

Kings

The books of Kings covers:

1. The reign of Solomon 2. The Division of the kingdom and the parallel history of the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel. 3. The destruction and captivity of the Northern Kingdom of Israel by Assyria. 4. History of Judah to the Babylonian captivity.

I Kings opens with the Hebrew nation in its glory.

II Kings closes with the nation in ruin.

The author makes frequent references to state annals, archives and other historical records that existed in his day.

I Kings 2:1-4 Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying, 1Ki 2:2 I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; 1Ki 2:3 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: 1Ki 2:4 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.

Solomon becomes king and chooses wisdom.

I Kings 3:5 In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

I Kings 3:9-14 Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? 1Ki 3:10 And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. 1Ki 3:11 And

God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; 1Ki 3:12 Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. 1Ki 3:13 And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. 1Ki 3:14 And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

A Famous story of Solomon's wisdom, justice and judgment cf:

I Kings 3:16-28

Solomon wrote three thousand proverbs and a thousand and five songs.

I Kings 4:32-33 And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. 1Ki 4:33 And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that *is* in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.

I Kings 6:1 And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which *is* the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.

Solomon began to reign in 971 BC minus 4 years is 967 BC plus 480 years equals 1,446-1,447 BC for the date of the Exodus.

I Kings 9 & 10 The era of David and Solomon was the golden age of Hebrew history. David was a warrior, Solomon was a builder. Solomon

built an empire by peaceful commerce. The outside world was the age of Homer and the beginning of Greek history. Egypt, Assyria and Babylon were weak nations. Israel was the most powerful kingdom in the world at that time.

1Ki 9:15 And this *is* the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build the house of the LORD, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer. 1Ki 9:16 *For* Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it *for* a present unto his daughter, Solomon's wife. 1Ki 9:17 And Solomon built Gezer, and Bethhoron the nether

I Kings 11 Solomon married many idolatrous women. He had seven hundred wife, and three hundred concubines. The wise man of the ages was just a plain common fool for a skirt. These women were idolatrous daughters of the heathen princes and kings, wedded for the sake for political alliances. Solomon set up high places for these women's heathen gods on the Mount of Olives. Perhaps the account is God's example of what luxury and ceaseless rounds of pleasure will do even to the best of man.

I Kings 11:1ff

Ash-to-reth a Canaanite goddess, her male consort was Baal. The two were worshiped together with lewd rites.

Mil-com or Mol-ech: a heathen god of the Ammonites worshiped in gruesome orgies in which children were sacrificed and burned alive in the idol's arms.

Che-mosh: The heathen god of Moab, Mesha King of Moab offered his son to Chemosh as a burnt offering cf: II Kings 3:4ff

I Kings 12 The united kingdom had lasted a hundred and twenty years. Saul ruled for forty years, David forty years and Solomon forty years.

After the death of Solomon the kingdom was divided. The Ten tribes formed the Northern Kingdom which was called Israel. Judah and Benjamin formed the southern kingdom called Judah. The Northern kingdom lasted over two hundred years and was destroyed by Assyria in 721 BC. The Southern kingdom lasted a little over three hundred years and was destroyed by Babylon in 586 BC.

In the northern kingdom of Israel there were 9 Dynasties or family lines of kings making up 19 kings. Eight of these kings meet death by violence.

In the southern Kingdom of Judah there was only one Dynasty that of King David's family line with 20 kings in all.

I Kings 13 & 14 Jeroboam, founder of the Northern Kingdom adopted calf worship by setting up a golden calf in the high places in Bethel and Dan to keep the kingdoms separate. This kept his subjects from going to Jerusalem to worship at the Temple of the Lord.

Six chapters are now given unto Ahab's reign while most of the kings have only part of a chapter. The reason is largely the story of Elijah.

The prophet Elijah was God's answer to Ahab and Jezebel. God sent Elijah to stamp out Baalism a vile and cruel religion.

I Kings 16:29-30 And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years. 1Ki 16:30 And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that *were* before him.

I Kings 16:32-34 And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. 1Ki 16:33 And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him. 1Ki 16:34 In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in

Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest *son* Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun

Joshua 6:26 And Joshua adjured *them* at that time, saying, Cursed *be* the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest *son* shall he set up the gates of it.

I Kings 17:1-41 And Elijah the Tishbite, *who was* of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, *As* the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. 1Ki 17:2 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, 1Ki 17:3 Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan. 1Ki 17:4 And it shall be, *that* thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there

I Kings 17:91 Arise, get thee to Zar'-e-phath, which *belongeth* to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

I Kings 17:14 For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day *that* the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

I Kings 17:17-18 And it came to pass after these things, *that* the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him. 1 Kings 17:18 And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?

I Kings 17:22 And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.

I Kings 18:1 And it came to pass *after* many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.

I Kings 18:17-24 And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, *Art* thou he that troubleth Israel? **1Ki 18:18** And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim. **1Ki 18:19** Now therefore send, *and* gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. **1Ki 18:20** So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. **1Ki 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. **1Ki 18:22** Then said Elijah unto the people, I, *even* I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men. **1Ki 18:23** Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under*; and I will dress the other bullock, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under*: **1Ki 18:24** And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken

I Kings 18:27 And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he *is* a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, *or* peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. **1Ki 18:28** And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. **1Ki 18:29** And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the *time* of the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that *there was* neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

I Kings 18:30 And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD *that was* broken down. **1Ki 18:31** And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: **1Ki 18:32** And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. **1Ki 18:33** And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour *it* on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.

I Kings 18:37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou *art* the LORD God, and *that* thou hast turned their heart back again. **1Ki 18:38** Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that *was* in the trench. **1Ki 18:39** And when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he *is* the God; the LORD, he *is* the God. **1Ki 18:40** And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there. **1Ki 18:41** And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for *there is* a sound of abundance of rain.

Elijah's undaunted courage and fiery zeal, the brilliance of his triumphs, the pathos of his depression and despondency, the glory of his departure, the calm beauty of his reappearance on the Mount of Transfiguration makes him one of the grandest characters Israel ever produced.

Sources: KJV Bible, e-sword & Halley's Bible Handbook