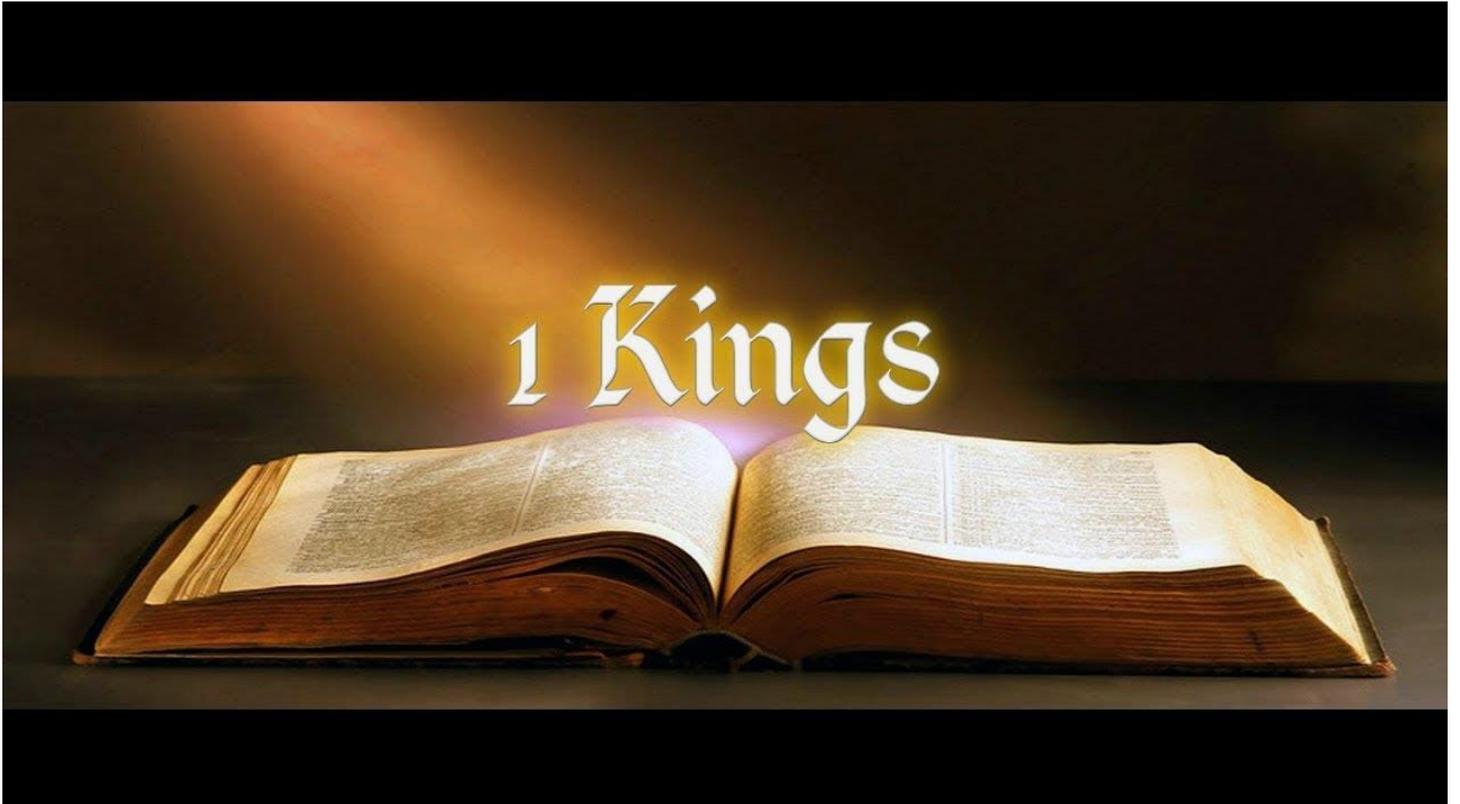


The Book of 1 Kings



Part 5 3 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 – Solomon forgets his first love

1 Kings 11:1-13
(Sermon on 3-July-22)

Before we begin, have a look at the sub-headings in your Bible for chapters 1 to 10 of 1 Kings and summarize what we learnt during our look at 1 Kings last year.

- *When King David was very old, David's son Adonijah put himself forward as David's successor as King*
- *But David made Solomon his successor*
- *David told Solomon to be a godly king and walk in obedience to God's Law*
- *Solomon is crowned as King*
- *God said to Solomon "ask for whatever you want" and Solomon asked for wisdom and a discerning heart*
- *Solomon made a wise ruling when two prostitutes have a dispute of whose baby it is*
- *Solomon had a huge number of officials and governors and required a huge amount of daily provisions*
- *Solomon is seen as the wisest man among all nations*
- *Solomon prepared to build the temple by doing a deal with King Hiram of Tyre for cedar trees and labour force*
- *Solomon built the temple which took seven years*
- *Solomon then built his palace with no expense spared which took thirteen years*
- *The Ark of the Covenant (containing the 10 commandments, a jar of manna and Aaron's budding rod) were brought to the Temple*
- *Solomon dedicated the Temple to the Lord*
- *Then the Lord appeared to Solomon when the Temple was finished*
- *The Queen of Sheba, having heard of Solomon's wisdom and fame, made a royal visit*
- *Chapter 10 concludes with a list of Solomon's splendour and riches*

What's your overall impression of chapters 1 to 10?

The overall impression is that this is a golden age for Solomon. He's Kingdom is successful; his wisdom is regarded worldwide; he is very very rich.

We do get a couple of hints of trouble looming ahead though. Solomon has married a foreign wife, Pharaoh's daughter (1 Kings 3:1) who would not necessarily worship the Lord God of Israel; and at the end of chapter 10, we discover that Solomon has accumulated many chariots and horses; something that God had forbidden back in Deuteronomy 17:14-20.

Read Genesis 2:23-24

1. How is marriage described here?

Marriage is described as being between man and woman, an exclusive relationship – "the two become one flesh"

Read Matthew 19:1-6

2. How is marriage described here?

*Here Jesus confirms what God ordained as marriage back in Genesis, quoting from Genesis 2:23-24. Jesus goes on to say, that a married couple are joined together by God, so it's not up to human beings to break it. In other words, marriage **is meant to be** a life-long union, until death.*

Read Deuteronomy 7:1-4

3. What instructions does God give the Israelites as they enter the Promised Land?

God says there will be many other nations and tribes in the Promised Land when the Israelites enter. God says:

- *These nations and tribes will be delivered over to the Israelites and they will defeat them*
- *The Israelites are NOT to make treaties with these other nations and tribes*
- *The Israelites are NOT to intermarry with these other nations and tribes, because they will turn the Israelites hearts away from following God and instead serve other gods; and this will make God very angry and they will be punished for this disobedience!*

Read Exodus 34:11-16

4. What instructions does God give the Israelites as they enter the Promised Land?

God will drive out the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. The Israelites are not to make a treaty with those tribes. They are to also tear down the worship altars and idols of these pagan tribes. Because, the Lord God of Israel is a jealous God. They are also not to intermarry as this will lead to the Israelites prostituting themselves to the pagan tribes' gods!

Read 1 Kings 11:1-3

5. Based on the Old Testament passages you have just read; what problems does Solomon have in marrying many foreign women (wives)?

Solomon is breaking God's laws and instructions in intermarrying these foreign wives AND these foreign wives will turn his heart away from the Lord God of Israel and towards the gods that his wives' worship! And as we just read, God is a jealous God and requires an exclusive relationship (just like a marriage)

Solomon is also rejecting God's plan for marriage where two become one (Matthew 19:4-6 and Genesis 2:23-24).

6. How many wives and concubines does Solomon have? What's the difference between a wife and a concubine?

He had 700 wives of royal birth (princesses) and 300 concubines.

Concubines were generally slaves and not free women; hence they could not be classed as wives. Any children born from a concubine would not normally be entitled to any inheritance. A concubine woman did not have to provide a dowry.

It some cases, concubines were used to bear children for men whose wives were barren (e.g., Hagar for Abraham). Later, concubines were kept simply for sexual pleasure. We can also surmise a reason based on the culture of the day. Unmarried women in ancient times were completely dependent on their family members, such as their fathers, brothers, etc. If for some reason a woman had no family members or her husband had died or divorced her, she would be left with few options for survival. Most women in ancient times were uneducated and unskilled in a trade. Providing for themselves was very difficult, and they were vulnerable to those who would prey upon them. For many women in dire situations, becoming a concubine was a much more suitable option than prostitution, homelessness, or death. At least a concubine would be provided a home and afforded a certain amount of care. It appears God allowed the sin of concubinage, in part, to provide for women in need, although it was certainly not an ideal situation. Sin is never ideal. Christians should be reminded that, just because God allows a sin for a time, it does not mean God is pleased with it. Many Bible narratives teach that God can take what some people mean for evil and use it for good (e.g., Genesis 50:20).

7. What do these wives and concubines do in verse 3?

As God warned; these foreign wives and concubines, led Solomon astray!

8. **Ponder:** What reasons could Solomon have for so many wives/concubines?

Solomon had so many wives/concubines for the following reasons:

- a. Because he **followed the bad example of his father, David**, who had many wives and concubines (2 Samuel 5:13-16)*
- b. Because these wives were **part of treaties** with other nations (again something God warned about)*
- c. Because a large harem was a **status symbol**. It said to the world “look how many wives and children, I can support. Look how many women I have authority over”. Solomon’s desire for this prestige led him to ungodly marriages and alliances.*
- d. Because of his sexual **lust**.*

Read 1 Kings 11:4-8

9. In what ways is Solomon led astray in verses 4 to 8? Why is this wrong? (Exodus 20:3-4; Deuteronomy 6:14-16; 17:17; 1 Kings 9:6)

V4 – Solomon worshipped other gods and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord God.

V5 – He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians; and Molek the god of the Ammonites.

V6 – He did not follow the Lord God completely like his father, David, did.

V7 – He built worship centres on high-places for Chemosh god of Moab and Molek god of the Ammonites.

V8 – He built worship centres for his wives to worship their foreign gods.

This is wrong based on the following passages:

*Exodus 20:3-4 – ³ “You shall have **no other gods** before me. ⁴ “You **shall not make for yourself an image** in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.*

*Deut 6:14-16 – ¹⁴ **Do not follow other gods**, the gods of the peoples around you; ¹⁵ for the LORD your **God, who is among you, is a jealous God** and his anger will burn against you, and he will destroy you from the face of the land. ¹⁶ **Do not put the LORD your God to the test** as you did at Massah.*

*Deut 17:17 – ¹⁷ He **must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray**. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold.*

*1 Kings 9:6-7 - ⁶ “But **if** you or your descendants **turn away from me and do not observe the commands and decrees, I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them,** ⁷ **then I will cut off Israel from the land** I have given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. Israel will then become a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples”*

Read 1 Kings 11:9-13

10. Why was God angry with Solomon?

God was angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from God even though the Lord God, had given Solomon the privilege of appearing to him twice (1 Kings 3:5; 9:2) and even though God had given Solomon the privilege of building the temple.

Also, God had expressly forbidden Solomon to follow other gods after Solomon had completed the temple (1 Kings 9:6-9)

11. What judgements does God make over Solomon and his Kingdom?

God will tear away the Kingdom from Solomon and give it to one of Solomon’s subordinates!

12. In what way is Solomon personally spared and why?

God will not tear away Solomon’s kingdom from him but from Solomon’s son. Why? For the sake of Solomon’s father, David, who although sinful in some of the same ways as Solomon, had not turned his heart away from God. This ensured that God kept His promise to David of an everlasting Kingdom (2 Samuel 7) and the kept His promise that David’s son would be King.

13. What hope is there in verse 13?

God will not tear away the whole Kingdom from Solomon’s son; one tribe will remain under the rule of Solomon’s son.

Even in this great judgment, God mingles undeserved mercy (grace) with deserved judgment.

God announces that the kingdom will be divided, and part of it will be loyal to the descendants of David and part of it will be under a different dynasty.

Many other passages in the Old Testament (such as 2 Chronicles 11:12) tell us that the southern kingdom was made up of two tribes, Judah and Benjamin. Several times in this

chapter the southern kingdom is referred to as one tribe. This is because either Benjamin is swallowed up in Judah, or the idea was one tribe in addition to Judah.

14. **Ponder:** What word is used 4 times in verses 2 to 4? Why is that significant? (cf. Mark 7:21-23)

The word "heart" is used 4 times in verses 2 to 4. This is significant because that is Solomon's problem; he has a heart problem.

*As Mark 7:21-23 says: ²¹ For it is from within, **out of a person's heart**, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²² adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. ²³ All these evils come from inside and defile a person."*

15. Compare 1 Kings 3:3 with 1 Kings 11:1, what do you notice?

*1 Kings 3:3 – Solomon showed his **love for the Lord** by walking according to the instructions given by his father, David, except that he offered sacrifices and burned incense in high places.*

*1 Kings 11:1 – King Solomon, however, **loved many foreign women** besides Pharaoh's daughter – Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites.*

In 1 Kings 3:3, Solomon loves the Lord; but in 1 Kings 11:1, Solomon's love for his foreign wives usurps his love for the Lord. Even in 1 Kings 3:3 – we see the danger lurking; as Solomon worshipped and sacrificed on high places which seems to have been allowed as long as it was worship of the Lord God; however, this high place worship was a leftover idea from the original inhabitants and could easily lead to worshipping other gods. When the temple was built, sacrifice was meant to be centralized.

16. **Ponder:** Why is God angry with someone (like Solomon) who wants to spread his devotion around, and expose himself to other religious traditions and spiritual experiences?

*Because God is a holy, perfect God who requires **exclusive** worship (as in a marriage) and He is a jealous God; who commands no other worship but of Him! No pagan deity requires exclusive devotion of his/her worshippers!*

Exposing ourselves to other religious traditions and spiritual experiences will inevitably lead our hearts away from God and leave us not fully committed or half-hearted towards Him.

Remember too, as King, Solomon was meant to point people towards the Lord God of Israel and to set a godly example. If the people see the King worshipping other gods, they would think "if the wisest King in all the world is doing it, it must be okay!"

Read Revelation 2:1-7

17. How might this passage relate to 1 Kings 11:1-13?

Through the Apostle John, our Lord Jesus speaks to the Church in Ephesus.

Jesus commends the Church of Ephesus' hard work and perseverance; He knows they cannot tolerate wicked people. He knows they have been discerning about false apostles. He knows they have persevered through many hardships.

BUT – they have a problem; they have forsaken their first love; which is the Lord God.

Isn't that what Solomon has done too!

What about us? It's easy for us to think we're doing God's work but is He our first love?

Perhaps we need to look in the mirror?

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **1 Kings 11:1-13**?

- Forsaking our first love
- A heart problem



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?

- a. The promise of one tribe remaining, the tribe of Judah, points to a descendant of Judah, which is of course, our Lord Jesus!
- b. When God tells Solomon, the Kingdom will be taken away from him; it should remind us of what Jesus says in the parable of the tenants, in Matthew 21. Jesus refers to the people of Israel as the tenants who disrespected the landowner and his son, and so Jesus concludes the parable in Matthew 21:43 - *"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit."*
- c. Only faith in Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit can change our rebellious hearts.

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

- *God gives rules, laws and commandments for a reason; to keep us safe and pure.*
- *Sin is subtle and gradual; it creeps in without us noticing sometimes.*
- *There will always be consequences in breaking God's commandments and laws.*
- *Marriage is meant to be an exclusive relationship and marriage is a picture of God's relationship with His people; it is meant to be an exclusive, faithful, life-long relationship.*
- *Pride comes before a fall (Proverbs 16:18).*
- *Just because God allows sin sometimes does not mean He approves of it – and there will be consequences!*
- *Although God must exert justice on sinful rebellion; He is also full of grace and mercy and offers a way out of this sin and rebellion!*
- *What is in our **heart** when it comes to worshipping God and being faithful to Him?*
- *God wants our **whole heart** towards Him and no other!*
- *Are we guilty of forsaking our first love, God/Jesus? Are we putting the worship of other people or other stuff ahead of Him?*
- *Let's not get complacent in our relationship with God, as Solomon and as the Church of Ephesus did; there's a position in Paradise where we can eat from the tree of life (Rev 2:7).*
- *It's never too late to come back to our first love (God) and it's never too late to make God our first love!*

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

1 Kings 11:13 - Yet I will not tear the whole kingdom from him, but will give him one tribe for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen."

*Revelation 2:4 - Yet I hold this against you: **You have forsaken the love you had at first***

Finish in prayer: Father God, help us to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. Father God, help us to not forget that you are our first love. In Jesus name, Amen.

Study 2 – All History is in God’s Sovereign Control

1 Kings 11:14-43
(Sermon on 10-July-22)

Remind yourself from the last study, what Solomon did wrong and what God said He would do about it?

Solomon had intermarried with many foreign wives who had turned their hearts away from the one true God of Israel (1 Kings 11:9) and he had worshipped/followed other foreign gods. So, God said He would tear away the Kingdom of Israel from Solomon and give it to one of his subordinates (1 Kings 11:10). God showed grace to Solomon by saying He would not tear away the Kingdom in Solomon’s lifetime; but would wait until Solomon’s son was King. This was because God had made a promise to Solomon’s father, David, that David’s son (Solomon) would reign as King and that David’s Kingdom would be an everlasting Kingdom. Therefore, God said He would not take away the whole Kingdom, for the sake of David and for the sake of the city of Jerusalem (for which God has special plans (Deut 12:11))

Read 1 Kings 11:14-22

1. Who is the adversary that God raised up against Solomon?

***Hadad** the Edomite (from Edom).*

*Note the Hebrew word for **adversary** is “satan” (שָׂטָן)*

Hadad’s name means “mighty” and often used as part of the name of kings of Edom and the name also used for the Syrian god of storms

2. What’s his background?

When David had battled with Edom (back in 2 Samuel 8), David’s commander of the army, Joab, had stayed behind for 6 months to ensure all Edomite men were killed. But Hadad was only a boy and had escaped to Egypt with some of his father’s officials. They eventually got help from the Pharaoh of Egypt; and Pharaoh gave Hadad a house and provided him with food; then later a wife (Pharaoh’s sister, Queen Tahpenes).

Once Hadad heard that David and Joab were dead, he asked Pharaoh if he could return to his own country.

3. Find **Edom** on the map in Appendix 1.

See red circle on map in Appendix 1). Edom is south east of Israel.

Read 1 Kings 11:23-25

4. Who is the adversary that God raised up against Solomon?

*The second adversary was **Rezon** son of Eliada.*

Rezon’s name means “prince”

5. What’s his background?

He fled from his master, Hadadezer King of Zobah.

Back in 2 Samuel 8, when David destroyed Zobah's army, Rezon had gathered a band of men around him and became their leader, and they went to Damascus to settle.

Rezon ended up ruler in Aram.

6. Find **Zobah and Aram** on the map in Appendix 1.

Zobah and Aram (aka Syria – and capital Damascus) are to the North-East of Israel. See blue squares on map in appendix 1.

Read 1 Kings 11:26-40

7. Who is the adversary in verse 26?

The adversary this time is from within Israel; one of Solomon's officials, Jeroboam, son of Nebat. Jeroboam was an Ephraimite from Zeredah (for Ephraim - see green rectangle on map) and his mother was a widow named Zeruah. The threat from within was the greatest threat.

8. How is Jeroboam described in verse 28?

He was 'a man of standing'. It seems Solomon was so impressed with Jeroboam's work that he put Jeroboam in charge of the whole labour force that was building terraces to fill in the gap in the wall of the city of David (Jerusalem).

Tradition has it that Jeroboam rebelled against Solomon because of the oppressive use of forced labor in these building projects.

Jeroboam's name means "the people will contend"

9. Who does Jeroboam meet as he was going out of Jerusalem?

Jeroboam meets a prophet from Shiloh called Ahijah; whom we have not come across before.

10. What prophecy about a cloak is revealed in verses 30 to 32?

Ahijah's tore his cloak into 12 pieces and told Jeroboam to take 10 pieces of the torn cloak. Ahijah told Jeroboam that the Lord God says: "I am going to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hand and give you ten tribes, but for the sake of my servant David and the city of Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of the tribes of Israel, he (Solomon) will have one tribe"

11. **Ponder:** What do the 12 pieces of the cloak represent in verse 30? And is there a mathematical problem in that Jeroboam is given 10 pieces (v31) and Solomon will have one piece (v32)? What's the solution?

The 12 pieces of the cloak = the 12 tribes of Israel.

10 pieces = 10 tribes that will be given to Jeroboam = Northern Kingdom = aka Israel

2 pieces = 2 remaining tribes of Judah and Benjamin = Southern Kingdom = aka Judah.

Mathematical problem is solved either by a) the prophecy meaning one tribe (Benjamin) besides Solomon's tribe of Judah or b) the tribe of Benjamin being swallowed up by the tribe of Judah.

12. What's the reason given for God's intended action in v33?

The reason for God's intended action is because they (the people of Israel as well as Solomon) have forsaken the one true God of Israel and worshipped Ashtoreth (goddess of Sidon), Chemosh (god of Moab) and Molek (god of Ammonites), and have not walked in obedience to God and kept God's laws and decrees as Solomon's father, David, did.

Note: the worship of these gods requires child and human sacrifices!

13. What 'mercy' is Solomon given according to verse 32?

God will not take the whole kingdom and will not take the kingdom away whilst Solomon is ruling and alive; because of God's promise to David.

14. What 'mercy' is Solomon afforded in verses 34 to 36?

Solomon will continue to rule until he dies (v34)

It will be Solomon's son from whom the Kingdom will be torn away (v35)

One tribe will be given to Solomon's son (v36) because of David's faithfulness to the Lord – and so that God maintains His promise of an everlasting Kingdom of David.

15. What is Jeroboam promised in verses 37 to 38? Are there any conditions?

Jeroboam will be king of Israel and rule over all that his heart desires.

Conditions: If Jeroboam obeys God's decrees and commands, as King David did, God will be with him and Jeroboam will have a dynasty like King David. Which of course begs the question: will Jeroboam obey God's decrees and commands; and what will happen if he doesn't!

By the time we get to chapters 12 to 14, we will see that Jeroboam does not obey God's decrees and commands. If Jeroboam had of been obedient, there could have been two God fearing Kingdoms (North and South).

16. Why do you think Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam? (cf. 1 Kings 11:11-13). Why does Solomon's attempt to kill Jeroboam fail? (cf. 1 Kings 11:31-39)

Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam because God had said in 1 Kings 11:11-13 that he would tear the Kingdom away from Solomon. Solomon thought he could stop God's plan.

Solomon's attempt to kill Jeroboam failed because God's prophecy through Ahijah in 1 Kings 11:31-39 must take place; what God says will happen ALWAYS happens. He is in sovereign control of all things.

Solomon's attempt to kill Jeroboam failed; and Jeroboam fled to Egypt and stayed there until Solomon died.

There is a possibility that on hearing the prophecy from Ahijah, Jeroboam, rebelled in some way, even though Ahijah's prophecy clearly said the tearing of the Kingdom would happen during the reign of Solomon's son. This rebellion then caused Solomon to try to kill Jeroboam. Either way; things are only going to happen the way God said they would happen.

17. **Ponder:** Can God preserve what He is destroying? Does God's promise to Jeroboam through Ahijah negate the sure and certain promise He made to David in 2 Samuel 7:12-16?

Of course, God can preserve what He is destroying. His promise to Jeroboam through Ahijah makes it clear that for the sake of King David, there will be a remnant tribe (Judah plus Benjamin) that will ensure God's promise for an everlasting kingdom, remains intact.

18. What hope is there in verses 34, 36 and 39?

V34 – The hope is that it's not the whole kingdom being torn away.

V36 – One tribe will remain – so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, where God's name dwells.

Note: the lamp was symbolic of:

- a. Continuing life. To put out a lamp or brazier meant the end of the family line.*
- b. Continuous succession. David's line to continue – through to Jesus and eternity.*
- c. Divine guidance. For God's Word is always a lamp to our feet (Psalm 119:105; 2 Samuel 22:9; Proverbs 6:20, 22). But to forsake God's law is to walk in darkness. (See 1 Kings 15:4).*

V39 – Even though David's descendants – Solomon etc. – are humbled – it will not be forever!

Read 1 Kings 11:41-43

19. How is Solomon's reign summarized?

Solomon reigned 40 years. We are not given an assessment of his reign, just a statement that other events involving Solomon are written in the book of the annals of Solomon.

20. Who takes over from Solomon as king when he dies?

Solomon's son, Rehoboam succeeds him. Rehoboam means "who enlarges the people". Ironic name perhaps!

Read Matthew 1:1-7

21. How might this passage relate to 1 Kings 11:14-43?

In these verses we have the genealogy of our Lord Jesus showing that the promise God made to King David in 2 Samuel 7:16 - Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever – is fulfilled. In Jesus' family line is Rehoboam, son of Solomon, son of David.

Read John 5:16-30

22. How might this passage relate to 1 Kings 11:14-43?

In this passage Jesus says in v17 "My Father is ALWAYS at work to this very day, and I (Jesus) am too working". We see how God was working in this passage in 1 Kings 11:14-43; God raises adversaries (satans) to tackle Solomon's rebellion; yet He is also at work making sure His

promise to David is kept, in that one of David's descendants, will be that forever King that He promised.

Also, in this passage from John, we see that unlike the people of Israel and their kings, Jesus can only do "what He sees the Father do" (v19) – and the Father has entrusted Jesus, the Son, with the judgment of all people (v22).

Just like the Israelites we fail to fully obey God's rules and commands; and just like there was grace in 1 Kings 11; there is grace here. See v24 – Jesus is like a bridge – a bridge from sin and death – to forgiveness and eternal life.

24 "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me^ϐ has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.ϑ

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **1 Kings 11:14-43**?

God is sovereign in all things



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?

- a. *Jeroboam fleeing to Egypt until King Solomon died; is a bit like Joseph, Mary and Jesus fleeing to Egypt until King Herod died. God is in control of this history.*
- b. *The remaining one tribe for the sake of David – puts to a descendant from David's tribe of Judah; namely Jesus. Jesus stops us from being cut off from God forever (1 Kings 11:39)*
- c. *David, Solomon and Rehoboam are in Jesus' family line (Matthew 1:1-7)*
- d. *Jesus can do whatever God the Father can do (John 5:19).*
- e. *The reference to David always having a lamp (1 Kings 11:36) points to Jesus, the light of the world (John 8:12) who calls people out of the darkness of their sin (John 1:5; 12:46; Ephesians 5:8; 1 Peter 2:9)*

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

- a. *There will always be consequences for sin and rebellion. Solomon found this out. Back in 1 Kings 5:4 - But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side, and there is no adversary (satan) or disaster. But now God has raised up (allowed) three adversaries (satans): Hadad, Rezon and Jeroboam.*
- b. *God is sovereign control of all of history; let's not ever forget it.*
- c. *When we reflect back on our lives – we can see clearly God's sovereign hand on various incidents/events in our lives and say "if God hadn't allowed this or that to happen – or if God hadn't have stopped this or that from happening – then this would not have happened". God uses our good, bad and ugly to His purposes.*
- d. *God afflicts but He does not abandon; there is always a way back if we repent. There is a ray of hope behind the clouds of judgment. That ray of hope is Jesus.*

e. *It's no fun to go from the Golden Age to the Torn Kingdom; but people can endure because it's not forever (1 Kings 11:39). Whatever we are going through right now – in a world of turmoil with Covid, wars, protests, strikes, financial crisis, floods, droughts and bushfires. We can endure, because it's not forever; Jesus has saved us for eternity in Heaven.*

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

1 Kings 11:39 - I will humble David's descendants because of this, but not forever

John 5:24 - "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

Finish in prayer: Father God thank you that you are in sovereign control of all history and thank you that in your own perfect way you are able to administer justice and mercy. Thank you for your grace and mercy in sending Jesus.

Study 3 – Good things going bad and bad things coming good**1 Kings 12:1-24****(Sermon on 17-July-22 – Rev. Jason Forbes)**

Remind yourself from the last study, what prophecy was made about Jeroboam in 1 Kings 11:26-40.

Through the prophecy of Ahijah, we are told that Jeroboam will be given 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel. This is symbolized by Ahijah's new cloak being torn into 12 pieces and 10 pieces of Ahijah's cloak are given to Jeroboam to represent the 10 tribes of Israel that Jeroboam will rule over. But God tells Jeroboam he must be obedient.

Remind yourself from last study, who became king after Solomon's death.

At Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam, becomes King.

Read 1 Kings 12:1-5

1. What are the tribes of Israel about to do at Shechem in verse 1?

Rehoboam went to Shechem (red circle on map in Appendix 2). The tribes of Israel are about to make Rehoboam King of all of Israel. Shechem famous place where Abraham worshipped (Genesis 12:6) and Jacob built an altar (Genesis 33:18-20) and Joseph was buried there (Joshua 24:32)

2. Who do they also send for in verse 2 and 3? Why do you think they would do that?

Jeroboam (who had fled to Egypt from King Solomon), now returns from Egypt. So, the tribes send to Jeroboam to join the assembly of people at Shechem, who went to Rehoboam. Why? Jeroboam would be interested in Solomon's successor, especially given Ahijah's prophecy. Perhaps too, the elders of the tribes of Israel, might look to Jeroboam, if they are not satisfied with Rehoboam's response to their request in verse 4.

3. What do they ask Rehoboam for in exchange for their allegiance in verse 4?

They ask that Rehoboam might lighten the heavy yoke that Rehoboam's father, Solomon, put on the people. If Rehoboam agrees to do this, they will serve Rehoboam as King. The heavy yoke Solomon put on them was taxation and forced labour.

4. Is it a surprise that Solomon had treated the people this way? (cf. 1 Samuel 8:10-19).

No, in 1 Samuel 8:10-19, the people were warned what any future king would do:

- *V11 – He will take your sons and make them serve with chariots and horses*
- *V12 – They will serve in the army – or will plow the King's crowd and reap his harvest – and some will make weapons of war and equipment for chariots*
- *V13 – He will take their daughters as perfumers or cooks or bakers*
- *V14 – He will take the best of the crops and vineyards and give to his attendants*
- *V15 – He will take a tenth of their grain (tax) and give to his attendants*

- V16 – He will take some of them as his servants – take the best of their cattle and donkeys for his own use
- V17 – He will take a tenth of their flocks and they will become the king’s slaves
- V18 – And when the day comes, they will cry out to God and God will not answer them
- V19 – Nevertheless knowing all this about the future king, they still wanted a King!

Sadly, the people didn’t complain about Solomon’s spiritual failings or his temporal ones!

5. What is Rehoboam’s response in verse 5? Why?

Rehoboam tells the people to go away for three days and then come back to him.

This bought Rehoboam time, to seek advice as per verses 7 to 11.

Read 1 Kings 12:7-11

6. What do the elders who had served Solomon advise Rehoboam? Is this good advice?

They advised that if Rehoboam gave the people a favourable answer to their request, the people would always be loyal servants to Rehoboam. This was good advice!

7. What does Rehoboam do with the advice from the elders of Solomon? Who does he consult instead?

Rehoboam rejected their advice, and consulted the young men that he grew up with.

8. What do the young men that Rehoboam grew up with, advise Rehoboam? Is this good advice?

They advise Rehoboam to say “My little finger is thicker than my father’s waist. My father laid on you a heavy yoke; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions.”. This is not good advice and a recipe to provoke their anger and disapproval.

9. What does the phrase “**how should we answer**” in verse 9 tell you about Rehoboam’s thought process?

It’s like Rehoboam is ‘advice shopping’; and it seems Rehoboam ‘shops’ until he gets the advice he wants to hear; i.e., “we” suggests he’s already going to agree with his young men’s advice, as this is what he wants to do anyway; he just needed people to agree with him!

10. Can you guess which advice Rehoboam will take and what the outcome will be?

It is pretty obvious Rehoboam will take the advice of the young men he grew up and it’s likely the outcome will be that the people will reject Rehoboam when he reveals his answer.

Read 1 Kings 12:12-19

11. What does Rehoboam tell the people after 3 days in verses 12 to 15?

Here's what Rehoboam said to the people after 3 days: "My father made your yoke heavy; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions."

12. **Ponder:** We could instinctively moralize the passage and launch into the folly of refusing to listen to wiser, more experienced people. We could gather proof texts from Proverbs on wisdom. But the writer tells us exactly what's really going on in verse 15, what is it?

*We are given the reason for Rehoboam's refusal to listen to the people; see v15 –for this turn of events was from the Lord, **to fulfill the word the Lord had spoken to Jeroboam son of Nebat through Ahijah the Shilonite.***

Basically, God's prophecy and promise to Jeroboam through Ahijah must be fulfilled and these turn of events with Rehoboam mean he will be rejected and Jeroboam will become King later.

13. What is the outcome of Rehoboam revealing his decision in verses 16 and 17?

When the people of Israel saw that the King refused to listen to them; they answered: "What share do we have in David, what part in Jesse's son? To your tents, Israel! Look after your own house, David!" – and so they returned to their homes.

Whereas the people who lived in the towns of Judah (Rehoboam's tribe) continued to be ruled by Rehoboam.

14. How does Rehoboam react in verse 18? Was this wise?

King Rehoboam sent out Adoniram (chief tax collector – famous for his harsh policy on forced labour in 1 Kings 4:6; 5:14) who was in charge of forced labour, to enforce Rehoboam's policy of making his yoke tougher. He underestimated the people and they stoned Adoniram to death. Rehoboam managed to escape by chariot to Jerusalem. Rehoboam's tough-guy policy didn't work. It was not a wise move at all.

15. What are the consequences of this action in verses 19 and 20?

Consequences are: Israel (10 tribes) have been in rebellion against the house of David (tribe of Judah) from that day forward (v19); And the Israelites (10 tribes) called Jeroboam to the Assembly and made him king over Israel (Northern Kingdom=10 tribes); and one tribe Judah (including Benjamin) remained loyal to the house of David (v20).

Read 1 Kings 12:21-24

16. What plan does Rehoboam come up with in verse 21?

Rehoboam musters together 180,000 men from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin – to go to war against Israel and regain the kingdom for Rehoboam.

17. How would you summarize Rehoboam's actions thus far?

Very foolish. And he has at no stage consulted God, BEFORE acting!

18. How does God through Shemaiah put a stop to Rehoboam's words and plans in verses 22 to 24?

*Through the prophet, Shemaiah, God says: "Do not go up to fight against your brothers, the Israelites. Go home, every one of you, **for this is my doing**"*

19. Is verse 24b surprising? Yes/No/Maybe?

Surprisingly, given that there has been no consultation with God and no spiritual involvement by Rehoboam or the people; the people obeyed the word of the Lord and went home again, as the Lord ordered.

Read Matthew 11:28-30

20. How might this New Testament passage relate to 1 Kings 12:1-24?

Whereas Solomon put a heavy yoke on the people; and Rehoboam intended to put an even heavier yoke on them; Jesus' offers something different. Jesus gives an invitation to all who are weary and heavy burdened, and offers to give rest (v28). He says that people can take His yoke and learn from Him because He is gentle and humble in heart, and people will find rest for their souls (v29); because Jesus' yoke (unlike Solomon's and Rehoboam's) is an easy yoke and His burden on people is light – because He's carrying the load for people!

Read John 14:15-21

21. How might this New Testament passage relate to 1 Kings 12:1-24?

Things went bad when Rehoboam tried to go against God's Word but things settled down when Rehoboam and the people listened and obeyed God's Word.

Jesus says in this passage from John 14 – that if we love Jesus, we will obey His commands. If we believe in Jesus and follow Him; He promises to send another advocate to help us and be with us forever; namely the Holy Spirit. This Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth and lives in all believers as a permanent guide in our lives; guiding us to do the right thing.

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 1 Kings 12:1-24?

Divine sovereignty not human foolishness and disobedience



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?

Nothing can overthrow God's Davidic covenant promise. Nothing can prevent the coming of the greater (Messianic) David (Hosea 3:5; Ezekiel 34:23-24).

The people refused to bow down to the demands of King Rehoboam; there is a King that everyone will bow down to one day. See Philippians 2:6-11.

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

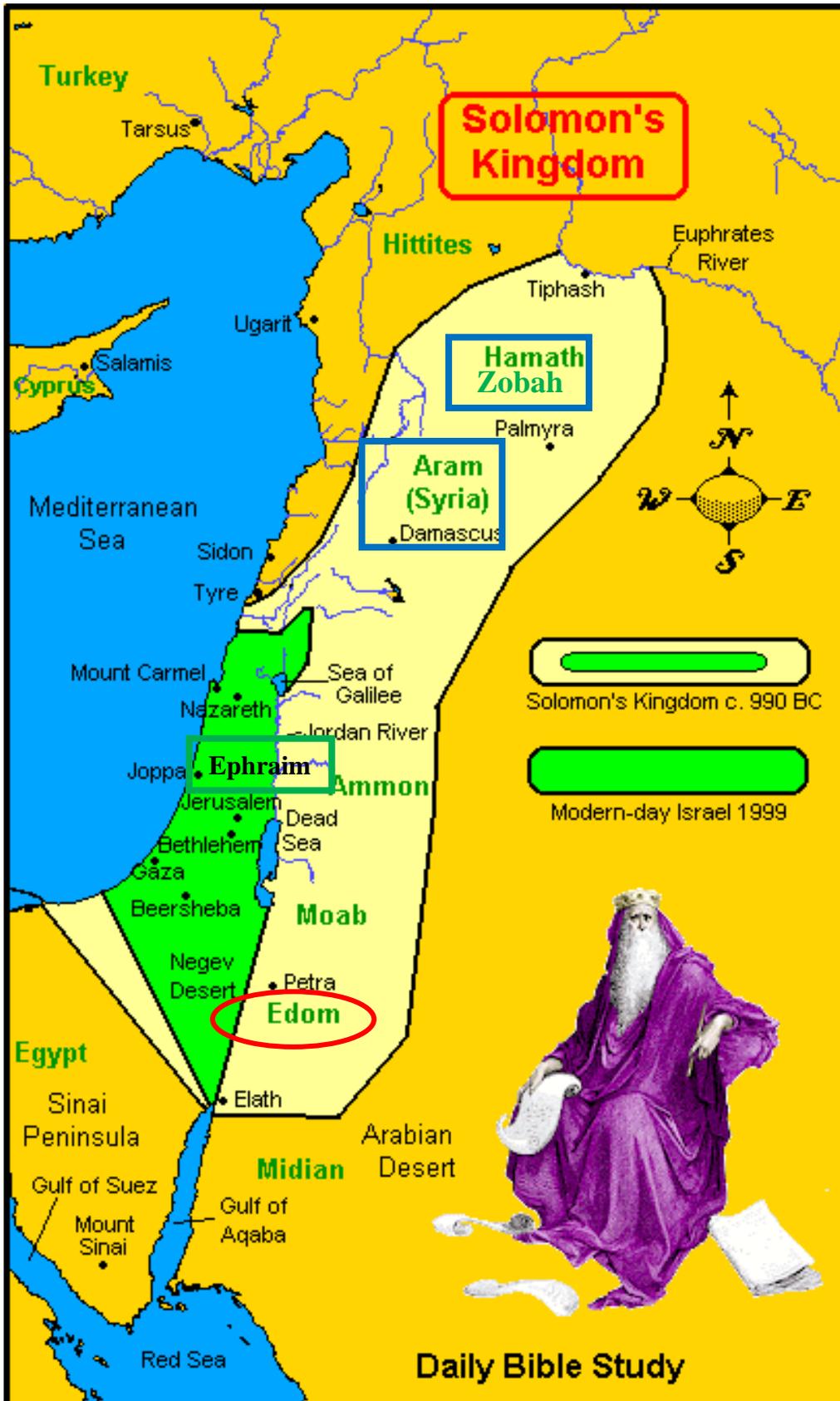
- a. *If God makes a promise or prophecy it will happen (e.g., Rehoboam will lose 10 tribes to Jeroboam) – nothing will derail God’s plans and purposes.*
- b. *Big men (like Rehoboam) can be as cocky, arrogant and as foolish as they like; but that never catches God by surprise; instead, God uses it. Men such as Rehoboam are merely servants of God’s Word. Contrary to our fears, human foolishness is not running loose but is on the leash of God’s sovereignty.*
- c. *We need to learn from our mistakes and foolishness, rather than continue in it. It took a while for Rehoboam to do that. First, he tried to impose tougher measures than his father, Solomon. Second, when the people rejected those tougher measures; he tried to enforce them and lost his enforcer, Adoniram, who was stoned. Third, he then gathered an army to force the people into submission.*
- d. *Our foolishness and disobedience may cause consequences (like Adoniram) that could have been avoided. We cannot prevent God’s Kingdom from coming in power and great glory but we can tarnish its luster today by our folly and faithlessness. That’s sad!*
- e. *When God has clearly closed the door on one of our “ideas”, instead of thinking we can fix it. Instead, we must listen to the Word of God at that point, and go on living for the Kingdom as grace enables us to do so. Is that weakness or is it finally wisdom?*

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

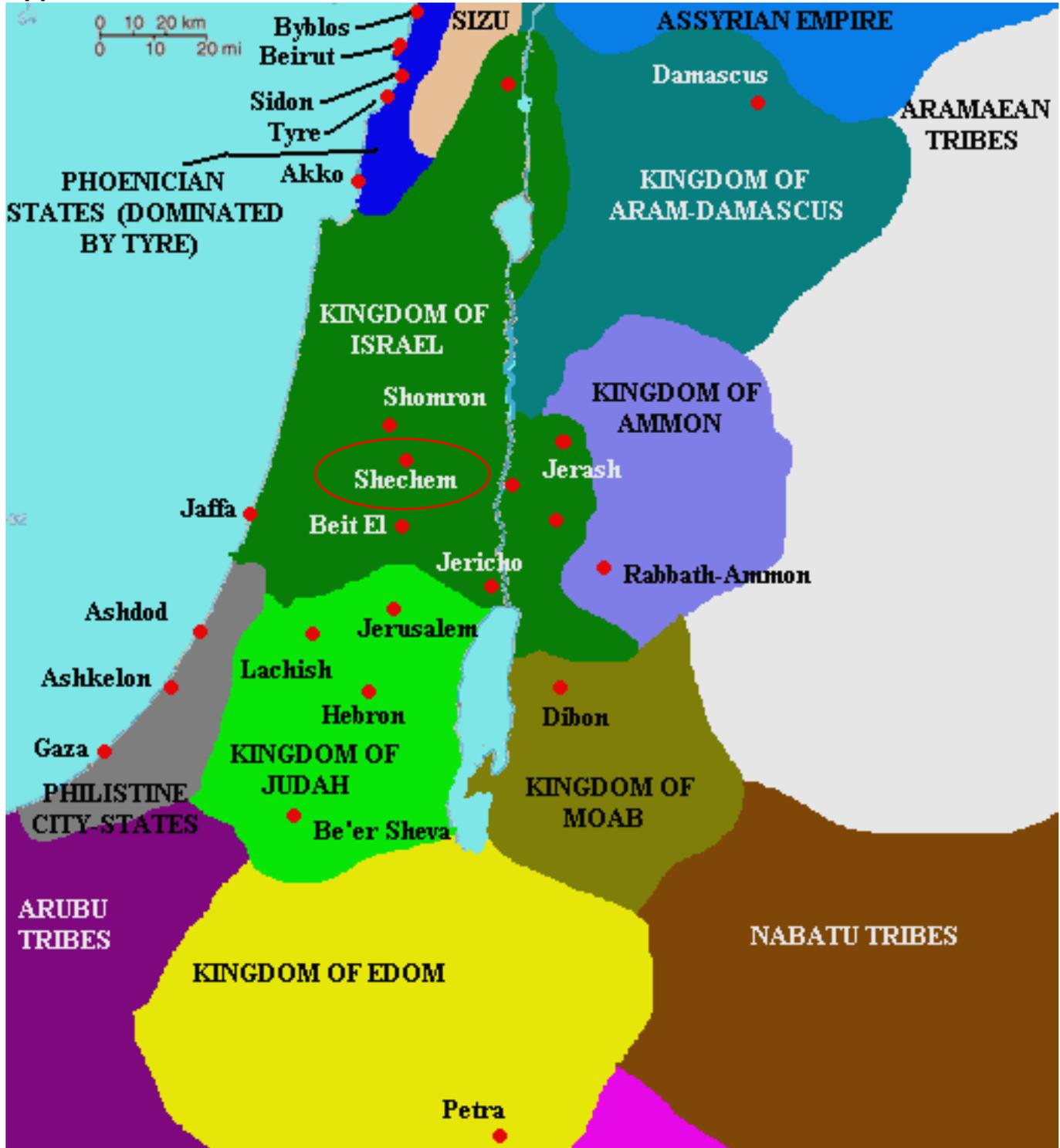
V24 - This is what the Lord says: Do not go up to fight against your brothers, the Israelites. Go home, every one of you, for this is my doing.” So, they obeyed the word of the Lord and went home again, as the Lord had ordered.

Finish in prayer: Father God help us to bring our burdens to Jesus and take His yoke upon us and learn from Him. Help us to trust and obey Him (because there’s no other way!).

Appendix 1 – Map of Solomon’s Kingdom



Appendix 2



Studies prepared by Paul O'Rourke
June 2022

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