

11. First Book of Kings

1. Overview: The historical account of the 120 years after King David's reign, including Solomon's 40-year reign and the subsequent division of the unified tribes of Israel into two separate nations of Israel and Judah and their respective kings.
2. Writer: Unknown. We know that based on the expression "unto this day" it was written before the Temple of God was destroyed by the Babylonians so it was written before the captivity of Judah. (The staves (rods) that had used to transport the Ark were removed because the Ark would remain permanently inside the Temple and no longer be transported with the mobile tabernacle (tent). See I Kings 8:8 *And they drew out the staves, that the ends of the staves were seen out in the holy place before the oracle, and they were not seen without: and there they are unto this day.*)
3. Time period: The narrative continues from II Samuel, beginning with the final year(s) of David's life and reign as he designated and formally installs Solomon to rule in his stead, while he was still alive. The first half of I Kings focuses on King Solomon's 40-year reign and the second half covers the next 80 years in which the kingdom is divided into two separate nations: Judah and Israel. During that 80-year period, Judah goes through 4 different kings, each a descendant of David, while the idolatrous nation of Israel has a total of 7 Kings of which 3 are overthrown and murdered. The First Book of Kings ends just after the death of Israel's 6th king, the notoriously wicked, King Ahab. (See the Chart of Kings No. 1)
4. Chapter by Chapter

Chapter 1 – David, now very old and feeble, is given a new young concubine named Abishag to hopes of restoring some new vitality, but it doesn't work. David's son, Adonijah (Absalom's younger brother) decides that he is going to be king after David and sets a plan in motion to install himself on the throne enlisting the help of Joab (Captain of David's Armies) and Abiathar (one of the two chief Priests and sole survivor of Saul's massacre of the Priests of Nob See I Samuel 22). David had already told Bath-sheba that her son, Solomon should reign after him and upon seeing Adonijah's scheme, Nathan the prophet and Bath-sheba prompt David to confirm the kingdom for Solomon before he dies. David does so and Solomon becomes king before David's death. Adonijah pleads for his life and Solomon grants it on the condition that he shows himself a 'worthy man.'

Chapter 2 – David charges Solomon to be strong and keep the law of God. David also instructs him not to let two men die peacefully of old age: Joab (Captain of the Host and Murderer of Abner and Amasa) and Shimei (the relation of Saul who cursed David as he fled from Absalom). Solomon obeys by slaying Joab and putting Shimei on house arrest and charges that if he leaves the city of Jerusalem, then he will die. Shimei eventually does leave and Solomon puts him to death. Adonijah tries again to supplant Solomon by requesting that David's concubine Abishag be his wife, but Solomon sees through his plot and puts him to death. Solomon also thrusts out Abiathar from the priesthood for siding with Adonijah in the plot. (Fulfilling God promise that Eli's descents would be cast out of from being priests. See I Samuel 2). See Key Verse No.1.

Chapter 3 – While Solomon is sacrificing to the Lord in Gibeon at a 'high place', the Lord appears to Solomon in a dream saying "Ask what I shall give thee." Solomon requests wisdom and discernment that he may be able to judge God people, which is one of King's primary responsibilities. God blesses him to be wisest man to live (other than Jesus) and because he didn't ask for riches or honor, God gives him both of these as well. Solomon's wisdom is displayed when he settles a dispute between two harlots both of whom were claiming to be the rightful mother of child when he brings forth a sword and threatens to cut the child in two and give half to each woman. The difference in the woman's responses to the proposition clearly reveals the true mother.

Chapter 4 - Description of key persons in Solomon's government along the vastness of Solomon's territory and his wealth. There is peace and prosperity in Israel during Solomon's reign. Solomon's wisdom was famous and people travelled from all over to hear him. He spoke 3000 proverbs and wrote 1005 songs.

- Chapter 5 - Hiram, king of Tyre, provides cedar for Solomon to build both the temple and Solomon's own house. Noteworthy Location: Tyre is a wealthy port city on the coast of the Mediterranean in the northern portion of Asher's territory. Tyre is frequently referenced through the scriptures in a negative sense as a 'worldly' place and usually in connection with its neighboring port city – Sidon. (See Map No. 1- The Inheritances of the Twelve Tribes)
- Chapter 6 - In 480th year since Israel came out of Egypt, Solomon begins to build the Temple. The measurement details of temple are set out. It takes 7 years to complete. It has a foundation of large stones with the structure made of cedar and on the whole house was overlaid with gold.
- Chapter 7 – Solomon's house is completed in 13 years. Additional details of the temple and the furnishings crafted by a different Hiram, also of Tyre, who was a brass craftsman: 2 pillars (apx. 27 feet tall and about 6 feet wide), the sea (like big fancy round tub about 15 feet wide) and it sat on a base that looked like 12 oxen, 10 lavers (a washing station) and 10 bases that went under the lavers, plus the other instruments.
- Chapter 8 -During the Feast of Tabernacles, Israel celebrates the completion and the dedication of the Temple by bringing the Ark into the Temple. Solomon offered so many sacrifices that they couldn't be counted and the bronze altar couldn't handle them all so they had to hallow a portion of the court yard to offer them there. Solomon blesses the people and then give a lengthy prayer to the Lord (See Verses 22-53).
- Chapter 9 – At least thirteen years after the first version, because Solomon's house is now completed, the Lord appears to Solomon a 2nd time and acknowledges that God had heard Solomon's prayer at least six years ago at the dedication of the Temple. God promises to establish Solomon's kingdom forever if Solomon will follow God's ways; but he also warns him that if Solomon worships other gods; then God will cast off Israel out of the land. Time passes until the 20th year of Solomon's reign. Additional details on the economic dealings of Solomon: with Hiram, with Pharaoh, Solomon's navy and the taxes levied on those of the seven nations that should be destroyed.
- Chapter 10 - Queen of Sheba comes to visit Solomon to test him with many questions and she is forced to admit that the half of Solomon's wisdom and greatness was not told to her. Descriptions of Solomon's great riches: annual income in gold, his gold covered ivory throne with lion statues on the steps, 1,400 chariots and 24,000 horsemen.
- Chapter 11 – *But Solomon loved strange women...* Solomon is drawn into gross idolatry by these strange women (He had 700 wives and 300 concubines) and builds alters to the gods of their home nations (Ashtoreth of Zidon, Milcom of Ammon, Chemosh of Moab, and Molech of Ammon). In His anger, God decides to tear the nation from Solomon's son. God raises up adversaries to torment Solomon: Hadad the Edomite, Rezon the Syrian and Jeroboam who Solomon had made a ruler over all the house of Joseph. The prophet Ahijah found Jeroboam and told him that God will give him 10 of the 12 tribes to rule over. Jeroboam flees to Egypt because Solomon tries to kill him. Solomon dies after reigning 40 years
- Chapter 12 – Rehoboam, Solomon's son, goes to the city of Shechem for the nation had gathered an assembly to make him king. The people ask Rehoboam to lighten their burdens (most likely tax burdens). In fulfillment of God's promise to rend the kingdom, Rehoboam, ignoring the wise counsel of the old men, speaks roughly to the people saying that he will be an even fiercer taskmaster than Solomon. Ten of the tribes (all except Judah and Benjamin) reject him as their king and they eventually declare that Jeroboam will be their King- this is the formation of the nation will now be called Israel (**1st King of Israel- I1**). Rehoboam assembles an army of Judah and Benjamin and he is ready to fight a civil war to keep control over the kingdom, but God sends word through a prophet named Shemaiah that they must not fight and all the people return home. Rehoboam remains in control of just Judah and Benjamin and this nation is referred to as Judah (**1st King of Judah-J1**). Jeroboam, now King of Israel, fears the people would turn back to Rehoboam if they obeyed God's commandment to keep the three annual feasts at the Temple in Jerusalem, which is in Judah's territory. His solution was to make two golden calves and declare them to be the gods that brought Israel out of Egypt and he set one in Beth-el and one in Dan. He also instituted an annual feast in the eighth month, which was similar to the one God instituted.

Chapter 13 - A prophet from Judah goes to Bethel and cries against Jeroboam's altar declaring that in the future a king named Josiah shall defile that altar by sacrificing the idolatrous priests upon it and as a sign that it would come to pass the altar would be broken in two that day. (Prophecy fulfilled in II Kings 23:15) This prophet is tricked into disobeying the command of God not to eat or drink in Israel by a deceitful prophet and God slays him with a lion.

Chapter 14 - Jeroboam's wife disguises herself to visit the old, blind prophet Ahijah (same prophet that told Jeroboam that he would be king) to inquire after her sick son-Abijah. She is told for all of Jeroboam's sin, his house shall be utterly destroyed and only this sick son, Abijah shall die and be buried in peace because he was the only good thing towards the Lord in all the house of Jeroboam. As soon as she returns home, the child dies. Jeroboam reigned a **total 22 years** and upon his death, Nadab his son became the **2nd King of Israel**. Rehoboam the 1st King of Judah, engaged in more idolatry than his father Solomon and there were sodomites were in the land, which had existed in Canaan before Israel came in and was clearly prohibited under the law (See Deuteronomy 23:17). Rehoboam (J1) reigned a total of **17 years** and upon his death his son, Abijam reigned as the **2nd King of Judah**.

Chapter 15 –

- Judah: Abijam (J2) only reigned over Judah **3 years** and he like his father practiced idolatry. He was followed by his son, Asa, who was the **3rd King of Judah**. Asa (J3) was a good king and during his **41-year** reign, he walked in God's ways and reformed Judah to put away the idols only he didn't destroy the high places where people sacrificed instead of going to the Temple.
- Israel: Nabad **2nd King of Israel** is murdered after two years by a man named Baash of Issachar, who becomes the **3rd King of Israel** after he destroyed all of Jeroboam's family (fulfilling Ahijah's words) and retained power for **24 years**, while continuing in the idolatry of Jeroboam.

Chapter 16 – God send a prophet, Jehu to cry against Baash (13) for all his evil ways and to tell that his house shall be entirely destroy. The word is fulfilled by the captain of half of Baash's chariots, Zimri, who "reigned" as the **4th King of Israel** for just **7 days** in Tirzah. The rest of Israel appoints, Omri, who was Israel's top general, as king and they attack Tirzah. Zimri (14) seeing that he has lost elects to kill himself by setting fire to the king's palace, while inside it. Omri the **5th King of Israel** builds the city of Samaria, the new capital of Israel and reigns for **6 years**. Upon his death, his son the notoriously wicked Ahab becomes the **6th King of Israel** and remains in power for **22 years**. Ahab (16) married Jezebel, the daughter of the Zidonian King, and with her worship Ba'al.

During Ahab's days an Israelite from Bethel rebuilt the cursed city of Jericho and lost his youngest and eldest son as a consequence (fulfilling Joshua's word See Joshua 6:26).

Chapter 17 – God sends Elijah, the Tishbite from Gilead, to prophesy against Ahab (16) that God wouldn't permit there to be dew or rain for years. God stayed the rain for 3 and ½ years, which caused a terrible famine in the land. (See James 5:17-18) God sustains Elijah with food delivered by ravens while he camped beside a little brook Cherith until the brook dried up. Then God sent him to the Gentile city of Zarephath, unto a widow woman, whose small barrel of meal and cruse of oil miraculously sustained her, her son and Elijah for many days during the famine. Later, the woman's son dies, but Elijah prays that God would send the soul back into the child and God does so.

Chapter 18 – God sends Elijah back to see Ahab (16) and Elijah faces off against the 450 prophets of Baal to see who will send fire down from heaven to consume a burnt offering Baal or God. God completely consumes the burnt offering, the altar and all the water that had been poured on and around it by Elijah. Elijah tells the people that they need choose who to serve: either God or Baal. The people turn to God and at Elijah's command slay the prophets of Baal. God sends rain to end the drought. See Key Verse No. 2.

Chapter 19 - Elijah flees from Jezebel, who has promised to kill him by the next day. Elijah is strengthened by an angel with food, which sustained as he walked forty days to Mt. Horeb (Mt. Sinai were Moses's received the law). God meets him at Mt Horeb in the still, small voice and commands that he anoint Jehu king over Israel, Hazael to be king over Syria, and Elisha to a prophet in Elijah's place. While Elijah is having a pity party about being the only one left who is

-serving the Lord, God reveals that he has a remnant among Israel of 7,000 who haven't bowed to serve Baal. Elijah tosses his mantle upon Elisha, the son of Shephat, as he walks past and Elisha follows him after bidding his family farewell. See Key Verse No.3.

Chapter 20 - Ben-hadad king of Syria encircles Samaria in a siege; God delivers the Syrian army into Ahab's hands three times so he would learn and know that God is the Lord, but Ahab disobeys God's command to kill Ben-hadad and another prophet tells Ahab his life shall be in exchange for the man's who was appointed for destruction and given into Ahab hand that he let go.

Chapter 21 – Jezebel, Ahab's Queen, has Naboth murdered for refusing to sell his vineyard to Ahab. Elijah is sent to proclaim that Ahab's house shall be utterly cut off and that the dogs shall lick up Ahab blood and shall eat Jezebel's body. Surprisingly, Ahab humbles himself before the Lord and God elects to defer the punishment of until after Ahab is dead.

Chapter 22 – Asa's son, Jehoshaphat the **4th King of Judah** and Ahab (I6) join forces to fight against a common enemy: Syria. They inquire of the prophets and all prophets encourage them to go saying the Lord will bless their efforts- all except Micaiah, who reveals that God had sent a lying spirit to those prophets and declares that Ahab shall die in battle. Ahab decides not to take any chances so he disguises himself, while Jehoshaphat (J4) wears his kingly clothing into battle, but Ahab is still killed by an arrow shot at random. Ahab's son Ahaziah reigns for **2 years** as the **7th King of Israel** doing evil like his father. Jehoshaphat (J4) reigns **25 years over Judah** and follows the good ways of serving the Lord, like his father Asa (J3).

5. Key Verses

1. 1 Kings 2:2-4- David's charge to Solomon: *I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; And keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: That the Lord may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.*
2. Kings 18:21 *And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.*
3. 1 Kings 19:11-12 *And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.*

6. How does book of 1st Kings point to Jesus Christ?

1. The Resurrection: God's revival of the Zidonian Widow's son for Elijah is the 1st recording a miracle of bring a dead person back to life (i.e. a resurrection). Jesus references this miracle, when he is teaching that prophet that has honor except in his own people, which pointed to the inclusion of Gentile into Jesus's fold of sheep. (Luke 4: 25-26 *But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow* See Also John 10:16 *And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring...*) Jesus's resurrection declared God's acceptance of his sacrifice on behalf of each of his children as complete payment for their sins.

Chart of Kings No. 1 (I Samuel-I Kings)

Total Years since 1st King	Length of Reign	Judah	Israel	Book	Prophets
40	40	Saul (40 Year Reign over Unified Kingdom See Act 13:21) First King of Israel, selected by God but later rejected for his disobedience.		I Samuel & I Chronicles Ch. 10	Samuel
47	7	David: 7 Years in Hebron over Judah (2 Samuel 2:11)	Ishbosheth: 7 Years (Saul's Son)	II Samuel & I Chronicles Ch. 11-29	Gad, Nathan
80	33	David (33 Year Reign over Unified Kingdom See 1 Kings 2:11)			
120	40	Solomon (40 Year Reign over Unified Kingdom See 1 Kings 11:42) (David's Son) Constructed the Temple. A Wise and Wealthy King who followed the Lord for many years but he worshiped the idols of his many strange wives in his later years.		I Kings Chapters 1-11	Ahijah, Iddo
140	20	J1. Rehoboam: 17 Years (Son of Solomon) God took most of the kingdom from him for Solomon's sin, but he continued in the idolatry. Egypt invades Judah.	I1. Jeroboam: 22 Year Reign (Son of Nabat) Created 2 Golden Cow Idols for Israel to worship in Cities of Bethel and Dan so they wouldn't go to Israel. Built Shechem. Ahijah declares that his house shall be utterly destroyed.	I Kings Chapters 12-22	
		J2. Abijam: 3 Years- Rehoboam's Son			
181	41	J3. Asa: 41 Years Son of Abijam	I2. Nadab 2 Years (Son of Jeroboam and slain by Baasha)		
			I3. Baasha: 24 years (Slays Nadab)		
206	25	J4. Jehoshaphat: 25 Years Son of Asa	I4. Zimiri: 7 days (slays Baasha)	Elijah, Micaiah	
			I5. Omri: 12 years (slays Zimiri)		
			I6. Ahab: 22 years (Son of Omri) Wicked leads Israel to worship Baal and kills prophets of God. Wife Jezebel- an evil Princess of Syria.		
			I7. Ahaziah: 2 Years (Son of Ahab)		