

Subject: Know Your Bible – Part 4

Scripture: Deuteronomy 17:14-20

We have already considered the time of judges and are looking now at the time when kings ruled Israel. God did not tell His people to have a king, but He knew that one day they would have a king like all the other nations. For hundreds of years God was their only King. When the time came for them to have an earthly king, God gave them instructions and guidelines so they would have the right kind of king. The king of Israel must meet four requirements:

- 1) The king must be God's chosen man
- 2) The king must be a fellow Israelite (not a foreigner)
- 3) The king must not acquire many horses, wives, or riches (lest he rely on military power rather than God, lest he listen to his wives' advice instead of God's wisdom, and lest he trust in his own resources instead of God)
- 4) The king must write, read, and obey God's Word (he was to learn, respect, and follow God's Word)

No one was above God's Law, not even the king. Most of the problems in Israel's history can be traced to the failure of their kings to live and reign by these guidelines.

The History of Israel: 1 Kings through Esther

1 and 2 Kings describe the united and divided kingdoms

These books provide a selective rather than an exhaustive account of people and events from 971 BC to 561 BC. Both books were likely written between 561-538 BC, by an unknown author after Jerusalem was destroyed and many Jews were deported from their homeland.

1 Kings 1-11: King Solomon ruled

A time of peace

The rise of Israel

Israel was a united kingdom ruled by three kings for a total of 120 years. Saul, David, and Solomon each ruled 40 years. Solomon pleased God by asking for wisdom (1 Kg. 3:5-15). He angered God by disobeying His Word (1 Kg. 11:1-13)

1 Kings 12-2 Kings: Many kings ruled

A time of turmoil

The demise of Israel

Four Significant Dates and Events:

970 BC – Solomon became king in Jerusalem

930 BC – Israel was divided into two kingdoms

722 BC – The Northern Kingdom (Israel) was destroyed by Assyria
586 BC – The Southern Kingdom (Judah) was overtaken by Babylon

Important themes in 1 and 2 Kings:

Yahweh is the only true God. All heathen idols are foolish, powerless, and worthless. God alone is worthy of worship. God is always faithful to His covenants. God reveals Himself and His will through the Law and prophets. Elijah and Elisha are prominent men of God. God always blesses obedience and severely punishes disobedience. These books reminded the exiled Jews why God's judgment had come upon the nation. God withdrew His hand of protection because they abandoned His law and worshiped false gods.

1 and 2 Chronicles describe Israel's history from God's perspective

From Genesis through 2 Kings all books follow a chronological order, but 1 and 2 Chronicles return to a previous time period. These books cover the same history described in 2 Samuel through 2 Kings, but the point of view is different. This is not merely a repetition of the same material, but it reveals the spiritual significance of historical events.

- These books emphasize the Law, priesthood, and temple
- 1 and 2 Chronicles record events from King David around 1000 B.C. to the return of exiles in 538 B.C.

Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther describe Israel's return and restoration

Ezra tells the story of two returns from Babylonian captivity:

Ezra 1-6: Return under Zerubbabel to rebuild Israel's temple

Ezra 7-10: Return under Ezra to restore Israel's spiritual life

Nehemiah tells the story of the third return from captivity:

Nehemiah 1-7: Rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem

Nehemiah 8-13: Reminding the people to obey the Lord

Esther tells the story of God's providence during captivity. It describes the Jews who remained in exile.

Esther is like a drama because of its surprising and ironic twists.

Esther reveals how God uses ordinary people to accomplish His plan.

Esther and Ruth are the only two Bible books named for women:

- Esther was a Jew who married a Gentile (God used her to preserve His people)
- Ruth was a Gentile who married a Jew (God used her in the Messiah's family line)

Know Your Bible – Part 4

1 Kings through Esther

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- 1) The king must be _____
- 2) The king must be _____
- 3) The king must not acquire _____
- 4) The king must _____

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The History of Israel: 1 Kings through Esther

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The _____ of Israel

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