

# The Book of 1 Kings



## Part 4 4 studies in 1 Kings

## Introduction

The two books, 1 & 2 Kings, in the Hebrew Old Testament were one book. It was divided by the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) translators. They summarized these books as follows: I The Reign of Solomon; II Division of the Kingdom, and Parallel History of the Two Kingdoms; III Subsequent History of Judah to the Captivity.

1 Kings opens with the Hebrew nation in its glory. 2 Kings closes with the nation in ruin. Together they cover a period of about 400 years, from 1000-600 BC.

## Author

The author is not known. A Jewish tradition says it was Jeremiah. Whoever the author is, he makes frequent reference to state annals and other historical records existent in his day, such as: "The book of the acts of Solomon"; "The book of chronicles of the Kings of Judah"; and "The book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel" (1 Kings 11:41; 14:19, 29; 15:7, 23, 31; 16:5, 14, 27 etc.).

## Brief Outline of 1 & 2 Kings

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. The last days of David and Solomon's Accession              | 1 Kings 1:1 - 1 Kings 2:46   |
| 2. The reign of Solomon  | 1 Kings 3:1 - 1 Kings 11:43  |
| 3. History of the Divided Kingdom                              | 1 Kings 12:1 - 2 Kings 10:36 |
| 4. History of Judah and Israel to the fall of Northern Kingdom | 2 Kings 11:1 - 2 Kings 17:41 |
| 5. History of Judah to the fall of Jerusalem                   | 2 Kings 18:1 - 2 Kings 25:30 |

## Alternative Outline of 1 & 2 Kings

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The Golden Age   | 1 Kings 1-11          |
| 2. The Torn Kingdom | 1 Kings 12-2 Kings 17 |
| 3. The Last Days    | 2 Kings 18-25         |

## Please Note the following:

1. It is not necessary to look up all the Bible cross references listed in a particular question; your Growth Group Leader will summarize these Bible cross references for you.
2. Just a reminder that sometimes in our Growth Groups, people feel comfortable sharing very personal and sensitive things about their lives. This information **MUST BE CONFIDENTIAL and NEVER LEAVE THE GROUP.**

## Study 1 - The Lord appears to Solomon

1 Kings 9:1-9  
(Sermon on 7-Nov-21)

**Before we begin, what is the context as we reach 1 Kings 9 (see 1 Kings 8)**

*We have just had the dedication of the Temple.*

*And Solomon has prayed (1 Kings 8:58) that the Lord would turn the hearts of the people to Him, and that they would walk in obedience to Him and keep the commands, decrees and laws He gave their ancestors.*

### Read 1 Kings 9:1-5

1. What has Solomon just done.

*He has just finished building the temple and the palace; and "achieved all he had desired to do"*

2. When had God appeared to Solomon before? (cf. 1 Kings 3:1-9)

*God had appeared to Solomon before at the beginning of his reign, when Solomon had offered a thousand burnt offerings to God at Gibeon, where the tabernacle (mobile version) was. At Gibeon, the Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream and said "Ask for whatever you want me to give you".*

*Solomon asked for "a discerning (God listening) heart to govern God's people". God gave Solomon "a wise and discerning (God listening) heart, as well as "both wealth and honour, so that in his lifetime, Solomon would have no equal among kings".*

3. How are worship conditions different on this second appearance compared to the first appearance?

*In the first appearance, the Solomon and the people were sacrificing at high places (1 Kings 3:2, 3). These high places were perhaps a leftover remnant from the previous occupants of Israel who worshipped false gods. It begs the question, why they didn't use the tabernacle only!*

*In the second appearance, Solomon and the people are worshipping at the new built temple.*

4. Why does God appear a second time to Solomon? (Verse 3)

*God has heard Solomon's plea (prayers from chapter 8)*

5. What has God done and what does He promise? (Verse 3)

*God has consecrated the temple (i.e., set apart the temple for holy use - God's use - and not ordinary use) by putting His name there.*

*God promises that His eyes and heart will always be in the Temple.*

6. What condition is there in verse 4 and 5?

*If Solomon walks before God faithfully with integrity of heart and uprightness and does all God commanded and observes God's decrees and laws, then God will establish Solomon's royal throne and He will keep the promise He made Solomon's father: "You shall never fail to have a successor on the throne"*

7. **Ponder:** What is God expecting of Solomon when He says "as David your father did"?

*David was a man after God's own heart; he was far from perfect but He loved God. David never worshipped false gods and when confronted with his sin was always willing to repent. This standard was not out of reach for Solomon.*

**Read 1 Kings 9:6-9**

8. What will happen if Solomon [and the people] or descendants disobey God? (Verses 6 & 7)

*Note: the "you" in verse 6 is plural - so it applies to Solomon and the people. God will cut off Israel from the land (exile) and will reject the Temple that has just been consecrated for His holy Name. And Israel will become an object of ridicule among the nations.*

9. What does God mean that Israel will become a "byword..." in verse 7?

*A Byword: person or thing cited as a notable and outstanding example or embodiment of something.*

*Living Bible translation - Israel will become a joke to the nations and an example and proverb of sudden disaster.*

10. What will happen to the Temple in verse 8?

*The Temple will be a heap of rubble.*

11. What will passersby ask at the end of verse 8 and what answer will be given in verse 9?

*God will chastise Israel so severely that the nations will be astonished at their punishment. The passersby will ask "why has the Lord done such a thing to this land and temple". And the answer will be because Israel has been disobedient and forsaken the God who brought them out of Egypt and are worshipping false gods.*

12. **Ponder:** What do you make of the severity of the warning from God here? *He desires obedience and faithfulness. He will not tolerate His people forsaking Him and following other gods. (See Deuteronomy 28 - blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience)*

13. **Ponder:** In what way is God's warning here kind? *It's kind in the sense that God is alerting Solomon to the danger of disobedience. God spells out the danger and warns so clearly to show the need for urgent faithfulness to Him. After all, Israel were God's people and meant to be the light and example to the surrounding nations.*

14. How do the following NT passages relate to 1 Kings 9:1-9 and to us?

### **Hebrews 2:1-3**

*Just like Solomon must heed the words of God, as Christians we must heed the words of Jesus.*

*In context of chapter 1 where Jesus is described as superior to angels; believers are to listen intently to the words of Jesus in case we drift away (backslide).*

*The ancient Greek phrase for drift away comes from the idea "to slip" (Dodds). It was used for an arrow slipping from the quiver, for snow slipping off a landscape, or of food slipping down the windpipe to cause choking. It happens easily. One doesn't have to do anything to drift away. Our backsliding usually comes from slow drifting, not from a sudden departure.*

### **Hebrews 3:12-13**

*Again, another warning (like the one to Solomon) not to have sinful unbelieving hearts that turn away from the living God.*

*Instead, we are to encourage one another each day, so that our hearts don't become hard and get deceived into thinking that our sin is hidden or that we have it under control.*

### **Hebrews 6:1-8**

*Again, a warning (like with Solomon) to become mature Christians and to not fall away. This is a difficult passage; can Christians really fall away? They may backslide but can they fall away? Perhaps the best way to understand it, is that people from a human perspective may have all the appearances of being saved. But from God's perspective, He is the only one who knows people's hearts.*

*The Apostle Peter denied Jesus three times (because Peter was scared of the Roman soldiers and punishment); but Jesus forgave him. Peter didn't really turn away from Jesus; his humanness and sinfulness meant he couldn't face what might be ahead. Later he did and was martyred.*

### **Hebrews 10:26-31**

*The context is the writer of Hebrews is warning people not to turn back to Judaism. If they do, they are deliberately giving up on Jesus' sacrifice for sin and there is no sacrifice for sin then available to them. Once people reject the gift of salvation there is nothing left but judgment; and as v31 says: "it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God [without salvation from Jesus]"*

### **Hebrews 12:25-29**

*Again, a warning for Christians to listen to God and to be faithful (just like the warning to Solomon). Jesus' kingdom is unshakable (v28) and believers should be very thankful of this. As the MSG says: "God is not an indifferent bystander. He's actively cleaning His house, torching all that needs to burn, and He won't quit until it's all cleansed. God Himself is a consuming fire!"*

15. **Ponder:** Why doesn't God appear to us now, like He did to Solomon, or does He? (cf. 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Isaiah 55:11; Hebrews 1:1-2; James 1:2-5; Hebrews 12:5-11)

*Notwithstanding there are stories today of incidents and miracles where God has appeared or spoken to people.*

*He **speaks** and teaches and corrects and trains **through His Word** as 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

*And Isaiah 55:11 says **God's Word** accomplishes what He plans: so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

*Hebrews 1:1-2 says in the past God spoke through His prophets but now He speaks through Jesus [who is the WORD made flesh]: In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.*

*James 1:2-5 says **God speaks through the trials we endure which give perseverance and He speaks to us through prayer when we ask Him for wisdom:***

*<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. <sup>4</sup> Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.*

*And as Hebrews 12:5-11 says, **God speaks to us through His discipline of us; God disciplines the one He loves.***

16. **One concluding thought:** God gives warnings in His Word all the time and they seem to be in areas of life that the people being spoken to are going to have problems with down the track. **Read 1 Corinthians 10:11-13** to see how these warnings in the Old Testament apply to us today...

*The things that happened in the Old Testament were written down for us to a) heed the warnings they were given; b) to learn from their mistakes rather than us making the same mistakes; and c) to encourage us to remain faithful and trust God in all things.*

*1 Corinthians 10:11-13 reminds us why these stories (like Solomon's) are in the Bible. They are for us to learn from and teach us how to live to please God. We should not get too puffed up thinking we're standing firm but instead be alert to the traps of Satan and the dangers and consequences of sin.*

*We also have the comfort (v13) of knowing that there is no unique temptation, they've all happened to many people before - and we have the extra comfort of knowing that God is faithful and will not let us be tempted beyond what we can bear - and even provides a way out to avoid the temptation.*

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **1 Kings 9:1-9**?

*The urgent need for faithfulness to God*



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and Scripture is all about Him (Luke 24:27), in what ways does this passage point to Jesus, if at all?

- The promise to David of a forever throne ultimately finds its fulfilment in Jesus
- Where Solomon and the people could not be fully obedient to God's laws and decrees; Jesus was/is fully obedient
- The promise of God's Name in the Temple forever - finds its fulfilment in Jesus as the Temple (1 Kings 9:3)

How does this passage **apply to your life?**

- *God listens to our prayers*
- *God want us to be faithful to Him*
- *There will always be consequences for our sin and unfaithfulness to God (e.g., look what happens to Solomon's temple later and where to the people of Israel end up!)*
- *Solomon has achieved all that he desired to do (1 Kings 9:1) and wouldn't Solomon now have to find some "other" project and maybe Solomon would get tempted into the wrong project; so, God appears to warn him. Isn't that when we might be at our most vulnerable when we think we're okay now.*
- *God's Word is for warning and teaching us. In God's Word we have God's presence and His Son's presence right there with us.*
- *God is faithful and provides a way out when we are tempted to sin - we just have to take it!*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

*1 Kings 9:4-5 - calling for faithfulness.*

*1 Corinthians 10:13- No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.*

**Finish in prayer:** Thanking God for His Word and the warnings therein. Ask God to help us to heed the warnings from Scripture and learn from the past

experience of the people in the Bible. Ask God to help us remain faithful to Him and His Son.

## Study 2 - Solomon's other activities

1 Kings 9:10-28

*(Sermon on 14-Nov-21)*

### Read 1 Kings 9:10-14

1. How long had Solomon's building projects taken?

*Solomon took twenty years to build the Temple of the Lord and his Palace.*

2. What did Solomon give Hiram, King of Tyre? Why?

*Solomon gave Hiram twenty towns in Galilee because Hiram had supplied Solomon with all the cedar, juniper and gold he wanted for the building projects.*

3. What does Hiram think of this "gift" of Solomon?

*Hiram was not pleased with this "gift"; he says to Solomon "what kind of towns are these you have given me, my brother?"*

4. What does Hiram call these towns in verse 13 and what's significant about the name?

*Hiram calls these towns "Kabul" which means "good for nothing" [interestingly the same spelling as capital of Afghanistan]*

*It's always worth checking out the meaning of names in the Old Testament; they often have a significant meaning!*

*Hiram acting honorably towards Solomon, perhaps because of his prior relationship with Solomon's father, David.*

5. What do we learn about Hiram from verse 14?

*Hiram also gave Solomon 120 talents of gold [4 ½ tons or 4 metric tons] - worth \$161 million at 2015 prices!*

6. **Ponder:** What do we make of Solomon's behaviour here?

- a. *Remember the land of Israel was the Promised Land given to the Israelites by God; Solomon gave away twenty towns to a non-Israelite and had no right or permission to do so!*
- b. *We're meant to see Solomon as a shrewd dealer - but he's ripping Hiram off. Solomon gives Hiram twenty "ordinary" towns and Hiram gave all those materials for the construction of the Temple and Palace; as well as all that gold!*
- c. *Would Solomon's father, David, acted this way?*

## Read 1 Kings 9:15-19

7. What do we learn about the laborers used in Solomon's building project in v15? *Solomon used conscripted labour to build the Lord's temple, the Palace, the terraces [in some Bibles the Millo which is architectural terracing and buttressing along the NE slope of the east hill of Jerusalem], the wall of Jerusalem and the fortified cities of Hazor [in the north in Galilee], Megiddo [in the plain of Sharon] and Gezer [west of Jerusalem near the coast]*

8. How did the gift to Solomon's wife eventuate?

*Although Gezer was included in the tribal territory of Ephraim, it was not occupied by the Israelites until the time of Solomon. Then it was attacked and captured by the Pharaoh of Egypt and then given to Solomon as a wedding gift by Pharaoh to his daughter. Then Solomon rebuilt it.*

*The wedding gift was a huge favour for Solomon as the town of Gezer was on the major trading route to Joppa (aka Jaffa).*

9. Locate the places mentioned on the map below:



10. What do we learn about Solomon's building projects in verse 19?

*Solomon also had store cities and towns for his chariots and horses. As well as that, he built whatever he desired in Jerusalem, in Lebanon and throughout all his kingdom.*

11. **Ponder:** What do we make of Solomon's behaviour here?

*Solomon can basically do and build whatever he wants. He can indulge himself as much as he pleases!*

*There were warnings about trusting in chariots and horses:*

*Psalm 20:27 - Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.*

*Deuteronomy 17:16 - The king, moreover, must not acquire great numbers of horses for himself or make the people return to Egypt to get more of them, for the LORD has told you, "You are not to go back that way again."*

**Read 1 Kings 9:20-24**

12. What does Solomon do with the peoples that were not Israelites (i.e., Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites) in verses 20 & 21?

*All the non-Israelites that had not been exterminated when the Israelites took the Promised Land [the descendants of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites) were used as slave labour in Solomon's building projects.*

13. What does Solomon do with the Israelites in verse 22 & 23?

*The Israelites were made fighting men, government officials, officers, captains, commanders of his chariots or charioteers or chief officials in charge of Solomon's projects.*

14. **Ponder:** What do we make of Solomon's behaviour here?

a. *This was an apparent compromise by Solomon. God strictly commanded that the remnants of these non-Israelite tribes be driven out of the land, not used as slave laborers in Israel. See Deuteronomy 7:1-2: When the LORD your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations—the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you—<sup>2</sup> and when the LORD your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy.*

b. *Solomon used people as a commodity - to do what he pleased with them!*

- c. *Foreign wives could be a problem; if he is influenced by them!*
- d. *Double standard - it's okay to have a pretty foreign wife in a palace but the foreign men are slaves!*

15. What hint of trouble ahead do we have in verses 16 & 24? (cf. 1 Kings 11:4)  
*V16 - Solomon married a foreign wife (Pharaoh's daughter) and v24 - Solomon built a palace for his foreign wife (Pharaoh's daughter) - 1 Kings 11:4 says: As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been.*

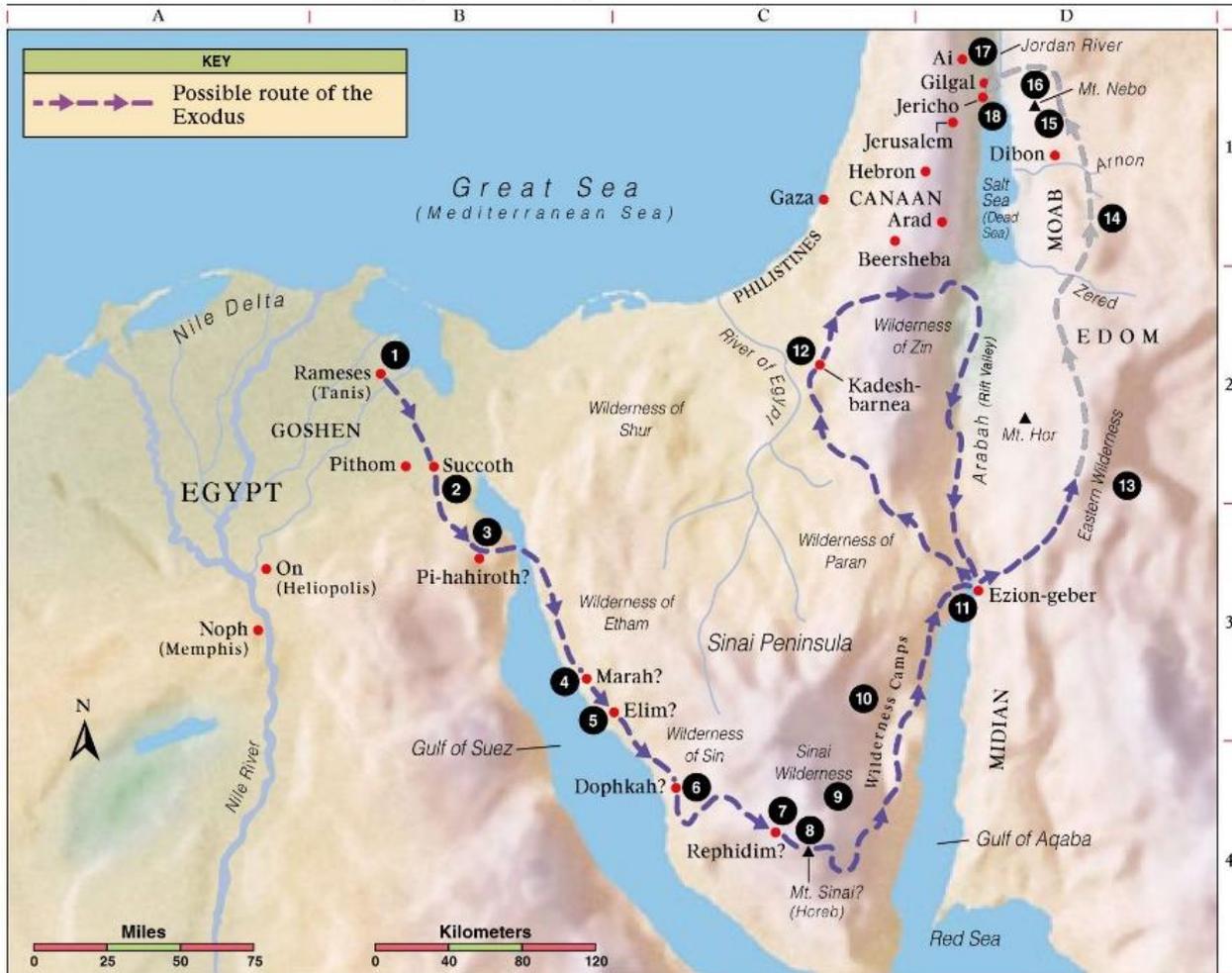
**Read 1 Kings 9:25-28**

16. Why does Solomon make sacrifices three times per year? (cf. Exodus 23:14-17)

*According to Exodus 23:14-17 there were 3 annual festivals which were pilgrim festivals [Jews travelled to Jerusalem]:*

- a. *The festival of Unleavened Bread (Passover)*
- b. *The festival of the Harvest of the Firstfruits (Pentecost)*
- c. *The festival of Ingathering at the end of the year*

## 2. Israel's Exodus from Egypt and Entry into Canaan



17. Find Ezion-Geber on the map. What did Solomon do there?  
*He built ships there. Hiram then sent sailors who knew the sea to serve on Solomon's fleet.*
18. What were the ships used for in verse 28?  
*They sailed to Ophir [location uncertain - perhaps SE Arabia or East coast of Africa or even India] and brought back 420 talents [16 tons or 14 metric tons] of gold.*
19. **Ponder:** What do we make of Solomon's behaviour here?  
*a. It's possible that Solomon made the sacrifices himself, not a priest?*  
*b. Solomon's overindulgence knows no bounds!*
20. How would you summarize Solomon's behaviour in 1 Kings 9:10-28? And how do 1 Kings 9:6-9 loom large peering over the proceedings of 1 Kings 9:10-28?

*Solomon's relentless pursuit of wealth and possessions has him in danger of him "turning away from" God (v6) and "serving other gods" [and wealth and possessions and foreign wives] and trusting in chariots and horses instead of God. If Solomon and the people forsake God and His commands; then the consequences in verse 7 are exile and the temple reduced to rubble in verse 8.*

*Solomon is behaving like any other King in any of the surrounding nations. He is not behaving like God's anointed King. Danger looms...*

21. In some ways, King Solomon acts and lives as a King would normally live. **Read Matthew 20:20-28** and see how King Jesus lives. How is King Jesus a different sort of King?

*The mother of the sons of Zebedee (James and John) asked Jesus for her sons to be seated at Jesus' at His right and left. Basically, asking to share in Jesus' prestige and power. Bear in mind Jesus had promised this in Matthew 19:28 -*

*[Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.]*

*But their mother doesn't know what she's asking. If they want to share in Jesus' power and prestige they have to share in His cup of suffering and be baptized [swallowed up or immersed in suffering] with the same suffering Jesus would face. And besides who sits at Jesus' right or left is up to the Father and not the Son!*

*Jesus also promises that James and John will drink His cup [of suffering]*

*The other disciples were a bit annoyed thinking the two brothers James and John had been given special privilege but in fact - pretty much all the apostles suffered for following Jesus.*

*Jesus makes the point that His leadership and Kingship is different to the surrounding nations (Gentiles) idea of Kingship. The rulers of Gentiles lord it over their subjects. But no so in Jesus Kingdom.*

*This is a stinging rebuke to the disciples and to the Church (and us) not to operate the way the world does.*

*In Jesus' Kingdom community, status, money, popularity should never be the prerequisites for leadership. Humble service is the great prerequisite, as shown by Jesus' own ministry.*

*Real ministry is done for the benefit of those ministered to, not for the benefit of the minister. Many people are in the ministry for what they can receive (either materially or emotionally) from their people instead of for what they can give.*

*i. "He received nothing from others; his was a life of giving, and the giving of a life...No service is greater than to redeem sinners by his own death, no ministry is lowlier than to die in the stead of sinners." (Spurgeon)*

*ii. "He does not come to be served, but to serve. Does not this suit you, poor sinner — you who never did serve him, you who could not, as you are, minister to him? Well, he did not come to get your service; he came to give you, his services; not that you might first do him honor, but that he might show you mercy." (Spurgeon)*

*Jesus did the job of a slave when He washed the disciples' feet (John 13).*

*So, Jesus concludes that He did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many. Note: a ransom was most commonly used as the purchase price for freeing slaves and the preposition "for" in Greek "anti" has the idea of Him taking our place!*

*Kings might die for their subjects - but they wouldn't die for a person's sin or take a person's punishment. Jesus even died for His enemies - who later could still come to believe in Jesus (e.g., the Apostle Paul).*

**22. Challenge:** What teachings in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) might come into play with Solomon's behaviour here in 1 Kings 9:10-28?

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. (Matthew 5:6-8)*

<sup>13</sup> "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. <sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let

*your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:13-16)*

*19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)*

*24 "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. (Matthew 6:24)*

*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own (Matthew 6:33-34)*

*"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it (Matthew 7:13-14)*

*24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." (Matthew 7:24-27)*

### **Read 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1**

23. What does Paul call us to be like? (Especially 1 Corinthians 11:1)

*Do everything to God's glory (not our own!)*

*Seek the good of others, so that they might be saved!*

*Follow the example of Jesus!*

### **Read Philippians 2:1-11**

24. What does being a Christian look like?

- *Being like-minded, having same love [of Jesus], being in one spirit and one mind.*
- *Not selfish or self-serving but humble and looking out for the interests of others.*
- *Having the same mindset of Jesus - humble, servant-like and showing sacrificial (to die for) love*

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 1 Kings 9:10-28?

*The danger of being self-serving and self-indulgent*

 If the Old Testament points to Jesus and Scripture is all about Him (Luke 24:27), in what ways does this passage point to Jesus, if at all?

*In v19 Solomon did whatever He pleased; Jesus did only the Father's will*

*Jesus is a servant King as opposed to Solomon who is self-serving and self-indulgent*

*The sacrifices that Solomon (v25) made ultimately point to Jesus' sacrifice*

How does this passage **apply to your life?**

- a. *We should operate with **honesty and integrity** in our dealings with others; we are ambassadors of Jesus! Golden rule - treat others as we would want to be treated.*
- b. *We should **trust in the Lord** and not in our wealth or in our "stuff" - remember the 1<sup>st</sup> commandment - "You shall have no other gods before Me!" (Exodus 20:3)*
- c. *Solomon was **not content with what he had** but continually pursued more and more wealth and riches.*
- d. *Be careful we are **not influenced by family/friends who don't follow the Lord!** If we're not careful we can start to believe the lies of the world.*
- e. *Solomon relied on chariots and horses and fortified cities instead of relying on the Lord.*
- f. *There are **consequences** in us ignoring or forsaking our relationship with the Lord*
- g. *Walk in **obedience to God** - love God and love others*
- h. *Be servant like - not self-serving.*
- i. *Imitate Jesus - the Servant King!*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

*1 Kings 9:25*

*Matthew 20:28*

*Philippians 2:5*

**Finish in prayer:** Give thanks to Jesus the Servant King. Ask God through His Spirit to give us servant-like hearts to love and serve Him and love and serve others.

## Study 3 - The Royal Visit

1 Kings 10:1-13

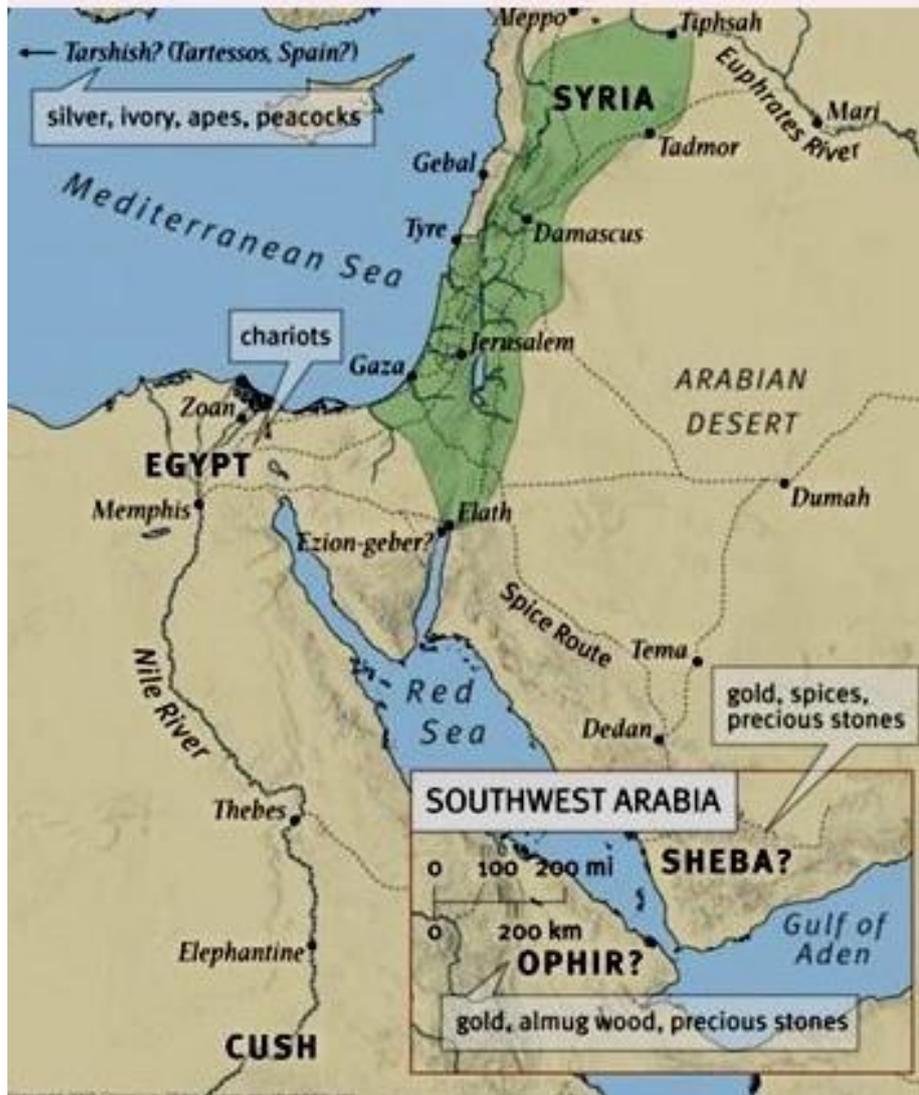
*(Sermon on 21-Nov-21)*

**Before we begin:** Where is Sheba?

*Sheba (also known as Sabea) was where modern-day Yemen is today (Southern Arabia). It was a wealthy kingdom, with much gold, spices, and precious woods. History also tells us that they were known to have queens as well as kings.*

*Another possible location is modern day Sudan.*

*The distance the Queen of Sheba travelled is about 1500 miles (2400 KM)*



**Read 1 Kings 10:1-5**

1. Why did the Queen of Sheba come to see Solomon in verse 1?

*She came because she heard about Solomon's fame and his relationship to the Lord; and to test Solomon with some hard questions.*

2. What do we learn about the Queen of Sheba in verse 2?

*She had a huge entourage: a great caravan - with camels carrying spices, gold, and precious stones. The Queen is very wealthy in her own right.*

3. What was so impressive about Solomon in verse 3?

*He answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for him to answer.*

4. What was the Queen of Sheba's reaction to King Solomon in verses 4 & 5?

Why?

*The Queen was overwhelmed (literally it 'took her breath away') because of: a) Solomon's wisdom; b) the magnificent Palace he had built; c) the way he could entertain his guests in such a grand manner; and d) the burnt offering (sacrifices) he made at the Temple.*

### Read 1 Kings 10:6-9

5. What are the highlights of the Queen of Sheba's speech in verses 6 to 9?

- *The reports she had heard in her own country of Solomon's reputation for wisdom and his achievements are all true*
- *But seeing is believing - and what she's seen with her own eyes she can scarcely believe*
- *Solomon has wealth and wisdom far beyond what she imagined*
- *Every one of Solomon subjects should be happy with such a wise King*
- *She praises the Lord God of Israel for blessing Solomon so much and making him King, to maintain justice and righteousness; and she acknowledges God's eternal love for Israel.*

6. In what way do verses 6 to 9 fulfill the words God spoke in Deut 28:1 & 10?

*If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high **above all the nations on earth** (Deut 28:1)*

*Then all the peoples on earth will see that you are **called by the name of the LORD**, and they will **fear you**. (Deut 28:10)*

*There is no doubt that the surrounding nations (like Sheba) see Israel as the "stand-out" nation "above all nations on Earth"*

*And there is no doubt that the surrounding nations (like Sheba) can see what the Lord God of Israel has done and they are fearful (as well as in awe) of God and what He has done for Israel.*

*This chapter (10) is a fulfilment of God's promises to Solomon (wisdom which Solomon asked for and wealth and honour, which he didn't ask for - see 1 Kings 3:9-13) and fulfilment to Israel that they would be above all nations around them (Deut 28:1, 10).*

*And yet at the same time, Solomon (and Israel and us) need to remember the warning of the need for obedience in 1 Kings 9:6-9.*

### **Read 1 Kings 10:10-13**

7. What gifts does the Queen of Sheba give Solomon? Why is this impressive?  
*She gave 120 talents (4 ½ tons and 4 metric tons) of gold and a huge number of spices. There have never again been so many spices brought to Israel.*

8. What supplies does Solomon acquire in verse 11 and what does he do with them in verse 12?

*King Hiram's ships brought gold and almugwood (almugwood - possibly like juniper or red sandalwood) and precious stones. The almugwood was used to make the wooden supports for the Temple and the Palace; and to also make harps and lyres for the musicians.*

9. What gifts does Solomon give the Queen of Sheba in verse 13?

*Not only did Solomon give the Queen gifts out of his bounty but also whatever she desired or asked for.*

10. **Ponder:** How does the prayer of Solomon from 1 Kings 8:41-43 and 1 Kings 8:60, play out in the visit of the Queen of Sheba in 1 Kings 10:1-13?

<sup>41</sup> "As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your name— <sup>42</sup> for **they will hear of your great name** and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm—when they come and pray toward this temple, <sup>43</sup> then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. **Do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you**, as do your own people Israel, and may know that this house I have built bears your Name (1 Kings 8:41-43)

<sup>60</sup> so that **all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God and that there is no other.** (1 Kings 8:60)

*Solomon's prayer from 1 Kings 8:41-43, 60 asked for foreigners to hear of the Lord's great name and for all peoples of the earth to know that the Lord is God and there is no other. Here we have a foreigner coming to Israel having heard of the Lord; it's a pity Solomon doesn't heed his own prayer (see 1 Kings 11:4)*

As 1 Kings 10:1-13 finishes up, it's not the last time we hear about the Queen of Sheba. **Read Matthew 12:38-42.**

11. What is Jesus' point in relation to Israel and the Queen of the South (aka the Queen of Sheba)?

*Jesus is talking to Pharisees and teachers of the law who think they have arrived and are so righteous. But Jesus is scathing and says in v39 they are a wicked and adulterous (unfaithful to God) generation.*

*Jesus commends the Queen of Sheba (who He refers to as the Queen of the South) for coming such a great distance to see King Solomon. Now these religious leaders have one greater than Solomon, standing before them and they are unbelieving, cynical, skeptical, dismissive and hostile to the Son of God! It's inexcusable!*

*Jesus' point is that the Queen of Sheba's search and commitment to hear about Solomon's God, puts the Pharisees and teachers of the Law and most of the Jews at the time, to shame.*

*In fact, Jesus goes as far as saying the people of Nineveh and the Queen of Sheba, all non-Jews (Gentiles) repented having had less "light" than the Pharisees and teachers of the Law and their generation, who have the "light of the world" standing in front of them! Jesus' point is: the greater light (of Jesus) requires greater judgment (by Jesus the Judge). The rejection of this greater light (Jesus) by the religious leaders of Jesus' day was indefensible.*

12. **Ponder:** How does the Queen of Sheba relate to us today?

*Just like Israel was meant to be a light to the Gentiles (see Isaiah 42:6), our lives are meant to be a "light" and a "signpost" pointing people, who don't know Jesus (like the Queen didn't know the Lord God of Israel) towards Him, so that they come out of the darkness of their sin and into His glorious light; and repent; and receive forgiveness and eternal life.*

### 13. How does **Matthew 5:14-16** relate to 1 Kings 10:1-13?

*<sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Matt 5:14-16)*

*We are to be like shining lights attracting unbelievers to come to King Jesus; just as Solomon & the people of Israel, were meant to be a shining light for foreigners to come to YHWH, the Lord God of Israel.*

### 14. How do **Acts 1:8** and **Matthew 28:18-20** relate to 1 Kings 10:1-13?

*<sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)*

*Our job is that through the power of the Holy Spirit we are witnesses to our Lord Jesus and we share our faith "to the ends of the earth" just like the Queen of Sheba came from "the ends of the earth" to see Solomon and hear about his God.*

*<sup>18</sup> Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)*

*Our job (just like King Solomon and the Jews) is to go and "make disciples of all nations". Christianity is not exclusive; it's inclusive.*

### What's the **BIG IDEA** of 1 Kings 10:1-13?

*Be a witness to the Lord God, YHWH and His Son, Jesus.*



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and Scripture is all about Him (Luke 24:27), in what ways does this passage point to Jesus, if at all?

- *Jesus refers to the Queen of the South (Matthew 12)*
- *King Jesus is "one greater than" King Solomon; that we ALL must come to.*

### How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- *The Queen of Sheba went to great lengths to see King Solomon - will we go great lengths to serve Jesus?*
- *The Queen was amazed when she met King Solomon and witnessed his splendour; it was far greater than she had imagined. When we meet the glory of Jesus; it will be far greater than we could ever imagine.*

- *Israel was meant to be a light to the Gentiles to show what the One True God is like; in the same way, we are lights directing people to Jesus - the Light of the World.*
- *Solomon impressed the Queen with his wisdom, wealth and splendour - but what about Solomon's God; we need to make sure we are pointing people to God and his Son, Jesus; and not just impressing them with who we are and what we have. People need to be seeking Jesus' Kingdom and His righteousness first (Matt 6:33)*
- *Like King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba we can give people gifts ("stuff") but the best gift we can give is Jesus and a relationship with Him!*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

*1 Kings 10:1 – The Queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's "relationship to the Lord"*

*1 Kings 10:9 - Praise be to the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the **LORD's eternal love for Israel**, he has made you king to maintain justice and righteousness*

**Finish in prayer:** Thanking God for sending Jesus; one greater than Jonah and one greater than Solomon. Pray that through His Spirit; God would enable and equip us to be ambassadors of Christ, shining the light of Jesus into people's lives, so that they too become followers of Him.

## Study 4 – Solomon's Splendour

1 Kings 10:14-29

*(Sermon on 28-Nov-21)*

**Before we begin: read Deuteronomy 17:14-20** and summarize the rules for any King ruling over God's people...

- *Must be a King chosen by God*
- *Must be an Israelite and not a foreigner*
- *Must not accumulate a large number of horses*
- *Must not make the people return to Egypt to get more horses*
- *Must not take many wives so his heart is led astray*
- *Must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold*
- *Must write a copy of the Law for himself and revere God's Law and keep it*
- *Must not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites*

### Read 1 Kings 10:14-15

1. What is Solomon's annual income? What's that in today's money?

*666 talents of gold = 25 tons or 23 metric tons = \$900 million to \$1 billion dollars  
Plus, revenue from: merchants, traders, Arabian kings and governors of territories (aka royal tax)*

### Read 1 Kings 10:16-27

2. How many shields? What type? How much are they worth?

*200 large shields of hammered gold - each shield had 600 shekels (15lbs or 6.9 Kg) of gold) = \$436,000 per shield at today's prices.*

*300 small shields of hammered gold - each shield had 3 minas (3  $\frac{3}{4}$  lbs. 1.7Kg) of gold = \$108, 678 per shield at today's prices*

3. Describe Solomon's throne.

- *Ivory throne overlaid with gold*
- *Throne had six steps and back had rounded top*
- *Armrests with lion standing between each of them*
- *12 lions on either side of each step*



4. Describe the goblets. What is wrong with silver?

*All King Solomon's goblets were gold and so were all the household articles in the Palace.*

*Silver was considered of little value in Solomon's day which shows the tremendous abundance in Solomon's kingdom.*

5. What did the King's fleet of ships bring?

*Every three years, the King's fleet brought gold, silver, ivory, apes and baboons.*

6. How is Solomon described in verse 23?

*He is greater in riches and wisdom than any other king in the world.*

7. Who came to Solomon and why in verse 24?

*The whole world came to hear the wisdom that God had given Solomon*

8. What did Solomon's visitors bring in verse 25 and why?

*They brought gifts of silver, gold, robes, weapons, spices, horses and mules. Why? Out of respect and thanks for Solomon's wisdom, wealth and honour.*

9. What did Solomon accumulate in verse 26?

*Chariots (1400) and horses (12000) - kept in special chariot cities and also in Jerusalem*

10. How is Solomon's extravagance and splendour highlighted in verse 27?

*Silver became as common as stones*

*Cedar as plentiful as a sycamore fig*

11. What else did Solomon import in verse 28 and how is that justified in verse 29?

*He imported horses from Egypt and Kue (Cilicia in SE Asia Minor)*

*Also imported chariots from Egypt.*

*Justification was that they were exported to the Hittites and Arameans.*

*Solomon could perhaps argue that they were not imported for his own use?*

12. **Ponder:** In what ways could we criticize Solomon from 1 Kings 10:14-29? (cf. Deuteronomy 17:14-20 and what you noted in question 1)

- *He accumulated a large number of horses*
- *He made the people return to Egypt to get more horses*
- *He accumulated large amounts of silver and gold*
- *We're not told he spent much time revering God's Law and he's certainly gone against Deuteronomy 17?*

### **Read Matthew 6:19-21**

13. How does this passage relate to Solomon in 1 Kings 10:14-29? And how does it relate to us?

*Solomon stored up treasures on Earth: gold, silver, chariots and horses [and later on wives]. That's where his heart was - and not ultimately towards God.*

*We can be tempted in the same way.*

*Is our heart towards God or something else?*

*We need to be rich towards God and store up treasures in Heaven*

*It's not wrong to lay up treasure on Earth - it's wrong to lay up treasure for "yourselves"*

### **Read Matthew 6:28-34**

14. How does this passage relate to Solomon in 1 Kings 10:14-29? And how does it relate to us?

*Jesus is saying that people perhaps worry about material stuff and forget that God provides all we need.*

*God has even arranged to make flowers look more splendid than Solomon - so if God takes care of nature so well, he's sure going to take care of us too!  
So rather than getting preoccupied with stuff (like Solomon did) when seek God's Kingdom - and seek His righteousness first - and God will take care of the rest for us.*

*To seek God's kingdom and His righteousness first - is to live a life with God at the forefront of our minds. Ask ourselves in everything, are we pleasing Him and bringing glory to Him? Solomon seems to have lost sight of God in the process of the blessings of wisdom, wealth and honour.*

### **Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19**

15. How does this passage relate Solomon in 1 Kings 10:14-29? And how does it relate to us?

*Paul says that people who are rich are not to be arrogant or put their hope in wealth (which is so uncertain - like stock market crash or COVID closing down a business) - but instead to put their hope in God - who is the provider. Rich people are to do good and be generous and share. We don't seem to see Solomon doing this do we?*

*Solomon seems to have crossed a line - where the accumulation of wealth - became his focus. For us - there is a fine line - that we can cross - if we're not mindful of the dangers.*

### **What's the BIG IDEA of 1 Kings 10:14-29?**

- a. *We are meant to go "WOW" look at how rich and famous and wise Solomon is*
- b. *On the one-hand, Solomon's wisdom, wealth and honour are a fulfilment of God's promises from 1 Kings 3 when Solomon asked for wisdom.*
- c. *But what if wealth and honour go to our heads? There is a danger of accumulating treasures on Earth - which can corrupt our hearts and lead us away from God being our priority*



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and Scripture is all about Him (Luke 24:27), in what ways does this passage point to Jesus, if at all?

- *As always when we read about Solomon - we must always be thinking of the one who is greater than Solomon (Matt 12:42)*

How does this passage **apply to your life?**

- *Let's not forget where our wisdom and wealth come from?*
- *We can subtly justify or rationalize disobedience ["everyone's does that", "God doesn't mind; He understands we're human"]*
- *Examine our lives - are we putting too much of our heart into our stuff - and God and His Son are being squeezed out of our lives?*
- *Are we competing with or comparing ourselves with family and friends - who have a better income, bigger house, better holidays etc.*
- *Prosperity Gospel is not in the Bible!*
- *Instead of being rich for ourselves - be rich towards God and towards others*
- *Store up treasures in Heaven - earthly stuff is temporary - heavenly stuff is permanent*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

**1 Kings 10:24** - The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart.

**Matthew 6:21** - <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also

**Finish in prayer:** Asking God to help us to seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness before chasing after anything else.

**Studies prepared by Paul O'Rourke**  
**October 2021**

**Resources:**

The MacArthur Study Bible

New Bible Commentary (Carson, France, Moyter & Wenham)

1 and 2 Kings (Donald J. Wiseman - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries)

1 Kings - The Wisdom and the Folly (Dale Ralph Davis)

Halley's Bible Handbook - New Revised Edition (Henry H. Halley)

**Notes/Prayer Points**