

1 Kings

Introduction:

In this book we study the life and reign of Solomon, David's son and the successor to the throne of Israel. The kingdom of David and Solomon was unparalleled in the history of Israel. This was the golden age of God's nation. The worship of Jehovah reached an all time high during this time and was never attained again. The wealth that Israel experienced during this time would never be matched again. Solomon exceeded all the kings in the history of the world in both wisdom and wealth. However, in the midst of prosperity and peace, the seeds of collapse were being sown and the second part of the book deals with the consequences of compromise.

Structure and Outline:

I. The Reign of Solomon (1-11)

II. The Divided Kingdom (12-22)

I. The Reign of Solomon (1-11) - characterized by 4 W's – Wisdom, Worship, Wealth, Women

1. Wisdom (Chapters 3-4)

God grants Solomon one wish and the king asks for Godly Wisdom (3). God is so pleased with the king's request that he grants him both great wisdom and great riches.

What is Godly Wisdom so Important?

- Wisdom helps us recognize our limitations (7)
- Wisdom helps us remember our place (8-9)
- Wisdom helps us put others first (10-14)
- Wisdom leads us back to worship (15)

2. Worship (Chapters 5-8)

Solomon's greatest achievement was the construction of the temple for God. The temple enabled worship during this period to reach it's all time peak. We see several elements of worship that please God:

- **God Receives the Best We Have to Offer (5-7)**
 - No expense was spared in the construction of the temple
 - No energy was reserved in the dedication of the Temple
- **God is Put in His Rightful Place (8)**

3. Wealth (9-10)

Solomon is most likely the richest person that has ever lived. To give you an idea of his wealth – The richest man in the world today is Bill Gates whose net worth is around 50 billion dollars. Solomon was bringing in more money in a year than Bill Gates has accumulated in a lifetime!

4. Women (11)

Solomon did many good things for God, but his downfall came when he started to love the blessings of God more than God Himself. Solomon took for himself 700 wives and another 300 concubines, which was in direct disobedience to God's Word – see Deuteronomy 17:14-20. As a result of his disobedience and compromise, as an old man Solomon would have to look over a kingdom in ruins that would fall apart shortly after his death.

Practical Application:

In Matthew 12:42 Jesus says, "one greater than Solomon is here". The reign of Solomon over God's people pointed forward to a day when a perfect King from the line of David would rule God's people and this became reality in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

- **King Jesus is unsurpassed in His Wisdom!** As God made flesh He is all knowing, all-powerful, all loving, and able to help us navigate through any of life's circumstances.
- **King Jesus is unsurpassed in His Worship!** In Solomon's day, sacrifices led to the glory of God dwelling in the temple so that God's greatness would be declared to the world. The supreme sacrifice of Christ led to the glory of God dwelling in every believer as a temple. Today, instead of the world coming to the temple to see the glory of God, we as the temple go to the world to tell of God's glory!
- **King Jesus is unsurpassed in His Wealth!** Our Jesus left the riches of Heaven to come give His life to pay the price for our sins so that we might enjoy His riches for all of eternity.

II. The Divided Kingdom (12-22)

This section of the Bible is one of the least understood, but one of the most important. If you do not understand this section, it is difficult to understand the remainder of the Old Testament.

Toward the end of Solomon's reign an officer named Jeroboam rebelled against the King and sent the nation into a civil war. The end result was that 10 tribes broke away and created a separate nation known as The Northern Kingdom of Israel. Jeroboam was their first King and their capital was Samaria. The remaining 2 tribes remained a nation known as The Southern Kingdom of Judah. Rehoboam (Solomon's son) was their first King and their capital remained Jerusalem.

In the years to come the Northern Kingdom of Israel would have 19 Kings. Not a single one of them honored God and calf worship became their accepted religion. In the years to come the Southern Kingdom of Judah would have 19 Kings and 1 Queen. 8 of the 20 "did what was right in the sight of the Lord". Two important themes develop during the reigns of these kings:

- The rejection of Israel as God's People
- The rise of prophets who proclaim God's Word

