

1 & 2 KINGS

Author: Uncertain

Date: 971 - 586 BC

The importance of 1 & 2 Kings, which was originally only one book, can be seen from a historical perspective in that it spans 400 years of the history of Israel from the reign of Solomon to the Babylonian Captivity. It is more than a mere history book. Kings gives a spiritual analysis of each of the kings as to whether they served the Lord or not. This is the story of one people headed down two different paths. It tells us of good and bad kings, true and false prophets, and of loyalty and disobedience to God. Through it all, God remains faithful to His people and true to His word. The story begins with a united kingdom and great prosperity but ends with a divided kingdom and tremendous problems.

First Kings records the lives of a number of famous people, both good and evil. King David, King Solomon, and the Queen of Sheba are examples of righteous people seeking God's wisdom. King Ahab and Jezebel are notorious examples of wicked people discarding God's law and rebelling against him. In addition to these famous figures is the man often described as Israel's greatest prophet, Elijah. His confrontation against 400 prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel is one of the most dramatic stories in the Bible.

Second Kings traces the history of the divided kingdom in chapters 1-17. At that point (722 B.C.), the northern kingdom, Israel falls into Assyrian captivity. Chapters 18-25 continue the history of the surviving southern kingdom, Judah, until it falls to the Babylonians (586 B.C.). The kings are clearly labeled as good or evil.

Application: This book is an illustration of what can happen to us if we make anything more important than God, make ruinous alliances, allow our consciences to be desensitized to right and wrong, and when we are no longer able to discern God's will for our lives. We may fail, like the people of Judah and Israel, but God's promises never fail.

1 KINGS OUTLINE

- I. THE UNITED KINGDOM (1:1 - 11:43)
 - A. The Decline of David and the Exaltation of Solomon (1:1 - 2:12)
 - B. The Reign of the Solomon (2:13 - 11:43)
- II. THE DIVIDED KINGDOM (12:1 - 22:53)
 - A. The Cause of the Division of the Kingdom (12:1-24)
 - B. The Reign of Kings of Israel and Judah (12:24 - 22:53)

2 KINGS OUTLINE

- I. THE DIVIDED KINGDOM (Cont'd from 1 Kings) (Chapters 1 - 17)
 - A. The Good and Evil Kings of Judah and Israel.
 - B. The Fall of the Northern Kingdom (Israel) to Assyria(17:7-41)
- II. THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH TO THE CAPTIVITY (Chs. 18-25)
 - A. More Good and Evil Kings of Judah (18:1 - 24:16)
 - B. The Fall of the Southern Kingdom (Judah) To Babylon (24:17 - 25:30)