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## OT History – Part 16: 1&2 Kings Overview

*“In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the Israelites to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, in Gozan on the Habor River and in the towns of the Medes.”*  
*2 Kings 17:6*

*“So the Lord said, “I will remove Judah also from my presence as I removed Israel, and I will reject Jerusalem, the city I chose, and this temple, about which I said, ‘There shall my Name be.’””* –  
*2 Kings 23:27*

### 1. Content

- a. Overview: Solomon’s sins led to the division of the kingdom into two rival nations.
- b. The books of Kings provide the historical framework into which the ministries of almost all of the writing prophets may be fitted.
- c. Duplication of several texts between Kings and the prophets.
  - i. 2Ki 18:13-20:19 and Isaiah 36-39.
  - ii. 2Ki 24:18-25:30 and Jeremiah 52.

### 2. Author and Date

- a. Ultimately, we don’t know who the author was.
- b. Final form of the book must date after 561 B.C. due to the inclusion of the release of King Jehoiachin from a Babylonian prison (2Ki 25:27-30).
- c. These books span more than four hundred years.
  - i. From the end of David’s reign (ca. 970 B.C) to the release of King Jehoiachin in 561 B.C.
- d. Use of sources in Kings – none of which have survived to this day.
  - i. Book of the Acts of Solomon (1Ki 11:41).
  - ii. Book of the Chronicles (or Annals) of the Kings of Israel
    1. Mentioned 18 times.
  - iii. Book of the Chronicles (or Annals) of the Kings of Judah
    1. Mentioned 15 times.

### 3. Framework of the Kings

- a. Kings of Israel and of Judah ascension notices and death notices follow a pattern.
  - i. Note that for Kings of Judah, the king’s age and mother’s name is always given.
- b. Some of the kings of Judah received mixed verdicts (some good, some bad) while the kings of Israel were all evil.
- c. The dynastic succession remains in place in the kings of Judah – from David to his sons, to his sons and so on.
- d. The family line of the house of Israel broken off and detouring all over the place.

### 4. Chronological Difficulties<sup>1</sup>

- a. The chronology of 1 and 2 Kings has been scrutinized and criticized.
  - i. Sometimes contradictory dates are given for certain facts.
  - ii. Sometimes summary dates for a king’s reign do not match up with the synchronisms established with the dates in the other kingdom.
  - iii. Numbers that are added up to fill a certain time period do not match up with each other.
  - iv. External synchronisms some times don’t fit with known dates.

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<sup>1</sup> David M. Howard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Historical Books* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2007), 208-209.

- b. Thiele has a scheme that seems to put all of the pieces together and rests on principles such as<sup>2</sup>:
  - i. In Israel, years were reckoned from the month of Nisan (roughly equivalent to April), whereas in Judah they were reckoned from Tishri (roughly equivalent to October).
  - ii. Israel and Judah used different systems of counting the first year of a king's reign (by some methods of counting it would have overlapped the previous king's last year and thus counted twice); furthermore, each nation changed its system at least once during its history.
  - iii. Israel and Judah each counted the other's years using their own systems.
  - iv. Both nations employed a system of "coregencies," in which a king's son may have been installed as king before his father died; the overlapping years were then usually counted twice.
- c. Despite its complex nature, Thiele's system does show the biblical text to be internally consistent.

### 5. Other Introductory Information

- a. Kings of Judah vs. Kings of Israel.
  - i. Southern kingdom was more stable – fewer kings in the same time span.
  - ii. Jeroboam as the standard for iniquity in the northern kingdom.
  - iii. David as the standard for goodness in the southern kingdom.
- b. Prophets
  - i. "Man of God" used 60 times in Kings.
  - ii. "Prophet(s)" is used 94 times in Kings.
- c. "Word of the Lord"
  - i. Occurs 44 times in Kings.
- d. Prophecy and fulfillment<sup>3</sup>
  - i. 2 Samuel 7:13 // 1 Ki 8:20
  - ii. 1 Ki 11:29ff // 1 Ki 12:15
  - iii. 1 Ki 13:2 // 2 Ki 23:16-18
  - iv. 1 Ki 13:3 // 1 Ki 13:5
  - v. 1 Ki 14:6ff // 1 Ki 15:29
  - vi. 1 Ki 16:1ff // 1 Ki 16:12
  - vii. Joshua 6:26 // 1 Ki 16:34
  - viii. 1 Ki 22:17 // 1 Ki 22:35ff
  - ix. 1 Ki 21:21ff // 1 Ki 21:27-29 (cf. 2 Ki 9:7)
  - x. 2 Ki 1:6 // 2 Ki 1:17
  - xi. 2 Ki 21:10ff // 2 Ki 24:2 (cf. also 23:26)
  - xii. 2 Ki 22:15ff // 2 Ki 23:30
  - xiii. 1 Ki 21:23 (and 2 Ki 9:10) // 2 Ki 9:30-37

### 6. Kings as a Theological History

- a. Kings theme/purpose
  - i. The question is, "What happened?"
  - ii. Focus on kingship through the phases.
    - 1. 970-930: Solomon
    - 2. 930-722 – United Monarchy
    - 3. 722-586 – Judah alone
  - iii. Focus in Kings on getting the facts straight.

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<sup>2</sup> Howard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Historical Books*, 211.

<sup>3</sup> Howard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Historical Books*, 216.

1. Not simply a focus on political history, but viewed with how God views them.
2. Human king and God as King.
- iv. Strong emphasis on prophecy and fulfillment (see above).
- b. Earliest possible date of writing.
  - i. Look for last recorded event (can't be sooner than that).
  - ii. In Kings: release of Jehoiachin in ~562B.C.
- c. Message
  - i. Offer an explanation of the exile.
    1. Covenant breaking has brought about covenant consequences.
    2. 2 Kings 17:1-23 (Israel)
      - a. See also 2 Kings 18:11-2
    3. 2 Kings 24-25 (Judah)
    4. Theological explanation of the exile.
  - ii. What do we make of all of this?
    1. What about 2 Samuel 7?
      - a. See 2 Samuel 7:12-16
      - b. Unconditional promise
    2. Although we see the division of the united Monarchy, and the subsequent demist of Israel and Judah, we (standing on this side of the Cross) can see glimmers of hope throughout 1 and 2 Kings.
      - a. Continual speak of the Davidic promise.
      - b. Detailed linkage of the line of David being preserved.
        - i. 1Ki 11:43, 1Ki 14:31, 1Ki 15:8, 1Ki 15:24, 1Ki 22:50, 2Ki 8:16, 2Ki 8:24, 2Ki 11:1-3, 2Ki 11:21, 2Ki 12:19-21, 2Ki 14:17-22, 2Ki 15:7, 2Ki 15:38, 2Ki 16:20, 2Ki 20:21, 2Ki 21:19, 2Ki 21:26, 2Ki 23:30, 2Ki 23:34, 2Ki 24:6, 2Ki 24:15-17
    3. Matthew 1 – genealogy of Jesus.

### 7. 1&2 Chronicles (Briefly)

- a. 1&2 Chronicles can be viewed as synoptic histories with Samuel/Kings.
  - i. Think – synoptic Gospels (same history, different presentation).
  - ii. Think two biographies of the same person, written by to different people in two different generations.
- b. Originally one work, like Samuel (and probably Kings), it was split into two when it was translated into Greek.
- c. Opens with 9 chapters of genealogy.
  - i. This is dull to us because we don't generally recognize the importance or value of these genealogies.
- d. Begins with Adam, spans past the exile.
- e. ½ of Chronicles is from Samuel/Kings.
  - i. Writer used Samuel/Kings
  - ii. Audience was likely familiar with Samuel/Kings
  - iii. Chronicler selectively draws from Samuel/Kings and presents the history to the post-exilic people.
  - iv. Wherever one can check it, Chronicles history checks out.
  - v. Chronicles is more of a homiletic structure (~sermon) than Samuel/Kings.

### 8. Chronicles as a Theological History

- a. Original audience
  - i. Restored community – returning from the exile.
  - ii. The question now is, “What happens now?”

- iii. 70 years of exile have elapsed.
  - 1. 2Ch 36:20ff
  - 2. Earliest possible date – Cyrus edict
  - 3. Latest possible date – debatable.
- iv. Fundamental question: “Is God still interested in us?”
  - 1. “Are his covenants still in force?”
- v. Parental parallel – provide care and assurance after discipline.
- b. Differences with respect to Samuel/Kings:
  - i. Idealization of David
  - ii. None of the bad is recounted (Solomon, David, even the “good” kings – the bad parts of their reigns are glossed over).
  - iii. Not trying to rewrite history, but present it with a different purpose.
  - iv. Shift from “David’s kingdom” to the “Lord’s kingdom”.
  - v. Providing hope.
  - vi. Don’t “choose” between Samuel/Kings and Chronicles.

### 9. Resources

- a. Published:
  - i. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Historical Books*, David M. Howard.
  - ii. *1 and 2 Kings* – Provan, Iain. NIBCOT (Hendrickson, 1995).
  - iii. Old Testament History Lectures and Study Guides from Covenant Theological Seminary
    - 1. <http://www.covenantseminary.edu/worldwide/en/OT230/OT230.asp>
    - 2. Lectures 31-35
  - iv. *A Synoptic Harmony of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles: With Related Passages from Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezra*, James D. Newsome.
  - v. *A Biblical History of Israel*, Provan, Long, Longerman.
- b. From Class:
  - i. Synthetic Outline of 1 Kings.
  - ii. Synthetic Outline of 2 Kings.
  - iii. Timeline
  - iv. Cross-reference for Reading the Prophets.
    - 1. Isaiah 1:1, 6:1, 7:1, 36:1...
    - 2. Jeremiah 1:2-3, 21:1, 24:1, 25:12, 26:1, 27:1, 28:1, 29:1-2, 32:1, 34:1, 35:1, 36:1, 37:1, 39:1, 45:1, 47:1, 50:1...
    - 3. Lamentations – expresses the people’s overwhelming sense of loss that accompanied the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple as well as the exile of Judah’s inhabitants from the land of Yahweh had covenanted to give Israel as a perpetual national homeland.
    - 4. Ezekiel 1:1-2
      - a. Prophet during exile.
    - 5. Daniel 1:1, 8:1, 9:1, 10:1...
    - 6. Hosea 1:1
    - 7. Micah 1:1
  - v. As you read the Prophets, ask yourself:
    - 1. Where am I at in the history of Israel?
    - 2. Is this prophet a prophet in Israel or Judah? (are we talking northern or southern kingdom?)
    - 3. Who is king?
    - 4. Is that king a good king or a bad king?
    - 5. Is this a time of stability or unrest?
    - 6. Where are we at with respect to exile (before? how far before? during? after? how far after?)

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## OT History – Part 16: 1&2 Kings Overview

- vi. Read the passages associated with Kings/Chronicles accounts to get context and don't forget where you're at in the big picture.

### 10. For Next Time:

- a. Read all of Ezra and Nehemiah.
  - i. Utilize the "Postexilic Chronology" listing at the bottom right of the OT History Timeline to guide you through the events.
- b. Read Chapter 9 of Howard's book.
- c. Jot down things that stand out to you and why they stand out to you.
- d. What is the major issue that Ezra has to deal with in Ezra 9-10?
- e. When Nehemiah is addressed by King Artaxerxes in Nehemiah 2, he responds with a plan. Note here that a couple of months have passed since Nehemiah 1. What are the details that Nehemiah has thought through in these couple of months?
- f. Nehemiah has to overcome and reform many practices in Jerusalem; what are some of those practices which he attempted to reform?

### 11. Class Handouts, etc Available Online:

- a. I'm making all of the handouts, etc available online at:
  - i. [www.toddsmindblogger.wordpress.com](http://www.toddsmindblogger.wordpress.com)