INTRODUCTION

TO

FIRST AND SECOND KINGS
Introduction

to

First and Second Kings

I. The books of 1 and 2 Kings report the history of the Israelites during four (4) turbulent centuries, from 970 to 586 B.C. (Youngblood) while The Pulpit Commentary dates 1 and 2 Kings from Solomon’s accession to the throne in 1015 B.C. to the close of Jehoiachin’s captivity in 562 B.C.

A. The narratives given in these books are organized around the various kings who reigned during these centuries. (Youngblood)

1. Because of this fact, the books were named “Kings.”

B. Following the death of Solomon, the kingdom divided north, known as Israel, and south, known as Judah.

1. The kingdom divided north and south in approximately 933 B.C., Halley wrote.

2. The northern kingdom (Israel) ended in approximately 722/721 B.C., according to the NIV and Halley, when conquered by the Assyrians.

3. The southern Kingdom (Judah) ended in approximately 606 B.C., according to Halley, when conquered by the Babylonians.
a. Jerusalem was subjugated in stages and its conquest by the Babylonians is dated by the NIV at 586 B.C.

II. Originally, 1 and 2 Kings consisted of one (1) unbroken book as was also true of 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Chronicles.

A. 2 Samuel ends with the approaching end of David’s reign and his imminent death.

B. 1 Kings begins where 2 Samuel ends; that is, at the end of David’s reign.

C. 1 and 2 Kings continued as one (1) book until approximately 1518 A.D. and the point at which the books are presently separated is purely arbitrary, The Pulpit Commentary states.

III. Outline of 1 Kings (Youngblood):

A. Part One: The United Kingdom (1:1-ll:43)
   1. The Establishment of Solomon as King (1:1-2:46)
   2. The Rise of Solomon as King (3:1-8:66)
   3. The Decline of Solomon as King (9:1-11:43)

B. Part Two: The Divided Kingdom (12:1-22:53)
   1. The Division of the Kingdom (12:1-14:31)
   2. The Reigns of Two Kings in Judah (15:1-24)
   3. The Reigns of Five Kings in Israel (15:25-16:28)
4. The Reign of Ahab in Israel (16:29-22:40)
5. The Reign of Jehoshaphat in Judah (22:41-50)

IV. Outline of 2 Kings (Youngblood):

A. Part One: The Divided Kingdom (1:1-17:41)
1. The Reign of Ahaziah in Israel (1:1-18)
2. The Reign of Jehoram in Israel (2:1-8:15)
3. The Reign of Jehoram in Judah (8:16-24)
5. The Reign of Jehu in Israel (9:30-10:36)
6. The Reign of Queen Athaliah in Judah (11:1-16)
8. The Reign of Jehoahaz in Israel (13:1-9)
10. The Reign of Amaziah in Judah (14:1-22)
11. The Reign of Jeroboam II in Israel (14:23-29)
12. The Reign of Azariah in Judah (15:8-12)
13. The Reign of Zechariah in Israel (15:8-12)
15. The Reign of Menahem in Israel (15:16-22)
16. The Reign of Pekahiah in Israel (15:23-26)
17. The Reign of Pekah in Israel (15:27-31)
20. The Reign of Hoshea in Israel (17:1-41)

Note: Youngblood observed that, during the period of the Divided Kingdom, the narrative in 1 and 2 Kings is complex and difficult and switches back and forth from speaking of a king of Israel and then of a king of Judah. Being aware of this parallel approach to the treatment of historical events improves understanding of the chronology.

B. Part Two: The Surviving Kingdom of Judah (18:1-25:30)

3. The Reign of Amon in Judah (21:19-26)
5. The Reign of Jehoahaz in Judah (23:31-34)

7. The Reign of Jehoiachin in Judah (24:8-16)


V. Miscellaneous information:

A. First and Second Kings not only give information about the nineteen (19) kings of Israel and twenty (20) kings of Judah plus two (2) kings of the United Kingdom; that is, David and Solomon, but also provide vital information about such notable non-regal persons as Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah, and, yes, Naaman.

B. Jesus was the son of David! (See Coffman.)

   1. According to the flesh, Mary his mother, was a descendant of David, but not of Bathsheba, Solomon, nor other of the later kings of Judah (Luke 3:23-38).

   2. Joseph was not the physical father of Jesus. It was he who was a descendant of Bathsheba and David’s regal descendants. (Matthew 1-17)

C. Youngblood wrote, “Some of these kings were honest, ethical, and morally pure. But the good kings always were the exception. The majority of the rulers led the people astray, some even openly encouraging them to worship false gods, . . .the phrase, “He did evil in the sight of the Lord,” is a familiar refrain in Kings.”
1. The NIV states, “God’s prophets continually warned the people that God would punish them if they did not repent from their sins.”

2. Because of their continuing sinfulness they were destroyed North by the Assyrians and South by the Babylonians.

VI. Authorship and Date:

A. Jeremiah has been considered the author of 1 and 2 Kings.

1. He lived at the time of the concluding events of 2 Kings.

2. 2 Kings 24-25 appear in Jeremiah 39-42 and 52.

B. Some currently are of the opinion that the author was an unnamed contemporary of Jeremiah.

C. Long assumed 1 and 2 Kings were written by an author during the Babylonian exile sometime in the mid-sixth century B.C.

1. Coffman places the writing of 1 and 2 Kings between 562/561 B.C. when Jehoiachin was released from prison and the return of the captives from Babylon in 536 B.C.

D. Some hold that Isaiah may have written 1 and 2 Kings and cite the similarities of such passages as the following (as in Clarke’s Preface):

1. 2 Kings 18-20
2. Isaiah 36-39

E. The most common opinion is that 1 and 2 Kings was written by Ezra.

1. For factual information the author relied on such sources as the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah, the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and the Book of the Acts of Solomon, all of which have been lost to history, according to The Pulpit Commentary.

a. 1 Kings 11:41, As for the other events of Solomon's reign—all he did and the wisdom he displayed—are they not written in the book of the annals of Solomon? (NIV)

b. 1 Kings 14:29, As for the other events of Rehoboam's reign, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? (NIV)

c. 1 Kings 14:19, The other events of Jeroboam's reign, his wars and how he ruled, are written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel. (NIV)

F. 1 and 2 Kings are clearly the work of a single writer.

G. The Pulpit Commentary dates the writing of 1 and 2 Kings to the period of the Babylonian Captivity between 460-440 B.C., probably about 460 B.C.

1. Others hold, based on 1 Kings 8:8, that Kings was written before Solomon’s temple was destroyed by the Babylonians (McGee).
VII. Kings of Israel and Judah (according to Halley).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kings of Israel</th>
<th>Kings of Judah</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeroboam</td>
<td>933-911 (22 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadab</td>
<td>911-910 (2 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baasha</td>
<td>910-887 (24 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elan</td>
<td>887-886 (2 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimri</td>
<td>886 (7 days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omri</td>
<td>886-875 (12 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahab</td>
<td>875-854 (22 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahaziah*</td>
<td>855-854 (2 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joram</td>
<td>854-843 (12 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehu</td>
<td>843-816 (28 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehoahaz</td>
<td>820-804 (17 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joash</td>
<td>806-790 (16 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeroboam II</td>
<td>790-749 (41 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zechariah</td>
<td>748 (6 mths)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shallum</td>
<td>748 (1 mth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menahem*</td>
<td>748-738 (10 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pekahiah*</td>
<td>738-736 (2 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pekah*</td>
<td>748-730 (20 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoshea</td>
<td>730-721 (9 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some of the reigns were concurrent. The Pulpit Commentary states that some chronologies in 1 and 2 Kings may be in error due to mistakes by copyists most frequently found in 2 Kings.
Note: First Kings covers a period one hundred nineteen (119) years and 2 Kings covers a period of three hundred eight (308) years, Clarke wrote.
Questions

on

Introduction
to

First and Second Kings

1. The books of ______________________________ report the ________________ of the ________________ during ________________ to ________________ B.C. or, according to The Pulpit Commentary, from ________________’s ________________ to the ________________ in ________________ B.C. to the close of ________________’s ________________ in ________________ B.C.

2. Why are these two (2) books known as Kings? ________________

3. Following the ________________ of ________________, the ________________ ________________, known as ________________, and ________________, known as ________________, in approximately ________________ B.C.
4. Under what circumstances and when did the northern kingdom end? ____________________
   _____________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________

5. Under what circumstances and when did the Southern Kingdom end? ____________________
   _____________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________

6. Why and when was Kings, once a single book, divided into 1 and 2 Kings. ____________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________

7. First Kings has two parts; visibly, ____________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________

8. Part One has three (3) sections; viz., ____________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________
9. Part Two (2) has six (6) sections; viz., __________________
   __________________
   __________________
   __________________
   __________________
   __________________

10. Second Kings can also be divided into two (2) parts; viz., ___
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________

11. Part One (1) has twenty (20) parts; viz., __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________

12. Part Two (2) has ten (10) parts; viz., __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
    __________________
13. What makes 1 and 2 Kings complex and difficult? What improves the understanding of the chronology of First and Second Kings?

14. First and Second Kings not only give information about the ________________ of _______________ and ________________ of _______________ plus _______________ of the ________________ and ________________, but also provide vital information about such notable ________________ persons as ________________, ________________, and ________________.

15. How was Jesus the son of David? Was Jesus the biological son of David and Bathsheba? How can it be said Jesus was the son of David and Bathsheba?
16. Evaluate the moral character and devotion to Yahweh of the Kings of Judah and Israel. What resulted from this kingly behavior? ____________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

17. First and Second Kings evaluates each king on the basis of his ______________________ or ______________________ to _______________. The repeated use of the phrases, “_________________ in the ___________________ of the ___________________ and “_________________ what was ____________________ in the____________________ of the _________________” illustrate how the kings were evaluated.

18. __________________ was placed on the __________________ or __________________ of the __________________ being __________________. When __________________ were __________________ to __________________, the __________________ was _________________. When __________________ were __________________ and __________________, the ___________________ and __________________. This same principle is emphasized in the ___________________ of ___________________ as well.

19. Who wrote 1 and 2 Kings? When were these books written? Give reasons for your answer. ____________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
20. List the kings of Israel, the kings of Judah, the approximate dates each ruled and how long each ruled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kings of Israel</th>
<th>Kings of Judah</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
21. Explain any duplications or possible date contradictions or confusions regarding the reigns of the kings listed above.

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

22. First Kings covers a period of ________________ years while Second Kings covers a total of ________________ years.

23. What situation faced Israel when 1 Kings begins? What situation faced Israel-Judah when 2 Kings ends? ________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

24. Does 1 Kings 8:8 indicate that Kings was written before the temple was destroyed? If so, what does this say about the date 1 and 2 Kings were written? ________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

25. The sad end of Israel and Judah are plainly stated in Kings. Write 2 Kings 17:22-23 here. ________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________
Write 2 Kings 25:21 here.