1-2 KINGS

*"Don't do this again!"*

SETTING

The kings from Solomon to the Babylonian exile (972 - 560 BC)

KEY VERSE

*"So the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence. Only the tribe of Judah was left, and even Judah did not keep the commands of the Lord their God. They followed the practices Israel had introduced. Therefore the Lord rejected all the people of Israel; he afflicted them and gave them into the hands of plunderers, until he thrust them from his presence."*

2. Kings 17:18-20

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1-2 Kings continue the story from 1-2 Samuel and span approximately 400 years. They dealt with all the kings of Israel after Saul and David until the Babylonian exile. 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings thus describe the history of the monarchy from beginning to end.

We can divide 1-2 Kings into 3 parts:

**1 Kings 1-11:** Solomon (972-931 BC). The story begins with David's death. Solomon becomes the next king. He builds the temple in Jerusalem.

**1 Kings 12 - 2 Kings 17:** The divided kingdom - Israel and Judah (931-722 BC). After Solomon, the kingdom is divided into two: The northern kingdom is henceforth called Israel, and the southern kingdom is called Judah. The author goes chronologically through all the kings and alternates between north and south. The kings are not judged by what they accomplished politically or militarily but by whether they followed God and the law. In the north, all the kings are evil, while in the south, it's about 50/50. The kings of Judah are compared to David, and only a few came close to him. In 722 BC, the northern kingdom of Israel was taken by Assyria and went down.

**2. Kings 18-25:** Judah (722-586). Only Judah remains after 722 BC, but they are eventually captured by the Babylonians. The last paragraph gives a tiny bit of hope amid the misery, but the big picture is that the kingdom has fallen because the people did not follow the law and did not listen to the prophets. God was right to send them into exile in Assyria and Babylon.

Not only the monarchy is recorded in the royal books. The temple was also built and destroyed. They lose the land and even end up where Abraham came from in Genesis. Everything seems to have been reset. The people probably interpreted it as if God had abandoned them and that they had destroyed everything. Now, what about the promise of the Messiah, who would be a descendant of David?

When Solomon opens the temple in chapter 8, he prays that if the people sin and end up in exile in another country, they must repent and return home. This gives a little hope that things can go well, in addition to the last section where David's King Jehoiachin is released from prison.

All these kings who come and go are all "messiahs" (anointed), and history almost creates a kind of longing for the great king who will fix everything - the Messiah with a capital M. After the books of Kings, Jesus is the next to be called *"King"* in the Bible. He said He is greater than the temple (Matthew 12:6) and greater than Solomon (Matthew 12:42). This is how He becomes the fulfillment of the story in 1-2 Kings because He is the new temple and the descendant of David that everything pointed toward.