

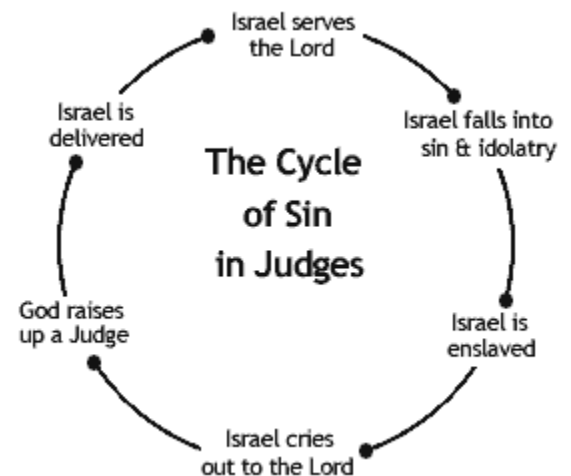
Overview of the books of Samuel and Kings:

Israel was rescued out of slavery in Egypt - God raised up Moses to lead the people to freedom. What God intended for His people was to be a holy nation that lived out God's love and greatness to other nations.

It took them three months to reach Horeb (Mt. Sinai). Here they made a covenant with God.

- The covenant that God made with His people at Mt. Sinai was building on the covenant God made with Abraham back in Genesis. That covenant first established a relationship between God and Abraham's descendents.
 - *"The LORD had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.'" – Genesis 12:1.*
 - *"The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring [or seed] I will give this land." – Genesis 12:7.* The land being promised here is the Promised Land.
- The Mosaic Covenant is a conditional covenant made between God and the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai. The basic agreement of this covenant is God's affirmation of the Israelites as his people on the condition that they accept certain rules of conduct. (Exodus 19-24)
- Moses spends 40 days and nights on the mountain with God.
- While Moses was on the mountain, God spoke with him and gave specific instructions on building a sanctuary where He would dwell among the people. (Exodus 25-27)
- God also gave instructions on instituting a priesthood in Israel. (Exodus 28-29)
- Moses shares what God said with the people and they set out to build the tabernacle and ark.
- When they reached the border of the Promised Land, they sent 12 spies to check out the land. If you know this story, you know that ten of the spies come back with a fearful report, saying that the people were powerful and the cities fortified and that they couldn't conquer the land. However, two of the spies (Joshua and Caleb) feel differently. In fact Caleb silences the people and says, *"We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it."* (Numbers 13:30)
- The ten spies spread a bad report among the people about the land they had explored and the people rebelled against Moses.

- Because of their lack of faith and rebellion, God punished them with 40 years of wandering through desert wilderness before being able to enter the Promised Land.
- They eventually do come into the Promised Land where they were supposed to be faithful to God and obey the covenant commands. Israel failed miserably at this.
- The book of Judges covers the period of time from after the death of Joshua to the birth of Samuel. It shows the downward spiral into chaos and rebellion that took place at this time in Israel's history, and Israel's need for faithful, wise leaders to lead the people back to God.
- The book of Samuel supplies the answer to this need.



I Samuel

There are three main characters: Samuel, Saul and David

These three men transition Israel from a group of tribes ruled by judges, into a unified kingdom ruled by King David in Jerusalem.

Two main parts to I Samuel:

Chapters 1-7

- Samuel is the key leader and first prophet in the book

Chapters 8-31

- Saul's story - 2 parts
 - his rise to power and his failures
 - His downfall and tragic death; David rises

II Samuel

II Samuel tells the story of David as king of Israel. There are two main parts:

Chapters 1-20:

- There is a season of success and blessing.
- Huge moral failure and consequences.

Chapters 21-24

- Reflects back on the good and bad in David's life, generating hope of a future king to come from David's line.

I and II Kings

David has unified the tribes of Israel into one kingdom, and we saw how God promised that from David's line would come a Messianic king who would establish God's kingdom over the nations and fulfill the promise made to Abraham.

The books of I and II Kings tells the story of the long line of kings who came after David. The book of I Kings covers about one and half centuries while II Kings covers about three centuries.

Five main parts:

Part #1: I Kings 1-11

- Solomon's reign and the construction of the temple

Part #2: I Kings 12-16

- Israel splits into two rival kingdoms: Israel (ten tribes) and Judah (two tribes)
 - Simeon - It is thought that the tribe of Simeon relocated to the north when the 12 tribes split into two kingdoms, and that some of the people came back when they saw they were on the wrong side.
 - Look at the map of the twelve tribes. These tribes correlate with the twelve sons of Jacob: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin. (Joshua 13-22)

What do you notice when you look at this list, and the map of the twelve tribes?

-There are some names of sons that are not on the map (Levi and Joseph)
-There are a few different names that don't correlate with a son (Manasseh and Ephraim)

-The size in land is very different

- Levi was the tribe where the priests came from and was not given land. Instead, cities throughout the land from which to minister. They were in charge of the tabernacle and later on the temple. The Lord was their inheritance.
- Manasseh and Ephraim were Joseph's sons and were given his inheritance because he had received a double portion after Reuben lost his birthright due to his sin.
- The difference in size of land distribution was due to the population of each tribe.

Part #3: I Kings 17- II Kings 8

- God tries to prevent corruption by sending the prophets, who were key figures in Israel's history and who appear throughout these chapters to hold the kings accountable.
 - They spoke on behalf of the God of Israel
 - They played the role of covenant watchdog - they called out idolatry and injustice.
 - They challenged Israel to repent and follow their God.
 - The prophets that covered the three centuries of II Kings were Hosea, Amos and Jonah in Israel and Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah in Judah.
- In these chapters, the story goes back and forth between the northern and southern kingdoms, tracing their fate.
- Each kingdom has about 20 successive kings.
- Each king's reign is evaluated based on the following criteria
 - Did they worship the God of Israel alone or did they worship other gods?
 - Did they deal with idolatry among the people?
 - Did they remain faithful to the covenant like David, or did they become corrupt and unjust?
- According to these criteria the kingdom of Israel was 0 for 20 and Judah was 8 for 20.

The two main prophets in the northern kingdom were Elijah and Elisha. Elijah is seen in the first half of these chapters before he passes the mantle to Elisha. Both were ultimately unsuccessful in turning Israel back from their idolatry.

Part #4: II Kings 9-17

- Exile becomes unavoidable as consequence of Israel's sin

In this section, we will see the horrible spiral of political assassinations and rebellions from which Israel never recovers from. We will see coup after coup and each king following other gods and allowing awful injustices that lead to exile.

Part #5: II Kings 18-25:

- Judah's exile into Babylon

Here we get the story of the southern kingdom (Judah) and although there were a few good kings scattered throughout, they still end up going the same direction as the northern kingdom.

We are picking up the story in the third movement of the books of Kings where we go back and forth between the northern and southern kingdoms and read how the prophets tried to reign them back to following the true God of Israel.

The Kings We've Covered So Far

Rehoboam (Judah) - Solomon's son/grandson of David - started his reign at age 41- ruled for 17 years

- Encouraged the growth of his father's idolatry.
- His poor leadership led to the united kingdom of Israel dividing into the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah)
- He was the first king of the Southern Kingdom (Judah)

Jeroboam (Israel) - Was a servant of king Solomon - reigned for 22 years

- He was the first king of the Northern kingdom (Israel)
- Overthrew God's ordinances for worship
- He built two state temples with golden calves, one in Bethel and the other in Dan.
- Became the measuring stick for evil

Abijah (Judah) - Son of Rehoboam - reigned for three years

- His reign was marked by warfare
- Wicked king
- Followed in his father's footsteps

Asa (Judah) - Oldest son of Rehoboam - Reigned for 41 years

- Man of integrity
- Brought reformation by removing idolatry from Judah.
- Revived the things of God in the hearts and minds of the people.

Nadab (Israel) - Second son of Jeroboam - reigned for less than two years

- Walked in the ways of his father
- Did evil in the eyes of the Lord

Baasha (Israel) - Captain of Nadab's army - Reigned for 24 years

- He became king by assassinating King Nadab
- He ruthlessly wiped out Jeroboam and his entire family
- Known for his evil and practice of idolatry
- *God used him to fulfill the prophecy spoken about Jeroboam in I Kings 14.*

Elah (Israel) - Son of Baasha - Reigned for two years

- Did evil in the eyes of the Lord by promoting idol worship
- Assassinated by Zimri

Zimri (Israel) - Chariot commander and servant to king Elah - Reigned for seven days (shortest reign of any king in Israel)

- *Was used to accomplish the destruction of Baasha's house as prophesied about in 1 Kings 16:3.*
- Did evil in the eyes of the Lord by following in the ways of Jeroboam
- Made the mistake of not gaining the support of Israel's army
- Killed himself by setting fire to the palace he was in when he saw the city was taken.

Omri (Israel) - Commander of the army of King Elah - Reigned for 12 years

- Had a powerful influence over Israel
- Established a dynasty that lasted nearly 50 years
- Was politically successful
- Moved the capital city to Samaria
- Did evil in the eyes of the Lord and was worse than those before him; he followed in the ways of Jeroboam.

Ahab (Israel) - Son of Omri - Reigned for 22 years

- Worst king to sit on Israel's throne
- Married Jezebel - influenced him to do evil
- Worshiped false gods, abused his power, disobeyed God
- Built an altar to Baal in Samaria
- Established cults for Baal and Asherah in Israel
- Fought against the prophets of God

Jehoshaphat (Judah) - Son of Asa - Reigned for 25 years

- He was one of the few good rulers of Judah.
- Wise king - devoted to the Lord
- Brought about religious reforms

Ahaziah (Israel) - Son of Ahab - Reigned for two years

We pick up the story with Ahaziah becoming king over Israel.

- Look at the chart of the kings of Israel and Judah - compare the two sides.
What stands out to you?
 - Israel had no kings who did right
 - Judah had six kings who did right + two who did right some of the time.
 - What does this say about the leadership of the two kingdoms?
 - Judah lasted about 339 years longer (543 altogether) before going into captivity than Israel (lasted 204 years). Does quality of leadership matter?
 - Compare the 'relationship to previous king' column of the two sides.
Do you notice anything?
 - Judah passed the throne on to a family member (son) - every king of Judah was the son of a previous king (excluding the usurping queen Athaliah)
 - In Israel, the throne was taken by whoever was strong enough. Seven kings of Israel took office only after killing the previous king.