

3. Some points we will want to look at with greater care:
  - a. The judgeship of Samuel
  - b. The incident of the ark
  - c. The rejection of the divine rule period (the demand for a king)
  - d. The rejection of Saul
  - e. The Davidic covenant
  - f. Lessons from these lives for our own.

These books treat the transitional period in the history of Israel in the movement from the economy of the Judges to that of the Kings. A total period of about 130 years is treated...note the reference in Acts 13. The books are not detailed political histories but more accounts of biographical material illustrating Jehovah's resource with the nation.

Among other things in the Samuel books we are following the true kingship as it is applied by God. The aspirations of men and the people in general are set in proper perspective and God is faithful not only for fulfilling the aspects of Abraham's covenant (Gen. 15, 17) but also for honoring Jacob's blessing and covenantal strictures of Genesis 49. The establishment of David and his tribe provides an interesting typology for Christ and the kingdom of God.

E. Summary Survey of the Books of Kings (two at once!)

1. An overview:

Jewish tradition says Jeremiah is the author of Kings. Several factors could be construed in favor of this: the book is prophetic in its outlook on and evaluation of the nation's history; Jeremiah is not mentioned even though he would have been an important and well-known figure in the last days of Judah's existence (if he were the author he would have modestly refrained from naming himself); and the author, like Jeremiah, obviously has a great deal of literary ability.

2 Kings 25, however, would not have been written by Jeremiah because he died in Egypt and would not have known what happened in Babylon. Moreover, this tradition is recorded in only one place, the Mishnah (the first section of the Talmud), without any corroborating evidence. The material of 1 and 2 Kings covers a span of approximately 400 years (about 970-550 BC), and the author uses various records for his resource materials (for example, 1 Kings 11:41; 14:19). These "annals of the kings of..." are government records of important events during the reigns of the various kings. The author of Kings probably uses both these annals and popular histories based upon them--not, as some might think, as a mere compiler, but as a careful author of an original work, smoothly combining his materials from his varied sources.

The earliest possible date for the book's completion as we have it is 550 BC, after the death of Jehoiachin (2 Kings 25:27-30). It is probably written by a member of a prophetic school near the middle of the 6th century BC. Kings is mostly prose with some poetry (2 Kings 19:21-34) and governmental lists (1 Kings 4:2-19).