

Kings and Prophets

Chapter 13

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 39



Objective: To introduce the books that tell of the kings and the prophets of the Hebrew nations after David and to learn from the examples and warnings.



“O Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing loving-kindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart.”

—1 Kings 8:23

The books of 1 and 2 Kings tell us about the kingdom of man that resulted from Israel not wanting God to be their king. In these books, we will find awesome warnings, especially in the lives of the wicked kings, and we will also find great examples in the lives of godly prophets, especially prophets like Elijah and Elisha. In 1 Kings, we learn about the division of that human kingdom. In 2 Kings, we learn the details of their sad captivities. There are many warnings in the books of Kings because most of these kings were wicked.

The significance of these two books is that they record the division of the Jewish nation into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah, and the collapse and captivity of each kingdom. They also record the ministries of Elijah, Elisha, and many other great prophets of God. We might call 1 and 2 Kings “The Rise and Fall of the Hebrew Nation.” In 2 Kings, we learn about the northern kingdom’s captivity by Assyria. These 10 tribes are often called “the lost tribes of Israel” because they are never heard from again in Scripture or in history. Later, the southern kingdom of Judah was also taken captive. They were taken to Babylon and returned 70 years later to rebuild Jerusalem when the Persian emperor freed them.

Two themes stand out in these books: (1) how God does not give up on Israel even in the midst of terrible apostasy and backsliding, and (2) God’s patience in dealing with some of their corrupt kings.



1. True or false? The book of 1 Kings is about the division of Israel into two separate kingdoms.

2. True or false? The book of 2 Kings is about how Israel was reunited into one united kingdom again.

3. True or false? The prophets mostly predicted the future.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What eventually happened to the northern kingdom of Israel?

- a. It conquered the southern kingdom.
- b. It conquered the Assyrians and dominated the region.
- c. It was conquered by the Assyrians and never heard from again.
- d. It learned its lessons and returned to God.

5. What eventually happened to the southern kingdom of Judah?

- a. It was conquered by the Persians and never heard from again.
- b. It was conquered by the Babylonians and eventually returned to Judah.
- c. It conquered the Greeks and Persians.
- d. It was abandoned by its people, who returned to Egypt.

6. Which of the following are included in a prophet's role? (*choose all that apply*)

- a. They preached God's written word.
- b. They ruled the nation by manipulating kings.
- c. They sometimes foretold the future.
- d. They interpreted circumstances from God's perspective.
- e. They punished people who disobeyed the king.

7. What did Elijah do that Israel's judges had not done well?

- a. Defeated Israel's enemies
- b. Trained Israel's armies
- c. Kept people from sinning
- d. Trained a successor

8. After the kingdom divided, how many good kings ruled the north?

- a. None
- b. Five
- c. Nine
- d. All of them

9. After the kingdom divided, how many good kings ruled the south?

- a. None
- b. At least three
- c. Eleven
- d. All of them

10. How would the true prophets of Israel answer the king?
 - a. They would tell the king only what he wanted to hear.
 - b. They would always tell the king every detail of the future.
 - c. They would take a vote and tell the king the most popular opinion.
 - d. They would only tell the king what God said.

11. How were God’s prophets treated for telling the truth?
 - a. They were always generously rewarded.
 - b. They were very popular with the people.
 - c. They were often punished very harshly and persecuted.
 - d. They were always killed immediately.

12. What kinds of powers did prophets usually have?
 - a. They were just like everyone else, with no special powers.
 - b. God gave them supernatural wisdom, and often supernatural power.
 - c. They could control the minds of kings.
 - d. They were invincible.

13. How did God respond to Elijah’s confrontation with the false prophets and priests?
 - a. He got angry at Elijah for testing Him.
 - b. He ignored Elijah.
 - c. He told Elijah to make peace with the false prophets and priests.
 - d. He honored Elijah’s faithfulness by striking his wet altar with fire.

14. How did the people respond to Elijah’s victory?
 - a. They tried to kill him.
 - b. They refused to repent.
 - c. They repented and believed God.
 - d. They did not even notice what God had done.

15. As an “earthen vessel” that God used mightily, what was Elijah like after his great victory?
 - a. He had weaknesses and fears like anyone else.
 - b. He trusted God and was never afraid of anything again.
 - c. He became sinless.
 - d. He became very proud, and God punished him.



In what ways can you relate to Elijah? In what ways have you experienced God’s power?
 In what ways have you experienced weaknesses and fears?



Thank God that He does not reserve His power only for perfect people. Ask Him to do something powerful in and through your life this week.



Going Deeper

1. In these two books of Kings, in what ways do we discover why God did not want Israel to have the kings they requested of Samuel, when they told that great leader they did not want God to be their king? _____

2. What do we learn about the character of God from the way He related to the wicked kings in the Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel and Judah? _____

3. What happened to the Northern Kingdom after it was conquered and taken into captivity by the Assyrians? What happened to the Southern Kingdom after it was conquered and taken captive by the Babylonians? _____

4. Define the role and character of a true prophet. _____

5. Describe four or five ways Elijah demonstrated the role and character of a true prophet, when he challenged the false prophets of Ahab and Jezebel on Mount Carmel and facilitated a revival of the people of God (1 Kings 18). _____

6. How can we explain the burnout of Elijah in the very next chapter of Kings, when he sat under a juniper tree and asked God to take his life? _____

7. Describe the importance of the relationship between Elijah and Elisha. What did Elijah do that Joshua and the judges of Israel did not do? (Relate that to 2 Timothy 2:2 and the relationship between Paul and Timothy, and the way that Jesus apprenticed the apostles.) _____
