

**THE CAMBRIDGE BIBLE FOR
SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES. THE
SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS:
WITH INTRODUCTION AND
NOTES**

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The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges. The Second Book of the Kings: With Introduction and Notes by J. Rawson Lumby

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J. RAWSON LUMBY

**THE CAMBRIDGE BIBLE FOR
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WITH
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The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges.

GENERAL EDITOR:—J. J. S. PEROWNE, D.D.
DEAN OF PETERBOROUGH.

THE SECOND BOOK

OF THE

K I N G S,

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

THE REV. J. RAWSON LUMBY, D.D.
NORRISIAN PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY.

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PREFACE
BY THE GENERAL EDITOR.

THE General Editor of *The Cambridge Bible for Schools* thinks it right to say that he does not hold himself responsible either for the interpretation of particular passages which the Editors of the several Books have adopted, or for any opinion on points of doctrine that they may have expressed. In the New Testament more especially questions arise of the deepest theological import, on which the ablest and most conscientious interpreters have differed and always will differ. His aim has been in all such cases to leave each Contributor to the unfettered exercise of his own judgment, only taking care that mere controversy should as far as possible be avoided. He has contented himself chiefly with a careful revision of the notes, with pointing out omissions, with

suggesting occasionally a reconsideration of some question, or a fuller treatment of difficult passages, and the like.

Beyond this he has not attempted to interfere, feeling it better that each Commentary should have its own individual character, and being convinced that freshness and variety of treatment are more than a compensation for any lack of uniformity in the Series.

DEANERY, PETERBOROUGH.

CONTENTS.

| | PAGES |
|---|--------------|
| I. INTRODUCTION, | |
| i. Title and Divisions. Date, Author, Canonicity and Sources of the Books of Kings | ix—xv |
| ii. Hebrew Text and Versions..... | xv—xviii |
| iii. Summary of the contents of the Books of Kings | xix—xxx |
| iv. Historical survey of the Books of Kings..... | xxx—xliii |
| v. Character of the Books of Kings, and their relation to the other books of the Old Testament: | xliii—xlviii |
| II. CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE..... | xlix—lii |
| III. TEXT AND NOTES | 1—260 |
| IV. INDEX | 261—267 |

* The Text adopted in this Edition is that of Dr Scrivener's *Cambridge Paragraph Bible*. A few variations from the ordinary Text, chiefly in the spelling of certain words, and in the use of italics, will be noticed. For the principles adopted by Dr Scrivener as regards the printing of the Text see his Introduction to the *Paragraph Bible*, published by the Cambridge University Press.

INTRODUCTION.

I. TITLE AND DIVISIONS, DATE, AUTHOR, CANONICITY AND SOURCES OF THE BOOKS OF KINGS.

(a) WHAT we name 1 and 2 Kings was anciently only one book, called by the Jews 'the Book of Kings.' It was broken into two parts by the Greek translators of the Septuagint, who did the same by the book of Samuel and the book of Chronicles, which also at first were both single books. The division between 1 and 2 Kings is made in the middle of the short reign of Ahaziah, king of Israel, a severance which would never have been made by the compiler. Having made two parts out of Samuel, and two out of the Kings, the Greek translators named the four portions thus formed, the first, second, third and fourth books of the kingdoms, or, of the kings. The Latin versions followed the divisions, but not the names, of the Greek. The two portions of Samuel, they called 1 and 2 Samuel, and our books 1 and 2 Kings. Jerome though he knew that each of these pairs was but one book, did not attempt to change titles which had been so long accepted¹. And the whole of the Western Church has followed the Vulgate.

The Jews did not for many centuries adopt the division which had thus become current among Christians. They were led to do so at last for readiness of reference in the frequently recurring controversies between the Christians and themselves. The earliest adoption by the Jews of the Christian chapters in

¹ On this see Jerome's preface to the Books of Samuel and Kings.

the Old Testament has generally been attributed to Rabbi Isaac Nathan, who began a Concordance in 1437. But in the Cambridge University Library there is a Hebrew MS.¹, of at least a century earlier date, in which the Christian divisions are marked all the way through. Into printed Hebrew Bibles they were introduced by Daniel Bomberg in 1518.

(b) To the date of the compilation of the Book of Kings we are guided by the latest events that are mentioned in it. The last chapter (2 Kings xxv.) concludes with the 37th year of Jehoiachin's captivity, when Evil-Merodach released him from prison. This happened B.C. 562. But this last chapter and a few verses 18—20 of chapter xxiv. are identical with chapter lii. of the prophecy of Jeremiah. There however the closing words of chapter li. 'Thus far are the words of Jeremiah' plainly shew that what follows was added by one who thought it no integral part of the prophecy, but added it to complete the historical notices found in other parts of that book, and added it most likely from this book of Kings. We may therefore conclude that this book was compiled after B.C. 562. But the compiler has no word, even of hope, to record concerning the final deliverance of the nation from captivity. That deliverance commenced with the decree of Cyrus, B.C. 536, though the final migrations did not take place till the days of Nehemiah nearly a century later, B.C. 445. Had he known of any movement in the direction of a return, the compiler of Kings would surely have made mention of it. He is cheered, apparently, at the close of his work, by the clemency shewn to Jehoiachin. He would hardly have passed over any agitation for the national redemption without a word of notice. The book was therefore finished before B.C. 536, and its date lies between that year and B.C. 561.

(c) Who the compiler was we have no means of deciding. The Jewish tradition² ascribes it to Jeremiah. But this is exceedingly improbable. The closing events recorded took place in Babylon. But at the overthrow of Jerusalem, Jeremiah

¹ No. 13. See *Catalogue of Heb. MSS.* by Dr Schiller-Szinessy, p. 17.
² *T. B. Baba Bathra* 15a.