

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the ideas and thoughts of the heart.”

Course Text: First Kings

First Kings covers about 125 years from approximately 975 to 850 B.C. The first book of kings is interesting as it picks up the history of Israel at the conclusion of King David’s reign and continues through the history of Solomon and into the period of the divided kingdoms. The United Kingdom of Israel split after Solomon's death. All of the kings of the Southern Kingdom were descendants of King David. This was not the case with the kings of the Northern Kingdom. This book reminds us that the wisdom of man is never very wise. It is disappointing that history is so full of sadness, but when man chooses sin it will always lead to sadness.

Time Charts

The United Kingdom (All dates approximate)

Saul (1051-1011) I Samuel
David (1011-971) II Samuel
Solomon (971-931) I Kings 1-12

The Kings of Israel (Northern Kingdom)

#	Name	Approx. Date	Scripture References
1	Jeroboam	931-910	I Kings 12:25-14:20
2	Nadab	910-909	I Kings 15:25-31
3	Baasha	909-886	I Kings 15:32-16:7
4	Elah	886-885	I Kings 16:8-14
5	Zimri	885	I Kings 16:15-22
6	Omri	885-874	I Kings 16:23-28
7	Ahab	874-853	I Kings 16:28-34; 20:1-22:40

The Kings of Judah (Southern Kingdom)

#	Name	Approx. Date	Scripture References
1	Rehoboam	931-913	I Kings 14:21-31
2	Abijam	913-911	I Kings 15:1-8
3	Asa	911-870	I Kings 15:9-24
4	Jehoshaphat	873-848	I Kings 22:41-50

Suggested methodology:

1. Let the students have a copy of the lesson well before the class meets. (Perhaps the previous meeting)
2. The students read the Bible book and answer the questions in this lesson before the group meets.
3. At the class meeting allow time for greetings and fellowship. (Save most of this for the end)
4. Take prayer requests (Try to keep it from becoming a competition to see who has the most or the worst.)
5. Pray (The idea here is to leave our troubles with God so we can give His word our attention with a clear mind.)
6. Discuss the questions on page 7. Let those who prefer to listen, listen. My answers, when provided, are just one opinion; you may have a better answer. It might be good to establish the norm that only those who have actually read the book should discuss it aloud.
7. Discuss whatever other questions people have on their mind about the First Kings.
8. Close in prayer (It is best to call on others to pray, but try to get their permission ahead of time.)
9. Fellowship (Leave this as open ended as possible for the time and place you meet.)

Depending on the number of people, this class is expected to take about two hours.

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First Kings Chapters 1 to 11

The Rise of Solomon

King David is very old and weak, so Adonijah, one of his sons, decides to make himself king in David's place. David corrects the situation and appoints Solomon to the throne with the anointing of the prophet of God. Soon the kingdom is securely in the hands of Solomon and the injustice of recent years has been corrected. God reveals himself in a dream to Solomon, and Solomon asks for wisdom as he leads the people of Israel. Solomon shows wisdom as he finds a way to identify a baby's real mother. The wisdom of Solomon becomes known, and his rule is made more secure in the Lord. Read 1st Kings Chapters 1-4 and answer the following questions:

- [1] What did Solomon do to Adonijah to punish him from trying to take the throne from David? _____
- [2] What did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada do for King Solomon? _____
- [3a] What did Solomon ask for from God? _____
- [3b] How did Solomon identify the real mother of the child? _____
- _____
- [4] Who was Solomon wiser than? _____

The Temple Built

Solomon makes preparation for, and builds the temple in Jerusalem. This is one of the greatest feats of his rule. He also builds a palace for himself. It takes 20 years to complete these buildings. The Ark of the Covenant is brought to the new temple. Read 1st Kings Chapters 5-8 and answer the following questions:

- [5] Who was Hiram? _____
- [6] What color was the temple when it was finished? _____
- [7] How long did it take for Solomon to build his own house? _____
- [8a] What happened after the priests put the Ark in the Holy of Holies?. _____
- [8b] True or False? The temple was only for the Israelites. _____

The Fall of Solomon

The Lord appears to Solomon again as he did in chapter 3. This word from God is surely worth reading carefully. The words of this revelation are prophetic as Solomon soon turns away from the one true God. We see the grandeur that comes to Solomon as he is faithful to God in his reign as their king. Yet we also see the downfall of Solomon. Solomon loved foreign women and they turned his heart from Jehovah. Read 1st Kings Chapters 9-11 and answer the following questions:

- [9] What did God say was required for Israel to stay securely in the land? _____
- [10] True or False? King Solomon married the Queen of Sheba. _____
- [11] Why did Ahijah the prophet say the kingdom would be divided? _____

First Kings Chapters 13 to 22

The Nation Divided

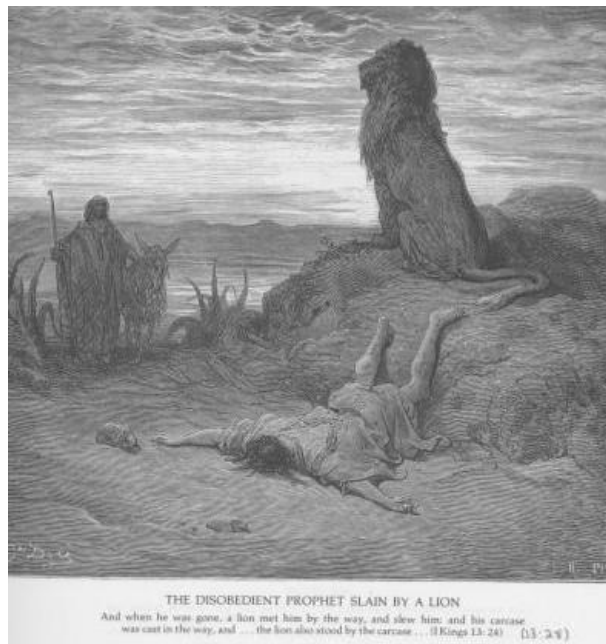
After Solomon's death his son Rehoboam takes the throne and leads the nation so arrogantly that the people rebel and the northern ten tribes are never to be returned to the kingdom of Judah. The kingdom is now divided and only a remnant is left to provide for the hope of the coming Messiah. From this point until the end of this book Judah has only two good kings, Asa and his son Jehoshaphat. The account of Israel becomes one of idol worship and sin, as kings come and go with no respect for God. Read 1st Kings Chapters 12-15 and answer the following questions:

- [12] Whose advice did Rehoboam listen to? _____
- [13] True or False? When his hand dried up and was healed Jeroboam repented of idol worship. _____
- [14] Who took the gold from Solomon's temple? _____
- [15] Of the Kings Asa, Abijam, and Nadab, which one was a godly man? _____

Elijah the Prophet

Ahab becomes king of Israel and he is worth noting only because his sins are greater than those before him. Soon, Elijah the prophet makes his appearance, and the story of his proclamation for the Lord is most interesting. In chapter 19 Elijah thinks he is alone, so he flees from Ahab. Jehovah reveals that there are still seven thousand that are faithful to him. The book ends with the death of Ahab, just as the prophet had promised. Read 1st Kings Chapters 16-22 and answer the following questions:

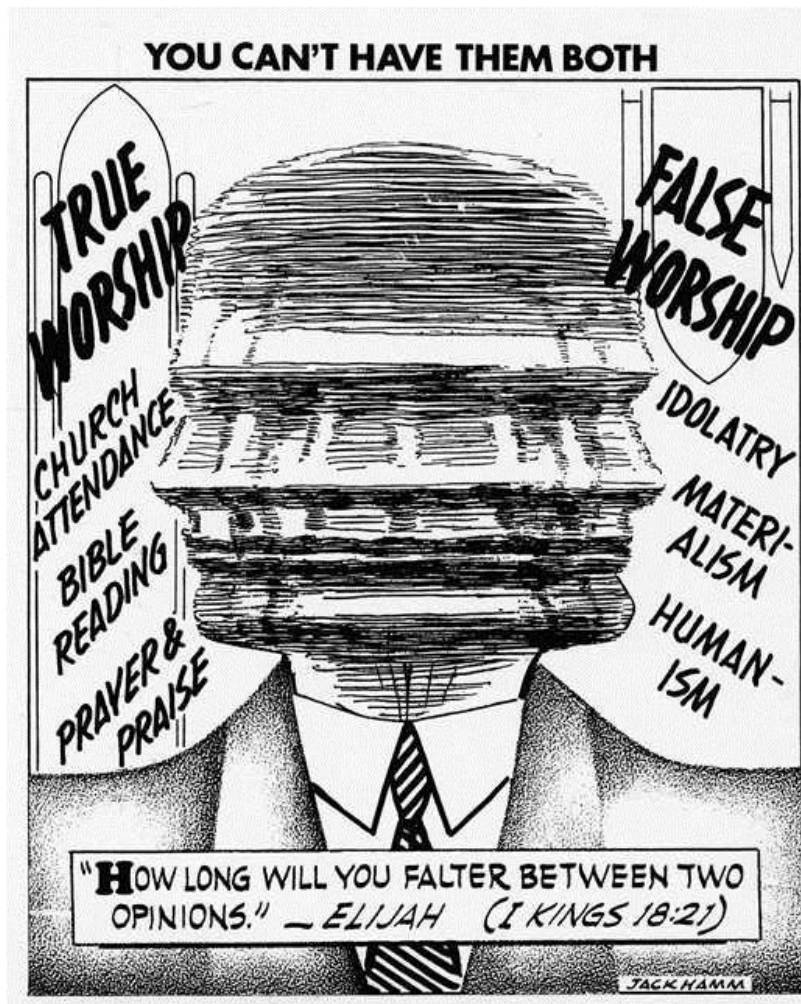
- [16] How long was Zimri the king? _____
- [17] Who fed Elijah while he was waiting by the brook, creek or wadi? _____
- [18] Besides the offering what else did the fire of God consume or burn up? _____
- [19] The Lord's voice was not heard in the wind, earthquake, or fire but in what? _____
- [20] Why was the man killed by a lion? _____
- [21] What caused God to delay his vengeance on the house of Ahab? _____
- [22] How did Ahab die? _____ 37



----- ANSWERS -----

First Kings Chapters 13 to 22

- [12] Whose advice did Rehoboam listen to? The young men 1Kgs 12:8-15
- [13] When his hand dried up and was healed Jeroboam repented of idol worship. False 1Kgs 13:33
- [14] Who took the gold from Solomon's temple? The Egyptians 1Kgs 14:25-26
- [15] Of the Kings Asa, Abijam, and Nadab, which one was a godly man? Asa 1Kgs 15:11
- [16] How long was Zimri the king? Seven days 1Kgs 16:15
- [17] Who fed Elijah while he was waiting by the brook, creek or wadi. The ravens 1Kgs 17:4-6
- [18] Besides the offering what else did the fire of God consume or burn up?
Wood, stone, dust, and water. 1Kgs 18:38
- [19] The Lord's voice was not heard in the wind, earthquake, or fire but in what?
A still small voice or quiet whisper. 1Kgs 19:11-13
- [20] Why was the man killed by a lion?
Because he refused to strike the prophet when requested. 1Kgs 20:36
- [21] What caused God to delay his vengeance on the house of Ahab.
Ahab repented and was sorry 1Kgs 21:27-29
- [22] How did Ahab die? He was shot by an arrow during battle 1Kgs 22:34-37



(1) In 1Kgs 11 Solomon worships idols for the sake of some of his wives. How was it possible for the wisest man in the world to sin so badly? What hope is there for those of us who are less wise?

Think & Pray _____

(2) In 1Kgs 13:11-24 a prophet of God dies because he believes a lie. What does this story teach us?

Think & Pray _____

(3) How could 1Kgs 14:12-13 be used to comfort someone whose young child dies?

Think & Pray _____

(4) If someone asked you what First Kings was about what would you say?

Think & Pray _____

(5) How can the lessons of First Kings be applied to our own life?

Think & Pray _____

(6) Which verse or passage would you select to memorize from First Kings? Why?

Think & Pray _____

If you have any questions about First Kings, now is the time to discuss them with your classmates.

----- ANSWERS -----

(1) Not by Wisdom The people of the Old Testament are written about for our example. (1 COR 10:6) I believe the purpose of this part of the story of Solomon is to show us that we are saved by Jesus Christ, not by our wisdom.

(2) Truth It teaches us not to believe everyone who claims to be speaking for God. We need to guard what we believe very carefully. (See Acts 20:29-30) Lies can be deadly.

(3) Rescue God called this child home to heaven because he was good, and rescued him from all the bad things that would have happened to him had he lived. The death of an infant should be understood as God rescuing them.

(4) First Kings Summary The first book of kings is interesting as it picks up the history of Israel at the conclusion of King David's reign and continues thru the history of Solomon and into the period of the divided kingdoms. The United Kingdom of Israel split after Solomon's death. All of the kings of the Southern Kingdom were descendants of King David. This was not the case with the kings of the Northern Kingdom.

We read of the sad disappointment the people were to God, because of the plans they made for themselves. The people thought that it would be great to have a king. (1 Samuel 8) Their idea was that a king would give them the strength and unity that was needed for real success. The appointment of a king eventually brought them to the point of great weakness and division for the kingdom. There is sharp contrast between the way that Jehovah would have provided for the people, and the way it worked out under their kings. This book reminds us that the wisdom of man is never very wise. It is disappointing that history is so full of sadness, but when man chooses sin it will always lead to sadness.

(5) First Kings Life Application I think the most important lessons to bring away from 1st Kings is that it is always a mistake to do things our own way instead of God's way.

(6) Something to Remember I like 1st Kings 8:61 "Let your heart therefore be wholly devoted to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as at this day." It emphasizes the attitude we should have toward God. It is the lesson of 1st Kings in a single sentence.