

Today we will return to the Old Testament for another emphasis on the *Trustworthiness of God's Words*, this time in the book of Kings.

“No other book of the Bible goes so out of its way to cite God’s words as the driving force and explanation behind the events of human history as the record of 1 and 2 Kings.” [189]¹

Recurring phrases:

“the word of the Lord” in Kings: 51 times (Chronicles: 13 times)²

“thus says the Lord” in Kings: 33 times (Chronicles: 12 times)

These references highlight God’s word, often in prophecy, and many times include the fulfillment of these prophecies. Some fulfillments are immediate, “others take years, decades, or even centuries to materialize.” [190]

The theological point: “*all God’s words are totally trustworthy.*” [190]

The Man of God and The Word of the Lord (1 Kings 13)

Elijah & the Word of the Lord (1 Kings 17-21)

“The *word of the Lord* theme in Kings is like rain; the drops are scattered everywhere, but in certain places it pools into puddles. The next puddle after the man of God episode is the Elijah chronicle.” [193]

On the way to Elijah...

Jeroboam’s son:

¹ Ki 14.13 “All Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he alone of Jeroboam’s *family* will come to the grave, because in him something good was found toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.

¹ Ki 14.17-18 ¶ Then Jeroboam’s wife arose and departed and came to Tirzah. As she was entering the threshold of the house, the child died.¹⁸ All Israel buried him and mourned for him, **according to the word of the LORD** which He spoke through His servant Ahijah the prophet.

¹ Layton Talbert, *The Trustworthiness of God’s Words: Why the Reliability of Every Word from God Matters* (Geanies House, UK: Christian Focus, 2022), 189 (All other quotations will be noted merely by a page number [in brackets]).

² Chronicles is 14% longer and covers essentially the same material.

The rise of Baasha

1 Ki 15.27-29 ¶ Then Baasha the son of Ahijah of the house of Issachar conspired against him, and Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, while Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon. ²⁸ So Baasha killed him in the third year of Asa king of Judah and reigned in his place. ²⁹ It came about as soon as he was king, he struck down all the household of Jeroboam. He did not leave to Jeroboam any persons alive, until he had destroyed them, **according to the word of the LORD**, which He spoke by His servant Ahijah the Shilonite,

The fall of Baasha

1 Ki 16.11-12 ¶ It came about when he became king, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he killed all the household of Baasha; he did not leave a single male, neither of his relatives nor of his friends. ¹² Thus Zimri destroyed all the household of Baasha, **according to the word of the LORD**, which He spoke against Baasha through Jehu the prophet,

The rebuilding of Jericho

1 Ki 16.34 In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho; he laid its foundations with the *loss of* Abiram his firstborn, and set up its gates with the *loss of* his youngest son Segub, **according to the word of the LORD**, which He spoke by Joshua the son of Nun.

Josh 6.26-27 ¶ Then Joshua made them take an oath at that time, saying, “Cursed before the LORD is the man who rises up and builds this city Jericho; with *the loss of* his firstborn he shall lay its foundation, and with *the loss of* his youngest son he shall set up its gates.” ²⁷ ¶ So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.

“God’s words are the wheels on which history rolls along.” [194]

Elijah

^{1 Ki 17.1} ¶ Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.”

When speaking on behalf of God, the prophet is the voice of God.

Then the word of the Lord directed Elijah:

^{1 Ki 17.2-3} The word of the LORD came to him, saying, ³ “Go away from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.

And Elijah obeyed the word of the Lord, and the Lord sent ravens to feed him:

^{1 Ki 17.5} So he went and did according to the word of the LORD, for he went and lived by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.

In the drought, the brook dried up, so the word of the Lord came to him again, sending him to be fed by a widow who was likewise on the edge of starvation:

^{1 Ki 17.8-9} ¶ Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, ⁹ “Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there; behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.”

Elijah assured the widow through the word of the Lord:

^{1 Ki 17.14, 16} “For thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘The bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain on the face of the earth.’ ... ¹⁶ The bowl of flour was not exhausted nor did the jar of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke through Elijah.

The widow’s testimony, after Elijah raises her son from the dead:

^{1 Ki 17.24} Then the woman said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth.”

The Lord directed Elijah to return to Ahab, promising rain by the word of the Lord (18.1):

1 Ki 18.1 ¶ Now it happened *after* many days that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, “Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the face of the earth.”

In the contest with Baal, Elijah gathers twelve stones for his altar, in memory of the patriarch Jacob, who received the word of the Lord (18.31):

1 Ki 18.31 Elijah took twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, “Israel shall be your name.”

In Elijah’s prayer, he asks God to answer so that he could show all he had done was by the word of the Lord (18.36):

1 Ki 18.36 ¶ At the time of the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, Elijah the prophet came near and said, “O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, today let it be known that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and I have done all these things at Your word.

Of course the rain comes according to the word of the Lord, and Elijah flees Jezebel — forgetting the Word?

The Lord brings recovery to the depressed Elijah... how?

1 Ki 19.9 ¶ Then he came there to a cave and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and He said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

The Lord is not in the strong wind, nor the earthquake, nor the fire, but then...

KJV 1Ki 19:12 And after the earthquake a fire; *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire: and after the fire **a still small voice**. ¹³ And it was *so*, when Elijah heard *it*, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, *there came a voice* unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?