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## **History is His Story**

### **Series: Divided Heart, Divided Nation**

#### **The Village Church at Shell Point**

#### **Evening Service**

**August 4, 2024**

- I. Introduction to the Series
  - A. Live in a divided nation
    - 1. Competing policies belie competing world views, competing values
    - 2. Would do well to examine the sources of the division
  - B. Purpose – explore biblical history which will expose the fault lines of a nation’s deterioration
  - C. **Divided heart, Divided nation**
    - 1. Stole the title
      - a. Precept course on the portion of Kings and Chronicles which deals with the reign of Solomon
    - 2. Tried to think of a better name; couldn’t
      - a. Decided to just make the proper attribution
      - b. Thanks then to Kay Arthur
  - D. Period of the nation of Israel during which Solomon reigned
    - 1. Solomon
      - a. One of the great kings of Israel
        - (1) Discover the nature of his wealth and power
        - (2) Also the wisdom with which established his reign
      - b. One of the great disappointments of Israel
        - (1) Discover the spiritual and political decline
        - (2) See how this decline led to the divided kingdom
    - 2. Comparison with previous kings
      - a. Recall the simplistic designation used by Walk Thru the Bible
        - (1) Saul = no heart
        - (2) David = whole heart
        - (3) Solomon = half heart
      - b. Certainly, the lives of these people was more complicated than that
        - (1) But it does enable a beginning distinction between early kings of Israel
  - E. **Context**
    - 1. 1 Kings 1-15 deals with the succession of Solomon to the throne
      - a. The establishment of his reign
      - b. His successes
      - c. His spiritual and political decline
      - d. The devolution of the united kingdom into northern and southern kingdoms

2. 2 Chr 1-13 deals with the same period of time
3. Both of those divisions are artificial
  - a. In this course, we're only looking at a part of one book
  - b. Kings and Chronicles each were both one book
  - c. Septuagint (Gk translation of OT) and Vulgate (Lat translation of OT) divided the books, more for ease of copying, transmission, instruction than for content
  - d. Divisions then persist in our English translations
4. Authors (tradition)
  - a. Kings – Jeremiah (prophet)
  - b. Chronicles – Ezra (priest)
  - c. Can't establish either from the text
  - d. Can see unique perspectives in each
    - (1) Role of the prophet is very clear in the Kings history
    - (2) Role of the priest in establishing religious institutions is evident in the Chronicles history

F. **Perspectives**

1. Kings was written earlier than Chr
  - a. Written at about the end of Judah's kingdom, just before the Babylonian exile
    - (1) Or soon after the exile, during the exilic period
2. Chronicles was written during the restoration following the exile for a slightly different purpose
  - a. How to reconstitute the people of Israel following their dislocation and relocation?
  - b. How can the central political and religious institutions be reconstituted during the restoration (including the Davidic throne)?
  - c. How were the people to understand their experience of exile and restoration in light of law and grace?
3. Chronicles was written with a clear religious and social agenda
  - a. Becomes a spiritual commentary on some of the same events described in Kings

G. Kings as history

1. Much more of a history
2. Much recorded detail about the period
3. Interest in dates, lengths of time, chronology
4. Synchronization between the kings of northern and southern kingdoms
  - a. That can be difficult to follow
  - b. Serves the author's purpose in providing a unified history of a disunited people
5. Synchronizes the accession of each king with the year of the reign of the contemporary king in the other kingdom
  - a. Lists the age of the king upon accession to the throne
    - (1) With respect to the Judean kings, the names of the mothers
6. Historical problems with the chronology

- a. Can't always line up the dates with extra-biblical records
- b. End up with too many years to end up at the fall of Israel (722 BC) and Judah (586 BC)
- c. Ways of dealing with those problems
  - (1) Years of accession – whether the year the transition took place, or the first full year
  - (2) Month the year began
  - (3) Co-regencies (transitional periods in which successors began to reign during the latter years of their predecessors)
- 7. Relies on existing sources to provide this history
  - a. History of Kings itself spans nearly 400 years
  - b. Author wasn't present during all those years
  - c. Relied on other sources – named
    - (1) “The book of the acts of Solomon”
    - (2) “The Chronicles of the Kings of Israel”
    - (3) “The Chronicles of the Kings of Judah”
  - d. May have had other materials as well
    - (1) Accounts of the lives of prophets
- 8. Author of Kings was an historian
- H. Biblical history is not quite like contemporary history
  - 1. Authors are not dispassionate, objective chroniclers, simply trying to understand the past
    - a. The way a university history professor might
    - b. (Maybe that's a bad example!)
  - 2. Both the authors have purposes that apply to a specific group of people
    - a. Israel – God's chosen people
    - b. 1 Kings 8:53 (ESV) — 53 “For you separated them from among all the peoples of the earth to be your heritage, as you declared through Moses your servant, when you brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD.”
  - 3. The separation of these people as God's inheritance issues, not from any intrinsic merit of their own, but from God's own elective mercy
    - a. Deuteronomy 7:6 (ESV) — 6 “For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.”
  - 4. You write history a little differently for a people like that
  - 5. In fact, this history is written, not so much from a human perspective (although that perspective is evident)
    - a. But from God's perspective
  - 6. In this case, **History is His story**
    - a. Story about the relationship between God and His people
- I. This history as His story is reflected in several different ways
  - 1. Theological history
  - 2. Covenant history

3. Redemptive history
- J. Lessons in each of those histories if we are to understand our own divided nation, and if we are to see our way through to a solution to the divisions

## II. Theological History

- A. Revelation is historical
  1. God reveals Himself in His word
  2. Doesn't do that in abstract categories
    - a. Doesn't rely on verbal propositions about who He is
  3. You can certainly find God described in abstract categories
    - a. Exodus 34:6–7 (ESV) — 6 The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, 7 keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”
  4. God never relies on those categories
    - a. He acts in space-time-history to reveal Himself
    - b. In fact, to illustrate who He is as described in those abstract categories:
  5. Leviticus 10:1–3 (ESV) — 1 Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, which he had not commanded them. 2 And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. 3 Then Moses said to Aaron, “This is what the LORD has said: ‘Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.’ ” And Aaron held his peace.
    - a. God acted in space and in time to demonstrate what it means that He is holy
- B. Kings history is meant to be a theological history – teaches us something about who God is based on His interaction with His chosen people
  1. Tozer:
    - a. “We can never know who or what we are till we know at least something of what God is.”
    - b. “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”
    - c. “Without doubt the mightiest thought the mind can entertain is the thought of God.”
  2. If Kings and Chronicles teaches us anything, it teaches us who God is
    - a. And the most important thing we need to understand about our divided nation is who God is
  3. LORD God – The LORD your God, The LORD, the God of Israel
    - a. Over 500 times in Kings
    - b. LORD = Yahweh

- (1) Covenant name – defined the relationship with Israel
  - (2) Speaks of His self-existence (I am who I am)
  - (3) Speaks of His independent freedom to be and do what He will do
4. **Sovereign LORD**
    - a. The God who determines all of history for the good of His covenant people
  5. **LORD Almighty**
    - a. Covenant keeping God who has the power and ability to carry out all of His intentions and fulfill all His promises
    - b. **2 Kings 19:31** (ESV) — 31 For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD will do this.
  6. **One true God**
    - a. He has no rival among any of the other pagan religious deities
    - b. Elijah: **1 Kings 18:24** (ESV) — 24 “And you call upon the name of your god, and I will call upon the name of the LORD, and the God who answers by fire, he is God.” And all the people answered, “It is well spoken.”
  7. **Incomparable**
    - a. **1 Kings 8:23** (ESV) — 23 and said, “O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to your servants who walk before you with all their heart...”
  8. **The Creator**
    - a. **2 Kings 19:15** (ESV) — 15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD and said: “O LORD, the God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth.”
  9. **The giver of life**
    - a. **1 Kings 17:21** (ESV) — 21 Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried to the LORD, “O LORD my God, let this child’s life come into him again.”
  10. **The living God**
    - a. Frequent formula: **1 Kings 17:12** (ESV) — 12 And she said, “As the LORD your God lives...”
  11. **God of the fathers, Israel**
    - a. **1 Kings 18:36** (ESV) — 36 And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, “O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word.
  12. **Transcendent**

- a. **1 Kings 8:27** (ESV) — 27 “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!”
13. **Omnipresent**
- a. **1 Kings 20:28** (ESV) — 28 And a man of God came near and said to the king of Israel, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Because the Syrians have said, “The LORD is a god of the hills but he is not a god of the valleys,” therefore I will give all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the LORD.’ ”
14. **Imminent** (with His people)
- a. **1 Kings 8:23** (ESV) — 23 and said, “O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to your servants who walk before you with all their heart...”
15. **Rules over the kingdoms** of men
- a. **2 Kings 19:15** (ESV) — 15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD and said: “O LORD, the God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth.
16. **Raises up kings**
- a. **1 Kings 11:23** (ESV) — 23 God also raised up as an adversary to him, Rezon the son of Eliada, who had fled from his master Hadadezer king of Zobah.
17. **Controls** the turn of **events**
- a. **1 Kings 12:15** (ESV) — 15 So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of affairs brought about by the LORD that he might fulfill his word, which the LORD spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.
18. **Drives out nations**
- a. **2 Kings 16:3** (ESV) — 3 but he walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He even burned his son as an offering, according to the despicable practices of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel.
19. **Can be provoked to anger**
- a. **1 Kings 11:9** (ESV) — 9 And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice
20. **Calamity is attributed to Him**
- a. **1 Kings 9:9** (ESV) — 9 Then they will say, ‘Because they abandoned the LORD their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them. Therefore the LORD has brought all this disaster on them.’ ”

- b. **2 Kings 15:5** (ESV) — 5 And the LORD touched the king, so that he was a leper to the day of his death, and he lived in a separate house. ...
    - c. **2 Kings 8:1** (ESV) — 1 Now Elisha had said to the woman whose son he had restored to life, “Arise, and depart with your household, and sojourn wherever you can, for the LORD has called for a famine, and it will come upon the land for seven years.”
  - 21. **Hears and answers prayers**
    - a. Of both Solomon and Hezekiah
  - 22. **Gives deliverance and victory**
    - a. **2 Kings 13:5** (ESV) — 5 (Therefore the LORD gave Israel a savior, so that they escaped from the hand of the Syrians, and the people of Israel lived in their homes as formerly....)
  - 23. **Gives forgiveness**
    - a. **2 Kings 5:18** (ESV) — 18 In this matter may the LORD pardon your servant: when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, leaning on my arm, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon your servant in this matter.”
  - 24. **Gives wisdom**
    - a. **1 Kings 3:28** (ESV) — 28 And all Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered, and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him to do justice.
  - 25. **Gives His Spirit**
    - a. **1 Kings 18:12** (ESV) — 12 And as soon as I have gone from you, the Spirit of the LORD will carry you I know not where. And so, when I come and tell Ahab and he cannot find you, he will kill me, although I your servant have feared the LORD from my youth.
  - 26. **Gives His power**
    - a. **1 Kings 18:46** (ESV) — 46 And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah, and he gathered up his garment and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.
- C. God is a **God of judgment**
  - 1. Failure to worship God and instead to substitute idolatry or some kind of syncretistic worship led to the downfall of kings and their reigns
  - 2. Failure to keep the law led to the downfall of Israel
- D. As you read, see what you will learn about God from this history
  - 1. This is theological history
  - 2. The only way out of our national dysfunction is through a God like that!

### III. **Covenant History**

- A. God’s history is covenant history
  - 1. God acts according to covenant relationships
  - 2. True from the very beginning
- B. **Covenant of works**

1. Adam and Eve in the garden
    - a. God's continued presence and fellowship with them was contingent on their obedience to His one command
  2. They failed in that covenant of works
    - a. God did not destroy them as He might
    - b. Led to the covenant of grace
- C. **Covenant of grace**
1. Promise of a redeemer through seed of woman
  2. **Genesis 3:15** (ESV) — 15 “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”
  3. Promise began to take shape in covenant with Abraham
    - a. Bless him and all the families of the earth
    - b. His faith was credited to him as righteousness
  4. **Covenant with Israel at Sinai**
    - a. Expressed in the form of ancient near-eastern suzerainty treaties
      - (1) Conquering king would establish the parameters of relationship with vassal states
      - (2) Included laws, sanctions, promises of protection and provision
    - b. Often thought of, incorrectly, as a covenant of works
      - (1) Really a covenant of grace
      - (2) Sacrificial system enabled forgiveness
      - (3) Allowed a deeply flawed and unholy people to continue to have a relationship with God
    - c. Israel's inability to fulfill the commands of obedience would make evident the need for a new covenant which would enable the power to fulfill the commands of God
  5. **Covenant** reestablished **in Deuteronomy**
    - a. 2<sup>nd</sup> giving of the law
    - b. Deuteronomy looms large over the Kings history
    - c. Deuteronomy given just prior to entry into the land
    - d. Stipulated conditions for Israel to remain in the land
    - e. Israel and Judah's failure to keep the Deuteronomic law led to their expulsion
    - f. At the same time, the covenant would provide hope for the future
      - (1) Restoration of Israel to the land post-exile
    - g. Scholars call kings Deuteronomic history
  6. **Davidic covenant**
    - a. God's promise to David to provide a perpetual king from the family of David is central to the story unfolding in Kings
    - b. Ultimately, that promise would be fulfilled in David's greater Son, Jesus, Messiah
  7. **New Covenant**



- a. **Jeremiah 31:31–34** (ESV) — 31 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”
- 8. New Covenant fulfilled in Christ
- D. History is covenant history
  - 1. God’s actions are established and seen as unfolding His gracious plan and purposes for redemption
    - a. As well as His sanctions for obedience and disobedience to His commands as expressed in His covenants

#### IV. **Redemptive History**

- A. From the very beginning God promised a redeemer for sin
  - 1. **Genesis 3:15** (ESV) — 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”
- B. The whole history of the OT must be seen from this perspective
- C. **Adam and Eve** were promised a seed
  - 1. Cain and Able
    - a. Able killed by Cain
  - 2. **Seth** given as substitute for Able through whom the redeemer would come
    - a. Led to the rise of wickedness of line of Cain, v. godly line of Seth
- D. **Noah**
  - 1. Eventually, the whole human race devolved into wickedness
    - a. God destroyed the earth, save one family
  - 2. Noah’s sons
    - a. Shem
    - b. Ham
    - c. Japheth
  - 3. **Shem** would be the one through whom the redemptive line would continue
    - a. Ancestor of Abraham
- E. **Abraham’s descendants**
  - 1. **Isaac** and Ishmael
    - a. Isaac – child of the promise
  - 2. **Jacob** and Esau
    - a. Jacob – continued the redemptive line

3. 12 sons of Jacob
  - a. **Judah** – continue the redemptive line
  - b. Scepter would not depart from Judah
- F. Through all of the sordid history of the Judges, descendants of Judah were preserved
  1. Ultimately, when Israel demanded a king, **David** appeared on the scene
  2. David would continue the redemptive line
- G. Kings demonstrates that continued redemptive succession
  1. Northern kingdom
    - a. 20 kings from 9 different families are described
  2. Southern kingdom
    - a. 20 kings from only one family – family of David
  3. David's line was preserved in and through the exile into the period of the restoration
- H. History described in kings is redemptive history

## V. Conclusion

- A. **Theological history**
  1. Learn about God
- B. **Covenant history**
  1. Learn about God's framework for dealing with His people
- C. **Redemptive history**
  1. Learn about how God orchestrates history to provide for the redemption of His people
  2. Throughout all ages
  3. Including us
    - a. Who worship King Jesus
    - b. David's greater son
    - c. The fulfillment of the Davidic promises
- D. Divided Heart – Divided Nation
  1. Just one scene in the grand drama of redemption
- E. Lessons to be learned