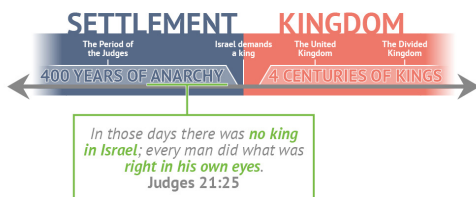


The Kingdom Era



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Introduction



Introduction

After four hundred years of anarchy, when “there was no king in Israel; [and] everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 21:25 NKJV), Israel demanded a king. Israel had rejected God’s reign, yet God gave the people kings who ruled them for the next four centuries.

Four “time” books tell the story of Israel’s kingdom: 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings. There are no “color” books in the Kingdom era, but a huge amount of literature adds color to it. Most of Israel’s poetry and wisdom literature was produced at this time, and thirteen of Israel’s sixteen prophets wrote while kings ruled in Israel. Lamentations is a lament over Jerusalem and was composed at the end of the Kingdom era.

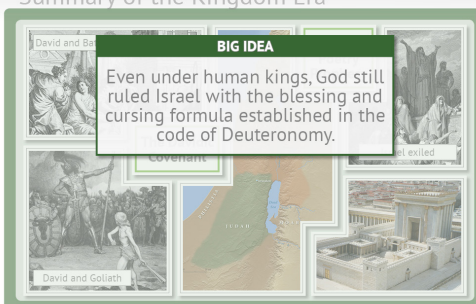
Summary of the Kingdom Era



Summary of the Kingdom Era

Great people lived and great events occurred in the Kingdom era. The stories of David and Goliath and David and Bathsheba mark the heights and depths of Israel’s greatest king. The Davidic covenant promised a Messiah. Solomon’s temple was built and destroyed during the period of Israel’s kings. Israel tore itself apart and created two nations. Much of Israel’s great poetic and wisdom literature was written and her prophets ministered and wrote while the kings ruled. Israel’s tragic return to slavery under a Gentile king closed this time of her history.

Summary of the Kingdom Era



The big idea of the Kingdom era is that even under human kings, God still ruled Israel with the blessing and cursing formula established in the code of Deuteronomy. For centuries, God’s patience endured Israel’s consistent rejection of Him and His laws. Finally, being true to His covenant, God removed His hand of protection. Israel fell to the Assyrians and Judah to the Babylonians. The author of Samuel and Kings had a clear purpose.

Introduction

4 major periods

Preparing for the Kingdom – 1 Samuel 1–7
Israel's **transition** from judges **to kings**

The United Kingdom – 1 Samuel 8–1 Kings 11
The time of King **Saul**, King **David**, and King **Solomon**

The Divided Kingdom – 1 Kings 12–2 Kings 17
Israel and **Judah** **divided**; Israel enslaved

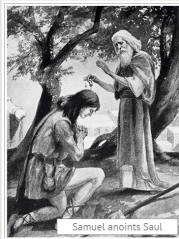
Judah's Final Days – 2 Kings 17–25
Judah taken into **slavery**

1 Samuel

Preparing for the Kingdom – 1 Samuel 1–7**MAJOR CHARACTER**

Samuel

- The **last judge**.
- **Anointed** Israel's first **two kings**.
- One of the Bible's major characters.



Samuel anoints Saul

1 Samuel

The United Kingdom – 1 Samuel 8–1 Kings 11

It was to demonstrate that Israel and Judah's destruction was a result of their disobedience.

The Kingdom era is divided into four periods. The time of preparing for the kingdom is described in 1 Samuel 1–7. Then the time of the united kingdom period with its three kings (Saul, David, and Solomon) is recorded in 1 Samuel 8–1 Kings 11. The third period describing the divided kingdom is recorded in 1 Kings 12–2 Kings 17. And the fourth movement, which tells about Judah's final days, is recorded in 2 Kings 17–25. In 586 BC the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem, Judah's capital city, and carried her citizens back into slavery under a Gentile nation.

1 Samuel

First Samuel 1–7 provides a transition from the time of Judges to the anointing of Israel's first king. Samuel is the pivotal figure in this transition. He was the last judge, and he anointed Israel's first two kings. Though often lost in the shuffle between Israel's judges and kings, Samuel is one of the Bible's major characters.

In Genesis 12, God promised Abraham that a great nation and a king would come from his seed. In Deuteronomy 17, God gave Israel guidelines for choosing a king. God had planned for a king who would rule Israel as His representative. But Israel was weary of the anarchy they experienced during the time of the judges. Threats of continued invasion from their neighbors called for unity among Israel's tribes. Israel assumed they were being oppressed because they had no king, when in reality they were oppressed because they had rejected Yahweh as their king.

Israel's request in 1 Samuel 8:5 summarizes their desire for a king. They said to Samuel, "You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have." When Samuel resisted their request, God 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" (1 Samuel 8:7 NIV). The disconnect between God's promise to give Israel a king and their disobedience in demanding one was a difference in intention. God intended that they have a human representative of His reign, but Israel wanted a military king like their neighbors had.

First Samuel opens with Samuel's birth and ends with Saul's

death. It records Saul's anointing as Israel's first king and his early successes and later failures. First Samuel also introduces David as Israel's next and greatest king. The book's purpose is to describe how Israel's monarchy came into being, and its big idea is that God had not abandoned Israel, even when Israel had rejected Him.

2 Samuel

Second Samuel is about David and 5:4-5 gives a summary of his reign, "David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years" (NIV). In chapter 6 David reestablished Yahweh's throne in Israel by moving the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, David's new capital city. Chapter 7 records God's covenant with David, which promised that one of his heirs would sit on Israel's throne forever. Matthew took note of that covenant when he opened his gospel with "the record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1 NASB). So in chapter 6 David established Yahweh's rein over Israel and in chapter 7 Yahweh established David's throne.

There are two parts to David's story. First Samuel 16-2 Samuel 10 records his great successes and his effective reign as God's representative king. But in 2 Samuel 11 David's sins regarding Bathsheba and Uriah signal the beginning of David's troubles. Even the great King David, a man after God's own heart, is not immune from Deuteronomy's code of blessing and cursing. God forgave David's sin, but his life as described in 2 Samuel 11 to his death in 1 Kings 2 is filled with difficulties and struggles.

Second Samuel's big idea is that no one is immune from God's judgment. When David faithfully followed God, God blessed him. But when David disobeyed God, he paid a terrible price. One of the book's purposes is to warn its readers that God forgives sinners but does not remove sin's consequences.

1 Kings 1-11

First Kings 1-11 records Solomon's reign. Chapter 3 describes


2 Samuel

The United Kingdom - 1 Samuel 8-1 Kings 11

MAJOR CHARACTER

David

"David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years." 2 Samuel 5:4-5




King David

2 Samuel

The United Kingdom - 1 Samuel 8-1 Kings 11

ORGANIZATION

1. 1 Samuel 16-2 Samuel 10
David has great success and an effective reign as God's representative king.



David victorious in battle

1 Kings 1-11

The United Kingdom – 1 Samuel 8–1 Kings 11

MAJOR CHARACTER

Solomon

- **Love for God** is the **foundation** of his regency (1 Kings 3).
- **Asks God for wisdom** to rule His people well (1 Kings 3–4).
- Built a magnificent **temple** (1 Kings 5–8).
- Becomes gloriously **wealthy** and **wise** (1 Kings 9–10).



King Solomon

Solomon's love for God as the foundation of his regency. In chapters 3 and 4 he asked God for wisdom so he would rule God's people well. Chapters 5–8 record how Solomon built God a magnificent temple. Solomon's glory, wealth, and wisdom are described in chapters 9 and 10. He was everything David would have wanted in the heir to Israel's throne.

But, like David, he didn't end as well as he started, and chapter 11 reveals a tragic turn in Solomon's story.

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. Although he had forbidden Solomon to follow other gods, Solomon did not keep the Lord's command. So the Lord said to Solomon, "Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees, which I commanded you, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates." (1 Kings 11:9–11 NIV)

1 Kings 1-11

The United Kingdom – 1 Samuel 8–1 Kings 11

*The Lord became angry with Solomon because **his heart had turned away from the Lord**. . . So the Lord said to Solomon, "Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees, which I commanded you, **I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you** and give it to one of your subordinates."*
1 Kings 11:9-11



1 Kings 12–2 Kings 25

The Divided Kingdom – 1 Kings 12–2 Kings 17

- Solomon sowed the seeds of destruction and **God took most of the Davidic kingdom away** from Solomon's son Rehoboam.



1 Kings 12–2 Kings 25

The Divided Kingdom – 1 Kings 12–2 Kings 17

ISRAEL

ruled by Jeroboam

JUDAH

ruled by Solomon's son Rehoboam



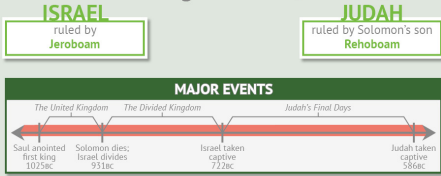
1 Kings 12–2 Kings 25

Solomon had sown the seeds of Israel's destruction, and God took most of the Davidic kingdom away from Solomon's son Rehoboam. God explained to Solomon how he could tear the kingdom away from Solomon's son without violating the covenant He had made with David: "Yet I will not tear the whole kingdom from him, but will give him one tribe for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen" (1 Kings 11:13 NIV). To discipline Solomon for his disobedience and to maintain His promise to David, God would create two nations. One consisted of Israel's ten northern tribes and maintained the name Israel. They had a separate king, a man named Jeroboam. But David's dynasty would be maintained in the smaller nation comprised of Judah and Benjamin's tribes and be called Judah. Solomon's son Rehoboam would be the southern nation's first king.

So from 931 until 722 BC when the Assyrians destroyed Samaria, Israel's capital, Abraham's descendants lived as two nations.

1 Kings 12–2 Kings 25

The Divided Kingdom – 1 Kings 12–2 Kings 17



After 722 Judah continued, constantly harassed by the Assyrians and the Babylonians, until 586 when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Judah's capital city of Jerusalem.

Israel had twenty kings and Judah had nineteen kings and one queen. None of Israel's kings followed God. In fact, her first king, Jeroboam, introduced idols into Israel's worship by erecting two altars in Israel. Second Kings records twenty-one different times that Jeroboam caused Israel to sin. Judah fared a little better. Of her twenty monarchs, it is recorded that eight of them served Yahweh. But eight out of twenty is scandalous for a nation with her history. Israel survived for 210 years, from 931 to 722 BC. Judah lasted 345 years, from 931 to 586 BC. Israel had nine different ruling families and Judah had only one, the Davidic dynasty. That the leadership for both nations was chaotic is seen by the fact that Israel's monarchs suffered seven assassinations, one suicide, and one king who was "stricken by God." Judah had five assassinations, two kings who were "stricken by God," and three kings who were exiled to foreign lands. What a tragic end for Abraham's descendants after such a glorious beginning!

During this sad time in Israel and Judah, God's prophets become more prominent. They scolded, pleaded, and reasoned with Israel and Judah's people to repent of their idolatry and worship Yahweh. Only He could save them from their enemies—and themselves—and return Israel to the glory she knew under David and Solomon.

The big idea of 1 Kings 12–2 Kings 25 is that until the end of Israel's history, God never wavered from the covenant He established in Deuteronomy. Israel met her doom. But her doom was not a result of God's lack of love or patience. We will study the prophets in lesson 10 and see how they clearly emphasized God's wishes to reestablish His relationship with His rebellious people. In mercy and love, God waits for His disobedient people to repent and return to Him. What was true for Israel is still true today for us. Our unchanging God wants us to turn to Him.

1 Kings 12–2 Kings 25

The Divided Kingdom – 1 Kings 12–2 Kings 17

