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1 and 2 Kings

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CLT Bible Study

1 AND 2 KINGS

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SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

Welcome to the Continuing Lay Ministries series of Bible studies. You are engaged in a study venture that will be both helpful and enjoyable. Here are a few suggestions that will make this Bible study the most beneficial to you.

1. Since this is a Bible study, have your Bible near you at all times. This study outline is only designed to help you read the Bible.
2. The Bible version used for this study is the New International Version (NIV). The editor primarily used the language of the NIV to prepare the lessons. You may use other versions of the Bible if you choose. While the language may be different, the meaning will be the same.
3. Before you begin each section, read the entire Scripture passage. This is very important. The study outline will help you understand the particular Bible verses, but it does not tell what they say.
4. **IMPORTANT:** Note that scriptures from 1 Kings or 2 Kings may not have the book's name. In sections referring specifically to the Book of 1 Kings, if the Bible reference is (1:6-8), you will find these verses (6-8) in the first chapter of 1 Kings. Whereas other books of the Bible will include the name in the reference, for example, Isaiah 53:1 and John 17:1.
5. Go through the study outline carefully. Take time to look up all the Scripture verses in the outline.
6. You may want to mark your study Bible as you go. Marking your Bible will help the words become more and more your own. It will be well if you have colored pencils at hand to mark the Bible as you go along. A simple system is to mark promises in blue and warnings in red. However you do it, mark your Bible, and it will become more and more your very own.
7. Finally, read the Bible passage again to better understand its meaning. You may also benefit from listening to the readings of 1 Kings and 2 Kings.
8. The editor has also included how to pronounce some of the more difficult proper names and other important words. The first time the word is introduced, the pronunciation will follow the word. At the end of each chapter, you will find a list of the words in the order in which they were introduced. Additionally, at the end of the document, all of the words and pronunciations will be listed alphabetically. For pronunciation of additional terms and their definitions, please refer to *A Dictionary of the Bible & Christian Doctrine in Everyday English* (Eby et al., 2004).

If a family or a few friends decide to take this study together, here are two suggestions:

1. Have one person read the Bible passage and another person read the Continuing Lay Ministries outline.
2. Then discuss the Scripture and outline. Ask questions of each other to help clarify the meaning of the Scripture.

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1 AND 2 KINGS

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION TO 1 AND 2 KINGS

NOTES

The books 1 and 2 Kings in our English Bibles were originally one book and included in a grouping called “Former Prophets.” The two-part division may be traced to the Septuagint [SEP-twuh-gunt], the first Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

A. STYLE, AUTHORSHIP, AND DATE

Numerous references to sources throughout 1 and 2 Kings make it clear that the writer made use of available literary and historical materials. Three sources are mentioned by title:

- (1) “The book of the acts of Solomon” (1 Kings 11:41);
- (2) “The book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel,” first in 1 Kings 14:19; and
- (3) “The book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah,” first in 1 Kings 14:29.

The striking stylistic feature of 1 and 2 Kings is that accounts of the reigns of the kings after Solomon are usually presented within a literary framework consisting of three parts:

first, the introductory formula (see 1 Kings 14:21);
second, the main part (see 1 Kings 14:22-28); and,
third, the concluding formula (see 1 Kings 14:29-31).

Another interesting feature of the style is the manner in which the historian attempted to interweave the history of the two kingdoms after the division. This combination of the two histories takes up the greater part of 1 and 2 Kings, from 1 Kings 12:1 to 2 Kings 17:41.

First and Second Kings, like the majority of books of the Old Testament, do not name their human author. The tradition from rabbinic [ruh-BI-nuhk] literature is that Jeremiah wrote the Book of Jeremiah, the Books of the Kings, and Lamentations. A number of points make this tradition attractive. However, other considerations lead most scholars to question this tradition. One can merely suggest that a prophet unknown to us, who may be called the historian, completed 1 and 2 Kings shortly after the time of the last incident; that is, after 561 B.C.

B. VIEWPOINT AND PURPOSE

First and Second Kings are not history in the usual sense, but sacred history is written from a particular viewpoint with a specific purpose in mind. The historian understood that his nation’s covenant with God went back in history to the time of Moses and even beyond, to the time of Abraham. He realized that this meant, on the one hand, privilege as a people called “to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (see Exodus 19:6; also, Amos 3:2) and, on the other hand, responsibility in terms of obedience as a people called to be “a holy nation.”



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Thus, from the viewpoint of the call to holiness and of expected obedience, the historian attempted to show that obedience at times brought blessings and that widespread, persistent disobedience brought severe judgment. He also intended to show that the promise to David (see 2 Samuel 7:12-16) was being or would be fulfilled.

Septuagint [SEP-twuh-gunt]
rabbinic [ruh-BI-nuhk]

CHAPTER 2. ONE KINGDOM: THE TWELVE TRIBES RULED BY THE “HOUSE OF DAVID” (1 KINGS 1:1 - 11:43)



NOTES

First and Second Kings continue Israel's history, which is related in 2 Samuel and other historical books. At its beginning, 1 Kings concludes the account of David's reign and introduces Solomon's reign.

A. DAVID SUCCEEDED BY SOLOMON (1:1 - 2:12)

David made certain that Solomon would be his successor, although there was strong opposition to Solomon in favor of Adonijah.

1. *David's Health Fails (1:1-4)*

When he was nearly seventy, David found his physical strength failing and his days on earth nearly done. Abishag [ab-EYE-shag] from Shunem attempted to nurse warmth and vigor into his aged body, but he was not successful.

2. *Adonijah Attempts to Become King (1:5-10)*

Adonijah, a son of Haggith (see 2 Samuel 3:4), was apparently David's oldest living son and, therefore, believed he was next in line for the throne. Adonijah chose to press for his way rather than submit to God's will concerning Israel's throne. In exalting himself, he followed Absalom's pattern (see 2 Samuel 15:1). He gathered around himself chariots, horsemen, and runners (1:5). He was supported by Joab and Abiathar [ab-EYE-ah-thar], who no longer enjoyed David's favor. He was opposed by Zadok, Nathan, and others (1:8).

Adonijah and his followers proceeded with festivities appropriate for a coronation. Enrogel (1:9) was located outside the wall of Jerusalem, just beyond the point where the Kidron Valley is joined by the Hinnom Valley.

3. *Nathan and Bathsheba Oppose Adonijah (1:11-31)*

Nathan realized that Bathsheba and Solomon would undoubtedly lose their lives should Adonijah become king. He, therefore, advised Bathsheba to go to David at once. She went and asked concerning Solomon as his successor (1:13, 15-17). She informed him about Adonijah (1:18-19) and pointed out that "all Israel" was concerned (1:20).

Nathan came to David, informing him also about Adonijah's activities and asking if he was the one David wished to be his successor (1:22-27).

Directing his words to Bathsheba, David affirmed as strongly as possible that Solomon would reign after him (1:30).



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4. *Solomon Is Publicly Anointed at Gihon (1:32-40)*

Time was short, and it was time to act! David called those who were loyal to him and Solomon (1:32) and gave them instructions to make Solomon king.

David's instructions to Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah were:

- a. They were to cause Solomon to ride his mule down to Gihon (1:33);
- b. There Zadok was to anoint Solomon as king (1:34); and
- c. They were then to lead Solomon up the slope, into the city, and place him on the throne (1:35).

5. *Adonijah Fails to Make Himself King (1:41-53)*

Only a short distance from Gihon, Adonijah, and his party heard the uproar of those acclaiming Solomon as king. They paused a brief time to wonder what the shouts and noise meant. Then, Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, came and told them (1:42-48). Adonijah's followers disbanded hurriedly (1:49). Adonijah fled to the holy precincts of the altar for safety and mercy (1:50-53).

6. *David Speaks to Solomon as Death Draws Near (2:1-9)*

Awareness of the near approach of death apparently prompted David to express great concern to Solomon, first, for the moral and spiritual growth of his kingdom and, second, for its political stability. David was greatly concerned that Solomon should live a holy life and thus lead the people of Israel in holy living. He realized that growing morally and spiritually, developing in a life of holiness, was possible only through obedience to what God had revealed through Moses. He, therefore, urged Solomon to "walk in his ways" (2:3). This meant that Solomon and the people should keep all of God's laws, for obedience was the key to the realization of a rich and full life (2:3), and to the fulfillment of the promise that his "sons" would continue on the throne (2:4).

David informed his son about persons in his past with whom he had not settled all issues (2:5-6). David's former army captain had killed Abner (2 Samuel 3:27) and Amasa (2 Samuel 20:8-10) without adequate reason. Justice called for the punishment of Joab, but David had never attended to this. He, therefore, instructed Solomon to deal with Joab according to his crimes.

The sons of Barzillai (2:7) were to be guests of the court, apparently as payment for the kindness their father had shown David (see 2 Samuel 17:27-29). Shimei (2:8-9) had treated David shamefully at the time David fled from Absalom (see 2 Samuel 16:5-13). It seems that David felt the cause of justice had not been fully upheld concerning one who had acted wrongfully against "the anointed of the Lord" himself at the time of the incident.



NOTES

7. *David Dies after a Reign of Forty Years (2:10-12)*

The king idealized by prophets at a later time, the one described as a man after God's heart (Acts 13:22), died.

B. SOLOMON CARRIES OUT DAVID'S INSTRUCTIONS (2:13-46)

Solomon used his better judgment to carry out David's instructions and establish himself as king.

1. *Solomon's Anger with Adonijah (2:13-25)*

In asking for Abishag (2:17), Adonijah was really attempting to make a subtle move to usurp the throne. Solomon angrily refused to grant his request (2:22). He ordered Benaiah to execute Adonijah (2:25). Adonijah pursued selfish ambitions instead of submitting to God's will.

2. *Solomon Banishes Abiathar to Anathoth (2:26-27)*

Abiathar had been among those who attempted to make Adonijah king (1:5). The biblical record does not record any additional offensive action on Abiathar's part. Solomon apparently had good reason for depriving him of his priestly duties and for banishing him to Anathoth, a priests' village about three miles north of Jerusalem.

3. *Solomon Orders the Execution of Joab (2:28-34)*

Solomon found it necessary to execute Joab. As long as Joab went unpunished, there was guilt on David, and this guilt was passed on to Solomon. Solomon, therefore, understood that proper punitive action against Joab would take this guilt away and cause it to rest rightly "upon the head of Joab" (2:33). The sanctity and security of the horns of the altar provided no refuge for Joab as they had provided for Adonijah (2:28-30, 34; see also 1:52).

4. *Solomon Makes Benaiah and Zadok Court Officials (2:35)*

The narrative is interrupted to include the statement that Solomon had appointed Benaiah as Joab's replacement and Zadok as Abiathar's replacement.

5. *Solomon Restricts Shimei to Jerusalem (2:36-46)*

Solomon showed mercy to Shimei by permitting him to live in Jerusalem under a kind of house arrest to watch him. For Shimei, this meant a stay of execution. Jerusalem was his city of refuge.

Shimei jeopardized his claim for continued mercy when he disregarded his agreement with Solomon and went after his runaway slaves (2:39-42).



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6. *The Kingdom Is Established by Solomon (2:46)*

“The kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon” (see also 2:12). Solomon had taken care of troublesome problems and had proved himself equal to the task.

C. SOLOMON RULES WISELY AND BECOMES GREAT (3:1 - 4:34)

The historian included an assortment of selections from his main source on Solomon’s reign, “the Book of the Acts of Solomon” (11:41), to show that Solomon was a wise king.

1. *An Alliance between Israel and Egypt (3:1)*

The marriage of Solomon and Pharaoh’s daughter was probably not without political commitments, for royal marriages in ancient times often sealed treaties between nations.

2. *The People Sacrifice at High Places (3:2-3)*

Before the Temple was built, the people of Israel worshiped God on elevated places or hills. They apparently did this out of expediency and convenience.

3. *God Reveals Himself to Solomon at Gibeon (3:4-15)*

Gibeon is to be identified with modern el-Jib, about six miles northwest of Jerusalem. Zadok served as a high priest there where Solomon offered sacrifices to God (3:4). There also, God appeared to Solomon in a dream (3:5). Solomon humbly prayed (3:7) that God might grant to him understanding to govern Israel (3:8-9). God granted his petition (3:11-12) and, in addition, promised honor and riches (3:13) and a long life (3:14).

4. *Solomon Deals Wisely with Two Quarreling Women (3:16-28)*

Two women involved in a dispute over who the mother of a particular child was were brought to Solomon (3:18-22). His command to divide the child with the stroke of a sword and to give each woman half of the body (3:24-25) was not motivated by cruelty but was rather a ruse to draw out the mother’s love of the rightful claimant to the child. When one woman cried out, pleading that the child be spared and given to the other, Solomon saw that she was the child’s mother.

He gave her child back to her (3:26-27). It was through incidents similar to this that Solomon manifested the wisdom which God had given to him (3:28).

5. *The “High Officials” of Solomon’s Court (4:1-6)*

This list of Solomon’s highest officials is sometimes called his cabinet. It is a list that David began (see 2 Samuel 8:15-18 and 20:23-26) and that Solomon expanded.



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6. *Officers Appointed to Administer New Districts (4:7-19)*

The “twelve officers” (4:7) were resident governors of newly established districts. Their task was to provide food for the court in Jerusalem; each one was assigned a month (4:7).

7. *Solomon Achieves Success and Fame (4:20-34)*

This passage also is a selection of various materials used to show that Solomon ruled wisely and that behind his wisdom was God, who had granted him wisdom. The details of this passage applied to the earlier part of Solomon’s reign rather than to the later part of his reign.

“Judah and Israel” (4:20), all of Israel, totaled more in population than at any previous time. Their large number was a fulfillment of the promise to the patriarchs (see Genesis 22:17 and 28:14). The people’s widespread happiness (4:20), security, and contentment (4:25) approximated the ideal longingly described by prophets of later times than Solomon’s (see Isaiah 36:16 and Micah 4:4).

The extensive domain Solomon inherited from David (see 2 Samuel 8:1-14) was a fulfillment of the promise to Israel prior to their crossing the Jordan (Joshua 1: 3-4).

D. SOLOMON BUILDS THE TEMPLE (5:1 - 7:51)

Solomon undertook many building projects. He constructed more elaborate and pretentious buildings than the Temple. However, he was greatly concerned about the Temple’s beauty and its significance for the people.

1. *Hiram Supplies Materials and Workmen (5:1-18)*

Hiram, king of Tyre, had established and maintained friendly relationships with Israel during David’s reign (5:1; see also Samuel 5:11).

David had gathered various materials for the Temple through a working arrangement with Hiram of Tyre. Hiram and Solomon communicated with each other, continuing a friendly relationship between Israel and Phoenicia [fe-NEESH-ah]. They discussed the Temple project (1-6).

Hiram and Solomon reached an agreement concerning:

- (1) more cedars needed for building the Temple (5:7-12); and
- (2) the plan for assigning workers to the forests of Lebanon, quarries, and other tasks in order to obtain materials for the Temple (5:13-18).

2. *Building the Temple (6:1-3)*

The Temple, intended as the dwelling place of God’s name, was Israel’s most significant building.

NOTES

Solomon's workers started construction of the Temple in his fourth year (967 B.C.) and completed it in his eleventh year (960 B.C.).

The Temple measurements were carefully given. A cubit measures approximately one and one-half feet (or about one-half of a meter). The Temple was ninety feet long, thirty wide, and forty-five feet high (6:2). Its floor plan consisted of three main parts: a porch or vestibule (6:3), a nave or sanctuary (6:5), and the innermost sanctuary - most holy place or holy of holies (6:5).

Verses 11-13 are a reiteration of David's charge to Solomon (see 2:3-4) with additional points: first, obedience is stressed as essential to the fulfillment of God's promise concerning David (6:12), and second, obedience would be the condition for the divine presence in the midst of Israel (6:13).

Verses 14-25 give details of the holy of holies. The holy of holies or inner sanctuary was a thirty-foot cubicle. It contained an altar of cedar (6:20), "overlaid with gold" (6:22). Large, olivewood cherubim [CHAIR-uh-bim] (winged creatures) with outstretched wings (6:23-28) stood before the ark of the covenant (6:19), which presumably was on the floor behind them. Special detailed attention is given in 1 Kings to the holy of holies because it was the place where God was to abide in his awesome Shekinah [shuh-KAI-nuh] or glory-presence.

3. *The Palace Built in Thirteen Years (7:1-12)*

Solomon's house (7:1) seems to refer to a complex of royal buildings: similar probably in some respects to palace-temple complexes of kings of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia [meh-suh-puh-TAY-mee-uh]. Some of the individual units of this complex seem to be indicated, such as "the house of the forest of Lebanon" (7:2), "the hall of pillars" (7:6), "the porch for the throne" (7:7), etc.

4. *Solomon Names Hiram as His Chief Bronze Artisan (7:13-45)*

The person Solomon selected to direct the manufacture of bronze furnishings for the Temple was Hiram, a skilled artisan from Tyre (7:14, not Hiram king of Tyre; see 5:1). Hiram did all the following work:

a. *Cast the pillars named Jachin [JEH-kin] and Boaz (7:15-22).* Each pillar was approximately twenty-seven feet in height and eighteen feet in circumference. Each was crowned with an ornate, elaborately decorated capital (7:16-20). Jachin was placed on the south side of the Temple entrance, Boaz on the north side (7:12).

b. *Made the great bronze sea (laver) (7:23-26).* The great bronze laver was located in the court to the east of the Temple. The great altar, mentioned in 2 Chronicles 4:1, was the other major furnishing of the Temple court. The great laver held approximately ten thousand gallons (about 37,854 liters) of water, the supply for ceremonial washings (see 2 Chronicles 4:6).



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c. *Made the ten bronze stands and lavers (7:27-39).* The bronze, wheeled stands for smaller lavers, which made it possible to have smaller, portable water supplies at convenient locations away from the great laver.

d. *Made also small bronze objects (7:40-45).* Hiram also made smaller objects needed for various aspects of the Temple service, such as pots, shovels, basins, and vessels of all sorts (7:45).

5. *The Bronze Objects Cast in the Plain of Jordan (7:46-47)*

The casting of such huge objects as the pillars and great sea was a remarkable engineering achievement. For instance, the weight of the sea has been estimated to have been between twenty-five and thirty US tons (about 27 metric tons), whereas, by comparison, the great bell of St. Paul's Cathedral in London weighs about seventeen and one-half tons. It is understandable why the weight of the bronze was not found out (7:47).

6. *Gold Objects for the Nave (7:48-50)*

The objects to be placed in the nave and the most holy place were made of gold or overlaid with gold. The profuse use of gold for these objects and elsewhere in the Temple symbolizes man's attitude toward God and devotion to God.

7. *David's Treasure Transferred to the Temple (7:51)*

The spoils of war, which David had dedicated to the Lord (see 2 Samuel 8:9-12), were brought into the treasuries of the house of the Lord as an indication of the completion of the Temple.

E. SOLOMON DEDICATES THE TEMPLE (8:1 - 9:9)

The great day of dedicating the Temple to God, the day anticipated even by David, had finally come. The historian saw it as a high point in Israel's history. The Temple had great potential as a significant witness to the true and living God. It could be the means by which light would go forth to the nations (see 8:43).

1. *The Glory of the Lord Fills the Temple (8:1-13)*

The Temple, like the Tabernacle, was to contain the ark of the covenant, the symbol of God's presence in the midst of his people. The ark was transferred from the Tabernacle in the "city of David" (8:1) by the holy procession and sacrificing (8:2-5) to the Temple. On this, as on a number of previous occasions, God made his presence real and known through an awesome cloud (see Exodus 40:34-38). "The priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud" (8:11).

It was a wonderful, holy day, for God took over the dedication service completely, and men as leaders faded into the background. "God in the midst; God among his people"



NOTES

- this is the all-important thought underlying the declaration that the Temple was to be a place for God to dwell in forever (8:13). This meant primarily that God was manifesting himself significantly on earth among his people. It is not a contradiction of the thought later expressed that God dwells in the heaven and the highest heaven (see 8:27-30).

2. *Solomon Addresses Assembled Israel (8:14-21)*

Solomon turned to face the assembled Israelites, recalling significant aspects of their past that made the dedication of the Temple a momentous occasion for all:

- (a) God should be blessed and extolled, for He had fulfilled his promise to David (8:15);
- (b) God's important choice was the choice of David over Israel, rather than the choice of a city for a "house" (8:16);
- (c) the "house" on David's heart was to be built, not by him, but by his son (8:17-18);
- (d) the "house" had been built as a fulfillment of God's word to David (8:20); and
- (e) the Temple was a place provided for the ark, which witnessed to God's covenant between himself and Israel, going back to the time of the Exodus (8:21).

3. *Solomon Prays the Prayer of Dedication (8:22-61)*

Solomon then left the vestibule of the Temple, descended the steps, and took a position before the altar in the Temple courtyard (8:22). With hands raised toward heaven, he uttered a prayer of dedication, which is one of the great prayers of the Bible.

Verses 22-30 express the theme, "How Great God Is!"

- (a) God is the only God (8:23).
- (b) God is greater than all the universe (8:27).
- (c) God is a merciful God (8:23-24).
- (d) God is a faithful God (8:24-26).
- (e) God has regard for his house (8:28-29).
- (f) God forgives and restores the wandering (8:30).

Verses 31-53 cover specific situations which could be expected to arise in the future. Each mentioned is cast in the "if . . . then" framework (8:31-32, for example):

- (a) A dispute between two persons to be settled before the altar or before God (8:31-32).
- (b) A defeated, exiled Israel will be returned to its homeland if it prays and seeks God's forgiveness (8:33-34).
- (c) Various kinds of judgment may come through natural disasters on account of unfaithfulness (8:35-37). However, God will hear prayers for forgiveness (8:36, 38-39).
- (d) God is entreated to hear the prayer of the non-Israelites, that all peoples may know God as do the people of Israel (8:41-43).
- (e) God is petitioned to go with Israel's army whenever it goes against the enemy (8:44-45).
- (f) God is petitioned to hear the repentant plea of his people in exile, although they had rightly been delivered into their enemies' hand because of their sins (8:46-53).



NOTES

Solomon arose from a kneeling position (8:54) after completing his intercession. His words of benediction are very meaningful:

- (a) God, who must be appropriately acknowledged, had given rest to his people (8:56): He had kept his word to Moses (8:56).
- (b) God *with* his people (8:57) is essential to the achievement of Israel's purpose as his people.
- (c) The desire to have the heart properly inclined toward God should be a constant desire (8:58).
- (d) The supplication was that God maintains the cause of the king and of the people of Israel (8:59).
- (e) The result of Israel's inclination toward God and God's faithfulness to Israel would be that of other peoples coming to know God (8:60).
- (f) The exhortation, therefore, was that the "heart be perfect" (or wholly true) to the Lord (8:61).

4. *Sacrifices and Festivities Follow the Benediction (8:62-66)*

Solomon led the people in offering an appropriate sacrifice of dedication. There followed a great time of feasting (8:65-66).

5. The Lord Appears to Solomon a Second Time (9:1-9)

The second time the Lord appeared to Solomon (9:2) was after the Temple had been completed. This appearance was comparable to the one Solomon had experienced at Gibeon (9:2; see also 3:5). The Lord revealed to Solomon that He had heard Solomon's supplication. Further, He had set the Temple apart as the place for his name (9:3).

The Lord then presented the "if . . . then" propositions of the covenant (9:4-9):

- (a) If he is faithful and obediently observes the commandments, then the "house of David" will continue to rule on the throne over Israel (9:5-6).
- (b) However, if he is unfaithful through disobedience and idolatry, then the people of Israel will be conquered and carried into another land (9:7), and the Temple dedicated to God will become a heap of ruins. Those who pass by will ponder its destruction (9:7-8), and the answer will be that they forsook their God, who brought them up out of Egypt.

F. SOLOMON REIGNS IN GRANDEUR AND LUXURY (9:10 - 10:29)

This passage, as a whole, gives the general impression that Solomon ruled wisely and that, as a result, God's blessing was upon him and Israel.

1. *Hiram Dissatisfied (9:10-14)*

Hiram expressed discontent over the cities Solomon had given to him for materials and gold (9:11-13). His discontent was removed through satisfactory negotiations, or Hiram was forced to forget what he thought was unfair to him, for he was the weaker king of the two.



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2. *Solomon Uses Forced Labor (9:15-23)*

The use of forced or drafted labor was mentioned in connection with an overseer of the laborers (4:6) and with the building of the Temple (5:13-18). It is mentioned here to show how extensive Solomon's building activities were (9:15-19) and that non-Israelites were the labor draftees (9:20-23).

3. *Pharaoh's Daughter Moves to Her Own House (9:24)*

Pharaoh's daughter, who had been forced to live in temporary quarters, was finally moved into a fitting palace in Jerusalem (see 3:1; 7:8; 9:16).

4. *Solomon Offers Sacrifices in Jerusalem (9:25)*

Solomon showed proper concern for the worship of God by participating in the annual sacrifices. He also recognized that the altar in the Temple courtyard was the place to offer sacrifices. Gibeon was no longer an acceptable place (see 3:2-4).

5. *Solomon's Fleet Sails from Ezion-geber (9:26-28; see also 10:11-12, 22)*

These verses give more than a hint of Solomon's maritime activities:

- (a) Ships at Ezion-geber sailed with bronze products or slabs to distant lands.
- (b) Ezion-geber (9:26) is known as the large place manned jointly by Israelites and by Hiram's Phoenicians (9:27).
- (c) The bronze was exchanged for gold (9:27) and other exotic products (10:22) for Solomon's luxuriously furnished court.

6. *The Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon (10:1-10, 13)*

The visit of the queen of Sheba (Sheba, a city or state of south Arabia) serves as a specific example to show that Solomon, as a wise and rich king, attracted rulers of other countries to Jerusalem. The visit was a friendly occasion between Solomon and the queen (10:10, 13):

- (a) She discussed matters of business and asked many questions (10:2).
- (b) She was overwhelmed by Solomon's wisdom and lavishly furnished court (10:4-5).
- (c) The wealth and happiness of Solomon's court convinced her that the reports she had heard were true (10:6-8).
- (d) She blessed the Lord God of Israel and recognized that God had shown love for Israel in making Solomon its king (10:9).

7. *Solomon's Riches and Wisdom Emphasized (10:14-29)*

This is another selection of miscellaneous materials intended apparently to illustrate further Solomon's great wealth and widespread fame, such as annual revenue (10:14-15),



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gold shields (10:16-17), ivory and gold-adorned throne (10:18-20), and gold drinking vessels (10:21), gifts (10:25), chariots (10:26), silver (10:27), cedars (10:27), and horses (10:28-29). Solomon indeed “exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom” (10:23-24).

G. SOLOMON'S APOSTASY RESULTS IN DECLINE (11:1-43)

The tragedy of Solomon's life was that the blessings of wisdom, wealth, and fame undermined his devotion to God.

1. *Solomon's Apostasy Was Due to His Many Wives (11:1-8)*

Solomon flagrantly disobeyed the command concerning intermarriage with certain peoples around Israel (11:2). He also disregarded the command that the king of Israel should not have a large number of wives, among other things (11:3; see Deuteronomy 17:17). Solomon's many wives led him to be involved in their worship, in the construction of shrines, etc. (11:4-5, 7-8).

The king permitted his heart to be turned from complete commitment to God (11:4, 6) to worship of Ashtoreth, Milcom (11:5), and perhaps other pagan deities. He gradually accepted that which he had initially merely condoned.

2. *God's Words of Anger to Solomon (11:9-13)*

God, who is holy, makes no exceptions concerning sin and unrighteousness. Solomon, therefore, was no exception. The Lord had mercifully appeared to him twice (11:9), giving him the opportunity to turn away from his idolatry (11:10). However, Solomon would not leave off his idolatry and return to God (11:10). Therefore, God spoke to him in terms of rending judgment:

- (a) the kingdom would be taken from him and given to one of his servants (11:11); and
- (b) for David's sake, the separation would happen during the reign of Solomon's son, and one tribe would remain under him (11:12-13).

3. *Adversaries Are Instruments of Judgment (11:14-40)*

God's judgment upon Solomon began while he was still alive. Adversaries emerged in vassal states and Judah.

Hadad of the royal house of Edom (11:14) had been forced to flee to Egypt when David captured Edom (11:15; see 2 Samuel 8:13-14). He remained in Egypt until the opportune time came for him to return (11:16-21). He became resolute in his desire to return (11:22), apparently bent on gaining control of Edom and throwing off Solomon's yoke.

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Rezon of Syria also became a troublemaker (11:23). David had captured Damascus and other Syrian (Aramaean) regions (see 2 Samuel 8:3-10) and apparently ruled them with a firm hand. Under Solomon, Rezon of Damascus led a band of marauders that harassed parts of Israel (11:24). Solomon never put him “out of business” (11:25). It has been suggested that Rezon led Syria in a complete breakaway from Israel during Solomon’s later years.

Jeroboam, a capable young man whom Solomon had appointed over workers assigned to repair the city wall (11:27-28), “rebelled against the king” (11:27), that is, committed treason. One day, he met Ahijah, the prophet.

(a) He was commanded by Ahijah to take ten of the twelve pieces into which Ahijah had torn a new garment (11:29-31, 35).

(b) He was told that one tribe would remain under Solomon’s son because of God’s promise to David (11:32-34, 36).

(c) He was also told by Ahijah that his name would be associated with a long-established ruling house of Israel, like David’s, if he would be obedient (11:37-38). Jeroboam was forced to flee for his life because of Ahijah’s prophecy and apparently because of the treasonous act the prophecy may have prompted. He fled to Egypt and remained there until Solomon died (11:40).

4. *Solomon Dies and Is Buried in the City of David (11:41-43)*

The lengthy account of Solomon’s reign, compared with accounts of later kings’ reigns, is closed in characteristic fashion.

Abishag [ab-EYE-shag]
Abiathar [ab-EYE-ah-thar]
Phoenicia [fe-NEESH-ah]
cherubim [CHAIR-uh-bim]
Shekinah [shuh-KAI-nuh]
Mesopotamia [meh-suh-puh-TAY-mee-uh]
Jachin [JEH-kin]

CHAPTER 3. TWO KINGDOMS, NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN; THEIR HISTORIES SYNCHRONIZED (1 KINGS 12:1 - 2 KINGS 17:41)

NOTES

First Kings 12:1 - Second Kings 17:41 is the historian's unique presentation of the histories of the two Israelite kingdoms. This combination of these two histories into one was made possible through selections from the official annals of both kingdoms. These annals are frequently mentioned as sources wherein the reader might gain additional information as desired. Unfortunately, they have long since been lost, but the essential points are preserved in these inspired biblical books.

A. DIVISION FOLLOWING REVOLT AT SHECHEM (12:1-24)

It is generally understood that the events recorded in this chapter occurred at the very beginning of Rehoboam's reign.

1. Rehoboam Meets with Israel at Shechem (12:1-15)

Shechem (12:1) is located about forty miles (about 64 kilometers) north of Jerusalem in the pass between Mount Gerizim [GER-ee-zim] and Mount Ebal [EE-bal]. Rehoboam went apparently to have himself confirmed as king of the tribes represented by the assembly which he met there.

Jeroboam, who had fled from Solomon, returned home after Solomon died (12:2). In fact, others had sent for him (12:3), without doubt remembering him as a capable leader. He was among those who asked Rehoboam to ease the yoke that Solomon had imposed upon them (12:4), requesting a decrease in taxes and other chafing restrictions.

After three days (12:5), Rehoboam came back with an answer based on the brash, arrogant advice of a group of young counselors (12:8-11, 13-14). He chose selfishly to pursue the course of a tyrant rather than follow the path of a servant in his declaration that he would greatly increase the weight of their yoke.

2. Jeroboam Made King (12:16-24)

The northern tribes felt they were not given proper consideration by Rehoboam, "son of David" (12:16). They therefore rebelled (12:19) and made Jeroboam their king. Rehoboam fled in his chariot to Jerusalem (12:18). His kingdom consisted primarily of the tribe of Judah (12:17, 20). The result of the division was two kingdoms - the Northern (known as Israel) and the Southern (known as Judah). The two kingdoms were never reunited completely as one, each running its course and falling to a powerful Mesopotamian political power.



NOTES

Rehoboam assembled his army to bring the Northern Kingdom back into line (12:21). He was warned by Shemaiah, a prophet, not to go to war against his Israelite brethren (12:22-24). To his credit, this time, he listened to the right man.

B. JEROBOAM REIGNS AT SHECHEM AND AT TIRZAH (12:25 - 14:20)

Shechem (12:25) was Jeroboam's capital at the beginning of his reign. Political and military factors may have caused the change to Tirzah (see 14:17), approximately seven miles northeast of Shechem.

1. Jeroboam Engages in Building Activity (12:25)

"Jeroboam fortified Shechem," that is, he added to or altered a city already with a long history (see 12:1; Joshua 24:1). Penuel was located east of the Jordan River.

2. Jeroboam Makes Religious Provisions for Israel (12:26-33)

Jeroboam took steps to provide for his people's religious needs, especially ensuring that they did not have to go to Jerusalem.

In consultation with others, Jeroboam made two calves (more precisely, "bulls") and presented them to his people as their gods (12:28). Bethel (12:29) was near the southern border of this kingdom, and Dan was near the northern border, beyond Lake Huleh. Different explanations have been given concerning the background of these bulls and their significance. They were an offense to God as long as they existed, whether of Egyptian, Canaanite, or other background. The historian frequently referred to them as the "sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat."

Shrines were built for Jeroboam's bulls and houses in high places, and priests from all the people (12:31) were appointed to officiate as the sacred personnel of Jeroboam's religion.

Jeroboam changed the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles from the fifteenth day of the seventh month to the fifteenth day of the eighth month (12:32). All these changes Jeroboam did "of his own choosing" (12:33).

3. Jeroboam's Altar Is Condemned (13:1-34)

The "man of God" coming forth to speak the word of the Lord to the king and to the nation is a manifestation of God's mercy and patience with a sinful, rebellious people. God warns before He sends judgment.

This unnamed prophet came from Judah to Bethel (13:1), about twelve miles north of Jerusalem. He came when Jeroboam was offering incense on the altar of his shrine. He predicted that Josiah would execute the priests of the altar on it (13:2). He miraculously destroyed the altar and healed Jeroboam's withered hand (13:3-6). He carefully obeyed God, refusing to dine with Jeroboam (13:10).

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But, an old prophet intercepted the man of God from Judah (13:11-32). The old prophet was perhaps a reliable, faithful prophet of God at one time, but one who had gone along with Jeroboam's new religion at Bethel.

- a. He deceived the man of God out of Judah and brought him back as his dinner guest (13:13-19).
- b. His deceit and the disobedience of the man from Judah were exposed by the word of the Lord (13:20-22).
- c. The man from Judah was killed by a lion because he had been disobedient (13:23-25).
- d. The old prophet of Bethel provided a proper burial for the man from Judah (13:26-31). He could not deny the validity of the word of the Lord (13:32).

In 13:1-26 there is a vivid illustration in real life of the lesson "God Expects Unquestioned Obedience":

- a. Obedience may take one into difficult places (13:10).
- b. Obedience confronts one with situations when it is difficult to make proper distinctions (13:11-16).
- c. Obedience can be quickly turned into disobedience when one's guard is down (13:17-19).
- d. Disobedience brings punishment irrespective of past faithfulness and service (13:20-25).

Jeroboam increased the number of high places and added to the number of reprobate priests (13:33). He continued to create circumstances that would result in his destruction (13:34).

4. *Jeroboam's Wife Visits Ahijah (14:1-16)*

Jeroboam sent his wife, disguised and with gifts (14:2-3), to Shiloh (14:4) to seek help from Ahijah (14:2) concerning the illness of Abijah, his son. The Lord revealed to the blind Ahijah that Jeroboam's wife was coming to see him (14:4-5).

Ahijah addressed her by name, stating that he was charged by the Lord to give "bad news" to her (14:6):

- a. the "house of Jeroboam" will be cut off (14:7-10);
- b. Abijah will die (14:12);
- c. another will rise up as king after Jeroboam (14:14); and
- d. Israel will eventually be scattered (14:15-16).

5. *A Sad Summary for Jeroboam (14:17-20)*

His son died (14:17). There was war and unrest after his death (14:19-20) - this is the sad life summary of the man who made Israel sin.

C. THE CLOSE OF REHOBOAM'S REIGN (14:21-31)

Attention is directed again to Rehoboam, whose reign, of course, coincided with that of Jeroboam.



NOTES

1. *Rehoboam Is Guilty of Apostasy and Idolatry (14:22-24)*

First Kings summarizes how Rehoboam gave himself to “the abominations of the nations” (14:24).

2. *Shishak of Egypt Comes against Jerusalem (14:25-28)*

Shishak (Sheshonk, 945-924 B.C.), king of Egypt, invaded Judah, captured Jerusalem, and took the treasures and gold shields of Judah (14:26-27).

Verses 21-28 interestingly illustrate “Form without Substance”:

- a. The golden shields were lost through sin (14:21-26).
- b. Substitute religion replaces the real (14:27).
- c. The imitation is as inferior to the real as brass is to pure gold (14:27).
- d. The form of godliness may still be maintained when reality is lost (14:28).

D. THE “HOUSE OF DAVID” IN JERUSALEM (15:1-24)

The history of the Southern Kingdom, Judah, is continued with the accounts of the reign of Abijam and of Asa.

1. *Abijam’s Reign, 913-911 B.C. (15:1-8)*

Abijam reigned ingloriously, similarly to the way his father, Rehoboam, had reigned. He continued the idolatry, the evil, of his father (15:3). Because of David’s faithfulness, he was not removed (15:4-5). He was continually at war with Jeroboam (15:6).

2. *Asa’s Reign, 911-870 B.C. (15:9-24)*

Asa’s reign is evaluated favorably by the historian (15:11), apparently because Asa undertook needed religious reform. He “got rid of” the various repulsive aspects of the idolatrous Canaanite worship he inherited from Rehoboam and Abijam (15:12-13). He also brought offerings and gifts to the house of the Lord, which his father had neglected (15:15).

Open conflict with Israel began over a border city, Ramah, which Baasha built to halt those of the Northern Kingdom who attempted to defect to the Southern Kingdom (15:17). Asa bought Ben-hadad’s help and stopped Baasha’s work at Ramah (15:18-21). He then organized his own workforce, tore down Ramah, and used the materials for two border cities of his own (15:22).

E. INSTABILITY IN THE NORTHERN KINGDOM (15:25 - 16:28)

This passage gives events of the Northern Kingdom of approximately twenty-five or thirty years.



NOTES

1. *Nadab's Reign, 910-909 B.C. (15:25-32)*

Nadab's reign was very short, coinciding with part of Asa's reign. Nadab chose to continue his father's religion, feeling it was essential to the existence of his kingdom (15:26). This was the result of his sins and of the way "he made Israel sin" (15:30). First Kings summarizes how Rehoboam gave himself to "the abominations of the nations" (14:24).

2. *Baasha's Reign, 909-886 B.C. (15:33 - 16:7)*

Baasha was another who came to power with promise but who also found it expedient to continue Jeroboam's corrupted, abortive worship (15:34). His sinful ways led to the prediction that his house, his descendants, would be killed (15:34).

3. *Elah's Reign, 886-885 B.C. (16:8-14)*

Elah, Baasha's son, lived a carefree life with no apparent concern for his people and their plight. He was killed by Zimri, a chariot commander of his army (16:9-10).

4. *Zimri's Reign, 885 B.C. (16:15-20)*

Zimri was king for only seven days (16:15). He had no support from the people, for they turned to Omri (16:15-16). Facing Omri and defeat (16:17-18), he burned his house down upon himself (16:18).

5. *Omri's Reign, 885-874 B.C. (16:21-28)*

Omri, a very capable leader, brought dynastic stability to the Northern Kingdom. He was able to defeat Tibni, leader of another group (16:21). He became the sole claimant to the throne, ending a period of political anarchy.

Omri's choice of Samaria as capital for the Northern Kingdom (16:24) was very wise, for it was based on the strategic location of Samaria in the hill country of Ephraim. But, his good points were nullified by his failure to lead the people in the true worship of God. He continued Jeroboam's religion (16:26) and involved himself in Canaanite religious practices.

F. AHAB OF THE "HOUSE OF OMRI" 874-853 BC (16:29 - 22:40)

The reign of Ahab was a crucial time for the people of the Northern Kingdom and also for those of the Southern Kingdom. The Syrians, led by the energetic Ben-hadad, threatened the nation externally. The idolatrous worship of Baal and Asherah promoted by Ahab and Jezebel threatened more seriously internally. The man whom God mightily used during these critical times was Elijah.



NOTES

1. *Ahab's Marriage to Jezebel (16:29-34)*

The marriage of Ahab to Jezebel (16:31) no doubt had political implications, along with the religious involvements described in the Bible.

As a result of this union, Ahab built a Baal temple, an altar, and an Asherah (a sacred pillar or pole) in Samaria (16:32-33). All this made Jeroboam's sins appear as a "light thing" (16:31). The rebuilding of Jericho (16:34), as prophesied by Joshua (Joshua 6:26), could have been part of a program to provide more adequate fortifications in the Jordan Valley area against threatening Moabites.

2. *Elijah Remains in Seclusion during the Drought (17:1-24)*

Elijah, one of the most exciting prophets of the Old Testament, appeared suddenly when the time required not only a great spirit but also great deeds. "Elijah the Tishbite" (from Tishbe, presumably somewhere in Transjordan) came dramatically to predict a drought of three and one-half years (17:1; see also Luke 4:25). This prediction was the beginning of intense opposition from Ahab and Jezebel. The opposition was essentially between one who stood for God and right and those who promoted Baal worship and evil. Elijah fled for safety to the "brook Cherith, that is before Jordan" (17:3) - not identifiable today. God directed ravens to bring the food he needed (17:6).

Elijah's second hiding place was a widow's home in Zarephath (17:9), about six miles south of Sidon. There a widow shared her last portion of meal and oil with him (17:11-14). God miraculously continued to maintain the supply of meal and oil according to his word through Elijah (17:14, 16). God manifested his power by restoring the widow's son to life (17:22-23). His power over physical life typifies his power to give newness of spiritual life - the "good news" (gospel) in Christ in the New Testament.

3. *Elijah Shows Himself to Ahab (18:1-46)*

"In the third year" (18:1) of the drought, Elijah obeyed God's command to present himself to angry, unpredictable Ahab. The severity of the famine was evident in Ahab's and Obadiah's search for grass (18:5-6). Obadiah had secretly hidden 100 prophets from Ahab and Jezebel (18:7:8). Reluctantly, he informed Ahab that Elijah had come (18:9-16).

"Troubler of Israel," cried Ahab when he saw Elijah (18:17). Elijah, however, set the record straight. It was Ahab's Baal and Asherah worship that was the reason for Israel's troubles (18:18).

Elijah next met Baal's and Asherah's prophets, probably on the southeastern slope of Carmel, nearly forty miles from Samaria.



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His challenge (18:21-24) was in the form of a question: “How long will you waver between two opinions?” (18:21) That is, how long are you going to try to do the impossible - make a place for both Yahweh [YAH-way] and Baal? The frenzied acts of the prophets of Baal (18:25-29) were a complete failure in arousing any response from Baal and Asherah. Elijah prayed to the living God in a direct manner and in simplicity of faith (18:36-37). God answered by fire, consuming the water-drenched sacrifice and altar (18:38).

God then sent the rain (18:41-46), ending the terrible drought and showing himself Lord of the whole realm of nature.

4. *Elijah Withdraws to the Desert (19:1-21)*

Elijah had won the day for God on Mount Carmel, but there remained Jezebel, who, in her fanatical zeal, sought Elijah’s life because he had slain her prophets (19:1-2).

a. Elijah under the juniper tree (19:4-8). Elijah’s lack of rest and low ebb physically had an adverse effect on his mental and spiritual outlook. He fled south into the wilderness. Somewhere in the desert, in solitude, he sat down under a juniper tree to ponder his difficult lot (19:4). The sleep, the food, more sleep, and the angel’s touch (19:5-8) restored him to his vigorous, fiery self.

b. God reveals himself to Elijah at Horeb (19:9-18). Horeb is understood to be another name for Sinai or a term that designates a particular area of Sinai. At the mountain where the Lord revealed himself to Moses in fire and thunder (Exodus 19, for example), He revealed himself to Elijah - not in a strong wind (19:11), nor in an earthquake (19:11), nor in a fire (19:12), but in a “still small voice” (19:12).

c. Elisha receives Elijah’s mantle (19:19-21). Going to Abel-meholah (see 19:16), Elijah threw his mantle over Elisha, designating Elisha as his successor. Elisha said goodbye to his parents (19:20), slew a yoke of oxen and gave a farewell feast (19:21), and became Elijah’s disciple (19:21). “God’s Cure for the Blues” is pictured in 19:1-21:

- (1) Proper care for the physical body.
- (2) A fresh revelation from God, hearing from heaven in “a still small voice” (19:9-14).
- (3) A renewed mission (19:15-16).
- (4) A faithful friend (19:18-21).

5. *Ahab Confronted by Ben-hadad (20:1-43)*

The Syrians under King Ben-hadad presented a constant threat to Ahab. However, they were never able to take Samaria. Ben-hadad organized a large coalition of kings (20:1), probably rulers of city-states, who attacked and besieged Samaria. With the city surrounded and at his mercy, Ben-hadad demanded payment of heavy tribute from Ahab (20:2-6). Consulting with the elders of the city, Ahab followed their counsel and refused to submit to Ben-hadad’s demand (20:7-12). A prophet informed Ahab that he would be able to defeat Ben-hadad, encouraging Ahab to rally his men (20:13-15). At noon, while Ben-hadad and his allied kings were drinking (20:16), Ahab directed his servants and others to move out of Samaria against Ben-hadad (20:17). They routed the besieging Syrians (20:19-21).



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The prophet at the siege of Samaria (20:22; also see 20:13) predicted that the Syrians would return in the spring. Ben-hadad, looking ahead to his next attack against Israel, planned to fight the battle in a plain rather than in the mountainous terrain (20:23-25).

Again, God gave Israel the victory. At Aphek in Bashan, east of the Sea of Galilee, the Syrians came in great numbers against Israel (20:26-27). Israel again defeated their enemies (20:28-30). Ahab captured Ben-hadad and then released him (20:30-34). The covenant or agreement (20:34) apparently concerned cities of northern Israel, which had come under Syrian control during Baasha's reign (see 15:20). A prophet condemned Ahab because he was lenient with Ben-hadad (15:35-41). He also predicted that Ahab's life would be taken in judgment since he had not executed Ben-hadad (20:42).

6. Jezebel's Evil Plot against Naboth (21:1-29)

A pouting king and a ruthless woman meant death for a man minding his affairs and standing for his rights. However, God was not unmindful of the injustice of it all. Naboth, an Israelite of Jezreel, had a tract of land near Ahab's summer home, which Ahab wanted (21:1-2). He not only was within his rights in refusing to sell to Ahab, but he also would have disregarded a religious responsibility had he sold it (20:3; see Leviticus 25:23-28).

Jezebel fiendishly conspired against Naboth (21:7-9). She instructed two evil men to charge Naboth falsely with blasphemy (21:10). The scheme worked. Naboth was stoned (21:11-14). Ahab was able to take possession of Naboth's land or vineyard (21:15-16). But Elijah was sent with a message of judgment upon Ahab, who had sold himself to do what was evil (21:20, 25). The message to Ahab was: You shall die in the very same way in which you murdered Naboth (21:18-20). Ahab's "house" would be cut off similarly to the way in which Jeroboam's was cut off (21:21-22). Jezebel and others would die terrible deaths (21:23-24).

Ahab repented of his evil (21:27). He was told that he himself would not see the destruction of his house. This would come after he died (21:28-29).

7. Ahab and Ben-hadad at War over Ramoth-gilead (22:1-40)

A truce between Israel and Syria for "three years" (22:1) may be figured from the time of the battle at Aphek (20:26-29) until the battle over Ramoth-gilead. An agreement between Ahab and Jehoshaphat involved Jehoshaphat in the battle over Ramoth-gilead (22:2-4). Jehoshaphat set a good example in wanting to hear from the Lord before going out to battle (22:5). Ahab's 400 prophets did not satisfy Jehoshaphat with their superficial optimism (22:6, 10-12). Micaiah predicted defeat for Israel (22:14-18) and death for Ahab (22:19-23). He was cast into prison (22:24-27).

Before the battle at Ramoth-gilead, Ahab disguised himself (22:29-30), but a chance arrow found its mark (22:34). That evening he died (22:35). In the meantime, his army scattered (22:36).

NOTES

The wicked king was buried in Samaria (22:37). His chariot was washed by the pool of Samaria (22:38), and dogs licked up his blood as predicted by Elijah (22:38; see 21:19).

G. JEHOSEPHAT'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 870-848 BC (22:41-50)

1. *A King Who Did Right (22:41-46)*

Jehoshaphat did as his father, Asa: he did what "was right in the eyes of the Lord" (22:43). He seems to have ruled as co-regent with his father, Asa, from 873 to 870 B.C.

2. *An Endeavor at Ezion-geber That Failed (22:47-50)*

Jehoshaphat's attempt to send ships out of Ezion-geber was not successful, for his ships were wrecked (22:48-49).

H. AHAZIAH'S REIGN IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 853-852 BC (1 KINGS 22:51 - 2 KINGS 1:18)

Ahaziah's reign coincided with two years of Jehoshaphat's reign (1 Kings 22:51).

1. *Characterized by Evil (1 Kings 22:52-53)*

Ahaziah did evil by walking in the way of Jeroboam and by serving Baal.

2. *Moab Rebels after Ahab Dies (2 Kings 1:1)*

Details concerning this rebellion are given in 2 Kings 3:4 and the following verses.

3. *Ahaziah Seeks Help from Baal-zebub (2 Kings 1:2-16)*

In his illness, Ahaziah chose to exalt Baal rather than God. Elijah intercepted his messengers sent to Ekron and told them that Ahaziah would not recover (1:3-4). The men returned and reported to Ahaziah (1:5-6). Ahaziah realized his men had been confronted by Elijah (1:7-8).

Elijah stopped two additional groups that Ahaziah had sent to Ekron (1:9-12). The prophet then accompanied a third group into the king's presence (1:13-15) and told him face-to-face that he would not recover (1:16).

4. *Epilogue of the Account of Ahaziah's Reign (1:17-18)*

Another man died, having never submitted himself to God but insisting rather on worshiping Baal.

NOTES

I. ELIJAH-ELISHA NARRATIVE (2:1-25)

This chapter gives an account of events that closed Elijah's ministry and marked the beginning of Elisha's.

Elijah's departure from this earth was near at hand (2:1-5). Elijah and Elisha crossed the Jordan for this event (2:6-8). Elisha's last request simply but significantly was: "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit." (2:9). The younger man witnessed Elijah's going into heaven - the chariots, the fire, the whirlwind (2:11). He met the test, qualifying to receive Elijah's mantle, and thus to be his successor (2:10).

Elisha discarded his own clothes and then put them on Elijah's mantle (2:12-13). The mantle was a symbol of God's power or Spirit upon him. He used God's power to re-cross Jordan (2:13-14), to wisely lead the "sons of the prophets" (2:16-18), to decontaminate the spring at Jericho (2:19-21), and to rout a group of jeering lads with the help of two she-bears (2:23-24).

J. JEHORAM'S REIGN IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 852-841 BC (3:1-27)

1. *The Evil of Jehoram's Reign (3:1-3)*

Jehoram took some steps against Baal worship (3:2), but he continued Jeroboam's religion (3:3).

2. *Jehoram Enlists Jehoshaphat's Aid against Moab (3:4-27)*

Jehoram had to deal with the revolt of Moab, a vassal of the Northern Kingdom, presumably from Omri's time. Jehoram called on Jehoshaphat to join him in putting down Mesha's rebellion (3:6-7). Moab was an enemy of both. Faced with an acute water shortage (3:9) and needing the help of a prophet (3:11-12), the kings went to see Elisha (3:12).

The word Elisha brought from the Lord was:

- a. they will have water (3:16-17), and
- b. they will defeat the Moabites (3:18-19).

The water that God provided appeared like pools of blood to the Moabites (3:21-22). They thought the Israelites had fought among themselves (3:23). The Moabites were off guard and completely surprised when the Israelites rose up to attack and defeat them (3:24-25).

K. MORE ABOUT ELISHA (4:1 - 8:15)

Elisha continued his ministry with many miracles. These probably occurred during Jehoram's reign.



NOTES

1. *God Provides for a Widow's Need (4:1-7)*

God's miraculous power was manifested in the abundant increase of oil, which enabled a prophet's widow to pay her debt and spare her sons from a period of slavery. Besides, she had enough on which she and her sons could live.

2. *God Gives New Life to a Child (4:8-37)*

Elisha had been befriended by a wealthy woman in Shunem (4:8), a village that overlooked the valley of Jezreel. She had shown many kindnesses to him. He, in turn, tried to repay her. The woman generously kept a room, well-provided and ready, for Elisha (4:8-10). One day, Elisha announced to the childless couple that a child would be born to them (4:14-16). In due time, they had a son (4:17).

The son, having grown normally, was helping with the harvest and suffered fatal exposure to the sun (4:18-20). The mother hurriedly went for Elisha at Mount Carmel (4:22-25). Elisha went with her to the child's bedroom (4:32). Alone, he prayed and stretched himself prone on the lifeless body of the child (4:33-34). God miraculously restored the life of the boy (4:35). Elisha presented him to his mother (4:36). God again gave newness of life (see 1 Kings 17:17-24).

3. *God Removes Poison from the Pot (4:38-41)*

A famine on and food scarce (4:38) - the conditions that led to the cooking of poisonous gourds (4:39). Elisha added meal to the pottage, correcting the poisonous element of the gourds (4:41). God manifested his power through Elisha in making the food safe.

4. *God Multiplies the Bread (4:42-44)*

A small amount of food for 100 hungry men - a situation which Elisha solved by miraculously increasing the food so that there was enough for all and some leftovers (4:43-44). This was another illustration of the greatness and goodness of God.

5. *God Heals Naaman of His Leprosy (5:1-27)*

God's healing power manifested in the cure of Naaman's leprosy was apparently intended to show further that the God of Israel was greater than the gods of the Syrians. A captive Israelite maiden's confidence in Elisha (5:2-3), or really in God, led Naaman to seek help in Israel (5:6-7).

Naaman's exasperation over the Jordan's uncleanness may have been partly due to his correct comparison of the rivers of Damascus with the Jordan (5:12). However, it was primarily due to his unwillingness to humble himself properly and to follow God's way to health.

When he finally did as directed, God wondrously healed him (5:13-14). Naaman made a glorious confession: "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel." (5:15). He also affirmed that he would offer sacrifices thereafter only to God (5:17).



NOTES

Gehazi, Elisha's servant, schemed to obtain the gifts (5:21-24), which Elisha had refused (see 5:15-16). He was smitten with Naaman's leprosy (5:27), apparently for his scheming, which could have seriously impaired the effectiveness of Elisha's ministry.

6. *God Enables Elisha to Retrieve the Axe Head (6:1-7)*

A group of prophets working on a building project (6:1-4) lost their axe head in the Jordan River. Elisha miraculously retrieved it for them (6:5-7).

7. *God Uses Elisha to Trap the Syrian Raiders (6:8-23)*

The Syrian raids described in this passage perhaps occurred during the time of Jehoram (see 3:1). Elisha, through divine revelation, frustrated the Syrians a number of times by informing the king of Israel of the secret movements of the Syrian raiders (6:8-10). The Syrians concluded that Elisha was the one making it possible for the king of Israel to outsmart them. They surrounded Dothan, hoping to seize Elisha (6:11-14).

Elisha, confident and unafraid, was used by the Lord to smite the Syrians with temporary blindness (6:18) and to lead them to the king of Israel at Samaria (6:19-20). There, the king of Israel mercifully gave them a feast and then sent them back to Syria (6:21-23).

8. *God Uses Elisha during Ben-hadad's Siege of Samaria (6:24 - 7:20)*

After a period of peace (see 6:23), Ben-hadad led his entire army to besiege Samaria. Under the prolonged siege, starvation threatened. The donkey, an unclean animal, was used for food (6:25), among other repulsive things. Further, mothers, in desperation, resorted to planned cannibalism (6:28-30). To the elders (6:32), the king's messenger, and the king (6:33), Elisha declared that on the next day, food would be sold cheaply at the gate of Samaria (7:1-2).

Four lepers outside the city decided they had nothing to lose by going to the Syrian camp (7:3-4). The Lord miraculously made the Syrians hear a sound like that of the approach of a large army. The Syrians hurriedly abandoned their camp (7:5-7). The lepers found the camp deserted (7:8). The men reported to the king and people at Samaria what they had discovered (7:9-11). The king's disbelief concerning their report was removed through a satisfactory check on it (7:12-15). The people of Samaria then went to plunder the camp of the Syrians. They soon had food again. What Elisha had predicted had come to pass (7:18-19).

9. *Elisha Again Assists the Shunammite Woman (8:1-6)*

The Shunammite woman had gone on a sojourn in the land of Philistia during a prolonged famine, following Elisha's advice (8:1-2). Elisha spoke on her behalf to the king and helped her repossess her land after the famine (8:3-6).



NOTES

10. Elisha Goes to Damascus (8:7-15)

Elisha went to Damascus to visit Ben-hadad. The Syrian ruler was ill, but he sent Elisha a gift by Hazael, an indication of his great respect for Elisha. Hazael asked Elisha about Ben-hadad's future well being (8:8). Elisha's word was that the king could recover. Elisha also declared to Hazael that he would become Syria's king (8:13) and that he would treat Israel ruthlessly (8:12). Hazael murdered Ben-hadad the next day (8:15).

L. JORAM'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 848-841 BC (8:16-24)

The name Jehoram (shorter form, Joram) is used in both king lists. Jehoram or Joram appears to have been co-regent with his father, Jehoshaphat, from 853 to 848 B.C.

1. "He Did Evil" (8:17-19)

Joram "did evil" by continuing the idolatrous worship of Ahab and Jezebel.

2. Edom Revolts against Joram (8:20-24)

Edom's revolt may have been prompted by failure earlier on Israel's part to subdue Moab completely (see 3:25-27).

M. AHAZIAH'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 841 BC (8:25-29)

1. "He Did Evil" (8:25-27)

Again, the evil condemned was participation in and promotion of the Canaanite religion.

2. Warring with Syria over Ramoth-gilead (8:28-29)

Ramoth-gilead (8:28) was apparently wrested from Syria at this time through the combined efforts of Jehoram (Northern Kingdom) and Ahaziah (Southern Kingdom).

N. JEHU'S RISE AND REIGN IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 841-814 BC (9:1 - 10:36)

"The house of Jehu" maintained itself in Samaria for four generations (10:30).

1. Jehu Is Anointed by a Prophet (9:1-10)

Elisha passed along to "one of the children of the prophets" (9:1) God's command to anoint Jehu (see 1 Kings 19:16), which had been given to him as Elijah's successor. Jehu was sought out and anointed to become king over Israel (9:2-6) and to destroy the "whole house of Ahab" (9:7-10).



NOTES

2. *Jehu Overthrows Jehoram (9:11-37)*

After initial surprise over the prophet's act, Jehu's companions proclaimed him king (9:11-13). Jehu made his way on his chariot from Ramoth-gilead to Jezreel (9:14-16), where Jehoram was recovering from a battle wound (9:15). Ahaziah of the Southern Kingdom was visiting him there (9:16). Jehu slew the fleeing Jehoram (9:17-24) and buried him in Naboth's vineyard (9:25-26). Jehu pursued the fleeing Ahaziah. An arrow found its mark. Ahaziah fell in his chariot and died at Megiddo (9:27). Jehu then went after Jezebel (9:30-33). Her terrible end was the fulfillment of Elijah's words (9:35-37; see 1 Kings 21:23-24).

3. *Jehu Removes Baal from Israel (10:1-36)*

Jehu faced a situation that demanded extreme measures. Baal must go, or God would go! Certain officials chose to support the new king (10:1-5). They helped him in his extermination of Jehoram's household (10:7-11). Ahaziah's kinsmen, on their way to Jezreel, were included in Jehu's blood purge (10:14). These men were all descendants of Ahab and Jezebel through their mother, Athaliah.

Jehonadab, a Rechabite leader of a group that stressed the rugged, simple life of bygone days (see Jeremiah 35:1-11), rode with Jehu to Samaria (10:16-17).

Jehu assembled the people apparently for Baal worship (10:18-19). At the appropriate time, he ordered his guards to slay the assembled Baal worshipers (10:21-25). He also ordered the destruction of the Baal images and pillars (10:26-27). Jehu purged the land of Baalism (10:28), but he did not remove Jeroboam's calves (10:29).

In an epilogue (10:32-36), it is related that Jehu could not stop Hazael's conquests in Transjordan (10:33).

0. **ATHALIAH'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 841-835 BC (11:1-20)**

Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother (11:1), tried to rule as queen in Judah, but she was put down after six years (11:3).

1. *Jehosheba Saves Joash (11:1-3)*

Jehosheba, daughter of King Joram, hid Joash (11:3), thus saving the one who became king and continued the Davidic line.

2. *Joash Publicly Proclaimed King (11:4-12)*

Those who promoted Joash made their plans and carried them out very well (11:9-11). After successfully hiding him for six years (11:3), they brought him out, placed the crown on his head, and proclaimed him king (11:12).



NOTES

3. *Jehoiada Captures Athaliah (11:13-16)*

The priest Jehoiada was the leader in establishing Joash and in deposing Athaliah. He was directly involved in capturing and executing her (11:15-16).

4. *Jehoiada Leads in Reestablishing the Covenant (11:17-20)*

The making of the covenant between the Lord and themselves (11:17) carried the responsibility of religious purge, which was assumed by Jehoiada and others (11:18).

P. JOASH'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 835-796 BC (11:21 - 12:21)

Joash (or Jehoash) began his reign as a boy-king (12:1), with Jehoiada as his chief counselor.

1. *Joash Urges Repair of the Temple (12:4-16)*

Athaliah's worship of Baal resulted in serious neglect of the Temple. A plan to depend on the priests for the Temple repairs did not succeed after it was given a twenty-three-year trial (12:6). A collection box was then used for collecting the funds, and a strict account was kept of what was placed in it (12:9-10). Workers were hired and paid in a businesslike manner (12:11-15). The Lord's work was undertaken seriously and systematically, and the project was completed successfully.

2. *Joash Pays Tribute to Hazael (12:17-18)*

Joash was forced to pay Hazael out of the palace and Temple treasuries in order to save Jerusalem (12:18).

3. *Joash Is Slain by Conspirators (12:19-21)*

Joash was the victim of conspirators led presumably by Jozachar and Jehozabad (12:21).

Q. JEHOAHAZ' REIGN IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 814-798 BC (13:1-9)

1. *Jehoahaz Did Evil (13:1-2)*

Jehoahaz promoted the "sins of Jeroboam".

2. *Jehoahaz Reigns Weakly (13:3-7)*

Hazael of Syria threatened continually (13:3), but Jehoahaz was not able to give needed strong leadership (13:6-7).

NOTES

R. JEHOASH'S REIGN IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 798-782 BC (13:10-25; 14:15-16)

The account of Jehoash's reign is arranged as follows: prologue (13:10-11), epilogue (13:12-13, repeated in 14:15-16), and body (14:14-24).

1. *Joash Visits Elisha during His Illness (13:14-19)*

Joash visited Elisha, who was near death (13:14). Elisha's commands involving a bow and arrows (13:15) concerned Syria. The arrow shot toward the east symbolized victory in Aphek (13:17). Striking the ground with arrows symbolized Israel's victories over Syria (13:18-19). Joash stopped short of complete victory.

2. *Elisha's Bones Revive a Man (13:20-21)*

The miraculous power associated with Elisha's bones was intended to show that God's power would be manifested in victory over Syria even after Elisha's death.

3. *Joash Is Victorious over Syria (13:22-25)*

Hazael of Syria had continually oppressed Israel (13:22; see 2 Kings 8:12). His son, Ben-hadad (the second Syrian king by that name in the Bible), was defeated by Jehoash three times (13:24-25). Jehoash recovered captive cities for Israel.

S. AMAZIAH'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 797-767 BC (14:1 14, 17-20)

Amaziah followed his assassinated father, Joash, on the throne in Jerusalem.

1. *The Prologue (14:1-6)*

Amaziah did right (14:3), except for failure to remove the high places (14:4). He apprehended the murderers of his father and executed them (14:5-6), exempting, however, their sons (see Deuteronomy 24-15).

2. *Amaziah Is Successful against Edom (14:7)*

Considerably more detail is given in 2 Chronicles 25:5-13 about the way Amaziah soundly defeated the Edomites.

3. *Amaziah Is Defeated by Joash (Jehoash) (14:8-14)*

Amaziah's words, "Come, meet me face to face" (14:8), were a declaration of war against Joash of the Northern Kingdom. Joash's fable suggested that Amaziah reconsider, for his Edomite victory had made him vainglorious (14:8-10). Amaziah would not reconsider, and Judah suffered a great loss (14:11-14).



NOTES

4. *Amaziah Is Also a Victim of Conspirators (14:17-20)*

Amaziah, learning about a conspiracy, fled to Lachish, where the conspirators caught him and slew him (14:19).

T. JEROBOAM'S REIGN (JEROBOAM 2) IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 782-753 BC (14:23-29)

The long reign of Jeroboam 2 was one of the strongest and most prosperous of the Northern Kingdom.

1. *Jeroboam Does Evil (14:24)*

Jeroboam's evil was an endorsement and continuation of the false worship begun by Jeroboam, son of Nebat (14:24).

2. *Jeroboam Restores the Border of Israel (14:25-28)*

Jeroboam was able to restore the "coast [border] of Israel" (14:25) northward and eastward, comparable to limits established by David (see 2 Samuel 8:1-14; 1 Kings 4:21).

U. AZARIAH'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 767-740 BC (14:21-22; 15:1-7)

Azariah (called Uzziah in 2 Chronicles 26 and Isaiah 1:1 and 6:1) was a strong, prosperous king, although his reign is treated very briefly in this passage. He appears to have reigned as co-regent with Amaziah from 791-767 B.C.

1. *The Prologue - "He Did ... Right" (15:1-4)*

Azariah did right, as did Joash (12:2) and Amaziah (14:3), but, like them, he did not remove the high places (15:4).

2. *Azariah Promotes Military and Commercial Expansion (14:22)*

Rebuilding Elath, the port of Ezion geber, for shipping purposes suggests strides in trade under Azariah (see 2 Chronicles 26:6-15). He also developed a mighty military force for Judah.

3. *Azariah's Leprosy Forces a Co-regency with Jotham (15:5-7)*

Azariah's leprous condition meant isolation (15:5; see Leviticus 13:1 - 14:57). His son Jotham was designated as co-regent with him (750-740 B.C.) until he died (15:5).

NOTES

V. WEAKNESS AND POLITICAL INTRIGUE THREATEN THE NORTHERN KINGDOM (15:8-31)

The end of the Northern Kingdom drew near soon after the death of Jeroboam 2, even though it had reached its zenith politically and materially under him.

1. Zechariah's Reign, 753-752 B.C. (15:8-12)

Zechariah's assassination was the first of a number of such violent acts at the close of the Northern Kingdom's history. Zechariah was the last king of "the house of Jehu."

2. Shallum's Reign, 752 B.C. (15:13-16)

Shallum, unable to unite the political groups, died - the victim of an assassin (15:14).

3. Menahem's Reign, 752-742 B.C. (15:17-22)

During Menahem's reign, the threat of anarchy within was matched with the threat of the great Assyrian ruler, Pul, from without (15:19). Pul was Tiglath-pileser (15:29), who made the Northern Kingdom a vassal state and demanded payment of heavy tribute from Menahem (15:19-20).

4. Pekahiah's Reign, 742-740 B.C. (15:23-26)

Menahem's son, Pekahiah, followed on the throne, but Pekah, an ambitious army officer, slew him (15:25).

5. Pekah's Reign, 740-732 B.C. (15:27-31)

Pekah lost prized territory to Tiglath-pileser (15:29). Israelites were taken captive to Assyria (15:29; see 17:6). Pekah was slain by Hoshea (15:30).

W. JOTHAM'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 740-732 BC (15:32-38)

1. He Does What Is Right (15:32-35)

The historian saw Jotham's reign as a good reign except for the failure to remove high places (15:34-35). He was co-regent with his father from about 748 B.C.

2. Jotham Resists Pekah and Rezin (15:37)

Pekah of the Northern Kingdom and Rezin of Damascus wanted Jotham of Judah to join them in an alliance against Assyria. Jotham refused. Rezin and Pekah led their armies against Judah (15:37; see Isaiah 7:1-9).



NOTES

X. AHAZ'S REIGN IN THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM 732-716 BC (16:1-20)

During the reign of Ahaz, unrighteousness and unfaithfulness developed into outrageous idolatry.

1. *Prologue: He Does Evil (16:1-4)*

Ahaz even offered his son as a human sacrifice (16:3), engaging in a practice long since dropped by most pagan peoples around Judah. Baal worship and other false religions flourished (16:3-4).

2. *Ahaz Is Besieged by Rezin and Pekah (16:5-9)*

Ahaz was threatened by Rezin and Pekah's armies (16:5). Perhaps this was the time when Ahaz, in desperation, offered his son (16:3) and sent to Assyria for help (16:7-9).

3. *Ahaz Submits to Assyria and Copies an Altar for Jerusalem (16:10-20)*

Ahaz's gifts (16:8-9), his visit to Damascus (16:10), and his command to Urijah to copy a Damascus altar (16:11), which was set up for sacrifices in Jerusalem (16:12-20) were concessions and compromises that Ahaz made in order to have Assyrian help.

Y. HOSHEA'S REIGN IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 732-723/722 BC (17:1-6)

During Hoshea's reign, the Northern Kingdom was crushed by impatient Assyrian rulers. Its collapse left Judah, the remaining Israelite kingdom in Palestine.

1. *Prologue: He Does Evil (17:1-2)*

Hoshea's nine years over the Northern Kingdom were characterized by evil but not to the degree of other kings (17:2).

2. *Hoshea Commits Treason against Assyria (17:3-4)*

Hoshea began his reign under Tiglath-pileser (see 15:30). Tiglathpileser died in 727 B.C. and was followed by Shalmaneser 5 (727-722). Hoshea apparently ignored Assyrian policies during the change on the Assyrian throne, for Shalmaneser came against him to make the Northern Kingdom a vassal state again and to impose tribute upon it (17:3).

Hoshea then attempted to form an alliance with Egypt to free the Assyrians from the yoke—a treacherous, treasonous act (17:4).



NOTES

3. *Assyria Besieges Samaria (17:5-6)*

The Assyrian king (17:6), Shalmaneser, or more likely Sargon 2 (722-705), captured Samaria after a three-year siege.

4. *Captive Israelites Are Carried Away (17:6)*

Following a policy earlier established (see 15:29), the victorious Assyrians carried captive Israelites into distant parts of their realm (17:6).

Z. REASONS FOR THE DOWNFALL (17:7-23)

The incriminating evidence against the Northern Kingdom has been presented from 1 Kings 12 to this point.

1. *The Historian Summarizes (17:7-18)*

“All of this took place because ...” (17:7) begins the historian’s explanation of the Northern Kingdom’s downfall. “So the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence” (17:18) is the historian’s conclusion. In between is an imposing list of Israel’s backslidings and disobedience (17:8-17). The people whom God had brought out of Egypt (17:7) were stubborn (17:14) and contemptuous toward God’s laws and statutes (17:15-17). They had brought their demise upon themselves.

2. *The Historian Gives Another Reason for Downfall (17:21-23)*

Walking in Jeroboam’s sins (17:22) was another reason for the Northern Kingdom’s downfall and subsequent exile.

3. *Judah Also Exiled Because of Unfaithfulness (17:19-20)*

The Historian writing after the fall of both kingdoms included a comment about Judah. Judah did not learn from the Northern Kingdom. Judah, like Israel, was also cast out of God’s sight (17:20) because of disobedience.



NOTES

AA. NEW PEOPLES ARE SETTLED IN SAMARIA'S CITIES (17:24-41)

The Assyrians not only deported captive Israelites from Palestine (see again 15:29 and 17:6), but they also brought captive peoples from other lands to Palestine.

1. Peoples Are Brought from Mesopotamia (17:24)

People were brought to Palestine from southern Mesopotamia (Babylon and Cuthah) and northern Mesopotamia (Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim).

2. Lions Create a Problem (17:25-28)

Lions increased and killed people in Samaria in alarming numbers (17:25). An exiled priest was sent back to lead in worship at Bethel with the hope that this might solve the problem caused by the lions (17:27-28).

3. A Religion to Accommodate All Beliefs (17:29-33)

A religion developed among the peoples of Samaria which was a combination of Israel's worship and of the various Mesopotamian religions.

4. The Attempt to Establish True Worship Fails (17:34-41)

The persons involved are not named. However, there was a serious attempt to establish true worship of God (17:35-39). The people, nevertheless, wanted their compromise religion: "fear of God" in a sense, but also their former religious ways (17:40-41).

Gerizim [GER-ee-zim]

Ebal [EE-bal]

Yahweh [YAH-way]

CHAPTER 4. ONE KINGDOM: JUDAH CONTINUES ALONE (2 KINGS 18:1 - 25:30)

NOTES

Judah continued as a nation for more than 130 years after the fall of the Northern Kingdom. Her longer history is perhaps best explained in words spoken at the time of the division, “that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem” (1 Kings 11:36).

A. HEZEKIAH'S REIGN 716-687 BC (18:1 - 20:21)

The parallel accounts of Hezekiah's reign are essentially the same (see 2 Chronicles 29:1 - 32:32; Isaiah 36-39; and 2 Kings 18:1 - 20:21), with, of course, some differences. Hezekiah seems to have been coregent with Ahaz from 729 B.C.

1. Prologue (18:1-8)

The rather lengthy prologue to the account of Hezekiah's reign probably reflects the historian's high estimation of Hezekiah. Hezekiah “did what was right in the eyes of the LORD” (18:3), conducting religious reform more thoroughly than his predecessors (see 2 Chronicles 29:2 - 30:21). He led in purging the worship of Judah of idolatry, various aspects of Baal and Asherah worship (18:4). He removed Moses' bronze serpent (18:4). Apparently as a relic it had become an object worshiped by the people. He trusted God rather than alliances with other nations. None trusted God as he did (18:5). He was obedient and faithful, keeping the commandments delivered to Moses (18:6). God's presence was with him and gave him victory, enabling him to throw off the Assyrian yoke and to subdue Philistine cities (18:8).

2. Israel's Downfall Mentioned Again (18:9-12)

Mention again of the downfall of the Northern Kingdom (see 17:1-6) is perhaps included to draw attention to the contrast between Hezekiah's obedience and the Northern Kingdom's disobedience.

3. Confronted by Sennacherib's First Invasion, 701 B.C. (18:13-16)

The outlining and discussion herein derive from the position that possibly the biblical account is a combination of materials concerning two invasions by Sennacherib's army. (Reasons for this are given in the Beacon Bible Commentary, Vol. 2, pp. 476-86.) Sennacherib used the strategy of taking the outlying cities of Judah before turning against Jerusalem (18:13). The Assyrian monarch was at Lachish, south of Jerusalem, when he received word from Hezekiah indicating a willingness to pay the amount of tribute he required (18:14-16).



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4. *Faced with Sennacherib's Second Invasion, about 688 B.C. (18:17 - 19:37)*

In this passage, it is clear that Hezekiah did not submit to Sennacherib but resolutely held out against him until God miraculously delivered Jerusalem. This suggests the possibility of two invasions.

Again, the Assyrians were encamped at Lachish. High army officials were sent to Jerusalem apparently to work out terms of surrender, an alternative to siege and destruction of the city (18:17-18).

The Rab-shekah (title of an Assyrian officer) raised a question concerning Hezekiah's basis for resisting the Assyrians (18:19). He warned:

- a. It was foolhardy to rebel against Assyria and to rely on Egypt (18:20-21);
- b. It was foolishness to trust in the Lord (18:22-24);
- c. Actually, the Lord had sent Assyria against Judah (18:25).

Eliakim, Hezekiah's prime minister (see 18:18), requested that they use Aramaic (Syrian), the international language. The people knew only Hebrew and would not understand what was being said. They would not be alarmed by the Assyrians' boasting (18:26-27). The Rab-shekah did not heed Eliakim's request but rather continued speaking in Hebrew, directing his remarks to the assembled onlookers. He told them:

- a. Hezekiah was deceiving them (18:30);
- b. They should make peace with Assyria and their dreams would come true (18:31-32).
- c. The hope that the Lord would deliver was a false hope, for which God had delivered his people from the mighty Assyrians (18:33-35).

Shaken visibly by the Rab-shekah's words, Eliakim reported to Hezekiah what had been said (18:36-37).

Hezekiah, greatly distressed (19:1), went to the "house of the Lord" - the Temple. Facing a great national crisis as king, Hezekiah sought help from the Lord. He also sought help from Isaiah, the great statesman-prophet of his day (19:2-5). Isaiah's message from the Lord was:

- a. There is no need to fear the Assyrians or their words (19:6);
- b. God will cause Sennacherib to return to his own land, where he will be assassinated (19:7).

Meanwhile, the Rab-shekah rejoined the Assyrian army at Libnah (19:8). The Assyrians heard that Tirhakah of Ethiopia had set out to help Judah (19:9). Another message similar to the previous one (19:10-13; see 18:29-35) was dispatched to Hezekiah.

Hezekiah recognized that the situation was too great for him and for the human resources of his people. He again went to the Lord (19:14-19). His prayer is an expression of a number of very profound thoughts about God:

- a. The threat (19:10-13);
- b. The right Source for help (19:14);
- c. He knew God was able (19:15);



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- d. He admitted all the hard facts (19:16-18);
- e. He sought for deliverance in order that God might be glorified (19:19).

God's answer to Hezekiah's prayer came again through Isaiah (19:20-28). It was an answer of hope: their attitude toward Sennacherib should be one of contempt and scorn (19:21); the Holy One of Israel, whom Assyria had mocked (19:22, 28), would put his "hook" in Assyria's "nose" and turn Assyria back (19:28). The "sign" that this was the proper attitude was the prophet's declaration concerning the fulfillment of the promise of deliverance (again see 19:7, 28). "This year," the survivors or "remnant" of the city would be able to gather volunteer food and fruit (19:29). In two more years, they would be producing food according to an established farming routine that had been interrupted. The city would be neither besieged nor stormed, and there would be no battle. God would defend the city for the sake of David (19:34).

The "angel of the Lord," one sent forth to perform a given task, effected death and disaster in Sennacherib's camp. Sennacherib was forced to abandon his intended conquest of Jerusalem and return to Nineveh, his capital city (19:35-36). Isaiah's earlier prediction (see 19:7) was fulfilled when Sennacherib was struck down by two of his sons in the Temple of Nisroch in Nineveh (19:37).

5. *Hezekiah Is Seriously Ill (20:1-19)*

"In those days" (20:1) refers in general to troublesome, threatening days prior to Sennacherib's first invasion in 701 B.C. and perhaps including the time of the invasion. Therefore, the events of this chapter are not chronologically arranged with other events included in the account of Hezekiah's reign. Hezekiah was a man whose prayers were answered: God heard Hezekiah's prayer (20:3) and gave Isaiah a message of healing for him (20:4-6). A "sign" (20:8), a miracle, was given to confirm Hezekiah's recovery in three days. God moved the shadow of the pointer of the sundial "backward ten degrees" (20:9-11).

Envoys from Berodach-baladan, or Merodach-baladan (see Isaiah 39:1), were presumably concerned about Hezekiah's health (20:12). Their interest in Judah's resources, implied by the way Hezekiah showed them Judah's wealth (20:13-15), stemmed probably from their real purpose in visiting Hezekiah. They had come to align Judah with Babylon and others against Assyria.

Isaiah's message of rebuke from the Lord appears to be against the background that Hezekiah was considering alliances and placing trust in nations. The prediction that "your own flesh and blood" (20:18) will be taken captive by the Babylonians, the nation showing friendliness at that time, may be understood to mean that some of the descendants of Hezekiah would be taken captive. Fulfillment of this prophecy is given in 2 Kings 24:10-17.



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6. *Epilogue (20:20-21)*

Here is a specific reference to Hezekiah's water system, which "brought water into the city" (20:20). This system, in effect, was an underground tunnel from the Gihon outside the city wall to a pool or reservoir within the city wall. The underground passage is now called the Siloam Tunnel, for it still is the passageway for water from the Gihon (Virgin's Fountain) to the Pool of Siloam.

B. MANASSEH'S REIGN 687-642 BC (21:1-18)

Manasseh reigned longer than any other king of Judah, but he also reigned more wickedly than any other king, outdoing pagan peoples around him (20:9-10). Manasseh seems to have been nominally associated with his father from 696 B.C.

1. *Prologue (21:1-2)*

The evils which characterized Manasseh's reign are described as "abominations of the heathen" (21:2).

2. *Manasseh Permits and Promotes Evils (21:3-9)*

The sad, tragic turning away from God to the ways of the world around occurred another time in the history of God's people:

- a. turning again to Baal (21:3, 7);
- b. worshiping the "starry hosts" (21:3-4);
- c. offering children as human sacrifices (21:6).

3. *Jerusalem's Downfall Is Predicted by Prophets (21:10-15)*

The tide of ungodliness became so great under Manasseh that prophets (21:10) predicted Judah's downfall in terms of Samaria's downfall (21:13).

4. *Innocent Blood Is Shed in Jerusalem (21:16)*

"Innocent blood," which was shed in a widespread manner, was another indication of the wave of ungodliness that swept over Judah during Manasseh's reign.

5. *Epilogue (21:17-18)*

"The Garden of Uzza" is different from the usual place of burial for kings, "the city of David." Manasseh and his son Amon (21:26) were the only two kings buried in this garden. Their apostasy apparently disqualified them for burial in the usual royal graveyard.



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C. AMON'S REIGN 642-640 BC (21:19-26)

Amon's brief reign was a monotonous, tragic continuation of the apostasy [uh-PAA-stuh-see] and idolatry, which took their death grip on Judah's religious life during his father's reign (21:0-22). Some kind of inner court rivalry erupted in the assassination of King Amon (21:23). "The people of the land" (21:24), perhaps a political party with agrarian interests, made Josiah the king of Judah.

D. JOSIAH'S REIGN 640-608 BC (22:1 - 23:30)

The historian praised Josiah, like Hezekiah. Regarding Josiah, he wrote that none gave more careful attention to obeying the law of Moses (23:25).

1. Prologue (22:1-2)

Josiah was another who began his reign as a boy king. Unlike Manasseh, he was surrounded by those interested in promoting godliness and holiness. Then, as an adult, he continued actively to promote proper worship of God and faithful, holy living. Thus, he has been described as one who "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord" (22:2).

2. Instructions Concerning the Temple (22:3-7)

The "eighteenth year of king Josiah" (22:3) has reference to the eighteenth year of his reign (622 B.C.). Repair of the Temple was apparently well underway after the pattern Jehoash had used (see 12:9-15).

3. The Discovered Book of the Law Is Read (22:8-10)

Two previously mentioned persons, "Hilkiah the high priest" and "Shaphan the scribe" (22:8; see 22:3-4), were key in reporting the discovery of the book of the law to Josiah. Shaphan "read it before the king" (22:10).

4. Josiah Reacts Sorrowfully to the Reading of the Law (22:11-13)

Josiah had reason to tear his robes (22:11) and to be sorrowful. He knew that his nation's record was one of evil and not of holiness. He was deeply concerned about the consequences of disobedience described in the Book of the Law (22:13).

5. Huldah Predicts Evil upon Jerusalem (22:14-20)

"Huldah the prophetess" (22:14) was apparently a person of high repute in the prophetic circles of Josiah's day. She was questioned concerning Judah's future (22:14). The word of the Lord, which she declared, consisted of two main points:



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- a. The wrath of the Lord had been kindled, and judgment would come upon the people of Judah because of their idolatrous ways (22:15-17);
- b. Josiah, the king of Judah, would not live to see the desolation and destruction from God's outpoured wrath (22:18-20).

6. *Josiah Makes a "Covenant before the Lord" (23:1-3)*

In calling the people together to read to them the book of the law, Josiah was already beginning to obey. God had commanded that the book of the law be read to the people (Deuteronomy 31:9-13). Josiah, taking the lead in making the covenant to live obediently, recalls the resolute Joshua, who declared before the assembled people at Shechem that he would serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15).

7. *Josiah and the High Priest Conduct a Religious Purge (23:4)*

Josiah's purge was another effort to remove pagan elements which had been put down earlier but had returned as well as the ousting of more recent innovations. This reminds us that we must be careful to not allow sinful tendencies to return.

The following were pagan, idolatrous aspects of Judah's religious life with which Josiah had to deal:

- a. Baal and Asherah worship (23:4-10, 13-14);
- b. worship of Molech (23:10);
- c. astral (star) worship (23:5, 11-12); and
- d. Canaanite "high places" or shrines (23:13-14).

8. *Josiah Destroys the Altar at Bethel (23:15-20)*

Josiah's religious purge was carried into the region of the former Northern Kingdom. Jeroboam's "altar that was at Beth-el" (23:15), called a "high place," had apparently been in continuous use from the fall of Samaria to the time of Josiah. Josiah's destruction of it, along with that of the other high places, was a fulfillment of the prophecy of the man out of Judah (1 Kings 13:1-3) whose tomb Josiah noticed and which he did not desecrate (23:17-18; see 1 Kings 13:26-31).

9. *Josiah Commands That the Passover Be Kept (23:21-23)*

The Passover was the most significant annual feast of Judah, a reminder of God's mercy toward their enslaved forefathers. The historian observed that no one "from the days of the judges" (23:22) down to Josiah's time had kept the Passover as Josiah did.

10. *None like Josiah in Obedience (23:24-25)*

No king among Israel's and Judah's kings paid as careful attention to the observance of "all the law of Moses" (23:25).



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11. *The Lord's Wrath Was Not Turned Away (23:26-27)*

The historian, writing some time after Judah's downfall, knew that Judah had been destroyed and that Josiah's religious revival had not stemmed the tide of ungodliness that had begun in Manasseh's reign. Josiah's great reform and revival were very significant, but they were not maintained after Josiah's untimely death. As the historian wrote, Judah had been exiled, and Jerusalem, the city where God's name had been placed, had been cast off (23:27). The remainder of 2 Kings gives the details.

12. *Epilogue (23:28-30)*

Josiah's untimely death occurred when he tried to stop Pharaohnechoh from going through Palestine, apparently to the aid of the floundering Assyrians (23:29).

E. JEHOAHAZ' REIGN 608 BC (23:31-35)

Jehoahaz reigned only three months when Necho summoned him to Riblah (23:33), south of Lake Hums on the Orontes. He was a vassal-king under Necho, Judah had come under Egyptian control when Josiah failed in his move against the Egyptian army at Megiddo (23:29).

1. *Jehoahaz Deposed by Necho (23:32-33)*

The reasons Jehoahaz displeased Necho are not given; however, Necho deposed him and assessed him as "a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold."

2. *Jehoiakim Is Named His Successor (23:34-35)*

Eliakim, another son of Josiah (23:34), was Necho's choice as Jehoahaz's successor. He was apparently more Egyptian in political leanings than the deposed Jehoahaz. Necho changed his name to Jehoiakim. He, too, had to pay a heavy annual tribute to Necho (23:35).

F. JEHOIAKIM'S REIGN 608-597 BC (23:36 - 24:7)

Judah was a vassal of Egypt at the time Jehoiakim was appointed by Necho to occupy its throne. Judah became subject to Babylonia toward the end of his reign (see 23:34 and 24:1). Judah faced harassment from foreign bands as part of divine judgment upon her (23:2-3). It was Babylonia who not only brought Judah to her knees but who brought about her downfall (23:7).

G. JEHOIACHIN'S REIGN 597 BC (24:8-17)

Jehoiachin faced the consequences of his father's rebellion (24:1) against Nebuchadnezzar.



NOTES

1. *Jehoiachin and the Royal Family Taken Captive (24:12, 15)*

Jehoiachin apparently saw that it was useless to offer long resistance against the Babylonians, so he surrendered (24:12). "The king of Babylon," Nebuchadnezzar [NEB-ukh-ad-nez-ar], took him and the royal family as captives.

2. *Temple Treasures and Vessels Are Confiscated (24:13)*

The Babylonians looted the Temple with its treasures and gold objects. The looting was perhaps prompted as much by a religious concern as by an interest in the spoils of war. Religiously, the looting suggested to the Babylonians that their god had given Judah to them, that he was greater than Judah's God.

3. *Many Thousands Taken Captive to Babylon (24:14, 16)*

Many thousands of Judah, especially the capable and skilled persons, were taken as captives and forced to be exiles in a strange land.

H. ZEDEKIAH'S REIGN 597-586 BC (24:18 - 25:7)

Zedekiah, a new name for Mattaniah, a third son of Josiah (24:17; see Jeremiah 52:1), was Nebuchadnezzar's appointed king over Judah.

1. *Zedekiah Does Evil (24:18-19)*

This account does not list Zedekiah's particular evil practices. However, it is clear that although Judah could not continue as a free nation, Zedekiah still had the responsibility to live righteously.

2. *Zedekiah Rebels against Babylonia (24:20)*

Zedekiah remained a royal vassal of Nebuchadnezzar for nine years (25:1) and then rebelled. From what is given in 2 Kings, his rebellion was an attempt to throw off the Babylonian yoke. He looked to Egypt for help (see Jeremiah 37:1).

3. *Nebuchadnezzar Takes Jerusalem (25:1-7)*

Nebuchadnezzar came again with his army against Jerusalem. After besieging the city for more than a year and a half (from January 587 to July 586 B.C.), his army broke through Jerusalem's wall (25:1-4). Zedekiah's attempt to flee was a failure. He was captured near Jericho (25:5) and taken to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah (25:6). He witnessed the execution of his sons. His eyes were then put out (25:7).

NOTES

I. JERUSALEM LOOTED AGAIN BY THE BABYLONIANS (25:8-17)

Following the capture of Zedekiah, Nebuzaradan (25:9) burned the major buildings of Jerusalem (25:9), broke down its walls (25:10), and rounded up hostages of war to be forced into exile. Again, the poorest of the land (25:12; see 24:14) were left.

The huge bronze pillars of the Temple, the great sea or laver, and other bronze objects made originally by Solomon (see 1 Kings 7:13-44) were torn down, cut into pieces, and carried off as booty (25:13-17).

J. ANOTHER DEPORTATION (25:18-21)

Nebuzaradan, “the captain of the guard” (25:18), moved against those who apparently were still defiant or who had perhaps strongly insisted upon resisting the Babylonians. He arrested many who were officials and leaders (25:18-20) and took them to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah (25:20), who put them to death (25:21).

“So, Judah was carried away out of their land.” (25:21; see 25:11)

K. GEDALIAH APPOINTED RULER (25:22-26)

Gedaliah was Nebuchadnezzar’s choice to rule as governor over Judah, at that time reduced to provincial status in the Babylonian Empire. Gedaliah tried to convince an anti-Babylonian group that it was important and wise to accept Babylonian rule (25:24). This group, led by Ishmael (25:25), viewed him with suspicion as a collaborationist and assassinated him and others (25:25). Many, fearing the reprisal of Nebuchadnezzar, fled to Egypt (25:26).

L. JEHOIACHIN RELEASED FROM PRISON (25:27-30)

The historian closed his account with the record of the release of Jehoiachin from prison. He was released by Evil-merodach (25:27) in 561 B.C., after thirty-seven years of imprisonment. This apparently was viewed as a day that brought new hope for the fulfillment of what the prophets had declared concerning the kings of the lineage of David.

apostasy [uh-PAA-stuh-see]
Molech [MOW-lek]
Nebuchadnezzar [NEB-ukh-ad-nez-ar]



1 and 2 Kings Study Questions

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION TO FIRST AND SECOND KINGS

1. What is true of the Books of First and Second Kings?

- A. They are the second of three “double” books.
- B. They were originally undivided.
- C. In the Hebrew Scriptures, they are part of “the former prophets.”
- D. all of these

2. What is true of the authorship of First and Second Kings?

- A. Like the majority of books of the Old Testament, they do not name their human author.
- B. The tradition from rabbinic literature is that Jeremiah wrote them.
- C. An unknown prophet, who may be called the historian, may have completed them about 561 B.C.
- D. all of these

3. What is true of the stylistic features of the Books of First and Second Kings?

- A. Accounts of the reigns of the kings after Solomon are usually presented within a literary framework consisting of three parts.
- B. The historian attempted to interweave the history of the two kingdoms after the division.
- C. The writer made use of available literary and historical materials.
- D. all of these

4. What is true of the viewpoint and purpose of the Books of First and Second Kings?

- A. They are not history in the usual sense.
- B. Their sacred history is written from a particular viewpoint with a specific purpose in mind.
- C. They attempted to show that obedience, at times, had brought blessing and that widespread, persistent disobedience had brought severe judgment.
- D. all of these

Chapter 2. ONE KINGDOM: THE TWELVE TRIBES RULED BY THE “HOUSE OF DAVID” (1 Kings 1:1 - 11:43)

A. DAVID SUCCEEDED BY SOLOMON (1:1 - 2:12)

5. First and Second Kings continue Israel’s history, which is related in 2 Samuel and other historical books.

- A. true
- B. false

6. At its beginning, 1 Kings concludes the account of David’s reign and introduces Solomon’s reign.

- A. true
- B. false



NOTES

7. David made certain that Solomon would be his successor, although there was strong opposition to Solomon in favor of Adonijah.

- A. true
- B. false

8. When nearly seventy, David found his physical strength failing and his days on earth nearly done.

- A. true
- B. false

9. Abishag's attempts from Shunem to nurse warmth and vigor into David's aged body were very successful.

- A. true
- B. false

10. Solomon, a son of Haggith, was apparently David's oldest living son, and therefore, he was next in line for the throne.

- A. true
- B. false

11. Prior to his death, David called those who were loyal to Adonijah and instructed them to make Solomon king.

- A. true
- B. false

12. David was not concerned that Solomon should live a holy life and lead the people of Israel in holy living.

- A. true
- B. false

B. SOLOMON CARRIES OUT DAVID'S INSTRUCTIONS (2:13-46)

13. What is not true about Solomon's relationship with Adonijah?

- A. Adonijah was older than Solomon.
- B. When Adonijah asked to marry Abishag, he was really attempting to make a subtle move to usurp the throne.
- C. Solomon made Adonijah Israel's Prime Minister.
- D. Adonijah pursued selfish ambitions instead of submitting to God's will.

14. What is not true about Solomon's banishment of Abiathar?

- A. Abiathar had supported Adonijah's attempt to become king.
- B. Solomon apparently had good reason for depriving him of his priestly duties
- C. Abiathar had defiled the Temple.
- D. Solomon banished him to Anathoth, a priests' village about three miles north of Jerusalem.



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15. What is not true about Solomon's execution of Joab?

- A. Joab had supported Adonijah's attempt to become king.
- B. Joab had killed Abner and Amasa without adequate reason.
- C. Joab had defiled the Temple.
- D. Solomon had instructed Solomon to deal with Joab according to Joab's crimes.

16. What is not true about Solomon's restriction of Shimei?

- A. Shimei had treated David shamefully at the time David fled from Absalom.
- B. Solomon showed mercy to Shimei by permitting him to live in Jerusalem under a kind of house arrest.
- C. Samaria was Shimei's city of refuge.
- D. Shimei jeopardized his claim for continued mercy when he disregarded his agreement with Solomon and went after his runaway slaves.

C. SOLOMON RULES WISELY AND BECOMES GREAT (3:1 - 4:34)

17. The historian included an assortment of selections from his main sources on Solomon's reign, "the book of the acts of Solomon" (11:41), to show that Solomon was a wise king.

- A. true
- B. false

18. The marriage of Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter was probably without political commitments.

- A. true
- B. false

19. Solomon executed two women who were involved in a dispute over who was the mother of a particular child.

- A. true
- B. false

20. The extensive domain Solomon inherited from David was a fulfillment of the promise to Israel prior to their crossing the Jordan.

- A. true
- B. false

D. SOLOMON BUILDS THE TEMPLE (5:1 - 7:51)

21. Solomon undertook very few building projects.

- A. true
- B. false



NOTES

22. What is true about Solomon's concern about building a beautiful and significant Temple for the people?

- A. David had gathered various materials for the Temple through a working arrangement with Hiram of Tyre.
- B. Hiram and Solomon reached an agreement concerning building materials and workers.
- C. Construction of the Temple began in Solomon's fourth year and was completed in his eleventh year.
- D. all of these

23. The spoils of war, which David had dedicated to the Lord, were brought into the treasuries of the house of the Lord as an indication of the completion of the Temple.

- A. true
- B. false

E. SOLOMON DEDICATES THE TEMPLE (8:1 - 9:9)

24. The historian saw the dedication of the Temple as a high point in Israel's history.

- A. true
- B. false

25. What is not true of the dedication of the Temple?

- A. God made his presence real and known through an awesome cloud.
- B. Solomon addressed the assembled Israel.
- C. A dispute broke out between two persons before the altar of God.
- D. Solomon led the people in offering an appropriate sacrifice of dedication.

26. What is true of the Lord's second appearance to Solomon?

- A. It was after the Temple had been completed.
- B. It was comparable to the one Solomon had experienced at Gibeon.
- C. The Lord revealed to Solomon that He had heard Solomon's supplication.
- D. all of these

F. SOLOMON REIGNS IN GRANDEUR AND LUXURY (9:10 - 10:29)

27. The general impression is that Solomon ruled wisely at first, and as a result, God blessed him and Israel.

- A. true
- B. false

28. Solomon showed proper concern for the worship of God by participating in the annual sacrifices.

- A. true
- B. false



NOTES

29. What is true of Solomon's fleet that sailed from Ezion-geber?

- A. Ships at Ezion-geber sailed with bronze products or slabs to distant lands.
- B. Ezion-geber is known as the large place manned jointly by the Israelites and Hiram's Phoenicians.
- C. Bronze was exchanged for gold (9:27) and other exotic products (10:22) for Solomon's luxuriously furnished court.
- D. all of these

30. What is true of the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon?

- A. She discussed matters of business and asked many questions.
- B. She was overwhelmed by Solomon's wisdom and lavishly furnished court.
- C. She blessed the Lord God of Israel and recognized that God had shown love for Israel in making Solomon its king.
- D. all of these

G. SOLOMON'S APOSTASY RESULTS IN DECLINE (11:1-43)

31. The greatest joy of Solomon's life was that the blessings of wisdom, wealth, and fame enabled his devotion to God until his death.

- A. true
- B. false

32. Although God is holy, He makes exceptions concerning sin and unrighteousness to leaders such as Solomon.

- A. true
- B. false

33. Which of the following was not one of Solomon's adversaries as an instrument of judgment?

- A. Hadad of Edom
- B. Rezon of Syria
- C. Ahijah
- D. Jeroboam

Chapter 3. TWO KINGDOMS, NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN; THEIR HISTORIES SYNCHRONIZED (1 Kings 12:1 - 2 Kings 17:41)

A. DIVISION FOLLOWING REVOLT AT SHECHEM (12:1-24)

34. First Kings 12:1 - Second Kings 17:41 is the historian's unique presentation of the histories of the two Israelite kingdoms after Rehoboam's death.

- A. true
- B. false



NOTES

35. Rehoboam's meeting with Israel at Shechem was very successful.

- A. true
- B. false

B. JEROBOAM REIGNS AT SHECHEM AND AT TIRZAH (12:25 - 14:20)

36. Samaria was Jeroboam's capital at the beginning of his reign.

- A. True
- B. False

37. Jeroboam took steps to provide for his people's religious needs, especially ensuring that they did not have to go to Jerusalem.

- A. True
- B. False

38. What is not true of the condemnation of Jeroboam's altar?

- A. The "man of God" coming forth to speak the word of the Lord to the king and to the nation is a manifestation of God's mercy and patience.
- B. The "man of God" predicted that Josiah would execute the priests of the altar on it.
- C. The angel of the Lord appeared when Jeroboam was offering incense on the altar of his shrine.
- D. Jeroboam's hand withered but was healed by the "man of God."

C. THE CLOSE OF REHOBOAM'S REIGN (14:21-31)

39. What is not true of Rehoboam's reign?

- A. It coincided with that of Jeroboam.
- B. Rehoboam was guilty of apostasy and idolatry.
- C. Rehoboam defeated Shishak, the king of Egypt.
- D. Chapter 14, verses 21-28 interestingly illustrate "Form without Substance."

D. THE "HOUSE OF DAVID" IN JERUSALEM (15:1-24)

40. Abijam reigned ingloriously, similarly to the way his father, Rehoboam, had reigned.

- A. True
- B. False

41. Asa's reign is evaluated favorably by the historian, apparently because Asa undertook needed religious reform.

- A. True
- B. False



NOTES

E. INSTABILITY IN THE NORTHERN KINGDOM (15:25 - 16:28)

42. Nadab's reign was very short, coinciding with part of Asa's reign.

- A. True
- B. False

43. Baasha was another who came to power with promise but who also found it expedient to continue Jeroboam's corrupted, abortive worship.

- A. True
- B. False

44. Who was king of the Northern Kingdom for only seven days?

- A. Nadab
- B. Baasha
- C. Zimri
- D. Omri

F. AHAB OF THE "HOUSE OF OMRI" 874-853 BC (16:29 - 22:40)

45. What is true of the reign of Ahab?

- A. The reign of Ahab was a crucial time for the people of the Northern Kingdom, and also for those of the Southern Kingdom.
- B. The Syrians led by the energetic Ben-hadad threatened the nation externally.
- C. The idolatrous worship of Baal and Asherah promoted by Ahab and Jezebel threatened the nation more seriously internally.
- D. all of these

46. What is true of the prophet Elijah during Ahab's reign?

- A. He is one of the most exciting prophets of the Old Testament.
- B. He appeared suddenly when the time required not only a great spirit but also great deeds.
- C. Ahab called Elijah the "Troubler of Israel".
- D. all of these

G. JEHOSHAPHAT'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 870-848 BC (22:41-50)

47. What is not true of Jehoshaphat's reign?

- A. He did as his father, Asa - he did what "was right in the eyes of the Lord."
- B. He seems to have ruled as co-regent with his father, Asa, from 873 to 870 B.C.
- C. He closed the Temple for several years.
- D. His attempt to send ships out of Ezion-geber was not successful.



NOTES

H. AHAZIAH'S REIGN IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 853-852 BC (1 KINGS 22:51 - 2 KINGS 1:18)

48. What is true of Ahaziah's reign?

- A. Ahaziah's reign coincided with two years of Jehoshaphat's reign.
- B. Ahaziah did evil by walking in the way of Jeroboam and by serving Baal.
- C. Moab rebelled after Ahab died.
- D. all of these

I. ELIJAH-ELISHA NARRATIVE (2:1-25)

49. What is not true of the Elijah-Elisha narrative in 2 Kings 2?

- A. It gives an account of events that closed Elijah's ministry and marked the beginning of Elisha's.
- B. Elisha witnessed Elijah's going into heaven - the chariots, the fire, the whirlwind.
- C. Elisha was not qualified to receive Elijah's mantle nor to be his successor.
- D. Elisha discarded his own clothes and then put on Elijah's mantle.

J. JEHORAM'S REIGN IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 852-841 BC (3:1-27)

50. Jehoram failed to continue Jeroboam's religion.

- A. True
- B. False

K. MORE ABOUT ELISHA (4:1 - 8:15)

51. Elisha continued his ministry with many miracles, probably during Jehoram's reign.

- A. True
- B. False

L. JORAM'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 848-841 BC (8:16-24)

52. Joram appears to have been co-regent with his father, Jehoshaphat, from 853 to 848 B.C.

- A. True
- B. False

M. AHAZIAH'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 841 BC (8:25-29)

53. Ahaziah condemned the participation in and promotion of the Canaanite religion.

- A. True
- B. False



NOTES

N. JEHU'S RISE AND REIGN IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 841-814 BC (9:1 - 10:36)

54. Jehu was anointed by the prophet Elisha

- A. True
- B. False

O. ATHALIAH'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 841-835 BC (11:1-20)

55. Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, ruled as queen in Judah, but she was put down after six years.

- A. True
- B. False

P. JOASH'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 835-796 BC (11:21 - 12:21)

56. Joash (or Jehoash) began his reign as a boy-king, with Jehoiada as his chief counselor.

- A. True
- B. False

Q. JEHOAHAZ' REIGN IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 814-798 BC (13:1-9)

57. What is not true of the reign of Jehoahaz?

- A. He did evil.
- B. He promoted the sins of Jeroboam.
- C. He provided much-needed strong leadership.
- D. Hazael of Syria threatened Israel continually.

R. JEHOASH'S REIGN IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 798-782 BC (13:10-25; 14:15-16)

58. What is not true of Jehoash's reign?

- A. Jehoash visited Elisha when Elisha was near death.
- B. Elisha predicted Jehoash's partial victory over Syria.
- C. Hazael of Syria continually captured more and more areas of Israel.
- D. Jehoash defeated Syria three times.

S. AMAZIAH'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 797-767 BC (14:1 14, 17-20)

59. Amaziah followed his assassinated father, Joash, on the throne in Jerusalem.

- A. True
- B. False

NOTES

T. JEROBOAM'S REIGN (JEROBOAM 2) IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 782-753 BC (14:23-29)

60. The reign of Jeroboam 2 was one of the shortest and least prosperous of the Northern Kingdom.

- A. True
- B. False

U. AZARIAH'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 767-740 BC (14:21-22; 15:1-7)

61. What is not true of Azariah's reign?

- A. He was a strong, prosperous king.
- B. He appears to have reigned as co-regent with Amaziah from 791-767 B.C.
- C. He was a wicked king who refused to do right.
- D. He rebuilt Elath, the port of Ezion geber, for shipping purposes.

V. WEAKNESS AND POLITICAL INTRIGUE THREATEN THE NORTHERN KINGDOM (15:8-31)

62. The end of the Northern Kingdom drew near soon after the death of Jeroboam 2.

- A. True
- B. False

W. JOTHAM'S REIGN IN SOUTHERN KINGDOM 740-732 BC (15:32-38)

63. The historian saw Jotham's reign as a good reign except for the failure to remove high places (15:34-35).

- A. True
- B. False

X. AHAZ'S REIGN IN THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM 732-716 BC (16:1-20)

64. What is not true of Ahaz's reign in the Southern Kingdom?

- A. Unrighteousness and unfaithfulness developed into outrageous idolatry.
- B. Ahaz even offered his son as a human sacrifice.
- C. Ahaz relied on the Northern Kingdom for protection.
- D. Ahaz was threatened by the armies of Rezin and Pekah.

Y. HOSHEA'S REIGN IN NORTHERN KINGDOM 732-723/722 BC (17:1-6)

65. What is true of Hoshea's reign in the Northern Kingdom?

- A. During Hoshea's reign, the Northern Kingdom was crushed by impatient Assyrian rulers.
- B. Hoshea enjoyed good relations with Shalmaneser.
- C. Hoshea neglected his alliance with Egypt.
- D. Hoshea's policies greatly benefitted the Northern Kingdom.

NOTES

Z. REASONS FOR THE DOWNFALL (17:7-23)

66. What is true of the reasons for the downfall of the Northern Kingdom?
- A. The LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence.
 - B. There was an imposing list of Israel's backslidings and disobedience.
 - C. They had been walking in the sins of Jeroboam.
 - D. all of these

AA. NEW PEOPLES ARE SETTLED IN SAMARIA'S CITIES (17:24-41)

67. When lions increased and killed people in Samaria in alarming numbers, an exiled priest was sent back to lead in worship at Bethel.
- A. True
 - B. False

Chapter 4. ONE KINGDOM: JUDAH CONTINUES ALONE (2 Kings 18:1 - 25:30)

68. Judah continued as a nation for more than 130 years after the fall of the Northern Kingdom.
- A. True
 - B. False

A. HEZEKIAH'S REIGN 716-687 BC (18:1 - 20:21)

69. Hezekiah seems to have been coregent with Ahaz from 729 B.C.
- A. True
 - B. False

B. MANASSEH'S REIGN 687-642 BC (21:1-18)

70. What is true of Manasseh's reign?
- A. Manasseh reigned longer than any other king of Judah.
 - B. Manasseh reigned more wickedly than any other king, outdoing pagan peoples around him.
 - C. Manasseh seems to have been nominally associated with his father from 696 B.C.
 - D. all of these

C. AMON'S REIGN 642-640 BC (21:19-26)

71. What is not true of Amon's reign?
- A. It was brief.
 - B. It was monotonous.
 - C. He served God faithfully.
 - D. He was assassinated.



NOTES

D. JOSIAH'S REIGN 640-608 BC (22:1 - 23:30)

72. There was none who gave more careful attention to obeying the law of Moses than Josiah was.

- A. True
- B. False

E. JEHOAHAZ' REIGN 608 BC (23:31-35)

73. Jehoahaz reigned for only three months.

- A. True
- B. False

F. JEHOIAKIM'S REIGN 608-597 BC (23:36 - 24:7)

74. Judah was a vassal of Egypt at the time Jehoiakim was appointed as king by Necho.

- A. True
- B. False

G. JEHOIACHIN'S REIGN 597 BC (24:8-17)

75. Jehoiachin faced the consequences of his father's rebellion against Necho.

- A. True
- B. False

Methods of Study

Have you enjoyed this study of the Books of 1 and 2 Kings? Do you wish to study further? If so, here are a few more suggestions.

1. Compare the authorship of the Books of 1 and 2 Kings to the authorship of 1 and 2 Samuel.
2. Compare the authorship of the Books of 1 and 2 Kings to the authorship of 1 and 2 Chronicles.
3. Consider the relationship of the Books of 1 and 2 Kings to 1 and 2 Samuel.
4. Consider the relationship of the Books of 1 and 2 Kings to 1 and 2 Chronicles.
5. Contrast the leadership of Israel under David and Solomon.
6. Contrast the leadership of the kings of the Northern Kingdom and the Southern (Judah) Kingdom.

Allow God, our Leader, to even more fully guide your life as you study the Books of 1 and 2 Kings!



NOTES

Pronunciation Guide

Abiathar [ab-EYE-ah-thar]
Abishag [ab-EYE-shag]
apostasy [uh-PAA-stuh-see]
cherubim [CHAIR-uh-bim]
Ebal [EE-bal]
Gerizim [GER-ee-zim]
Jachin [JEH-kin]
Mesopotamia [meh-suh-puh-TAY-mee-uh]
Molech [MOW-lek]
Nebuchadnezzar [NEB-ukh-ad-nez-ar]
Phoenicia [fe-NEESH-ah]
rabbinic [ruh-BI-nuhk]
Septuagint [SEP-twuh-gunt]
Shekinah [shuh-KAI-nuh]
Yahweh [YAH-way]