

As we consider the historical period from Saul to Zedekiah note how completely the pattern of this period is recorded. In spite of the dividing of the Kingdom that occurred after Solomon's death, the history of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah run parallel through the record of the books of Samuel, the Kings and Chronicles. As the kingdom period unfold, the tribe of Judah emerges as the pre-eminent tribe and the royal line is established in the house of David.

God has foreknowledge of what will come to pass in the future. This is evidenced here in the history recorded of the period of the Kings of Israel and Judah. With regards God's plan during this period, we are able to follow the thread of His purpose in continuing to establish the seed of Abraham, and then of David.

Acts 15:16-18 James in quoting from Amos 9:11, 12 comments that the dwelling place of David will be restored. James then concludes the quote in verse 18 that "The LORD who makes these things known from long ago." The fact this is referred to in both the old and new testaments confirms God's continuing plan is being worked out. This statement applies to every phase of God's purpose with the earth and mankind. The principle of foreknowledge concerning the Kingdom of Israel is clearly demonstrated in the following references.

Genesis 49:8-10 Shortly before his death, Jacob prophesied concerning the destiny of his family. Under the patriarchal system Reuben, Jacob's first born, would have received the birthright and leadership, but he was disqualified because of his instability. Simeon and Levi also were unacceptable because of their cruelty. Jacob, therefore, bestowed upon Judah, his fourth son, the honor and prestige of leadership. Note the reference to the sceptre in anticipation of a king, while as yet the family was only a small group under the patriarchal system. Verse 10 has particular significance for it shows that the kingly line of Judah would continue unbroken until Shiloh comes. There is some uncertainty regarding the word Shiloh. It is not used again in connection with a person. However, most authorities consider it a reference to the Messiah. God in Genesis 17:6 promised Abraham that kings would come out of him. It is into the lineage of Judah that Christ is born.

Deuteronomy 17: 14-20 Through Moses, God not only tells of Israel's future desire for a king, but also reveals the circumstances that would bring disaster upon the kingdom. The strength of the king and the prosperity of the kingdom would only come through the king's obedience to God's laws. The blessings that would come from a wise king are described in verses 19 and 20.

I Samuel 8:1-10 As foretold, here we see the events that lead to Israel's demand for a king. Despite Samuel providing a warning in verses 10-18, history confirms his predictions of their failures. In spite of the people's rejection of the LORD as their king, God heeds their complaints and instructs Samuel to provide them with a king.

I Samuel 9 This chapter gives an account of Saul's appointment as their king. Note that Saul was a king who fully met all human requirements. He was head and shoulders above his fellows; IE tall and good looking! It is obvious that pride in the flesh was the basis of Israel's appraisal of the qualifications of a king. It is also obvious from the events that follow, that a satisfactory king before God would also need to have a 'godly' character. After the rejection of Saul, David was anointed to be king. Even though David was tall and good looking, David was above all, "a man after God's own heart." He had the character that God was looking for. Another point that is important from a prophetic standpoint is that Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin of which no mention is made of a royal dynasty.

LESSON #8 Continued THE KINGDOM PERIOD

- I Samuel 13:1-14 As noted previously, Saul was first chosen but soon failed to uphold God's principles. These verses reveal Saul's instability as a leader and the consequences of his presumptuous actions. Consequently, God rejects Saul and announces He will replace him with a man who would be faithful and obedient.
- I Samuel 16:7-13 In answer to who was going to replace Saul as King and leader over God's people Israel, we are introduced to David, the son of Jesse.
v.7 Shows what God is looking for in a leader and provides the qualifications of the man after God's own heart.
v.8-14 Here we have the details surrounding the selection and appointment of David by anointing with oil.
- I Samuel 18-27 We can read these chapters to follow the continued conflict between Saul and David. Even though Saul was king, he knew that he had been rejected by the LORD. He also understood that David had been anointed and this cause great fear in the heart of Saul. For many years, Saul pursued David relentlessly with the intention to kill him. Despite this obsession by Saul, David never lifted up his hand to hurt Saul. He saw Saul as "the anointed" of the LORD, and was content to wait for God to remove him from power.
- I Samuel 31 The eventual death of Saul and some of his sons in battle opened the throne for David to take it.
- II Samuel 2 Initially, David is anointed officially as king to reign over the house of Judah only. The remaining tribes still held to Ishbosheth, the son of Saul. However, we can read here and in chapter 3 of the conflict which eventually transferred the Kingdom from the line of Saul (tribe of Benjamin), to David (tribe of Judah).
- II Samuel 3:6-10 Abner is the captain of Saul's army but when he has a falling out with Ishbosheth, he determines to support David by transferring the remaining tribes of Israel that were supporters of Saul and his family into David's hand.
- II Samuel 5:1-3 After 7 years ruling in Hebron, all the tribes are united under David by common consent and they anoint him king over all Israel, with headquarters in Jerusalem.
- II Samuel 7:12,13 Due to the remarkable faith of David to the word of God, this chapter reveals one of the most important prophecies we have in scripture. As before with Abraham, we again follow the important key word "seed", referring to the descendant of David. In this promise and covenant of God to David, it includes the foretelling of the coming Messiah (Anointed One, Christ) who would sit upon David's throne forever. An excellent reference to assure us that this seed is referring to Christ and not David's immediate son Solomon, is found in Acts 13:21-23.
- I Kings 2:10-12 Ultimately after a long and prosperous reign, David dies. The date of his death was approximately 1015 B.C. (refer to the chart) Solomon, according to God's pronouncement, takes over the throne of the Kingdom.
- 1 Kings 11 Again reading this section of Scripture will surely fill in the details of this period and give us insights into the man Solomon. A brief outline of Solomon's reign would show his earlier wisdom and the folly of his later years. A reference to Deut. 17:17 will be particularly appropriate at this time in connection with the deterioration of Solomon's character. The record of his life demonstrated the prophetic accuracy of the Deuteronomy reference.

Because of Solomon's transgressions, God's judgment came upon his house. .

The LORD had decreed that the Kingdom of Israel would be divided into two parts. Details can be found in vv, 11-13 and in vv, 26-43.

v43 Records Solomon's death

1 Kings 12 This chapter explains the circumstances under which the division of the twelve tribes of Israel took place. Rehoboam is unable to maintain his authority over these tribes and only Benjamin and Judah remain loyal to him. Jeroboam, on his return from Egypt, becomes a political power to the northern ten tribes of Israel. The prophecy of Ahijah (v15) is fulfilled and a division of the nation takes place. In verses 26 and 27, Jeroboam recognizes a weakness in his hold on the ten tribes with the temple in Jerusalem being the center of Israel's religious life. It was held in great reverence by the entire nation and yearly pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the feasts were required. In order to compete with this strong attraction which would weaken him politically, Jeroboam's solution was to set up two golden calves, one in Bethel in the south and one in Dan in the north. He represented these idols to be the gods which had delivered Israel from the land of Egypt. There were many individuals in the ten tribes who would not accept Jeroboam's golden calves as a substitute for the temple in Jerusalem. This was particularly true of the Levites whose priestly function would be supplanted by the new idolatrous priesthood introduced by Jeroboam. The result was that a great migration took place where those from the northern ten tribes moved to Judah. It is significant that the golden calf which had brought God's judgments upon Israel during the exodus at Sinai should again become the idolatrous symbol of Jeroboam's downfall. The calf was linked with the Egyptian bull worship which was a fertility and strength symbol which Israel brought out of Egypt and is reintroduced here with the return of Jeroboam who recently arrived from Egypt! This division between Israel and Judah continued throughout the remaining period of the Kings. Referring to the Bible occupied by the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

2 Kings 18:9-12 The history of Israel during this period is one of repeated rebellion against Yahweh. In spite of the prophets who were sent to warn them, they did not heed nor repent. At last in 722 B.C., the Assyrian King Shalmaneser invaded the Northern Kingdom and took the ten tribes of Israel into captivity. According to the policy of the Assyrian Kings, the ten tribes were deported and dispersed throughout the lands and cities of nations subject to Assyrian domination.

Jeremiah 25:11-13 The history of Judah has more significance in prophecy. This is natural because the royal seed (of promise) was to have its fulfillment in this tribe. The history of the Kingdom of Judah is presented as a succession of good and evil kings but the deterioration of the Kingdom was steady and continuous. At last God warns them through the prophets that He will now terminate their Kingdom. Of significance is the prophecy of Jeremiah who warns of their captivity, but also prophecy's their return from Babylon after 70 years. Reference to the chart will point up the importance of the time factor in God's dealing with His people. The 70 years of captivity came to an end exactly as prophesied. The restoration took place under Ezra, Nehemiah and Zerubbabel (recorded in Zechariah)

Ezekiel 21:24-27 The prophecy of the end of the Kingdom of Judah is here given and the way is prepared for the coming of "until he come whose right it is" (Jesus Christ) We would do well to read the Chronicles to get a good overview of this period in history with particular emphasis on the cause (idolatry) of their downfall. This prophecy is presented to the last king of Judah (Zedekiah) before being taken to Babylon. Again, this references Genesis 49:10 and the prophecy of Shiloh.

LESSON #8 (Contd.)

THE KINGDOM PERIOD

II Kings 25 The prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel are fulfilled.

v.21 The Kingdom is broken up. Jerusalem is destroyed. The Jews go into exile. From this time forward, the only hope of the Jew in captivity would be the promise of restoration and the coming of their Messiah.