Reading Guide to The Books of Kings
Ralph W. Klein

1 Kings 1-2 Completion of Court History of David
1 Kings 3-11 The Reign of Solomon
1 Kings 12-2 Kings 17 The Separate Kingdoms of Israel and Judah
2 Kings 18-25 The Last Days of Judah; the Exile

Significant Deuteronomistic Interpretations

1 Kings 8 Solomon’s Prayer at the Dedication of the Temple
   vv. 48-50 If they repent with all their mind and with all their heart in the land of their
   enemies...and pray to thee toward their land...then hear thou in heaven...and forgive thy
   people who have sinned against thee.
1 Kgs 11:4 For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods.
2 Kings 17 Sermon on the Fall of the Northern Kingdom
   v. 23 until Yahweh removed Israel out of his sight, as he had spoken by all his servants the
   prophets.
2 Kgs 23:25 Before Josiah there was no king like him, who turned to Yahweh with all his heart
   and with all his soul and with all his might...nor did any like him arise after him.
2 Kings 25:27-30 Release of Jehoiachin from prison

Regnal summaries:

1 Kings 15:4-5 Nevertheless for David’s sake Yahweh his God gave Abijam dominion (a lamp?)
in Jerusalem, setting up his son after him, and establishing Jerusalem; because David did what was
right in the eyes of Yahweh, and did not turn aside from anything that he commanded him all the
days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

1 Kgs 15:25 Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel....He did what was evil in the
sight of Yahweh, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin which he made Israel to sin.

Historical problems

First king mentioned outside of Bible: Omri in Assyrian records and in Moabite stone. cf. 1 Kgs
16:16-17, 21-28

Karkar, his royal city, I destroyed....2,000 chariots, 10,000 soldiers of Ahab, the Israelite....--these
twelve kings he brought to his support... 14,000 of these warriors I slew with the sword....With
my weapons I made their blood to flow down the valleys of the land. The plain was too small to
let their bodies fall...With their bodies I spanned the Orontes as with a bridge...From the Monolith
Inscription of Shalmaneser III, describing his western campaign of 853. Other campaigns in 849,
848, 845, 841, and 839.