

A FLAWED ASSUMPTION MANY MAKE ABOUT KINGS & CHRONICLES

Eric Lyons, Apologetics Press

Thirty-three times in 1st & 2nd Kings you will find the phrase *“the book of the chronicles of the kings of”* Israel/Judah. Ten times in 1st & 2nd Chronicles you will discover the phrase *“the book of the kings of”* Israel/Judah. Many Bible readers assume that *“the book of the chronicles”* mentioned in 1st & 2nd Kings is a reference to 1st & 2nd Chronicles, while *“the book of the kings”* mentioned in 1st & 2nd Chronicles is a reference to 1st & 2nd Kings. Is such an assessment correct? Is *“chronicles”* in Kings a reference to 1st & 2nd Chronicles, and is *“kings”* in Chronicles a reference to 1st & 2nd Kings?

First, consider the matter from purely a common-sense perspective. How could each book be a reference to the other book? It makes sense that one of the books could possibly refer to the other or could prophesy about the future existence of the other, but how could both be referring to each other as already being in existence? If one book was written before the other, then the other book obviously was not yet written, and therefore the reference to it already being in existence would be impossible and nonsensical. Imagine the original recipients reading over 30 times about a book that was not yet in existence. If such a thing happened with a written record today, we would call it fiction, not history. Thus, on the surface alone, it should be evident that at least one of these books is not referring to the other.

Second, the evidence favors Chronicles being written a century or so after Kings. The final event recorded in Kings is Jehoiachin's release from prison in the 37th year of Babylonian captivity (2nd Kings 25:27-30), which would have been in 560 B.C.—the earliest date of the writing of Kings. On the other hand, Chronicles concludes in the first year of the Persian King Cyrus (in 538 B.C.), when he wrote his public proclamation allowing all Jews in his kingdom to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple of Jehovah (2nd Chronicles 36:22-23). Also, some of the Jewish descendants listed in the genealogies in Chronicles push the earliest date of the writing of Chronicles easily back to about 500 B.C. What's more, if Ezra, *“the skilled scribe in the law of Moses”* (Ezra 7:6), wrote Chronicles (as Jewish tradition reasonably contends), the earliest date of Chronicles is moved back even further—to approximately 450 B.C. Thus, given the likely general time periods of the writing of Kings and Chronicles, it seems quite safe

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and rational to conclude that *“the book of the chronicles of the kings”* mentioned more than 30 times in Kings does not refer to Chronicles — a history written perhaps 100 years later.

Third, Kings appeals to *“the book of the chronicles of the kings”* for further details about various matters that are not recorded in 1st & 2nd Chronicles. For example, regarding Nadab, the second king of Israel, 1st Kings 15:31 states: *“Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?”* However, none of Nadab's acts are recorded in 1st & 2nd Chronicles. In fact, the inspired chronicler records very little activity of the kings of the northern kingdom. What's more, 1st Chronicles 9:1 refers to a vast amount of genealogical information (cf. 1st Chronicles 1:1-8:40) in *“the book of the kings of Israel,”* which quite clearly is not from 1st & 2nd Kings. There simply is very little genealogical information in 1st & 2nd Kings other than the overall, general succession of the kings of Israel and Judah. And there certainly is nothing like what the chronicler records in 1st Chronicles 1:1-8:40.

Finally, consider the fact that Kings and Chronicles mention a number of different books about which the inspired writers (a) were aware and (b) used, by inspiration, as reference books. Kings documents the existence of *“the book of the acts of Solomon”* (1st Kings 11:41), while Chronicles mentions *“the book of Nathan the prophet,” “the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite,” “the visions of Iddo the seer”* (1st Chronicles 9:29), *“the chronicles of King David”* (1st Chronicles 27:24), *“the book of Jehu the son of Hanani”* (2nd Chronicles 20:34), etc. Thus, it was quite natural for the inspired writers of Kings and Chronicles to reference non-canonical records in their historical writings. After all, if the inspired apostle Paul could occasionally quote from pagan poets (Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12), couldn't the inspired prophets who penned Kings and Chronicles refer to any number of relevant sources in their histories? To ask is to answer.

Rather than go through life assuming the Bible teaches this or that, let's resolve to reason through God's inspired revelation and draw only those conclusions warranted by the evidence. In the case at hand, we learn that in addition to God's inspired books of Kings and Chronicles, there were various relevant, historical, non-canonical writings to which the penmen of Kings and Chronicles alluded (which were not each other). Taking special note of these facts not only helps us in properly understanding the text, but it can also aid us in responding to Bible critics who may assume contradiction on the part of the writers of Kings and Chronicles.

***"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"***

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

***"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"***

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

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Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

***"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"***

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN"

PROVERBS 25:11

"Your learning speed is determined by your willingness to look stupid. The faster you're willing to be wrong, the faster you'll be right. Pride slows learning. Humility accelerates it. Be willing to be the dumbest person in the room. That's where real growth lives." – Scott D. Clary

GIVE ME THE BIBLE

KDNF 840AM

Sunday @ 9:00 a.m.

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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HYMN 122

Isaac Watts

Do we not know that solemn word,
That we are buried with the Lord,
Baptized into his death, and then
Put off the body of our sin?

Our souls receive diviner breath,
Raised from corruption, guilt, and death;
So from the grave did Christ arise,
And lives to God above the skies.

No more let sin or Satan reign
Over our mortal flesh again;
The various lusts we served before
Shall have dominion now no more.

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