

Note

1 Kings – Part 1 of 1

Era	Characters	Chapters
In the beginning	God created the world.	Genesis 1
Before 4000 BC	Adam & Eve	Gen 1~5
Before 3000 BC	Cain Abel Seth	Gen 4~5
Before 2500 BC	Noah	Gen 5~10
About 2000 BC Era of Patriarchs	Abraham Isaac & Ishmael Jacob & Esau Joseph	Gen 11~50
About 1500BC ~ 1000 BC Era of prophets	Moses Aaron Joshua	Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy
	Joshua	Joshua
	Judges(Othniel Ehud Shamgar Deborah Gideon Tola Jair Jephthah Ibzan Elon Abdon Samson) Abimelech	Judges
	Ruth Boaz Naomi	Ruth
	Eli Samuel Saul David	1st Samuel
About 1000 BC ~ 500 BC Era of princes	Saul Jonathan David Absalom Solomon	1st Samuel 2nd Samuel
	Solomon Jeroboam Rehoboam Ahab Elijah Elisha Jehu	1 kings ?

Summary

1 Kings - Part 1 of 13

First Kings is a book about the holy history of the Israelites.

It opens by describing the final days of King David and the family feud over the successor of the throne. King David anointed his son, Solomon to reign as king. King Solomon, known as the wisest man of all, built a magnificent temple but ignored God's commands of marrying foreign wives and worshipping foreign gods. Sins brought ruin to his kingdom and family dynasty. Once a unified kingdom, it splits into the northern kingdom consisting of 10 tribes, and the southern kingdom consisting of the 2 tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

All of the northern kings did evil in the sight of God. Some of the southern kings tried to revive obedience to God but none of them banned idol worship.

God sent His prophet Elijah to warn the people of Israel and King Ahab, an evil northern king, of God's wrath over their disobedience.

Every form of human government results in failure if the people do not acknowledge God's sovereignty. Only Jesus Christ can be our protector and provider of all our needs.

Transcript

1 Kings – Part 1 of 1

Let us look today at the book of First Kings. But before we do that, a quick review of the previous books-First Samuel, Second Samuel.

In these two books we see the lives of basically the first two kings of Israel. And we see how the people really yearned for a king. They demanded a king so that they could be like the other nations, to have a leader, impressive leader to lead them and fight their wars for them. That's why they demanded a king, rejecting their King for the last few hundred years, God Himself. So we have these two kings, and God gave them 40 year reigns. 40 years in the Bible is always a time of testing. And after the 40 years of reign, they both failed badly. The first king, Saul, spent a little bit of his earlier part of his reign really fighting the battles for Israel. But then he spent almost the rest of his 40 years, the vast majority of his 40 years, not fighting the enemies of Israel, but fighting his personal enemy, David. He was envious that David seemed to be more popular, more respected than him. And he wanted to destroy David. So instead of the king fighting their battles, they had to fight the king's battles. You see, that's how sad it is that most earthly kings don't fight your battles, you fight his battles.

Saul ends badly. He goes to a medium and then commits suicide. David seems a refreshing change, he started very well. And then before you know it, you find he starts accumulating wives - at least seven wives recorded, and countless concubines. So instead of fighting wars for them, he's enjoying his own life. Even Saul didn't have a lot of wives, but David had countless concubines. And then instead of going to war to fight, he goes up to the rooftop and looks at another man's wife, Bathsheba. And he steals her because he's king, he demands her to come. And then he as king had the power to make sure her husband was killed. Should a king use his power to protect us or for himself? So, we see how David moves in that direction. And then towards the later part of his life we find he has to fight his son Absalom because his son went into rebellion. Instead of fighting

the wars of Israel, he is relaxing, committing adultery, collecting wives and concubines, and in the end he spends the energy of Israel fighting his own son. And the last part of the story is so sad because of his pride, his ego, 70,000 people died. So Second Samuel ends with 70,000 deaths. That's the kind of king that men have.

All of us yearn for a good leader, that's natural. Everybody yearns for that, whether you work in a company, whether you are in a nation, you hope to have a good leader. But in the end, you always get disappointed. You start well generally, then end poorly. And finally, God tells us the only king that will ever satisfy you and will ever fulfill his kingly role of protecting and providing for you is King Jesus.

That's a quick review of Samuel. We come to the Book of Kings. In the Bible, Samuel is actually one book, not First Samuel, Second Samuel, and Kings is actually one book, not First Kings, Second Kings. But when the Hebrew scroll was translated to Greek, Greek language has twice as many letters as Hebrew to write the same thing, simply because Hebrew doesn't have vowels a,e,i,o,u. But in Greek, the vowels are there, so it's twice as long. So the books were split up into First Samuel, Second Samuel, First Kings, Second Kings. Actually, it's the same scroll.

The book of Kings was probably written long after these events by Jeremiah the prophet. Jeremiah was a prophet to the Israelites (to Judah) because of the exile. He wrote this probably to comfort the people who were in exile wondering Why has our God abandoned us? Why are we in this horrible exile life? What went wrong? And so this Book of Kings probably was written by Jeremiah, and maybe others added to it. Really these are what we call the historical books of the Bible. The first part is Torah. And then we come to the book of Joshua, Judges and Samuel and Kings. We say these are the historical books. But what kind of history is this? In Kings it is very clear what kind of history this is. It is holy history. It is not history as we normally know history. Normally history records political events, military victories, but the history books in the Bible record what I would call history from God's viewpoint-holy history -things that are of spiritual value are highly recorded, things that are of moral value, good or

bad, are highly recorded. This is the emphasis -the spiritual and the moral, not so much the economic power, the military power, the political power - those are mentioned only. For example, in Kings, some of the kings who really expanded the military might and economic power like Omri, king in northern kingdom, and Jeroboam II , they did amazing military and economic things, but Omri occupied only seven verses in the Bible, Jeroboam II eight verses only. And then Hezekiah, a godly King, a very good king, three chapters. But most interesting is that in the Book of Kings, the biggest chunk of it is not about the Kings, but about people and prophets -Elijah and Elisha. Especially Second Kings, you see a lot of it, other prophets. So though the book is called the Kings, actually it's the spiritual part of the kings, the moral part of the kings, and the impact of two prophets, Elijah and Elisha.

This is basically an overview. I hope you understand when you see history, you don't expect it to be chronological like you study your secular history.

Let's see the beginning of this book in First Kings. It begins with the last days of King David. The last days of King David shows him in bed with a strange woman. Of course, he's too old to have sexual relationships, but they had to find a beautiful girl to lie in bed with him to keep him warm? Its like telling you what kind of life King David really had. Very sad. Concubines many, countless wives, steals a man's wife. And then almost his last words to his son, Solomon - you can find that in First Kings chapter 2 -he starts with, kill my enemy, Joab, make sure you kill him, the other guy who insulted me, Shimei, make sure you kill him. You mean these are the last words of a guy called King David, whom we all look up to, whom the Bible really says was a good man. Why did the Bible say he's a man after God's own heart? Is it because his character was impeccable? No, the important thing, as far as God is concerned, David never went into idolatry. He always looked up to this one God. And He always understood the character of this God, in the sense that, whatever he did wrong, he repented immediately. He did wrong many times, but he understood the character of God. And God says this is a man after my own heart. But when you look at his life, it's not exactly exemplary.

Then we see in the last part of David's life, a family feud. One of his sons Adonijah tries to grab the throne before his father dies. You see, in the way of the kings of the East, their eldest son is not the automatic next king. Solomon was definitely not the eldest son and the king had to decide who his successor was. Could be any one of his sons. And so Adonijah tries to grab it before his father dies. David is reminded by his favorite wife Bathsheba that, You told me that Solomon, my son will be on the throne. How come Adonijah is already grabbing the kingdom? And so David arranges something and Solomon gets the throne. What did Solomon do when he got the throne? He kills Adonijah. You see this kind of life -the king's job is to protect his throne, far more than protect the kingdom.

Then Solomon begins his reign. All of us remember Solomon, the wisest of all men. We remember how he made a decision about the two women arguing whose baby it is. He said, pick a sword, cut the baby in half. Many of the Proverbs in the Bible are written by Solomon. And he wrote 1000 songs, probably most of them love songs because he had 1000 wives and concubines. We also know he was a great botanist and he knew about animal husbandry, about fish and everything. He knew a lot of stuff. Brilliant and very wise, but he had weak spots. And Solomon obviously had some weak spots. Number one was, he loved women. I mean, if you're the wisest of all men, will you have 700 wives? I mean, that's not really very wise. That's definitely not wise at all. And 300 concubines. So wise in many ways, but absolutely foolish in many ways. That's what we see in human wise men. They seem to be so wise in this and so dumb in something else. Then he loves to accumulate foreign wives, and the first one mentioned is Pharaoh's daughter. It would appear he married Pharaoh's daughter to form a political alliance. So this guy is wise in politics. He wanted to ally with Egypt, which is like a dominant power, by marrying the daughter.

So we see here, Solomon's first mistake was to marry Pharaoh's daughter. What happened was the Bible tells us, Solomon ended up having many foreign wives. The foreign wives brought in their gods, and he built places of worship for the gods and ended up by worshipping them too. Solomon was brilliant in some ways, dumb in other ways. Worships Jehovah God one way and worships idols the other way. And he is supposed to be the wisest of all men. I'm glad one day Jesus will rule, not wise men will rule. When I read about Solomon, he reminds me more of Pharaoh than he does of a king of Israel.

These are the first three kings, Saul, David, Solomon, each one had a 40 year reign. What is Saul's reign? I say envy and vengeance, and he ended up being crazy.

What about David? He's a messed up guy too. It's not as bad, still fell for women. A lot of pride in his life, though he knew how to worship the one, true God, he wasn't tempted by other gods.

Then, Solomon -His life is just pomp, power, possessions. He behaved almost like Pharaoh -very showy guy -he accumulates horses, chariots, wives. In Deuteronomy 17 God gave a warning saying when you have a king (Deuteronomy 17:16,17) make sure they don't multiply horses because horses give a sense of power; and don't multiply wives and he did exactly that. And he's supposed to be the wisest man of all? What would you say, what would most people say was Solomon's greatest achievement? Possibly some will say writing Proverbs, just like David wrote the Psalms. That he left a legacy for us. But for the Jews, probably it was the temple. He built what we call the 1st Temple.

All this time, God was worshipped in a tabernacle. A Tabernacle is just another word for tent. A tent like what refugee camps are like now. A tabernacle is just a tent for religious use, basically that's what it is. For 480 years after they left Egypt, all that God wanted for his house was a tent. Can you imagine a tent after 480 years? You pitch a tent outdoors for four years and the color runs and it looks pretty shabby.

480 years - yet God was perfectly content to have his presence in that tent. What does that teach us about the character of God? God doesn't care about showy things. Otherwise wouldn't God tell them build a place for Him since they had already settled in the land.

So finally, Solomon builds the temple. It's called the First Temple. Later the Second Temple was built by Herod during the time of Jesus long after this. If you look at the temple, how would you describe this temple? This is how you would describe it. It's like the tabernacle, all the same furniture, the altar, the laver, the lampstand, the table of showbread. But it's an elaborate, expensive version of it. Amazing amount of gold. The tabernacle was

basically to depict your experience when you come into God's presence - the cherubims, and then the palm trees - it's almost like the Garden of Eden and heaven merged together, new heaven and new earth. That's basically the symbol as you enter into the holy place - God's presence. So the Temple is just a super elaborate version of the tabernacle. That's what the temple was. It took seven years to build. Solomon taxed the people heavily, not only in money, but in forced labor to build something so elaborate. It was made of pure gold and it was a massive, elaborate structure. The Bible says it took seven years to build the temple, but 13 years to build his own house. Twice as much time to build his own house, which is quite typical of Christians. We give the church something, we are quite happy to give something, but we want to keep the bulk of our money for our luxuries. So when all that taxes came, the people felt the strain, but because he was a strong king, everything was alright. Then Solomon dies. And his next stupidity, so to speak, was choosing Rehoboam to be his successor. Solomon is the wisest man of all, yet chooses a fool to be his successor, and Rehoboam is really a fool. And then the kingdom splits into the northern kingdom-10 tribes, and the southern kingdom-2 tribes. Judah, the tribe of David and Solomon, and Benjamin make up the two tribes. We just call the southern kingdom Judah because Benjamin is a small tribe.

From now on in the book of First Kings, it's very confusing to read the two lines of kings. So we see here, the northern line begins with a guy called Jeroboam. Jeroboam is smart, strategic. He said, if we split, we don't want the Rehoboam to rule us, we don't want to pay taxes anymore. All the money goes into its fancy houses, his father's fancy house. All the money stuck in the south, the north is neglected. So Jeroboam had a rebellion and 10 tribes to the north joined him. And he figured out if the temple is still in the south, everybody wants to go to the temple to worship. Jeroboam said, I'm going to build something so that the children of Israel, the northern tribes, don't need to go to the temple. So he built two golden cows and put them on the north side of his kingdom Dan and in the south Bethel so that no Israelite really needed to go to the temple because he had this competing religion made of golden cows. Can you imagine at Sinai when Aaron made a golden calf and Moses smashed the 2 tablets -the 10 commandments. Now they have two golden calves. What are the golden calves? That's a religion. Cows always speak of prosperity. We call it a bull market? A cow is always a picture of fertility. That's the religion of the land of Canaan-fertility religion. So that replaced Jehovah worship in the north.

All the kings of the north did evil in the sight of God because all of them worshipped the golden calves of Dan and Bethel. So the north goes down in a quick spin, and goes into exile first. The south worshipped Jehovah God in the temple and also worshipped in the high places. High places are basically, a shrine where little gods are. High places are usually in a mountain top, usually on top of a pillar, on a tree. It's how shrines are always made, you have to look up at it. And so southern tribes had half Jehovah worship, and half idol worship. North had totally idol worship. And so the north goes into exile in 721 or 722 BC to Assyria (not Syria, people often confuse Assyria with Syria). Assyria is almost the part where Babylon is. And later, the south, 140 years later went into captivity around that same area-Babylon. Why Babylon? Because Abraham came out of Babylon. That was his hometown-Ur of the Chaldeans was in Babylon. They went right back to where Abraham was. One full circle in the exile.

From this point when the kingdom splits, it is very difficult to read First Kings because there are two lines of Kings, so you get confused. There is the north guy, there is the south guy. Their names sound alike. There are 20 kings in the north and 20 kings in the south. That makes it a bit easy. But the 20 kings in the north come from nine dynasties, because they kill each other. So there are nine dynasties, twenty kings. The southern one is in the land of David, and because of a promise there will always be a king sitting on the throne of David. So southern one, always from David's line. Twenty kings, twenty kings on both sides. But the southern kings lived longer because they went to exile 140 years later. So the southern kings lived longer, generally speaking, than the northern kings. In fact, someone did a calculation and said, the good kings live average 33 years, the bad kings live average 11 years. So we see here, the northern kings were all idol worshippers, so they were all bad in the eyes of God. Of the southern kings, out of 20, two were very good - Hezekiah, Josiah. Six were not bad, pretty good. So two very good, six not bad, 12 rotten, also idol worshippers. When I say rotten, I mean in the eyes of God. So finally, towards the end of First Kings we see a story of Ahab, one horrible King in the north. And this guy literally kills a person because he wants his plot of land, because it's next to his house. So he and his wife plot to kill this guy to get the land. You see what kings do in the end, they take advantage of you, they don't protect you. You could say that for any kind of leader, generally speaking, because his sinful heart is not that different. Ahab was a horrible king. But if we read First Kings 21 about Ahab, when he was warned by Elijah who

said, you took the land, God will punish you. You know what Ahab did? You look at the end of First Kings 21-Ahab rent his clothes, humbled himself, and you know what God said? Alright, I wouldn't punish you, I'll punish the next generation. I hope you see the character of God here. What God really likes is a humble heart, willing to say sorry to God. God is not looking for super brilliant, perfect people, but humble people who are willing and quick to say sorry to Him. So then First Kings ends with a king called Jehoshaphat, one of the good kings of Israel, compromising with the northern king. In other words, slowly they became so used to the idolatry of the northern kingdom that it was like nothing to them. So Jehoshaphat goes in First Kings 22 and says to Ahab, I am as thou art. You mean, there's no difference between the north and the south. And then slowly in the next book of Second Kings, you see how the southern kingdom begins to go down, but not as fast. And eventually, the northern kingdom becomes totally rotten, then the southern kingdom. 240 years later it became totally rotten.

So what do we see from the Book of Kings? So many kings-20/20. That's 40 already. And plus all the early kings. Again 40, remember the number 40 - 20/20. What does it tell us? All disappointing, so disappointing. Again, the lesson is we yearn for a king. We yearn for leadership. It's natural. It's called hero worship. If it's not a king, it's a sports star, if it's not a sports star, it's a film star, if it's not a film star, it's a gang leader. We need leadership. We look for a leader. But all these leaders are failures. The heart still yearns for a king. A good king doesn't exist among men. Jesus Christ, King of kings, Lord of lords, is the only King that will satisfy our souls for all eternity. May God bless you.