

Pt 7: Un-united Kingdom



Elijah on Mt. Carmel



Background Notes

PURPOSE: Tells the history of the kings of Israel from the division into north and south up to the Assyrian exile of the north; Conveys through the prophets' words that Yahweh's people were ultimately exiled because of their disobedience, represented by the kings of Israel and Judah who failed to live up to the standard of faithfulness set by King David.

AUTHOR: The deuteronomist for Kings and the chronicler for Chronicles. The chronicler may have been a Levite cantor.

DATE: Solomon's kingdom divides around 1000 BC and the separate histories (north and south) begin.

STYLE: While the deuteronomist emphasizes central temple worship, the chronicler emphasizes live worship rituals. Both refer to the historical archives "Acts of Solomon" and "Annals of the Kings", and incorporate prophesies, less concerned with the historical aspect than with the religious significance.



Opening Quotes

“To the foreigner who is not of your people Israel, when he comes and prays towards this temple, listen from your heavenly dwelling.” 1 K 8:41

“Ahijah laid hold of the new garment he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces. Then he said to Jeroboam, ‘Take for yourself ten pieces.’” 1K 11:31

“Yet to his son I will give one tribe, so that my servant David may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen to put my name.” 1 K 11:36

“What share do we have in David? To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, O David.” 1 K 12:15

“How long will you go on limping with two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.” 1K 18:20

“The Lord was not in the wind... the Lord was not in the earthquake... the Lord was not in the fire... there was a tiny whispering sound.” 1K 19:11

“Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel’ [Namaan said].” 2 K 5:15

“The Lord opened the eyes of the servant, and he saw; the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.” 2K 6:16

“‘Father, shall I kill them?’ ‘No! Did you capture with your sword and your bow those whom you want to kill?.’” 2K 6:19

the BIG PICTURE		LAW, History, Writings, Prophets		key covenants in our Father's plan	
12 Periods	Plot	Other books related to period		stories in each period	
BC	☉ THE BEGINNINGS	GN 1-11	Ps 8, 104	Creation, Adam & Eve, Cain & Abel, Noah's ark, Tower of Babel	
1850	♣ THE PATRIARCHS	GN 12-50		Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel), Joseph, Melchizedek	
1250	⚠ EXODUS FROM EGYPT	EX		Moses, the burning bush, the plagues, passover, exodus	
1200	♣ JOURNEY TO CANAAN	NM, Jos	LV, DT	Sinai desert, 10 commandments, Levites, Law, Joshua	
1100	☠ THE JUDGE CYCLE	Jg	Ruth	12 tribes, Gideon, Samson, Ruth, Samuel	
1030	☆ KINGS & PROPHETS	1 & 2 S	1 Ch, Ps, Prov	Saul, David, Solomon, Jerusalem, the Temple	
1000	■ THE DIVIDED KINGDOM	1 Kg	2 Ch, Prov, Ecc, Songs	Israel (N), Judah (S), Elijah & Elisha, Isaiah, Assyrian exile	
721 587	☹ BABYLONIAN EXILE	2 Kg	2 Ch, Tob, Hos, Am, Hab, Is, Jer, Lam, Jl, Mic, Zp, Jon, Nah, Ob, Ez, Dan, Bar	Babylonians, "major" prophets, Isaiah (to Israel), Jeremiah (to Jerusalem), Ezekiel (to Exiles)	
538	⚙ THE RESTORATION	Ezr, Neh	Est, Judith, Hag, Zech, Mal, Job	Cyrus, 2nd temple, 2nd Law, "minor" prophets, new writings	
163 63	🕯 THE REPURIFICATION	1 Mac	Dn, 2Mac, Sirach, Wisdom	Greeks, Maccabean revolt, Hasmonean Dynasty, Romans, Jewish sects (Pharisees, Saducees, Zealots, Essenes)	
AD	♣+✝ JESUS CHRIST	LK	MT, MK, JN	Incarnation, Good News, New Law, Cross & Resurrection	
33 70	🕯 APOSTOLIC CHURCH	Acts	Rm, 1&2Co, Ga, Ep, Phil, Col, 1&2Th, 1&2 Tm, Ti, Phm, Hb, Ja, 1P, 2P, 1,2&3J, Jd, Rv	Pentecost, council, journeys, epistles, Body/Bride of Christ	



The Story of Part 7: The Un-united Kingdom



When King Solomon gathered the cedars of Lebanon and precious stones to build God's temple, the people finally had a central place where they could gather religiously and worship Yahweh. Solomon beckoned Yahweh to hear the prayers of all who prayed to His name in the temple (even foreigners). Yahweh's presence filled the temple. Yahweh appeared to Solomon a second time reminding him that it was obedience to the covenant that would win God's favor, not the temple itself.

After a while, Solomon became too preoccupied with his riches and the temple because he began levying the people with heavy taxes and labor to support the temple. To make matters worse, in his older years, he had many foreign wives, gave in to their wishes and built them temples for their gods! Yahweh then sent the prophet Ahijah with the message that because of this the kingdom would be split in two, with ten of the twelve tribes being given to Jeroboam, a worker who revolted against Solomon and his tribe, Judah.

But Jeroboam then sinned by setting up two golden calves in two different places for worship so that the Israelites to the north wouldn't have to go to Jerusalem in Judah to worship! The prophet then told Jeroboam that this would eventually result in the end of the his kingdom in the north (now called "**Israel**"). But then Rehoboam, Solomon's son, also led his kingdom in the south (just called "**Judah**") into sin with foreign practices like mixing in sacred poles and sacred male prostitutes in the worship of Yahweh!

After King Rehoboam of Judah and King Jeroboam of Israel came a succession of kings in both kingdoms, some good, like King Asa of Judah, and most bad following the example of Jeroboam, like King Ahab of Israel. While the Judean king Asa did away with the sacred poles and prostitutes, the Israelite king Ahab and his foreign wife Jezebel killed many of Yahweh's prophets, and consulted their own "brotherhood of prophets" who followed Yahweh *and* the false gods, like the Baals and Asherah.

As for the prophets, there were even a couple of cases where a prophet did not faithfully follow the word of God and were killed by a lion for it. Then came the faithful prophet **Elijah**, who felt the awesome presence of God in a quiet breeze! He performed miracles like multiplying food and drink for a poor old widow and raising her dead son back to life. Then at the mountain of Carmel, he demonstrated to King Ahab, the brotherhood of prophets, and all of Israel that Yahweh was the one true God. Yahweh came down with fire and burned the sacrificial bull set up for him. Elijah then had the prophets of Baal seized and slaughtered. Having heard this, Ahab's wife Jezebel came after Elijah with a vengeance. Elijah fled to the holy mountain in the desert where Moses received the

covenant from Yahweh. There Yahweh appeared to Elijah and told him that He would spare the lives of all who did not give in to Baal. In accordance to the word of Yahweh, king Ahab died a violent death in battle. Any time Israel's kings displeased Yahweh, the Bible constantly reminds us they were nothing like the king that the united kingdom once had...David.

After his glorious ascension by a fiery chariot, the prophet Elijah left the prophet **Elisha** as his successor. At this time the nations of Moab and Aram attacked the promised land, which gave cause for the northern and southern kingdoms to unite against a common enemy. After a united victory for Judah and Israel, the prophet Elisha performed some great miracles as Elijah had done before.

The prophets like Ahijah, Elijah, and Elisha had been predicting the doom of Israel because of their constant infidelity to Yahweh. Because many of the southern kings pleased Yahweh, the prophets did not pronounce doom on Judah. Yahweh had promised to keep the "lamp" shining in the House of David. But even this was about to change when a king of Judah, married one of Ahab's daughters and started practicing the worship of Baal. So now both Judah and Israel had kings worshipping Baal, and it was time for Yahweh to take drastic action.

The word of Yahweh came to the prophet Elisha. He was to appoint Jehu the king of Israel, and Jehu was to avenge all the followers of Baal for Yahweh's sake. Jehu proceeded to pursue and destroy both royal families (except for one son of King Ahaziah who would eventually be the next king of Judah). Jehu killed all the worshippers of Baal, and the people of Jezreel killed Jezebel in fear of Jehu. Jehu ruled Israel, having rid the divided nation of the Baal worship. But Jehu continued to worship Yahweh at two golden calves instead of centralizing worship to God at His temple in Jerusalem. After the prophet Elisha died, God's kingdom was back to the same scenario: The northern king displeasing Yahweh and the southern king pleasing Yahweh, shining his lamp in the House of David.

Eventually the prophesies of doom would come true and Israel would be taken over by the powerful **Assyrian Empire**. The Israelites would be deported and replaced by foreigners. The old northern capital of Samaria now became inhabited by a mix of Israelites and foreigners who worshipped other gods and practiced sinful rituals like child sacrifice.

And so, just as the prophets predicted, the northern kingdom of Israel was destroyed. In the south, King Hezekiah of Judah would later be told by the major prophet Isaiah that only for the sake of David, Jerusalem would be spared. But all was not well for Judah either. 📖



Defending the Faith: Church and State

“The violent histories of Israel and Judah, and the Church’s Crusades and Inquisition, show that freedom of religion and the separation of Church and State are the only way to guarantee justice.”

First we need to understand why Church and State ever mixed in the first place. Before the Roman Empire fell to the barbarians, Emperor Constantine had ended the persecution of Christianity, which became the official religion shortly thereafter. But once the empire fell, Roman citizens were left without a strong government, and no defense against the barbarians. The Church rose to the occasion as best as possible by evangelizing the barbarians and flexing her spiritual (not military) muscle. Pope Leo the Great was not able to stop Attila the Hun from invading Rome, but he convinced Attila not to slaughter them! After a brief period of strength under Charlemagne, the lack of a strong state resulted in the decay of the feudal system, and corruption crept into the Church as well. With the Middle Ages came strong German emperors who were Christian, resulting in an arrangement of Emperor and Pope similar to King and Prophet in old Israel. The idea of Christendom was for the Pope to handle spiritual matters and the Emperor to handle state matters, but many times, both tried doing each other’s jobs! A growing sense of nationalism drew countries further from the Church centered in Rome, and with the Protestant Reformation, nationalized churches were formed: Lutheran in Germany, Calvinist in Switzerland, and Anglican in England.

Luther’s alternative to Christendom was to have the State run the Church (“erastianism”). This resulted in the tragic Peasants War, killing over a hundred thousand. Calvin tried having the Church run the State (“theocracy”), which also failed, persecuting non-Christians and Catholics as well. In England, Protestant

and Catholic persecutions flip-flopped, depending on which Tudor happened to occupy the throne.

After all this religious fighting came the so-called “Enlightenment”, which led to bloody revolutions and ideologies trying their own hand at government. The fervor with which the Church is being separated from government is still seen in the massive violation of human rights in systems like Communism or Nazism. But even democracy does not guarantee freedom. Hitler was elected democratically!

In our own country the separation of Church and State has driven our government further and further from the Christian roots of our founding fathers. We now *suppress* religious expression – taking down the Ten Commandments from public buildings and forbidding opening prayers at football games, not to mention the grossest violation of human rights in all of history: the silent holocaust of abortion, claiming over a million lives a year. The fact is, “freedom of religion” has become “freedom *from* religion,” and the results have been bloodier than the Crusades and the Inquisitions combined.

What, then, is the ideal balance between Church and State? Society has been trying to figure that one out since the beginning. Perhaps all we can do as Christians is abide by the law *without* sinning, rendering to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s (Mt 22:21). After all, we are ultimately foreigners on this earth, awaiting the country God has prepared for us (Heb 11:13-16). Do you consider yourself an American who happens to be Christian, or a Christian who happens to be American?



Expressing the Faith: My Country ‘Tis of Thee

Written by Samuel Francis Smith, this patriotic song feels strangely out of place in America’s quest for political correctness.

*My Country, ‘Tis Of Thee,
Sweet Land Of Liberty,
Of Thee I Sing;
Land Where My Fathers Died,
Land Of The Pilgrim’s Pride,
From Ev’ry Mountain Side
Let Freedom Ring.*

*Our Fathers’ God, To Thee,
Author Of Liberty,
To Thee We Sing;
Long May Our Land Be Bright
With Freedom’s Holy Light;
Protect Us By Thy Might,
Great God, Our King!*

↗ **Next time: “Here I Am, Lord”** ↖