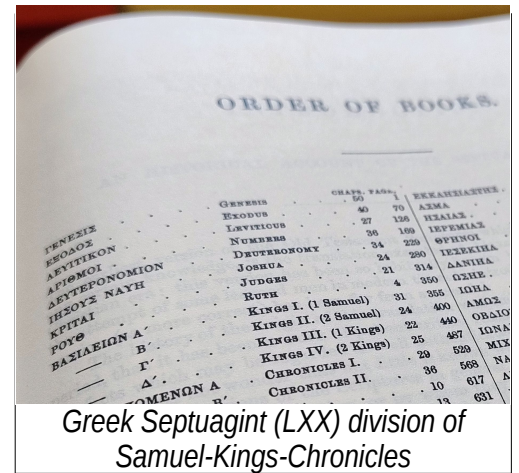


## 1. AUTHOR

**Q.** What do you know about *Kings*?

**A.** The author is unknown. Covering some 400 years of history, *Kings* has always been a fundamental part of the 'Former Prophets' in the Hebrew Bible (MT, DSS, LXX). It is referred to, alluded to, or quoted extensively by the NT, e.g. the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17; Luke 4:25-26), Naaman (2 Kings 5; Luke 4:27), the queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10; Luke 11:31), Elijah and rain (1 Kings 18; James 5:17), Jezebel (1 Kings 18ff; Revelation 2:20-23).



Greek Septuagint (LXX) division of Samuel-Kings-Chronicles

## 2. ONE KEY THEME –

### ***'KINGS, PROPHETS & THE WORD OF THE LORD'***

The '*word of the LORD*' theme is spread throughout<sup>1</sup> the whole of Kings (48 times) after Solomon starts to reign. The '*word of the LORD*' is almost personified in its own right. It starts by removing Abiathar, Eli's descendant, from the priesthood (1 Kings 2:27). It finishes by destroying the straggling, southern, kingdom of Judah (2 Kings 24:2).

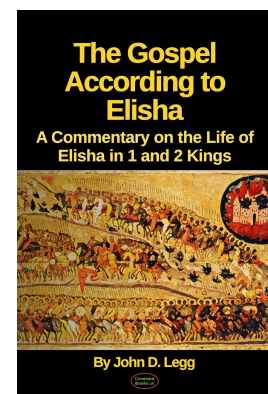
## 3. SHAPE & TEXTUAL STRUCTURE OF KINGS?

Samuel, Kings and Chronicles are mainly about the kings and prophets of Israel and Judah, so it is helpful to put this era into biblical context, especially to see where it is all heading – towards the great King and Prophet, Jesus.

A	EVENTS	DETAIL	CHRONOLOGICAL BOOK ORDER	WESTERN BIBLE BOOK ORDER
1400 – 1050 BC	Judges	Othniel to Kings	Judges, Ruth	Judges, Ruth
1050 – 1010 BC	Kings	Saul	Samuel	1 Samuel
1010 – 970 BC		David		2 Samuel
970 – 930 BC		Solomon	Kings <sup>2</sup>	1 Kings <sup>2</sup>
930 – 722bc		Divided kingdom		2 Kings <sup>2</sup>
722 – 586 BC		Judah only		
586 BC –	Exile(s)		Earlier prophets, Esther, ...	Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Esther, ...
537 BC? –	Return		Ezra, Nehemiah, Later prophets	Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah
c. 5 BC	The Kingdom of God	King/Prophet Jesus	Gospels, ...	Matthew, Luke, ...

<sup>1</sup> The exact phrase is in: 1 Kings 2:27;6:11;12:24;13:1;13:2;13:5;13:9;13:17;13:18;13:20;13:26;13:32;14:18;15:29;16:1;16:7;16:12;16:34;17:2;17:5;17:8;17:16;17:24;18:1;18:31;19:9;20:35;21:17;21:28;22:5;22:19;22:38;2 Kings 1:17;3:12;4:44;7:1;7:16;9:26;9:36;10:10;10:17;14:25;15:12;20:4;20:16;20:19;23:16;24:2.  
<sup>2</sup> Whilst Kings is divided into two books in the traditional western biblical order, it is in reality a single book, that only became split into multiple scrolls when the compact Hebrew was translated into the more expansive Greek for the Septuagint (Lxx) from the 3rd century onwards. See photo of Septuagint above.

B		
TEXTUAL STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK OF KINGS ITSELF		
CHAPTER	DALE RALPH DAVIS <sup>3</sup>	FOCUS
1 Kings 1-11	The Golden Age	Solomon
1 Kings 12-16	The Torn Kingdom	The divided kingdom
1 Kings 17-2 Kings 1		Elijah prosecutes the northern kingdom
2 Kings 2-13		Elisha blesses even the Gentiles →
2 Kings 14-17		The divided kingdom up to the Assyrian deportations (c.722 BC)
2 Kings 18-25	The Last Days	The southern kingdom up to the Babylonian exile (586 BC)



#### 4. KEY VERSE(S)

A pair of positive then negative key texts summarise what happens in Kings:

*1 Kings 6:11-13* Now the word of the LORD came to Solomon, <sup>12</sup> “Concerning this house [temple] that you are building, if you will walk in my statutes and obey my rules and keep all my commandments and walk in them, then I will establish my word with you, which I spoke to David your father. <sup>13</sup> And I will dwell among the children of Israel and will not forsake my people Israel.” *ESV*

*2 Kings 24:2* And the LORD sent against [Jehoiakim] bands of the Chaldeans and bands of the Syrians and bands of the Moabites and bands of the Ammonites, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by his servants the prophets. *ESV*

#### 5. KEY GROUPS OF PEOPLE

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Solomon as the Son of David</li> <li>2. Prophets speaking the word of the Lord</li> <li>3. Good kings (e.g. Solomon? Hezekiah)</li> <li>4. Bad kings (e.g. Ahab with Jezebel)</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Israel and Judah (N and S)</li> <li>6. Babylonians &amp; Assyrian empires</li> <li>7. Other Gentile nations</li> <li>8. The Lord himself as King of kings</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

#### 6. GREAT EVENTS

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Death of David (1 Kings 2)</li> <li>2. Building of the first temple (6)</li> <li>3. Solomon corrupted by his wives</li> <li>4. Division of the kingdom (12)</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Prophets of Baal on Mt Carmel (18)</li> <li>6. Exile and re-settlement of Israel</li> <li>7. Temple destroyed (2 Kings 25:9)</li> <li>8. Babylonian exile of Judah (25)</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

#### 7. THEMES

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The word of the LORD (via prophets)</li> <li>2. Good kings</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Bad kings</li> <li>4. Idolatry</li> </ol> |
|---|---|

<sup>3</sup> Dale Ralph Davis, Commentaries on 1 Kings and 2 Kings, *The Wisdom and the Folly*, CF, 2002; *The Power and the Fury*, CF, 2005

## 8. JESUS IN KINGS

Jesus is the ultimate king, prophet and *word of the LORD* in human form.

The alternation between (usually) good kings of the southern kingdom and (always) bad kings of the northern kingdom constantly creates a tension that is only resolved when the true King comes (Matthew 1:1; 27:11).

King Solomon, with all his glory, wisdom and temple, is a prominent 'type' of King Jesus. However, his fall into sin in 1 Kings 11 is in stark contrast with Jesus' sinless record.

Solomon's temple typifies both Christ (John 2:19-21) and his people (**1 Peter 2:5**).

Elijah typifies Jesus in his prophetic rôle, but specifically John the baptist (Matthew 17:12-13); Elijah purges the people of idolatry (1 Kings 18), John from Pharisaism (Matthew 3:7).

None of Elisha's sins is recorded in Kings. He is a remarkable type of Christ in many ways<sup>4</sup>:

	<b>ELISHA</b>	<b>JESUS</b>
<b>Anointed by Elijah</b>	Anointed by Elijah (1 Kings 19:16)	Anointed by 'Elijah' (Matthew 3:11-16; 17:10-12; Acts 10:38)
<b>Miraculous Provision</b>	Feeds a widow and then 100 prophets ( <b>2 Kings 4:1-7; 4:42-44</b> )	Feeds 50 times as many, starting with less food, in the feeding of the 5,000 (Matthew 14:13-21; 15:32-39), and Gentiles too.
<b>Raising the Dead</b>	Raises just the Shunammite's son (2 Kings 4:32-37)	Raises more people: Jairus' daughter, the widow's son, and Lazarus (Mark 5:21-43; Luke 7:11-17; John 11:1-44)
<b>Healing the Sick</b>	Heals only Naaman of leprosy (2 Kings 5:1-14)	Heals lepers and many others (Mark 1:40-45; Luke 17:11-19)
<b>Providing for the Needy</b>	Purifies just a pot of stew (2 Kings 4:38-41)	Feeds many hungry people (Matthew 14:13-21; 15:32-39)
<b>Multiplication of Resources</b>	Multiplies a widow's oil to pay off her debts (2 Kings 4:1-7)	Turns water into wine, giving the best (John 2:1-11)
<b>Power over Water</b>	Makes an axe head float on water (2 Kings 6:1-7)	Calms a storm and walks on water (Mark 4:35-41; Matthew 14:22-33)
<b>Knows people's thoughts</b>	Discerns the plans of the Aramean king and Gehazi's deceit (2 Kings 6:8-12; 5:20-27)	Perceives the thoughts and intentions of many others (e.g. Mark 2:8; John 2:24-25)
<b>Opening Blind Eyes</b>	Opens the spiritual eyes of his servant; both blinds and restores the sight of Arameans (2 Kings 6:15-20)	Heals physical blindness and brings spiritual understanding (John 9; Mark 10:46-52)
<b>Intercession and Protection</b>	Intercedes for Israel and protects them from enemies (2 Kings 6:18-23)	Intercedes for all his followers (John 17)

<sup>4</sup> Table from *Biblical Types and Images*, D.W. Legg, draft, due to be published in 2025, [Covenant Books UK](http://CovenantBooksUK.com).

## 9. KINGS IN PRACTICE

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read 1 Kings 13:1-32.

Q1. What key phrase brackets the story in verses 1 and 32?

Q2. How many times does the phrase occur in the account?

Q3. What, then, is the story really about?

Q4. What do we learn from our own reaction to the story (perhaps especially to 13:26)?

**2 Kings 23:15-16** Moreover, the altar at Bethel, the high place erected by Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, that altar with the high place he pulled down and burned, reducing it to dust. He also burned the Asherah [poles]. <sup>16</sup> And as Josiah turned, he saw the tombs there on the mount. And he sent and took the bones out of the tombs and burned them on the altar and defiled it, according to the word of the LORD that the man of God proclaimed, who had predicted these things. *ESV*

Q5. What key lesson to we learn about *the word of the LORD*?

## 10. HOMEWORK

Read and enjoy Kings; be thankful for King Jesus, the word of the LORD incarnate.

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