

1 and 2 Kings – Why Does God Want Us to Know This History?

1. 1 and 2 Kings records the history of Israel's kings after Saul, from a united monarchy, through its division into separate monarchies Judah and Israel, and until the demise of any Jewish authority over the Promised Land. But obscured in this historical record of Jewish kings is the purpose God intended with them. Carefully observe the text!

a. How does Jacob see himself?

But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the firstborn. He blessed Joseph, and said,
"The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, **the God who has been my shepherd** all my life to this day, the angel who has redeemed me from all evil,
Bless the lads; And may my name live on in them,
And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth." (Gen 48:14-16, NASB)

b. How does Moses define the term "sheep?"

Then Moses spoke to the Lord, saying, May the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, who will go out and come in before them, and who will lead them out and bring them in, so that **the congregation of the Lord will not be like sheep which have no shepherd.**" (Num 27:15-17, NASB)

c. Is there a shepherd for God's people after Joshua?

When Joshua had dismissed the people, the sons of Israel went each to his inheritance to possess the land. The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the Lord which He had done for Israel. Then Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of one hundred and ten. And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel. Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals, and they forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed themselves down to them; thus they provoked the Lord to anger. So they forsook the Lord and served Baal and the Ashtaroth. The anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and He gave them into the hands of plunderers who plundered them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies around them, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. Wherever they went, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had spoken and as the Lord had sworn to them, so that they were severely distressed. Then **the Lord raised up judges who delivered them from the hands of those who plundered them.** (Judg 2:6-16, NASB)

d. What is significant about Eli who becomes Israel's next judge after Samson?

Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him, "This is what the LORD says: 'Did I not indeed reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in bondage to Pharaoh's house? Did I not choose them from all the tribes of Israel to be My priests, to go up to My altar, to burn incense, to carry an ephod before Me?' (continues)

1 and 2 Kings – Why Does God Want Us to Know This History? (page 2)

And did I not give to the house of your father all the fire offerings of the sons of Israel? Why are you showing contempt for My sacrifice and My offering which I have commanded for My dwelling, and why are you honoring your sons above Me, by making yourselves fat with the choicest of every offering of My people Israel?' Therefore the LORD God of Israel declares, 'I did indeed say that your house and the house of your father was to walk before Me forever'; but now the LORD declares, 'Far be it from Me—for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be insignificant. Behold, the days are coming when I will eliminate your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house. And you will look at the distress of My dwelling, in spite of all the good that I do for Israel; and there will never be an old man in your house. Yet I will not cut off every man of yours from My altar, so that your eyes will fail from weeping and your soul grieve, and all the increase of your house will die in the prime of life. And this will be the sign to you which will come in regard to your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: on the same day both of them will die. But I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who will do according to what is in My heart and My soul; and I will build him an enduring house, and he will walk before My anointed always. (1 Sam 2:27-35, NASB)

When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell off the seat backward beside the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for he was old and heavy. Thus he judged Israel forty years. (1 Sam 4:18, NASB)

e. What is significant about Samuel who becomes the last judge of Israel after Eli?

And it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judging in Beersheba. His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice. Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah; and they said to him, "Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations." (1 Sam 8:1-5, NASB)

2. Why was David the most significant of Israel's kings?

But now your kingdom shall not endure. The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has appointed him ruler over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you." (1 Sam 13:14, NASB)

Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Behold, we are your bone and your flesh. Previously, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and in. And the Lord said to you, '**You will shepherd My people Israel, and you will be a ruler over Israel.**'" So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them before the Lord at Hebron; then they anointed David king over Israel. (2 Sam 5:1-3, NASB)

The LORD is my shepherd, I will not be in need.
He lets me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.
He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness
For the sake of His name. (Ps 23:1-3, NASB)

1 and 2 Kings – Why Does God Want Us to Know This History? (page 3)

As in Joshua's time, the kings following David did not keep their covenant nor recognize their responsibility of shepherding God's people. God ceases to appoint a naturally born human being to ever be a shepherd for His people. The prophet Micah introduces the idea of lost sheep without a shepherd in his prophecy against the king of Israel.

"I saw all Israel Scattered on the mountains, Like **sheep** which have no shepherd.

And the Lord said, 'These have no master. Let each of them return to his house in peace.'" (1 Kings 22:17, NASB; 2 Chron 18:16)

Confronting the kings of Judah and Israel, the Old Testament prophets spoke against bad shepherds (Jer 23:1; 50:6), the consequences of no shepherd (Zech 10:2-3) and of God's future response to His people needing a shepherd (Ezek 34:1-31). One of Ezekiel's oracles clearly indicates what God desired with His shepherd:

They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God. My servant David will be king over them, and **they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them.** (Ezek 37:23-24, NASB)

Here, as Ezekiel refers to one from the House of David, the King and Shepherd will lead God's people to a life of fidelity and loyalty to the Mosaic Covenant. The prophet Micah offers another prophecy of the future and indicates that God's Shepherd will be from Bethlehem (Micah 5:1-4, NASB).

To provide some correlation to ancient history, David ruled around 1000 B.C., the Northern Kingdom Israel fell around 700 B.C. and the Southern Kingdom Judah fell around 600 B.C. resulting in the Exile.

3. What is the definition of faith? Does your definition work in both Old and New Testaments? Mark up the text to highlight important terms and phrases!

Old Testament	New Testament	Definition
And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "This is what you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I carried you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. (Ex 19:3-4, NASB)	No one has seen God at any time; God the only Son, who is in the arms of the Father, He has explained Him. (John 1:18, NASB) Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in the same way. (John 5:19, NASB) For I did not speak on My own, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me." (John 12:49-50, NASB) If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." (John 14:7, NASB)	1.

1 and 2 Kings – Why Does God Want Us to Know This History? (page 4)

Old Testament	New Testament	Definition
<p>“Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.” (Ex 19:5-6, NASB)</p>	<p>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1, NASB)</p> <p>And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14, NASB)</p> <p>The Jews then said, “It took forty-six years to build this temple, and yet You will raise it up in three days?” But He was speaking about the temple of His body. So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken. (John 2:20-22, NASB)</p> <p>“He who comes from above is above all; the one who is only from the earth is of the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. What He has seen and heard, of this He testifies; and no one accepts His testimony. The one who has accepted His testimony has certified that God is true. For He whom God sent speaks the words of God; for He does not give the Spirit sparingly. The Father loves the Son and has entrusted all things to His hand. The one who believes in the Son has eternal life; but the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.” (John 3:31-36, NASB)</p> <p>For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, so that all will honor the Son just as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. (John 5:22-23, NASB)</p>	<p>2.</p>

4. When Jacob assembles his sons to tell them what will happen in the days that come, Judah is told that the scepter will not depart from his line (Gen 49:8-12). What do you learn about the last Judean king, and the problem it poses for the throne of David?

Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned for three months in Jerusalem; and his mother’s name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. He did evil in the sight of the LORD, in accordance with all that his father had done. (2 Ki 24:8-9, NASB; 2 Chron 36:9-10)

Is this man Coniah a despised, shattered jar? Or is he an undesirable vessel?
 Why have he and his descendants been hurled out And cast into a land that they had not known?
 O land, land, land, Hear the word of the LORD!
 This is what the LORD says:
 ‘Write this man down as childless,
 A man who will not prosper in his days;
 For no man among his descendants will prosper
 Sitting on the throne of David
 Or ruling again in Judah.’” (Jer 22:28-30, NASB)

1 and 2 Kings – Why Does God Want Us to Know This History? (page 5)

5. When Jesus begins His ministry, note carefully how His birth fulfills a prophecy (Ezek 37:23-24; Micah 5:1-4), and what He instructs of His disciples.

And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet:

'AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH,
ARE BY NO MEANS LEAST AMONG THE LEADERS OF JUDAH;
FOR FROM YOU WILL COME FORTH A RULER
WHO WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.'" (Matt 2:4-6, NASB)

"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters the flock. He flees because he is a hired hand and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know My own, and My own know Me, just as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. (John 10:11-15, NASB)

These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them, saying, "Do not go on a road to Gentiles, and do not enter a city of Samaritans; but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (Matt 10:5-6, NASB)

And a Canaanite woman from that region came out and began to cry out, saying, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely demon-possessed." But He did not answer her with even a word. And His disciples came up and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, because she keeps shouting at us!" But He answered and said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt 15:22-24, NASB)

Is there another reason why is it important to know about the historical acts of all of the kings of the nation of Israel recorded in 1 - 2 Samuel, 1 - 2 Kings, and 1 - 2 Chronicles?

Almost all of the major and minor prophets, which comprise the bulk of the Old Testament, confront the wayward kings and nation of Israel of their covenant infidelity and disobedience to God. Knowing about the kings helps you understand the prophet and most of the Old Testament.

The few books written after the return from the Exile, known as post-exilic books, are Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.