



## SNAPSHOT OF AN OLD TESTAMENT KING



▲ **SHALMANESER III** left more royal inscriptions and annals behind than any other Assyrian king. He didn't want to be forgotten!

One of the most exciting discoveries ever made in the lands of the Bible was a large black stone found in the ruins of the Assyrian city of Calah (modern Nimrud) in 1846. The stone was a four-sided monument (an obelisk) about six and a half feet high. The scenes carved on each side pictured rulers from all over the Assyrian empire bringing tribute to the king. More than 200 lines of cuneiform text explain the military triumphs of Shalmaneser III, who ruled Assyria from 858 to 824 BC. One carved picture stopped Old Testament scholars in their tracks! The caption read: "Tribute of Jehu, son of Omri."

The figure bowing before the Assyrian emperor was either an emissary from Jehu or Jehu himself—a biblical king snapped in a stone photograph. Jehu was the ruler of the northern kingdom of Israel during the time of Assyria's expansion westward (841–814 BC). Jehu may have paid tribute to Assyria as a direct political payout to buy Assyrian authority for his kingship. Jehu, it seems, had brutally killed king Jehoram in order to gain access to Israel's throne.