

**GRACE TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF LAWNSIDE**  
**Wednesday Night Bible Study**

**BOOK OF I KINGS**

**Introduction**

First and Second Kings display God's enduring faithfulness, amid great opposition and against all appearance, through temple, covenant, prophetic oracle, reform, and—when all other hope has faded—the coming Davidic King.

These books tell a sad story. The narrative begins at the height of the Israelite monarchy, as Solomon inherits the kingdom of his father, David, and goes on to acquire his own vast wealth and fame. The story ends in utter devastation, as the remaining people of the dwindling southern kingdom of Judah are carried off to Babylon in exile. There are a few bright spots along the way—the prophetic ministry of Elijah/Elisha, for instance, as well as Hezekiah's prayer for miraculous deliverance and the reforms under Josiah—but the overall trajectory of the narrative seems to plunge inexorably downward.

Yet this very pattern helps to express the meaning of the books of Kings. First and Second Kings do not merely describe a litany of decline and judgment; they highlight God's working amid that decline to fulfill His program of redemption. In the structure of 1–2 Kings, we detect a faint shadow of the gospel story itself, which arrives at Resurrection only through the slow, grinding agony of crucifixion. As we consider God's work in 1–2 Kings, we will gain a better sense of God's plan to advance His purposes through all the frustrations and failures of life.

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**I KINGS 1:1-4:34**  
**THE WEALTH AND WISDOM OF SOLOMON**

**Summary**

First Kings picks up where 2 Samuel left off: at the conclusion of King David's reign. First Kings 1–4 recounts Solomon's rise to the throne and early accomplishments. In chapter 1, Solomon is anointed king, despite the threat of Adonijah, in fulfillment of God's promise to David in 2 Samuel 7:12–13. In chapter 2, after a final charge from David, Solomon's reign is fully established. In chapter 3, Solomon asks the Lord for wisdom, which God grants him, along with riches and honor. Chapter 4 describes a season of blessing, prosperity, and peace among God's people under Solomon's reign.

Throughout 1 Kings 1–4 God sovereignly bestows good gifts to Solomon, including vast wealth and wisdom and even the promise to prolong his years (3:14). In these chapters we are reminded that all good gifts are distributed ultimately by God, including the very length of our life. Subsequently, God is pleased with Solomon's request for wisdom and his desire to rule justly over God's people (1 Kings 3:10). Solomon's wisdom results in a season of great prosperity

and blessing among God's people. Sometimes well-meaning Christians, seeking to emphasize the determinative role of God's grace in orienting our relationship with him, downplay the role of obedience in the life of the Christian, as if all efforts at obedience were inherently legalistic. In all, this story reminds us that, while we cannot earn God's favor through our obedience, our efforts at obedience, in response to the grace of God given to us in the Gospel, bring pleasure to our heavenly Father and result in his blessing.

**Please answer the following questions:**

**Chapter 1**

1. Who made himself king without David knowing it? (5-6)
2. What did Bathsheba do under the guidance of Nathan? (16-21, 28-31)
3. Who under David's instruction was appointed king of Israel? (38-40)
4. Upon hearing this, what did Adonijah do? (50-53)

**Chapter 2**

1. Who did David charge Solomon to put to death? (5-6, 8-9)
2. For what request was Adonijah put to death? (16-23)
3. Who killed Joab and was put over Solomon's army? (28-35)
4. Who was put in the priesthood as a replacement for Abiathar? (26-27, 35)
5. Who else did Benaiah kill? (44-46)

### **Chapter 3**

1. Who did Solomon marry? (1)
2. What opportunity was given to Solomon when the Lord appeared to him? (5)
3. For what did Solomon ask? (9)
4. In addition to Solomon's request, what else did the Lord say would be given to him? (12-13)
5. What incident demonstrated the wisdom that God gave Solomon? (16-28)

### **Chapter 4**

1. Who supplied provisions for Solomon? (7,27-28)
2. How did Solomon's wisdom compare to others? (29-31)
3. How many proverbs and songs did Solomon speak? (32)
4. Of what other subjects did Solomon speak? (33)
5. From where did people come to hear Solomon's wisdom? (34)

## **I KINGS 5:1–10:29**

### **THE TEMPLE: GOD’S PRESENCE AMONG HIS PEOPLE**

#### **Summary**

These chapters chronicle Solomon’s construction of the temple, which includes a detailed account of its furnishings (7:13–51) and culminates in Solomon’s lengthy prayer of dedication as the Ark is brought into the temple (8:22–61). In response to Solomon’s prayer, God promises His presence among the people, mediated through the temple: “My eyes and my heart will be there for all time” (9:3). Solomon’s renowned wisdom and wealth are further described, although there are disturbing hints that his wealth may be pulling his heart away from the Lord. For example, it is curious that he spends more time building his own palace than building the Lord’s temple as seen in 7:1–12. The conclusion of this section thus prepares us for Solomon’s turning away from the Lord, and the tragic results that follow.

After the Ark is brought into the temple and Solomon prays before the people, Solomon and the people of Israel offer a vast number of sheep and oxen as peace offerings in order to dedicate the temple (8:62–63). They also consecrate the middle portion of the court before the temple by offering “the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat pieces of the peace offerings” (8:64). Then Solomon and all the people of Israel hold a seven-day feast (8:65), after which they return to their homes “joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had shown to David His servant and to Israel His people” (8:66).

These various offerings draw from Leviticus 1–7, in which God institutes five major types of offerings for his people, each to serve a different function. Here they serve to consecrate the temple, and the feast functions as an act of celebration of the Lord’s goodness to and provision for his people. According to the New Testament, Christ has offered the perfect sacrifice that ends all other sacrifices (Hebrews 10:12), and His death opens up the access to God symbolized by the temple (Hebrews 10:20).

**Please answer the following questions:**

#### **Chapter 5**

1. What did Solomon request from Hiram, king of Tyre? (6)
2. What was Solomon to do for Hiram? (9-12)
3. How many Israelites did Solomon use to prepare materials for the temple? (13-16)

## **Chapter 6**

1. How many years after Israel left Egypt did Solomon begin to build the temple? (1)
2. What were the dimensions of the temple? (2-3)
3. What was built around the temple? (5-6)
4. What sound was not heard in the temple during the construction? (7)
5. What did the Lord promise Solomon if he kept God's statutes? (11-13)
6. Of what material was the inside of the temple overlaid? (21-22)
7. How many years did it take to build the temple? (38)

## **Chapter 7**

1. How many years did it take to build Solomon's house? (1)
2. Who did the metal work for the temple? (13-14)
3. What did Solomon bring to the temple when it was finished? (51)

## **Chapter 8**

1. What did the priests bring to the temple? (3-9)
2. What filled the temple when the priests came out of the holy place? (10-11)

3. What could not contain God? (27)
4. What did Solomon request of the Lord when people prayed toward the temple? (30-49)
5. What did Solomon want all the peoples of the earth to know? (60)
6. How many animals did Solomon offer at the dedication of the temple? (62-63)

### **Chapter 9**

1. What did Solomon build at Ezion-Geber? (26)
2. Whose sailors served in the same fleet with Solomon's men? (27-28)

### **Chapter 10**

1. What did the Queen of Sheba say when she saw the achievements and wisdom of Solomon? (6-9)
2. How much gold did Solomon receive each year? (14)
3. Of what materials did Solomon make his throne? (18)
4. Why weren't any of Solomon's vessels made of silver? (21,27)
5. How did the riches and wisdom of Solomon compare to other kings? (23)
6. How many chariots and horsemen did Solomon have? (26)

## **I KINGS 11:1–16:34**

### **DISOBEDIENCE, DIVISION, DECLINE**

#### **Summary**

First Kings 11 recounts Solomon's tragic turn toward idolatry, as his many foreign wives lead him to worship other gods. Solomon's disobedience is the first step in the long spiral downward that characterizes 1 and 2 Kings, seen especially in the division of the nation in 1 Kings 12 into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Several cycles of evil kings from both kingdoms follow in this section of 1 Kings (chapters 11-16), with the sole exception of Asa in Judah. Along the way, God raises up prophets who call the people to repentance.

First Kings 11–16 sees a spike in prophetic activity, as “the word of the Lord” comes frequently to God's people (11:29–39; 12:23–24; 13:1–3, 18, 21–22; 14:6–16; 16:1–4). The binding nature of the prophetic word is emphasized in these chapters, such that prophets are in authority even over kings (13:4–6), although they themselves are subject to their own prophetic word (13:11–34). The drama of 1 and 2 Kings makes it unmistakably clear that God's word is absolutely sovereign, and whatever it foretells will come to pass. Those who ignore its warnings, such as Jeroboam, do so at their own peril.

Further, in 1 Kings 12:1–24, the division of the kingdom is the result of Rehoboam's foolish choice to listen to the counsel of younger men rather than his older and wiser advisers. Nonetheless, Rehoboam's behavior is explained as “a turn of affairs brought about by the Lord that he might fulfill his word, which the Lord spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam” (12:15). Later, when the people of Judah consider going to war with Israel because of the split in the kingdom, God forbids them from fighting, explaining that “this thing is from me” (12:24). This is a striking instance of the compatibility of human responsibility and divine sovereignty, for even though Rehoboam is responsible for his foolish actions, God is nonetheless sovereignly bringing to pass the fulfillment of his prophetic word through that very behavior.

**Please answer the following questions:**

#### **Chapter 11**

1. How many wives and concubines did Solomon have? (3)
2. Why was the LORD angry with Solomon? (4-10)
3. What did the LORD say would happen to the kingdom? (11-13)
4. Who were Solomon's adversaries? (14,23)

5. With what object did Ahijah the prophet illustrate to Jeroboam that he would become king of ten tribes? (30-32)
6. When would this division of the kingdom occur? (35)
7. Who tried to kill Jeroboam? (40)
8. How long did Solomon reign in Jerusalem? (42)
9. Who reigned as king after Solomon died? (43)

## **Chapter 12**

1. What did Jeroboam request of Rehoboam? (4)
2. Whose advice did Rehoboam reject? (8)
3. What advice did Rehoboam follow? (9-15)
4. What did Israel do to Adoniram, who was over Solomon's laborers? (18)
5. Who did Israel make as their king? (20)
6. Why did Jeroboam set up golden calves at Bethel and Dan? (27-28)



### **Chapter 13**

1. What did the man of God from Judah prophesy against Jeroboam's altar? (1-3)
2. What happened to Jeroboam when he ordered the man of God to be seized? (4)
3. Why did the man of God refuse Jeroboam's invitation? (8-9)
4. How did the old prophet at Bethel persuade the man of God to come to his house? (18-19)
5. What happened to the man of God? (24)
6. What was the sin of the house of Jeroboam that led to its downfall? (33-34)

### **Chapter 14**

1. What did Jeroboam tell his wife to do? (1-4)
2. What did the Lord reveal to the prophet Ahijah? (5,10-12)
3. What would happen to Israel? (14-16)
4. How corrupt did Judah become? (22-24)
5. What did Shishak king of Egypt do? (25-26)
6. What did Rehoboam substitute for the treasures that were taken from the temple? (27)

## **Chapter 15**

1. What can be said of Abijah's three-year reign as king of Judah? (2-3)
2. How did Asa do in his forty-one-year reign over Judah? (11-15)
3. How did Nadab do in his two-year reign over Israel? (25-26)
4. How did Baasha become king of Israel? (27-30)
5. What can be said of Baasha's twenty-four-year reign as king of Israel? (33-34)

## **Chapter 16**

1. Who prophesied against Baasha? (1)
2. How did Zimri become king? (9-10)
3. How did Omri do in his twelve-year reign as king over Israel? (25-26)
4. What city did Omri build? (24)
5. How did Ahab do in his twenty-two-year reign over Israel? (30,32-33)
6. Who did Ahab marry? (31)

## **I KINGS 17:1–19:21**

### **ELIJAH AND COVENANT RENEWAL**

#### **Summary**

Chapters 17–19 represent a slowing down of the narrative pace of 1 Kings, as God raises up the prophet Elijah to confront the Baal worship introduced to Israel by Ahab and his foreign wife, Jezebel. In chapter 17, God sustains Elijah through drought, first through ravens at the Cherith brook and then through a widow in Zarephath. Throughout this chapter, Elijah holds incredible power as God’s prophet, commanding the rain at his own word (17:1). And yet this is a difficult, lonely, and humbling season as well. He must live alone in the wilderness before traveling north to Zarephath to live on the outskirts of society with a Gentile widow and her son. Food was scarce in both places. Chapter 18 narrates a dramatic showdown between Elijah and the prophets of Baal, as the Lord reveals that He is the true God and brings the drought to an end. In chapter 19 a disillusioned Elijah flees from Jezebel, and his successor, Elisha, is announced.

The great message of 1 Kings 17–19 is that God, not Baal, is the true God, a message particularly emphasized in Elijah’s raising of the widow’s son (17:17–24). In Canaanite thought, Baal was believed to periodically die, submitting to the god of death, Mot, before coming back to life during the rainy season. The resurrection of the widow’s son reinforces that it is the God of Israel, not Baal, who holds power over the grave—just as the drought reveals that it is the God of Israel who controls the weather. God’s power over the grave would be more fully manifested later in redemptive history through the person of Christ, who would conquer death forever by submitting to it himself before rising again.

All throughout Israel’s history, God calls his people to exclusive, unrivaled commitment and worship (e.g., Deut. 6:4–5). The people of Israel, from the golden calf of Aaron (Exodus 32) to the golden calves of Jeroboam (1 Kings 12:25–33), frequently turn aside from this calling to worship God alone, as they worship other gods instead. Perhaps in no other place in the Bible is God’s exclusive claim to deity more evident, or the choice between the true God and idols more poignant, than in 1 Kings 18. As the prophets of Baal cry out for an answer during the contest at Carmel, we read that “there was no voice, and no one answered” (1 Kings 18:26); “no one answered; no one paid attention” (v. 29). The story emphasizes the absolute powerlessness of idols and the Lord’s exclusive power to save.

Yet, God is faithful to Elijah throughout these chapters, as seen in his providing for Elijah’s needs during drought, protecting him from Ahab’s spies, answering his prayer for fire from heaven, and gently confronting him in his disillusionment and self-pity. God is faithful to His people as well: judging evil, preserving a remnant, and fulfilling his promises. When Elijah laments that he is the only true prophet left, for instance, God announces his plans to stamp out further rebellion through Jehu and Elisha (19:17). These chapters evidence God’s resourcefulness in bringing about his purposes. Although Elijah cannot see it, God is in the gentle whisper of chapter 19 as well as the fire from heaven of chapter 18—and he is just as able to carry forward his plan through preserving a remnant as through national revival.

**Please answer the following questions:**

**Chapter 17**

1. What did Elijah tell would not happen for the next three years? (1)
2. How was Elijah fed during this time? (6)
3. What did Elijah ask the widow of Zarephath to do for him? (10-13)
4. What miracle of provision did the LORD perform for the widow? (14-16)
5. What other miracle did the LORD perform for the widow? (20-22)

**Chapter 18**

1. What did the LORD tell Elijah to do? (1-2)
2. What did Obadiah do when Jezebel was killing the LORD's prophets? (4)
3. What did Ahab call Elijah? (17)
4. How many false prophets came up against Elijah on Mt. Carmel? (19)
5. What did Elijah ask the people of Israel? (21)
6. What would be the sign of the one true God? (24)
7. How long did Elijah give the prophets of Baal to call on their god? (25-29)

8. How much water did Elijah pour on his sacrifice and wood? (33-35)
9. What did they do to the prophets of Baal? (40)
10. What did Elijah hear? (41)
11. What sign was given to Elijah's servant that it was going to rain? (44)
12. How fast did Elijah run? (46)

### **Chapter 19**

1. Why did Elijah flee from Jezebel? (1-3)
2. For what did Elijah pray? (4)
3. Who provided food for Elijah giving him strength to get to Horeb? (5-8)
4. What question did the LORD twice ask Elijah? (9,13)
5. How did the LORD speak to Elijah? (11-12)
6. How did the LORD respond to Elijah's statement that he was the only one left of the LORD's prophets? (10,14,18)
7. Who did the LORD tell Elijah to anoint? (15-16)
8. What did Elisha do to his yoke of oxen and plowing equipment? (21)

## **I Kings 20:1–22:40**

### **Ahab's Death and Elijah's Departure**

#### **Summary**

First Kings 20–22 describes the further reign of Ahab after his confrontation with Elijah. Although the full destruction of Ahab's house is delayed when he humbles himself before God (21:27–29), Ahab's own death, foretold by multiple prophets, is inevitable (22:29–40). A recurring theme throughout these chapters is God's unwavering commitment to establish justice and to punish evil. On several occasions the equitable nature of justice is emphasized. Thus, one prophet informs Ahab, "Your life shall be for his life" (1 Kings 20:42); another promises, "In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick up your own blood" (21:19). At the same time, even wicked Ahab can receive mercy when he humbles himself before the Lord (21:27–29).

Prophetic activity also spikes once again in this "bridge" between 1 and 2 Kings (1 Kings 20:13–14, 22, 28, 41–43; 21:17–24; 22:13–28; 2 Kings 1:3–4, 15–16; 2:21–22) as various events are declared in advance by one of God's prophets. The emphasis falls on the binding nature of prophetic oracles: whatever the prophets foretell must come to pass, and even the prophets themselves are subject to it (1 Kings 20:35–36; compare 1 Kings 13:11–34).

#### **Please answer the following questions:**

##### **Chapter 20**

1. Who threatened to take Ahab's wives, children, silver and gold? (1-4)
2. Why did the LORD give Ahab victory over Ben-Hadad? (13,28)
3. For what did the prophet condemn Ahab? (34,42)

##### **Chapter 21**

1. Why did Naboth refuse to sell Ahab his vineyard? (3)
2. What did Jezebel have done to Naboth? (8-10)
3. What did Elijah prophesy about Ahab? (19-22)

4. What did Elijah prophesy would happen to Jezebel? (23)
5. Who was partly responsible for Ahab's vile behavior? (25)
6. Why was the disaster prophesied against Ahab delayed until his son? (27-29)

## **Chapter 22**

1. What did Ahab ask Jehoshaphat to do? (1-4)
2. What did Jehoshaphat first want to do? (5)
3. What did Ahab's four hundred prophets tell Ahab to do? (6,10-12)
4. Why did Ahab hate Micaiah? (7-8,18)
5. What did Micaiah say would happen to Israel? (17)
6. What did Ahab order to be done to Micaiah? (26-27)
7. What happened to Ahab in the battle? (34-37)
8. What did Jehoshaphat get rid of out of the land of Judah? (46)
9. What happened to Jehoshaphat's ships? (48)
10. How did Ahaziah do in his two-year reign over Israel? (51-53)