

I KINGS



OLD TESTAMENT KINGS & PROPHETS

This chart is provided to help you place the Old Testament Prophets in proper relationship to the Kings of Israel & Judah. Scholarship differs slightly on the timespan and somewhat on the order of the Prophets, but the following chart will give you a more than adequate "big picture" on their placement.

Kings of JUDAH		PROPHETS	Kings of ISRAEL	
Bad Bad	930 bc Rehoboam (17 yrs.) Abijam (3 yrs.)	ELIJAH 875-848BC	Jeroboam (22 yrs.) Nadab (2 yrs.) Baasha (24 yrs.)	930 bc Bad Bad Bloody
Good Good Good	900 bc Asa (41 yrs.) Jehoshaphat (25 yrs.) Jehoram (12 yrs.) Ahaziah (1 yr.) Athaliah (6 yrs.)	ELISHA 848-797BC OBADIAH 855-840BC JOEL?	Elah (2 yrs.) Zimri (1 wk.) Omri (12 yrs.) Ahab (22 yrs.) Ahaziah (2 yrs.) Jehoram (8 yrs.) Jehu (28 yrs.)	900 bc Bloody Bad Bad Evil Evil
	800bc Joash (40 yrs.) Amaziah (29 yrs.) Azariah (Uzziah) (52 yrs.) Jotham (16 yrs.) Ahaz (16 yrs.) Hezekiah (29 yrs.)	JONAH 785-775BC AMOS 760-750BC HOSEA 750-715BC MICAH 750-710BC ISAIAH 740-681 NAHUM 713BC	Jehoahaz (17 yrs.) Jehoash (16 yrs.) Jeroboam 2 (41 yrs.) Zechariah (6 mos.) Shallum (1 mos.) Menahem (10 yrs.) Pekahiah (2 yrs.) Pekah (20 yrs.) Hoshea (9 yrs.)	800bc
	722 bc Amon (2 yrs.)	ZEPHANIAH 630BC		722 bc
	700 bc Josiah (31 yrs.) Jehoahaz (3 mos.) Jehoiakim (11 yrs.) Jehoiakin (3 mos.) Zedekiah (11 yrs.)	HABAKKUK 626BC JEREMIAH 626-585BC	ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY	700 bc
	500 bc BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY First 538 bc Second 458 bc Final 432 bc	DANIEL 605-530BC EZEKIEL 593-571BC HAGGAI 520BC		500 bc
	430 bc	ZECHARIAH 520-480BC MALACHI 440-430BC		430 bc
	400 SILENT YEARS			400 SILENT YEARS

Welcome to the book of 1 Kings!

To begin your study of 1 Kings, Meditate upon the contents of the book reflected in the overview chart below. What are the four major movements in the life of Solomon? Why do you think the emphasis of the book is on the kings of Judah? This book has been given the theme of Solomon/split. How does this reflect the content of 1 Kings? A key verse is 12:20. How does this verse reflect the theme of the book? There were flaws in the monarchy from the beginning. Yet God had promised that if Israel would obey she would find deliverance from the pitfalls of sin. Note how each king responds as God offers a way of escape!

Also note the passages listed within the overview chart below. Take this opportunity to refer to and note each one, relating the section titles to the appropriate passage. What have you learned so far about 1 Kings?

1 KINGS	Solomon/Split
REIGN OF SOLOMON	REIGN OVER JUDAH
ascension...1:47; 2:46	<i>Divided Kingdom</i>
wisdom...3:9,28; 4:29,30	12:8,19
work...6:12,38; 7:8	<i>Divided Kings</i>
splendor...10:23,24	11:11,12; 14:22
1-11	12-22

None but the tribe of Judah followed the House of David. 12:20

1 Samuel begins with the call of Samuel the judge and closes with the casket of Saul. 2 Samuel opens with David's success over Judah and Israel and ends with his shame over Bathsheba and Absalom. 1 Kings opens with Solomon and closes with a split in the kingdom.

We now encounter the third character in our consideration of Saul-no heart, David-whole heart, and Solomon-half heart. As you study, make comparisons and contrasts with each man's life and your own. What do you learn from these examples? With whom can you most identify?

Open your heart as you read!

An improper emphasis on riches is always spoken of in Scripture as a snare. Solomon abounded in every material thing, and yet succumbed to sin and its consequent apostasy. How much of your thought time is wrapped up in the affairs of finance? Man can even be building a temple for the Living God and fall to apostasy! Note that a division of purpose (Israel/Judah) resulted in a division of persons (the kings and people).

AUTHOR

According to ancient Jewish tradition, Jeremiah is attributed with the authorship of Kings. It is also clear, however, that the concluding chapters of Kings must have been written by someone other than Jeremiah, since Jeremiah was in Egypt at that time (cf. Jeremiah 43:1-8), and this section of Kings seems to have been written by someone living in Babylon rather than Egypt, where Jeremiah died. The most important thing to remember, however, is that whether Jeremiah wrote Kings or possibly some Jewish captive living in the area of Babylon, the Holy Spirit is the Divine Author who inspired the human writer to pen this book.

NAME

The Hebrew title to 1 and 2 Kings is Melakim ("Kings") and, like the books of Samuel, were originally one book. Translators divided the book into two parts. The book of Kings gets its title from the type of leadership characteristic of that period. 1 Kings begins with the death of David and concludes with the reign of Jehoram in Judah and Ahaziah in Israel. 2 Kings continues the account of Ahaziah's rule and ends with Judah being destroyed.

DATE

2 Kings closes with the release of Jehoiachin from prison in the thirty-seventh year of his imprisonment (562-561 B.C.). In addition, the books do not mention the end of the captivity in 536 B.C. Since the books are a unit and not the product of several hands and successive dates, it must be dated during the Babylonian Captivity between 562 B.C. and 536 B.C.

OTHER BACKGROUND

1 and 2 Kings are basically a continuation of the books of Samuel. Kings covers a time period of 400 years and tells the story of the disruption and dispersion of the kingdom. In 1 Kings, the curtain rises on Solomon reigning over a united kingdom and 130 years later falls on a nation split in two by civil strife. The first half of the book (Chapters 1-11) relates details of Solomon's reign while the second half of the book (Chapters 12-22) relates the details of the kingdom's division. At this time, two nations come into existence: Israel in the north and Judah in the south. 1 Kings 11:11 summarizes the split Solomon's sin initiated.

Why study the book of 1 Kings?

1. This book illustrates man's total inability to rule himself apart from God's help. Man is still learning this lesson today.

2. The measurements of the temple were exactly twice as large as the tabernacle. Even so, it was small in size compared to church buildings of today. It was only 120' by 60' but it was meant to hold the priests, not the congregation, who worshipped towards it, not in it. There are three earthly temples mentioned in Scripture. The first is Solomon's which was destroyed by the Babylonians about 587 B.C. (2 Kings 25:8-9). The second was Zerubbabel's (Ezra 5:2; 6:15-18). This was not comparable in elegance to Solomon's. The third was Herod's temple erected on a grander scale in 20 B.C. and completed in A.D. 64. This temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 by Titus. Men used to have to make pilgrimages to these temples to meet God. Now we can worship Him in "spirit and truth" at any location, since our bodies are the temple of God (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19).



1 Kings Chapter Chart

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Ascension of Solomon

Read Chapters 1-2

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
1		
2		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. David was old and ready to die. What is the role of Abishag and what is the spiritual significance?
2. What role did Bathsheba play in Solomon's anointing as king?
3. Evaluate David's charge to Solomon (2:1-4). Where have you seen this theme before?
4. Why were the executions of Adonijah, Joab and Shimei necessary? Do you remember Saul's reaction to a similar situation?

What about today?

Four deaths were necessary as Solomon ascended to the throne. There was the death of David, because there could only be one king. The other three deaths were necessary because poor motives and lack of submission would have provided a weak foundation for Solomon's reign (2:46). What are the applications as we become believers and enter our inheritance? What needs to die?

Note 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 on God's desire for keeping purity among His people.

My thoughts about God being enthroned in my life and what is needing to die:

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
3		
4		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What does Solomon request from God?
2. In what ways is there a contrast with God's answer to Solomon's request?
3. What do you perceive as Solomon's initial spiritual foundation?
4. What do we learn about Solomon's wisdom from the incident with the two women?
5. What does verse 34 of chapter 4 reveal about the relationship between God's blessing and a man's obedience?

What about today?

Solomon had a heart for God, but in the midst of this commitment he also made commitments of compromise and embraced idolatry. No man can serve two masters. In what ways is this a difficulty for you?

Read James 4:3-6 regarding friendship with the world.

My thoughts about Solomon's heart in contrast or comparison to my heart:

The Work of Solomon

Read Chapters 5-8

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
5		
6		
7		
8		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Here we see the preparations (5:1-18), construction (6:1-7:51), and dedication (8:1-66) of the temple.
2. Notice how long it took to build each of the two houses (6:38 and 7:1). Why is this significant?
3. What was necessary in preparation to build the temple of the Lord?
4. What is the tone and mood of this section?
5. What were Solomon's feelings about the completion of the temple and how were his feelings manifested? What was God's reaction?

What about today?

God's promise and warning again reveal His faithfulness and instruction (1 Kings 9:1-9). Any "work" for God must follow not only proper principles in construction but the workers must know the Object of their work! Do you pursue "knowing God" over and above "service" for God?

Review Matthew 9:13 and 12:7 and appropriate cross-references.

What are the benefits and liabilities of building for God:

Splendor and Apostasy

Read Chapters 9-11

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
9		
10		
11		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. In the previous reading we observed God's response to the building of the temple and His warning about apostasy. Acts 7:48, 49 reinforces this already clear concept: God wants to dwell in the hearts of His people. Buildings and activities are never to be a replacement for our personal walk with Christ.
2. What are the two areas of downfall for Solomon?
3. What was the result of this sin in Solomon's life?

What about today?

After all the years of service to God, Solomon's heart was still "prone to wander". Even in prosperity (especially in prosperity) the danger of apostasy is great. Do you see any elements of apostasy in your own heart?

Note James 5:1-6 for insight into the snare of riches. Also read Proverbs 30:7-9 for added perspective.

My thoughts on what part prosperity plays in my world-view:

Divided Kingdom

Read Chapters 12-14

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
12		
13		
14		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What was Rehoboam's great mistake? Israel's mistake?
2. What was Jeroboam's downfall?
3. What is the significance (in context) of the disobedient prophet?
4. What instruction do we find in 14:25-28 about the certain effects of riches and power on the human heart?

What about today?

Once again Israel returns to her wicked ways. What has the history of Israel revealed to us thus far? What do we learn about the nature of man from the actions of the people and the nation? What do you learn about your own nature?

My thoughts on what causes division and how they impact my life:

The Kings Reign

Read Chapters 15-19

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Several divided kings bear special attention. First read the rest of 1 Kings and make separate lists with the headings...Good Kings and Bad Kings! Note each king that fits in the appropriate list and briefly summarize why.
2. In a short statement, how would you summarize the reign of the Israelite kings?
3. What was the major evil of each of the kings? The good qualities of each?
4. Why do you feel the first two recorded events in the life of Elijah were placed in this context (Chapter 17)?

What about today?

The grace of the Living God and His Son Jesus Christ becomes more impressive and immense with each passing year of Israel's history! As we witness the completely lost nature of mankind we are constrained to cling to and live for God!

My thoughts about how my good or evil conduct affects my life and the lives of others:

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
20		
21		
22		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Notice the increasingly prominent role of prophets. What was the basis of Ahab's sin?
2. What characterized the activities of Jezebel? Of Jehoshaphat?
3. What difficulties did this present for Elijah?

What about today?

Note the recurring phrase throughout the book, "According to the word of the Lord which He spoke." God's word and will is fulfilled with or without the cooperation of man.

Note 1 Peter 1:22-25 in regard to God's Word and will in relationship to man.

My thoughts about the ways that I feel I am cooperating with God:

KING FOR A DAY!

The consequences of a person's actions are clearly delineated within the Scriptures. Each believer must be aware that forsaking our Lord's commands is the ultimate insult (Romans 6:23). Additionally each believer should learn and respond to the truth that our individual sins bear a more immediate result or consequence.

In examining the lives of the kings of Israel, the penalty for a life of sin or apostasy is evident. The intent of this study is to consider the consequences of sin so that each believer will have a fuller appreciation of the uncompromising reality of God's judgment (Ecclesiastes 8:12-13).

Although the paths that the kings followed were in many cases similar, each one teaches lessons about sin, judgment, and God's compassion. Select two or more of the kings to consider in light of the questions below:

Jeroboam	I Kings 12:25 - 14:18
Nadab	I Kings 15:25-31
Boasha	I Kings 15:32 - 16:7
Elah	I Kings 16:8-14
Zimri	I Kings 16:15-20
Omri	I Kings 16:21-28
Ahab	I Kings 16:29-34; 21; 22
Ahaziah	I Kings 22:51-53

Examine the lives of the kings you have selected in light of the following questions:

A. How did the CONDUCT of each king reflect God's commandments? Was it their actions or their attitudes that led to judgment? Describe the action or attitude of each (see Jeremiah 17:10).

B. EVIDENT PUNISHMENT/CONSEQUENCE: What immediate judgment fell upon each king, if any? If the consequence for his sin was not immediately evident, how did the Lord's judgment come upon him or his descendants at a later date? What do you believe was the long-term result of the acts of each king?

C. CORRELATION TO TODAY: In considering A and B above, can you identify certain actions or attitudes on your part in which the consequences of your lack of obedience are evident? What do you believe is the greatest loss to you for any disobedience in your life (Note 2 Corinthians 5:9-10)?