
Elijah and Ahab

Week 1 - Introduction 1 Kings 16:29 - 17:6

Mid-week Bible Study



Introduction to Kings

1 & 2 Kings - originally one book

Sequel to 1 & 2 Samuel

1 & 2 Samuel

Life of Samuel, King Saul and King David

1100BC-970BC

1 & 2 Kings

Reign of King Solomon through to sack of Jerusalem

970BC-586BC

1 & 2 Chronicles

Genealogies starting with Adam, then covering Saul's death through to Cyrus' decree

Pre 4000BC? until 538BC



Potential authors

Samuel and Kings are pre-exilic writings. Jewish tradition says Kings was written by Jeremiah (Questionable?)

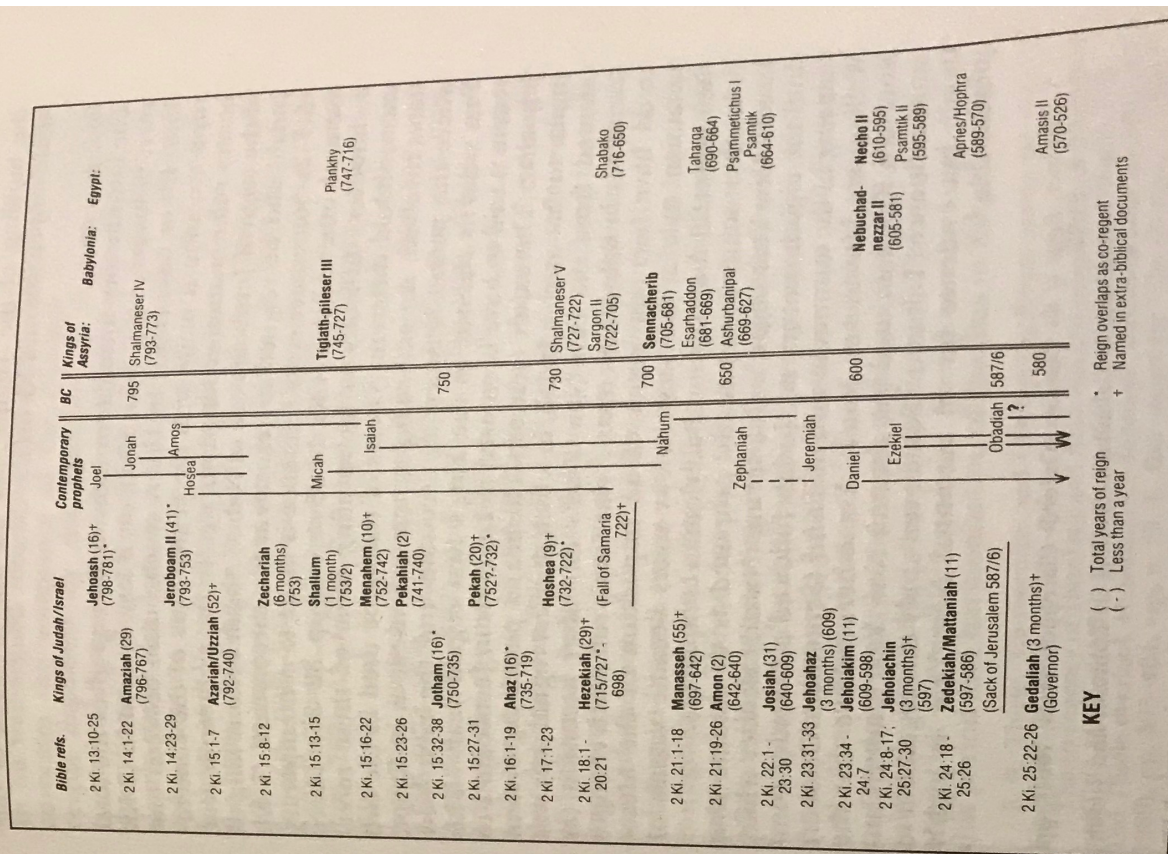
Chronicles is post-exilic. Jewish tradition says that Ezra the priest was the author.

Importance of Kings

Donald Wiseman (former member of Battle Baptist Church) writes,

[Kings'] frank statement of the triumphs and tragedies of God's people has a relevance for us today. These things were recorded as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on the things they did. They were also written as warnings so that when we think we are standing firmer than they, we must be careful not to fall (1 Corinthians 10:6) They were written to help the original readers and us to endure in times of testing and to encourage us to hope in the same unchanging God.
[Tyndale Old Testament Commentary, 1 & 2 Kings, Donald Wiseman]

INTRODUCTION



KEY

() Total years of reign
(-) Less than a year
+ Reign overlaps as co-regent
* Named in extra-biblical documents

Timeline of 1 & 2 Kings



Kingdom of Israel

Omride dynasty

Omri (885-874BC)

Ahab (874-853BC)

Ahaziah (853-852BC)

Jehoram (852-841BC)

Kingdom of Judah

Davidic line

Asa (910-869BC)

Jehoshaphat (872-848BC)

Je(ho)ram (853-842BC)

Asherah: goddess worshipped by surrounding tribes including the Phoenicians (Jezebel was a Phoenician). The corresponding greek translation of her name are the words *alsos* and *dendra* meaning groves or trees. An asherah pole was a sacred tree that had been carved into an idol of asherah and would be worshipped, often in high places. Asherah was referred to as the Queen of Heaven and it is thought that the people of Israel and Judah even worshipped her as the consort of Yahweh. See Deuteronomy 12:1-3

First passage: 1 Kings 16:29-34

Baal: Baal literally means 'Lord' (direct opposition to the Lordship of Yahweh). Baal was supposed to be the son of El, the chief God (although he was more powerful). He was a fertility God believed to make the earth produce crops and people produce children. He was worshipped in many different ways and took on different forms such as Baal' Zebub whom the Philistines worshipped and where the name Beelzebub originated.

How does the transactional worship of the idol Baal compare to worship of the one true God YHWH (Yahweh)?



Map of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah and surrounding Kingdoms

Joshua 6:26 (NIV)

26 At that time Joshua pronounced this solemn oath: “Cursed before the Lord is the one who undertakes to rebuild this city, Jericho:

“At the cost of his firstborn son
he will lay its foundations;
at the cost of his youngest
he will set up its gates.”

Second passage: 1 Kings 17:1-6

James 5:16-18

The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

17 Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. **18** Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

Why did God bring about the drought?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Some questions to consider in groups

What is the role of a prophet? What is Elijah's mission specifically?

Does this line up with what is widely considered prophetic ministry today in charismatic churches like ours?

How can the church exercise a prophetic ministry today?

Some Christians today will totally align themselves with a political leader or party, why might this be unhelpful?

In what arenas of life do we especially need a prophetic voice?

If God were to send a prophet like Elijah to our church, what do you think he would say to us? What would he say to you?

How can we have a powerful and effective prayer life like Elijah?
