

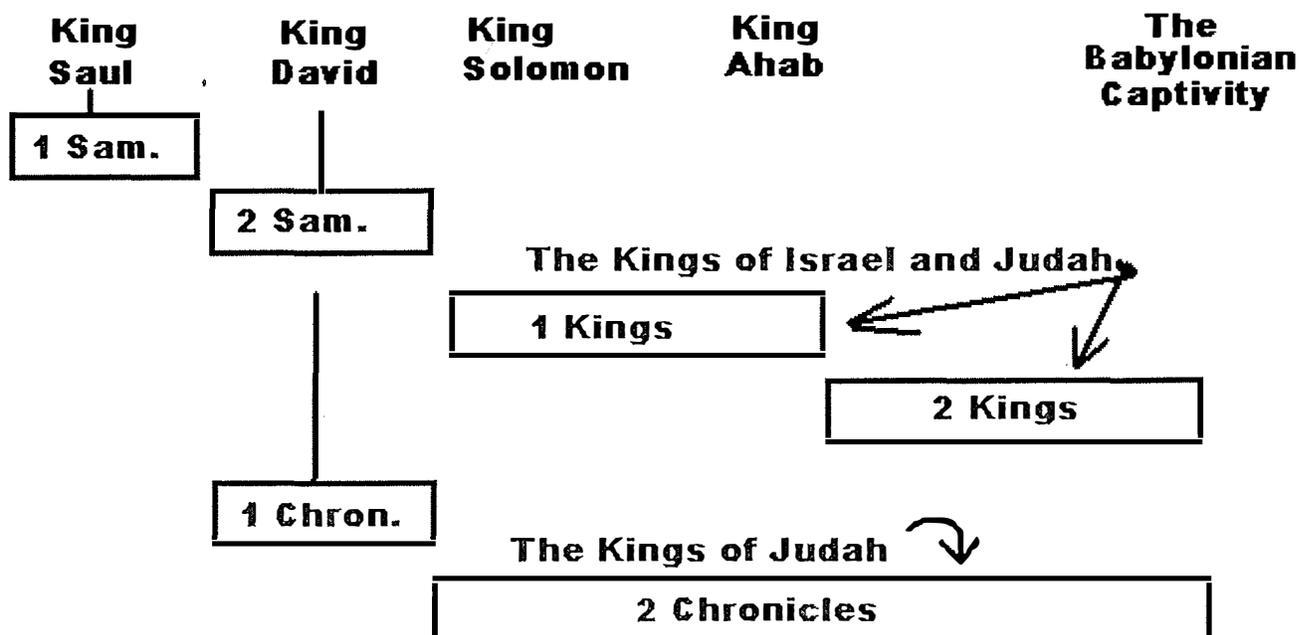
Chapter 5 Samuel, Kings, Chronicles

In this chapter we want to consider six history books which God has given to us. These books tell us all about the Jewish kings who ruled in the land of Palestine from the first king (Saul) to the very last king who ruled before the Babylonians conquered the land (see Chapter 1 under "Crown" and "Captivity"). As we look at these six books we discover that they are a series of three double books: the two books of Samuel, the two books of Kings, and the two books of Chronicles.

What Do Each of These Books Tell Us About?

1 SAMUEL	This book begins with Samuel and ends with the death of King Saul. It is also about the life of David before he became king.
2 SAMUEL	This book is about the reign of David.
1 KINGS	This book begins with King David's death and ends with the death of wicked King Ahab.
2 KINGS	This book tells about all the rest of the kings until the fall of Israel in 722 B.C. and the fall of Judah in 586 B.C.
1 CHRONICLES	This book is about the reign of David.
2 CHRONICLES	This book begins with Solomon and ends with the Babylonian Captivity.

Here is another way to think about these six books:



In light of this chart, please answer these questions:

1. Which is the only book which tells us about King Saul’s reign? _____
2. Which two books tell us about King David’s reign? _____
3. Which book tells us about David *before* he was king of Israel?

4. _____ Which book covers the same period of history as the books of 1 and 2 Kings
5. _____ Which two books end with the Babylonian Captivity?

The Books of Samuel

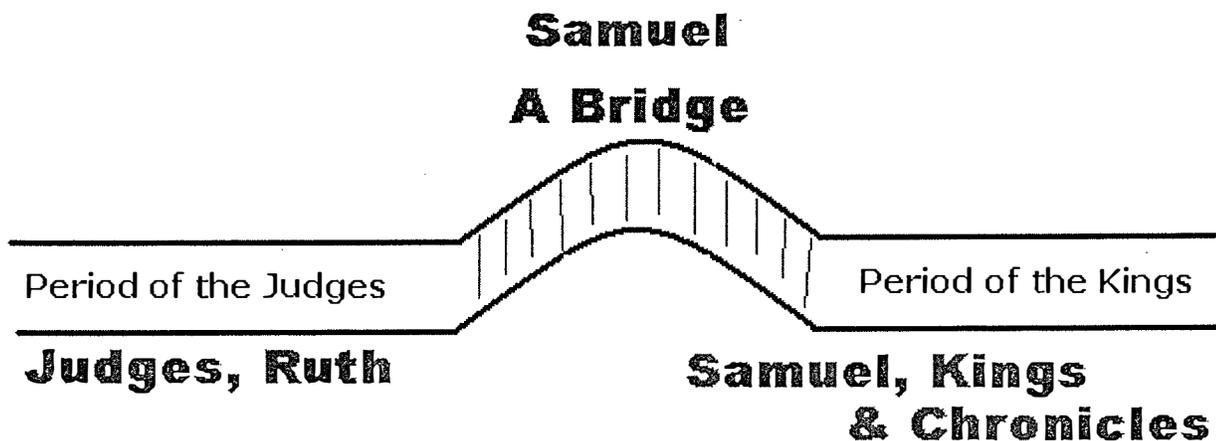
King Saul and King David

We are now ready to think about the first set of double books--the two books of Samuel. The book of 1 Samuel tells us about Israel’s first king--King Saul. The book of 2 Samuel tells us about Israel’s second king – King David.

MAIN CHARACTERS IN 1 SAMUEL	MAIN CHARACTER IN 2 SAMUEL
Samuel	David
Saul	
David	

Why Are These Books Called by the Name of Samuel?

Samuel was a godly man--a great Priest and a great Prophet. Samuel was like bridge between the period of the judges and the period of the kings:



These two books are called by the name **Samuel** for two reasons:

1. **Samuel** is the main character at the beginning of the book of 1 Samuel. Everything we

- know about the birth, life, ministry, and death of Samuel is found in the book of 1 Samuel.
2. **Samuel** anointed Saul and David, and the books of Samuel are all about these two men. Samuel anointed Saul in 1 Samuel 10:1 and the book of 1 Samuel is all about King Saul. Samuel anointed David in 1 Samuel 16:13 and the book of 2 Samuel is all about King David and his reign. These men were the first two kings of Israel and the books of Samuel tell us the stories of these two men.

The Beginning of the Kingdom

During the time of the judges, did Israel have a human king (Judges 21:25)? _____ God Himself was supposed to be their King! But as we saw in Chapter 4 of these notes, the children of Israel did not want God to rule over them; they wanted to be their own king!

Later in the days of Samuel, the children of Israel wanted a K _____ (1 Samuel 8:5) just like all the other nations. Did they want the LORD to be their King and to rule and reign over them (1 Samuel 8:7)? By asking for a human King who were they rejecting (1 Samuel 8:7)?

Sometimes God gives people what they ask for in order to teach them a lesson and make them learn the hard way. God did give the people a king. He gave them the king *of their choice!* His name was Saul! Why did Saul seem like the perfect king (1 Samuel 9:2)?

_____ How did the people look at Saul (1 Samuel 16:7)? _____ How did God look at Saul (1 Samuel 16:7)?

Saul turned out to be a complete failure as king! The people were wrong but God was right!

Let's briefly compare the first two kings of Israel:

SAUL	DAVID
A man after the people's heart (1 Samuel 8:5)	A man after God's heart (1 Samuel 13:14)
He was the people's choice.	He was God's choice.
He disobeyed God's Word (1 Samuel 15:11).	He obeyed God's Word (Acts 13:22).

In much of the book of 1 Samuel we see Saul chasing after David trying to kill him! This is the kind of a man he was! In the last chapter of 1 Samuel we see Saul, defeated and dead, on the field of battle!

The Key Verse

The key verse in the books of Samuel is found in 1 Samuel 2:30. Look especially at the last part of the verse: "For them that _____ Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed." What is God saying? This verse has both good news and bad news.

THE GOOD NEWS: "If you honor God, then God will honor you!" The person who honors

God considers God as Someone who is very valuable and important. This person says, "*God is so great and so important to me that I must believe what He says and do what He says all the days of my life!*"

THE BAD NEWS: "If a person fails to honor God and despises God, then God will consider that person of little importance and God's blessing will not be on that person's life. This person says, "*God is not very important to me at all. I really do not care what God says. What God says means very little to me!*"

In the books of Samuel we see how this truth was carried out in the lives of men. We can see how God honored those who honored Him. We can also see how God cursed those who despised Him. In the books of Samuel we learn about men who honored God and men who did not honor God!

<i>THOSE WHO HONORED GOD</i>	<i>THOSE WHO DESPISED GOD</i>
Samuel	Eli, the priest
Jonathan, Saul's son	King Saul
David (to see the amazing way God honored David, read 2 Samuel chapter 7)	Absalom, David's son

Which column would you fit in? Are you a person who honors God or are you a person who despises God? Is God very important to you? Is God's Word very important to you? Do you really care about what God has said? Do you really care about obeying God and doing what He says? What kind of a person do you want to be: a person like David or a person like Saul? Most people choose to be like Saul. They do not choose to honor God. Will you be one of the *few* people, like David, who chooses to honor God?

The Books of Kings

From Solomon to the Babylonian Captivity

The next group of double books is First and Second Kings. These two books cover about 400 years of history (4 centuries)!

The Divided Kingdom

We learned a little about the divided kingdom in Chapter 1 of these notes. As the book of 1 Kings begins we read about the death of King David. David's son Solomon became the next king. Solomon was the wealthiest and most powerful king Israel ever had. Even Jesus spoke of the glory of Solomon's kingdom in Matthew 6:29! After Solomon the kingdom was divided into two parts:

1. **THE NORTHERN KINGDOM** under King Jeroboam. Its capital came to be located in **Samaria** This kingdom is called the kingdom of ISRAEL.
2. **THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM** under King Rehoboam (Solomon's son). Its capital was

located in **Jerusalem**. This kingdom is called the kingdom of JUDAH. All the kings of Judah descended from King David.

The Conquered Kingdoms

The people living in both of these kingdoms turned their hearts away from the Lord, and God had to judge them. God first judged the wicked northern kingdom of Israel by sending the Assyrians.

In 722 B.C. the Assyrians conquered Israel and carried away the people as captives. Later God judged the southern kingdom of Judah by sending the Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar. In 586 B.C. the city of Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Babylonians and the Jews were carried away to Babylon as captives. In the book of 2 Kings we learn how both of these kingdoms fell and were conquered.

The Rise of the Prophets

As we read the books of Kings, we see that the prophets become more and more important as men who spoke for God. We also see that the priests become less and less important. The priests were the ones who were supposed to teach God's Word to the people. But most of the priests failed to do this, so God raised up prophets to give His message to the nation and to kings. In the books of Kings we learn about the lives of two great prophets:

In 1 Kings we learn about *Elijah*.

In 2 Kings we learn about *Elisha*.

Note: "J" comes before "S" in the alphabet, so this helps us to remember that ELIJAH came before ELISHA. Both men were contemporaries. That is, they lived on earth at the same time. Elisha lived on after Elijah was taken up from earth in a chariot of fire.

The Books About the Kings

The two books of Kings tell us all about all the kings of Israel and Judah from Solomon to the Babylonian Captivity.

In these books we are introduced to the names of all the kings. When a king is introduced, the following information is given:

1. The name of the king is given.
2. We are told whether he was a king of Judah or a king of Israel.
3. We are told how old he was when he began to reign.
4. We are told how many years he reigned as king.
5. We are told whether he was a bad king ("did evil") or a good king ("did right") in God's sight.

For example, in 2 Kings 15:1-4 we are introduced to King Azariah. Was he a king of Judah or a king of Israel? _____ How old was he when he took the throne? _____ How many years did he reign as king? _____ Was he a good king or a bad king?

Now we are ready to take a look at all the kings of Israel and Judah. "Good" means that the king did that which was right in God's eyes; "Bad" means that the king did evil in God's sight. However, keep in mind that sometimes a good king would do evil things and sometimes an evil king would do good things.

The United Kingdom

David (Good)

Saul (Bad)

Solomon

(Good, but later his heart turned away from the Lord - 1 Kings 11)

THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

(The Northern Kingdom)

Jeroboam I (Bad)
Nadab (Bad)
Baasha (Bad)
Elah (Bad)
Zimri (Bad)
Omri (Bad)
Ahab (Bad)
Ahaziah (Bad)
Jehoram (Bad)
Jehu (Bad)
Jehoahaz (Bad)
Jehoash (Bad)
Jeroboam II (Bad)
Zachariah (Bad)
Shallum (Bad)
Menahem (Bad)
Pekahiah (Bad)
Pekah (Bad)
Hoshea (Bad)

ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY
(722 B.C.)

THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH

(The Southern Kingdom)

Rehoboam (Bad)
Abijah (Bad)
Asa (Good)
Jehoshaphat (Good)
Jehoram (Bad)
Ahaziah (Bad)
Athaliah (Bad)
Joash (Good)
Amaziah (Good)
Azariah or Uzziah (Good)
Jotham (Good)
Ahaz (Bad)
Hezekiah (Good)
Manasseh (Bad)
Amon (Bad)
Josiah (Good)
Jehoahaz (Bad)
Jehoiakim (Bad)
Jehoiachin (Bad)
Zedekiah (Bad)

BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY
(586 B.C.)

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How many good kings did the northern kingdom of Israel have? _____ Which kingdom had the most good kings? _____ Which kingdom did God judge first? _____ Were the last four kings of Judah good or bad? _____ The kings of the southern kingdom were all descendants of David with the lower name being the son of the name above it (for example, Jehoshaphat was the father of _____)

Jehoram). Is it possible for a good king to have a bad son? _____ Is it possible for a bad king to have a good son? _____ **True or False:** _____ A person must always turn out to be like his parents. Is it possible for a good king to have a good son? _____ Is it possible for a bad king to have a bad son? _____ **True or False:** _____ A person may end up like his parents.

The Two Books Compared

1 KINGS	2 KINGS
Begins with King David	Ends with the king of Babylon
Opens with Solomon's glory	Closes with Jehoiachin's shame
Begins with the blessings of obedience	Ends with the curse of disobedience
Opens with the building of the temple	Closes with the burning of the temple
Shows the division of the kingdom	Shows the collapse and fall of each kingdom
Shows that God is very long-suffering. Even though there were many wicked kings, God held back His judgment on the nation.	Shows that God's long-suffering does not last forever. God must punish sin and He must punish His sinful people.
Tells about Elijah	Tells about Elisha

The Key Verse

The key verse for these two books of Kings is found in 1 Kings 18:21. Elijah said to those who were serving and worshipping the false god Baal: "if the _____ be God, _____ Him: but if Baal (be God), then follow him."

Elijah was saying this to the Jews of his day: If God is really God and you *fail* to serve Him and follow Him, then you are in trouble! In the book of 2 Kings we learn that the Jews did *fail* to follow God and they ended up in trouble!

Trouble for the northern kingdom: "For the children of Israel walked in all the _____ of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; until the LORD _____ Israel out of His sight, as _____ had _____ by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel _____ out of their own land to _____ unto this day" (2 Kings 17:22-23). This is called the *Assyrian Captivity*.

Trouble for the southern kingdom: "And the king of _____ smote them, and slew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So _____ was _____ out of their land" (2 Kings 25:21). This is called the *Babylonian Captivity*.

If Baal is really God, then he should be served and followed! But if he is not God (and he is not), then he should not be served! Every person must decide whether the God of the Bible is really God or not! If He is God, then **follow Him and serve Him with all your heart!** Many people serve and follow gods that are not really gods at all (1 Corinthians 8:4-6).

Following false gods was the problem of many of the kings. All of the kings of Israel and most of the kings of Judah served idols (false gods). Even many of the good kings failed to follow the Lord **fully**. Many of the good kings failed to remove the "high places" (see 2 Kings 15:3-4, for example). These "high places" were centers of idol worship located on the tops of hills. These idol worship centers should have been totally destroyed! Not many kings were willing to do this! Was Hezekiah willing to follow the Lord fully (2 Kings 18:4-6)? _____ God judged His people because they were serving idols. This idol worship was the reason for the captivities (2 Kings 17:9-12).

Is God really God? Is He really the King of this universe? Is He really your Saviour and your Lord? **If God be God then follow Him!** The Bible tells us to keep ourselves from _____ (1 John 5:21). This means we are to keep ourselves from that which is not real and right, and we are to follow the true and living God. **If God be God then serve Him!** Did the Thessalonian believers do this (1 Thess. 1:9)? _____ Are you doing this? _____ Who should we follow (John 8:12)? _____ How can a person serve God? Most of the kings refused to let God be King! Will you let the Lord be the King of your life?

The Books of Chronicles

A Careful History of Judah

As you can see from the chart at the beginning of this chapter, the books of Chronicles cover the same period of history as the books of 2 Samuel and Kings. God repeated that which had already been covered (in Samuel and Kings) in order to add new details and to emphasize what He considered important.

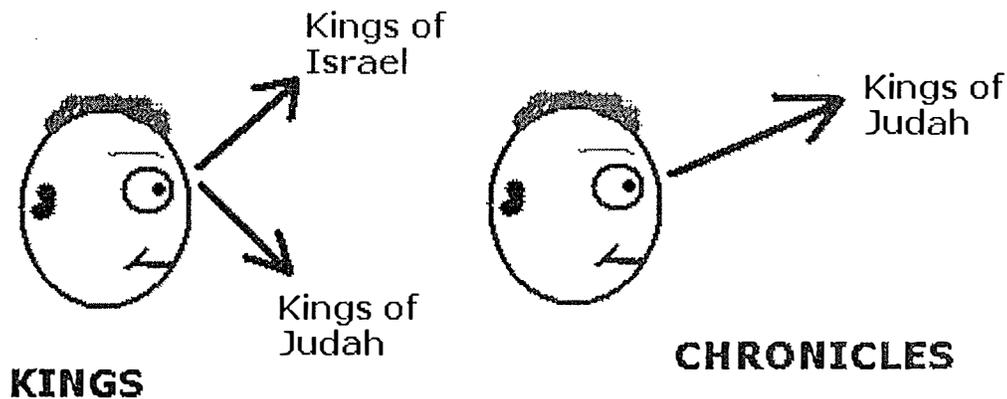
The word "chronicle" means "a continuous and detailed account of historical events arranged in order of time." God has given us very accurate history books so that we can know all that He wants us to know about the period of the kings.

The books of Chronicles may have been written by Ezra the scribe. We will learn about Ezra in the next chapter. The last two verses of 2 Chronicles are almost identical to the first three verses of Ezra.

FIRST CHRONICLES covers the same period of time as 2 SAMUEL. They both tell about the reign of David.

SECOND CHRONICLES covers the same period of time as 1 and 2 KINGS. They both cover the time from Solomon to the Babylonian Captivity.

There is a difference, however. Chronicles looks at the kings from a different point of view. Chronicles only tells us about the kings of Judah (the southern kingdom). These are the kings who were in the line of David:



In Chronicles the kings of Israel are not mentioned unless they are doing something that relates to the kings of Judah.

The Key Verse

The key verse in the books of Chronicles is found in 2 Chronicles 16:9: "For the _____ of the LORD _____ to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself _____ in the behalf of them whose heart is _____ towards Him."

God is searching the land for those who want to honor Him and serve Him and follow Him fully! This amazing verse tells us that God's eyes have feet (they run!). Of course God does not really have eyes and feet, but the verse is telling us that God sees very well and God gets around very well! When it comes to finding people who love Him and honor Him, God is an expert! If you have a heart that bends towards God and that is devoted to God, then God will find you and God will bless you!

Most of the kings of Israel and Judah did not have a perfect heart toward God! Did King Asa have a heart that was perfect before God (2 Chronicles 16:7-10)? _____

This key verse is really saying the same thing as 1 Samuel 2:30 (the key verse for the books of Samuel). God will honor those who honor Him! God will show Himself strong and God will bless those who trust Him! God will curse those who fail to honor Him and trust Him! As God's eyes run throughout the earth, you can be sure that **He sees you!** What does He find? Does He find a person who honors Him? Does He find a person that He can bless?

→ **Remember**, if you honor Him, He will honor you (**Samuel**)!

→ If God is really God, then serve Him and follow Him (**Kings**)! Don't serve and follow idols!

→ God is looking for those people with the kind of heart that He can bless (**Chronicles**)!

YOU CAN'T HAVE THEM BOTH

