

1 KINGS - A STUDY GUIDE

THE CENTRAL QUESTION:

What does this book/story say to us about God?

This question may be broken down further as follows:

- a. Why did God do it/allow it?
 - b. Why did He record it for our study?
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1. What picture of God would you have if you had only the book of 1 Kings? Would He just be One among many? Who wrote this book? Did he copy from earlier sources? Were all the people involved “inspired”? Was there a great deal of “faith” exhibited during the times of 1 Kings?
2. What do you think of David’s “hot water bottle?” (1 Kings 1:1-4) What would happen if we followed this custom with church or even government leaders today? What is implied by the statement, “but the king knew her not?” (v. 4) Was this fair to a beautiful young woman like Abishag? (Compare 1 Kings 2:13-23) How does this statement relate to Matthew 7:23, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity?”
3. What is the reason God gave so much wealth and wisdom to Solomon? (1 Kings 3:1-15; 2 Chronicles 1:3-12) Why do you think God offered to give Solomon essentially anything he asked for? (1 Kings 3:5) Why did God make so many promises to Solomon? (1 Kings 3:10-15 Compare 9:1-9)
4. Where did all of Solomon’s wives and concubines come from? (1 Kings 3:1; 11:1-3)
5. What actually led to Solomon’s downfall? In what important ways did he differ from David his father? (1 Kings 3:3; 11:1-6,33,34) How could God say to Solomon about David, “if you will serve me in honesty and integrity, as your father David did?” (1 Kings 3:14; 9:4; 15:5; Compare 3:6)
6. How would you measure wisdom to determine if someone was the wisest man? (1 Kings 4:29-34) Notice that Solomon was a great scientist. If Solomon was so wise, why was his son apparently so foolish? (1 Kings 12:1-20; 2 Chronicles 10:1-19)
7. Was it wise for Solomon to say that he would pay whatever wages the people of Lebanon asked? (1 Kings 5:6)
8. Why do we need all the details about the Temple and about Solomon’s house? (1 Kings 6 & 7)
9. What do you think Solomon had in mind when he sacrificed so many sheep and cattle that they couldn’t even be counted? (1 Kings 8:5, 62-64) Did they believe this would please God? (Genesis 8:21; Exodus 29:18,25,41; Leviticus 1:9,13,17; 2:2,9; Numbers 15:3,7,10, etc. Contrast Amos 5:21-24; Isaiah 1:10-17, Hosea 6:6; **Micah 6:6-8**; Matthew 9:13; 12:7)
10. In Solomon’s dedicatory prayer (1 Kings 8:23-53) he describes very well what happened later when they turned away from God (1 Kings 8:46-51). Where do you think he got these insights, and if he already understood them, how could he as the wisest man who ever lived, turn away from God? Why would Solomon be attracted to the “gods” of these other wives of his? (1 Kings 11:1-13)
11. Solomon suggests that the sins of the people may prevent the rains from coming (1 Kings 8:35). What does this imply about God? (Compare Matthew 5:45) What is suggested about Solomon’s attitude toward foreigners by his prayer? (1 Kings 8:41-43)
12. What does it mean when it says that God became angry with Solomon? (1 Kings 11:9)
13. Why did God give ten of the tribes to Jeroboam if He had foreknowledge of how wicked he was going to be? (1 Kings 11:31) How could God have talked to Jeroboam about walking in His ways, if He knew what Jeroboam was going to do? (1 Kings 11:38)
14. What is the purpose of the story of the older prophet and the “man of God” in 1 Kings 13? What should we learn from this story? Why do you think the older prophet lied? In what sense did the

younger prophet defy the word of the Lord? (1 Kings 13:20-22) Did the younger prophet do anything wrong? What should he have done?

15. What was the purpose for including the curse against the house of Jeroboam? (1 Kings 14:10-16) Notice the incredible list of sins committed during Jeroboam's time. Is it fair that Jeroboam's whole line should be punished because of his sins? (Deuteronomy 24:16; Ezekiel 18:1-32 see especially 18:19,20)
16. Why were there so many "high places" and "Asherah poles?" (1 Kings 11:7; 12:31,32; 13:32,33; **14:23**; 22:43) What was an "Asherah pole" and how was it used? Who was Asherah? (1 Kings 15:13; 16:33; 18:19; 2 Kings 13:6; 21:3,7 23:4,7 Compare Judges 3:7; 2 Chronicles 19:3; 24:18; 33:3)
17. If you had been God what would you have done with these kings? (1 Kings 16) Did God have anything to do with what took place, or is the Bible just giving a "national history" of the children of Abraham? Did these events take place because God caused them to happen or because of human "might and power"? Was God powerless to change the course of events we have recorded here?
18. What would you think if your pastor (apparently not married) went off to live for some time with a widow in another land as Elijah did? (1 Kings 17:8-16)
19. Why did God send the long period of drought on Israel? (1 Kings 17:1) How do you think Elijah felt facing the 850 prophets of Jezebel on top of Mt. Carmel? Why would God use this dramatic method of challenging their "gods"? (1 Kings 18:1-40) Compare the ten plagues of Egypt.
20. Why was Obadiah, a faithful servant of God, working for Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings 18:1-4)?
1 Kings 18:4: "and when Jezebel was killing the Lord's prophets, Obadiah took a hundred of them, hid them in caves in two groups of 50, and provided them with food and water.)" (*GNB*)
21. How could Elijah claim to be the only one left who was serving the Lord (1 Kings 19:10,14) if he knew about Obadiah and his 100 prophets?
22. What is the Lord trying to teach us from the experience of Elijah on Mt. Sinai? Would you rather have Elijah's experience on Mt. Carmel or his experience at the "mouth of the cave" on Mt. Sinai? (1 Kings 19:11,12) Who caused the wind, earthquake and fire if the Lord was not in them? Does this tell us anything about how the Lord would like to communicate with us today?
23. Why would God send Elijah to anoint Hazael as king of Syria-Israel's worst enemy? (1 Kings 19:15) What is implied by 1 Kings 19:17,18?
24. Why did Benhadad's officials claim that Israel's "gods" were mountain "gods"? (1 Kings 20:23)
25. How did God bring about such an enormous slaughter of Syrians with just a relatively few Israelites? (1 Kings 20:26-30)
26. Why would the Bible include a story like the story of Micaiah and the "lying prophets"? (1 Kings 22:1-28 Compare 2 Chronicles 18:2-19:2) What do you think of Micaiah's explanation of the source of their lying? (1 Kings 22:19-28; compare Micah 3:5,11 and 2 Samuel 24:1 contrasted with 1 Chronicles 21:1) Was this an authentic vision of heaven? (Compare 2 Kings 22:19 and Isaiah 6:1; Job 1:6) Did God directly deceive all these lying prophets? (See Ezekiel 14:9; 20:25,26; compare Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7) Did Ahab need a "lying spirit" to convince him to go up into battle or did he have his mind made up already about what he was going to do? (See James 1:13-15)

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