

## INTRODUCTION AND PREFACE

### INTRODUCTION

The Books of First and Second Kings are viewed together in the Hebrew original scripts just as the Books of Chronicles are jointly known as "The book of the days of the kings of Israel" A short postscript of which you can read in another article on the "Legend" of the book contains a reference to Deuteronomy 33.26-29 which reminds us that Israel is a "special" people. The First book of Kings is ostensibly a portrayal of the developments in the nation's life during a sector of her history from Samuel to Ahab and Jehoshaphat-but as set within the Former Prophets the book is an exposition of the LORD'S rule within His theocracy and eight distinct developments in the period are heralded by eight distinct prophets. You should not miss this cardinal fact.

#### PERIOD 1 1.11-10.25

The prophet Nathan introduces the first golden era when Solomon ruled. There are numerous lessons to be learned from studying the wisdom and praying and building of Solomon

#### PERIOD 2 10.26ff

The prophet Abijah proclaims the divine recompense of the divided monarchy which for hundreds of years until the Babylonian Captivity was to bi-furcate the nation's life and bring more prophetic heralds of God to the fore

#### PERIOD 3 13.1

A man of God seeks to establish prophetic accountability and predicts the end of the era of idolatrous priests and the Reformation naming Josiah as the monarch under which it would come some 300 years ahead

#### PERIOD 4 14.1

Ahijah heralds the end of the era of Jeroboam-a long blot on the theocracy

#### PERIOD 5 17.1

Elijah appears to turn the nation back to Yahweh. This prophet who foreshadows the great latter day prophet that will restore the hearts of the fathers to the children and vice-versa has courage and faith to withstand the machinations of Ahab and Jezebel and establishes a prophetic school that sends a ray of light along future prophetic history.

#### PERIOD 6 20 28-30

An unknown Man of God forecasts the fall of the Syrian dynasty

#### PERIOD 7 21.17 & 28 -29

Elijah is told of his success to bring Ahab to a place of repentance by God Himself whose pleasure is that a sinner should turn from his unrighteousness and live.

#### PERIOD 8 22 14-15

Micaiah previews the decease of Ahab at the classic prophetic conference in his day. Thus as the book comes to an end Judah continued after David and Israel after Jeroboam and the difference is not unrelated to the time-serving prophets of the north among whom some are evidently open to a satanic spirit

## **THEOCRACY**

It becomes clear from the evidence adduced that the theocracy is not so much directed through kings who certainly fight the wars and organise the defence of the land but the overall direction of the LORD is given by the prophets. In this matter the Israelite Theocracy is little different from the church in which prophetic preachers spell out the will of God through all generations whilst the kaleidoscope of successive human governments looks after society and its defence.

## **THE PRESENCE OF GOD**

Yahweh her king whispers "I will be a wall of fire around her and for glory in her midst." No-one could read 1 Kings and believe that Ichabod applied to this nation. The golden era of Solomon occupies half the book and during that time the message of what the LORD was doing with this first nation on earth had reached India and Spain and the depths of Africa. Even as the book finishes the nation of Syria supported by 32 kings trembles before the LORD as He gathers His believing people to humble their pride. The book testifies to God in Israel's midst and advises that human life is blessed and garrisoned by the indwelling LORD as in no other way.

## **WISDOM AND PRAYER**

Don't miss the lessons to be derived from the outstanding prayers of Solomon and Elijah. God through His covenant mercies calls his people down through the ages to seek His face and the same principles apply today as always. As to wisdom as James the apostle consents it is no otherwise to be found than by "asking God" and the evidence that it is found thus is portrayed through the early life of Solomon.

## **PREFACE**

This translation and commentary was completed in Mid August 2011 and it follows similar work on the Books of Samuel. It is offered public in the form of another Westgate commentary and CD label No.11. It is the 35<sup>th</sup> OT digital commentary to be completed –and as in each case I heartily wish I could have done more to be of help to the reader.

The commentary is promiscuously set out alongside the translation. I have highlighted the 200 or so conversations contained in the book because the Jewish interpreters considered these conversations of high spiritual value as showing how importantly the LORD rates speech. Words cause wars and words bring judgment but words also heal and bring the blessing of God when they reach out for the heart of God.

There are Hebrew words strewn here and there in the book. In such instances it can be useful for our understanding to think of the Hebrew root meaning that emerges in the original language.

I have great pleasure commending this commentary in the prophetic vein to the reader. May you become part of the long-standing divine purpose not only to gather Israel by the prophets but also to gather the people of God that we call the church from all nations by the heralding of the message of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in such a way that He is glorified as Redeemer and Coming King.

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