

THE BOOKS OF I AND II KINGS

First and Second Kings were originally one Book and we will overview them in that way. I Kings records the division of the united kingdom of Saul, David and Solomon into Two Kingdoms. The two kingdoms were **Israel** and **Judah**. II Kings records the captivity of both Judah and Israel.

Israel was composed of ten tribes. It was the northern kingdom and had Samaria as its capital. Judah was comprised of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. It was the southern kingdom and had Jerusalem as its capital. It is important to fix this in your mind if you are to understand the rest of the Old Testament.

NORTHERN KINGDOM - Israel - 10 tribes - Samaria.

SOUTHERN KINGDOM - Judah - 2 tribes - Jerusalem.

It is generally accepted that Jeremiah was the author of Kings, but this cannot absolutely be proven.

The CENTRAL MESSAGE of I Kings is: Division Because of Disobedience. This is seen in I Kings 11:11. This marks a turning point and becomes key to the whole story.

The Structure of I Kings

THE GREAT 40 YEAR REIGN OF KING SOLOMON - CHAPTERS 1-11.

(one half of the Book we have one united kingdom)

THE FIRST EIGHTY YEARS OF THE TWO KINGDOMS - CHAPTERS 12-22.

(one half of the Book we follow the two kingdoms and their leaders)

The Forty Year Reign of Solomon - Chapters 1-11

1. Solomon was the last of the kings to reign over a united Hebrew kingdom. He was just a child (according to 3:7) when he became king.
2. Please notice Solomon's prayer and God's promise (3:5-13).
 - a. II Chronicles 1:7-13 is very similar.
3. The **Wisdom** of Solomon was apparent (4:29-34). Read verse 32.
4. In Chapter 6 Solomon begins to build the first Temple. In Chapter 8 the dedication and prayer are given. II Chronicles 7:1-3 gives the results.
5. God's PROMISE and WARNING to Solomon (9:3-9). Please note God's conditions in Verse 6.
6. In Chapter 11 we see Solomon's transgression against God. About four and a half centuries before, God had written the qualifications for all future kings of Israel (Deuteronomy 17:14-17). Solomon had disobeyed God in all these areas.
 - a. He had much gold and silver - 1 Kings 10:14-27.
 - b. He had thousands of horses - 4:26.
 - c. He had hundreds of wives and concubines (11:3).
7. The results of his transgression: God said the kingdom would be divided after the death of Solomon (11:9-13 and 31).
8. Solomon's death and the rest of his works are recorded (11:41-43). Read Galatians 6:7.

The First Eighty Years of the Two Kingdoms - Chapters 12-22

1. Immediately after the death of Solomon the division of the kingdom takes place: ten tribes are led by Jeroboam and two tribes are led by Rehoboam the son of Solomon (12:16-21).
2. The sin of Israel (the north) 12:25-33. Jeroboam caused to be built false centers of worship at **Dan** and **Bethel** to keep the people from going to Jerusalem to worship. He made "priests of the lowest people, not the sons of Levi." Again we see the judgement of God (14:14-16).

3. There are two lines of Kings during the 80 year period of I KINGS: Judah had four kings and Israel had eight. All eight kings of Israel were evil. The two kings of Judah (Asa and Jehoshaphat) reigned 66 years and were good kings.

The Coming of the Prophet Elijah - Chapters 17-22

1. The last six chapters of I Kings gives the ministry of Elijah in the northern kingdom of Israel (ten tribes). The New Testament speaks of him more than any other prophet (Matthew 17:1-5).
With the kingdoms divided, Elijah suddenly appears as a crisis prophet and disappears as suddenly in a chariot of fire (II KINGS 2:11). Between these events we see a succession of miracles.
2. He was a prophet of deeds. He wrote nothing but "pronounced" for God.
 - a. Three years of drought (17:1).
 - b. A bone in the throat of King Ahab (18:17).
 - c. Many other miracles are recorded, an example is found in 17:21.
3. Elijah teaches us that God always has a man to match the need.
 - a. After fleeing for his life, he is told to go back and anoint two kings. He is also instructed to find Elisha. and begin training him to take his place.
 - b. He pronounced doom on King Ahab and it came to pass (21:19 and 22:38).
 - c. He proves what God can do through a single man willing to serve.

THE BOOK OF II KINGS

1. This is the **Book of Captivities**.
 - a. In Chapter 17 the ten tribes of Israel (northern) go into Assyrian captivity from which they have never returned.
 - b. In Chapter 25 the two tribes of Judah (southern) go into Babylonian captivity (the Temple burned) from which only a remnant returned.
2. The central message is quite specific: Willful sin brings a dreadful end.
3. **The Structure of the Book.**
 - a. Events of Israel (northern) - Chapters 1-10.
Contains the ministry of Elisha.
 - b. Events of both kingdoms - Chapters 11-17.
This part runs to the Assyrian captivity of Israel. Jonah, Amos and Hosea prophesied at this time in Israel (northern).
 - c. Events of Judah (southern) - Chapters 18-25.
Ends with the captivity of Judah in Babylon by which time Obadiah, Joel, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah and Jeremiah has prophesied in Judah.
 - d. Prophets to Israel or Judah after the captivity: Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.
4. **The Number of Kings**
 - a. Israel (ten tribes, northern) 19 kings, and the kingdom lasted about 250 years.
 - b. Judah (2 tribes, southern) 20 kings and lasted about 390 years.
 - c. The 19 kings of Israel came from seven different families.
 - d. The 20 kings of Judah were all of the same family: David.
5. **God's Faithfulness**
 - a. Scripture history helps us to understand the faithfulness of God in keeping His covenant with David (II Samuel 7:8-17) in the preservation of the line of David (II KINGS 8:19 and II Chronicles 21:7).
6. **Jesus and the Throne of David**
 - a. The Lord Jesus Christ will reestablish the Throne of David in His Kingdom at His second coming.

From I and II Kings we see God's Divine provision after man's failure.

FOR NEXT WEEK: READ I AND II CHRONICLES