

**LOOK AT THE BOOK
1 & 2 KINGS
LONG LIVE THE KING!**

Ralph Porter

Saul was the king after man's heart—a king like the nations seek to lead them.
David was the king after God's heart—a king who seeks to please God.

Aren't you glad the WE have learned our lesson . . .
 . . . that God blesses those who pursue His will with a whole heart?
 . . . that we never turn our backs on His direction and go the opposite way?

The book of Kings is a book of object lessons, to teach us . . .
 . . . the value of whole-hearted commitment to God.
 . . . the danger of playing games with God and going our own way.

AUTHOR

The two books of the kings were originally part of one larger book.

No logical reason presents itself for the division of the book in the middle of Ahaziah's reign.

It's possible that the scribes may have run out of space on their scroll and started the next paragraph on a new one!

The Talmud presents the traditional Jewish view that Jeremiah was the author of the book. While the author is not identified in the book itself, and thus remains unknown, there is some justification for the Jewish point of view.

The author was certainly a contemporary of Jeremiah.

Parts of the book were written previous to the captivity (8:8; 12:19)

The last 2 chapters were written after the fall of Jerusalem.

The style and emphases of the book are parallel to those of Jeremiah.

These facts don't require Jeremian authorship, but they at least leave open the possibility.

The book probably represents a compilation of historical information based on general knowledge and historical records.

The theological interpretation of those events was then added by the author.

DATE

The books were *written* during a period beginning slightly before, and ending slightly after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

1 Kings may have been completed previous to 586 B.C.

The events described in 1 Kings

-begin with the death of David and accession of Solomon in 971 B.C.

-conclude at the beginning of the reign of Ahaziah, king of Israel, in 853 B.C.

2 Kings does not end until sometime during the captivity (586 B.C.).

BACKGROUND

Although 2 Samuel ends at the conclusion of a period of affliction and degeneration in the life of David and his people, it should be noted that Israel was still at a high point in its historical-political career.

Results of David's career:

Their enemies have been silenced.

The powers of Mesopotamia (Iraq) are kept busy closer to home.

Israel's boundaries have expanded greatly.

The nation is basically united, peaceful and prosperous.

As Solomon assumes the throne, the nation is again carried forward.

His initial dependence on God and request for wisdom, produce increased wealth and fame for the king and for his people.

However, as Solomon's power increases, so also does the temptation to fall into the traps which cause a decline.

The prosperity cycle:

Success opens the door which leads to . . .

Solomon is attracted by women . . .

His many wives from different nations lead him into idolatry.

Due to his idolatry, Solomon's effectiveness decreases and his people begin to descend, both spiritually and politically.

The degeneration continues until the nation loses respect for its leadership.

Lack of national loyalty, added to oppression and corruption, bring increased tribal loyalty.

The tribes returned to their traditional loyalties and the north separated from the south.

In the north, the decline continued to increase until its captivity in 722 B.C. by Assyria.

The south likewise experienced repeated periods of degeneration.

A few good kings, such as Asa and Jehoshaphat, in 1 Kings, delayed total destruction until much later.

As 1 Kings ends, the fall of both nations is still distant.

The north is well along the road to depravity under one of its most wicked dynasties.

The southern kingdom is experiencing a temporary calm under Jehoshaphat.

PURPOSE AND THEME

1 Kings traces the history of Israel from its peak under David and Solomon, down the road of depravity.

It traces the cause of its division and the downward history of the divided nations following the division.

Although the book contains a summary of the history of the period, it is not its primary purpose to teach history. The summary of each king's reign is far too short for that.

The book is primarily theocratic and prophetic in its emphasis.

Purpose:

To demonstrate the principle of God's dealings with His covenant people.
 To cause God's people to trust Him and to obey to His commands.

Message:

God blesses the nation when its king and its people follow Him.
 When they turn from Him, the results are decline and destruction.

The theme is taught by the *positive* example of Solomon at the beginning of his reign.
 When he turns from God to idols, his *negative* example presents a warning of the danger of idolatry and disobedience.

The same lesson is taught from the division of the kingdom throughout the history of both kingdoms.
 The positive example of the two good kings of Judah at the end, Hezekiah and Josiah, also teaches that even in the midst of judgment for unfaithfulness to God, if His people will repent and turn back to Him, He will restore them and bless them.

ORGANIZATION

Similar to 2 Samuel in its structure, 1 Kings turns on the pivotal chapter 11.

The first 10 chapters describe Solomon's wisdom, fame, and glory, during the years when he is seeking to follow God.

Chapter 11 describes how prosperity leads to polygamy, which leads to idolatry.
 Idolatry leads to spiritual decline and, finally, to the division of the kingdom
 (11:1-4, 6, 9-13).

The remainder of the book describes the decline of the northern kingdom and the roller coaster spirituality of the southern kingdom.

The history of the divided kingdom is developed chronologically, presenting the kings of both Israel and Judah, alternating in order, according to the date of accession of each king.

Each king is described using an introductory and summary formula.

11:41-43a	Conclusion: Solomon
11:43b; 14:21	Introduction: Rehoboam
14:29-31	Conclusion: Rehoboam
15:1-2	Introduction: Abijah
15:6-8	Conclusion: Abijah

A theological verdict of each king's reign is given, using the reign of God's king, David, as a standard.

Rehoboam	14:22
Abijah	15:3

2 Kings- Introduction

Due to the nature of the relationship between 1 Kings and 2 Kings, it is best to note that the introductory considerations of 1 Kings remain unchanged.

The structure continues to follow the list of the kings of the two kingdoms, alternating according to the year of accession of each, until the fall of Israel.

The book demonstrates how the two kingdoms continue their spiritual decline until each is finally taken captive.

Following 722 B.C., only the history of Judah continues, since it alone exists.

Their temporary reforms caused a delay in God's judgment on them.

As God's people move closer to destruction, the role of the prophet assumes increasing importance. He is seeking to prevent their destruction.

The conclusion of 2 Kings indicates that it was not finished until sometime during the captivity.

The commentary concerning Jehoiachin (25:27-30), leads to two observations which should be considered by way of introduction to the book:

First, its similarity to the conclusion of Jeremiah indicates at least a common purpose, and most likely a common author (Jer. 52:31-34).

Second, the conclusion points to an additional purpose the author has in writing the book.

Throughout the book God has repeatedly demonstrated that He is in control of history. God was not defeated at Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

The fall of Jerusalem was in conformity with God's revealed method of dealing with His people.

Disobedience brings destruction and dispersion.

The conclusion introduces hope.

Though God has had to discipline His people for their unfaithfulness, He has not disowned them. There is still a future.

Jehoiachin has been preserved and protected by a pagan emperor because God is preparing for the restoration of the Davidic house in the future.

He will restore His people and His king at His established time.

KINGDOM UNITED 1-11

David's reign is concluding and Solomon's reign over the united kingdom beginning.

ACCESSION OF SOLOMON 1-2:12

Weakening of David 1:1-4

David's health began to decline from old age.

Abishag, a young Shunamite girl, was brought in to keep him warm.

He was too weak to take advantage of her presence.

Usurpation of Adonijah 1:5-37

Adonijah's strategy 1:5-10

When Adonijah realized the condition of his father's health, he developed a plan to make himself king.

He enlisted some of David's key men to help him.

Nathan's intervention 1:11-27

However, Nathan the prophet and Zadok the priest didn't back him.

They knew that God and David had chosen Solomon as the successor to the throne.

Nathan developed a plan to let David know what Adonijah was doing.

Nathan's operation 1:11-14

Bathsheba's petition 1:15-21

Nathan's information 1:22-27

David's proclamation 1:28-37

David declared his intention and proclaimed the inauguration of Solomon as king over Israel.

Inauguration of Solomon 1:38-53

Solomon installed 1:38-48

David, Zadok and Nathan anointed Solomon and delivered the throne to him.

Adonijah abandoned 1:49

When Adonijah and his guests realized what was happening, the guests fled.

Forgiveness requested 1:50-51

Adonijah went to take hold of the horns of the altar as he appealed to Solomon for mercy.

Protection promised 1:52-53

Solomon assured him that as long as he caused no problems there would be no action taken against him.

Final charge of David 2:1-9

Just before his death, David delivered a final charge to Solomon.

To be a man 2:1-2

Recognizing Solomon's soft nature, he urged him to be a man.

To obey God's law 2:3-4

In order to receive God's blessing on his kingdom, he would need to obey God's laws.

If he follows God, he will enjoy an eternal kingdom.

To recompense David's associates 2:5-9

Finally, there were some old debts David wanted to settle.

He urged Solomon to settle his accounts for him.

To kill Joab 2:5-6

Joab, as the commander of David's army, had killed two others David named in his place, out of jealousy.

Solomon should avenge these deaths.

To show kindness to Barzillai and sons 2:7

Barzillai had identified with David when he fled before Absalom.

Therefore, Solomon should care for his sons.

To kill Shimei 2:8-9

Finally, Shimei who had cursed David should be eliminated.

Death of David 2:10-11

After delivering this last charge to Solomon, David died.

Establishment of Solomon 2:12

Solomon's rule was then firmly established on the throne of Israel.

SOLIDIFICATION UNDER SOLOMON 2:13-3:1

Solomon follows in his father's footsteps:

Dependence on God.

Zeal for the temple.

Savors success.

Follows the "success syndrome" spiral ("Prosperity Cycle").

Solomon proceeded to solidify his hold over the empire.

Death of Adonijah 2:13-25

Adonijah requested that he be given Abishag, the Shunamite girl who had been with David prior to his death.

This was a disguised attempt to lay claim to the throne.

Solomon recognized Adonijah's intent immediately and ordered his execution.

Removal of Abiathar the priest 2:26-27

Solomon also stripped Abiathar the priest of his authority.

He was undoubtedly motivated by the fact that Abiathar had supported Adonijah.

God was removing him because he was a descendant of Eli.

Death of Joab 2:28-35

Solomon had sufficient motive of his own to eliminate Joab.

He had conspired with Adonijah against Solomon as king of Israel.

Therefore, he was delighted to fulfill his father's request and to order Joab's death as a repayment for the murder of Abner and Amasa.

His appeal at the horns of the altar was useless because his crime against the other two men was intentional.

Death of Shimei 2:36-46

Finally, Solomon took action against Shimei as he had promised David he would.

He prohibited Shimei from leaving Jerusalem.

Shimei vowed to obey the king's rule.

After three years, he left to chase some escaped slaves.

Therefore, Shimei was killed for not keeping his oath.

The book uses this case to demonstrate that God punishes those who refuse to submit to the authority which God has established.

Alliance with Egypt 3:1

Once Solomon had firm control over a powerful kingdom, even Egypt wanted to assure good relations with him.

They made a marriage alliance as a symbol of their covenant to maintain peace between them.

WISDOM OF SOLOMON 3:2-4:34

His submission to God's authority 3:2-4

As Solomon became aware of the size of his task as king of Israel and of his need for God's help, he worshiped God and walked with Him.
God gave him the opportunity to ask for anything he wanted.

His request for wisdom 3:5-15

Aware of his inadequacy, Solomon asked for wisdom from God to rule His people properly.
God responded by giving him wisdom, as well as riches and fame.

His demonstration of wisdom 3:16-28

His administration in wisdom 4:1-19

His riches accompany wisdom 4:20-28

His fame for wisdom 4:29-34

BUILDING OF SOLOMON 5-9:9

One of the major accomplishments of Solomon's reign was the construction of the temple.
It was a beautiful center for worshiping Yahweh.

Preparation for building temple 5

Construction of temple 6

Its surrounding structure 6:1-10

Its promise 6:11-13

Its completion 6:14-38

Construction of other houses 7:1-12

He also built several palace buildings.

Furnishings for temple 7:13-51

Dedication of temple 8-9:9

Delivery of ark 8:1-11

Message of dedication 8:12-21

Prayer of dedication 8:22-53

Blessing on the people 8:54-61

Sacrifices and feasting 8:62-66

Promise from Yahweh 9:1-9

Following the dedication of the temple, God revealed Himself to Solomon and promised him the throne forever.

GLORY OF SOLOMON 9:10-10:29

Additional evidences of Solomon's wealth and greatness are presented by several other events and activities.

His gift to Hiram 9:10-14

Solomon wished to repay Hiram for cooperating with him in building the temple and palace.

He presented twenty towns to him.

Hiram was dissatisfied with Solomon's gift.

Apparently Solomon could have afforded a much more expensive gift than the twenty towns he gave him.

Hiram had given him a gift of more than four tons of gold.

His gift is a testimony to his awareness of the greatness of Solomon's kingdom.

His building projects 9:15-25

In addition to his two master projects, Solomon had sufficient resources to accomplish numerous other building projects.

His ships launched 9:26-28

He launched a huge ship operation also.

His visit by the queen of Sheba 10:1-13

His fame became so wide spread that the queen of Sheba came to see for herself.

She recognized his greatness and brought a generous gift.

He likewise gave her generous gifts.

His wealth increased 10:14-29

The wealth of Solomon's kingdom continued to increase enormously.

The author seems overwhelmed by the task of describing the wealth of his empire.

Words weren't adequate to describe it, except to say that his riches and wisdom far surpassed those of any other king in the world.

FAILURE OF SOLOMON 11

Solomon's great wealth, wisdom, and power brought the consequences that eventually resulted in his downfall.

His wives 11:1-3

His power caused other kings to wish to make alliances with him.

Many marital alliances were made.

His idolatry 11:4-8

The wives brought their gods with them.

Solomon was influenced through his wives to follow other gods besides Yahweh.

His kingdom divided 11:9-13

As a result of his unfaithfulness, Yahweh became angry with him and promised to remove the kingdom, except one tribe, from his kingdom after his death.

His adversaries 11:14-40

During Solomon's lifetime there were additional consequences.

Numerous adversaries afflicted his kingdom.

Hadad the Edomite 11:14-22

Hadad returned from Egypt where he had gone to escape David's armies earlier.

He returned to re-establish his kingdom.

Rezon of Aram 11:23-25

Rezon established his rule in Aram and was hostile to Israel.

Jeroboam in northern tribes 11:26-40

The most significant opponent Solomon had to face was within Israel.

God had commissioned Ahijah to anoint Jeroboam as king over the ten tribes that were going to split off from Solomon's kingdom.

God promised Jeroboam a dynasty as permanent as David's, if he would follow God's ways.

Solomon tried to stop Jeroboam by killing him but was unable to do it.

Jeroboam managed to escape to Egypt until after Solomon's death.

His death 11:41-43

KINGDOM DIVIDED 12-22

When Solomon died, His son Rehoboam became king in his place.

In fulfillment of the judgment of God against Solomon, the kingdom was divided according to the old north-south tribal loyalties.

DIVISION BY JEROBOAM I 12-14:20

Kingdom divided by Jeroboam 12:1-24

The division occurred when the people of Israel met together with Rehoboam to talk about his plans for the kingdom.

Request 12:1-5

They asked him to demonstrate a kinder attitude toward them.

Response 12:6-15

After consultation with his advisers, Rehoboam promised greater severity.

Revolt 12:16-24

The people then revolted against him and ten tribes seceded.

The king over God's people was not given his authority to be a slave driver.

Only God had the right to that kind of demand.

Thus Rehoboam suffered for his own foolishness, but thereby fulfilled God's judgment against Solomon for his idolatry.

Religion established by Jeroboam 12:25-33

When God told Jeroboam that he would become king over the ten tribes of Israel, He promised to establish his throne forever as He had done for David.

The only condition was that he be faithful to God and follow His commands (11:29-31, 37-38).

Jeroboam quickly departed from that path as he established a new religion in Israel to keep his people from returning to their previous loyalty to Jerusalem.

Warning delivered to Jeroboam 13-14:18

God made three attempts to warn Jeroboam of the danger of the path he chose to follow.

Prophecy of the man of God 13:1-10

His prophecy against the altar 13:1-3

His judgment against Jeroboam 13:4-5

His intercession for Jeroboam 13:6

His rejection of invitation 13:7-10

Example of the man of God 13:11-34

The second warning to Jeroboam used the man of God as an object lesson.

God had given him clear orders not to eat or drink anything, and not to return by the same path.

He was deceived by an old prophet to disobey the order which God had given him.

Even though he was God's messenger, and the deception was done *in God's name*, the man of God was used as an example to demonstrate the priority that must be given to God's Word.

Jeroboam's disobedience would likewise end in death.

Nevertheless, Jeroboam refused to turn back.

Deception by the old prophet 13:11-19

Prophecy of the old prophet 13:20-22

Death of the man of God 13:23-25

Burial by the old prophet 13:26-32

Rejection of the message by Jeroboam 13:33-34

Death of the son of Jeroboam 14:1-18

The final warning came through the illness and death of his son.

Rather than accept the warning, he continued to play games with God.

Therefore, Ahijah prophesied his removal as king of Israel; neither he nor his sons would remain on the throne.

Illness 14:1

Deception 14:2-5

Prophecy 14:6-16

Condemnation of Jeroboam 14:6-11

Death of son 14:12-13

Removal of Jeroboam 14:14-16

Fulfillment 14:17-18

Death of Jeroboam 14:19-20

Jeroboam's example set the pace for the rest of Israel's history.

Although various dynasties would follow his, never did Israel have a king who led the people to follow God's commands completely.

EVIL REIGN OF REHOBOAM OVER JUDAH 14:21-31

Rehoboam continued to rule over Judah.

Pagan practices 14:21-24

Under his reign, Judah followed the ways of the other pagan nations around them.

Attack by Shishak 14:25-28

Therefore, God allowed Shishak from Egypt to invade the land and carry off the gold treasures which Solomon had left.

Summary of reign 14:29-31

Tension also existed throughout his reign between Judah and Israel.

DEGENERATION OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL AND OF JUDAH 15- 2 Ki. 17

Israel never had a good king!

It had "good-bad" kings—who worshiped Yahweh man's way.

It had "bad-bad" kings—who worshiped pagan gods.

Some of Israel's "bad" kings who followed Yahweh were better than some of Judah's bad kings that worshiped the pagan gods around them (such as, Jeroboam and Rehoboam). Judah only had eight good kings out of twenty—and less excuse!

Evil reign of Abijah over Judah 15:1-8

Good reign of Asa over Judah 15:9-24

His reforms 15:9-15
Expelled male prostitutes 15:9-12a
Eliminated idols 15:12b
Deposed idolatrous grandmother 15:13
Failed to remove high places 15:14
Supplied needed vessels for temple 15:15
His struggle against Israel 15:16-17
His alliance with Ben-Hadad 15:18-22
His reign summarized 15:23-24

Evil reign of Nadab over Israel 15:25-32

Evil reign of Baasha over Israel 15:33-16:7

Evil reign of Elah over Israel 16:8-10

Evil reign of Zimri over Israel 16:11-20

Evil reign of Omri over Israel 16:21-28

Omri established one of the most powerful, and yet most sinful dynasties to rule over Israel.

Politically he was a significant leader.

Under his rule Samaria was established as the capital of Israel.

Spiritually, however, Omri's dynasty ruined Israel.

He continued the previous practices of the Israelite kings, but added to these practices others, imported from his alliances with pagan nations.

Evil reign of Ahab over Israel 16:29-22:40

The son of Omri, Ahab, who succeeded him as king, formed a marriage alliance with Jezebel, the daughter of the king of Sidon.

Her influence was felt in both Israel and Judah for several generations.

God raised up Elijah for his prophetic ministry in Israel during the reign of Ahab.

His role is prophetic of God's program for the nation, which is confirmed by the signs demonstrated through both Elijah and Elisha.

God is about to judge His people.
They are headed for destruction.
From this point on, the Old Testament prophets' message is one of judgment, to be followed by restoration.
The signs confirm the message of judgment.

Reign of Ahab summarized 16:29-34

Ministry of Elijah presented 17-19

Control over weather 17-18:15

God had stated that disobedience to His commands would produce cursing (Deut. 28)

Among the curses described, He included drought.

Elijah, as God's spokesman, uses this curse against Ahab's kingdom, because of his disobedience to God.

Though Ahab blames him, Elijah makes it clear that Ahab himself was the cause of the drought because of his unfaithfulness.

His prophecy 17:1

His provision 17:2-24

While God's curse is upon the land in general, He provides for the needs of His faithful servant, and a widow who submits to the authority of His spokesman.

The brook and the ravens 17:2-7

The widow 17:8-24

The widow's attitude toward the servant of God is especially significant because she is a Sidonian, a pagan.

God's people have turned from Him and rejected His spokesperson, but the pagan Sidonian woman receives him and is willing to sacrifice for him.

Therefore God blesses her.

Jesus is nearly killed for using her as an example

(Luke 4:24-30)

Her need supplied 17:8-16

Her son revived 17:17-24

His presentation 18:1-15

Confrontation with prophets of Baal 18:16-46

Challenge 18:16-21

He challenges them to commit themselves either to Yahweh or to Baal. *"Make a choice!"*

Both can't be right.

Test 18:22-39

He presents the test of fire to demonstrate which is the true God.

Slaughter 18:40

Rain 18:41-46

Conflict with Jezebel 19:1-18

Jezebel's threat 19:1-2

Elijah's depression 19:3-5a

Angel's provision 19:5b-8

God's encouragement 19:9-18

Elijah is commissioned to anoint a new generation of leaders.

Hazeal will take over Syria; Jehu will replace Ahab; and Elisha will take his place.

There is about to be a complete change of conditions in the life of Israel.

Commissioning of Elisha 19:19-21

Decline of Ahab described 20:22-40

Having described most of Ahab's reign from the perspective of Elijah's prophetic ministry, the author looks more closely at several events which occur at the end of Ahab's reign and contribute to his downfall.

His campaigns against Ben-Hadad 20

Ahab's first victory 20:1-21

Ahab's second victory 20:22-30

Ahab's failure 20:31-34

Although Ahab is victorious in both campaigns, he fails to finish his task by killing Ben-Hadad.

Instead, he makes a peace treaty with him. Elijah informs him that God has judged him as a prison guard who lets the guilty escape.

His life will be taken in exchange for that of the escapee.

Ahab's condemnation 20:35-43

His injustice against Naboth 21

Ahab's wish 21:1-7

Jezebel's plot 21:8-16

Elijah's word 21:17-29

Divine commentary concerning Ahab: 21:25-29

His alliance with Jehoshaphat 22:1-40
Prophecy from puppets 22:1-6
Prophecy from God 22:7-28
Prophecy fulfilled 22:29-40

Good reign of Jehoshaphat over Judah 22:41-50

Evil reign of Ahaziah over Israel 22:51-53

The book concludes with the son of Ahab assuming his father's throne.

He is seen as a product of his family history.

He follows the example of his father and mother.

His worship of Baal is sufficient to label him as an evil king.

2 KINGS

DIVIDED KINGDOM (continued) 1-17

DEGENERATION OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL AND OF JUDAH (Continued) 1-17

Evil reign of Ahaziah over Israel (continued) 1:1-18

His injury 1:1-2a

His consultation with Baal-Zebub 1:2b

Following family tradition, when he fell and hurt himself, he consulted Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron.

Yahweh, as God of Israel was offended and concerned about the testimony before the pagan nations (1:1-2)

His condemnation by Elijah 1:3-18

Confrontation of messengers 1:3-4

Communication by messengers 1:5-8

Companies after Elijah 1:9-15

First company destroyed 1:9-10

Second company destroyed 1:11-12

Third company delivered 1:13-15

Communication of consequence 1:16-18

Evil reign of Joram over Israel 2-8:15

As Joram assumes the throne, his reign is overshadowed by the appearance of Elisha as God's spokesman, who was far more important in God's program than Joram.

Elijah's substitute designated 2:1-11

Elijah had fulfilled an important role during Ahab's corrupt reign over Israel.

However, his years of ministry were coming to an end.

A continuing prophetic voice was needed to alert God's people to the danger ahead.

Who would be able to fulfill such an important role?

God had already revealed to Elijah that Elisha was to take his place (1 Ki. 19:16).

The experiences of the day God took Elijah to heaven would demonstrate that fact to Elisha as well.

Elisha's authority demonstrated 2:12-25

Although Elijah's verbal promise of succession was given, it was difficult for Elisha to accept the fact.

Three confirmatory signs are given to demonstrate Elisha's authority.

They were for his benefit, as well as for the other prophets.

#1 Jordan parted 2:12-18

Succession proven to Elisha 2:12-14

When he returned to the Jordan to cross back, he only had his experience with Elijah to draw on.

Elijah struck the water with the cloak and the water divided.

When Elisha imitated Elijah's action it worked for him too.

Thus God confirmed to him his role as God's new spokesman.

Succession proven to others 2:15

The other prophets were watching and realized also that Elisha was demonstrating that he had taken Elijah's place.

Succession prevents restoration 2:16-18

The other prophets still weren't sure about Elisha's succession.

They thought they should make sure that God didn't drop Elijah somewhere else.

When they were finally convinced that Elijah wouldn't be back, they returned to Elisha.

Having seen the way God took Elijah, Elisha was sure that he would not be back.

From now on, the prophetic responsibility to Israel was his.

#2 Bad water healed 2:19-22

#3 Jeering youths cursed 2:23-25

A group of young men demonstrated their lack of respect for God's spokesman by mocking him.

God's judgment on them gave evidence to all Israel that Elisha was God's appointed spokesman.

They would pay a high price for playing disrespectfully with him.

Joram's expedition delivered 3

Although Joram was another of Israel's evil kings, he is given credit for eliminating the Baal worship of his parents.

His error was that of continuing Jeroboam's religious system.

Elisha's ministry described 4-8:15

Blessing for faithful Israel 4

Even in the midst of an apostate people, God maintains a remnant who are faithful to Him.

As the story of God's spokesman in an evil generation continues, four stories are told of people who recognize God's authority and submit to His Word and to His appointed spokesman.

In each case God supplies their need and blesses them.

Widow's creditor paid with oil 4:1-7

Shunamite's son restored to life 4:8-37

Providing for a prophet 4:8-10

Sending of a son 4:11-17

Saving of a son 4:18-37

Prophet's stew cured of death 4:38-41

Man's bread satisfied a hundred 4:42-44

Blessing for believing pagan leper 5

In contrast to unfaithful Israel, Naaman is introduced.

He has at least 3 reasons for being rejected by God:

- 1) He is a pagan
- 2) He is a leper
- 3) He is commander of a foreign army, opposing Israel

Nevertheless, he is an example to apostate Israel.

At a time when Israel has turned away from God and is going to receive His curse, this pagan, leprous commander turns to God and receives blessing.

God blesses those who trust Him, whatever their background may be!

Elisha's counsel sought 5:1-14

Counsel received from a Jewess 5:1-7

Counsel rejected from a prophet 5:8-13

Counsel reconsidered with results 5:14

Elisha's counsel recompensed 5:15-27

Recompense refused by Elisha 5:15-19

Recompense requested by Gehazi 5:20-27

His deception 5:20-24

His destiny 5:25-27

Two sub-themes are seen in the story:

The unnamed captive girl from Israel serves as an example to her people.

She has been faithful to God and accepts the authority of God's spokesman.

Her testimony before her pagan owners attracts them to Yahweh.

She is an effective missionary representative of her God.

Through her testimony, the pagan household is blessed.

The second sub-theme is seen in the story of Gehazi.

Throughout the account of Elisha's ministry, he has been frustrated.

While he has done well to identify with Elisha, he has repeatedly been neglected and failed to achieve his goals.

When Elisha refused the recompense Naaman offered, Gehazi saw an opportunity for personal gain.

He decided to deceive Naaman and make a profit.

By so doing, Gehazi demonstrates his lack of faith in God's adequate provision for his needs, as well as his personal greed.

His punishment with leprosy serves as a warning concerning the danger of greed.

Israel needs to trust God and His provision, rather than trust their own schemes and seek personal profit.

Gehazi was rejected from God's service and could never again enjoy fellowship with God's spokesman.

He was permanently excluded from future ministry.

God forgives.

But the requirements for leadership aren't to be taken lightly!

Blessing for participants in God's service 6:1-7

Victory over Israel's enemies 6:8-8:15

Blinding of Aramean troops 6:8-23

Elisha's prophetic warnings 6:8-12

Elisha's divine perspective 6:13-17

Elisha's supernatural victory 6:18-23

Scattering of Aramean troops 6:24-7:20

Famine in Israel 6:24-31

Prophetic revelation of victory 6:32-7:2

Experiential revelation of victory 7:3-15

Fulfillment of prophetic revelation 7:16-20

Special blessing for the faithful woman 8:1-6

Death sentence against Aramean king 8:7-15

Evil reign of Jehoram over Judah 8:16-24

His father, Jehoshaphat, who had been friendly with Ahab, arranged a marital alliance of his son and Ahab's daughter.

Thus Ahab and Jezebel's influence was extended into Judah also.

Evil reign of Ahaziah over Judah 8:25-29

He continued to demonstrate the same evil family influence of his grandparents from Israel.

Evil reign of Jehu over Israel 9-10:36

If ever there was a candidate for a good king in Israel, Jehu would have been it.

He obeyed God's orders and cleaned out the entire family of Ahab and Jezebel, as well as all the remnants of their Baal worship.

God rewarded his faithfulness in fulfilling this commission by promising him 4 generations of rule over Israel (10:28-31).

However, Jehu failed in that he did not remove Jeroboam's worship system from Israel

Like the other kings of Israel, he feared that to return to temple worship in Jerusalem was too great a risk.

The people might want to return to a united kingdom again. Then where would they be?

Anointed king 9:1-13

Death of Joram and Ahaziah 9:14-29

Death of Jezebel 9:30-37

Death of Ahab's family 10:1-17

Death of Baal's ministers and worship 10:18-28

Failure of Jehu 10:29-31

Reduction of Israel 10:32-36

Evil reign of Athaliah over Judah 11

Murder and usurpation of throne 11:1

Protection and installation of Joash 11:2-12

Death and purification 11:13-20

Good reign of Joash over Judah 12

Evil reign of Jehoahaz over Israel 13:1-9

Evil reign of Jehoash over Israel 13:10-25

His evil 13:10-13

Elisha's final prophecies 13:14-19

Elisha's continual blessing after death 13:20-21

Elisha's final prophecies fulfilled 13:22-25

Good reign of Amaziah over Judah 14:1-22

His obedience to the law 14:1-6

His attack against Israel 14:7-16

His death in Lachish 14:17-22

Evil reign of Jeroboam II over Israel 14:23-29

Good reign of Azariah over Judah 15:1-7

Evil reign of Zechariah over Israel 15:8-12

Evil reign of Shallum over Israel 15:13-15

Evil reign of Menahem over Israel 15:16-22

Evil reign of Pekahiah over Israel 15:23-26

Evil reign of Pekah over Israel 15:27-31

Good reign of Jotham over Judah 15:32-38

Evil reign of Ahaz over Judah 16:1-20

Evil reign of Hoshea over Israel 17

Account of Israel's activity 17:1-6

Cause of Israel's captivity 17:7-23

The author wants to make clear that the political reason for Israel's captivity was only a superficial symptom of the real cause.

Israel's God was not defeated by the gods of Assyria.

The true cause of Israel's defeat: they had turned away from Yahweh.

They violated the conditions of His covenant with them.

They preferred to imitate the pagan nations around them.

He sent prophets to warn them but they paid no attention.

Therefore, He rejected them and removed them from His presence in His land.

Confusion of religions in Israel 17:24-41

When Assyria repopulated the land with other pagan peoples, God demonstrated His power over the other gods.

The inhabitants of the land didn't worship Him.

Therefore, He sent lions among them and killed some of the people.

As a result, Assyria sent a priest to explain how Yahweh was to be worshiped.

To live in His land, they would at least have to recognize His presence there.

This action stopped God's judgment on the mixture of religions.

Nevertheless, a confused mixing of all the religions resulted; it contaminated the entire area that had belonged to Israel.

SURVIVING KINGDOM 18-25

In spite of the continuing decline in both Israel and Judah, which was leading to their destruction, Judah survived for 136 years longer than Israel.

The reason for their survival was the presence of good kings in Judah who called the people to repentance.

The history of the survival period revolves around two good kings who led the reforms, and the declines that followed their reigns.

FIRST REFORM AND DECLINE 18-21

The first of these cycles of reform and decline began while Israel was headed toward destruction, during the reign of Hoshea.

Hezekiah became king over Judah and was able to protect Judah from the same fate as that of Israel.

Good reign of Hezekiah 18-20

Hezekiah's reforms 18:1-12

Hezekiah's deliverance from Assyria 18:13-19:37

Hezekiah's recuperation from illness 20:1-11

Hezekiah's failure concerning Babylon 20:12-21 *PRIDE*

Evil reign of Manasseh 21:1-18

Evil reign of Amon 21:19-26

SECOND REFORM AND DECLINE 22-25:21

The son of Amon, Josiah, rejected the evil path his father followed and led Judah in the second cycle of reform.

He followed in every respect the pattern of obedience to God established by David.

Good reign of Josiah 22:1-23:30

Repair of the temple 22:1-7

Rediscovery of the law 22:8-20

Renewal of the covenant 23:1-3

Removal of abominations 23:4-25

Reconfirmation of judgment 23:26-27

Death of Josiah 23:28-30

Evil reign of Jehoahaz 23:31-33

Evil reign of Jehoiakim 23:34-24:7

Evil reign of Jehoiachin 24:8-16

Evil reign of Zedekiah 24:17-25:21

His evil deeds 24:17-20

His kingdom destroyed 25:1-21

HISTORICAL APPENDICES 25:22-30

Although God's people have been taken into captivity, the author mentions **two significant events** of great consequence in the light of God's program for His people:

Story of Gedaliah 25:22-26

The story of Gedaliah is significant for several reasons.

He is noteworthy because he is from a family known for its faithfulness to God and His spokesman (22:8-14; Jeremiah's warning: Jer. 38).

A pagan leader, under God's sovereign control, names a follower of Yahweh to be governor over the land.

His testimony is sufficiently solid to inspire the confidence of the people.

Gedaliah named governor 25:22-24

Gedaliah assassinated 25:25

Even in this situation, when a pagan ruler is an instrument in God's hands to bless His people, some of God's people become jealous and kill Gedaliah.

People fled to Egypt 25:26

The result of their rebellion against the ruler God has placed in authority is immediate fear of judgment by the Babylonians.

Thus they escape to Egypt, where they will eventually be destroyed.

Story of Jehoiachin 25:27-30

The second significant account demonstrates God's sovereignty, even in pagan Babylonia.

Jehoiachin is released from prison and protected and provided for by the pagan king.

Although those left in the land were destroyed, as Jeremiah had predicted, God's king is still being cared for.

There is still a future for God's people.

There is still a remnant in Babylonia.

They will return to Him and He will bless them again at His appointed time.

God continues to control history according to His plan.

He will yet fulfill His covenant with His people.

His release 25:27

His provisions 25:28-30