

The Message of the Old Testament

A Book-by-Book Study

KINGS

Background

The book is named for its prominent main characters, the _____. The author of the book is not named in the Bible.

Originally the two books of Kings formed a single book, as did the two books of Samuel. Kings and Samuel compose one continuous and complete history of Israel and Judah.

How We Got Here

- ▶ God promised Abraham a people and the land
- ▶ Moses led the people to the land
- ▶ Joshua led the people to conquer the land
- ▶ Judges sets before us life in the land
- ▶ Samuel's events take place as the period of the judges is coming to a close.
- ▶ Kings takes us from the hope of a strong, enduring kingdom to the reality of a kingdom that is demolished.

Contents of Kings

The _____ King (Solomon) (1 Kings 1–11)
Overcomes Abijah's challenge
Prays for and is granted wisdom
Builds the Temple and Palace
Turns from the Lord

The Kingdom Is _____ (1 Kings 12–14)
Rehoboam's Stupidity
Jeroboam's Cunning

The Kingdom's _____ (1 Kings 15-16)
Fighting
Killing
Idolatry

Elijah and _____ (1 Kings 17-22)
Elijah appears to Ahab telling him that as surely as the Lord lives, for three years there would be no rain except by his word.
Elijah has a showdown on Mt. Carmel with 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah. The people repent.
The Lord sends rain.
Elijah flees from Jezebel.
Elisha is called to succeed Elijah.
Ahab and Jezebel take Naboth's vineyard and meet their prophesied doom.

Elisha Succeeds Elijah (2 Kings 1-8)

Elijah is taken to heaven and Elisha assumes his mantle. Through him . . .
 God Provides oil for a destitute widow.
 God provides a son for the Shunammite woman.
 God raises the son of the Shunammite.
 God purifies a deadly stew.
 God heals Naaman of leprosy.
 God punishes Gehazi for his greed.
 God makes an axe head float.

Kings Rise and Fall; _____ Falls (2 Kings 9-17)

“In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria, and he carried the Israelites away to Assyria and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.” (2 Kings 17:6)

Hezekiah Ascends (2 Kings 18-20)

Hezekiah is key because he is king when Assyria has defeated Israel. Will they also be able to defeat Judah? No. God uses Hezekiah bolstered by Isaiah to withstand Assyria. Although through Hezekiah the door is cracked for the future invasion of the Babylonians.

Kings Rise and Fall; _____ Falls (2 Kings 21-25)

Revival under Josiah
 Decline under the kings that followed
 Capture and fall of Jerusalem

The Message of the Books of Kings

Standing on the threshold of _____, human beings called, empowered, and enriched by God blow it royally, yet again. This time the hope of God’s promise appears seriously in doubt.

“All that has unfolded in Joshua, Judges, and Samuel culminates. Israel ascends to its greatest religious, economic and political strength during Solomon’s reign (c. 970–930 B.C.), only to divide at his death, then disintegrate and suffer exile by 587 B.C.”

--Paul House, Old Testament Theology, 249.

This _____ has been repeated over and over through the Old Testament. Starting in the Garden of Eden, it repeats during the days of Moses and Joshua and the judges.

The exile puts a _____ to the tiresomeness of this pattern so the people can prepare for the one king who can actually lead them to the _____ of God’s covenants and His promises.

Themes in the Books of Kings***Idolatry*****►Warnings about Idolatry**

“Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I will drive out before you the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Take care, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land to which you go, lest it become a _____ in your midst. You shall tear down their altars and _____ their pillars and cut down their Asherim (for you shall

worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and when they whore after their gods and _____ to their gods and you are invited, you eat of his sacrifice, and you take of their daughters for your sons, and their daughters whore after their gods and make your sons whore after their gods.” Exodus 34:11-16
 If you will fear the _____ and serve him and obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the Lord your God, it will be _____. But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then the hand of the Lord will be _____ you and your king. 1 Samuel 12:14-15

And as for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules, then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’ But if you _____ from following me, you or your children, and do not keep my commandments and my statutes that I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will _____ Israel from the land that I have given them, and the house that I have consecrated for my name I will cast out of my sight, and Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples. And this house will become a heap of _____. Everyone passing by it will be astonished and will hiss, and they will say, ‘Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this house?’ Then they will say, ‘Because they _____ the Lord their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them. Therefore the Lord has brought all this disaster on them.’” 1 Kings 9:4-9

►The Sin of Solomon

Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the people of Israel, “You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love. He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart. For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. So Solomon did what was _____ in the sight of the Lord and did not wholly follow the Lord, as David his father had done. Then Solomon built a _____ for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods.

1 Kings 11:1-8

►The Sin of Jeroboam

And Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom will turn back to the house of David. If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah.” So the king took counsel and made two _____ of gold. And he said to the people, “You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Behold your _____, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.” And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. Then this thing became a sin, for the people went as far as Dan to be before one. He also made temples on high places and appointed priests from among all the people, who were not of the Levites.

1 Kings 12:26-31

►The Sin of Rehoboam

Under his leadership, the people of Judah . . .

. . . did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins that they committed, more than all that their fathers had done. For they also built for themselves high

places and pillars and Asherim on every high hill and under every green tree, and there were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the _____ that the Lord drove out before the people of Israel. 1 Kings 14:22-24

►More idolatry

Nadab . . . “did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin which he made Israel to sin.” (1 K 15:26)

Baasha and son Elah . . . “sinned and . . . made Israel to sin, provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with their idols.” (1 K 16:13)

Ahab . . . did evil in the sight of the Lord, more than all who were before him. And as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, he took for his wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal and worshiped him. He erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria. And Ahab made an Asherah. Ahab did more to provoke the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him. (1 K 16:30-33)

Asa . . . did what was _____ in the eyes of the Lord, as David his father had done. He put away the male cult prostitutes out of the land and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. He also removed Maacah his mother from being queen mother because she had made an abominable image for Asherah. And Asa cut down her image and burned it at the brook Kidron. (1 K 15:11-13)

Hezekiah . . . And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done. He _____ the high places and broke the pillars and cut down the Asherah. And he broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it (it was called Nehushtan). (2 K 18:3-4)

Manasseh . . . did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to the despicable practices of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel. For he _____ the high places that Hezekiah his father had destroyed, and he erected altars for Baal and made an Asherah, as Ahab king of Israel had done, and worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. And he built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord had said, “In Jerusalem will I put my name.” And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. And he burned his _____ as an offering and used fortune-telling and omens and dealt with mediums and with necromancers. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger. (2 K 21:2-6)

Idolatry runs right out of the failure of the king who had ruled at the apex of Israelite history (Solomon) to its demise at the end of the book where both kingdoms are decimated and taken into exile. This matter is at the very heart of what it means to love and worship God. The heart issue at the center of God’s plan involving human beings is their trust and rest in Him alone. The problem is not that the Israelites _____ the worship of God altogether, but with a bit of subtlety, they supplemented the worship of God with the worship of the idols of the surrounding nations. And Mark Dever rightly says, “When you try to worship any other god _____ the Lord, you show that you do not really know the one, true God. To know Him is to know that there is no _____.”
--Dever, *The Message of the Old Testament*, 326.

In the World AND of It

The worship of idols is one aspect of how the Israelites failed to fulfill God’s purpose for them. They were to be a people who revealed God to the other nations by their uniqueness in being His people. Becoming like the other nations is the very antithesis of the purpose for which God called them.

1. They had wanted a king in order to be like the other nations.
2. Now their kings are furthering this motive.

2 Kings 17:7-18 --

Prophets of God

Several prophets of Yahweh emerge in Kings. Among them are

_____---Helped assure that Solomon would ascend to the throne following David (1 K 1-2)

Ahijah---Prophesied Jeroboam would rule ten tribes (1 K 11:29). Prophesied that idolatry will eventually force God to send Israel into exile (1 K 14:14-16).

Shemaiah---Spoke the word of the Lord that Rehoboam should not go up to fight Jeroboam (1 K 12:22).

An unnamed man of God---Prophesied that a king named _____ would destroy Jeroboam's altar. This prophet also failed to obey the word God had given him and was attacked by a lion as punishment (1 K 13).

Elijah (1 K 17 – 2 K 2)

Elisha (19 – 2 K 13)

Isaiah (2 K 19 – 20)

In Kings, the prophets preach the word, both by predicting the future and by explaining the past. Prophets anoint and denounce _____. They are Yahweh's messengers and friends, as well as Israel's conscience and protectors.

Yet the Lord warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, "_____ from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the Law that I commanded your fathers, and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets." 2 K 17:13

The Lord _____ Israel out of his sight, as he had spoken by all his servants, the prophets. 2 K 17:22

The ministry of the prophets highlights several important truths:
 God's _____ of Nature – Elijah
 His care for the Helpless – Elijah and Elisha
 His supremacy over idols like Baal – Elijah
 His sovereignty over _____ – Elijah and Elisha
 The need for the people to repent if they would escape disaster – All

Kings introduces us to the _____ of the role of the prophet of God among his people. They speak to the people for God. They are to be taken seriously and respected. The word they speak is weighty. Their earnest attempt is to bring about reconciliation between God and the people called by His name. This introduction prepares us for the writings of the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the others. Ultimately it points us to Jesus and his forerunner, John the Baptist.

When Kings ends, Israel's history has been told from Abraham's era (c. 2000 B.C.) to Jehoiachin's old age (c. 560 B.C.). There remain God's covenant with Abraham, the Mosaic Covenant, and God's promise to David. But circumstances call them into doubt. A permanent solution to the problem of sin is what is needed but has yet to emerge. If these mighty prophets are unable to persuade Israel to return to Yahweh, then the future hardly looks hopeful. What is left to be done?

Practical Lessons for Daily Living

Flee from idolatry.

Beware the dangers of living in this world.

Heed the word of God.

Realize your natural tendencies and guard yourself!