

The Message of Kings (Bible Speaks Today)

John W. Olley



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At the beginning of 1 and 2 Kings, Solomon's reign brought peace, prosperity, dynamic international trade and a magnificent center of worship. At the end, by contrast, the people faced a complete reversal: they and their king were in exile; Jerusalem and the temple lay in ruins. How can this story of reversal, told by the very people who suffered the defeat, be of value today and equip us "for every good work"? John Olley shows how the two books of Kings retell the past as preached history, addressing the exilic situation of the original readers. This in turn helps as we ask how they speak to us today. Within the account of paths leading to short-term success but ultimate failure, there are pointers of hope, of God's continuing purposes and promises, and of the people's response in the present. In rich and often surprising ways, the narrative in Kings is part of the history that has shaped, and will continue to shape, the faith and life of Christian believers. Everyday life, along with the turmoil of national and global events, is the arena in which God's people are called to worship, trust and obey him, and it is on aspects of this life that 1 and 2 Kings can throw light.



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