

## **Robert Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Lecture 10B**

### **1 Samuel, Covenant Kingship, 1 & 2 Kings**

#### **Anti-Monarchy Passages – Renewing the Kingdom**

This next slide summarizes the alleged anti-monarchy division of those five passages: early source, 9:1-10:16 and 11:1-15; and late source, chapters 8, 10, and 12. Notice the asterisk in 11:1-15 and 10:17-21. 1 Samuel 11:1-15 is the story of Saul fighting the Ammonites and the aftermath of that—going to Gilgal to renew the kingdom and to make Saul king. It's typical of mainstream biblical scholars to say that's one story or tradition about how kingship arose in Israel, and that's combined then with 1 Samuel 10:17-27 when he is chosen by lot. Those two conflicting accounts then are said to be harmonized by a redactional insertion in 11:14 where Samuel says, "Let's go to Gilgal and renew the kingdom." "Renew the kingdom" is a way to harmonize instead of "establish the kingdom." Just a few comments: there's more on that in your handout, but I think I'm not going to go into that in depth because of time, so we can move on to some other things. But let's go back to the handout. I do want to spend some time on chapters 12, 14 and 15.

#### **1 Samuel 12:1-5 – Kingship and the Structure of Theocracy**

We're on page 4 of your handout, so let's look at 1 Samuel 11:14 to 12:25. Let's look at 12:1-25 first. 1 Samuel 12 describes Samuel's challenge to Israel to renew her allegiance to Yahweh on the occasion of the introduction of kingship into the structure of the theocracy. It seems to me that's what goes on in 1 Samuel 12. The chapter divides into the subsections that are listed here. First, verses 1-5. Let's read these verses and then look at the comment. In verses 1-5, Samuel says to all of Israel, "I have listened to everything you said to me and have set a king over you. Now you have a king as your leader. As for me, I am old and gray, and my sons are here with you. I have been your leader from my youth until this day. Here I stand. Testify against me in the presence of the LORD and his anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I cheated? Whom have I oppressed? From whose hand have I accepted a bribe to

make me shut my eyes? If I have done any of these things, I will make it right.’ ‘You have not cheated or oppressed us,’ they replied. ‘You have not taken anything from anyone’s hand.’ Samuel said to them, ‘The LORD is witness against you, and also his anointed is witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand.’ ‘He is witness,’ they said.”

Now in those verses I think what Samuel is doing is securing vindication of his own covenant faithfulness during the previous conduct of his office as he presented the people with the one who was to assume the responsibility of kingship. Samuel has been the religious and civil leader of the nation. He was the judge, but notice what he says he hasn’t done, and what he says he hasn’t taken. That certainly reflected back to chapter 8, where the “king like the nations round about” is described as someone who takes. Samuel is saying, “I was not that kind of a leader.”

#### 1 Samuel 12:6-12 – Righteous Acts of Yahweh

In 1 Samuel 12:6-12, Samuel uses a resume of the righteous acts of Yahweh in the events of the Exodus and the period of the judges in order to judicially establish Israel’s apostasy in requesting a king. In other words, what he does is to summarize the mighty acts of the Lord on Israel’s behalf to show that Israel had no grounds for asking for a king. That’s verses 6-12: “Then Samuel said to the people, ‘It is the LORD who appointed Moses and Aaron and brought your forefathers up out of Egypt. Now then, stand here, because I am going to confront you with evidence before the LORD as to all the righteous acts performed by the LORD for you and your fathers. After Jacob entered Egypt, they cried to the LORD for help, and the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, who brought your forefathers out of Egypt and settled them in this place. But they forgot the LORD their God; so he sold them into the hand of Sisera, the commander of the army of Hazor, and into the hands of the Philistines and the king of Moab, who fought against them. They cried out to the LORD and said, “We have sinned; we have forsaken the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashtoreths. But now deliver us from the hands of our enemies, and we will serve you.”’”

What did the Lord do? He sent deliverers, and he mentions some of the judges, bringing this up to date to the time of Samuel himself, whom the Lord had sent as a deliverer. “Then the LORD sent Jerub-Baal, Barak, Jephthah and Samuel, and he delivered you from the hands of your enemies on every side, so that you lived securely. But when you saw that Nahash king of the Ammonites was moving against you, you said to me, “No, we want a king to rule over us”—even though the LORD your God was your king.” So you see what he is doing—he is showing the covenant faithfulness of the Lord to his people through previous generations, and showing how they should have found their security in following after the Lord and being faithful to him, but they were not satisfied with that. So he establishes their apostasy in requesting a king.

#### 1 Samuel 12:13 – Time of Kingship Has Arrived

Verse 13 stands by itself. Samuel indicates that in spite of that apostasy, the Lord chose to use kingship as an instrument of his rule over his people. The time of kingship has arrived in God’s sovereign purpose. So verse 13 says, here is the king you have chosen, the one you asked for: “See, Yahweh has set a king over you.” It was the Lord’s purpose to give them a king.

#### 1 Samuel 12:14-15 – Covenant Conditional

I want to spend some time on 1 Samuel 12:14-15. Let me read what I have here in your handout. I’ll read verses 14 and 15 in the NIV first. The NIV says, “If you fear the LORD and serve and obey him and do not rebel against his commands, and if both you and the king who reigns over you follow the LORD your God—good! But if you do not obey the LORD, and if you rebel against his commands, his hand will be against you, as it was against your fathers.” I think what you have here is a restatement of what you might call the covenant conditional: if you do certain things—fear the Lord, obey him, don’t rebel against his command. A restatement of that covenant conditional on the occasion of integrating kingship into the theocracy then takes on an added dimension,

you might say.

There's long been a consensus of interpreters that verse 14 has only a protasis grammatical subordinate clause expressing a condition, "if." It only has a protasis and lacks an apodosis. The translation normally adopted is similar to the RSV and NIV. Now if you look on the screen, I think the King James translates this correctly. It translates it with the apodosis. Right in the middle of the verse, you get this "then" marking the apodosis. You see, the King James Version says, "If you fear the Lord and serve and obey him do not rebel against his commands, *then* shall both you and the king who reigneth over you continue with power in the Lord your God." But if you look at the NIV and the RSV, the RSV says, "If you fear the Lord and obey him and don't rebel against him, and if both you and the king who reigns over you continue following the Lord your God," it supplies "it will be well." That's not in the Hebrew text; it adds it. In other words, it only has that protasis; it's only that "if" that goes all the way down through the whole verse, and there is no apodosis, "then." The apodosis is provided by "it will be well" in the RSV. That's basically what the NIV does, "If you fear the LORD and serve and obey him and do not rebel against his commands, and if both you and the king who reigns over you follow the LORD your God—[NIV says] good!" "Good" is not in the Hebrew text; that's provided.

Now get back to your handout on top of page 5 where I have the RSV. But notice the comments on the second paragraph on page 5: the last phrase "it will be well" in the RSV or "good" in the NIV. Those do not occur in the Masoretic text, and must be added to complete the sentence. H. P. Smith has pointed that out, and this is the logic for translating verses this way in spite of it's not being worded that way in the Hebrew text. Smith points out, "If we begin the apodosis with *weki atem* it is normally translated 'then' in the middle of verse, like the King James Version does"—it's grammatically the correct thing to do, and that's the way the Hebrew reads. But Smith feels that to translate it that way produces a redundancy because "It makes them identical propositions: 'If you fear Yahweh, and obey him, and do not rebel against his commands, then you will follow Yahweh.'" You see, he's saying that makes no sense; it's a redundancy. So a number of

translations and many commentators have traditionally just continued that conditional all the way through the verse, and supplied an apodosis which isn't in the original text.

Now it seems to me that if you compare 1 Samuel 12:14 with verse 15, which is really the same statement but in negative terms rather than positive terms, it's clear that structurally the verse divides in the middle and there is a protasis and an apodosis. Verse 15 reads in the NIV, "But if you do not obey the Lord, if you rebel against his commands, his hand will be against you as it was against your fathers." It should read, "*then* his hand will be against you" just like it is in 14. The King James has the "then": "if you will not obey, then." The RSV has, "if you will not hearken, then." The NIV says, "if you do not obey"—it doesn't put the "then" in there, but it's implied—"his hand will be against you." So it seems to me that when you look at verse 15, its structure is the same as verse 14.

Both verses should be translated the same way. Well now, what difference does that make? What's the significance of what's going on? Go to Smith's objection to translating verse 14 the way King James does with the "then" apodosis in the middle of the verse. Smith's objection turns on his understanding of the expression, "Then you will follow Yahweh"—that last line in the verse: "Then shall both you and the king who reigneth over you continue following the Lord your God." He says that's a redundancy, saying the same thing the first part of the verse does.

However, that expression occurs in several other places in the Old Testament: 2 Samuel 2:10, 15:13; 1 Kings 12:20 and 16:21. I want to look at that, because in all of those places you will see that expression used to indicate that a segment of the people of Israel have chosen to follow a particular king in a situation where there was another possible alternative. Look at 2 Samuel 2:10. "Ish-Bosheth son of Saul was forty years old when he became king over Israel, and he reigned two years. The house of Judah, however, followed David." In Hebrew, that is the expression *ahar David*: "The house of Judah was after David." In other words, what you have is the decision of to follow David, while Ish-Bosheth remained over the remainder of the nation. There was an alternative; there were divided loyalties between Ish-Bosheth and David. And Judah was "after

David.”

Let’s look at 1 Kings 12:20: “When all the Israelites heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. Only the tribe of Judah remained *after* the house of David.” The NIV says “loyal to the house of David.” This is the time of the division of the kingdom, and Jeroboam is reigning in the north; only Judah is following David, only Judah is after David. Judah is called the “house of David” at the time of the division of the kingdom.

Look at 1 Kings 16:21: “Then the people of Israel were split into two factions; half supported Tibni son of Ginath for king, and the other half supported Omri.” Now, that word “supported” is actually “after,” so half were “after Tibni son of Ginath” and the other half were “after Omri.” So there were divided loyalties between Tibni and Omri after the death of Zimri.

2 Samuel 15:13 is about the rebellion of Absalom. I won’t look at that as we are pressed for time, but the men of Israel chose to give allegiance to Absalom and recognize him as king instead of David; they were *after* Absalom. That same expression is used in 1 Samuel 12:14 in the middle of the verse.

#### Possibility of Divided Loyalties [1 Samuel 12:14] – Covenant Conditional Expressing Loyalty to Yahweh

Using this understanding of the phrase, then one can say that here at Gilgal, Israel entered a new era in which the old covenant conditional took on a new dimension. What do I mean by that? With the institution of kingship, the potential is created for the people to have divided loyalties between Yahweh and the human king. Because of this, Samuel challenged the people to renew their determination to obey Yahweh and not to rebel against his commands. That’s what the apodosis is addressing—to demonstrate that they continue to recognize Yahweh as their sovereign. It is then not necessary to conclude that the expression “If you fear Yahweh, then you will follow Yahweh” is a redundancy or an identical proposition. Rather, this is the expression of the basic covenant conditional in terms of the new era Israel was entering. If Israel fears Yahweh, obeys him, and doesn’t

rebel against him, what will she do? She will show that she continues to recognize Yahweh as her sovereign even though human kingship has been introduced into the structure of the theocracy. Israel must not replace her loyalty to Yahweh with loyalty to her new ruler. That's the issue being addressed and that's the issue that these translations, with the exception of the King James, obscure.

I was part of the committee that worked on the New Living Translation. I put the wording in the New Living there: "Now if you fear and worship the Lord, and listen to his voice, and if you do not rebel against the Lord's commands, THEN both you and your king will show you recognize the Lord as your God." That anticipates the potentiality of divided loyalty. It seems to me that that's the issue.

#### 1 Samuel 12:16-21

All right, 1 Samuel 12:16-21: "A sign given from heaven and Samuel's request to demonstrate the seriousness of Israel's apostasy in asking for a king to replace Yahweh." Samuel says in verse 16, "'See this great thing the Lord is about to do before your eyes! Is it not wheat harvest now? I will call upon the LORD to send thunder and rain. And you will realize what an evil thing you did in the eyes of the LORD when you asked for a king.'" Then the Lord sent the thunder and the rain, and the people asked for Samuel to intercede for them and he does.

So it was a serious sin to ask for a king in place of Yahweh, for it displayed contempt for previous deliverances and the lack of confidence in Yahweh's covenant rule.

#### 1 Samuel 12:23-25 – Samuel's Role in the New Order

In 1 Samuel 12:23-25 over on page 7, Samuel describes his own continuing function in the new order. Notice when he says in verse 23, "As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right." Chapter 12 is often called "Samuel's farewell address." In fact, the NIV uses that heading. This is not a farewell address—Samuel isn't going

anywhere very soon. He's no longer going to be their civil leader but he's going to pray for the people and he's going to instruct them; he's going to perform the role of prophet. He says, "I will teach you the way that is good and right." What's the way that is good and right? It's the way of the covenant. And he does that, of course, as he calls Saul to account and eventually rejects Saul.

So Samuel describes his own continuing function in the new order, and concludes his remarks with a repetition of Israel's central covenantal obligations in verse 24, reinforced by the threat of covenant curse on Israel should they apostatize. Verse 24 pretty much sums up the essence of Israel's covenant obligation. It's a great verse. Notice what it says: "But be sure to fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart." It's that fundamental covenantal obligation. What motivates that? "Consider what great things he's done for you." There's that historical prologue again, recalling the beneficent acts of the great king on the behalf of his people. The stipulations follow in verse 25: "If you persist in doing evil, both you and your king will be destroyed." This is the threat of the covenant curse.

### 1 Samuel 8-12 Summary – Renewed Allegiance to Yahweh at Saul's Inauguration

Now I'm going to stop with that. What follows on page 7 is a rather detailed discussion of 11:14-15. I'm going to skip over that, but I think that what you have in this section from 8-12 is Israel's sin in requesting a king, the Lord's determination that the time for kingship has arrived, his instruction to Samuel to appoint that king, and then the inauguration of Saul's reign in the context of a renewal of allegiance to the Lord in the assembly of all Israel. Israel renews their allegiance to the Lord on the occasion of the inauguration of Saul.

If you look at 1 Samuel 11:14-15, I made a couple of brief comments there. 11:14-15 summarize all that goes on in chapter 12. You read in 11:14-15 that after Samuel's victory over the Ammonites, he says to the people, "'Come, let us go to Gilgal and there'"—NIV says, "'reaffirm your kingship.'" I think it's a bad translation. It should say "renew the kingdom." It doesn't mean "reaffirm," it means "renew." The question is,



renew whose kingdom? And I think in context it is the kingdom of Yahweh. This is the renewal of allegiance to Yahweh: “‘Let us go to Gilgal and renew the kingdom.’ So all the people went to Gilgal,” and NIV says, “to confirm Saul as king in the presence of the Lord.” It doesn’t say “confirm Saul’s kingdom”; it says, “They made Saul king.” They had already chosen Saul to be king, so they went to Gilgal to renew the kingdom, Yahweh’s kingdom, and there they made Saul king. It’s not a renewal of Saul’s’ kingdom in verse 14, because Saul had not yet been inaugurated as king; this is the inauguration of his reign. “So they went to Gilgal and made Saul king in the presence of the Lord. There they sacrificed fellowship offerings before the Lord and Saul and all the Israelites held a great celebration.”

Now there are two rather crucial translation issues I’ve just touched on. There’s more detail in the handout—I’m not going to hold you accountable for that. If you want to read through that in the handout, you will see some more of the details on that. But they went to Gilgal to renew the kingdom and to make Saul king. They sacrificed fellowship offerings for the Lord. Saul and all the Israelites held a great celebration and the details of that are described in detail.

## 6. Samuel Rejects Saul, 1 Samuel 13 and 15

All right, if you go back to your outline, number 6. is “Samuel rejects Saul, 1 Samuel 13 and 15.” In chapter 13, the Philistines again assembled to fight Israel and you read in verse 7, “Saul remained at Gilgal and all his troops with him were quaking with fear. He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul’s men began to scatter.” Now that reference to seven days’ time set by Samuel is a reference back to 1 Samuel 10:8. At the time Samuel had anointed Saul, he told him: “Go down ahead of me to Gilgal. I will surely come down to you to sacrifice burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, but you must wait seven days until I come to you and tell you what you are to do.” So this is the situation. Saul goes to Gilgal. He’s waited there seven days and Samuel still hasn’t come. So in verse 9 Saul says, “Bring me the burnt offering and fellowship offering.” Saul offered up the burnt offering, and just as he

finished making the offering, Samuel arrives. So he didn't wait long enough; it was still on that seventh day. "'What have you done?' asked Samuel. Saul replied, 'When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time...I thought, "Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the Lord's favor." So I felt compelled to offer the offering.'" Samuel's response in 1 Samuel 13:13 is directed towards him: "You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom for all time. But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people." So because Saul did not obey the word of the prophet Samuel as he had been instructed, the Lord tells him that he will not have an enduring dynasty. At this point he's not going to be removed from his office as king, but he will not have an enduring dynasty.

Chapter 15 is another chapter where Saul receives an instruction from the Lord through Samuel. You read in the first verse, "Samuel said to Saul, 'I am the one the Lord sent to anoint you king over his people Israel; so listen to that message from the Lord. This is what the Lord Almighty says.'" So here is a word of the Lord. "'I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up out of Egypt.'" Remember, we looked at that. They were on their way to Sinai, the Amalekites attacked, and the Lord said to Joshua, "Write this down." Now he instructs Saul, "Attack the Amalekites; totally destroy everything that belongs to them, do not spare them, put to death men, women and children and sheep, cattle and pigs." This is *herem*, just like you have in the book of Joshua. Well, Saul attacks the Amalekites, but you read in verse 8 that he took Agag alive, and 1 Samuel 15:9 spared Agag and the best of the sheep and the cattle and the fat pigs and everything that was good. And the Lord comes and tells Samuel, "I am grieved that I have made Saul king, because he's turned away from me and has not carried out my instruction." Literally, "He has not obeyed my words." "Has turned away from me" is the same expression in 11:14, meaning that he is not "after the Lord."

So the Lord sends Samuel to confront Saul, and when Samuel reaches him, notice

what Saul says in verse 13: “Saul said, ‘The Lord bless you! I have carried out the Lord’s instructions.’” Samuel wasn’t taken in by that and asks: “What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears, what is this lowing of cattle?” Then Saul justifies it, saying, “The soldiers brought them [he tries to shift responsibility]; they spared the best of the sheep and the cattle to sacrifice to the Lord”—notice the pronoun—“your God.” He doesn’t say, “my God.” “But we totally destroyed the rest.” Samuel does not accept that; verse 19, “‘Why did you not obey the Lord? Why did you pounce on the plunder and do evil in the eyes of the Lord?’ ‘But I did obey the Lord,’ Saul said.” He tries to justify himself.

Here’s the difference between Saul and David. David did some bad things, but every time he was confronted by a prophet, he made no excuses, did not try to shift the blame, accepted responsibility and repented. Saul doesn’t do that. And Saul says in 1 Samuel 15:20, “‘I did obey the Lord. I went on the mission the Lord assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king. The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of that was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice to the Lord your God at Gilgal’”—notice, “your God” again.

It’s as if going through these rituals somehow justifies this completely. Samuel’s reply is a classic statement on the relationship of sacrifice to obedience. He says in 1 Samuel 15:22, “Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king.” That goes back to the covenant conditional of 12:14 to obey and not rebel. Saul did rebel, and then tried to justify it. Because of that, the Lord says, “I have rejected you as king.”

In the very next chapter, 1 Samuel 16, Samuel is commissioned to anoint Saul’s replacement, which is David. The rest of 1 Samuel describes the downward spiral of Saul and the rise of David. So at the end of the book, Saul dies, taking his own life in a battle against the Philistines. Then in 2 Samuel David assumes the throne.

## VII. The Divided Kingdom

### A. 1 and 2 Kings

### B. 1 and 2 Chronicles

I'm going to stop the discussion of Samuel with those comments. I want to go on to Roman numeral VII. on your outline, "The divided kingdom." A. is "1 and 2 Kings" and B. is "1 and 2 Chronicles." I wanted to close our discussions by saying a few things about Kings and prophets under this heading of the divided kingdom. David, of course, reigns all the way through 2 Samuel. In 1 Kings 1 and 2 you get the transition to the reign of Solomon. Then you have the reign of Solomon through 1 Kings 11, but in 1 Kings 12 you get the transition to the divided kingdom. Then you have Rehoboam in the south and Jeroboam in the north. Rehoboam is in the line of David, and Jeroboam is not of the line of David. So that's the divided kingdom here, split in 931 B.C.

#### 1. a. Name and Scope of the Book [1 & 2 Kings]

Under "1 and 2 Kings," a. is "Name and scope of the book." Remember that when we talked about the name of Samuel, I mentioned that it was originally one book that was subsequently divided, ending with the death of Saul. Tradition tells us that the book of Kings was originally one book also. The Septuagint split both Samuel and Kings into two books and called them "Of the Kingdoms" 1, 2, 3 and 4. The Vulgate modified that to Kings 1, 2, 3 and 4. I mentioned that before under the discussion of Samuel. Sometimes commentaries will be Kings 1, 2, 3, and 4. So you should be aware of that. We know the books as 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Samuel. 1 and 2 Kings would be Kings 3 and 4 in the Latin Vulgate tradition. But as I mentioned a minute ago, the book begins with the transition from the rule of David to Solomon, and ends with the accounts of the last Kings of Judah—Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, both of whom were taken captive in the Babylonian exile. Kings begins with the last year of the reign of David. Then it shows how Israel divided at the end of Solomon's reign and then how the Northern Kingdom eventually fell to Assyria and the Southern Kingdom was overcome by the Babylonians. So the book covers a period of about 400 years, from about 970 B.C. to 586 B.C. That's

approximately 400 years.

As far as dates, 931 B.C. is an important date—anybody know what that is? That's the division of the kingdom, with the transition to the divided kingdom after the reign of Solomon in 931 B.C. 721 and 586 are the other two important dates. 721 B.C. is the fall of the Northern kingdom to the Assyrians, and 586 B.C. is the fall of the Southern Kingdom, Judah, to the Babylonians. That gives you a broad chronological structure.

The author of Kings is unknown. It appears to be someone who was a contemporary of Jeremiah who had access to records of the reigns of the earlier kings. But we don't know who the writer is.

## 2. The Purpose of Kings

Number 2. on your outline is "The purpose of Kings." Look at your citations on page 56. There's a paragraph on 1 and 2 Kings from Gleason Archer, who says, "The theme of these two books was to demonstrate on the basis of Israel's history that the welfare of the nation ultimately depended upon the sincerity of its faithfulness to the covenant with Jehovah, and that the success of any ruler was to be measured by the degree of his adherence to the Mosaic constitution and his maintenance of a pure and God-honoring testimony before the people. The purpose of this was to set forth those events which were important from the standpoint of God and his program of redemption. The author had no intention of glorifying Israel's heroes around nationalistic motives. Hence he omitted even those passing achievements which were to have great importance in the eyes of secular historians. His prime concern was to show how each successive ruler dealt with God and his covenant responsibility."

Now remember I said that the overall theme of 1 and 2 Samuel is covenant kingship? That theme flows on to 1 and 2 Kings. These kings were assessed on the basis of their covenant faithfulness. It's that perspective that really runs from Joshua through Judges, Samuel and Kings and it's that Deuteronomic perspective.

Because of the importance of that covenantal perspective, the role of the prophets in relation to various kings seems to have a great deal of emphasis. The kings who were

treated most thoroughly are those kings in whose history the prophets had an important function. That's true whether the relationship is hostile or more favorable. For example, in Jeroboam I's reign, Ahijah the prophet confronts him. With Ahab, the king who led the Northern Kingdom astray, remember who the prophet was? Elijah. There are a number of chapters given to the reign of Ahab because of the prominence of Elijah. With a more favorable relationship to a king, you think of Hezekiah where Isaiah had strong influence in his life and reign. Remember that the relationship between kings and prophets was really established by Samuel. Samuel was a prophet, and he was God's instrument in establishing kingship. We looked at that text where Samuel said, "I am going to teach you to do the right way." That's what prophets did for the kings as well as for the people. In Israel, the king was always accountable to the prophet.

#### Ahab & Elijah

So as a result, in 1 and 2 Kings you have a description of this period of time in which the Kings are judged by the measure of their faithfulness to their covenant obligation. I mentioned at the beginning of this course that you see this perspective in someone like Omri and his son Ahab. Omri was a very significant king. The Assyrian annals called Israel "the land of Omri" centuries after he founded it. He was the one that founded Samaria as the capital of the Northern Kingdom. He had a dynasty that went down several generations. He's treated in 1 Kings 16:23-28. He is given only six verses. Very little is said of him. But his son Ahab receives a great deal of attention, because Ahab is the one who led Israel astray to worship Baal and Ashtoreth rather than following the Lord. It's during Ahab's reign that Elijah is raised up as a prophet, and you have all those stories of interaction between Elijah and Ahab.

#### Hezekiah and Josiah

But if you look at the assessment of the kings, you will find unqualified approval only of two kings, both of Judah, and that's Hezekiah and Josiah. Hezekiah is in 2 Kings 18-20 and Josiah is in 2 Kings 22-23. There is qualified approval of a number, where they

walked in the way of their father David, but—and then you get the qualification—but they didn't remove the high places, or something of that sort. The strongest disapproval is of Ahab in the north and Manasseh in the south. So you get that kind of assessment of the kings with the highest degree of unfaithfulness in Ahab and Manasseh and the highest degree of faithfulness in Hezekiah and Josiah.

### Fall of the Kingdoms

I think the end result of the book of Kings is to show God's justice in bringing about the fall of both the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms. You find that described quite well in 2 Kings 17. You read in 2 Kings 17:5, "The king of Assyria invaded the entire land, marched against Samaria and laid siege to it for three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the Israelites to Assyria. [Now notice what follows, which gives an explanation of why this happened.] He settled them in Halah, in Gozan on the Habor River and in the towns of the Medes. All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. They worshiped other gods and followed the practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before them." In verse 9, the Israelites did things against the Lord their God that was not right. Verse 10, they set up sacred stones and Ashtoreth poles. Verse 12, they worshiped idols, and the Lord said they shouldn't have done that. Verse 13, the Lord warned Israel and Judah through all its prophets and seers, "Turn from your evil ways, observe my commands." Verse 14, but they refused to listen and were as stiff-necked as their fathers had been and would not trust in the Lord their God.

### Exile

2 Kings 17:15 sums it up: why the exile? "They rejected his decrees and the covenant he made with their fathers and the warnings he had given them. They followed worthless idols and made themselves worthless. They imitated the nations around them." That's the essence. That's the reason for the exile. So what happened? You read in

verse 16, “So the Lord was angry with Israel and removed them from his presence.” See, that’s the exile of the Northern Kingdom and the fall of Samaria; but what about Judah?

Judah doesn’t join the exile until sometime later under the Babylonians when power in Mesopotamia had switched from the Assyrians to the Babylonians, but it’s the very same issue. In chapter 17 Judah goes on notice. It says that only Judah was left and even Judah did not keep the commands of the Lord their God. They followed basically the same practices that Israel had introduced. Therefore the Lord rejected all the people of Israel. He afflicted them and gave them into the hands of plunderers and thrust them from his presence.

So that is the explanation of why Israel went into captivity. As far as the structure of the book, I think this will help give you some handle on the content of the book. When you get to the divided kingdom period, it’s the synchronous reigns of the kingdom of the north and the south. It’s kind of hard to structure, but this will give you a broad structure. The first 11 chapters of 1 Kings are Solomon and the united kingdom under him, and then in 1 King 12 you have the divided kingdom with Rehoboam in the south and Jeroboam in the north in 931 B.C. If you go from 1 Kings 12 to 2 Kings 17, the chapter we just looked at, that’s the divided kingdom until the fall of Samaria in 721 B.C. Then what follows in 2 Kings 18-25 is the continuation of Judah alone after Israel’s fall until the fall of Judah at the end of the book. So that gives you a general structure of the content of 1 and 2 Kings.

1 & 2 Chronicles: Its Prospective of the Future, Post-Exile and Focus on David’s Line, temple and Restored Community

Let’s go on to 1 and 2 Chronicles. Let me make just a few comments here. I think the question that often arises is, what’s the difference between 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles? Why do you have these two books that have a fair amount of overlap? I think the basic difference is that Kings is retrospective; it’s addressed to the needs of the community in exile. It explains to those people the reason for their condition—the reason why they are in exile. Chronicles has a different prospective. Chronicles addresses the



needs of the restored community that has come back from exile. What it emphasizes is those things that would provide a basis for those who have returned from exile to begin the process of reconstruction on a firm basis after return from the Babylonian exile.

Now, with that general idea in mind, what are the emphases of Chronicles that provide this basis for those returning from exile to build for the future? The first major emphasis is on the kingship of David and his successors in Judah. That becomes a focal point, and that's present right from the beginning of 1 Chronicles where you have genealogical material. The first tribe that is traced is that of Judah. Within the tribe of Judah, the house of David is emphasized with the entirety of chapter 3 tracing the generations of David. So the focus is on David with comparatively little attention to the other tribes. I think what the author is doing is emphasizing hope for the promised Messiah, whom the early prophets spoke of as being sustained in the line of David and promised in the Davidic covenant in 2 Samuel 7, repeated in 1 Chronicles 17.

So the focus is on David and his line for the future. For that reason, there's very little mention of Kings of the north. It's only the kings of the Davidic lineage. Kings of the north are only mentioned in connection with situations in which they are involved in something that happens in the south. There's not even a reference to the fall of the northern kingdom. The line of David, even though it's given extensive treatment, doesn't describe the family affairs of David, the Bathsheba incident and all the aftermath of that, the fall that came to David's life and family as a result of that. David is pictured as an example of the true theocratic king for the messianic king who was to come.

So you have that emphasis on David and his house, and you have emphasis on the temple and its service as the legacy that was left to the restored community by the house of David. The rebuilt temple and its continuing service are seen as evidence that God is not finished with his people; there still is a future for his people.

A third emphasis for the restored community is the importance of the obedience to the law and the prophets, and that is emphasized by calling attention to the theme of divine retribution. What I mean by that is that as the chronicler describes the reigns of the various kings, he emphasizes that sin brings judgment, while obedience brings blessing

and prosperity. That concept as exhibited in the reigns of the kings of Judah is to be a foundation on which the nation is to build after returning from exile.

So Kings is more retrospective, explaining to a people in exile why they are there. Chronicles is more prospective, laying the foundations for a restored community after the exile.

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