

1 and 2 Kings

Teaching Day 27/9/2014

London International Church of Christ

SESSION 1
OVERVIEW

WHO, WHEN, WHAT

Author unknown, but some think Jeremiah or Baruch. Jeremiah is traditionally asserted as author by the Jews (cp last chapter of 2 Kings cp Jeremiah 52). No conclusive evidence.

The author/ editor used material from sources such as “the book(s) of the annals of the kings of Israel/ Judah.”

Some think there was one writer/ editor of Joshua-Kings. Others don't, and it's not ultimately important.

WHO, WHEN, WHAT

Covers the period 971 to 561 BC

Final composition of 1 and 2 Kings probably between 561 (end of 2 Kings) and 539BC (Cyrus' takeover of Babylon – an argument from silence, but cp 2 Chronicles 36 and Ezra 1, plus Isaiah's prophecy, versus non-mention of Cyrus at end of Kings)

WHO, WHEN, WHAT

Significant events: David's death, Solomon's reign, the Temple as focus of worship (and deviation from this), the division of the kingdom, Elijah and Elisha's ministries, captivity of Israel by Assyrians, captivity of Judah by Babylonians

Originally one book. The division, in the middle of a narrative concerning Ahaziah, is arbitrary!

NOT JUST ANY HISTORY

The books of 1 and 2 Kings are not just *accurate* history, they are *interpreted* history

The author wanted to convey the lessons of Israel's history...

...specifically, *why* the Lord's judgment of exile had come

SECULAR GREATNESS, SPIRITUAL INSIGNIFICANCE

eg 1 Kings 16

- ²¹ Then the people of Israel were split into two factions; half supported Tibni son of Ginath for king, and the other half supported Omri. ²² But Omri's followers proved stronger than those of Tibni son of Ginath. So Tibni died and Omri became king.
- ²³ In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned twelve years, six of them in Tirzah. ²⁴ He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents^[a] of silver and built a city on the hill, calling it Samaria, after Shemer, the name of the former owner of the hill.
- ²⁵ But **Omri did evil** in the eyes of the LORD and sinned more than all those before him. ²⁶ He followed completely the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat, committing the same sin Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit, so that they aroused the anger of the LORD, the God of Israel, by their worthless idols.
- ²⁷ As for the other events of Omri's reign, what he did and the things he achieved, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel? ²⁸ Omri rested with his ancestors and was buried in Samaria. And Ahab his son succeeded him as king.

HOW DID THEY FARE?

Most of the kings of Judah “did evil in the sight of the Lord”

Almost all the kings of Israel “did evil in the sight of the Lord”

MAJOR THEMES

1. The Lord judged Israel and Judah because of their disobedience to his word, led by their kings. This was as promised in the Law.
2. The Temple was the one true place of worship.
3. The Lord remembered his promise to David. Even as 2 Kings closes, the line of David still exists, providing hope for the coming “seed” of David. God proves himself faithful, and his word trustworthy.

KINGS cp CHRONICLES

- Kings was written at the end of the “former prophets” to look back at a history beginning with Joshua, and describing God’s grace, the people’s disobedience, God’s discipline and eventual exiling. Joshua to Kings (the “former prophets”) was possibly written by one writer/ editor (Baruch?)
- Chronicles was written only about the kings of Judah and emphasises their Davidic lineage, the continuation of Temple worship, the continuing role of priests and Levites etc. It looks forward to a good future, because God’s proven faithfulness to David gives hope, despite the exile. Written by Ezra? To returning exiles?

A HOPEFUL ENDING

A DAVIDIC KING STILL HONOURED

2 Kings 25

²⁷ In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the year Awel-Marduk became king of Babylon, he released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. He did this on the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month. ²⁸ He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat of honour higher than those of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. ²⁹ So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes and for the rest of his life ate regularly at the king's table. ³⁰ Day by day the king gave Jehoiachin a regular allowance as long as he lived.

SESSION 2

THE KING

THE KING

Deuteronomy 17

¹⁴ When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, “Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us,” ¹⁵ be sure to appoint over you a king the LORD your God chooses. He must be from among your fellow Israelites. Do not place a foreigner over you, one who is not an Israelite. ¹⁶ The king, moreover, **must not acquire great numbers of horses** for himself or make the people return to Egypt to get more of them, for the LORD has told you, “You are not to go back that way again.” ¹⁷ He **must not take many wives**, or his heart will be led astray. He **must not accumulate** large amounts of silver and gold.

¹⁸ When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to **write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law**, taken from that of the Levitical priests. ¹⁹ It is to be with him, and he is **to read it all the days of his life** so that he may learn to revere the LORD his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees ²⁰ and **not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites and turn from the law** to the right or to the left. Then he and his descendants will reign a long time over his kingdom in Israel.

THE KING

1 Samuel 8

When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as Israel's leaders.^[a] ² The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abijah, and they served at Beersheba. ³ But his sons did not follow his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.

⁴ So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. ⁵ They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; now appoint a king to lead^[b] us, such as all the other nations have."

⁶ But when they said, "Give us a king to lead us," this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD. ⁷ And the LORD told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; **it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.** ⁸ As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you. ⁹ Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will claim as his rights."

DID THEY REMEMBER?

1Kings 2

- When the time drew near for David to die, he gave a charge to Solomon his son.
- ² “I am about to go the way of all the earth,” he said. “So be strong, act like a man, ³ and observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in obedience to him, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and regulations, as written in the Law of Moses. Do this so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go ⁴ and that the LORD may keep his promise to me: ‘If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel.’

1 Kings 8

²⁵ “Now LORD, the God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father the promises you made to him when you said, ‘You shall never fail to have a successor to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your descendants are careful in all they do to walk before me faithfully as you have done.’ ²⁶ And now, God of Israel, let your word that you promised your servant David my father come true.

1 KINGS 10

²⁶ Solomon accumulated chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and **twelve thousand horses**,^[i] which he kept in the chariot cities and also with him in Jerusalem. ²⁷ The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar as plentiful as sycamore-fig trees in the foothills. ²⁸ Solomon's horses were **imported from Egypt** and from Kue^[i]—the royal merchants purchased them from Kue at the current price. ²⁹ They imported a chariot from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty.^[k] They also exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and of the Arameans.

1 KINGS 11

King Solomon, however, **loved many foreign women** besides Pharaoh's daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. ² They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love. ³ He had **seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray.** ⁴ As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been. ⁵ He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. ⁶ So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not follow the LORD completely, as David his father had done.

⁷ On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. ⁸ He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.

⁹ The LORD became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice.

THE MOST WICKED?

- Probably Ahab in the north and Mannaseh in the south, though both are recorded as having humbled themselves before the Lord, at least to some extent
- Jeroboam is blamed for setting a precedent of idolatry in the northern kingdom

THE GREATEST KING?

- 1 Sam 23:1,5 The inspired utterance of **David** son of Jesse, the utterance of the man exalted by the Most High....
...If my house were not right with God,
surely he would not have made with me an everlasting covenant
- 2 Kings 18:5 **Hezekiah** trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him.
- 2 Kings 23:25 Neither before nor after **Josiah** was there a king like him who turned to the LORD as he did—with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses.

SESSION 3

THE PROPHET

THE PROPHET

Deuteronomy 18

- ¹⁴ The nations you will dispossess listen to those who practice sorcery or divination. But as for you, the LORD your God has not permitted you to do so. ¹⁵ The LORD your God **will raise up for you a prophet like me** from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. ¹⁶ For this is what you asked of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, “Let us not hear the voice of the LORD our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.”
- ¹⁷ The LORD said to me: “What they say is good. ¹⁸ **I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him.** ¹⁹ **I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name.** ²⁰ **But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, is to be put to death.”**
- ²¹ You may say to yourselves, “How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the LORD?” ²² **If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously, so do not be alarmed.**

PROPHETS IN KINGS

- Elijah
- Elisha
- Micaiah
- Jonah son of Amittai
- Unnamed prophets/ company of prophets
- Parts of Kings reproduced in Isaiah and Jeremiah

ONLY GOD REVEALS AND IT HAPPENS

ISAIAH 42:8-9

“I am the LORD; that is my name!
I will not yield my glory to
another
or my praise to idols.
⁹ See, the former things have
taken place,
and new things I declare;
before they spring into being
I announce them to you.”

AMOS 3:6-8

When a trumpet sounds in a city,
do not the people tremble?
When disaster comes to a city,
has not the LORD caused it?
⁷ Surely the Sovereign LORD does
nothing
without revealing his plan
to his servants the prophets.
⁸ The lion has roared—
who will not fear?
The Sovereign LORD has
spoken—
who can but prophesy?

THE ROLE OF THE PROPHET IN KINGS

- The prophet sometimes announced and anointed a new king
- The prophet rebuked a king for his sins
- The prophet was sometimes the one to declare when the king and his army should go to war

GOD OVERRULES HUMANS

Isaiah 55:8-11

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,”
declares the LORD.

⁹ “As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

¹⁰ As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it
without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish,
so that it yields seed for the sower and
bread for the eater,

¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my
mouth:
It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Bible narrators seem to have an “audacious
delight in God’s inscrutable ways”:

- Eg - “Primogeniture” (succession of the firstborn) is no guarantee of succession.
- Prophet over king
- David over Saul
- Solomon over Adonijah
- Etc
- God’s sovereign plan always happens in the end

GOD'S DREAM FULFILLED

JEREMIAH 31

³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.”
³⁴ No longer will they teach their neighbour, or say to one another, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

ROMANS 8

¹⁴ For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵ The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship.^[f] And by him we cry, “Abba,^[g] Father.”¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

GOD'S DREAM FULFILLED

Num 11:29

But Moses replied, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!"

1 Pet 2:9

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

CONCLUSION

**RESPOND HUMBLY TO GOD'S
WORD**

2 Kings 17:7-8

All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshiped other gods ⁸ and followed the practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before them, as well as the practices that the kings of Israel had introduced.

...looking for someone to devour...

(1 Pe 5:8)

2 Kings 10

³² In those days the LORD began to reduce the size of Israel. Hazael overpowered the Israelites throughout their territory ³³ east of the Jordan in all the land of Gilead (the region of Gad, Reuben and Manasseh), from Aroer by the Arnon Gorge through Gilead to Bashan.

Numbers 32

The Reubenites and Gadites, who had very large herds and flocks, saw that the lands of Jazer and Gilead were suitable for livestock. ² So they came to Moses and Eleazar the priest and to the leaders of the community, and said, ³ “Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo and Beon— ⁴ the land the LORD subdued before the people of Israel—are suitable for livestock, and your servants have livestock. ⁵ If we have found favour in your eyes,” they said, “let this land be given to your servants as our possession. Do not make us cross the Jordan.”

The Example of Josiah

2 Kings 22:18-19 Tell the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says concerning the words you heard:¹⁹ Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I have spoken against this place and its people—that they would become a curse^[b] and be laid waste—and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I also have heard you, declares the LORD.

The Word of God in our Lives

- 2 Peter 1:3 His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God^[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

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