

Expositional Notes on | Kings

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Introduction

David asked, “*Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle*” (Ps. 24:8).¹ Of course John revealed the truth as well, saying, “*And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.*”¹⁶ *And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS*” (Rev. 19:13, 16). The Lord Jesus Christ is the King of His creation, and desired to be the King of His chosen people in history. When He brought them into the Promised Land the LORD was the King of Israel and gave victory over human kings (Josh. 12:7-24). Joshua and the Tribes pledged their submission to the LORD (Josh. 24:15-28), but in time the nation forsook His theocracy (Jdg. 21:25) and demanded a king, as Jehovah predicted (Dt. 17:14-20). Their disobedient rejection of Jehovah climaxed with the rejection of the last of the judges, as the Scripture revealed, saying, “*Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,*”⁵ *And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.*”⁶ *But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD.*”⁷ *And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: **for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them***” (I Sam. 8:4-7). The rebellious people chose their own kings, such as Saul and Jeroboam, Hosea historically summarized, saying, “*They have set up kings, but not by me: they have made princes, and I knew it not: of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off*” (Hos. 8:4). Samuel revealed to Saul, saying, “*But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee*” (I Sam. 13:14). For the monarchy, Jehovah’s choice was King David (דָּוִד “beloved”)² the

¹To David, Jehovah was his King, as he affirmed, saying, “*Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.*”² *Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray*” (Ps. 5:1-2).

²The NT refers to Δαβίδ 59x.

godly king-warrior, and King Solomon (שְׁלֹמֹה “peace”)³ the messianic-precursor. Saul reigned for forty years (1051-1011 BC),⁴ as did David (1011-971 BC)⁵ and Solomon (971-931 BC).⁶

The narrative in what became the First Book of Kings (I Kings) covered about one hundred and eighteen years or from the end of David’s reign at his death (971 BC) to the beginning of the reign of Israel’s King Ahaziah (853 BC). The first forty years covered Solomon’s peaceful reign as the United Kingdom and the last seventy-eight years involved the beginning reigns of the Divided Kingdom. The Second Book of Kings (II Kings) continued the historical narrative with evil ruler Ahaziah of the Northern Kingdom (NK = “Israel”), and ended with the Southern Kingdom (SK = Judah) in exile.

The Author and Date

The books known as I and II Kings were originally one book in the Hebrew Scripture. The *LXX* divided the books into two volumes, entitling them “III Kingdoms” and “IV Kingdoms,” following I and II Samuel or “I Kingdoms” and “II Kingdoms.” I and II Kings cover the period from Solomon’s ascension to Judah’s fall to the Babylonian captivity. The author was alive in 586 BC to chronicle the final fall of Jerusalem (II Ki. 25:1 ff.). However, he was also knowledgeable of details about the Solomonic Temple prior to its destruction (I Ki. 8:8). Since the last historical account refers to Jehoiachin’s release about 562 BC (Jer. 52:31), and since the Jewish return from exile is not mentioned (536 BC), presumably the author lived during these temporal parameters. Talmudic tradition posits Jeremiah as the author, and there is no biblical reason not to accept his authorship. Jeremiah was a writing prophet, he was alive at the time of the Babylonian exile, and he was burdened enough to reveal this theological and historical record about his beloved people (cf. Lam. 1:1 ff.). Therefore, Jeremiah wrote I and II Kings around 562 BC.

The Historical Books

I Kings continued the narrative of the conclusion of II Samuel (II Sam.) and the Book of Ezra (Ezra) continued with the conclusion of II Chronicles (II Chr.). The man Ezra apparently wrote both Chronicles and Ezra. I and II Samuel and I and II Kings seem to focus on prophetic perspective of leadership (e.g., the prophets Samuel and Jeremiah) whereas I and II Chronicles seem to focus on the priestly leadership (the priest Ezra). In I and II Kings wars and sin seem to be emphasized, whereas in I and II Chronicles the Temple and redemption become the focus. Jeremiah wrote as a prophet giving the historical fact of the kings (about 562 BC), whereas Ezra wrote as a priest giving theological reflection of the events (about 450 BC). I and II Chronicles

³The NT refers to Σολομών 12x.

⁴Acts 13:21.

⁵II Sam. 5:4.

⁶I Ki. 11:42.

give the history of man from Adam to Solomon to the captivity. From Samuel through Kings the authors revealed the period between the Judges to the exile. The broader scope of OT history includes the following biblical eras:

<i>Patriarchs</i> (Abraham-Moses)	2166-1406 BC
<i>Promised Land</i> (Joshua-Judges)	1406-1051 BC
<i>Monarchy</i> (Saul-David-Solomon)	1051-931 BC
<i>Divided Kingdoms</i> (Rehoboam and Jeroboam forward)	
Northern Kingdom (Israel)	931-722 BC
Southern Kingdom (Judah)	931-586 BC

Theology of Historical Books

The LORD is sovereign over all nations, determining that Adam's offspring would establish nations as He planned, stating, "*And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation*" (Acts 17:26). Furthermore, God gave boundaries to the nations, stating, "*When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel*" (Dt. 32:8; Gen. 10:5). He also gave His choice land to the nation of Israel from which Jehovah will ultimately reign, saying "*And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him*" (Gen. 12:7), and "*This is the land which ye shall divide by lot unto the tribes of Israel for inheritance, and these are their portions, saith the Lord GOD...and the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there*" (Ezk. 48:29, 35). During the Millennium, the LORD will reign from Jerusalem over Israel and the nations, as He promised, saying, "*And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.*" (Zech. 14:16).

Furthermore, Jehovah is sovereign over kings and rulers, as the Scriptures reveal, saying, "*The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will*" (Prov. 21:1). Rulers and nations were the instruments that the Lord God used in history. For instance, He accomplished His will through the Assyrians and Babylonians (Isa. 10:5; Hab. 1:6), the anointed King Cyrus (Isa. 44:21; 45:1), and through Herod (Mt. 2:16; Acts 12:1 ff.). Man, rulers, and nations are nothing to the Lord and are under His complete control as Isaiah declared, saying, "*Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.* ¹⁶ *And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.* ¹⁷ *All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity*" (Isa. 40:15-17).

The whole of Scripture points to the reality that King Jehovah will rule the world from His promised land (Gen. 12:1-3) through His promised seed (Gen. 3:15) for the thousand years (Rev. 20:4), as a prelude to His eternal reign, as Paul prophesied, saying, “*Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords*” (I Tim. 6:15).

The Outline

The outline of I Kings conveniently and naturally breaks into two historical periods, namely the time of the United Kingdom (1-11) and the time of the Divided Kingdom (12-22). The first period reveals the Solomonic Kingdom in tranquility and the second reveals the Divided Kingdoms in turmoil. The first depicts the rise and fall of Solomon and second depicts the results of the fall of Solomon. The first prepares Israel for the blessed hope of the messianic Millennium, and the second demands the messianic recovery of the blessed hope of the Millennium. The syllabus will follow this outline:

I. The United Kingdom (1:1-11:43)

- A. Under David (1:1-2:11)
 - 1. David’s Demise (1:1-14)
 - 2. David’s Decisions (1:15-2:9)
 - 3. David’s Death (2:10-11)
- B. Under Solomon (2:12-11:43)
 - 1. Solomon’s Rise (2:12-3:28)
 - 2. Solomon’s Glory (4:1-10:29)
 - 3. Solomon’s Fall (11:1-43)

II. The Divided Kingdom (12:1-22:53)

- A. The Southern Kingdom (12:1-19)
 - 1. Rehoboam’s Accession (12:1-15)
 - 2. Israel’s Rebellion (12:16-19)
- B. The Northern Kingdom (12:20-14:20)
 - 1. Jeroboam’s Accession (12:20-33)
 - 2. God’s Man (13:1-32)
 - 3. Jeroboam’s Fall (13:33-14:20)
- C. The Southern Kingdom (14:21-15:24)
 - 1. Judah’s Sin (14:21-24)
 - 2. Jehovah’s Judgment (14:25-30)
 - 3. Rehoboam’s Death (14:31)
 - 4. Abijam’s Reign (15:1-8)
 - 5. Asa’s Reign (15:9-24)
- D. The Northern Kingdom (15:25-22:40)

1. Nadab's Reign (15:25-26)
2. Baasha's Reign (15:27-34)
3. Jehovah's Word (16:1-7)
4. Elah's Reign (16:8-10)
5. Zimri's Reign (16:10-20)
6. Omri's Reign (16:21-28)
7. Ahab's Reign (16:29-22:40)
 - a. Elijah's Ministry (17:1-24)
 - b. Elijah's Victory (18:1-46)
 - c. Elijah's Flight (19:1-18)
 - d. Elijah's Successor (19:19-21)
 - e. Ahab's Victories (20:1-43)
 - f. Ahab's Wickedness (21:1-29)
 - g. Ahab's Death (22:1-40)
- E. The Southern Kingdom (22:41-50)
 1. Jehoshaphat's Reign (22:41-50)
- F. The Northern Kingdom (22:51-53)
 1. Ahaziah's Reign (22:51-53)
 2. *Ahaziah's Reign (II Ki. 1:1-18)*

Exposition

I. THE UNITED KINGDOM (1-11)

Chapter One

The first chapter of I Kings brings to a close the account of the life and reign of King David, giving closure to the narrative of II Samuel (24:25). It records David's demise from some physical affliction (vv. 1-4),⁷ his decision to stop willful and undisciplined Adonijah's plot (vv. 5-10)⁸ with Nathan's counter-plan (vv. 11-31), and his anointing Solomon as his successor (vv. 32-53).⁹

Chapter Two

Before David died he gave a two-fold charge to Solomon, namely, the spiritual charge to obey the Law of Moses (Dt. 17:18-20)¹⁰ and the social charges concerning Joab, the sons of Barzillai, and Shimei (vv. 1-9). Having put his house and kingdom in order, David died at

⁷Hints at his physical affliction for sin occur in Ps. 32:3-4, saying, "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. ⁴ For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah." Abishag אֲבִישָׁג ("my father a wanderer") probably became his concubine (cf. 2:22-23).

⁸Adonijah resisted the divine revelation about Solomon's kingship, which stated, "Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. ¹⁰ He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever" (I Chr. 22:9-10).

⁹Solomon was about 21 years of age when he began to reign (if David were 49 when he sinned with Bathsheba), living unto the shorten lifetime of 61, and falling short of the ideal (Ps. 90:10) because of idolatry (Ex. 20:12).

¹⁰David spent time with Solomon instructing him in truth: "For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. ⁴ He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. ⁵ Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth" (Prov. 4:3-5).

seventy after forty years of service (vv. 10-11).¹¹ Solomon had Adonijah killed (vv. 13-25),¹² Abiathar deposed (vv. 26-27), and Joab and Shimei¹³ eliminated (vv. 28-46).

Chapter Three

Depicting the rise of Solomon, the chapter divides neatly into King Solomon's worship (vv. 1-4), walk (vv. 5-15),¹⁴ and wisdom (vv. 16-27). As he worshipped at Gibeon, he recognized that there was no central place of worship and that the high places represented Canaanite practices (Dt. 12:1-12).¹⁵ His humble obedient walk prompted the LORD to give him an understanding heart to judge the people and make him the wisest man who ever lived.¹⁶ His wisdom about dealing with the two harlots and the argument over the infant brought him great fame (cf. 4:29-34).

Chapter Four

His supernaturally-endowed wisdom helped him to begin to administer a brilliant and glorious kingdom which would foreshadow Christ's Millennial Kingdom.¹⁷ He organized his administrative hierarchy and the people multiplied and became prosperous (vv. 1-21).¹⁸ The narrative described the daily disposal of his vast bounty (vv. 22-28). The fame of his wisdom¹⁹ and knowledge²⁰ became widespread (vv. 29-34).

¹¹"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption" (Acts 13:36).

¹²For Adonijah to desire to marry into David's harem became a serious threat to Solomon's throne, and demanded capital punishment.

¹³David forgave Shimei once for cursing him (II Sam. 19:23). He was not worthy of another pardon.

¹⁴Solomon recognized the great mercy (חֶסֶד *chesed* = "mercy, kindness") Jehovah had shown him by blessing him with the Abrahamic "covenant kindness" (v. 6; Gen. 24:12).

¹⁵Cf. "So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness. ⁴ But the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjathjearim to the place which David had prepared for it: for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem" (II Chr. 1:3-4).

¹⁶Consider the truth of the application of Mt. 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

¹⁷Solomon's reign of peace prefigured the reign of the Prince of Peace (I Ki. 2:33; Isa. 9:6-7; Zech. 6:13; and Lk. 2:14).

¹⁸The blessing of each man having his vine and fig tree in the Promised Land depicts the millennial blessings for the Jews (v. 25; Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10).

¹⁹See Prov. 1:1-7.

²⁰His proverbs and songs appear in the Wisdom Literature, namely Psalms (72 and 127), Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.

Chapter Five

Solomon took on the responsibility of building the Temple for the LORD, and acquired the lumber from Hiram as well as foundation stones. Since he had rest from all enemies (v. 4; cf. 4:24), he was able to utilize the multitudes of Jews to accomplish the work (vv. 1-18).²¹ The LORD provided the materials (vv. 1-11), the mind (v. 12), and the men (vv. 13-18) for His Temple.

Chapter Six

The construction of the Solomonic Temple²² was so significant in the history of Israel that the Lord dated it with the Exodus from Egypt. Since Solomon began reigning in 971 BC, his fourth year was 967 BC, making the Exodus under Moses four hundred and eighty years prior, or occurring in 1447 BC. The narrative gives great detail about the beautifully constructed Temple with its fine wood and overlaid gold (vv. 1-19).²³ He made the “oracle” (“holiest of holies”) as a perfect cube, twenty cubits cubed (v. 20).²⁴ He placed the two cherubim in the oracle and accomplished the construction in seven years (vv. 21-38).

Chapter Seven

The king built other structures as well, including the house in the forest (vv. 1-7; 10:16-17), his personal house, and a house for Pharaoh’s daughter (vv. 8-12). The narrative gives more detail about the construction of the Temple, with the skilled craftsman Hiram²⁵ furnishing detail work to it, including the two pillars of brass entitled Jachin יָכִין (“he establishes”) and Boaz בְּעֹז (“in him is strength”), right and left respectively (vv. 13-22). He also made the large laver for

²¹The 70,000 carriers and 80,000 stonemasons were non-Jews (II Chr. 2:17-18).

²²The LORD gave the initial hint about His Temple to Moses, saying, “*Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established*” (Ex. 15:17).

²³The chronicler gave more detail, saying, “*Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite*” (II Chr. 3:1; see also I Chr. 21:18-22; 22:1). Jehovah created the land mass (Gen. 1:9) so that He could give the Promised Land to the Jews (Gen. 12:1-3), so that they could worship Him on Mt. Moriah (Dt. 12:5, 14), the place of Abraham’s prefigurement (Gen. 22:1-14; II Sam. 5:7; Heb. 11:17-19) of Christ’s death on Mt. Calvary (Lk. 23:33; Jn. 19:17). About AD 691 the Moslems erected “the Dome of the Rock” on the site of the former Temples, at which site Antichrist will allow the Jews to rebuild the Tribulation Temple (Dan. 9:27; II Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-2).

²⁴The New Jerusalem will be the eternal Holiest of Holies in the form of a perfect cube (not a pyramid) at least 1400 miles cubed (Rev. 21:16).

²⁵This is not the same as King Hiram (5:1).

priests' washings, moveable bases with water, and internal vessels in the holy place (vv. 23-51; cf. Ex. 25:10-40).

Chapter Eight

Once the Temple was completed, King Solomon dedicated it to Jehovah. First he installed the Ark of the Covenant in the oracle in the seventh month commemorating the Feast of Booths which represented "rest" from the wilderness wanderings (cf. Lev. 23:43; Dt. 12:9-10). The Ark became the residing place for the glory of God (vv. 1-9). Then the LORD filled the house with His glory, authenticating publically that the Temple was His place of presence, worship and service (vv. 10-11).²⁶ Solomon blessed the people (vv. 12-21) and then petitioned the LORD in prayer (vv. 22-30). The king made a series of requests to Jehovah, including requests for justice (vv. 31-32), forgiveness (vv. 33-34), deliverance from drought (vv. 35-36), deliverance from famine (vv.37-40), salvation of Gentiles (vv. 41-43), answered prayers toward Temple (vv. 44-45), and divine faithfulness (vv. 46-53). In conclusion, he blessed the people and the LORD, offered sacrifices, and then dedicated (כָּנַס *chanac*)²⁷ the Temple (vv. 54-66).

Chapter Nine

Once the Temple was constructed and dedicated, the LORD appeared unto Solomon a second time (3:5; cf. 11:9) and covenanted with him about obedience to His commandments.²⁸ The Davidic dynasty would be permanently secure (II Sam. 7:12-16), the LORD promised, but the Temple and people would be destroyed if there was disobedience. This narrative of course anticipated Solomon's fall recorded in Chapter Eleven (vv. 1-9). Midway through Solomon's reign he gave King Hiram twenty cities which eventually became valuable (II Chr. 8:1-2), but not initially (vv. 10-14). He administered wisely toward his people and with his navy (vv. 15-28; *vide* 10:22).

Chapter Ten

²⁶Other biblical demonstrations of the LORD's authentication for His place of divine presence and worship included the Tabernacle (Ex. 40:34-35), the Baptist assembly (Acts 2:1-4), and the Millennial Temple (Ezk. 43:1-5).

²⁷John referred to "*the feast of dedication*" or *Hanukkah* (Jn. 10:22). *Hanukkah* or "the Festival of Lights" refers to the Jewish holiday of celebrating the re-dedication of the Second Temple during the Maccabean Revolt (2nd century BC).

²⁸"*And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: ¹⁹ And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them*" (Dt. 17:18-19).

The Queen of Sheba visited Solomon from southern Arabia and questioned him about many things.²⁹ She was impressed with his wisdom and wealth, and recognized that Jehovah had blessed the king abundantly.³⁰ They exchanged gifts from their respective bounty (vv. 1-13). His wealth, as detailed in gold (666 talents), weapons, a great throne, drinking vessels, and army of chariots,³¹ made him the wealthiest man in the world (vv. 14-29; especially v. 23).

Chapter Eleven

King Solomon's late-in-life apostasy was similar to Adam's; the female gender tempted him to sin. Nehemiah summarized Solomon's life and defection, saying, "*Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin*" (Neh. 13:26). The one thousand women in his harem³² obligated him to cater to their occultic worship of pagan deities (Milcom, Chemosh, Molech) and goddesses (Ashtoreth), contrary to the LORD's admonition (Dt. 17:17) and Bathsheba's instruction (Prov. 31:1-31). How Jedidiah, the beloved of Jehovah (II Sam. 12:25), could turn from his rich spiritual heritage (Prov. 4:3-4) and enter into occultic, demonic practices is difficult to comprehend? Apparently the author who wrote Prov. 22:6 ultimately turned back to the LORD (see Prov. 8:35)! The one at the pinnacle of divine blessings³³ came spiraling down into demonic darkness because of sin (vv. 1-8; *vide* I Cor. 10:12; cf. Isa. 14:13-15).

His sin brought the anger and chastening of the LORD Who promised to rend his kingdom out of the hand of Rehoboam (רַחֲבָעָם "a people has enlarged"), leaving one tribe for David and Jerusalem's sake (vv. 9-13).³⁴ Uprisings began at the end of Solomon's reign and obviously continued after David's death (v. 21) as Jehovah declared (vv. 14-28). The prophet

²⁹She apparently became a believer at some point (Mt.12:42).

³⁰The men and servants were "happy" or blessed (אֲשֵׁר 'esher), again prefiguring the Millennium (Mt. 5:3-11).

³¹Cf. "*But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way*" (Dt. 17:16; Isa. 31:1).

³²David's harem included at least 8 wives (producing at least 19 children [I Chr. 3:1 ff.; II Sam. 5:13]), Rehoboam had 78 wives (and 88 children [II Chr. 11:21]), and Abijah had 14 wives (and 38 children [II Chr. 13:21]). Solomon's union with the women produced 3 children.

³³Solomon's privileges included 1) being God's choice, 2) having a special name, 3) receiving divine wisdom, 4) gaining vast wealth, and 5) having two heavenly visits.

³⁴Since Jerusalem bordered Judah and Benjamin, their unity around the city was considered "one" (11:32, 36).

Ahijah (“brother of Jehovah”)³⁵ enacted the distribution of the tribes before Jeroboam (יִרְבְּעָם) “the people will contend”), giving him ten pieces of the rent garment which represented the ten tribes.³⁶ The division would not occur in Solomon’s lifetime, but the king was cognizant of the coming rift and sought to kill Jeroboam (v. 29-40). After forty years of reigning Solomon died and his only son Rehoboam³⁷ began to reign (vv. 41-43).³⁸

II. THE DIVIDED KINGDOM (12-22)

Chapter Twelve

After hearing the redress of Israel’s spokesman Jeroboam for lighter service (vv. 1-4), Rehoboam counseled with the elders but rejected their sagacity by roughly promising to increase their yoke of forced labor (vv. 5-15). Naturally, Israel revolted against Rehoboam in Jerusalem, and made Jeroboam king (931-910 BC)³⁹ over all Israel except for the house of David and tribe of Benjamin. The LORD forbade their effort for a civil war (vv. 16-24). Jeroboam headquartered in Shechem⁴⁰ and sinfully made idolatrous worship centers in Bethel (southern Israel) and Dan (northern Israel), and placed non-Levites in the priesthood (vv. 25-33).

Chapter Thirteen

The man of God from Judah rebuked the idolatrous altar (and Jeroboam), predicting that the future judgment from Josiah (641-609 BC)⁴¹ would come (vv. 1-2).⁴² The truth of the

³⁵Ahijah was one of the LORD’s prophets and anticipated others, namely Shemaiah (I Ki. 12:22), an anonymous prophet (I Ki. 13:1), Azariah (II Chr. 15:1), Jehu (I Ki. 16:1), Hanani (II Chr. 16:7), Micaiah (I Ki. 22:8), Jahaziel (II Chr. 20:14), Eliezer (II Chr. 20:37), but especially Elijah (I Ki. 17:1 ff.).

³⁶The LORD informed the prophets of His plans, saying, “*Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets*” (Amos 3:7).

³⁷Solomon had one son Rehoboam (cf. Prov. 1:8 *et al*) and two daughters, Taphath (I Ki. 4:11) and Basmath (I Ki. 4:15). Why did Solomon have such a dinky quiver (Ps. 127:5)? Rehoboam was born one year before Solomon began to reign, and was the product of the union of Solomon with Naamah (I Ki. 14:21). Solomon’s union with Naamah occurred before he was given pharaoh’s daughter, and presumably before his relationship with the Shulamite (Cant. 6:13).

³⁸*The Book of the Acts of Solomon*, along with “*the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah*” (I Ki. 14:29), and “*the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel*” (II Ki. 15:31), are not extant documents and therefore not preserved Scripture.

³⁹Cf. II Chr. 10:2-13:20.

⁴⁰Shechem was a religious and geographical center for Israel (cf. Josh 24:1, 25, and 32).

⁴¹Josiah, predicted about 300 years in advance, was one of two individuals prophesied by name years before their ascendancy, the other being Cyrus about 150 years prior (Isa. 44:28; 45:1).

⁴²“*Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high*

prediction was affirmed by the sign of judgment and restoration on the altar and Jeroboam's hand. The man of God refused the king's offer of reward and went his way (vv. 3-10). An old (false) prophet lied to the man of God, thus deceiving him about a meal which disobedience led to a prophecy condemning the man of God. The fulfillment of the prophecy of death occurred by the lion, and the old prophet took the body of the man of God and buried it, desiring to be buried with God's man (vv. 11-32). Nevertheless, the message of absolute obedience to the word of God (cf. Gal. 1:8) was lost on Jeroboam who continued to sin by installing non-Levites into the priesthood (vv. 33-34).

Chapter Fourteen

Obstinate Jeroboam needed additional affirmation that his idolatry was sin, and the LORD used the illness of his son Abijah ("my father is Jehovah") to set up the judgment prophecy (v. 1). Jeroboam sent his disguised wife to the blind prophet Ahijah⁴³ ("my brother is Jehovah") for a prognosis. The Lord revealed to Ahijah the ruse, who in turn prophesied that Jehovah would judge his house, and the posterity⁴⁴ of Jeroboam would be killed and unburied. Only Abijah would be buried and mourned as he would die when his mother returned (vv. 2-13). Furthermore, Ahijah prophesied that another king would cut off the house of Jeroboam (i. e., Baasha, I Ki. 15:27-29) and that Jehovah would scatter Israel (722 BC). The narrative reveals that the child died as predicted, and after Jeroboam reigned twenty-two years he died as well (vv. 14-20).

Idolatry permeated Judah as well under Rehoboam's reign (931-913 BC)⁴⁵ and the land filled with all sorts of abominations including the practice of the sodomites (שִׁדְמָה *qadesh*).⁴⁶ By the king's fifth year, Shishak king of Egypt fought against and took the treasures of the houses of the LORD and of the king, including gold shields. Finally, Rehoboam died, having warred constantly with Jeroboam. His history (along with Jeroboam's) was recorded in "*the book of the chronicles of the kings*"⁴⁷ and his throne was ascended by Abijam (vv. 21-31).

place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove. ¹⁶ *And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words" (II Ki. 23:15-16).*

⁴³Cf. 11:29-31.

⁴⁴The expression "*him that pisseth* [שָׁטָן *shathan*] *against the wall*" (v.10; I Sam. 25:22, 34; I Ki. 21:21; and II Ki. 9:8) probably refers to the arrogant male reprobate who urinated on the walls of them he despised. The rendering "every male person" of the NAS clearly misses the mark.

⁴⁵Cf. II Chr. 10:1-12:16.

⁴⁶The Hebrew is cognate with the word for temple dedication (*vide* Ex. 26:33), referring to the male temple prostitutes.

⁴⁷This expression which refers civil annals of royal activities and events occurs 34x in the OT, from I Ki. 14:19 to Est. 10:2 (cf. II Chr. 12:15).

Chapter Fifteen

This chapter begins to describe the litany of the succession of the kings of Judah and Israel. Abijam (913-911 BC)⁴⁸ succeeded his father Rehoboam of Judah in the eighteenth year of Israel's King Jeroboam. Abijam (אבִיָּאָם “my father is the sea”) continued in the idolatrous sins of his father and fell short of the pattern of King David's royal example. David's posterity continued as a lamp (cf. 11:36) in spite of personal sins because of the LORD's promise to David (II Sam. 7:14 ff.). The civil war continued during Abijam's reign, and upon his death Asa (אָסָא “healer”) became king (vv. 1-8). Under Asa (911-870 BC)⁴⁹ reforms occurred, including the removal of sodomites and idols, the deposing of his grandmother Maachah (vv. 9-15). He battled with Baasha (בַּעֲשָׂא “wicked”) of the Northern Kingdom and made alliance with Benhadad of Syria to retard militarily Baasha's building program at Ramah. Asa was a godly king until up to the end when he sought physicians and not the LORD about his diseased feet (cf. II Chr. 16:11-14).⁵⁰ He was succeeded by the fourth Judean king, Jehoshaphat (יְהוֹשָׁפָט “Jehovah judges”),⁵¹ a righteous king (vv. 16-24).

The narrative picks up with the reign of Nadab⁵² (910-909 BC) who continued the evil ways of his father. Baasha assassinated Nadab (נָדָב “generous”) in the third year of Asa and decimated the house of Jeroboam in fulfillment of the earlier prophecy (14:10-13). King Baasha (909-886 BC)⁵³ perpetuated war with Asa, from Asa's third year until Baasha's demise, some twenty-four years later (vv. 25-34).

Chapter Sixteen

The LORD used His prophet Jehu (“Jehovah is He”) the son of Hanani⁵⁴ to denounce Baasha's sin of continuing the ways of Jeroboam, which ways caused Israel to sin. The prophet proclaimed a curse upon Baasha as was upon Jeroboam, namely to destroy his posterity and have them consumed by dogs and fowls. Baasha was succeeded by his son Elah (אֵלָה “an oak”), and the narrative repeated Jehu's condemnation because of Baasha's culpability in the murder of Nadab (vv. 1-7; 15:27-29). The reign of Elah (886-885 BC) was short-lived because of the curse upon Baasha's posterity uttered by Jehu. The LORD used Zimri (“my music”) the servant of

⁴⁸Cf. II Chr. 13:1-22.

⁴⁹Cf. II Chr. 14:1-16:14.

⁵⁰His failure to trust the LORD earlier led to judgment and failure to trust again (II Chr. 16:7-10).

⁵¹Vide 22:41.

⁵²“The generous one;” see 14:20.

⁵³Cf. II Chr. 16:1-6.

⁵⁴Jehu “the son of Nimshi” was obviously a different person and king over Israel (I Ki. 19:16).

Elah to kill the king and the entire house of Baasha (vv. 8-14). Zimri (885 BC), the LORD's tool in fulfilling His prophecy concerning Baasha, reigned only seven days and committed suicide by dying in the fire he set in the king's house. This self-murder was prompted by the threat of the people and their choice of Omri (עֲמֹרִי "pupil of Jehovah") as the new king. Zimri's short reign in Tirzah received notice in the ancient annals of the kings (vv. 15-20).

Omri (885-874 BC) not only succeeded Zimri but ousted Tibni's bid for kingship after four years. Omri purchased and built "the hill Samaria of Shemer,"⁵⁵ making it the idolatrous capital of the Northern Kingdom (cf. Hos. 8:5-6; II Ki. 17:5). Omri surpassed the first five kings of Israel in his wickedness, incurring the anger of the LORD. His evil son "Ahab" (אָחָב "father's brother") succeeded Omri's reign (vv. 21-28).

Atrociously awful Ahab (874-853 BC)⁵⁶ reigned for twenty-two years, and even surpassed his father Omri in wickedness.⁵⁷ For instance, he perpetuated Jeroboam's sins of idolatry, and also married Jezebel⁵⁸ ("baal exalts") of Ethbaal ("with baal") of the Zidonians. She encouraged him to promote the worship of Baal⁵⁹ ("master, lord") and the "grove" ("Asherah") in Samaria. During Ahab's reign Hiel ignored Jehovah's curse on anyone rebuilding Jericho and lost his sons in the process (vv. 29-34).⁶⁰

Chapter Seventeen

The advanced wickedness of the king and the people of Israel necessitated the presence and preaching of God's man, namely Elijah ("my God is Jah").⁶¹ The ministry of Elijah⁶²

⁵⁵Both "Samaria" and "Shemer" come from the *shamar* root שָׁמַר ("to guard, watch, keep").

⁵⁶Cf. II Chr. 18:1-19.

⁵⁷The epitaph of Ahab was reprehensive, as the LORD declared, saying, "But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up" (I Ki. 21:25).

⁵⁸"Jezebel" (יֵזֶבֶל = Ἰεζάβελ) killed the LORD's prophets (II Ki. 9:7), and her daughter through Ahab was Athaliah the wife of Jehoram of Judah and the mother of Amaziah (II Ki. 8:25-26). Scripture depicts the memory of Jezebel as evil, manifested in the church at Thyatira (Rev. 2:20).

⁵⁹"Baal" (בַּעַל) was the Canaanite storm and rain deity. Baal worship permeated Israel, with various references to Baal in names, such as "Eshbaal" ("man of Baal"), "Jerubbaal" ("let Baal plead"), "Meribbaal" ("Baal is my advocate"), and "Bealiah" ("Baal is Jah").

⁶⁰"And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it" (Josh. 6:26).

⁶¹Reference to "Elijah" (אֵלִיָּהּ) occurs 69x in the OT and to "Elias" (Ἠλίᾱς) 30x in the NT. Scripture predicted that Elijah would come before the Tribulation (Mal. 4:5-6), suggested that John the Baptist was the potential fulfillment (Mt. 11:14; 17:10-12), and revealed that some thought that the Lord Jesus was Elijah (Mt. 16:14). Elijah wrote a letter to evil Jehoram about his judgment and death (II Chr. 21:12 ff.).

involved Jehovah dealing with Israel through *drought* (Chapter Seventeen), with the false prophets through *death* (Chapter Eighteen), and finally with the prophet through *discipline* (Chapter Nineteen). Elijah predicted the drought (17:1; 18:41-45)⁶³ and the LORD provided for Elijah in the midst of the drought. The provisions for the man of God were through the most improbable scenarios. First, at brook Cherith⁶⁴ (“separation”) the scavenger ravens brought him bread and flesh twice daily (vv. 2-7), and second, at Zarephath (“refinery”)⁶⁵ a poor widow fed him (vv. 8-16).⁶⁶ Several miracles occurred through prayer and faith, including the unfailling supply of the meal and oil, and the raising of the deceased son⁶⁷ (vv. 14-23; Heb. 11:35). The testimony of the “insignificant” widow suffices as the inspired truth about Elijah: he was the man of God who preached the word of the LORD (v. 24).

Chapter Eighteen

The LORD used Elijah not only to bring famine on Israel but to be the instrument that brought death to the harbingers of apostasy, that is, the four hundred and fifty false prophets of Baal and the four hundred false prophets of the groves. Toward the end of the three and a half year drought (Lk. 4:25; Jam. 5:17), Elijah obeyed Jehovah’s command to show himself to the king (vv. 1-2). Pious Obadiah, Ahab’s steward, protected one hundred of the Lord’s prophets and received instruction from the king to find water for the animals. On his way he met Elijah who informed Obadiah to tell Ahab about Elijah’s presence. The king’s steward was fearful of repercussions but the prophet assured him with his promise to appear to Ahab (vv. 3-15).⁶⁸ Upon meeting the prophet, Ahab falsely charged him with troubling (עָכַר *`acar*) Israel. Elijah made a

⁶²Characteristics of this man of God included his submission to the Word of God (17:1-7), to the Will of God (17:8-16), and to the Work of God (17:17-24).

⁶³“*Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.*”¹⁸ And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit” (Jam. 5:17-18).

⁶⁴The Hebrew כְּרִית (2x) relates to cutting and is spelled “Kerith” in the NIV.

⁶⁵Elijah received divine refinement at צָרְפַת.

⁶⁶“*But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;*”²⁶ *But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow*” (Lk 4:25-26).

⁶⁷The “soul” (נֶפֶשׁ *nephesh*) of the lad returned (vv. 21-22), indicating that the spirit or breath returned. Scripture teaches that men are souls or total persons, and not that they have souls. Since the first reference of a word dictates the ongoing meaning unless otherwise stated, “soul” refers to the total being (Adam was constituted a soul, with breath and body [Gen. 2:7]) or to parts of personhood. “Soul” in this case refers to part of the child, i.e., his spirit, and is an example of the figure of speech called a synecdoche—whole for a part (cf. Gen. 35:18).

⁶⁸“*The Spirit of the LORD*” (רוּחַ יְהוָה *ruach Jehovah*) was certainly capable of transporting prophets geographically (Ezk. 3:14; 8:3; 11:1, 24; 43:5; Acts 8:39; Rev. 21:10).

challenge to the people to choose between two opinions about the true deity—Baal or Jehovah. Who could send fire from heaven and burn the sacrifice (vv. 16-35)? Of course impotent Baal⁶⁹ could not, but the LORD did consume the burnt offering, resulting in the people claiming allegiance Him and chanting about “*The LORD, he is the God*” twice. Elijah destroyed the false prophets and prayed for rain (Jam. 5:17-18), which fell in perfect timing (“*seven times*”) and established Jehovah as the true God over storms, rain, and everything. The LORD allowed the prophet to reach Jezreel, the home of Ahab and Jezebel, before the king (vv. 36-46).

Chapter Nineteen

After Elijah’s incredible victory, he encountered the wrath of a woman, namely the ruthless and fierce Jezebel (16:31; 21:25) who threatened him with death in the name of her deities (vv. 1-2). He responded in fear and fled to Beersheba, and wandered alone in the wilderness finally resting under “*a juniper tree*” (רֶתֶם *rethem*). In great defeat and despair he sought death but “*the angel of the LORD*” (מַלְאֲכַי יְהוָה *mal’ac Jehovah*)⁷⁰ ignored his request and ministered to the prophet. He gave Elijah food and water (twice) and allowed him rest before sending the prophet to Horeb (= Mt. Sinai; cf. 8:9; Ex. 3:1). After wandering forty days and nights, he arrived at Mt. Sinai and probably at the cave (הַמְעָרָה *hamme’arah*)⁷¹ or cleft of the rock (cf. Ex. 33:21-23), where Jehovah interrogated Elijah (vv. 3-9). After three precursors to the presence of Jehovah (wind, earthquake, and fire),⁷² the still small voice of the LORD challenged Elijah about his presence and God’s plan. After complaining about his sole defense for the LORD, Jehovah gave him a three-fold task, and incidentally responded that He still had seven thousand believers in Israel (cf. Rom. 11:4). His tasks were the following: 1) internationally, he was to anoint Hazael over Ben-Hadad as king; 2) nationally, he was to anoint Jehu over Ahab as king; and 3) spiritually, he was to anoint “*Elisha*”⁷³ (אֵלִישָׁע) as his successor (vv. 10-18). He started his new commission with finding and challenging Elisha about his new calling. The new prophet responded immediately by sacrificing his livelihood and then followed Elijah (vv. 19-21).

Chapter Twenty

⁶⁹“*Baal*” was perhaps “*pursuing*” (שִׁיג *siyg* = bowel movement), as Elijah suggested. Did he not answer their occultic gestures of “cutting” (v. 28) because he was too busy at the rest room or water closet (v. 27)?

⁷⁰“*The angel of the LORD*” was the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ (II Ki. 1:3; Gen. 16:7 ff.; Zech. 3:1).

⁷¹Since “*cave*” is articular, it may be referring to a specific cave.

⁷²Cf. Ex. 20:18; Isa. 29:6, Rev. 11:19.

⁷³“*Elisha*” (58x) means “*God is salvation*” The Greek counterpart is Ἐλισσαῖος (Lk. 4:27). He desired a double portion of Elijah’s spirit (II Ki. 2:9).

The majority of the remainder of the book chronicles the reign of Israel's seventh king, namely Ahab, including his Syrian victories (20:1-34), the prophet's rebuke (20:35-43), the king's greed for and seizure of Naboth's vineyard (21:1-29), and King Ahab's final battle (22:1-40). Recognizing the drought-diminished land, Ben-hadad besieged Samaria and demanded his wealth and family. Ahab sought the elders' counsel which advised the king to refuse, and the refusal subsequently prompted the threat of war (vv. 1-12). An unnamed prophet advised Ahab to fight using his young men and God would give the deliverance, which did occur (vv. 13-21). Ahab was advised that there would be another Syrian effort and to prepare for it. The Syrians mocked the power of Jehovah Who in turn decimated the Syrian army.⁷⁴ The remaining army with Ben-hadad feigned repentance and sought mercy, resulting in an ill-advised covenant between Israel and Syria (vv. 13-34). Jehovah sent another prophet of "*the sons of the prophets*" (cf. II Ki. 2:3, 5, 7, 15; 4:1, 38; 5:22; 6:1) who enacted symbolically Ahab's disobedient behaviour of leniency toward Ben-hadad, and pronounced death upon the king and destruction to Israel (vv. 35-43).

Chapter Twenty-One

The wicked King Ahab continued his disobedient ways, coveting the vineyard of Naboth his neighbor. Upon Naboth's refusal to sell his paternal inheritance (cf. Lev. 25:23-28), Ahab became sullen and despondent. Jezebel connived a plan to grant the king's desire which included putting Naboth in a prominent position at a meeting and then denouncing him with the charges of blaspheming God and the king (Dt. 13:10-11; 17:5).⁷⁵ These charges demanded stoning, and Naboth was murdered.⁷⁶ Through Jezebel's plan and prompting, Ahab took possession of the vineyard (vv. 1-16). Of course, Jehovah was displeased and sent Elijah to pronounce death to this covetous murderer and his wicked wife. Dogs would lick and eat their blood as Jehovah judged their house, similar to His judgment on Jeroboam and Baasha (cf. II Ki. 9:30-37). Ahab, who had sold himself to work wickedness (הָרַע *hara`* ["the evil"]), responded in humility and "repentance,"⁷⁷ staving some of the judgment on him but reserving the rest on his posterity (vv. 17-29).

Chapter Twenty-Two

⁷⁴Obviously, God's omnipresence and infinity are not limited to hills, as Solomon had expressed earlier, saying, "*But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?*" (I Ki. 8:27).

⁷⁵The witnesses were false, being the "*sons of belial*" (בְּלִיעַל). The name בְּלִיעַל (16x) was a name for Satan, as Paul employed Βελίαλ (CT spelled it Βελιάρ) and affirmed (II Cor. 6:15).

⁷⁶Naboth's sons were killed at the same time leaving no heir (II Ki. 9:26).

⁷⁷True repentance would have resulted in the restoration of the vineyard (cf. Lk. 19:8).

After the time that Syria and Israel had peace, Ahab formed an alliance his brother-in-law and Judah's King Jehoshaphat (873-848 BC),⁷⁸ and they sought to take Ramoth-gilead from Syria.⁷⁹ To know the outcome, Ahab sought the advice of four hundred false prophets, but Jehoshaphat desired another prophet, namely Micaiah. The false prophets predicted victory at Ramoth-gilead (vv. 5-16). The faithful prophet saw two revelatory truths concerning Israel and Ahab: 1) Israel scattered as sheep with no shepherd,⁸⁰ and 2) the angelic host around the throne of God with demons vying for the opportunity to lie through the prophets about Ahab's "victory."⁸¹ In spite of Ahab's disguise to avoid being targeted by the Syrian army, he was "randomly"⁸² shot and eventually died as predicted by Micaiah. His spilt blood was licked-up by dogs as predicted by Elijah (21:19). The narrative briefly summarized Ahab's reign including the building of an ivory house and cities (vv. 17-40). Furthermore, the writer chronicled briefly the reign of Jehoshaphat, including his godly walk, moral reforms, and judgments,⁸³ his death, and his successor Jehoram (יהורם "Jehovah is exalted")⁸⁴ who was his son (vv. 41-50). Ahaziah (אחזיהו "Jehovah possesses") had a brief reign (853-852 BC),⁸⁵ continuing the wickedness of the kings of Israel with Baal worship (vv. 51-53). Thus, the book concluded with the spiritual darkness of a dynasty that had so much brilliant hope at the beginning.

Finis

⁷⁸Cf. II Chr. 17:1-20:37.

⁷⁹Jehoshaphat compromised the doctrinal purity of Jehovah worship by aligning with Ahab and his baalism. Cf. *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? ¹⁶ And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people"* (II Cor. 6:14-16).

⁸⁰See Zech. 13:7; Mt. 26:31; Mk. 14:27, for the smitten Shepherd and scattered sheep fulfillment.

⁸¹Cf. Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6; Rev. 12:10-13.

⁸²The so-called "lucky shot" was pre-ordained and facilitated by the LORD (*vide* Ps. 91:5).

⁸³The LORD judged his alliance with Ahaziah by destroying Jehoshaphat's fleet of ships, as the prophet Eliezer predicted, saying, *"Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish"* (II Chr. 20:37).

⁸⁴Jehoram married Athaliah (cf. II Ki. 8:16, 25-26).

⁸⁵Cf. II Chr. 20:35-21:1.

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