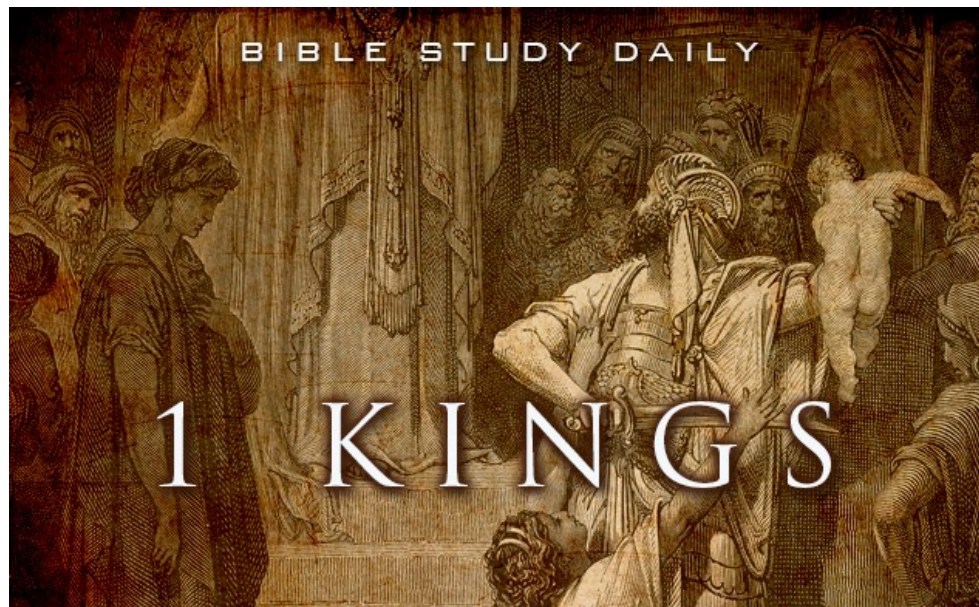




BIBLE STUDY DAILY



This document contains the introduction to the book of 1 Kings as well as my study notes for the book.



Name

The title “1 Kings” is derived from the history of the kings after Saul. Originally the books of 1 Kings and 2 Kings were a single book known simply as Kings. However when the books were translated into Greek (about 150 B.C.) the books of Samuel and Kings were combined into one large book (titled First, Second, Third, and Fourth Kingdom). Later 1 and 2 Samuel were again separated from the books of Kings. Note: in the Latin and Vulgate Bibles they are referred to as First, Second, Third, and Fourth Kings.

Author

The authorship of 1 and 2 Kings is unknown. Most scholars agree that the book contains the writing style of a single individual but there is no agreement as to whom that might be.

Genre

History

Literary Form

Historical Narrative of Royal Records

Time Frame

The record of 1 Kings and 2 Kings covers a period of approximately 410 years. 1 Kings begins around 970 B.C. with David's death, and 2 Kings ends around 560 B.C.

Emphasis

The books of 1 and 2 Kings emphasizes not just a record of the history of the people, but of the important spiritual lessons of obedience to God

- God will fulfill His kingdom purposes
- Obeying God with all our hearts is the basis of His blessings
- Turn from sin that separates us from God
- Fulfill our kingdom purpose

Outline

- The final days of King David 1:1 - 2:11
- Solomon's reign over the united kingdom of Israel 2:12 - 11:43
- Judah and Israel - the divided kingdoms 12:1 - 22:53

What I Noticed Today (1 Kings 1-2:25)

1 Kings 1

David's last days and the issue of planning a successor to the throne.

In verses 1-4 David was old and could no longer stay warm so a search was done for a beautiful young virgin to care for David. Abishag the Shunammite was brought to David and she became his caregiver but he was not intimate with her.

In verses 5-10 Adonijah, David's son, kept exalting himself saying, "I will be king."

Note: Adonijah was David's fourth son and probably the oldest of David's remaining sons.

- Adonijah prepared chariots, cavalry, and had 50 men run ahead of him.
- Apparently this had been going on for some time, but David said nothing to him. Adonijah grew bolder and bolder.
- Eventually, he conspired with Joab and Abiathar the priest.
- He even planned a coronation party for himself with sacrificed animals. He invited the royal household, the men of Judah, and servants of the king. But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the warriors, or his brother Solomon.

In verses 11-40 about that time Nathan the prophet stepped in to let Bathsheba know what Adonijah had planned.

- Nathan and Bathsheba told David about Adonijah and asked if it was his intention to let Adonijah become king rather than Solomon (as he had promised).
- David made good on his earlier promise to Bathsheba and ordered Solomon crowned as king.

In verses 41-53 Adonijah learns of Solomon's coronation.

- Jonathan, son of Abiathar the priest came and told Adonijah that David and made Solomon king.
- When Adonijah's supporters heard that David made Solomon king they deserted him.
- Adonijah was afraid and went to grab hold of the horns of the altar near the tabernacle.
- Solomon told Adonijah he would be shown mercy if he demonstrated

loyalty to the throne and was no longer rebellious.

- Adonijah promised loyalty to Solomon and Solomon sent him home.

Note: Adonijah soon rebelled against Solomon and was killed (1 Kings 2:13-25)

1 Kings 2

1 Kings 2 contains David's final instructions to Solomon.

In verses 1-9 David encouraged Solomon to be faithful to God, walk in His ways, and keep His statutes.

- David gave Solomon a list of people who had betrayed him, as well as those who had been faithful to him.
- David died, having ruled Israel 40 years, 7 years in Hebron, and 33 years in Jerusalem.

In verses 10-25 Adonijah came to Bathsheba and asked her to ask Solomon to give him Abishag (David's caregiver) as a wife.

Note: It was the tradition for a king to take over the concubines of their predecessor as a sign of power. So Adonijah's request was very bold and symbolized taking David's power.

- Solomon wisely refused and ordered Benaiah to kill Adonijah.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *David certainly seemed to have a soft spot in his heart for his rebellious/ traitorous children. First, Absalom tried to take his throne, then Adonijah tried to take the throne. In both cases, David let the action go until it caused bigger problems for him and others. Even after David died Adonijah continued to try to extend his authority, but Solomon wisely saw through his ploy and took decisive action.*
- *Sometimes it is easy to know what to do when it involves someone else, but when it involves our own flesh and blood, we lose the strength of our convictions. We may feel like we are being loving and gracious by letting our children find their way. Sometimes we think if we just ignore their behavior they will see the error of their ways and stop. That is usually not the case. Seldom does ignoring and hoping a problem will go away actually resolve anything. There are times when decisive action is the best way to deal with a difficult action.*

What I Noticed Today (1 Kings 2:26-4)

1 Kings 2:26

Solomon continued to solidify his position as king.

In verses 26-27 Solomon ordered Abiathar the priest to return to Anathoth. Although he deserved to die for aligning himself with Adonijah (1 Kings 1:7), he had carried the Ark of God and suffered through the wars with his father David. Because of this, he was allowed to live.

Note: Abiathar's banishment and removal from priesthood fulfilled the prophecy of 1 Samuel 2:30-36).

In verses 28-29 Joab heard the news of what had happened to Adonijah and Abiathar. Joab realized he also was in trouble for having supported Adonijah (1 Kings 1:7), and for having killed Abner (2 Samuel 3:26-27) and Amasa (2 Samuel 20:8-10). He also sought the sanctuary of the altar of God.

- Solomon ordered Benaiah to take Joab away and kill him because he had murdered Abner and Amasa.
- Benaiah killed Joab and he was buried in the wilderness.
- Then Solomon appointed Benaiah as commander of the army in place of Joab. He also appointed Zadok priest in place of Abiathar.

In verses 36-46 Solomon summoned Shimei and ordered him to build a house in Jerusalem and never leave the city. If he left the city he would be killed as punishment for his rebellion against David (2 Samuel 16:5-13).

- Shimei agreed and said the judgment was fair.
- After three years two of Shimei's slaves ran away to Gath. Shimei went after them, found his slaves in Gath and returned to Jerusalem.
- Solomon ordered Shimei to be brought before him and reminded him of his oath to remain in Jerusalem and the consequences of disobeying.
- Solomon then ordered Benaiah to kill Shimei.

Note: Solomon had effectively dealt with the troublemakers and insurrectionists that had caused problems for his father, and might have continued to cause him problems as the nation's leader.

1 Kings 3

In verse 1 Solomon made an alliance with the Egypt by marrying one of the pharaoh's daughters.

Note: This was a political alliance that secured peace with Egypt,

but as we shall see it came with its own set of problems (see 1 Kings 11:1-8).

In verses 2-15 Solomon and the people were sacrificing to the Lord at the high places (altars) because the temple to the Lord had not yet been built.

- Solomon went to Gibeon to sacrifice to the Lord and made 1,000 burnt offerings at the altar.

Note: The large quantity of offerings indicates that Solomon didn't offer these sacrifices by himself.

- The Lord appeared to Solomon and asked, "What should I give you?"
- Solomon asked for nothing for himself, only wisdom to lead the people. God gave him wisdom and promised him worldly riches as well.
- Solomon went to the Ark of the Lord in Jerusalem and offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings.

In verses 16-28 an example of Solomon's wisdom is detailed:

- Two harlots appeared before Solomon both claiming they had given birth. One woman woke up to find her baby dead but realized the other woman had switched her dead baby with the live one.
- Solomon proposed the baby be cut in half with half given to each mother.
- The true mother said no, spare the child, give her to the other woman. The other woman said, no, cut the child in half.
- Solomon, realizing the true mother had wanted to spare her child, gave the child to her.

1 Kings 4

1 Kings 4 provides the structure of Solomon's government.

In verses 1-6 Solomon lists the high officials in his court: Azariah as high priest, Elihoreph and Ahijah as secretaries, Jehoshaphat as historian, Benaiah as commander of the army, Zadok and Abiathar as priests, Azariah in charge of the deputies (officers), Zabud a priest and advisor to Solomon, Ahishar in charge of the palace, and Adoniram in charge of forced labor.


Note: This represents a dramatic shift away from the tribal leader structure to a centralized government structure for the nation Israel.

In verses 7-19 Solomon established 12 districts throughout the land, and each district was responsible for supplying the king's needs for one month.

In verses 20-28 the monthly provision for Solomon's court is detailed.

Note: Scholars estimate the amounts listed in 1 Kings 4:22-26 was enough to feed 20,000 people.

Note: 1 Kings 4:26 mentions the horses and chariots Solomon had acquired. David had not used chariots and because they were expensive



took significant training it is quite possible that were not Israelite charioteers. As for the horses Deuteronomy 17:16, specifically prohibits the king from accumulating herds of horses or from going to Egypt to procure them.

In verses 29-34 Solomon's wisdom is proclaimed a second time. His wisdom was greater than all the people of the east and his reputation extended to all the surrounding nations.

- Solomon wrote 3,000 proverbs and 1,500 songs (psalms).
- People came from all over to hear his wisdom.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *The people were enjoying peace and prosperity under Solomon (v. 4:20: "they were eating, drinking, and rejoicing"). No doubt this was a welcome change from the years of wars and famine that they had endured during Saul and David's reign.*
- *Solomon's government represented a significant shift in structure. The people went from tribal alliances under Saul and David, doing battle with each other almost as often as they battled outsiders, to a more centralized, unified structured government under Solomon.*

What I Noticed Today (1 Kings 5-7)

1 Kings 5

Timber and stone are acquired for the construction of the Lord's Temple.

In verses 1-12 Solomon's father, David, had provided much of what was needed to build the Temple, but Solomon reached out to Hiram, the King of Tyre to supply cedar trees from the forest of Lebanon.

Note: Hiram was the Gentile king of Tyre (Lebanon). The timber Hiram supplied was taken to the Mediterranean Sea made into rafts, floated to Joppa, and then carried to Jerusalem.

- Solomon provided a 100,000 bushels of wheat and 110,000 gallons of oil to Hiram, king of Tyre, every year. In exchange, Hiram supplied timber for the construction of the temple.
- Solomon and Hiram made a treaty with each other and there was peace between them.

In verses 13-18 to help in the work,

- Solomon drafted 30,000 men and sent 10,000 of them to work in Lebanon for a month at a time.
- There were 70,000 porters and 80,000 stone cutters in the mountains.
- The immense stones needed for the Temple were cut at stone quarries nearby.

1 Kings 6

Construction of the Lord's Temple begins.

In verse 1 the construction of the Lord's Temple began 480 years after the Israelites came out of Egypt.

Note: This would place the date of the Israelite's exodus from Egypt at approximately 1446 or 1447 B.C.

In verses 2-10 details of the size and construction of the Temple are described.

In verses 11-13 the Lord entered into a covenant with Solomon (1 Kings 6:11) stating that the Lord would dwell among the people and not forsake them as long as they walked in His statutes, obeyed His rules, and kept His commandments.

In verses 14-36 the details of the construction of the interior of the Lord's Temple are described.

In verses 37-38 the Temple construction began in the fourth year of Solomon's reign and was finished seven years later.

1 Kings 7

Once the Temple was completed, David began building his own house and other buildings in the palace complex.

In verse 1 the construction of Solomon's palace took 13 years to complete.

In verses 2-12 the construction of a building referred to as "The House of the Forest of Lebanon" is described.

- In addition, Solomon also built a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, his wife.

Note: The name of the building is derived from the number and size of the cedar pillars used in its construction.

- All of the buildings were made of stone and cedar wood.

In verses 13-47 while his own house was being built, Solomon brought Hiram/Hiram (not the same Hiram as the king), who was a skilled worker in bronze to make all the temple furnishings.

Verses 15-22. Two large bronze pillars were cast in bronze. They were installed at the portico of the sanctuary (the entrance to the Temple. The one on the left was named Boaz (in Him is Strength) and the one on the right was named Jachin (He shall establish).

Verses 23-26. The Sea, a large bronze basin that held 11,000 gallons of water was cast and placed on 12 bronze oxen. It was placed between the Temple and the altar.

Verses 27-39. Ten bronze water basins were cast and placed on wooden carts with wheels so they could be moved from place to place. Each basin held 220 gallons of water.


Verses 40-47. Hiram supervised the casting of all the bronze pots, shovels, and bowls used in the temple.

In verses 48-50 Solomon completed the construction of all the gold furnishings used in the Temple including the altar of incense, the table of gold, ten gold tables for the showbread, ten gold lampstands, and all the gold utensils.

In verse 51 when all the furnishings were completed Solomon had them dedicated and stored in the temple treasury.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *Building the temple was a massive undertaking It required adherence to the details of God's plan. It required significant preparation in the assembling of the materials. And perhaps most importantly, when it came time to build, it required sacrifice, cooperation among the people,*



and sustained focus over a long period of time.

- *Imagine what we might accomplish as a people of God, if we came together in such unity of purpose, with such dedication, willingness to sacrifice, and focus today!*

What I Noticed Today (1 Kings 8)

1 Kings 8

In verses 1-9 Solomon brought all the leaders of Israel together for the dedication of the temple of the Lord in the seventh month at the Festival of the Harvest (aka Booths or Tabernacles, Exodus 23:16).

- The priests carried the Ark and the temple utensils from the Tent of Meeting to the Temple.
- The Ark was placed inside the inner sanctuary (Holy of Holies) beneath the wings of the cherubim.

Note: Until God moved in the temple was just another beautiful building. His presence is what made the building special.

The Temple was a place of God's glory. Solomon began the process of bringing the Ark into the temple. The Levites brought the ark up out of the tent and installed it in the temple in the inner sanctuary, in the Holy of Holies. When the priests left the Holy place, the glory of God filled the whole house of the Lord (1 Kings 8:10).

The Temple was a place of testimony. The Ark represented the covenant promise God made with the people of Israel (1 Kings 8:21). The Ark was a symbol of all that God had done in bringing the people out of Egypt, through the desert, and into the Promised Land.

The Temple was a place of witness to the world. Solomon, knowing that foreigners would hear about the Lord's house and come, asked the Lord to hear the prayers of all those who came before the temple and called on His name. He prayed that all the people of the world would come to know that the Temple is called by His name (1 Kings 8:41-43).


The Temple was a place of blessing and sacrifice. Solomon blessed the Lord for fulfilling all His promises to the people of Israel and called on God to bless the people as they walked faithfully with Him, walking in his statutes, and keeping His commandments. Solomon sacrificed peace offerings of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep (1 Kings 8:54-62).

In verses 64-66 Solomon consecrated the courtyard in front of the Lord's temple with burnt, grain, and fellowship offerings.

- The people throughout Israel celebrated the consecration of the temple of the Lord for 14 days. On the fifteenth day, Solomon sent everyone home rejoicing in what the Lord had done for His people.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *Our bodies are just bodies until God breathes life into us. We are just*



people until we accept Christ, then we are children of God and His Spirit lives in us. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6:9 that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. With that in mind, I ask myself is my body a place of God's glory, am I a testimony, am I a witness to the world, am I a place of blessing and sacrifice? These are important questions worthy of daily reflection.

What I Noticed Today (1 Kings 9-11)

1 Kings 9

God established a covenant with Solomon.

In verses 1-9 about 25 years into his reign (946 B.C.) Solomon had finished building the Lord's Temple, his palace, and other buildings.

- The Lord appeared to Solomon a second time like He had appeared to Solomon at Gibeon.
- The Lord responded to Solomon's prayer by putting His name on His house (temple) forever and keeping His eyes and heart there for all time.
- The Lord restated his promise to protect and bless the people if Solomon would walk with the Lord in the integrity of heart and uprightness.
- But, says the Lord, if Solomon turned away from following the Lord, the Lord promised to afflict the people, up to and including taking the land away from them.

In verses 10-14 at the end of 20 years, Solomon had completed building the Lord's Temple and his own palace. Solomon gave Hiram, king of Tyre, 20 cities in Galilee.

- In addition to the cedar and pine wood, Hiram had given 9,000 pounds of gold (120 talents) to Solomon.
- When Hiram visited the 20 cities he referred to them as the Land of Cabul (good for nothing)

Note: Hiram referred to Solomon as "my brother" (v. 13). Scholars believe this language is an indication of a treaty between the two rulers (Amos 1:9).

In verses 15-19 Solomon continued building. He built terraces between the hills and extended the wall around the city of Jerusalem. He also built walls around the cities of Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. He rebuilt Beth-horon, Baalath, Tamar, the storage cities, and the cities where the cavalry was stationed.

In verses 20-23 the people who remained in the land after it had been conquered by the Israelites were conscribed to forced labor (the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites). 550 Israelites served as deputies supervising the workforce (along with 3,300 foremen 1 Kings 5:16).

In verses 24-28 Solomon's wife, the daughter of Pharaoh moved from the City of David (Jerusalem) to the house Solomon had built for her. Three times a year Solomon offered sacrifices before the Lord. Solomon assembled

a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber on the Red Sea in Edom who conducted trade with Ophir

1 Kings 10

The Queen of Sheba pays Solomon a visit.

In verses 1-13 through his foreign trade, Solomon's wisdom became known throughout the world, and the Queen of Sheba came to visit. The Queen recognized the Lord's blessing on Solomon and his reign, as a sign of the Lord's love for Israel.

Note: Sheba is modern Yemen and is about 1,200 miles from Jerusalem.

- The queen admitted that Solomon's wisdom and wealth were even greater than she had heard. Although the Queen was a pagan she gave credit for this to Yahweh.
- She gave Solomon 4-1/2 tons of gold (120 talents), spices, and precious stones.
- Solomon gave the queen whatever she desired and she returned home.

In verses 14-29 Solomon had enormous wealth flowing into the country from all his foreign trade. 25 tons of gold came to him every year through his trade with other nations.

- People from all over the world came bearing gifts to hear the wisdom of Solomon.
- Among other things, Solomon accumulated 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen and stationed them in the chariot cities.

Note: The accumulation of horses was contrary to the admonition in Deuteronomy 17:16 not to do so.


1 Kings 11

1 Kings 11 marks Solomon's stark turn away from the Lord.

In verses 1-13 Solomon loved the ladies. He didn't care where they came from or what gods they worshipped.

Note: Deuteronomy 17:17 warned kings not to accumulate wives. And Deuteronomy 7:3-4 warned the Israelites not to intermarry with women who worshipped foreign Gods.

- Solomon ignored both of these commands from God by accumulating 700 wives and princesses, and 300 concubines, many of whom worshipped foreign gods.
- To keep them happy he allowed them to worship their foreign gods, and eventually, he even helped build altars to those gods.

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- God called Solomon to account for turning away from Him and told him judgement would come in the form of having all of his kingdom except for one tribe stripped away.

In verses 14-40 God raised up enemies against Solomon.

- God began to raise up adversaries against Solomon (Hadad vv. 14-22, Rezon vv. 23-25, and Jeroboam 26-39).
- Ahijah, the prophet met Jeroboam and told him the Lord would strip away ten tribes from Solomon and give them to Jeroboam if Jeroboam would keep the Lord's commands and statutes.
- Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam so Jeroboam fled to Shishak king of Egypt and stayed there until Solomon's death.

In verses 41-43 Solomon reigned over Israel 40 years. He died and was buried in Jerusalem and his son, Rehoboam became king.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *It's interesting that Solomon began so fully alive for God and for the privilege of leading His people that all Solomon asked of God was wisdom. But once wealth and power became his, he began to fall away. He turned away from God for riches, and wives. Even in the midst of God's rebuke we do not see Solomon repenting of his sin or taking any action to restore his relationship with the Lord.*
- *God's blessings come out of God's grace, but they can only be retained and enjoyed by obedience!*

What I Noticed Today (1 Kings 12-13)

1 Kings 12

Rehoboam succeeded his father Solomon as king.

In verses 1-5 Rehoboam went to Shechem to be made the king of the Israelites.

- Leaders of the northern tribes summoned Jeroboam to represent them before Rehoboam. (Jeroboam had fled to Egypt to get away from Solomon.)
- Jeroboam and the leaders of Israel came to Rehoboam and asked him to lighten the oppressive load that had been imposed on them by Solomon.
- Rehoboam told the people he would respond to their request in three days.

In verses 6-11 Rehoboam consulted with the advisors who had served his father, Solomon.

- Solomon's advisors told Rehoboam if he would be a servant to the people and speak kindly to them he would secure their loyalty forever.
- Rather than listening to the advice of the elders to lighten the tax load, Rehoboam sought out the advice of his friends who told him what he wanted to hear—increase the burden on the people.

Note: Rehoboam was not an inexperienced, young man when he became king. He was 41 years old!


In verses 12-19 on the third day, Rehoboam told the people not only would he not lessen their tax load, he would increase it.

- This caused the people of Israel to divide, with only the people of Judah remaining completely loyal to Rehoboam.
- The 10 northern tribes banded together and rebelled against the tribe of Judah.

In verses 20-24 the Israelites appointed Jeroboam as their king. Rehoboam returned to Jerusalem and assembled an army of 180,000 men to reunite the tribes under his leadership.

- A message from God came to Shemaiah, the man of God, who told Rehoboam he was not to attack his Israelite brothers.
- Rehoboam and the army did as the Lord said and they returned home.

In verses 25-33 Jeroboam established Shechem as his capital.

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- Afraid that the people would journey to Jerusalem for their sacrifices and return to Rehoboam, Jeroboam had golden calves made with one placed in Dan (in the north) and one placed in Bethel (in the south) and said here is your God that brought you out of Egypt.
 - Jeroboam built shrines and even appointed whoever wanted to be a priest.
 - Jeroboam established a festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth month (like the Day of Atonement). He offered sacrifices on the altar and burned incense.

Note: God had promised Jeroboam that he would establish Jeroboam's rule if he would follow and obey God, but Jeroboam immediately turned away from God. He appointed priests from non-Levites, and he created imitations of altars and festivals on his own which led the people away from God rather than to Him.

1 Kings 13

In verses 1-10 Jeroboam built up high places and altars and made sacrifices there. But this transgression of leading the people away from God angered God, and He sent a prophet to confront Jeroboam.

- The prophet conveyed God's message that a man from the house of David named Josiah would demolish the altar and desecrate it with human remains, and slaughter the false priests.

Note: Josiah, who reigned from 640-609 B.C., fulfilled this prophecy 290-years after it was given.

- Jeroboam cried out, calling for the man of God to be arrested. When he reached his arm out it became withered.
- Jeroboam pleaded with the prophet to restore his arm and God restored it, yet Jeroboam did not repent of his ways or change his course of action.
- Jeroboam invited the man of God to his home to eat and receive a reward, but the man of God refused and left.
- As the prophet left Jeroboam, God told him to leave, not stop, and return home via a different route.

In verses 11-32 along the way, another man who claimed to be a prophet lied to the man of God who had prophesied against Jeroboam and told him an angel had appeared to him and that prophet should stop and eat with him.

- This was a direct contradiction of what God had told the prophet, yet he stopped and ate with the man.
- As a result, God passed judgement on the prophet and he was killed by a lion on his way home. The lion did not eat him or maul him but stood beside him.
- When the old prophet heard about it, he saddled his donkey, retrieved the



man of God's body, then buried him in his own tomb.

In verses 33-34 Jeroboam heard about God's judgement on the man of God, but he did not repent of his ways. Jeroboam continued to appoint new priests from non-Levites and worship at high places. For this sin (falling away from God, apostasy), the house of Jeroboam would be wiped out.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *Rehoboam had a chance to be a true servant leader, but instead he chose to have the people serve him, and it cost him dearly, the nation of Israel divided. Even though that division did not immediately cause a civil war it did pit the people of Israel against one another.*
- *The prophet was lied to by someone who said they had a message from God. It is important that when God directs us to do one thing we are very careful about listening to those who say they have a word from God for us that contradicts what God has already told us. Had the man of God stuck to doing what God told him, his life would have ended differently.*

What I Noticed Today (1 Kings 14-15)

Note: Yikes! These two chapters can be a bit confusing because they switch back and forth between kings of the north and the kings of the south. It makes it more difficult to keep track of who is who. To complicate matters even more, in many of the introductions to one king will be a reference to the king ruling the other part of the country. It is helpful to remember the kingdom of Judah is in the south, Israel is in the north.

1 Kings 14

1 Kings 14 opens with God's very strong rebuke against Jeroboam

In verses 1-5 Jeroboam's son, Abijah, became sick. Jeroboam told his wife to disguise herself and go to Shiloh and ask the prophet Ahijah what would happen to his son. The Lord warned Ahijah in a vision that she would visit him soon and He told Ahijah what to tell her.

Note: The phrase "at that time" in verse 1 likely means this followed shortly after the events of 1 Kings 13.

In verses 6-18 the Lord issued a strong rebuke against Jeroboam through the prophet Ahijah.

- God had lifted Jeroboam up and made him king over Israel.
- Yet Jeroboam had only done evil in the eyes of the Lord by making graven images and leading people away from God.
- The Lord accused Jeroboam of behaving more wickedly than all those who came before him.
- Because of his rebellion the Lord said that all Jeroboam's male descendants would be swept away and his dynasty would end. The boy who was sick would die and be buried. No one else in Jeroboam's family would be buried; dogs would eat anyone who died in the city and birds would eat anyone who died in the country.
- Ahijah told Jeroboam's wife the Lord would raise up a king who would cut off Jeroboam's family.

Note: Baasha fulfilled this prophecy in 1 Kings 15:27-29.

- Jeroboam's wife returned home and her son died just as Ahijah had prophesied.

In verses 19-20 Jeroboam reigned 22 years before he died and his son, Nadab, reigned after him.

In verses 21-30 Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, reigned in Judah for 17 years.

- He was a bad king in that he turned the people away from worshipping God.
- He built high places and Asherim to worship foreign gods. He had male prostitutes and a host of other abominations.
- In Rehoboam's fifth year Shishak, king of Egypt, waged war against Judah, plundering the gold from the house of the Lord, and the king's house.
- Rehoboam and Jeroboam were continually at war until Rehoboam died, and his son Abijam reigned in his place.

1 Kings 15


In verses 1-8 in Jeroboam's (Israel) 18th year, Abijam son of Rehoboam began to rule over Judah. Abijam only ruled three years (913-911 B.C.). He was a bad king, not devoted to God. There was a continual war between Abijam and Jeroboam. Abijam died and his son Asa became king over Judah.

In verses 9-24 in Jeroboam's 20th year Asa (Abijam's son) began to rule over Judah.

- Asa was a good king who ruled for 41 years in Jerusalem.
- His heart was devoted to the Lord.
- He got rid of the prostitutes and idols and even deposed his queen mother because she worshipped foreign gods.
- He began to restore the treasury of the house of the Lord.
- There was a war between Baasha and Asa throughout their reigns.

In verses 25-32 Nadab (son of Jeroboam) began reigning in Israel in Asa's second year.

- Nadab reigned over Israel for two years (910-909 B.C.).
- He was a bad king, who walked in the ways of his father Jeroboam.
- Then Baasha son of Ahijah killed Nadab and became king of Israel.
- Baasha killed all the surviving members of the house of Jeroboam.
- There was a war between Baasha and Asa throughout their reigns.
- Asa removed the silver and gold from the treasury of the Lord's temple and the royal treasury. He sent it to Ben-hadad king of Aram who lived in Damascus asking him to break his treaty with Baasha.
- Ben-hadad broke his treaty with Baasha and went and attacked cities in Israel.
- In Asa's old age he developed a disease in his feet, died, and was buried in Jerusalem. His son Jehoshaphat became king in his place.



In verses 33-34 in Asa's third year, Baasha (son of Ahijah) became king over Israel and he reigned in Tirzah 24 years (909-986 B.C.).

- He was also a bad king, following the example of Jeroboam.
- He became king by killing Nadab and all his household.
- Baasha was at war with Asa all of their days.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *Solomon's great kingdom was decimated. Their nation was divided and the great riches of their treasuries were gone. This was all part of God's judgement. Yet these bad kings did not repent of their sins and turn back to God. The only decent king here was Asa in that he tried to restore the worship of God in Judah.*
- *It is so easy for us to read these words and think 'you fools' look what you've done to yourselves by turning away from God. Then I read the news and realize our society is doing the very same thing today. We are enjoying God's blessings, but turning away from following Him as faithful children.*

What I Noticed Today (1 Kings 16-18)

1 Kings 16

1 Kings 16 opens with God's strong rebuke against Baasha for making the people of Israel sin like Jeroboam had done.

In verses 1-4 the Lord spoke a word of rebuke to Baasha through Jehu the prophet.

Note: This Jehu is a prophet and is not the same Jehu who was king of Israel (941 -814 B.C.).

- The Lord said He had lifted Baasha up and made him ruler over Israel but Baasha had behaved like Jeroboam causing the people to sin against the Lord.
- Therefore, the Lord promised to sweep away the house of Baasha

Note: The words of judgement in verse 4 are nearly identical to the judgement against Jeroboam in 1 Kings 14:10-11.

In verses 5-7 Baasha died and was buried in Tirzah. His son Elah became king and reigned for two years.

In verses 8-14 in the 26th year of Judah's king Asa, Elah became king over Israel and reigned for two years (886-885 B.C.).

- Elah's chariot commander, Zimri rose up against Elah.
- Zimri killed Elah and became king in his place.
- Zimri killed the entire house of Baasha. This fulfilled God's judgement (1 Kings 16:3).

In verses 15-22 in the 27th years of Asa king of Judah, Zimri became king over Israel and reigned for 7-days (in 885 B.C.).

- Because Zimri had killed Elah others in the nation of Israel appointed Omri to be king.
- Omri went up against Zimri to attack Zimri at Tirzah. They besieged the city and when Zimri realized the city had been surrounded he went into the royal palace and committed suicide by burning his house down.

In verses 20-22 the nation of Israel divided yet again with some of the people following Tibni, and the rest following Omri.

- Tibni and Omri reigned over portions of Israel for 6-years (885-880 B.C.)
- Omri's army killed Tibni and he became king over Israel.

- Omri reigned over all Israel for 6-years (880-874 B.C.).

In verses 23-28 in the 36th year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king over Israel and reigned for 12 years from Tirzah.

- But Omri was also an evil king, worse than all the kings that came before him.
- He died and his son Ahab reigned in his place.

In verses 29-34 in the 38th year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab became king over Israel and he reigned from Samaria for 22 years (874-853 B.C.).

- Ahab was also an evil king who followed in the ways of Jeroboam leading the people to sin against the Lord.
- Ahab married Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal a Canaanite.
- Ahab built an altar to Baal and he and Jezebel worshipped Baal.
- Ahab also set up an Asherah pole to worship Baal
- Ahab provoked the Lord more than all the kings of Israel who went before him.

1 Kings 17

1 Kings 17 provides some welcome relief from the warring kings!

In verses 1-7 Elijah the Tishbite, a prophet, suddenly appeared to Ahab proclaiming a three-year drought.

- The Lord told Elisha to leave Samaria and go to the wadi Kerith.

Note: A wadi is a ravine in which a stream would run during the rainy season.

- During that time, God miraculously cared for Elijah feeding him and providing a source of water.

In verses 8-16 when the brook dried up, the Lord told Elijah to go to Zarephath where he lived with a Gentile widow and her son.

- God miraculously provided for them through oil and flour that never ran out.


In verses 17-24 when the woman's son died, Elijah cried out to the Lord and was able to bring the boy back to life.

- The woman declared that Elijah was a man of God and that what Elijah spoke was the truth.

1 Kings 18

Elijah brings a message to Ahab.

In verses 1-19 at the end of the three years God told Elijah to go to Ahab.

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- Elijah's message to Ahab was that the Lord was about to send rain upon the land of Samaria.

Note: It is likely that the account in verses 2b-6 precedes verses 1-2.

- Ahab called for Obadiah who was in charge of the palace. Ahab and Obadiah went throughout the land looking for water.
- Ahab's wife, Jezebel, had tried to kill off all of the prophets of God but Obadiah had hidden 100 of them and cared for them in caves.

Note: Jezebel was a Baal worshiper who with Ahab had outlawed worship of God.


- Obadiah encountered Elijah on the road while he was out looking for water.
- Elijah told Obadiah to return to Ahab and tell him that Elijah would present himself to Ahab that day.
- Obadiah went and told Ahab about Elijah and Ahab went out to meet Elijah.
- When Ahab saw Elijah, he called him the "destroyer of Israel."
- Elijah told Ahab it was he and his household who had destroyed Israel.
- Then Elijah ordered Ahab to bring all the prophets of Baal and Asherah and meet him at Mount Carmel.

In verses 20-46 Elijah invited Ahab and the prophets of Baal and Asherah to Mt Carmel (the most important site for Baal worship).

- Elijah challenged them not to have divided loyalty, either worship Baal or God.
- He set up a contest to see which god really was God.
- The Baals killed a bull and placed it on the altar and called out to Baal all day to bring down fire but nothing happened.
- Eventually, Elijah prepared a bull on God's altar. He dug a trench around the altar and had water poured on the wood, so much that it filled the trench.
- Elijah called on God to send fire. The fire that God sent burned the entire offering, the wood, the stones, and consumer the water in the trench.
- The people fell face down worshipping the Lord.
- Then Elijah ordered the people to seize the prophets of Baal. They were taken to the Wadi Kishon where Elijah killed them all.

Note: The Wadi Kishon runs parallel to the Mount Carmel range on the north side.

- After that God sent rain to the land.

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- Ahab got in his chariot and went to Jezreel (about 25 miles).
 - Elijah ran ahead of Ahab to Jezreel.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *Ahab had allowed Baal worship to take over in the land and despite the three-year draught, he never repented and returned to God. Ahab even refused to repent after the contest between Baal and God. The widow and her son witnessed the miracle of the flour and oil yet she did not recognize Elijah as an honorable man of God until he brought her son back to life.*
- *How stubborn our hearts can be! We can be so set in our ways and false beliefs that we do not recognize the truth of God and His miracles when they are right before us. My prayer is that we will have open hearts to see and understand God's truth!*

What I Noticed Today (1 Kings 19-20)

1 Kings 19

In verses 1-9 Ahab gets home and tells his wife, Jezebel everything that had happened on Mount Carmel including how Elijah had killed all the prophets of Baal.

- Elijah is coming off of this incredible high of the victory over the Baals, when suddenly Jezebel sends him a message that says, “I’m going to have you killed.”
- Elijah was afraid of Jezebel and her threat so he ran and hid in the wilderness under a broom tree. He prayed that he would die.

Note: This is the same Elijah who God cared for miraculously during the three years of drought, and sent fire from heaven, and suddenly he is living in fear of Jezebel instead of in faith that God will be with him.

- An angel of the Lord appeared to Elijah twice commanded him to eat and drink some water.
- The angel encouraged him, and on the strength of that encouragement Elijah traveled 40 days to Mt. Horeb (Sinai) where God had originally made a covenant with Moses (Exodus 24:18).

Note: A direct route from Beersheba to Mount Horeb would be about 200 miles and take about 14 days walking on foot.

In verses 9b-18 Elijah has an encounter with God on Mount Horeb:

- God demonstrated his power to Elijah on Mt. Horeb first in the form of a great wind, then an earthquake, and finally in a fire.
- But then the Lord spoke to Elijah in a small still voice.
- God let Elijah know that he was still in control.
- Elijah was directed to anoint Hazael king over Syria (Arameans), Jehu king over Israel, and Elisha as a prophet to replace him.
- The Lord said Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha would put to death all those who had bowed to Baal. A remnant of 7,000 would be left in Israel.

In verses 19-21 Elijah left the wilderness and went and found Elisha (Elisha means “My God is Salvation”). Elijah threw his cloak over Elisha (symbolizing a transfer of authority). Elisha slaughtered his oxen, burned his plows, had a farewell banquet, and left to follow Elijah.

Note: The phrase “What have I done to you?” (v. 20b) is a way of giving permission. It is like saying, “Do what you please.”

1 Kings 20

1 Kings 20 shifts our attention to Ben-Hadad, king of Syria (Arameans), who led a group of 32 kings against Ahab, king of Israel.

In verses 1-34 Ben-Hadad besieged Samaria and sent messengers to Ahab calling for a tribute to be paid to him (all his silver, gold, wives, and children).

- Ahab agreed to Ben-hadad's terms.
- Ben-hadad then said the next day his men would personally come and take whatever they wanted.
- Ahab spoke to his counselors and they said not to agree to Ben-hadad's terms, so Ben-Hadad took up positions against Ahab.
- Ahab did battle with Ben-Hadad twice and defeated Ben-Hadad each time.
- The first victory proclaimed by the Lord was to demonstrate to Ahab that the Lord was God (1 Kings 20:13).
- The second victory was to demonstrate to Ben-Hadad that the Lord was God (1Kings 20:28).
- Ben-hadad agreed to return the cities his father had taken from Ahab's father (Baasha).
- Ahab made a treaty with Ben-Hadad after the second victory rather than killing him as God had directed.

In verses 35-43 the Lord sent a prophet to confront Ahab for releasing Ben-hadad in opposition to the Lord's command to destroy him.

- The prophet confronted Ahab describing a similar situation but Ahab didn't recognize the situation or the prophet. Because Ahab had spared Ben-hadad he would die in his place. Because Ahab had spared the people of Ben-hadad, the people of Israel would die.
- Ahab left to return home to Samaria resentful and angry because of the prophecy against him.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *Elijah experienced a spiritual high followed by a spiritual low and a significant depression. This is often the case with us as well. We should trust in God, and rest in our faith knowing that God is in control.*
- *Ahab was such a stubborn hard-hearted leader. God gave him victory twice even though he didn't deserve it. God brought messages to him from prophets. Yet Ahab was too stubborn and hard-hearted to repent and turn away from his sins, and to the Lord who had just saved him and the people.*

- *It is easy for us today to get so caught up in our own way that we miss God's blessings and favor right before us. We can even miss God's message to us to trust Him, and follow Him in faith.*



What I Noticed Today (1 Kings 21-22)

1 Kings 21

Ahab tries to purchase Naboth's vineyard.

In verses 1-16 we have King Ahab who just had two miraculous military victories over Ben-Hadad, and he gets all pouty when his neighbor Naboth refuses to sell him his vineyard and give up his family's inheritance.

Note: There was no provision in the Levitical law for selling your family inheritance, so Ahab shouldn't have been surprised by Naboth's response.

- However, Jezebel, Ahab's wife, says she will get the land for him.
- She knows enough about the Levitical law to have two men accuse Naboth of cursing God.
- As a result, Naboth was stoned and Ahab took his vineyard.

In verses 17-29 the word of the Lord came to Elijah and told him to go to Ahab and confront him for killing Naboth and taking his vineyard.

- Elijah appears before Ahab and passes judgment on him from the Lord for the killing of Naboth and for doing evil in the Lord's sight.
- Elijah says the Lord has promised to eliminate all of Ahab's heirs because he had provoked Israel to sin. The Lord's condemnation extended to Jezebel who said Elijah, would be eaten by the dogs in Jezreel.
- In a surprising turn of events, Ahab repented. He tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and fasted upon hearing the Lord's judgment, so the Lord delayed bringing disaster on the house of Ahab.

Note: Jezebel did not repent and the prophecies regarding her death were fulfilled (2 Kings 9:30-37).

1 Kings 22

1 Kings 22 describes three years of relative peace between Aram (some translations say Syria, this is Ben-Hadad) and Jehoshaphat (king of Judah).

In verses 1-12 Jehoshaphat came to Ahab (king of Israel) to form an alliance (in the third year of the peace, 853 B.C.).

- Jehoshaphat asked Ahab for a prophet to inquire if they would have victory over Ben-Hadad.
- Ahab brought 400 prophets who told the kings what they wanted to hear; that they would succeed in the battle.

- But Jehoshaphat asked for a *true* prophet of God.

In verses 13-28 Micaiah, a prophet of God, came and appeared before the kings.

- At first, Micaiah told the kings they should go into battle.
- Ahab made Micaiah swear to tell only the truth in the name of God.
- At that point, Micaiah bravely told the kings they would lose the battle.
- Ahab ordered Micaiah turned over to the jailer and put in prison until he returned safely from battle. Micaiah said, if you return from battle, the Lord has not spoken through me.

In verses 29-40 Ahab tried to deceive the enemy and Jehoshaphat by having Jehoshaphat wear his robes into battle (the enemy would always try to kill the king).

- This, he thought, would keep him safe, and make Jehoshaphat the target.
- A random arrow from the enemy killed Ahab, king of Israel.
- Ahab died and was buried in Samaria. His son, Ahaziah reigned in his place.


In verses 41-50 Jehoshaphat, son of Asa became king of Judah in the fourth year of Israel's King Ahab.

Note: Jehoshaphat ruled as co-regent with his father, Asa due to Asa's poor health for three years (873-870 B.C.). Jehoshaphat ruled for a total of 25 years (873-848 B.C.).

- He was 35 years old when he became king and he ruled in Jerusalem for 25 years.
- Jehoshaphat walked in the ways of his father, Asa. He tried to do what was right in the eyes of the Lord.
- However, he allowed the high places to remain and people still sacrificed and burned incense there.
- He removed the rest of the male cult prostitutes, leftover from the reign of his father, Asa.
- Jehoshaphat died and was buried in the city of Jerusalem.
- His son, Jehoram, became king in his place.

Note: Jehoram began ruling as a co-regent with his father Jehoshaphat (853-848 B.C.). The he ruled as king for another seven years (848-841 B.C.).

In verses 51-53 Ahaziah, Ahab's son, became king over Israel in the 17th year of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. He ruled for less than two full years (853-852 B.C.)

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- Ahaziah was an evil king who walked in the ways of his mother and father, doing evil in the sight of the Lord, leading the people of Israel away from God by worshipping Baal.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *The story of Ahab and Naboth's vineyard recounts my sins. Ahab was covetous (Exodus 20:17), he and Jezebel worshiped other gods (Baal), they lied, they committed murder by having an innocent man killed, they stole his property, and they tried to cover it all up. But God saw all the sins of Ahab and Jezebel and passed judgment on them. Covetousness led to many other sins!*
- *The story of Jehoshaphat and Ahab illustrates how we must be careful in forming alliances. Ahab seemed to want to hear from God, but ultimately both kings did what they wanted despite the prophecy from Micaiah.*