



Walking Thru The Bible

1 & 2 KINGS

INTRODUCTION

First and Second Kings are just a continuation of the Books of Samuel. As their name suggests, they record the events of the reign of Solomon and then the succeeding kings of Judah and Israel. In the Hebrew Bible 1st and 2nd Samuel form one book, 1st and 2nd Kings form a second, and 1st and 2nd Chronicles form a third book.

Author: The Jews understood that the book was written by Jeremiah, and indeed there are many resemblances (cf. 2 Kings 24:18-25:30 and Jeremiah 52:1-34).

Date: The books cover the time from Solomon's reign to the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem and the Babylonian captivity, a time span of about 400 years.

Background: First Kings begins with the death of David and the chapters 1-11 deal with the reign of Solomon. The nation divided into two kingdoms when Solomon died ca. 930 BC.

The northern kingdom (Israel) was made up by ten tribes and during its existence till 722 BC it had nine dynasties and 19 kings. It was sometimes called by the name of its leading tribe, Ephraim.

The southern kingdom composed of two tribes was referred to by its leading tribe, Judah. It had only one dynasty (i.e., David's) and some 20 kings.

FIRST KINGS

Central Message: *Division Because of Disobedience.*

Structure of First Kings:

- I. The Forty-Year Reign of King Solomon Ch. 1-11
 1. Solomon was the last king to reign over a *united* Hebrew kingdom. He was but a young man (3:7) when he became king.
 2. Solomon prayed for wisdom and received it 3
 3. Builds temple of the Lord and dedicates it 4-9
 4. Receives royal visitors and increases wealth 10
 5. Solomon's wives turn him from the Lord 11
- II. The First Eighty Years of Two Kingdoms Ch. 12-22

1. Immediately after the death of Solomon the division of the kingdom takes place and ten tribes in the north (referred to as ISRAEL) are led by Jeroboam-- and two tribes in the south, JUDAH, remain loyal to Rehoboam, the son of Solomon.
2. The sins of Israel (12:24-33). Jeroboam built false centers of worship at Dan and Bethel to keep the people from going to Jerusalem to worship--and he made "priests of the lowest people, not of the sons of Levi."
3. There are two lines of Kings and during this 80-year period of 1st Kings Judah had four and Israel eight. All eight of Israel were *evil*. Two of Judah's kings (Asa and Jehoshaphat) were *good* kings and reigned 66 of the 80 yrs.
4. Elijah and some of the events of his life Ch. 17-22
 - a. Fed by ravens and widow of Zarephath 17
 - b. Challenges Baal prophets on Mt. Carmel 18
 - c. Flees for life from Jezebel 19
 - d. Anoints Elisha to be prophet in his place 20
 - e. Rebukes Ahab for taking Naboth's vineyard 21

Archaeological discoveries confirm the contents of 1st Kings. The invasion of Judah by Shishak in Rehoboam's reign (1 Kings 14:25) is proved by the inscription of Karnak. The strongholds of Solomon in Megiddo, Hazor, and Gezer (1 Kings 9:15-19) have been discovered. Omri, king of Israel (1 Kings 16:21-28) is mentioned on the Moabite Stone in 850 BC, and King Jehu is pictured on the Black Obelisk.

SECOND KINGS

Second Kings has been said to be "Hebrew history from the prophetic standpoint." In the period we meet such great prophets as Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah and Jeremiah who were "faithfully testifying of the moral foundation of the nation, vindicating the righteousness of God and rebuking sin and upholding the divine ideal to which God's people as a nation had been called."

Date: The history of 2nd Kings covers approximately 265 years. We see the kingdom of Israel coming to an end when its capital, Samaria, was destroyed by the Assyrians in 722 BC after lasting 250 years (2 Kings 17). The kingdom of Judah lasted nearly 150 years after Israel came to an end when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC (2 Kings 25).

Structure of Second Kings:

- I. Elisha the prophet and his work 2 Kings 1:1 - 13:21
 1. Associated with Elijah in his last days 1:1-2:12

2. Performed many miracles in Israel 2:12-13:21
- II. Alternating history and kings of the two nations described
 1. The downfall of Israel (God gave reasons why in ch. 17)
 - a. Sinned against the Lord their God 17:7
 - b. Walked in the statutes of the heathen 17:8
 - c. "Did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God" 17:9
 - d. Set up images, idols and high places 17:10-12
 - e. Rejected the warning of the prophets 17:13-14
 - f. Rejected statutes and left commandments of God 17:15-16
 - g. Offered their children as burnt offerings 17:17
 The nation Israel was carried into Assyrian captivity.
 2. The downfall of Judah (Some Reasons why listed)
 - a. Did more evil than the heathen nations about them (2 Kings 21:9, 11, 15)
 - b. Manasseh shed innocent blood in Jerusalem (21:16)
 The nation of Judah was carried in Babylonian captivity.

Some Practical Lessons From First Kings

1. David's advice to his son Solomon is good advice for every father to give his son, (2:1-3.)
2. Solomon prayed for wisdom just as we may, (3:5) James 1:5-7.
3. Solomon's apostasy stands as a warning today against marrying someone who does not have the same regards for God as we do, (11:4; 21:25).
4. Jeroboam introduces convenient religion to Israel and it has been with us ever since (12:28).
5. A warning against being deceived under the guise of religion is gained from the experience of the young prophet (13:18).
6. God's people must be completely on his side as the contest at Mt. Carmel shows, (18:17-21).
7. Children usually follow the example of their parents as Ahaziah followed Ahab and Jezebel, (22:51-53).

Some Practical Lessons From Second Kings

1. The essentially of doing what God says do is illustrated by Naaman, (5:1-14).
2. Our responsibility and opportunity is like that of the four lepers who had good tidings that needed to be told, (7:1-9).
3. It is dangerous to trust in "bruised reeds," (18:21).
 - a. Power, money, "doctrines of men", etc.
4. "What have they seen in thine house?" (20:15).
5. Second Kings is valuable in teaching great moral lessons as backed up an illustrated in history.

Lessons from Naaman the Leper

2 Kings 5:1-14

Introduction

1. Naaman was "a captain," "a great man," "honorable," "BUT he was a leper."

I. SOME THINGS ABOUT LEPROSY

1. It was a loathsome disease. (A description)
2. It was a contagious disease.
3. It was a deceptive disease.
4. It was a disease not inherited, but acquired.
5. It was a disease that had a tendency to increase.
6. It was a disease incurable except by the power of God.

II. AN ANALOGY BETWEEN LEPROSY AND SIN

1. It is loathsome (Ezek. 18:20)
2. Sin is contagious (1 Cor. 5:6; 15:33)
3. Sin is deceptive (Hebrews 3:12-13)
4. Sin is not inherited, but acquired (Ezek. 18:20; 28:15)
5. Sin has a tendency to increase (James 1:15)
6. Sin is incurable except by the power of God. (Heb. 9:22; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 2Tim 2:10)

III. NAAMAN WAS KEPT FROM BEING CLEANSED AT FIRST:

1. Because he got mad (2Ki 5:11-12)
2. Because he had pride (2Ki 5:13)
3. Because he was prejudice (2Ki 5:11)
4. Because he wanted something sensational to happen (2ki 5:11, 13)
5. Because of the Jordan (2Kings 5:12)

IV. NAAMAN HUMBLER HIMSELF TO OBEY

1. 2Kings 5:12

Conclusion:

1. What was the secret of Naaman's obedience?
2. The same thing must be true of sinners today.
3. Will you manifest the same kind of faith as Naaman had? Enough to take God at His word? Enough to obey God?