

## **Resource: Bible Dictionary (Tyndale)**

### **Aquifer Open Bible Dictionary**

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the temple rebuilding project ([Ezr 3:9](#)), participated in sealing the covenant ([Neh 10:9](#)), and were prominent in the praise service ([9:4-5](#); [12:24](#)).

## Kadmonites

A Semitic tribe whose land God promised to the descendants of Abraham ([Genesis 15:19](#)). Semitic people are ancient groups from the Middle East and North Africa, known for their shared languages (such as Hebrew, Aramaic, or Arabic) and cultural traditions. The name "Kadmonites" means "eastern" in Hebrew. This may be why the Bible sometimes talks about the "people of the east" (for example, in [Genesis 25:6](#); [Judges 8:10](#); [1 Kings 4:30](#); [Job 1:3](#)).

## Kain (Place)

Town in the Judean hill country ([Jos 15:57](#)). Its place in the same district as the known cities of Maon, Carmel, Ziph, and Juttah (v [55](#)) favors its identification with Khirbet Yuqim, southwest of Hebron.

## Kain (Tribe)

The Kain were a tribe of people who were the same as the Kenites ([Numbers 24:22](#); [Judges 4:11](#)). The name "Kain" in Hebrew means "spear," which suggests they may have been skilled in making metal tools and weapons. The tribe lived as nomads, moving from place to place rather than settling in one area. They were friendly toward Israel ([1 Samuel 15:6](#)). They later became part of Judah.

*See Kenites.*

## Kaiwan

Mesopotamian astral deity, called "Chiun" in the kjv and "Kiyyun" in the nasb ([Am 5:26](#)). *See Sakkuth.*

## Kallai

Priest and the head of Sallu's (Sallai's) priestly family during the days of Joiakim the high priest ([Neh 12:20](#)).

## Kamon

City in Gilead where Jair the judge was buried ([Jgs 10:5](#)). While the place has not been identified with certainty, modern Kameim, a small village southeast of the Sea of Galilee, probably reflects the original name, if not the exact location.

## Kanah

1. Brook forming Ephraim's northern border and the southern border of Manasseh's tribe ([Jos 16:8](#); [17:9](#)). It flowed westward, joining the Yarkon River about five miles (8 kilometers) from the Mediterranean just north of the modern city of Tel Aviv (biblical Joppa). It is dry most of the year. Kanah is today called Wadi Qana.

2. City situated along Asher's border ([Jos 19:28](#)). It lay about six miles (9.7 kilometers) southeast of Tyre on one of the major northeast-southwest routes through northern Galilee. Qana (in modern Lebanon) still bears the name and marks the site.

## Kanatha

One of the original ten Greek cities. Rome rebuilt it after Pompey's conquest of Palestine and Syria around 63 BC. The region of these cities became known as the Decapolis. Kanatha (also spelled Canatha) was about 96.5 kilometers (60 miles) east of the Sea of Galilee. It formed the easternmost boundary of the Decapolis. Some identify the city with Kenath of [Numbers 32:42](#). The modern town of Qanawat is a short distance northeast of es-Suweideh in the Hauran region.

*See also Decapolis; Kenath.*

## Kareah

Father of Jonathan and Johanan ([2 Kgs 25:23](#)). After Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar's army, his sons joined Gedaliah at Mizpah ([Jer 40:8-43:5](#)).

## Karka

Unidentified town marking a part of Judah's southern boundary ([Jos 15:3](#)). It was located in the southwest section of Palestine between Kadesh-barnea and Wadi el-Arish (Besor Brook).

## Karkor

City in the Transjordan where Gideon attacked the armies of the two Midianite kings, Zebah and Zalmunna ([Jgs 8:10](#)). Indications of its location are sketchy. [Judges 8:11](#) places it east of Nobah and Jog-behah, a town identified with Jubeiah, which is seven miles (11.3 kilometers) northwest of Amman in Jordan. A more feasible site is in the vicinity of ancient Succoth (Tell Dier 'Alla) and Penuel (Tell edh-Dhahab esh-Sherqiyeh), both assigned to Gad's tribe in Gilead.

## Karnaim

Town situated along the King's Highway and along one of the northeastern tributaries of the Yarmuk River, 22 miles (35.4 kilometers) east of the Sea of Galilee on the Transjordan Plateau. The prophet Amos prophesied against Karnaim (also spelled Carnaim), foretelling its impending destruction on account of its wickedness ([Am 6:13](#)).

It was the leading town in the area after the decline of its sister city, Ashteroth, and became the main center of an Assyrian province in the seventh century BC. In 163 BC it was captured by Judas Maccabeus ([1 Macc 5:26, 43-44](#)). Christian and Jewish traditions believe it to be the home of Job.

*See also* Ashteroth-karnaim.

## Kartah

Levitical city in Zebulun's territory. The list of cities assigned to the Merarite clan of Levites in [Joshua 21:34](#) mentions Kartah, but the parallel passage in [1 Chronicles 6:77](#) (in the Hebrew) does not.

## Kartan

Levitical town assigned to the Gershonites from the tribe of Naphtali ([Jos 21:32](#)). It is called Kiriathaim

in [1 Chronicles 6:76](#). *See* Kiriathaim #2; Levitical Cities.

## Kattath

Town assigned to Zebulun ([Jos 19:15](#)), perhaps the same as the Kitron of [Judges 1:30](#). *See* Kitron.

## Kebar

Canal in Babylonia. The prophet Ezekiel, who was among the exiles from the southern kingdom of Judah, received visions from God while living in the area of the Kebar Canal ([Ez 1:1, 3; 3:15, 23; 10:15, 20, 22; 43:3](#)). Secular Babylonian texts refer to a *nar Kabaru* that is believed to be the same canal.

## Kedar

1. The second son of Ishmael, Abraham's son ([Genesis 25:13; 1 Chronicles 1:29](#)).
2. A tribe or area appearing mainly in the prophetic writings from Solomon to the exile. In Isaiah's prophecy against Arabia, Kedar is mentioned twice ([Isaiah 21:13-17](#)). Along with Arabia, Dedan, and Tema, the Kedarites are threatened with destruction. [Isaiah 21:16](#) mentions their "pomp," suggesting some wealth (see also [Ezekiel 27:21](#)). The militaristic tone in [Isaiah 21:17](#) suggests that they were a warring people. In [Jeremiah 49:28](#), Kedar is linked with Hazor as victims of Nebuchadnezzar's conquests. There is no record outside of the Bible of Nebuchadnezzar's march on Kedar. However, Ashurbanipal, the king of Assyria, mentions the conquest of Kedar. That would have been about 650 BC, or half a century earlier than the Babylonian conquest.

Besides Ashurbanipal's account, the only other ancient reference outside of the Bible to Kedar is on a silver bowl. It was offered to the Arabian goddess Han-'ilat in the Egyptian Delta. The inscription on

the bowl reads, "Cain, son of Geshem, king of Kedar," and it is dated to the fifth century BC. This Geshem was very likely the enemy of Nehemiah ([Nehemiah 2:19](#); [6:1-6](#)).

The picture the Bible gives of Kedar is that of a people living in the wilderness, descended from Ishmael. They did not believe in Yahweh at first but are included in Isaiah's prophecy of the future kingdom of God (compare [Isaiah 42:11](#); [60:7](#)). Their desert environment limited their work to sheep herding and trading. Unpredictable water in the desert forced them to move. A tent life was better than permanent houses (compare [Psalm 120:5](#); [Song of Solomon 1:5](#)). For this reason, archaeologists have found no site named Kedar. Kedar was east and slightly south of Israel, in southern Jordan. The people of Kedar presumably died out or were absorbed into nearby nations.

## Kedemah

A son of Ishmael mentioned in [Genesis 25:15](#). Later, his descendants were known by his name ([1 Chronicles 1:31](#)).

## Kedemoth

City east of the Jordan, probably located on the upper course of the Arnon River. From the wilderness of Kedemoth, Moses sent messengers to Sihon, king of Heshbon, asking permission to pass peaceably through his land ([Dt 2:26](#)). In the division of the land, Kedemoth was given to Reuben's tribe ([Jos 13:18](#)) and then set aside as one of the Levitical cities for the Merarites ([Jos 21:37](#); [1 Chr 6:79](#)).

*See also* Levitical Cities.

## Kedesh

1. Town in the Judean Negev ([Jos 15:23](#)); its appearance alongside Adadah (Aroer) argues against its identification with Kadesh-barnea.

2. City of refuge in upper Galilee, in the territory of Naphtali ([Jos 20:7](#)), set apart for the Gershonite clan of Levi ([Jos 21:32](#); [1 Chr 6:76](#)), and the home of Barak ([Jgs 4:6](#)). It was conquered by Tiglath-pileser III in 732 BC ([2 Kgs 15:29](#)). Jonathan Maccabeus defeated the army of Demetrius there ([1 Macc 11:63, 73](#)). It is identified with Tell Qades,

four and a half miles (7.2 kilometers) northwest of Lake Huleh.

*See also* Cities of Refuge.

3. Levitical city in Issachar ([1 Chr 6:72](#)); the parallel passage has Kishion ([Jos 21:28](#)).

*See also* Levitical Cities.

## Kedorlaomer

King of Elam who participated with three other kings in a campaign against five cities near the southern end of the Dead Sea plain ([Gn 14](#)). Although Kedorlaomer is initially third in the list ([v 1](#)), he was evidently the leader of the four kings. Elsewhere in the chapter his name comes first or stands alone.

For 12 years the five cities of the plain were vassals of Kedorlaomer. In the 13th year the cities rebelled, and the next year Kedorlaomer enlisted allies to enforce his lordship. The victorious kings looted the cities and took prisoners. Because the patriarch Abram's nephew Lot was among the captives, Abram mustered his servants and allies and pursued Kedorlaomer as far as Damascus. Kedorlaomer was defeated, and the captured loot and prisoners were rescued.

The first half of the name Kedorlaomer is a common Elamite word meaning "servant." The second half is probably the name of an Elamite deity. Although both elements of the name are known outside the Bible, the combination is not. It fits, however, with an early second-millennium BC date for the encounter, coinciding with the biblical account.

## Kehelathah

One of the places where the Israelites camped during their journey from Egypt to Mount Sinai. It was located somewhere between Rissah and Mount Shepher ([Numbers 33:22-23](#)).

## Keilah (Person)

Caleb's descendant from Judah's tribe, called the Garmite in [1 Chronicles 4:19](#). Some identify this reference with the city in Judah instead of a person.

## Keilah (Place)

City assigned to Judah's tribe ([Jos 15:44](#); [1 Chr 4:19](#)), located in the southeast Shephelah near the Philistine border. It is identified with modern Khirbet Qila, eight and a half miles (13.7 kilometers) northwest of Hebron.

David led a daring expedition to Keilah to deliver it from marauding Philistine bands, who were stealing grain from its threshing floors. He made it his residence for a time and expected to gain the loyalty of its people. However, when it became evident that the men of Keilah were plotting to turn him and his men over to Saul, he retreated into the wilderness of Ziph ([1 Sm 23:1-14](#)).

Keilah was reinhabited by Jews after the Captivity and was divided into two districts, ruled by Hashabiah and Bavvai. Its rulers were included in the roster of those who participated in rebuilding the Jerusalem wall under Nehemiah ([Neh 3:17-18](#)).

## Kelaiah

A Levite who was guilty of marrying a pagan wife ([Ezr 10:18](#)). According to verse [23](#) Kelaiah is also called Kelita. A Levite named Kelita is also found in [Nehemiah 8:7](#), [10:10](#), and [1 Esdras 9:48](#), where he is one who helped Ezra in expounding the law and who set his seal on Ezra's covenant. It cannot be determined with certainty whether Kelaiah and Kelita are the same individual.

## Kelal

Another spelling for Chelal, son of Pahath-moab.

*See* Chelal.

## Kelita

A Levite sometimes thought to be the same as Kelaiah. *See* Kelaiah.

## Kelub

Another spelling for the name Chelub.

*See* Chelub.

## Kelubai

Another spelling of the name Chelubai, which is itself a variant of the name Caleb. This refers to the son of Hezron who appears in ([1 Chronicles 2:9](#)).

*See* Chelubai.

## Keluhi

One of Bani's sons, who was encouraged by Ezra to divorce his foreign wife after the exile ([Ezr 10:35](#)).

## Kemuel

3. The third son of Nahor (the brother of the patriarch Abraham). He was the father of Aram ([Genesis 22:21](#)).
4. A son of Shiptan from the tribe of Ephraim. He was one of 12 men chosen to divide the land among the Israelite tribes ([Numbers 34:24](#)).
5. The father of Hashabiah. He was a ruler of the Levites during the rule of King David ([1 Chronicles 27:17](#)).

## Kenaanah

1. Father of Zedekiah, the false prophet who incorrectly prophesied victory for kings Ahab and Jehoshaphat over the Syrians ([1 Kgs 22:11, 24](#); [2 Chr 18:10, 23](#)).

2. Bilhan's son, who was chief of the subclan of Jediah in Benjamin's tribe in the time of King David ([1 Chr 7:10-11](#)).

## Kenan

A descendant of Adam. He lived four generations after Adam, as the son of Enosh ([Genesis 5:9-14](#); [1 Chronicles 1:2](#)). He is also called Cainan in [Luke 3:37](#).

*See* Ancestry of Jesus Christ.

## Kenani

Levite who participated in Ezra's public reading of the law after the exile ([Neh 9:4](#)).

## Kenaniah

1. Levite chief who led processional singing when King David brought the ark of the covenant to the new tabernacle in Jerusalem ([1 Chr 15:1-3, 22, 27](#)).

2. Public administrator during David's reign. His sons also served as public officials ([1 Chr 26:29](#)).

## Kenath

Kenath was a town in the Hauran region. It was captured by a man named Nobah ([Numbers 32:42](#)). It was later captured by Geshur and Aram ([1 Chronicles 2:23](#)).

Kenath was a Canaanite city. It appears in Egyptian curse texts from the 19th and 18th centuries BC. The city was also conquered by the Egyptian pharaoh Thutmose III and is mentioned in the Amarna letters (ancient diplomatic correspondence)..

During the Hellenistic period (the time after Alexander the Great), Kenath became one of the cities of the Decapolis (a group of ten cities). Jewish people who returned from exile in Babylon settled there. The Jewish religious teachers (rabbis) considered it a border town of the promised land. Kenath was also called Kanatha.

*See also* Kanatha.

## Kenaz

The singular form of the name of the Kenizzite tribe. God promised their land to the descendants of Abraham ([Genesis 15:19](#)). The Old Testament mentions three different men with this name. This might be because the Kenizzites had moved into both Edom (a land to the south) and southern Judah (part of what would become Israel). This happened before the Israelites conquered the land.

6. A grandson of Esau and a clan leader of Edom ([Genesis 36:11, 15, 42; 1 Chronicles 1:36, 53](#)).

7. The father of Othniel and Seraiah ([Joshua 15:17; Judges 1:13; 3:9-11; 1 Chronicles 4:13](#)).

8. A descendant of Caleb ([1 Chronicles 4:15](#)). *See* Kenizzites.

## Kenezite

The King James Version spelling of Kenizzite in [Numbers 32:12](#) and [Joshua 14:6, 14](#).

*See* Kenizzites.

## Kenites

The Kenites were one of 10 tribes living in Canaan during the time of Abraham ([Genesis 15:19](#)). However, they are not listed among the Canaanite tribes from the time of Moses ([Exodus 3:17](#)). This was likely because they had developed a more friendly relationship with Israel by that time. Israel continued to give special treatment to the Kenites, as seen in [1 Samuel 15:6](#). When Saul gathered his army to fight against the Amalekites, he warned the Kenites before the attack. This kindness probably reflected the help given by Hobab, son of Reuel, who served as Israel's guide in the wilderness ([Numbers 10:29-31](#)).

By the time of Barak the judge and Deborah the prophetess, some Kenites were living in Galilee. [Judges 4:11](#) says, "Now Heber the Kenite had moved away from the Kenites, the descendants of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, and had pitched his tent by the great tree of Zaanan, which was near Kedesh." This Kedesh was in Galilee and was not the Kadesh-barnea in the Sinai wilderness.

### *The Kenites' Role as Metalworkers*

The name "Kenite" is closely related to the word for "smith" (a metalworker who works with copper) in both Arabic and Aramaic. This suggests that this tribe might have been a group of traveling metalworkers who offered their skills wherever they were needed. Nomadic tribes of metalworkers were known to move throughout the ancient Near East from the early 2nd millennium BC. Images of such workers can be found in the Beni-Hasan tomb in Egypt, which dates to the 19th century BC. Even in modern times, at least one Arab tribe of traveling smiths has followed trade routes looking for work.



### *The Kenites' Influence on Israelite Culture*

Based on what the Bible tells us about the Kenites, an important question is what influence this widespread tribe had on the life and culture of the Israelites. Some have suggested that Moses learned about making the bronze serpent from his Kenite/Midianite father-in-law, Jethro ([Numbers 21:4–9](#)). But this is unlikely. However, if the Kenites were experts in metalworking, they may have taught this skill to God's people to help them establish themselves as a nation.

More significant is the suggestion that Jethro (also called Reuel), "priest of Midian," was the source of Moses's belief in one God—the monotheistic religion of Yahweh. This idea can be challenged from both biblical and historical perspectives.

The Bible specifically states that Yahweh was the personal God known to godly people from the earliest generations in [Genesis 4:26](#): "And to Seth also a son was born, and he called him Enosh. At that time men began to call upon the name of the LORD." Equally important is the fact that Moses' mother (or ancestor, as some would suggest) had the name Jochebed, which means "Yahweh is glory." Clearly, Moses did not first hear about Yahweh from his father-in-law during his exile in the wilderness of Midian.

Historical evidence shows that no worship centers other than the movable tabernacle were located in Sinai or anywhere south of Beersheba. It was south of that city that God, who had earlier revealed himself to the patriarchs at various places in the north, told Moses that he was the same God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ([Exodus 3:6](#)). The Israelites never returned to Sinai to worship, even though God had first revealed himself to them there.

Jethro clearly learned about Yahweh through Moses, not the other way around. Those Kenites who became part of God's people did so by being adopted into the covenant relationship with the God of Jacob through Israel's witness.

### *The Kenites and the Tribe of Judah*

Interestingly, [1 Chronicles 2:55](#) includes a Kenite named Hammath in the family list of the tribe of Judah. Hammath was the ancestor of the Rechabites. This shows that the Kenites were eventually added to the tribe of Judah. David also connects the Kenites with other groups living in southern Judah ([1 Samuel 27:10](#)). [Jeremiah 35](#) states that the Rechabites had a simple nomadic

lifestyle until the time of the Babylonian captivity. This also fits with what is known about the nature of the Kenites.

## **Kenizzites**

A people related to Kenaz, grandson of Esau ([Gn 36:11, 15](#)). The Kenizzites were of Edomite stock and resided to the southeast of Judah in the vicinity of the Kenites. They are thought to belong to the pre-Israelite population of Canaan ([Gn 15:19](#)). Their territory was to be given to the Israelites along with that of the Kenites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites (vv [19–21](#)).

In Numbers and Joshua, Caleb, the faithful spy, is reckoned to belong to the Kenizzites ([Nm 32:12](#); [Jos 14:6, 14](#)). According to [1 Chronicles 4:15](#), Caleb's genealogy is traced back to Judah ([1 Chr 4:1](#)). The relationship of Caleb to the Kenizzites is far from clear. Caleb established his patrimony at Kiriath-sepher ([Jgs 1:11–13](#)), which is in Judah but which is also situated close to the territory of the Kenizzites. Critical opinion views the Kenizzites as non-Israelites who occupied Hebron, Debir, and the southernmost hill country of the Negev and became politically incorporated into Judah.

## **Kephar-Ammoni**

City allotted to Benjamin's tribe for an inheritance after the initial conquest of Canaan by Joshua ([Jos 18:24](#)).

## **Kephirah**

Another spelling for Chephirah, an ancient city that was home to the Hivite people ([Joshua 9:17](#)). See Chephirah.

## **Keran**

Another spelling for Cheran, son of Dishon ([Genesis 36:26](#); [1 Chronicles 1:41](#)). See Cheran.



## Keren-Happuch

Job's third daughter and the sister of Jemimah and Keziah. She was listed as a member of Job's family at the time of his restoration ([Jb 42:14](#)).

## Kerethites

The Kerethites were a group of people who lived in southern Judah, near Hebron ([1 Samuel 30:14](#)). [2 Samuel 8:18](#) mentions them along with the Pelethites. [Ezekiel 25:15-17](#) associates the Kerethites with the Philistines (compare [Zephaniah 2:5](#)). God judged them along with other people who lived along the seacoast because of the wrong things the Philistines did to Israel.

Many scholars believe that the name Kerethite means "Cretan" (someone from the island of Crete). This makes sense because the Philistines may have come from Crete and other islands in the Mediterranean Sea. The word Pelethite is probably another way of saying "Philistine."

Because the Kerethites were likely related to the Philistines, we can learn about them by studying the Philistines. Art from Crete and Egypt shows Philistines wearing feathered or plumed head coverings. Pottery from Philistine, Cretan, and Greek places also looks very similar. This suggests these groups were closely connected.

The Kerethites and Pelethites became soldiers for King David. They were foreign fighters who worked for pay (called mercenaries). These soldiers were very loyal to David, even during difficult times ([2 Samuel 15:18](#); [20:7, 23](#); [1 Kings 1:38](#)). Later kings of Judah may have also used them as soldiers. Some people think the "Carites" in [2 Kings 11:4, 19](#) were Kerethites.

## Kerioth

9. A town in the Negev of Judah called Kerioth-hezron ([Joshua 15:25](#)). In the Hebrew text, Kerioth and Hezron are understood to be separate towns. Hezron is likely the same place as Hazor mentioned earlier in the list (verse [23](#)).

10. A town in Moab ([Jeremiah 48:24, 41](#); [Amos 2:2](#)). From information on the Moabite Stone (an ancient stone with writing), we can locate this town in the southwest plateau of Moab, across from Ataroth. Kerioth is not in the list of towns belonging to the tribes of Reuben and Gad ([Numbers 34](#); [Joshua 13](#)). In other lists, Kerioth is not mentioned, but a place called Ar is ([Isaiah 15-16](#)). This has led scholars to believe that Ar and Kerioth might be the same place.

## Kerioth-Hezron

Town mentioned in [Joshua 15:25](#). See Kerioth #1.

## Kerith, the Brook

Another spelling for the Brook of Cherith, where the Lord told the prophet Elijah to hide from King Ahab during a famine he had predicted ([1 Kings 17:2-6](#)). See Cherith, the Brook.

## Keros

One of the temple servants whose descendants returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel ([Ezr 2:44](#); [Neh 7:47](#)).

## Kerub

Another way of spelling the name Cherub, the name of a city in Babylon.

See Cherub (Place).

## Kerygma

The basic evangelistic message proclaimed by the earliest Christians. More fully, it is the proclamation of the death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus. When people hear this message, they understand that Jesus is both Lord and Christ. The message calls them to turn away from their sins. It also promises that God will forgive their sins.

We find this basic message in two places:

11. We find parts of the kerygma in the earliest Christian teachings that were written before Paul's letters.
12. We find the kerygma in Peter's speeches about Jesus in the book of Acts.

When we look at both of these sources, we see they share the same basic message.

The kerygma is essentially the same as the gospel. Although the term itself emphasizes the *manner* of delivery somewhat more than the *message* that is being proclaimed. In the ancient world, the king made known his decrees by means of a *kerux*. *Kerux* is the Greek word for a town crier or herald. This person often served as a close confidant of the king. They would travel throughout the realm, announcing to the people whatever the king wished to make known. It is this note of authoritative declaration that is so applied to the preaching of the gospel by the early church.

### *What Is the Kerygma?*

The simplest outline of the kerygma is made up of the following:

13. A proclamation of the death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus, seen as the fulfillment of prophecy and involving human responsibility.
14. The resultant evaluation of Jesus as both Lord and Christ.
15. A summons to repent and receive forgiveness of sins.

However, on the basis of a careful study of the actual texts themselves, the kerygma did *not* contain the following:

16. A declaration of the dawn of the messianic age.
17. Any reference to the life and ministry of Jesus (in contrast to his death and resurrection).
18. A major emphasis on the Second Coming as part of the evangelistic proclamation.

These topics are discussed elsewhere in the New Testament. However, they were not part of the

basic message that Jesus's first followers shared. We know this because these topics are not found in the earliest Christian writings

### *Why Is the Resurrection Important?*

The resurrection is very important in God's plan of redemption. The kerygma always focuses on the resurrection. This supernatural act of God in history gives power to the words and works of Jesus. It is the reason for the Christian hope of immortality.

Without the resurrection, the church would be no more than a group of nice people who put their faith in a philosophical teacher. The resurrection is evidence that Jesus is who he said he was. Only if he is the Son of God can his death provide an appropriate and sufficient sacrifice for human sin. Essentially, the kerygma is a declaration that Christ is risen from the dead and that by that great act, God has brought salvation.

### *What Is the Goal of the Kerygma?*

The kerygma is not a boring summary of historical facts but an important confrontation between the Holy Spirit and the needs of sinful humans. No one can deny that the reality of the resurrection confirms the claims of Christ. No one can resist the compelling logic of the resurrection as it leads irresistibly to the conclusion that Jesus of Nazareth is the living Lord. To repent and believe is to enter the kingdom of God. The kerygma has as its ultimate goal not an advanced theology but a changed life. It is the declaration that in Christ the new order of eternal life has already entered into time and history.

*See also* Acts of the Apostles, Book of the; Gospel.

## **Kesalon**

Another spelling for Chesalon, a city in northern Judah near the border of Dan ([Joshua 15:10](#)).

*See also* Chesalon.

## **Kesed**

Another spelling for Chesed, son of Milcah and Nahor ([Genesis 22:22](#)). *See* Chesed.

## Kesil

Another spelling for Chesil, a city on the borders of Edom in the Negev. *See* Chesil.

## Kesitah

A weight of unknown value ([Genesis 33:19](#); [Joshua 24:32](#); [Job 42:11](#)).

*See* Money.

## Kesulloth

Another spelling for Chesulloth, a town in Issachar ([Joshua 19:18](#)). *See* Chesulloth.

## Keturah

Keturah was the second wife of Abraham. The Bible does not clearly state if Abraham married her before or after Sarah died ([Genesis 25:1](#)). Abraham and Keturah had six sons together:

19. Zimran
20. Jokshan
21. Medan
22. Midian
23. Ishbak
24. Shuah (see [Genesis 25:2](#))

Keturah did not have the same status as Sarah. The Bible calls her a concubine ([Genesis 25:6](#), compare [1 Chronicles 1:32](#)). Her sons received gifts from Abraham instead of sharing in his inheritance.

The sons of Keturah became ancestors of tribes that Israel later had contact with after they entered the promised land. The most important of these tribes were Midian and Jokshan's sons Sheba and Dedan ([Genesis 25:3](#)). These tribes settled in the northern and central regions near the Euphrates River, extending into the central parts of the Arabian Desert.

The people worked as merchants and shepherds ([Genesis 37](#); [Exodus 2:16](#)). They took part in international trade ([Isaiah 60:6](#)). For example, the queen of Sheba, who was a descendant of Jokshan ([Genesis 25:3](#)), visited Solomon to start trading with Israel ([1 Kings 10:2](#)).

*See also* Abraham.

## Keys of the Kingdom

A symbolic description of the authority that Jesus gave to Peter. In [Matthew 16:19](#), Jesus tells Peter, "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

In ancient times, many cultures believed that gates to heaven and the underworld were controlled by beings with keys. For instance, in Greek mythology, Pluto had the key to the underworld. Jewish writings often assigned the key to God. In the book of Revelation, Jesus holds the keys to death and the underworld ([Revelation 1:18](#); see [3:7](#)).

In the Gospel of Matthew, the keys represent the authority to manage entry into the kingdom of heaven. After Peter declares that Jesus is the Christ, Jesus gives him the authority to "bind" and "loose" ([Matthew 16:16, 19](#)). This authority is later shared with all the disciples ([Matthew 18:18](#)). The terms "bind" and "loose" were used by rabbis to describe declaring someone under a ban or freeing them from it. This could mean expulsion or reinstatement in a synagogue or determining someone's judgment by God.

Jesus's "power of the keys" is about spiritual authority. It is similar to the authority Jesus gives in John [John 20:23](#): "If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld."

The Pharisees and scribes thought they had the power to deny others entry into the kingdom of heaven ([Matthew 23:13](#)). However, they missed the truth that Peter recognized—that Jesus is the true way to God's kingdom. The keys symbolize the authority to declare judgment and offer forgiveness, not by human power, but based on Christ's teachings.

*See also* Kingdom of God, Kingdom of Heaven.

## Keziah

The second daughter of Job. She was born after God restored Job's fortunes ([Job 42:14](#)).

## Kezib

Another spelling of Chezib, a city in the territory of Judah ([Genesis 38:5](#)).

## Keziz, Valley of

KJV rendering of Emek-keziz, a city allotted to Benjamin's tribe for an inheritance, in [Joshua 18:21](#). See Emek-keziz.

## Kibroth-Hattaavah

Location in the wilderness where the Israelites who were killed by plague for craving meat from Egypt were buried ([Nm 11:34-35](#); [33:16-17](#); [Dt 9:22](#)). It was situated between Mt Sinai and Hazeroth, but its exact site is unknown. The name, meaning "graves of craving," accords with the account of the quails.

See also Wilderness Wanderings.

## Kibzaim

One of several cities in Ephraim given to the Levitical family of Kohath after the conquest of Canaan ([Jos 21:22](#)). It is probably the same as the Jokmeam of [1 Chronicles 6:68](#).

## Kid

Young goat. See Animals (Goat).

## Kidney

A kidney is an internal organ of the body. In the Bible, kidneys had both a physical and spiritual meaning.

In ancient Israel, God commanded that the kidneys of sacrificial animals, along with their fat, be burned as offerings on the altar ([Exodus 29:13](#); [Leviticus 3:4-15](#)). This was part of God's instructions about which parts of animals could and could not be eaten. The Israelites were not allowed to eat blood, and the kidneys represented this restriction.

The Bible also uses the kidneys as a symbol for a person's deepest thoughts and feelings. Hebrew writers often mentioned kidneys alongside the heart and soul to describe someone's inner self or true character ([Psalm 73:21](#)). They believed the kidneys were the place where people made moral choices and thought deeply about life ([Psalm 16:7](#); [Jeremiah 12:2](#)). The Hebrew word for kidneys is often translated as "heart."

In the Old Testament, God knows everyone's deepest thoughts (for example, [Psalms 7:9](#); [26:2](#); [Jeremiah 20:12](#)). So, Jesus was identified in the book of Revelation as "the One who searches minds and hearts" ([Revelation 2:23](#)). This indirectly but clearly identifies Jesus with God. This is the only reference to the kidneys in the New Testament.

## Kidon

Another spelling of Chidon, the threshing floor where God struck down Huzzah as he attempted to steady the ark of the covenant ([1 Chronicles 13:9](#)).

See Chidon.

## Kidron

The Kidron Valley is a valley and streambed located below the southeast wall of Jerusalem. It separates the city from the Mount of Olives to the east. From there, it turns southeast and follows a winding path to the Dead Sea. The Kidron is best described as a torrent bed that is almost always dry. Water flows only in the rainy season. It is partly fed by two irregular springs, Gihon and En-rogel.

The Gihon Spring was a crucial water source for the ancient City of David. In King Hezekiah's time, an underground tunnel was carved from rock. It was to ensure a steady water supply during sieges. This tunnel led to the Pool of Siloam, located within the city walls.

The term "brook" is found in [John 18:1](#) in the King James Version. A better translation would be "winter flow" or "winter course." This reflects the stream's seasonal nature, not a constant river.

The Kidron Valley has two key roles in Jerusalem's history: military and funerary. The city's walls have always towered above the valley. Their steepness made it hard for enemies to attack from that direction. Debris from nearby ruins raised the valley floor over time. It now sits about 12.2 meters

(40 feet) higher than its ancient level. Many ancient caves and tombs may still lie buried beneath the current surface. Just south of the city, the Kidron merges with the Tyropean and Hinnom Valleys. The area has long been used for royal gardens, watered by nearby springs.

Since the fourth century AD, the Kidron Valley has been called "the Valley of Jehoshaphat" ([Joel 3:12](#)). It is linked to the final judgment of the nations. This tradition is significant for both Muslims and Jews. Today, the valley's sides are filled with tombs. Even before the exile, the Kidron was a popular burial site. [2 Kings 23:4-12](#) mentions the graves of common people and the disposal of idolatrous objects there. This is also referenced in [2 Chronicles 34:4-5](#).

The first reference to the Kidron Valley is in [2 Samuel 15:23](#) when King David and his people crossed it during Absalom's rebellion. This crossing was strategic, providing an escape route in case of an attack on the city. The king and the people wept as they fled ([2 Samuel 15:30](#)). It symbolized David's abandonment of Zion without a fight. Later, Solomon forbade the offensive Shimei to cross the Kidron. The penalty for disobeying was death ([1 Kings 2:36-38](#)) on pain of death. The historian Josephus notes that Queen Athaliah was executed in the Kidron Valley (*Antiquities* 9.7.3). [2 Kings 11:16](#) is not clear whether the horses' entrance to the palace opened onto the Kidron.

The Bible's last mention of the Kidron is when Jesus crossed it with his disciples on the night of his betrayal ([John 18:1](#)). The parallels between Jesus's and David's crossings are noteworthy. They relate to David's role in the biblical theme of kingship. Jeremiah prophesied that, in the end times, the Lord would make the Kidron Valley sacred ([Jeremiah 31:38-40](#)) as part of the restoration of Israel.

*See also* Jerusalem.

## Kileab

Another spelling of Chileab, the second son of King David.

*See* Chileab.

## Kilion

Another spelling of Chilion, one of the two sons of Elimelech and Naomi ([Ruth 1:2](#)).

*See* Kilion.

## Killing

*See* Civil Law and Justice; Criminal Law and Punishment; Commandments, The Ten.

## Kilmad

Another spelling of Chilmad, a city in Mesopotamia ([Ezekiel 27:23](#)).

*See* Chilmad.

## Kiln

Large furnace used in firing pottery. *See* Pottery.

## Kimham

Another spelling of Chimham, a son of Barzillai, according to the Jewish historian Josephus.

*See* Chimham.

## Kinah

Town in the Negev of Judah ([Jos 15:22](#)), perhaps named after the Kenites who lived in the area ([Jgs 1:16](#)). According to a letter discovered at Arad, troops were sent from Kinah to reinforce Ramoth-negev against an Edomite attack. The ancient name is preserved in Wadi el-Qeini, in the eastern Negev.

## Kindness

Kindness is a way of being that includes loving care, understanding, friendliness, patience, gentleness, and goodness. It is shown in how a person speaks and acts. Kindness is more about choosing to act in a certain way than about feeling emotions.

The Bible has many stories about kindness:

- Joseph asked Pharaoh's servant to kindly remember him to Pharaoh ([Genesis 40:14](#)).
- Rahab asked for kind treatment from Israel because she protected two spies in her home ([Joshua 2:12](#)).
- Before he attacked Amalek, Saul asked the Kenites to leave the Amalekite territory. He did not want to kill them along with the Amalekites because of the kindness they had shown Israel when Israel came up from Egypt ([1 Samuel 15:6](#)).
- David praised the men of Jabesh-gilead for burying Saul's body ([2 Samuel 2:5](#)).
- Jonathan requested "unfailing kindness" of David so that he would not be killed ([1 Samuel 20:14-15](#)).
- David was kind to Jonathan's son, letting him eat at the king's table ([2 Samuel 9:1-7](#)).

It is very wrong to return evil for kindness:

- Abimelech wanted Abraham to swear that he would return kindness for kindness to his offspring ([Genesis 21:23](#)).
- Abner showed kindness to Ishbosheth by not delivering him over to David, but Ishbosheth charged Abner with wrongdoing regarding Saul's concubine, Rizpah ([2 Samuel 3:8](#)).
- David sent kind words when his father died, but Hanun humiliated David's messengers, thereby bringing on war between the two nations ([2 Samuel 10:2-19](#)).
- Absalom rebuked Hushai, David's friend, for supposedly leaving David's side when he needed him. Absalom asked Hushai if that was the way he was repaying David's friendship ([2 Samuel 16:17](#); see also [2 Chronicles 24:22](#)).

God's actions are the best examples of kindness in the Bible. The Levites praised God for being forgiving, gracious, compassionate, and very kind ([Nehemiah 9:17-31](#)). They said God was kind even when Israel was not faithful to Him.

- God did not leave his people, even when they worshipped a golden calf a golden calf.
- God gave them his Spirit to teach them.
- God gave them manna to eat and water to drink for 40 years in the wilderness.
- God gave them the land of Canaan to live in.

The greatest example of God's kindness was giving salvation to sinners, not because of their good deeds but because of His mercy ([Titus 3:4](#); see also [Ephesians 2:7](#)).

Because God has been so kind to them, Christians (as God's chosen people) are told to be compassionate, kind, humble, gentle, and patient ([Colossians 3:12](#)). The apostle Peter told Christians to add "brotherly kindness" to their faith, along with other good qualities ([2 Peter 1:7](#)).



## Kine

Cows. *See* Animals (Cattle).

## King

The word *melek* (king) occurs more than 2,000 times in the Hebrew OT. It may refer to God ([Ps 95:3](#)) or to human rulers. Generally it designates one invested with ultimate authority and power over his subjects. In the OT, the word *melek* designates the ruler of a tribe ("the kings of Midian," [Nm 31:8](#)), a city (Jericho, Ai; cf. [Jos 12:9-24](#), where 31 kings of city-states conquered by the Israelites are listed), a nation (Israel, Judah, Ammon, Moab, Aram), or an international power (such as Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, or Persia). Other words may also refer to royalty. The Philistines introduced the title *seren* (lord) into Hebrew vocabulary. The five Philistine cities were ruled by five lords. Another word for an Israelite king is *nagid* (ruler). Both Saul and David were anointed as *nagid* over Israel ([1 Sm 10:1](#); [16:13](#)). In the NT and the Septuagint, the Greek version of the OT, the Greek word *basileus* has a meaning similar to the Hebrew *melek*. The NT *basileus* refers to secular rulers living in the first century, kings of Israel, rulers of the past, and the divine King, Jesus Christ.

The phrase "King of kings," attributed to Jesus ([1 Tm 6:15](#)), is a Hebrew expression meaning supreme or greatest king. For example, in Ezekiel's prediction of the fall of Tyre, Nebuchadnezzar is named the "king of kings" ([Ez 26:7](#)). The great rulers of Assyria and Babylon introduced this title. Before their time, rulers were called either "king" or "great king," as in [2 Kings 18:28](#): "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria" (rsv). Later rulers had their titles adjusted to keep up with the expanse of their empires.

### *Kingship in Israel*

God chose Abraham as the father of nations; through him and his descendants the messianic rule would be established on earth. In his promises to Abraham, God repeatedly assured him that he would become the father of a mighty nation, to whom God would give the land of Canaan, and that kings would arise from his descendants ([Gn 17:6](#)). Abraham showed his acceptance of the rule of God over his family by obeying God's command to be circumcised, which set the clan of Abraham apart

for the service of God (vv [10-14](#)). The ultimate purpose of God's relation with Abraham and his descendants was that God would be King over Israel and that his people would show their acceptance of his rule by their faithful obedience to him (v [9](#)).

At the heart of the covenant was God's expectation of loyalty to his rule. Abraham and his descendants were to exercise their God-given "rule" over the nations by living in fellowship with the great King. Thus the Lord reestablished his dominion over mankind. Through Abraham and his descendants, he would raise up a "royal nation" to whom the full privileges of rule over his creation would be restored.

The Lord also made a covenant with Israel. This covenant was a sovereign administration of grace and promise by which the Lord consecrated the people unto himself by the sanctions of divine law and by his very presence. The nation, witnessing God's care for them, had to learn that by their obedience to God's expectations the theocratic kingdom might become a reality on earth. In the Sinaitic covenant the theocracy (the rule of God) was established. Israel was entrusted with the commandments, so that they might show themselves to be a theocratic nation, as God revealed to Moses: "Now if you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my own special treasure from among all the nations of the earth; for all the earth belongs to me. And you will be to me a kingdom of priests, my holy nation" ([Ex 19:5-6](#), nlt). They were God's elect for the sake of the nations; through Israel's priestly obedience and intercession, the whole earth might know the Creator-Redeemer.

The qualities of God's kingship were power, glory, fidelity, wisdom, concern, service, delegation of power to man, blessing and protection, just rule, judgment, vindication, and deliverance. Israel's kingship was to be no different from God's. Their varied and sometimes complex laws taught Israel to distinguish between what was holy and common, clean and unclean, the ways of God and the ways of the nations. The ways of God enhanced love, fidelity, justice, peace, harmony, service, concern for others, wise living, defense of the needy, and judgment of the guilty. The ways of the kingdoms of the world all too often promoted selfishness, anarchy, despotism, and disregard for justice.

The Lord also instituted an organizational structure designed to promote his theocratic

purposes. In the wilderness Moses and the chosen leaders of Israel ([Ex 18:19–26](#); [Nm 11:24–25](#); cf. [Dt 1:15–18](#)) were God’s instruments for upholding his kingship in Israel. Upon Moses’ death, Joshua took over the theocratic rule. The Lord was with him as he had been with Moses, and all Israel recognized the continuity of God’s rule in Joshua’s leadership ([Dt 34:9](#); [Jos 3:7](#); [4:14](#)). Like Moses had before his death, Joshua charged the leadership and Israel to persevere in the gracious covenant relationship ([Jos 23–24](#)). However, Israel perished because of its greed, immorality, strife, and idolatry. During the period of the judges, each one did what was right in his own eyes ([Jgs 17:6](#); [18:1](#); [19:1](#); [21:25](#)). There was no king in the land in those days. The judges were military leaders whom the Lord raised up to deliver his people from their foreign oppressors. But God remained King, regardless of the fact that Israel lived as if he were not. The period of the judges demonstrated that apostate Israel, disobedient to their King, was unsuccessful in dealing with the surrounding nations.

The theocratic leadership was restored to Israel by the ministry of Samuel. He was born into a Levitical family and served the Lord at the Shiloh tabernacle. He was called to be a prophet—an office which had not been filled since Moses’ death ([1 Sm 3:20–21](#)). He was recognized as a judge in Israel ([7:15](#)). In Samuel the offices of priest, prophet, and king were combined. He is never called king, as his lifestyle was that of a prophet rather than that of a ruler. The carefully calculated request of the people for a king was a rejection of Samuel’s ministry. The people were not satisfied with the spiritual, charismatic leadership of Samuel. In their search for a more dynamic leader they found in the kings of the surrounding nations attractive elements: power, manifestation of glory, and stability. Thus far the tribes had experienced several civil wars that endangered the unity of Israel. It was thought that a king would remedy all of the social and political problems. Though God had foreseen the days of the monarchy in the law ([Dt 17:14–20](#)), the people were motivated to introduce the kingship for secular rather than religious reasons: “Give us a king like all the other nations have” ([1 Sm 8:5](#)); “We want to be like the nations around us. Our king will govern us and lead us into battle” (v [20](#), nlt). Samuel never accepted the idea of kingship; it was foreign to the theocratic ideal.

The crucial difference between kingship in Israel and kingship in neighboring lands lay in the fact that God endowed the king of Israel with his Spirit to establish his rule on earth. God ruled for his

people, and his people benefited was from his rule; he was their provider, protector, and divine warrior.

Samuel was instrumental in anointing Saul (a sad example of kingship) and David (a good example of kingly rule under God). Saul’s kingship revealed a despotic, uncaring attitude and self-aggrandizement. He was intent on establishing his dynasty, while not caring sufficiently for the people of God. Therefore, the Lord rejected his kingship ([1 Sm 15:23](#)).

David’s kingship, in contrast to Saul’s, was in line with God’s because it reflected the glory of Yahweh’s kingship. David’s life and rule are taken up in the two books of Samuel as a commentary on the pros and cons of kingship. Positively, David was a man after God’s heart, who sought the will of God, repented of his sin, and sought the glory of God. Negatively, David failed in his personal and family life to uphold the high standards of God’s law. Yet God was pleased to choose David’s dynasty as the lineage through which Jesus Christ would come. The prophet Nathan assured David that his dynasty would last: “Your dynasty and your kingdom will continue for all time before me, and your throne will be secure forever” ([2 Sm 7:16](#), nlt). But God did not promise that it would be immune from prosecution or banishment.

The outstanding qualities of the kingship of David and his son Solomon reflect the true theocratic intention: concern for the Lord, for a heart of wisdom and integrity, and for the well-being of God’s people. Concern for the Lord found expression in the preparation for and actual building of the temple (cf. [Ps 132](#)). Concern for integrity and wisdom is clearly evident, especially in David’s response to Nathan’s rebuke ([2 Sm 12](#)) and in Solomon’s request to have a heart of wisdom ([1 Kgs 3](#)). Concern for the people comes to expression in their securing the borders against enemies, achieving national unification, and bringing opportunity for economic growth. The era of David and Solomon represented a true reflection of God’s kingship on earth.

The accounts in Kings and Chronicles unfold the subsequent history of kingship in Israel and Judah. The good kings followed the examples provided by David and Solomon in securing Jerusalem against foreign invaders, in supplying for the needs of the temple, in having God’s people instructed in the word of God, and in modeling their rule after the law of Moses. A good Davidic king loved the Lord, the temple, the law, and God’s people. He served

them as a good shepherd. Evil kings were those who rejected this model of kingship in favor of the pagan models. So Omri and Ahab introduced the Phoenician culture with its Baalism, utterly disregarding the heritage of Israel.

The Davidic king was treated as a member of God's household, being a "son" of the great King (cf. [2 Sm 7:14-16](#); [Ps 2:6-7](#)). The Davidic king was to be loyal to the great King, Yahweh. He, like Moses and Joshua, received his orders directly from the Lord; but unlike with Moses, the word of the Lord was mediated through the prophets. He, like Moses and Joshua, was expected to serve his God and his people.

### *The Messiah-King*

The descendants of David failed to maintain and expand the theocracy. By the eighth and seventh centuries BC, it was apparent that even the greatest kings were dwarfed by the stature of David and Solomon. The prophets ([Is 9:2-7](#); [11:1-9](#); [Jer 33:14-16](#); [Ez 34:22-31](#); [Mi 5:2-5](#)) spoke of another king, the Messiah, a descendant of David who would rule permanently and by whose rule the reign of God would extend to the ends of the earth. He would put down all opposition to God's rule, remove all enemies, and bring in an era of universal peace and righteousness. The Messiah-King would reveal the perfections of divine rule, as the Spirit of God would be upon him. His kingship would be marked by service to the people of God, so that they would be a well-cared-for flock; he would serve them as their shepherd.

In the coming of Jesus the messianic kingdom is more clearly revealed. He is the King of whom the angels said, "The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born tonight in Bethlehem, the city of David!" ([Lk 2:11](#), nlt). These magnificent words show continuity with the prophetic word. Jesus is the Savior, whose role includes deliverance from sin but also deliverance from all causes of adversity, evil, and the effects of the curse. His mission pertains to both forgiveness and to the establishment of peace on earth ([1:77-79](#)). In this light we must look at Jesus' ministry of healing, feeding, opposing the forces of evil, suffering, and teaching as the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. He is the King who serves, fights against the demonic powers, and overcomes. The resurrection marks his victory, and he is crowned with glory by being seated at the right hand of the Father ([Acts 2:33-36](#); cf. [1 Cor 15:25](#)). In being the Savior he is none other than Christ the Lord. The early apostolic

preaching proclaimed that Jesus is the Messiah of God and the Lord. The lordship of Jesus is corollary to his being the Messiah. To those who call on him, he is the Savior-Messiah-Lord ([Rom 10:9-15](#)), but to those who reject him, he is the divine warrior, before whom all knees will bow and who will bring in the era of the Father's judgment (cf. [Rv 1:12-16](#); [19:11-21](#)).

Jesus taught his disciples that at his coming in glory he would be seated on his throne and all mankind would pay him obeisance. The enemies of God will be cast out from his presence, and the people of God will fully inherit the kingdom ([Mt 25:31-46](#)). In accordance with Jesus' teaching, the members of his body, the church, are expected to work out the theocratic ideal in their lives, that by their works and faith they may glorify the Father and show that they are his ([Jn 17:20-26](#); cf. [Mt 25:33-40](#)). This is the biblical manner of witness that Israel failed to give and that the church is privileged to give; as Paul wrote to Timothy:

I command you before God, who gives life to all, and before Christ Jesus, . . . that you obey his commands with all purity. Then no one can find fault with you from now until our Lord Jesus Christ returns. For at the right time Christ will be revealed from heaven by the blessed and only almighty God, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He alone can never die, and he lives in light so brilliant that no human can approach him. No one has ever seen him, nor ever will. To him be honor and power forever. Amen. ([1 Tm 6:13-16](#), nlt)

Then Paul gives several instructions as to how the people of God must demonstrate their allegiance to Jesus. Throughout the book of Revelation, Jesus is viewed as King over the church ([Rv 4:2, 9-11](#); [5:1, 9-13](#)). At his return his kingship will be established. At this time, the enemies of the cross will see the one whom they have rejected and will bow before the messianic King ([1 Cor 15:25-28](#)). "After that the end will come, when he [Jesus] will turn the Kingdom over to God the Father, having put down all enemies of every kind" (v [24](#), nlt).

See also Israel, History of; Kingdom of God, Kingdom of Heaven.

### **King's Dale**

The King James Version name for the Valley of the King near Salem. Salem was the city of Melchizedek mentioned in [Genesis 14:17](#).

See King's Valley.

## King's Garden

Probably an area of the royal estates, situated outside the walls of Jerusalem near the pool of Siloam ([2 Kgs 25:4](#); [Jer 39:4](#); [52:7](#)) in the Kidron Valley, near where the Kidron meets the valley of Hinnom. Upon the return from the exile, Nehemiah set the families to work, each building a part of the wall. Fountain Gate is recorded as being near the pool of Siloam by the king's garden ([Neh 3:15](#)). It is not certain whether the site now called the king's garden outside the walls of modern Jerusalem is the original site.

## King's Highway

The road running north-south across the Transjordanian plateau. It appears in the OT only twice in requests by the Israelites to use this road when passing through Edom ([Nm 20:17](#)) and the Amorite kingdom of Heshbon ([21:22](#)). The route may also be called simply "the highway" ([20:19](#)). The northern segment is called "the way of Bashan" ([Nm 21:33](#); [Dt 3:1](#)).

This highway connected Damascus with the caravan route running through the Hijaz down to southern Arabia and the rich sources of spices, perfumes, and other exotic products ([1 Kgs 10:2](#); [Ez 27:22](#)). Control over it was a key factor in the geopolitics of Israel and its rivals.

The local topography limits the possible lines of march to two parallel routes. A double watershed exists the full length of the Transjordanian plateau. One is created by the shorter streams that bisect the mountains from east to west; they leave a watershed about 13 to 16 miles (21 to 26 kilometers) east of the Jordan Valley. The larger streams, the Yarmuk, Jabbok, Arnon, and Zered, begin some 25 to 30 miles (40 to 48 kilometers) to the east, usually running north before curving westward. The route bypassing them on the east must follow the fringes of the north Arabian Desert. Though the latter has an easier course to follow, it passes fewer good water sources and settlements where supplies could be obtained. The former, on the western watershed, had ample water and was lined with major towns; however, the caravans had to negotiate the steep canyons of the four large wadis.

The earliest record of movement along this route is in [Genesis 14](#). The four kings went from Ashtaroth, the capital of Bashan, to Ham in northern Gilead, then to Shaveh-kiriathaim on the Moabite plateau, and finally to Mt Seir as far as El-paran. The patriarchs probably always came this way when traveling to Canaan; Jacob came through Gilead ([Gn 31:21](#)) and established a base at Succoth before crossing the Jordan to Canaan ([33:17](#)).

## King's Pool

A reservoir in the garden of the king in Jerusalem ([Nehemiah 2:14](#)). It is known as the pool of Shelah ([3:15](#)).

## King's Valley

A valley near Salem, the city where Melchizedek was king. This is where Abraham met the king of Sodom. Abraham refused an offer from the king of Sodom that would have been morally wrong ([Genesis 14:17](#)). The valley is also called Shaveh.

If Salem is the same place as Jerusalem, the "king's valley" is probably either the Kidron Valley or the valley of Hinnom. These are two valleys near ancient Jerusalem.

This same valley was also the place where Absalom (King David's son) built a stone pillar as a monument to himself ([2 Samuel 18:18](#)).

## Kingdom of God, Kingdom of Heaven

The sovereign rule of God, initiated by Christ's earthly ministry and consummated when the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ ([Rv 11:15](#)).

Preview

- Introduction
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### Introduction

According to the testimony of the first three Gospels, the proclamation of the kingdom of God was Jesus' central message. Matthew summarizes the Galilean ministry with the words "Jesus



traveled throughout Galilee teaching in the synagogues, preaching everywhere the Good News about the Kingdom” ([Mt 4:23](#), nlt). The Sermon on the Mount is concerned with the righteousness that qualifies people to enter the kingdom of God ([5:20](#)). The collection of parables in [Matthew 13](#) and [Mark 4](#) illustrate the “mystery” of the kingdom of God ([Mt 13:11](#); [Mk 4:11](#)). The establishment of the Lord’s Supper looks forward to the establishment of the kingdom of God ([Mt 26:29](#); [Mk 14:25](#)).

The NT reports two different forms of the expression: “the kingdom of God” and “the kingdom of the heavens.” The latter is found only in Matthew, but Matthew also has “the kingdom of God” four times ([Mt 12:28](#); [19:24](#); [21:31](#), [43](#)). “The kingdom of heaven” is a Semitic phrase that would have been meaningful to Jews but not to Greeks. The Jews, out of reverence for God, avoided uttering the divine name, and contemporary literature gives examples of substituting the word “heaven” for God ([1 Macc 3:18](#), [50](#); [4:10](#); see [Lk 15:18](#)).

The key to an understanding of the kingdom of God is that the basic meaning of the Greek word *basileia*, as also of the Hebrew *malkut*, is rule, reign, dominion. We frequently find in the OT the expression “in the year of the kingdom of . . .,” meaning in the year of the reign of a given king (e.g., [1 Chr 26:31](#); [2 Chr 3:2](#); [15:10](#); [Ezr 7:1](#); [8:1](#); [Est 2:16](#); [Jer 10:7](#); [52:31](#)). When we read that Solomon’s kingdom was firmly established ([1 Kgs 2:12](#)), we are to understand that his authority to reign was settled. To “turn the kingdom of Saul over to [David]” ([1 Chr 12:23](#), kjv) indicates that the authority that had been Saul’s was given to David. As a result of having received legal authority, David became king. This abstract idea of *malkut* is evident when it is found in parallelisms with such ideas as power, might, glory, and dominion ([Dn 4:34](#); [7:14](#)).

When *malkut* is used of God, it almost always refers to his authority or to his rule as the heavenly King. “They will talk together about the glory of your kingdom; they will celebrate examples of your power. . . . For your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. You rule generation after generation” ([Ps 145:11, 13](#), nlt).

Further, if a king rules, there must be a realm or sphere over which he reigns. This is also called *malkut*. “So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest round about” ([2 Chr 20:30](#), rsv; see [Est 3:6](#); [Jer 10:7](#); [Dn 9:1](#); [11:9](#)).

This same twofold use of *basileia* is found in the NT. In fact, *basileia* could be translated by the expression “kingly power” in [Luke 23:42](#) (niv mg) and by “kingship” in [John 18:36](#). When a nobleman went into a far country to get a “kingdom” ([Luke 19:12](#), nasb) he went to the governing authority to get an appointment as king. When Jesus said, “My kingship is not of this world” ([Jn 18:36](#), rsv), he did not mean to say that his rule has nothing to do with the world but rather that his kingship—his dominion—does not come from man but from God. Therefore, he rejects the use of worldly fighting to gain his ends.

This central meaning of *basileia* makes it easy to understand many sayings in the Gospels. In the Lord’s Prayer the petition “Thy kingdom come” ([Mt 6:10](#)) is a prayer for God to manifest his reign so that his will may be done on earth as it is in heaven. When we read that we are to “receive the kingdom of God like a child” ([Mk 10:15](#), rsv), we must open our hearts and lives to the rule of God.

Also in the NT are sayings about being *in* the kingdom or of *entering* the kingdom ([Mt 8:11](#); [Mk 9:47](#); [10:23–25](#); [Lk 13:28](#)). There is no philological or theological objection to understanding “the kingdom of God” first as the divine reign or rule and second as the sphere of blessing in which that reign is experienced.

### Old Testament Background

The expression “the kingdom of God” is not found in the OT, but the idea appears throughout the prophets. God is frequently spoken of as the King, both of Israel ([Ex 15:18](#); [Nm 23:21](#); [Dt 33:5](#); [Is 43:15](#)) and of all the earth ([2 Kgs 19:15](#); [Pss 29:10](#); [47:2](#); [93:1–2](#); [96:10](#); [97:1–9](#); [99:1–4](#); [145:11–13](#); [Is 6:5](#); [Jer 46:18](#)). Although God is not the earthly King of Israel, other references speak of a day when God shall become King and shall rule over his people ([Is 24:23](#); [33:22](#); [52:7](#); [Ob 1:21](#); [Zep 3:15](#); [Zec 14:9–11](#)).

This brief summary of God’s kingship provides the outline for the entire OT concept. While God is King over all the earth, he is in a special way King over his people, Israel. God’s rule is therefore something realized in Israel’s history. However, it is only partially and imperfectly realized. Israel again and again rebelled against the divine sovereignty. Furthermore, Israel was constantly plagued by wars with its pagan neighbors in which it was not always victorious. Again, there are evils in nature and the physical world that often bring suffering to God’s people. Therefore, the prophets look forward

to a day when God's rule will be fully experienced, not by Israel alone, but by all the world. The main emphasis of the prophets is on hope, the establishing of God's perfect rule in the world.

The prophets describe the final establishment of God's kingdom in terms of a theophany—a divine visitation ([Mi 1:3–4](#)). Zechariah foresees a “Day of the Lord” when all nations will be gathered in battle against Jerusalem, when the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations ([Zec 14:3, 5](#)). Israel will be visited by the Lord ([Is 29:6](#)) and delivered from its enemies ([35:4](#); [59:20](#)). God's coming will also mean judgment ([2:21](#); [26:21](#)). This final coming of God will mean the salvation of the Gentiles as well as of Israel ([Zec 2:10–11](#); cf. [Is 66:18–24](#)).

Behind this language is a distinct theology of “the God who comes.” It is a fact widely recognized in contemporary OT theology that the God of the OT is not a nature god, like the gods of other peoples, but a God of history—a God who visits his people in history to bless or to judge them. God visited Israel in Egypt to deliver them from bondage and to constitute them as his people. The rescue from Egypt was not merely an act of deliverance; it was an act through which God made himself known and through which Israel was to know and serve him.

Because God has visited his people again and again in their history, he must finally come to them in the future to judge wickedness and to establish his kingdom. Israel's hope is thus rooted in history, or rather in the God who works in history. God will finally break into history in a glorious theophany to establish his rule in all the earth. The source of the kingdom is not history itself but God.

While the prophets visualize the kingdom as coming from God, the kingdom is always on earth. The divine irruption into the natural order is not designed to accomplish its destruction but to make way for a new, perfect order arising out of the old, imperfect one. The prophets do not present a single consistent picture of the new order. Sometimes the new order is described very much in this-worldly terms. “The terraced vineyards on the hills of Israel will drip with sweet wine” ([Am 9:13](#), nlt). On the other hand, God will create new heavens and a new earth ([Is 65:17](#); [66:22](#)), where there will be untroubled joy, prosperity, peace, and righteousness. The final visitation of God will mean the redemption of the world, for a redeemed earth is the scene of the kingdom of God. The prophets look forward again and again to the deliverance of creation “from the bondage to decay.” The

description is often couched in simple physical terms. The wilderness will become fruitful ([32:15](#)); the desert will blossom ([35:2](#)); sorrow and sighing will flee away (v [10](#)). The burning sands will be cooled and the dry places become springs of water (v [7](#)); peace will return to the animal world so that all injury and destruction are done away with ([11:6](#)). All this results because the earth becomes full of the knowledge of God (v [9](#)).

Such language is not mere poetry but reflects a profound theology of creation. Humans as creatures were made to dwell on the earth, and the earth shares in human destiny. The main point is that creation as such is good and not a hindrance to true spirituality, as was often true in Greek thought. Redemption always includes redemption of the earth, which then becomes the blessed environment God intended it to be. Salvation does not mean deliverance from creaturehood, for this is not an evil thing but an essential and permanent element of true, human existence. Salvation does not mean escape from bodily creaturely existence, as in some Greek thought. On the contrary, ultimate redemption will mean the redemption of the whole person. The emergence of the doctrine of bodily resurrection is a reflection of this theology of creaturehood. The corollary of this is that creation in its entirety must share in the blessing of redemption.

A distinctive element in prophetic eschatology is the tension between history and eschatology. That is, as the prophets looked into the future, they saw an immediate historical judgment as well as a more remote eschatological visitation. For Amos, the Day of the Lord is both the immediate judgment of Israel by the Assyrians and a final eschatological salvation. Joel sees an imminent historical visitation of drought and locusts, but beyond this he sees the eschatological Day of the Lord. Zephaniah sees an imminent Day of the Lord in some undesignated historical visitation ([Zep 1:2–18](#)), but beyond it he sees the salvation of the Gentiles ([3:9](#)). The same God who acts in history to bless and judge his people will act at the end of history in an eschatological act of judgment and salvation. The prophets do not sharply distinguish between these two days, for it is one and the same God who is concerned to judge and save his people.

The eschatological hope of the prophets is always an ethical hope. That is to say, the prophets are not interested in the future for its own sake but for the impact of the future on the present. The prophetic predictions were given that, in light of future



judgment and salvation, Israel might be confronted in the present by the will of God. “Prepare to meet your God as he comes in judgment, you people of Israel” ([Am 4:12](#), nlt) might well be taken as the keynote of all the prophets.

### *In the New Testament*

#### **The Synoptic Gospels**

Jesus’ teachings about the kingdom of God embodied the same contrast between the present order and the future age as that of the prophets, and he expressed it in the idiom “this age and the age to come.” This fact is obscured in the kjv, which translates the word for “age” by “world.” These are, however, two different concepts. A rich man asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life ([Mk 10:17](#)). The context makes it clear that he was asking about eschatological life—the life of the resurrection ([Dn 12:2](#)). Jesus speaks of the difficulty of entering the kingdom of God. (The parallel passage in [Matthew 19:23–24](#) has both “kingdom of God” and “kingdom of heaven,” proving that they are interchangeable terms.) In their reaction the disciples ask, “Then who can be saved?” Jesus’ answer contrasts the lot of his disciples “in this time” with the “age to come” ([Mk 10:29–30](#)) when they would inherit eternal life. It is clear from this passage that in some sense the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, salvation, and eternal life all belong to the age to come. So far as this saying is concerned, God’s people will not experience eternal life until they do so in the new age.

Matthew alone records the expression “the close of the age.” This age will be terminated by the coming of the Son of Man ([Mt 24:3](#)) and by the judgment of humanity ([13:39–42](#)). Then the righteous will be separated from the wicked (v [49](#)). The same expression occurs in the promise of the risen Jesus assuring his disciples of his presence until the consummation of the age ([28:20](#)). It follows that if this age is to come to its consummation, it must be followed by another age—the age to come.

The eschatological kingdom will be inaugurated by an apocalyptic event—the glorious coming of the Son of Man. This is made clear by two of the parables about the kingdom of God. In the parable of the tares, “the Son of man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and throw them into the furnace of fire” ([Mt 13:41–42](#), rsv). The parable of the sheep and goats reflects the same eschatology.

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, he will sit on his glorious throne to judge the nations, separating the sheep from the goats. The righteous—the sheep—are to “inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”; and entrance into the kingdom is synonymous with entrance into life ([25:31–46](#), rsv).

The eschatological character of the kingdom of God is seen also in the other two parables of [Matthew 25](#). “The kingdom of heaven shall be compared to ten maidens who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom” (v [1](#), rsv). However, five of them were foolish and did not provide an adequate supply of oil for their lamps. Thus they were late for the wedding and were excluded from the wedding feast—a symbol of the eschatological kingdom—while those properly prepared entered the kingdom. In the same way the two faithful servants who had been “faithful over a little” were granted to “enter into the joy of your master” (vv [21, 23](#)), while the unfaithful servant was excluded from the kingdom and cast into outer darkness.

Jesus almost never showed any interest in descriptions of the eschatological kingdom, but it is clear that its coming was constantly in his thoughts. The pure in heart will see God ([Mt 5:8](#)). The harvest will take place and the grain will be gathered into the barn ([13:30, 39](#); [Mk 4:29](#)). Jesus frequently used the metaphor of a feast or table fellowship to describe life in the eschatological kingdom. He will drink wine again with his disciples in the kingdom of God. They will eat and drink at Jesus’ table in the kingdom ([Lk 22:30](#)). People will be gathered from all corners of the earth to sit at a table with the OT saints ([Mt 8:11–12](#); [Lk 13:29](#)). The consummation is likened to a wedding feast ([Mt 22:1–14](#)) and a banquet ([Lk 14:16–24](#)). All of these metaphors picture the restoration of communion between God and people, a union that had been broken by sin.

In most of the sayings cited to illustrate the future character of the kingdom, “kingdom” refers to the eschatological order—the eschaton, the age to come. However, when Jesus taught his disciples to pray “Thy kingdom come” ([Mt 6:10](#)), he was not referring to the new eschatological order; he was referring to the kingdom as God’s kingly rule, his reign. It is a prayer that God will effectively establish his sovereign rule in the world.

In his teaching about the kingdom of God as the apocalyptic consummation, Jesus does not differ essentially from the OT prophets. The most distinctive element in Jesus’ teaching—indeed, the

fact that characterizes his entire mission and message—is the fact that in some real sense of the word, the kingdom of God has come in history in an utterly unexpected way. This sets Jesus' teaching apart from all contemporary Jewish thought.

This is seen first of all in his repeated teaching that his mission is a fulfillment of the OT messianic prophets. Mark summarizes Jesus' message with the words "The Kingdom of God is near! Turn from your sins and believe this Good News!" ([Mk 1:15](#), nlt). This saying can have one of two meanings. It may refer to the imminent coming of the apocalyptic kingdom. Matthew summarizes the message of John the Baptist with nearly the same words: "Turn from your sins and turn to God, because the Kingdom of Heaven is near" ([Mt 3:2](#), nlt). The Baptist expounds what he means by the approach of the kingdom of God: "He is ready to separate the chaff from the grain with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, storing the grain in his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire" (v [12](#), nlt). John proclaimed an apocalyptic act; "unquenchable fire" can mean no strictly historical event but only an apocalyptic judgment. John expected Jesus to be the one in whom the cosmic event expected by the prophets would be carried out.

It is possible that this was also Jesus' meaning. However, another interpretation is possible that is better supported by the actual course of his mission: "The time is fulfilled." The messianic promises of the prophets were not only about to be fulfilled; they were actually in process of fulfillment in his mission. In Jesus, God was visiting his people. The hope of the prophets in some real sense was being realized.

The meaning of this can be seen in Luke's introduction of Jesus' ministry. Luke selects an event that occurred in Nazareth later in Jesus' ministry ([Lk 4:16-21](#)) and places it at the beginning of his Gospel in order to sound this note of fulfillment. Jesus read from Isaiah a promise that looked forward to the messianic salvation: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has appointed me to preach Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the downtrodden will be freed from their oppressors, and that the time of the Lord's favor has come" (vv [18-19](#), nlt). Then Jesus astonished his audience by the assertion "This Scripture has come true today before your very eyes!" (v [21](#), nlt).

Here was an amazing claim. John the Baptist had announced an apocalyptic visitation of God that would mean the fulfillment of the eschatological hope and the consummation of the messianic age. Jesus proclaimed that the messianic promise was actually being fulfilled in his person. This is no apocalyptic kingdom but a present salvation. In these words Jesus did not proclaim the imminence of the apocalyptic kingdom. Rather, he boldly announced that the kingdom of God had come. The presence of the kingdom was a happening, an event, the gracious action of God. This was no new theology or new idea or new promise; it was a new event in history.

The note of fulfillment is again sounded in Jesus' answer to the question about fasting. "Do wedding guests fast while celebrating with the groom? Of course not. They can't fast while they are with the groom" ([Mk 2:19](#), nlt). The marriage feast had become a metaphor in Judaism for the messianic consummation. In these words Jesus announced the presence of the messianic time of salvation. It would be a contradiction in terms for the disciples to fast when they were enjoying the blessings of the messianic age. The time of fulfillment had come.

A saying found in different contexts in Matthew and Luke touches this central note of the fulfillment in history of the OT hope: "Blessed are the eyes which see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it" ([Lk 10:23-24](#), rsv; cf. [Mt 13:16-17](#)). Both Matthew and Luke associate this saying with the kingdom of God, and both agree that the hope of former generations has become an object of experience. Many prophets and kings looked forward to something, but they looked in vain, for it did not come to them. What they longed for has now come, and this can be nothing less than the promised messianic salvation.

Fulfillment in history is again asserted in Jesus' answer to John's question about the one who is to come ([Mt 11:2-3](#)). "The deeds of the Christ" (Messiah) were not the deeds John had announced. Wicked rulers like Herod were not being judged in fire. Instead, Jesus was helping people, not bringing an apocalyptic kingdom. Jesus replied in words that echo the promise of the messianic salvation in [Isaiah 35:5-6](#): "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" ([Mt 11:4-5](#), rsv). In these words

Jesus claimed that the blessings of the messianic salvation are present. There was indeed reason for John's perplexity, for the fulfillment was not taking place along expected lines. The apocalyptic consummation did not appear to be on the horizon. The point of Jesus' answer was that fulfillment was taking place without the eschatological consummation. Therefore, Jesus pronounced a special blessing upon those who were not offended by the character of the messianic fulfillment (v 6). The fulfillment was indeed taking place, but not the apocalyptic consummation.

The most unambiguous statement of the presence of the kingdom is found in the words about the binding of Satan. One of Jesus' most characteristic acts was the exorcism of demons—deliverance from satanic power. The Pharisees admitted his power but attributed it to Satan. Jesus replied, "If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? . . . But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God is come upon you" ([Mt 12:26, 28](#), rsv). Here the verb has the clear meaning "to come, to arrive" (cf. [Rom 9:30](#); [2 Cor 10:14](#); [Phil 3:16](#)). Here is a clear affirmation that the kingdom of God has come among men.

In explanation Jesus said, "Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house" ([Mt 12:29](#), rsv). The strong man is Satan; this "present evil age" ([Gal 1:4](#)) is his "house"; his "goods" are demon-possessed men and women. Jesus has invaded the strong man's house to snatch away from him men and women whom he has in his power, and this is the work of the kingdom of God. The kingly reign of God has come into history in the person of Jesus before the apocalyptic consummation when Satan will be destroyed, to render Satan a preliminary defeat. Jesus has already "bound" Satan (i.e., curbed his power). This has been accomplished by the presence of the kingdom of God in the mission of Jesus.

A similar saying is found in [Luke 10:18](#). Jesus had sent a band of his disciples on a preaching mission. Like Jesus, they were to proclaim the nearness of the kingdom of God ([Lk 10:9](#)). They, too, were to exorcize demons. When they returned to Jesus to report their success, Jesus said, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (v 18, rsv). This again is metaphorical language that asserts that in the mission of Jesus' disciples, as well as in Jesus himself, Satan has fallen from his place of power.

Both "binding" and "falling" are metaphors that describe the same truth: the victory of the kingdom of God over Satan.

Here is the element that sets Jesus apart from the OT and from all of contemporary Judaism. The prophets conceived of the kingdom being established by a heavenly supernatural being ([Dn 7](#)) or ruled by a powerful Davidic messianic king ([Is 9, 11](#)). The fulfillment of the messianic hope is everywhere in the prophets an eschatological hope. The same is true of the Jewish writers who despaired of history and cast all hope into the future.

In contrast to all that had gone before him, Jesus proclaimed the kingdom of God as an event taking place in his own person and mission. God had again assumed the initiative; God was acting. No first-century Jew had any idea of the kingdom of God coming into history in the person of an ordinary man—a teacher who was meek and lowly.

The presence of the kingdom is further seen in the fact that the rule of God, present in Jesus, is a gift to be received. This is also true of the kingdom in its eschatological consummation, where the kingdom is freely inherited by the righteous ([Mt 25:34](#)). In answer to the young man's question about inheriting eternal life ([Mk 10:17](#)), Jesus spoke of entering the kingdom (vv 23–24) and receiving the gift of eternal life (v 30) as though they were synonymous. The kingdom is a gift that the Father is pleased to bestow upon the little flock of Jesus' disciples ([Lk 12:32](#)).

If God's eschatological rule brings to his people the blessings of that kingdom, and if God's kingdom is his rule invading history before the eschatological consummation, then we may expect God's rule in the present to bring a preliminary blessing to his people. This fact is reflected in numerous sayings. The kingdom is something to be sought here and now ([Mt 6:33](#)) and to be received as children receive a gift ([Mk 10:15](#); [Lk 18:16–17](#)). Although it is present in an unexpected form, the kingdom of God in Jesus' person is like a hidden treasure or a pearl of great price whose possession outranks all other goods ([Mt 13:44–46](#)). The gift of the kingdom is also seen in that the deaf hear, the blind see, lepers are cleansed, and the poor have good news preached to them ([11:5](#)).

### John's Gospel

In the Gospel of John the concept of eternal life takes the place of the kingdom of God in Jesus'

teaching. The kingdom of God is mentioned twice ([In 3:3, 5](#)), and it is placed in connection with eternal life. The kingdom of God is here the eschatological kingdom, and eternal life is the life of the kingdom. Thus, as the kingdom of God in the synoptic Gospels is both future and present, so eternal life is both the life of the age to come ([12:25](#)) and also a present blessing ([3:16](#), etc.).

### Acts

In Acts it seems the earliest disciples generally failed to understand Jesus' message about the kingdom of God as a present spiritual blessing. They gathered together to await the coming of the eschatological kingdom to Israel ([Acts 1:6](#)). Acts relates that the disciples continued to preach the kingdom of God, but usually it is an eschatological blessing ([8:12](#); [14:22](#); [19:8](#); [20:25](#); [28:23, 31](#)). However, the last two references make the kingdom of God synonymous with the gospel about Jesus Christ.

One important theme in Acts is linked to that of the kingdom of God. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter announces that God has seated Jesus at his right hand in fulfillment of [Psalm 110:1](#) ([Acts 2:33–35](#)). In the Psalms this is a prophecy of the enthronement of the Davidic king in Jerusalem. Peter asserts that this prophecy is now fulfilled in the heavenly reign of Jesus. Therefore, he has been made both Lord and Christ (Messiah). These are interchangeable terms, "Lord" meaning absolute sovereign, "Christ" meaning the messianic king.

### Paul's Writings

Paul carried further this theme of the heavenly rule of Christ, the anointed King. The kingdom is both an eschatological inheritance ([1 Cor 6:9](#); [15:50](#); [Gal 5:21](#); [Eph 5:5](#); [1 Thes 2:12](#); [2 Thes 1:5](#); [2 Tm 4:1, 18](#)) and a present blessing into which believers now enter ([Rom 14:17](#); [Col 1:13](#)). The key to this is the interchangeable character of lordship and messianic kingship. Jesus is now exalted as Lord over all ([Phil 2:11](#)), and even as his lordship is invisible, it will become manifest to all at his second coming. In the same way, he has been enthroned as messianic King by virtue of his resurrection and heavenly session, and he must reign as King until he has put all his enemies under his feet ([1 Cor 15:25](#); [Eph 1:22](#)). The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

### Revelation

The central message of the Revelation to John is the consummation of God's redemptive purpose, when the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ ([Rv 11:15](#)). Revelation pictures the plight of a persecuted church in a hostile world, but it assures the church that Christ has already won a victory over the powers of evil ([5:5](#)), by virtue of which he can finally destroy them ([19:11–20:14](#)). Again, the last enemy to be destroyed is death ([20:13–14](#)). Revelation closes with a highly symbolic picture of the kingdom of God (chs [21–22](#)) when God comes to dwell among his people, and "they shall see his face" ([22:4](#)). Thus the NT ends: divine order is restored to a disordered world. This is the kingdom of God.

See also Jesus Christ, Teachings of; King; Parable.

## Kings, Books of First and Second

Books continuing the history of the covenant people as recorded in Joshua, Judges, and the books of Samuel. The record in Kings begins with the events at the end of David's reign ([1 Kgs 1–2](#)). It continues through the reign of Solomon (chs [3–11](#)); the histories of the divided kingdoms ([1 Kgs 12–2 Kgs 17](#)); and the history of the surviving kingdom in the south, through its fall in 586 BC and the subsequent kindness shown Jehoiachin by Evil-merodach, king of Babylon, around 561 BC ([2 Kgs 18–25](#)).

### Preview

- Authorship and Date
- Sources
- Theology and Purpose
- Content

### Authorship and Date

Kings was originally regarded as one book in the Hebrew canon; the division into two books of approximately equal length appeared first in the Septuagint and finally entered the Hebrew Bible in the 15th century AD.

The book itself is anonymous, and information about its author can only be deduced by examining the concerns and perspectives of the work. The Babylonian Talmud (*Baba Bathra* 15a) attributes Kings to Jeremiah. Although this identification could have arisen from the tendency of later Jewish



tradition to assign biblical books to prophetic authors, the theory of origin in prophetic circles fits the evidence quite well. Substantial portions are given to the lives of the prophets; 16 of 47 chapters are devoted to the lives of Elijah and Elisha ([1 Kgs 17–2 Kgs 10](#)), and there is considerable interest in other prophetic figures such as Ahijah ([1 Kgs 11:29–39; 14:1–16](#)), an unnamed man of God ([13:1–10](#)), and Micaiah ([22:13–28](#)). Possible dependence on Isaiah ([2 Kgs 18–20](#); cf. [Is 36–39](#)) and Jeremiah ([2 Kgs 24–25](#); cf. [Jer 52](#)) also suggest prophetic origin. The author-compiler also shows intense concern with the efficacy of the prophetic word, frequently calling attention to the fulfillment of words spoken earlier by the prophets.

One might initially think that such a history would be unlikely for a prophet, but the evidence is to the contrary. The prophets were the guardians of the covenant relationship and are known to have produced accounts used as sources by other biblical historians. The following are among such sources: the acts of Samuel the seer, the acts of Nathan the prophet, the acts of Gad the seer ([1 Chr 29:29](#)); the acts of Nathan the prophet, the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, the visions of Iddo the seer ([2 Chr 9:29](#)); the chronicles of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer ([12:15](#)); the annotations of the prophet Iddo ([13:22](#)); and the acts of Uzziah by Isaiah the prophet ([26:22](#)). Add to this the fact that Kings is positioned in the Hebrew canon in the Former Prophets (Joshua to 2 Kings), and a consistent picture of prophetic origin emerges.

The date of the final part of the book must be after the last events recorded. Evil-merodach's kindness toward Jehoiachin (c. 561 BC) is the terminus of the book and therefore fixes the earliest date. Since the work shows no knowledge of the restoration period, a date before 539 BC is probable. The author's selection of his data to answer the burning theological questions of the exilic community also suggests a date between 561 and 539 BC.

### Sources

The compiler of Kings specifically names three of the sources that he used in his work, and biblical scholars have suggested the presence of a number of other sources that may have been cited. Of course, the sources not mentioned specifically by the compiler are only the speculations of those who have studied his work and can have only varying degrees of probability. The sources both specified and alleged are as follows.

### The Book of the Acts of Solomon

As [1 Kings 11:41](#) says, "The rest of the events in Solomon's reign, including his wisdom, are recorded in *The Book of the Acts of Solomon*" (nlt). Presumably additional materials of a biographical nature were included, specifically accounts similar to the judgment between the two mothers ([3:16–28](#)) or the visit of the queen of Sheba ([10:1–10](#)). There has been debate as to whether these materials were official court records or nonofficial documents. Some scholars have attempted to isolate further materials within this section by identifying descriptions of the buildings as from temple archives (chs [6–7](#)) and lists of administrators as from administrative documents (chs [4–5](#)), but this must remain speculative.

### The Book of the History of the Kings of Israel

This source is mentioned 17 times in Kings, usually in the closing formulas at the end of the account of the reign of a northern king. Some idea of the nature of these chronicles can be derived from looking at the type of information to which the compiler refers his readers (see [1 Kgs 14:19; 16:27; 22:39; 2 Kgs 13:12; 14:28](#)). These passages suggest that this source was the official annals covering the reigns of the kings.

### The Book of the History of the Kings of Judah

This source is mentioned in 15 passages, and as with the kings of Israel, is found in the concluding formulas to the accounts of the reigns. This source was to be consulted for additional details on individuals' reigns (for example, see [1 Kgs 15:23; 22:45; 2 Kgs 20:20; 21:17](#)). These sources for the histories of the two kingdoms were probably similar to the annals known from the surrounding cultures, particularly from the reigns of Assyrian kings. They were likely official court histories kept in Samaria and Jerusalem.

In addition to these explicitly mentioned sources, scholars have suggested the compiler drew on other sources that he does not name.

### Davidic Court History

[Second Samuel 9–20](#) is often identified as a unit of material in the composition of the books of Samuel; it is variously called "the court history" or "the succession narrative." Because of similar vocabulary and outlook, [1 Kings 1–2](#) are often associated with this material from Samuel. The statement of [1 Kings 2:46](#), "so the kingdom was

now firmly in Solomon's grip," is taken to be the end of this record.

### Sources for the House of Ahab

The reigns of individual kings are ordinarily given only brief notices; for example, the father of Ahab, Omri, is given eight verses, even though when judged by political and economic significance, he was among the greatest of the northern kings ([1 Kgs 16:21-28](#)). However, beginning with the reign of Ahab, the record becomes quite expansive, and extensive coverage is given the dynasty of Ahab through the coup by Jehu ([1 Kgs 16—2 Kgs 12](#)). The use of the stereotyped formulas for the reigns is suspended in this material, and the existence of other literature used by the compiler is probable. This material is commonly subdivided into further sources for the lives of Elijah and Elisha and the reign of Ahab.

The Elijah section covers material in the following chapters: [1 Kings 17-19](#), including the feeding by the ravens, the incidents with the widow of Zarephath, the drought, the fire on Carmel, and the revelation of God at Sinai; [1 Kings 21](#), the affair of Naboth's vineyard; and [2 Kings 1](#), the death of Ahaziah's messengers. The reign of Ahab, which gets so much attention in Kings, is primarily a backdrop for the accounts concerning Elijah.

The Elisha material found in [2 Kings 2-13](#) may have had an independent literary development from that of the Elijah accounts. It includes the following: chapter [2](#) (Elisha's succession to the prophetic office, the purification of a spring, the death of mocking children); chapter [3](#) (on the campaign against Moab); chapter [4](#) (the widow's oil, the Shunammite woman); chapter [5](#) (Naaman's leprosy); chapter [6](#) (the Aramean attempt to capture Elisha); chapter [7](#) (the famine in Samaria); chapter [8](#) (the Shunammite's property, the coup of Hazael); chapter [9](#) (the anointing of Jehu); and chapter [13](#) (the death of Elisha). No other portion of the OT takes the sheer delight in the miraculous that is seen in the Elisha narratives.

In [1 Kings 16](#) to [2 Kings 13](#) there are additional incidents not directly related to the biographies of Elijah and Elisha; accounts such as the military campaigns of [1 Kings 20:1-34](#) and further details of Jehu's coup ([2 Kgs 9:11-10:36](#)) are often attributed to a third source containing accounts of the dynasty of Ahab and his successors. In all three of these possible sources the orientation is toward affairs in the northern kingdom.

### Isaiah Source

The account of the reign of Hezekiah contains a section ([2 Kgs 18:13-20:19](#)) that is nearly a verbatim citation of material also found in Isaiah ([Is 36:1-39:8](#)). The section records the invasion of Sennacherib, the mission of the Rabshakeh, Hezekiah's prayer, Isaiah's prophecy, Hezekiah's illness, the regression of the sun, and the envoys from Merodach-baladan. The material must be regarded as based on the book of Isaiah or some other source used in both Isaiah and Kings.

### A Prophetic Source

Because Kings shows great interest in the prophets and their ministries, various scholars have suggested that yet another source was used by the compiler; this would be an independent literary unit containing accounts of the prophets. This source would have contained the records for the material on Ahijah ([1 Kgs 11:29-39](#); [14:1-16](#)), unnamed prophets ([ch 12](#); [20:35-43](#)), Micah ([22:13-28](#)), and other references.

Apart from the sources explicitly mentioned and inferences about their character, the remainder of the sources suggested have only varying degrees of probability. Considerable scholarly effort has gone into identifying and characterizing such sources, but it remains speculative. When considering the sources the compiler may have used, one important caution must be kept in mind. Even if such sources did exist, one cannot have confidence in a reconstruction of the compositional history. Which sources had already been integrated into a larger composition before they were used by the compiler of Kings? We cannot be certain that the life situation out of which these other sources grew has been correctly identified, nor can we know that even the compiler himself was aware of the past history of his sources. Biblical scholarship has expended considerable energy in trying to delineate the past history of the book of Kings, but it has often been at the neglect of the unity of perspective that is the product of the final compiler(s) in whose hands the book received its canonical form.

What is important to understanding the book is not the perspective of its various sources (of which the compiler himself may have been unaware), but the perspective of the book as a whole on the history of the kingdoms. It is the outline that the compiler has imposed on the sources that establishes the teaching of the book; his sources are used in accord with his own purposes, a fact that makes the



purposes for which the sources had been prepared largely irrelevant to the teaching of the book in its present form. Exploring possible sources, worthwhile in itself, must not eclipse the message of the book as a whole. This is not to imply that the books of Kings are simply a compilation of unaltered sources. The writer(s) undoubtedly exercised a measure of selectivity and literary skill in composing the historical narrative.

One compositional technique of the compiler is quite prominent in the histories of the divided kingdoms: this is the use of formulaic introductions and conclusions to the various reigns. The formulas for both kingdoms are quite similar, differing only in minor details. For the kings of Judah, the full introductory formula is as follows: (1) year of accession synchronized with the regnal year of the northern king; (2) age of the king at his accession; (3) length of his reign; (4) name of his mother; (5) judgment on the character of the reign. The account of a Judean king's reign is concluded as follows: (1) a reference to the chronicles of the kings of Judah for further information; (2) a statement regarding the death of the king, including the place of burial; (3) successor: "And his son reigned in his stead" (rsv). The full formula for a Judean king can be seen, for example, in the reign of Rehoboam ([1 Kgs 14:21-22, 29-31](#)).

The formulas differ slightly for the kings of Israel; the introduction is as follows: (1) year of succession synchronized with the regnal year of the southern king; (2) length of his reign; (3) location of the royal residence; (4) condemnation for idolatry; (5) name of the king's father. The account of an Israelite king's reign ends as follows: (1) a reference to the chronicles of the kings of Israel for further information; (2) a statement regarding his death; (3) a statement of the succession of his son, unless a usurper follows. The full formula for an Israelite king can be seen, for example, in the reign of Baasha ([1 Kgs 15:33-34; 16:5-6](#)).

There is some variation in the use of these patterns, but on the whole, they are consistently followed and provide the basic framework for the history of the divided kingdom. The synchronisms of the reigns provide data for constructing the chronology of the period. The variations in the formulas may reflect the characteristics of the sources the compiler was using or may reflect his own interests. The name of the mother of a Judean king is recorded, but not of an Israelite king, perhaps reflecting concern with a more exact and

fuller record of the Davidic succession. The royal residence is presumed to be Jerusalem for the southern kings (though it may be mentioned) but is recorded for the northern kings since it moved several times, from Shechem to Penuel to Tirzah to Samaria. The mention of the king's father for a northern ruler also reflects the frequent change in dynasties there, as opposed to the dynastic stability of Judah, which is reinforced by mentioning the burial of almost all its kings in the city of David.

### *Theology and Purpose*

The books of Kings record the history of the covenant people from the end of the reign of David (961 BC) through the fall of the southern kingdom (586 BC). Yet it is not history written in accord with modern expectations for history textbooks. Rather than concentrating on economic, political, and military themes as they shaped the history of the period, the compiler of Kings is motivated by theological concerns.

Evaluation of the theology and purpose of the books of Kings is made easier by the fact that there is a parallel history for much of Kings found in the books of Chronicles. By comparing the two accounts, especially where the later Chronicler adds or deletes material found in Kings, the interests of both histories are thrown into clearer relief.

The books of Kings were composed during the exile, likely between 560 and 539 BC. Jerusalem had been turned into rubble, and there was no longer a throne of David. Those two pillars of the popular theology—the inviolability of the temple and the throne of David ([Jer 7:4; 13:13-14; 22:1-9](#); see [1 Kgs 8:16, 29](#))—had tumbled. If Israel's faith was to survive, the burning questions that had to be answered were "How did it all happen? Can't God keep his promises to David and to Zion? Have the promises failed?" The writer of Kings aims to deal with the bewilderment of the chosen people in response to the disasters of 722 BC (fall of Samaria) and 586 BC (fall of Jerusalem). Kings, like the book of Job, is a theodicy, a justification of the ways of God to men.

In order to answer the question "How did it happen?" the compiler adopts the procedure of recounting the history of the covenant people in light of standards propounded in the Law. For this reason Kings could be called Pentateuchal history, or even more pointedly, Deuteronomic history, for standards propounded only in the book of Deuteronomy in the Pentateuch are used by the

compiler to measure the kingdoms. Among the prominent themes selected from Deuteronomy and applied to the kingdoms are the centralization of worship, the institution of the monarchy, the efficacy of the prophetic word, and the outworking of the covenant curses on disobedience.

### Centralization of Worship

The primary concern of the writer is the purity of the worship of the Lord. His major criterion for measuring this purity is the attitude of the kings toward centralization of worship in the Jerusalem temple as opposed to the worship of the Lord elsewhere and the continuation of Canaanite cults mingled with Yahwism at the high places. Centralization of worship at the central shrine is called for in [Deuteronomy 12](#). Perhaps “centralization of worship” is a misnomer, for worship was always centered around the tabernacle in the periods prior to the temple; the change that is envisaged in Deuteronomy is not the centralizing of worship but rather the fact that the shrine would no longer be mobile but stationary. For the kings of the northern kingdom, this criterion becomes virtually a stereotyped formula that “he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord and walked in the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who sinned and made all Israel sin along with him” (see [1 Kgs 14:16](#); [15:30](#); [16:31](#); [2 Kgs 3:3](#); [10:31](#); [13:2, 11](#); [14:24](#); [15:9, 18, 24, 28](#); [17:22](#)). The compiler of Kings sees the rival altars with the golden calves at Dan and Bethel as the great sin of which the northern kings never repented ([1 Kgs 12:25–13:34](#)). Rejecting the primacy of Jerusalem, these altars became the rod with which to measure the northern kings. All the kings of Israel are condemned by this standard (except for Shallum, who reigned but a month, and Hoshea, the last of the northern kings)—even Zimri, the murderer of Elah, who ruled only one week before committing suicide in the flames of his own palace ([16:9–20](#)). For the kings of Judah, a different standard is used: what their attitude was to the high places where heterodox worship was allowed to flourish in the environs of Jerusalem. Only Hezekiah and Josiah receive the compiler’s unqualified endorsement for following the ways of David ([2 Kgs 18:3](#); [22:2](#)). Six others are commended for their zeal in suppressing idolatry, though they did not remove the high places (Asa, [1 Kgs 15:9–15](#); Jehoshaphat, [22:43](#); Jehoash, [2 Kgs 12:2–3](#); Amaziah, [14:3–4](#); Azariah, [15:3–4](#); Jotham, [15:34–35](#)). The remainder of the Judean kings are condemned for their participation in the high places and their

desecration of the temple itself. This one theme is the preeminent motif in the book.

### History of the Monarchy

A second prominent interest for the compiler was to trace the history of the monarchy. [Deuteronomy 17:14–20](#) provides for the day when Israel would ask for a king and charges that king with the basic religious responsibility for the people. This provision for a king, again a feature found only in Deuteronomy, becomes the basis for the compiler’s intense interest in the history of the monarchy, and particularly the religious fidelity of the kings. David becomes the model of the ideal king, the one by whom the others are measured, the one whose sons “continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel” ([17:20](#); see also [1 Kgs 15:11](#); [2 Kgs 18:3](#); [22:2](#) for following in the ways of David, and [1 Kgs 14:8](#); [15:3–5](#); [2 Kgs 14:3](#); [16:2](#) for the reverse). The compiler wanted to show that God had been faithful to David even though David’s sons were not faithful. While both kingdoms had about the same number of kings, the northern kingdom is marked by repeated dynastic changes and regicide through its 200 years, while the dynasty of David is maintained as a lamp in the south through 350 years ([1 Kgs 11:13, 32, 36](#); [15:4–5](#); [2 Kgs 8:19](#); [19:34](#); [20:6](#)). It is the disaster that had befallen the house of David, and the consequent doubts about the promises of God, that prompted the compiler to write.

### Efficacy of the Prophetic Word

Another reason why Kings can be called Deuteronomic history is its concern with the efficacy of the prophetic word. There are three passages in the Pentateuch that deal with the institution of the prophetic order: [Numbers 12:1–8](#); [Deuteronomy 13:1–5](#); and [Deuteronomy 18:14–22](#). It is only in [Deuteronomy 18](#) that the test of a true prophet is given: that what he has spoken comes about, that his words are fulfilled. Notice the number of instances where the writer calls attention to the fulfillment of the words of the prophets: [2 Samuel 7:13](#) in [1 Kings 8:20](#); [1 Kings 11:29–36](#) in [12:15](#); [1 Kings 13:1–3](#) in [2 Kings 23:16–18](#); [1 Kings 14:6–12](#) in [14:17–18](#) and [15:29](#); [1 Kings 16:1–4](#) in [16:7, 11–12](#); [Joshua 6:26](#) in [1 Kings 16:34](#); [1 Kings 22:17](#) in [22:35–38](#); [1 Kings 21:21–29](#) in [2 Kings 9:7–10, 30–37](#) and [10:10–11, 30](#); [2 Kings 1:6](#) in [1:17](#); [2 Kings 21:10–15](#) in [24:2](#); [2 Kings 22:15–20](#) in [23:30](#). The writer is concerned to show that the words of the prophets were efficacious, powerful words. His concern with the

prophetic order is also seen in the material devoted to Elijah and Elisha and to other prophetic figures.

### Fulfillment of the Curses

Another aspect of the compiler's interest in Deuteronomy is seen in his concern to trace the fulfillment of the covenant curses on disobedience. God's covenant with Israel would issue in curses or blessings depending on the obedience of the people; the compiler of Kings sees the curses inflicted on the two kingdoms because of their failure to meet the demands of the covenant. He takes care to show that most of the curses of [Deuteronomy 28:15-68](#) had some historical realization in the life of the people. Moses had warned that disobedience would "bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down" ([Dt 28:49](#), nasb), and the Assyrians came to Samaria and the Babylonians to Jerusalem ([28:52](#)). The siege of Samaria lasted from 724 to 722 BC, and the siege of Jerusalem from 588 to 586 BC. The dire conditions of the siege would drive the people to devouring their own children; women would feed on their afterbirths. It happened to Israel in the siege of Ben-hadad ([2 Kgs 6:24-30](#)). Just as the Lord had delighted to prosper and multiply his people, so he would not refrain from destroying them and scattering them among the peoples of the earth ([Dt 28:63-67](#)).

In these and other ways the writer of Kings set out to write the history of Israel and Judah to solve a theological dilemma. How was one to reconcile the exile with God's promises to the nation and David? His answer is twofold: (1) the problem was not with God but with the people's disobedience—God remains just; (2) the end of the state does not equal the end of the people or the house of David. Here the ending of the book is instructive: Evil-merodach releases Jehoiachin from prison, elevates him above the other kings, and provides his rations ([2 Kgs 25:27-30](#)). Even during the exile, though cut down to almost nothing, the house of David still enjoys the favor and blessing of God. God has not abandoned his promises; the people should keep hope.

Other themes in Kings also show the theological motivations underlying the compiler's selection and arrangement of the data, particularly his use of Deuteronomy as a framework for examining the history of the people. Compare the laws governing the observance of Passover in [Exodus 12:1-20](#) and [Deuteronomy 16:1-8](#): whereas the Passover is centered in the family in Exodus, it is celebrated at

the sanctuary in Deuteronomy. The writer of Kings is careful to show that the Passover during the reign of Josiah was celebrated in accordance with the requirements of Deuteronomy ([2 Kgs 23:21-23](#)). A passage in Deuteronomy is explicitly cited with reference to Amaziah's keeping the law ([Dt 24:16](#) in [2 Kgs 14:6](#)).

### Contrast with Chronicles

The interests of Kings are further highlighted when compared with the parallel accounts in Chronicles. While the writer of Kings worked in the aftermath of the destruction of Jerusalem and had to answer the "how?" and "why?" questions, the Chronicler is part of the restoration community. Here the burning theological questions were not "how?" and "why?" but rather "What continuity do we have with David? Is God still interested in us?" The need is not to account for the exile but rather to relate the postexilic and the preexilic. The building of the second temple and the ordering of worship there show up in increased detail in Chronicles in any matter pertaining to the former temple. Chronicles is a history of Judah and of the Davidic line, reflecting the fact that it alone survives after the exile. Interesting, too, are the things omitted from the account by the Chronicler. Since he is not building a case for an indictment, as was done in Samuel and Kings, he is free to omit references to David's sin with Bathsheba ([2 Sm 11](#)) or to Solomon's difficulties in gaining the throne ([1 Kgs 1-2](#)). Since in his day the northern kingdom had not survived, the Chronicler did not go into detail about the sins of Jeroboam (chs [13-14](#)). Chronicles is interested more in the affairs of the temple and does not show the marked interest in prophetic matters found in Kings, so that the lives of Elijah and Elisha are omitted ([1 Kgs 16-2 Kgs 10](#)). Nor does the Chronicler recite the sins that led to the demise of the northern kingdom ([2 Kgs 17:1-18:12](#)). In all these examples one can see the interplay of the historical moment and theological concerns of the people and the compilers. Each compiler has selected and arranged the data in accordance with the concerns and needs of the community in which he was a member; comparing the two accounts throws the interests of each into sharp relief.

### Content

The books of Kings fall into three parts: (1) the reign of Solomon ([1 Kgs 1-11](#)); (2) the history of the divided kingdom ([1 Kgs 12-2 Kgs 17](#)); (3) the

history of the surviving kingdom in Judah ([2 Kgs 18-25](#)).

### **The Reign of Solomon ([1 Kgs 1-11](#))**

The record begins with an account of the court intrigue surrounding Solomon's accession to the throne, set against the backdrop of the abortive coup by Adonijah (ch [1](#)). The dying David charges Solomon to obey the commandments of God ([2:1-4](#)) and also to take vengeance on his enemies (vv [5-9](#)). After David's death Solomon orders the deaths of Adonijah, Joab, and Shimei, and the banishment of Abiathar, the priest who had supported Adonijah in his bid for the throne (vv [13-46](#)). Enemies eliminated, the kingdom was firmly established by Solomon (v [46](#)).

The remainder of Solomon's reign is divided into two parts: Solomon the good, who follows in the ways of his father, David (chs [3-10](#)); and Solomon the bad, whose heart is led astray (ch [11](#)). While sacrificing at Gibeon, Solomon asks God to give him the gift of wisdom to rule—wisdom promptly demonstrated in the quarrel of two prostitutes about a child (ch [3](#)). An account is given of the administrative organization of the kingdom and the incomparable wisdom of Solomon (ch [4](#)). The compiler of Kings gives extensive coverage to the preparations (ch [5](#)), building (chs [6-7](#)), and dedication (ch [8](#)) of the temple. God appeared to Solomon a second time, reminding him to keep his commandments as David had done ([9:1-9](#)). Details are given of the king's building and commercial activities (vv [10-27](#)). The account of the visit by the queen of Sheba is followed with elaboration of Solomon's splendor (ch [10](#)). But Solomon did not keep God's commands; seduced to pagan worship by his foreign wives, he was not fully devoted to the Lord as David had been ([11:4](#)), and God determined to take away the northern tribes from the rule of his son (vv [11-13](#)). As punishment from the hand of God, Solomon faced rebellion among conquered peoples (vv [14-25](#)) and within Israel in the person of Jeroboam (vv [26-40](#)).

### **History of the Divided Kingdom ([1 Kgs 12-2 Kgs 17](#))**

The united monarchy dissolved after the death of Solomon. The northern kingdom (Israel) would exist for about two centuries, would be ruled by 20 kings from nine different dynasties, and would show a history of internal weakness riddled with regicide and usurpation. In contrast, the southern kingdom would last for three and a half centuries

and would be ruled by 19 kings of Davidic descent (apart from a short period under the dynastic interloper Athaliah).

There had been a long history of independent action and even warfare between the northern and southern tribes prior to David and Solomon, so it is no surprise that the division would take place along the lines that it did. The immediate cause, however, was the unwise severity with which Rehoboam replied to the representatives of the northern tribes while negotiating for the kingship. Jeroboam, the popular hero of the earlier insurrection against Solomon, became king in the north. He immediately erected the rival sanctuaries at Dan and Bethel ([1 Kgs 12](#)); these rival altars became the measure by which the kings of Israel were condemned for following in the sins of Jeroboam.

For two generations there would be warfare between Israel and Judah over the border areas in Benjamin claimed by both sides. Fifty years of sporadic fighting on their mutual frontier, interlaced with invasions from the Arameans in the north or the Egyptians in the south, would consume the reigns of Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, and Zimri in Israel and of Rehoboam, Abijah, and Asa in Judah ([1 Kgs 13:1-16:20](#)).

The accession of Omri in Israel introduced a ruling house that would last for a total of four generations and end the dynastic instability of the northern kingdom. Though Kings gives Omri a scant eight verses ([1 Kgs 16:21-28](#)), he was among the greatest of the northern kings, forging alliances with the Phoenicians and Judah; for over a century, the Assyrians would call Israel "the house of Omri."

The reigns of Omri's successors, Ahab, Ahaziah, and Jehoram, are treated at disproportionate length, taking almost a third of the total book, 16 of 47 chapters ([1 Kgs 17-2 Kgs 10](#)). This is due to the fact that the compiler of Kings incorporated extensive coverage of the lives of Elijah and Elisha, weaving a contrast between good and evil by paralleling the dynasty of Omri with these prophets. Ahab and Jezebel were used as foils for the account of Elijah, so that Ahab became a paradigm of the evil king (e.g., [2 Kgs 21:3](#)).

Because of this preoccupation with the dynasty of Omri and the lives of Elijah and Elisha, the equivalent period in Judah is not given as extensive coverage. During this period, the northern kingdom appears to have exercised some hegemony over Judah, as attested by the marriage of an Omride (Athaliah, [2 Kgs 8:18, 26](#)) to Jehoram



of Judah and the subservient role of Jehoshaphat to Ahab at the battle of Ramoth-gilead ([1 Kgs 22](#)). Judah's fortunes declined in this period when Edom revolted against Jehoram ([2 Kgs 8:20-22](#)), costing Judah control over the port at Ezion-geber and consequent economic losses.

In 842 BC Jehu, after being anointed king by a prophet ([2 Kgs 9:1-13](#)), led a coup ending the house of Omri and also killing Ahaziah of Judah (vv [14-29](#)). Jehu's purge also brought the death of Jezebel, Ahab's family, members of the family of Ahaziah, and the ministers of Baal ([9:30-10:36](#)). The consequences were severe politically: the murder of the Phoenician princess Jezebel and the king of Judah cost Israel its allies to the north and south.

Jehu's dynasty had the longest succession of any in Israel, including Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II, and Zechariah, a period spanning 90 years. Jehu's murder of Ahaziah of Judah set the stage for the one threat to the continuity of the Davidic dynasty. Queen Athaliah, herself an Omride, seized the throne and attempted a purge of Davidic pretenders. She ruled for six years, until the faithful priest Jehoiada staged a counter coup to place the child Joash on the throne of David (ch [11](#)).

Israel endured a half century of weakness as a result of Jehu's coup, during which the Arameans had a free hand, reducing the forces of Jehu's son Jehoahaz to a small army and bodyguard ([2 Kgs 13:1-7](#)).

The reemergence of Assyria early in the ninth century BC gave relief to Israel and Judah. Assyrian armies conquered the Arameans; with that threat removed, Israel and Judah enjoyed a dramatic resurgence. Jehoash of Israel, grandson of Jehu, reconquered cities lost to the Arameans ([2 Kgs 13:25](#)); Elisha died during his reign (v [20](#)). In the south Amaziah reconquered the Edomites ([14:7](#)). Amaziah and Jehoash renewed the warfare between the kingdoms, with the north again victorious (vv [8-14](#)).

Under Jeroboam II, Israel enjoyed a period of prosperity when the borders of the kingdom reached the same extent as they had under Solomon ([2 Kgs 14:23-28](#)). Uzziah (Azariah), his contemporary in Judah, also fortified Jerusalem and undertook a program of offensive operations extending Judah's sway to the south ([14:21-22; 15:1-7](#)).

Yet this resurgence was but a brilliant sunset in the history of the two kingdoms. After the death of

Jeroboam II, the history is one of successive disasters, culminating in the fall of Israel and the subjugation of Judah to the might of Assyria. The next 30 years in Israel would see four dynasties, three represented by only one king, and repeated regicides as the northern kingdom hastened to its demise. A period of civil war and anarchy would see five kings in just over ten years ([2 Kgs 15](#)). Heavy tribute was paid to Tiglath-pileser III in both the north and south ([15:19-20; 16:7-10](#)). Israel and the Arameans forged a coalition to throw back the Assyrians and sought to press Ahaz of Judah into the fight; Ahaz appealed to Tiglath-pileser III for help. The coalition was destroyed, and Israel and Judah became vassals. Hoshea defected as soon as he felt safe, looking to Egypt for help, but it was suicide for the northern kingdom. Shalmaneser V retaliated, and the political history of the state of Israel came to an end ([17:1-23](#)). The area was resettled with other displaced populations (vv [24-41](#)).

Israel had faced the Arameans and survived, only to fall to Assyria. And now, similarly, Judah would outlast Assyria, only to fall to Babylon.

### History of the Surviving Kingdom of Judah ([2 Kgs 18-25](#))

Ahaz's appeal for Assyrian aid cost him his liberty, and Judah became a vassal of the Assyrian Empire. Illegitimate worship flourished under his rule ([2 Kgs 16:1-19](#)). Ahaz was succeeded by the first of the outstanding reform kings of Judah: Hezekiah. Much of the account of his reign is given to his rebellion against Sennacherib of Assyria: the rebellion, the Assyrian envoys and threats, Isaiah's assurances of deliverance, and the destruction of the Assyrian armies ([18:9-19:37](#)). Hezekiah's illness was averted after a sign and oracle from Isaiah ([20:1-11](#)). As part of what appears to be negotiations toward an anti-Assyrian alliance, Hezekiah also entertained envoys from Babylon, a decision that the prophet announced would be costly (vv [12-21](#)).

Hezekiah was followed by Manasseh, who ruled longer than any other king of Judah (a total of 55 years). His reign was marked by great apostasy—apostasy so severe that the compiler of Kings regarded his reign as sufficient reason for the exile that was unavoidable ([2 Kgs 21:1-18](#); cf. [23:26; 24:3-4; Jer 15:1-4](#)). Manasseh was followed by his son Amon, a carbon copy of his father, who ruled only two years before he was deposed by the people ([2 Kings 21:19-26](#)).

The second great reform king of Judah, Josiah, followed. In his reign the Book of the Law was found while the temple was being refurbished; he led the people in a renewal of the covenant and suppressed illegitimate worship ([2 Kgs 22:1-23:14](#)). The Assyrian Empire was in rapid decline, so Josiah extended his borders to the north, destroying the altar at Bethel and the high places throughout Samaria ([23:15-20](#)). A great Passover celebration was convened in Jerusalem, and further measures were taken to rectify worship (vv [21-25](#)). Josiah tried to block Pharaoh Neco's foray to assist Assyria, and he lost his life at Megiddo (vv [26-30](#)).

Josiah was the only king of Judah to have three of his sons succeed him. At his death the people put Jehoahaz on the throne, but Neco removed him three months later and took him to Egypt in chains ([2 Kgs 23:31-33](#)), replacing him with another son of Josiah, Eliakim, whose name was changed to Jehoiakim (vv [34-37](#)). During his reign, Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah, and Jehoiakim became his vassal. Late in his life Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. Jehoiakim died, leaving his son Jehoiachin to face retaliation from Babylon ([24:1-10](#)). Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem; when the city fell, Jehoiachin, the queen mother, the army, and the leaders of the land were carried away captive. Nebuchadnezzar put Mattaniah (uncle of Jehoiachin and third son of Josiah) on the throne, changing his name to Zedekiah (vv [11-17](#)). Nine years later Zedekiah, too, would rebel against Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city for two years and, when it fell, utterly destroyed it. Zedekiah's sons were killed before his eyes, and then his own eyes were put out, and he was taken to Babylon ([24:18-25:21](#)). Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah to rule as governor from nearby Mizpah; he was assassinated, and the conspirators fled to Egypt ([25:22-26](#)).

The book concludes by showing that God had not forgotten his promise to David, mentioning that in captivity Jehoiachin enjoyed favor from the hand of Evil-merodach, successor of Nebuchadnezzar ([2 Kgs 25:27-30](#)).

*See also* Chronicles, Books of First and Second.

## Kinnereth

Kinnereth is way of spelling Chinnereth, which is another name for the Sea of Galilee. The name can also describe the land around the lake.

*See* Chinnereth, Chinneroth.

## Kinsman

A kinsman is a close relative in the same family. In ancient Israel, the tribe was the largest social and political group. The family was the smallest social unit within the tribe. The relationship between families was carefully organized by rules about who could not marry each other ([Leviticus 18](#)).

People who were related, even distantly, received special rights and responsibilities for all family members. It was the right of the kinsman to receive the property of a family member who died without children ([Numbers 27:11](#)). The kinsman was also required to buy back property of a relative who had fallen into debt ([Leviticus 25:25-28](#)). This was especially important if the relative had become enslaved to someone who was not an Israelite (verses [47-49](#)). When a kinsman (*karov*) performed this role of buying back property or freeing relatives, he became known as a kinsman-redeemer (*go'el*).

In the book of Ruth, Boaz is the kinsman-redeemer. "The man is a close relative. He is one of our kinsman-redeemers" ([Ruth 2:20](#)). On legal grounds, Boaz had a right to reclaim the property of Naomi. But the law required him to wait for his turn. This was because he was not the *nearest* relative ([4:4](#)). The nearest relative refused to help (verse [6](#)). So Boaz fulfilled his duty as kinsman.

## Kios

Another spelling of Chios, an island in the Aegean Sea.

*See* Chios.

## Kir

1. Mesopotamian city from which the Syrians migrated to Damascus and back to which they were later exiled by the Assyrians ([Am 1:5](#); [9:7](#)). Escape from Kir to Aram paralleled the exodus of the



Israelites. It must have been a terribly bitter experience to have been deported (by Tiglath-pileser) back to Kir ([2 Kgs 16:9](#)). Whether the city actually existed or not is debatable. It could have become a metaphor for enslavement and exile.

2. Fortress usually identified with the ancient capital of Moab. Soldiers from Kir were associated with those from Elam ([Is 22:6](#)). Likewise, Kir was paralleled with Ar in Isaiah's lament over Moab ([Is 15:1](#)). Kir of Moab, therefore, is probably the same as Kir-hareseth ([2 Kgs 3:25](#); [Is 16:7](#)), located at Kerak, 11 miles (17.7 kilometers) east of the southern end of the Dead Sea.

## Kir-Hareseth

A fortified city often identified with the ancient capital of Moab.

*See Kir #2.*

## Kiriath-Arba

An ancient name of Hebron. It was near the cave of Machpelah, the burial place of the patriarchs ([Genesis 23:2](#); [Joshua 14:15](#); [Judges 1:10](#)).

*See Hebron (Place) #1.*

## Kiriath-Arim

Alternate name for Kiriath-jearim in [Ezra 2:25](#) (nlt mg). *See Kiriath-jearim.*

## Kiriath-Baal

Alternate name for Kiriath-jearim in [Joshua 15:60](#) and [18:14](#). *See Kiriath-jearim.*

## Kiriath-huzoth

A town in Moab. Balak and Balaam went there before going to Bamoth-baal ([Numbers 22:39](#)).

## Kiriath-Jearim

Kiriath-Jearim is a village located 16 kilometers (10 miles) northwest of Jerusalem, on the road

between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Today, it is called Abu Ghosh. French archaeologists found evidence that people lived there 7,000 years ago. These early residents changed from raising animals to growing crops. The village got its modern name from a family of Arab leaders called Abu Ghosh. In the early 19th century, this family would rob religious travelers who were going to Jerusalem. This ended when Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt stopped the practice.

In the 12th century, the Crusaders built a church in this village because they thought it was Emmaus. According to the Bible, Emmaus was where Jesus appeared to two people after he came back to life ([Luke 24:13](#)). The church has very thick walls. These walls were built on top of an old Roman military base. This base is where the Roman emperor Titus had kept his experienced soldiers during the war against the Jewish people (called the "Jewish Revolt"). Under the church, there is a large underground room called a crypt. The crypt has a natural water spring. Stories written during the First Crusade call this the "Emmaus Spring."

During the time when judges led Israel, Kiriath-jearim was one of four cities where the Gibeonite people lived. The Gibeonites had tricked Joshua and the leaders of Israel by lying about who they were. Because of this trick, Joshua made an agreement to protect them ([Joshua 9:3-27](#)). The city sat on the border between two tribes of Israel, Judah and Benjamin. Eventually, it became part of the tribe of Judah ([Joshua 15:9](#); [18:14](#)).

Later, during the time when Samuel was Israel's leader, something important happened involving the ark of God. The Philistines had taken the ark from Israel ([1 Samuel 4:11](#)). However, they soon discovered that having the ark brought them trouble. They were told to give it back to Israel.

The Philistines returned the ark to a place called Beth-shemesh. There, 70 men died because they looked inside the ark. The people of Beth-shemesh were afraid of the ark's power, so they sent it to Kiriath-jearim. The ark stayed in the house of a man named Abinadab for 20 years ([1 Samuel 7:1](#)).

Years later, when David became king and moved to Jerusalem, one of his first actions was to move the ark. He took it from Kiriath-jearim (also called Baalah) first to the house of Obed-edom, and then finally to Jerusalem ([2 Samuel 6](#)).

A prophet named Uriah came from Kiriath-jearim. He spoke out against King Jehoiakim's evil actions, but because of this, the king had him killed ([Jeremiah 26:20-23](#)). Later in history, when many

Jewish people were forced to leave their homeland, some people from Kiriath-jearim were among them. Years later, when they were allowed to return home, some of these people from Kiriath-jearim came back ([Ezra 2:25](#); [Nehemiah 7:29](#)).

## Kiriath-Sannah

Alternate name for Debir, a Judean city, in [Joshua 15:49](#). *See* Debir (Place) #1.

## Kiriath-Sepher

Older name for the Judean city Debir in [Joshua 15:15](#). *See* Debir (Place) #1.

## Kiriathaim

1. Town on the Moabite plateau, mentioned in the march of the four kings against the five ([Gn 14:5](#)) where the indigenous Emim were attacked. It was taken by the Israelites from Sihon ([Nm 32:37](#)) and included in Reuben's inheritance ([Jos 13:19](#)). The Moabite Stone records that Sihon fortified the place after gaining control of the plateau; in the seventh century BC it was still under Moabite control ([Jer 48:1, 23](#); [Ez 25:9](#)). Eusebius placed it 10 Roman miles west of Medeba. Two identifications have been proposed—either Khirbet el-Qureiyeh or Qaryat el-Mukhaiyet, six miles (9.7 kilometers) northwest and three miles (4.8 kilometers) northwest of Medeba respectively.

2. Levitical town in Naphtali's territory ([1 Chr 6:76](#)), called Kartan in [Joshua 21:32](#); the latter is probably a dialectical variant. The suggested identification is with Khirbet el-Qurieyeh, northeast of 'Ain Ibl in southern Lebanon.

*See also* Levitical Cities.

## Kerioth

The King James Version spelling of Kerioth, a Moabite city ([Amos 2:2](#)).

*See* Kerioth #2.

## Kirjath

KJV spelling of Kiriath, an abbreviation of Kiriath-jearim, in [Joshua 18:28](#). *See* Kiriath-jearim.

## Kirjath-Arba

The King James Version form of Kiriath-arba, the ancient name of Hebron.

*See* Hebron (Place) #1.

## Kirjath-Arim

KJV form of Kiriatharim, an alternate name for Kiriath-jearim, in [Ezra 2:25](#). *See* Kiriath-jearim.

## Kirjath-Baal

KJV spelling of Kiriath-baal, an alternate name for Kiriath-jearim, in [Joshua 15:60](#) and [18:14](#). *See* Kiriath-jearim.

## Kirjath-huzoth

The King James Version spelling of Kiriath-huzoth, a Moabite town ([Numbers 22:39](#)).

*See* Kiriath-huzoth.

## Kirjath-Jearim

The King James Version spelling of Kiriath-jearim.

*See* Kiriath-jearim.

## Kirjath-Sannah

KJV spelling of Kiriath-sannah, in [Joshua 15:49](#). *See* Debir (Place) #1.

## Kirjath-Sepher

KJV spelling of Kiriath-sepher in [Joshua 15:15-16](#) and [Judges 1:11-12](#). *See* Debir (Place) #1.

## Kirjathaim

The King James Version spelling of Kiriathaim ([Numbers 32:37](#); [Joshua 13:19](#); [1 Chronicles 6:76](#)).

See Kiriathaim.

## Kish

25. A Benjamite from Gibeah, father of King Saul and a man of importance in his town ([1 Samuel 9:1](#)). His ancestry is traced for four generations. So is Elkanah's, the father of Samuel, who would anoint Saul king ([1 Samuel 1:1](#)).

Kish's family details are somewhat unclear. His father's name is listed as Abiel in [1 Samuel 9:1](#). If the Kish mentioned in [1 Chronicles 8:30](#) is the same person, then Abiel was also known as Jeiel. But it may be that this second Kish was an uncle of Saul's father. In [1 Chronicles 8:33](#) and [9:39](#), Ner, not Abiel, is said to be the father of Kish. Yet in [1 Samuel 14:51](#), Abiel is said to be the father of two sons whose names were Ner and Kish. The solution is that the Ner in Chronicles was an earlier ancestor, probably Abiel's father or grandfather. If so, then, the father-son relationship between Ner and Kish should be taken in an extended sense, as elsewhere in the Old Testament. No other details of Kish's life are available. His grave was in Zela of Benjamin ([2 Samuel 21:14](#)). The King James Version spells his name Cis in [Acts 13:21](#).

26. A Levite, grandson of Merari, Mahli's son and the father of Jerahmeel ([1 Chronicles 23:21-22](#); [24:29](#)).
27. Abdi's son, another Levite of the family of Merari. He was one of the Levites who helped Hezekiah cleanse the temple ([2 Chronicles 29:12](#)).
28. A Benjamite and the great-grandfather of Mordecai. Mordecai was brought into exile by Nebuchadnezzar in 597 BC ([Esther 2:5](#)), with King Jehoiachin and the prophet Ezekiel.

## Kishi

Levite of Merari's family whose son Ethan was a singer and musician in the sanctuary during David's reign ([1 Chr 6:44](#)). He is also known as Kushaiah in [15:17](#).

## Kishion

City allotted to Issachar's tribe ([Jos 19:20](#)) and given to the Gershonite Levites ([Jos 21:28](#)). See Levitical Cities.

## Kishon

1. KJV variant of Kishion in [Joshua 21:28](#). See Kishion.

2. River draining the valley of Jezreel. It is a mere 25 miles (40 kilometers) in length but gathers into itself numerous small streams that originate in the hill country to the south and the north along its course. It rises in the north of the Samaritan highlands where the watershed directs some waters north and others west down the plain of Dothan. Numerous small wadis empty into the main watercourse as it moves northwest down the slopes of the north Samaritan hills into the plain of Esdraelon. These upper reaches are dry in summer but in winter (the rainy season) can become torrential. From Jenin to the narrow gap at Tell el-Qassis (the "mound of the priest"), the fall is about 250 feet (76.2 meters). The course of the river follows the Mt Carmel ridge, and numerous streams join the main stream from the Carmel ranges to the south and the hills of Galilee to the north. Because this region has a much better rainfall than the area of the upper reaches of the river, the Kishon becomes a perennial stream for the last part of its course. It flows for the last six miles (9.7 kilometers) of its length beside Mt Carmel and empties into the Mediterranean Sea about two miles (3.2 kilometers) north of Haifa. Just before it reaches the sea, it attains a width of 65 feet (19.8 meters).

The heavy runoff from the hills, especially at the time of the spring rains, combined with the flat terrain of the plain of Esdraelon, produced swampy conditions along its course and provided a serious obstacle to transportation in early times. Its middle course has been largely drained in recent years.

Two important biblical events took place in the region of the Kishon River. The defeat of Sisera by Barak and Deborah took place here. Canaanite chariots were caught in the swamps of the Kishon and were overcome by the Israelite attack ([Jgs 4–5](#)). The river was praised in the Song of Deborah ([5:21](#)), and the event was recalled in [Psalm 83:9](#) (where it is called Kison in the kjv). Later, the prophets of Baal, humiliated by Elijah on Mt Carmel, were killed along the banks of the Kishon ([1 Kgs 18:40](#)). The river is mentioned by the Roman historian Pliny, by Arab writers, and by the Crusaders. In recent years the last part of the river has been deepened and widened so that a channel 984 feet (300 meters) long, 164 feet (50 meters) wide, and 13 feet (4 meters) deep provides an auxiliary harbor for Haifa, especially for fishing vessels.

## Kislev

Kislev is one of the months in the Hebrew calendar. On our modern calendar, it usually occurs during parts of November and December. The name can also be written as Chislev or Chisleu.

*See* Calendars, Ancient and Modern.

## Kislon

Another spelling of Chislon, the father of Elidad.

*See* Chislon.

## Kisloth-Tabor

Another spelling of Chisloth-tabor, a city mentioned in [Joshua 19:12](#).

*See* Chesulloth. *See also* Tabor (Place).

## Kison

The King James Version spelling of the river Kishon in [Psalm 83:9](#).

*See* Kishon #2.

## Kiss, Kiss of Peace

A common way to show love and fellowship in biblical times.

Kissing appears in the Bible in many different contexts:

- Kisses were shared among relatives and friends as a sign of affection ([Genesis 29:11](#); [33:4](#)).
- Sometimes kisses had a sensual meaning ([Proverbs 7:6–13](#); [Song of Solomon 1:2](#)).
- Kissing was also a way to show respect or worship ([1 Samuel 10:1](#); [Job 31:27](#)), though it could be seen as wrong in certain situations ([1 Kings 19:18](#); [Hosea 13:2](#)).
- A kiss could be used to betray someone, as seen in the story of Jesus' betrayal ([Matthew 26:48–49](#)).

In the New Testament, there are five mentions of a “holy kiss,” also known as the “kiss of peace:”

29. [Romans 16:16](#)
30. [1 Corinthians 16:20](#)
31. [2 Corinthians 13:12](#)
32. [1 Thessalonians 5:26](#)
33. [1 Peter 5:14](#)

This kiss was a symbol of Christian love and unity. Although the Bible doesn't give detailed instructions, it was a gesture of friendship and commitment among early Christians ([1 Thessalonians 5:25–27](#)).

By the late second century, this practice became a part of church liturgy. Justin Martyr described it as a kiss exchanged among the congregation after prayer. Over time, it was moved to before Holy Communion and eventually replaced by a simple bow in many churches. Today, some churches still have different forms of this practice.

## Kitchen

*See* Food and Food Preparation; Homes and Dwellings.

## Kite

A kite (*Milvus milvus*) is a large bird of prey. It is about 48.3 centimeters (19 inches) long. The upper feathers are dark. The belly is white.

Kites build their nests high in trees from sticks and other plant material. They usually have two or three young. They feed them snakes, grasshoppers, and other small animals. People sometimes call kites “snake hawks.”

Kites are migratory birds. They spend the summer in Israel, especially in the mountains of southern Judea, in the empty land west of the Dead Sea, and in the wilderness near Beersheba.

The red kite, also called the glade, is a medium-sized bird of prey. The edges of its upper bill overlap the lower bill like sharp scissors. Its tail is forked (split into two points), like a fish’s tail. Its call is loud and often sounds like a sharp whistle.

Other kites in the Holy Land include the black kite (*Milvus migrans*) and the black-winged kite (*Elanus caeruleus*).

The kite is listed among the unclean birds in the law of Moses ([Leviticus 11:14](#); [Deuteronomy 14:13](#)). Some scholars and translators are not certain about the exact type of bird meant in these verses.

See Birds; Buzzard; Falcon.

## Kithlish, Kitlish

Alternate spellings of Chitlish, a city given to the tribe of Judah ([Joshua 15:40](#)).

See Chitlish.

## Kitron

City allotted to the tribe of Zebulun from which the Canaanite inhabitants could not be driven out ([Jgs 1:30](#)). It has been identified with Kattath ([Jos 19:15](#)), Tell el-Far, and Tell Qurdaneh. See Kattath.

## Kittim

The ancient Hebrew name for the island of Cyprus in the Mediterranean Sea. The name comes from descendants of Javan (the Kittites) mentioned in the Table of Nations ([Genesis 10:4](#)). The prophet

Daniel mentions “ships from Kittim” in a vision ([Daniel 11:30](#)).

See Cyprus.

## Kneeling

A body position that means to worship, respect, or submit to someone.

Strong knees represented a person’s strong faith, so kneeling showed respect for someone with greater authority. People knelt before kings, rulers, governors, or God. In [Genesis 41:43](#), people knelt before Pharaoh and Joseph. People showed their respect for God by kneeling ([Isaiah 45:23](#); [Romans 14:11](#); [Philippians 2:10](#)). During a famine when there was not enough food, some Israelites turned away from God. Those who stayed faithful were called “all whose knees have not bowed to Baal” ([1 Kings 19:18](#); see [Romans 11:4](#)).

Firm knees meant strength, so hurting those knees meant destroying power ([Deuteronomy 28:35](#)). Isaiah asked God to make weak knees strong ([Isaiah 35:3](#)). Weak knees usually showed a lack of strong faith ([Job 4:4](#); [Hebrews 12:12](#)). Sometimes it meant poor health ([Psalm 109:24](#)). Ezekiel talked about people whose knees “will turn to water” ([Ezekiel 7:17](#); [21:7](#)).

Kneeling before God was a way to show worship ([Psalms 95:6](#)) and also prayer ([Daniel 6:10](#)). Jesus himself knelt to pray in the garden of Gethsemane ([Luke 22:41](#)). Peter, Paul, and Stephen all did the same ([Acts 7:60](#); [9:40](#); [20:36](#); [21:5](#)). Solomon knelt in prayer to God ([1 Kings 8:54](#)). Once he even had a platform built so everyone could see him kneeling before God ([2 Chronicles 6:13](#)).

Some knelt to show they were sorry like Ezra did at the evening sacrifice ([Ezra 9:5](#)). Peter knelt to beg the Lord’s forgiveness for his lack of faith and trust ([Luke 5:8](#)). People asking the prophet Elijah for help knelt before him as God’s representative ([2 Kings 1:13](#)). Many came kneeling and begging Jesus for healing ([Matthew 17:14](#); [Mark 1:40](#)). Daniel knelt in wonder before an angel ([Daniel 10:10](#)). When Belshazzar was afraid, his “knees knocked together” ([Daniel 5:6](#)).

In the New Testament, Jesus was mocked by soldiers. They joked and pretended he was king. They kneeled before him and cried, “Hail, King of the Jews” ([Matthew 27:29](#); [Mark 15:19](#)).



## Knife

Small, handheld, single- or double-edged cutting instrument, usually made of flint or metal.

## Knowledge

Observation and recognition of objects within the range of one's senses; acquaintance of a personal nature that includes a response of the knower.

The word "know" or "knowledge" occurs more than 1,600 times in the Bible. The specific connotation of the word group provides insight into the basic messages of both the OT and the NT.

The Hebrew view of man is one of differentiated totality—the heart, soul, and mind are so interrelated that they cannot be separated. "To know" thus involves the whole being and is not simply an action of the mind. The heart is sometimes identified as the organ of knowledge (cf. [Ps 49:3](#); [Is 6:10](#)). The implication is that knowledge involves both will and emotions. It is in light of this connotation that the OT uses "to know" as an idiom for sexual intercourse between husband and wife.

The Jew's concept of knowledge is beautifully illustrated in [Isaiah 1:3](#): "Even the animals—the donkey and the ox—know their owner and appreciate his care, but not my people Israel. No matter what I do for them, they still do not understand" (nlt). Israel's failure lay not in ritual behavior but in refusal to respond in loving obedience to the God who has chosen her. Only the fool refuses to respond to this revelation. Thus the person who does not respond in obedience obviously has an incomplete knowledge of the Lord. "To know God" involves relationship, fellowship, concern, and experience.

The NT continues this basic idea of knowledge and adds some variations of its own. In the Gospel of John the knowledge of God is mediated through Jesus as the Logos. Jesus has perfect knowledge of God's purpose and nature, and reveals it to his followers: "If you had known who I am, then you would have known who my Father is" ([Jn 14:7](#), nlt). The identification of Jesus' own relationship with the Father as a model for the relationship of the disciples indicates that knowledge signifies a personal relationship that is intimate and mutual.

The definition of eternal life in [John 17:3](#) adds further content to this concept: "And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true

God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth" (nlt). This concept is vastly different from that of Hellenistic mysticism, in which contemplation and ecstasy are consummated in the gradual merging of the knower and God. In John, by contrast, the result of knowledge is having a personal relationship with God through his Son.

Paul also places the revelation of God in Christ as the source of knowledge. God has made known the "mystery of his will" to the one who is "in Christ." The spiritual person is taught by the Spirit of God ([1 Cor 2:12-16](#)) and responds to the truth as it is revealed in Jesus Christ. Again, there is emphasis on relationship and encounter as essential elements in the concept of knowledge.

Christian knowledge of God is not based simply on observation or speculation but is the result of experience in Christ. This knowledge is contrasted sharply with natural wisdom, which operates from an incorrect perspective. Paul is quick to point out that the mystery of God's redemptive plan has been made known and there is now no room for ignorance. Knowledge, then, is the whole person standing in relationship with God through Christ.

*See also* Revelation; Truth.

## Koa

People probably living northeast of Babylonia. They are named along with Babylon, Pekod, and Shoa as people who would come against Jerusalem as instruments of God's judgment on Israel ([Ez 23:23](#)). They are perhaps identifiable with the Kutu, mentioned frequently in Assyrian inscriptions.

## Kohath, Kohathites

Kohath was a son of Levi ([Genesis 46:11](#); [Exodus 6:16](#)). He was the father of Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel ([Exodus 6:18](#); [Numbers 3:19, 27](#); [1 Chronicles 6:2](#)). He was the founder of the Kohathite family of Levites who were responsible for important duties in the tabernacle service ([Numbers 3:31-32](#)). Moses, Aaron, and Miriam were descendants of Kohath ([Exodus 6:18-20](#); [Numbers 26:59](#); [1 Chronicles 6:3](#); [23:13-17](#)).

### *The Kohathites Among the Levites*

The tribe of Levi had three divisions named after Levi's sons:

- Gershon,
- Kohath, and
- Merari ([Genesis 46:11](#); [Exodus 6:16](#); [Numbers 3:17](#); [1 Chronicles 6:1, 16](#); [23:6](#)).

The Kohathites were an important family among the Levites. The order of their names in [Numbers 4](#), [Joshua 21](#), [1 Chronicles 6:16](#), and [2 Chronicles 29:12](#) suggests that they were assigned a more honorable position than either Gershon or Merari. References to their position and duties (whether referred to as “the Kohathites,” or “the sons of Kohath”) appear throughout early Hebrew writings ([Exodus 6:18](#); [Numbers 3:19, 27–30](#); [4:2–4, 15, 18, 34, 37](#); [7:9](#); [10:21](#); [26:57](#); [Joshua 21:4–5, 10, 20, 26](#); [1 Chronicles 6:2, 18, 22, 33, 54, 61, 66, 70](#); [15:5](#); [23:12](#); [2 Chronicles 20:19](#); [29:12](#); [34:12](#)).

### *Duties During the Wilderness Journey*

After leaving Egypt, the Israelites journeyed in the wilderness. The Kohathites camped on the southern side of the tabernacle ([Numbers 3:29](#)). When the tabernacle was moved, they carried the ark and other sacred objects on their shoulders ([Numbers 7:9](#)). When the tabernacle was being built, a count was taken of all male Kohathites who would serve God ([Numbers 3:27–28](#); [4:1–4, 34–37](#)).

### *Settlement in Canaan*

After the tribes settled in the land of Canaan, the Kohathites' service seemed to end. However, God commanded that they be cared for, just like the other Levitical families. The Kohathites were given many cities to live in ([Joshua 21:4–5, 20–26](#); [1 Chronicles 6:66–70](#)).

### *Service During David's Reign*

When David became king, he organized the Levites into three divisions ([1 Chronicles 23:6](#)). Heman, who represented the Kohathites, was put in charge of music in God's house ([1 Chronicles 6:31](#)). Another group of Kohathites was responsible for preparing the “bread of the presence” each Sabbath ([1 Chronicles 9:32](#)). When David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, he appointed Uriel, a

Kohathite, to oversee its transportation ([1 Chronicles 15:3–5](#)).

### *The Divided Kingdom Period*

During the time of the divided kingdom, the Moabites and Ammonites attacked Judah. King Jehoshaphat admitted that Judah could not defeat them and asked for God's help. The Kohathites led the people in songs of praise. They may have also led the army when the king and warriors of Judah faced the invaders ([2 Chronicles 20:19–22](#)).

### *Role in Religious Reforms*

Two important reform movements occurred in Judah's final years:

- The first happened during Hezekiah's reign, from 715 to 686 BC ([2 Kings 18](#); [2 Chronicles 29–30](#)).
- The second happened during Josiah's reign, from 640 to 609 BC ([2 Kings 22–23](#); [2 Chronicles 34](#)).

Josiah's reform reached its peak in 621 BC when the Book of the Law was found. The Kohathites played a key role in both reforms. During Hezekiah's reign, they cleaned the temple ([2 Chronicles 29:12–16](#)). During Josiah's reign, two Kohathites supervised the temple repairs ([2 Chronicles 34:12](#)).

### *After the Exile*

After the exile in Babylon, the Kohathites are mentioned again. Though we have little information about their importance during this time, they likely served God faithfully despite general spiritual decline. The few whose names are recorded in the Bible were given humble duties. Without evidence to suggest otherwise, we can assume they carried out their responsibilities faithfully ([1 Chronicles 9:19, 31–32](#); [Ezra 2:42](#); [Nehemiah 12:25](#)).

See also Levi, Tribe of; Priests and Levites; Tabernacle; Temple.

## **Koheleth**

Another spelling for Qoheleth. This is an alternative way to write the Hebrew title of the book of Ecclesiastes. The spelling difference comes from different ways of translating Hebrew letters into

English. Both Koheleth and Qoheleth refer to the same person who wrote Ecclesiastes and called himself "the Teacher" or "the Preacher."

See Qoheleth.

## Koine Greek

A form of the Greek language that was widely used throughout the Near East and Mediterranean regions during the time of the Roman Empire. The word *koine* means "common" in Greek. This was the form of Greek used to write the New Testament and translate the Septuagint (a Greek translation of the Old Testament).

See Bible.

## Kola

Kola is mentioned in the book of Judith ([Jdt 15:4](#)) as a place-name. It may be identified with Holon ([Jos 15:51](#)).

## Kolaiah

1. Benjamite; forefather of a family who lived in Jerusalem after the exile ([Neh 11:7](#)).

2. Father of Ahab, the false prophet who, along with Zedekiah, prophesied falsely in the name of God during Jeremiah's day ([Jer 29:21](#)).

## Kona

Town referred to in the apocryphal book of Judith ([Jdt 4:4](#)).

## Kor

Dry commodity measure equivalent to one homer (about 3.8 to 7.5 bushels). See Weights and Measures.

## Korah

34. The third son of Esau by Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah ([Genesis 36:5,14,18](#); [1 Chronicles 1:35](#)).
35. Esau's grandson and the fifth son of Eliphaz ([Genesis 36:16](#)).
36. The eldest son of Izhar, Kohath's son from the tribe of Levi ([Exodus 6:21, 24](#)). He led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. He accused Moses and Aaron of exalting themselves above the assembly of the Lord ([Numbers 16:1-3](#)).

[Numbers 16:1](#) also records a revolt by two brothers, Dathan and Abiram, and a man named On. All were of the tribe of Reuben. They challenged Moses's authority. Dathan and Abiram accused Moses of making himself a prince. They said he had failed to lead them into the promised land ([Numbers 16:12-14](#)). The stories of the two rebellions are interwoven in such a way that it is difficult to separate them. It may be that the two revolts occurred at the same time.

Moses challenged Korah and his followers to a trial by ordeal. They were to take censers with fire and incense to the tent of meeting the next day. God would then choose one of them to be the holy priest ([Numbers 16:4-10, 15-17](#)). Moses accused Korah and his company of rebelling against God rather than against Aaron ([Numbers 16:11](#)). When the men gathered as Moses had instructed, the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people.

The Lord ordered Moses to tell the congregation to separate from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram ([Numbers 16:19-24](#)). Moses proposed a test to prove his authority. But as he spoke the earth opened and swallowed all the rebels, their families, and their possessions. Fire consumed the 250 men who were offering the incense. The rest of the Israelites were terrified and fled from the scene ([Numbers 16:31-35](#)). [Numbers 26:11](#) adds, however, that "the line of Korah did not die out." with the others.

Then, through Moses, the Lord instructed Eleazar, the son of Aaron. He was to take the censers of the dead men and make them into hammered plates to cover the altar. This would remind the Israelites that only priests, descendants of Aaron, may burn incense before the Lord. Anyone else would meet

the same fate as Korah and his followers ([Numbers 16:36-40](#)).

The next day, the people complained against Moses and Aaron. They accused them of killing the God's people. Even after what happened to Korah and his followers, they still did not believe that God had shown Moses and Aaron to be the true leaders. Because of this new rebellion, God threatened to destroy all the people and sent a deadly sickness among them. Moses prayed for the people and stopped the disaster from getting worse. However, 14,700 Israelites still died from the sickness ([Numbers 16:41-50](#)). The rebellious incident of the Korahites is last mentioned in [Jude 1:11](#).

*See also* Korahite, Korathite.

37. The eldest son of Hebron, included in the family list of Caleb ([1 Chronicles 2:43](#)). This reference has been understood as a geographical name, possibly a town in Judah.
38. Aminadab's son and grandson of Kohath, second son of Levi ([1 Chronicles 6:22](#)).

## Korahite, Korathite

A member of Levi's tribe, of the division of Kohath ([Exodus 6:18, 21](#)).

Their ancestor, Izhar, was a member of the priestly family and was related to Moses and Aaron. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron. It ended with the deaths of many Korahites ([Numbers 16:31-35](#)). Only those who did not participate in the rebellion survived ([Numbers 16:11](#)). They settled around Hebron in areas set aside for the Levites ([Numbers 26:58](#)).

The Korahites were known as temple singers, according to [Psalms 42, 44-49, 84-85, and 87-88](#). David put them in charge of the musical service in the Lord's house after the ark of the covenant was brought to Jerusalem ([1 Chronicles 6:31-33](#)). They also acted as gatekeepers ([1 Chronicles 9:19; 26:19](#)). They baked cakes used in sacrifices ([1 Chronicles 9:31](#)). They are mentioned as singers in the celebration of Jehoshaphat's victory over Ammon and Moab ([2 Chronicles 20:19](#)).

*See also* Korah #3.

## Korazin

Another spelling of Chorazin, a Palestinian city on which Jesus pronounced woe ([Matthew 11:21-24; Luke 10:13-14](#)).

*See* Chorazin.

## Kore

1. Kohathite Levite who, with his brothers, was responsible for the service at the entrance to the tent of meeting in David's time ([1 Chr 9:19; 26:1](#)).
2. KJV alternate name for Korahite in [1 Chronicles 26:19](#). *See* Korahite, Korathite.
3. Imnah's son, a Levite who was a keeper of the East Gate in Hezekiah's reign. He had charge of the freewill offerings of the people ([2 Chr 31:14](#)).

## Korhite

KJV alternate spelling of Korahite, a descendant of Korah, Hebron's son, in [1 Chronicles 12:6](#). *See* Korah #4.

## Koz

1. Descendant of Judah and possibly an ancestor of the priestly house of Hakkoz ([1 Chr 4:8](#)).
2. KJV rendering of the priestly family of Hakkoz ([Ezr 2:61; Neh 3:4, 21; 7:63](#)); perhaps identifiable with #1 above. *See* Hakkoz.

## Kub

Kub is a place mentioned in [Ezekiel 30:5](#) as one of the nations that would fall in battle along with Egypt. The exact location of Kub is unknown, and it is only mentioned once in the Bible. The name appears in the Hebrew text, but many Bible translations say "Libya" instead of Kub. This is because Kub may have been a region in North Africa.

*See also* Libya, Libyans.

## Kue

Name of Cilicia in OT times. From there Solomon imported horses ([1 Kgs 10:28](#); [2 Chr 1:16](#), nlt mg). It included two geographical areas, the plain on the east (Cilicia Pedias) and the mountains on the west (Cilicia Tracheia). It was bounded on the south by the Mediterranean, on the west and northwest by the Taurus ranges, on the northeast by the anti-Taurus, and on the east by the Amanus.

The Akkadian rulers of the late third millennium, Sargon the Great and his grandson Naram-Sin, claimed to have reached the “cedar forest” and the “mountain of silver,” evidently the Amanus and Taurus, respectively. The name of the plain in the middle Bronze Age was Adaniya; during the late Bronze Age a kingdom called Kizzuwatna, composed of Luwian and Hurrian elements, came into being there but was subjugated by the Hittite Empire.

The Iron Age (first millennium BC) saw the rise of the Neo-Hittite kingdom of Kue; it acted as a middleman, bringing horses down from the north (cf. [Ez 27:14](#)). In the ninth century BC Kue joined a coalition of states to resist the aggression of Shalmaneser III (858 BC), who finally conquered Kue in 839–833 BC. When the Assyrians withdrew, Kue was third in importance after Aram-Damascus and Arpad (according to the stela of Zakir, king of Hamath). By the end of the eighth century, Urikki, king of Kue, paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser III (738 BC), and somewhat later Kue was annexed by Assyria. With the death of Sargon (705 BC), all the Assyrian provinces in Cilicia and Anatolia rebelled; Sennacherib did not reconquer them until 695 BC. In spite of pressure from the neighboring Tabal and the tribes of the Khilakku (who later gave the name Cilicia to the plain), Esar-haddon and Ashurbanipal managed to keep their hold on Kue. The Chaldean Nebuchadnezzar conducted campaigns there in 593 and 591 BC. Later, Chaldean kings also controlled it and campaigned against neighboring Lydia. With the fall of Babylon to the Persians, the Khilakku took advantage of the situation to occupy the plain. This brought an end to Kue and the beginning of the classical Cilicia.

## Kushaiah

Alternate name for Kishi, a Merarite Levite, in [1 Chronicles 15:17](#). See Kishi.