

# I KINGS

## INTRODUCTION

With the Book of I Kings, we begin the study of King Solomon's reign, which is the last portion of the period of Israel's history known as the UNITED KINGDOM (King Saul, David and Solomon). In the midst of the Book (chapter 12), we observe a new period of history beginning, THE DIVIDED KINGDOM. From this point on there are two kingdoms: Israel (Northern 10 tribes) and Judah (Southern 2 tribes- Benjamin). The Book covers a period of approximately 126 years: Solomon's 40 year reign, and the next 86 years to the reign of Jehoshaphat in Judah, and the reign of Ahaziah in Israel.

During this period of the DIVIDED KINGDOM (930 – 722 B.C.), Israel has 20 kings and Judah has 19 kings. I Kings gives the history of this period covering the first four kings of Judah, and the first eight Kings of the northern kingdom of Israel.

KINGS OF JUDAH	KINGS OF ISRAEL
Rehoboam (17 yrs.)	Jeroboam (22 yrs.)
Abijam (3 yrs.)	Nadab (2 yrs.)
Asa (41 yrs.)	Baasha (24 yrs.)
Jehoshaphat (25 yrs.)	Elah (2 yrs.)
	Zimri (1 week)
	Omri (12 yrs.)
	Ahab (22 yrs.)
	Ahaziah (2 yrs.)

The Book of I Kings continues the history of Israel following the books of I Samuel and 2 Samuel. The Book of 2 Kings will take up where the history of I Kings ends. In the early Hebrew Bible, the books of I Kings and 2 Kings were one book. The Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek in approximately 275 B.C. , combined the books of Samuel and Kings into four books: I Kingdoms, 2 Kingdoms, 3 Kingdoms (I Kings), and 4 Kingdoms (2 Kings). In our English Bibles, I Kings and 2 Kings are two related but distinctive Books and recognized among the Historical Books of the Old Testament. The two-fold division in the modern Hebrew Bibles first appeared with the printed edition of Daniel Blomberg in 1517.

**I. NAME, DATE AND AUTHOR OF THE BOOK**

- A. The title “kings” is derived from the events surrounding the lives of the Kings of Judah and Israel.
- B. The date for the writing of the Book is between 562 B.C. and 536 B.C. The date of 562 is derived by considering the last event in 2 Kings (release of Jehoichin). Therefore, it could not have been written before this time, but since the return of Israelites from Babylonian Captivity is not mentioned, the book is assumed to have been written before the 536 B.C. date.
- C. The author of the Book is uncertain. Jewish tradition in the Talmud ascribes the Book to Jeremiah.

**II. PURPOSE OF THE BOOK**

- A. To record the spiritual and religious condition of the people of Israel during the time of the Kings.
  - 1. Wicked kings introduce false worship and righteous kings work for reform.
  - 2. Both Kingdoms eventually yield to the evil and suffer captivity as the consequence.

**III. KEY EVENTS AND CHARACTERS IN THE BOOK**

- A. Solomon’s Glory and Apostasy (I Kings 1-11).
  - 1. Solomon’s Wisdom (I Kings 3:9-28; 10:1-23).
  - 2. Solomon’ building and dedication of the Temple (I Kings 5-8).
  - 3. Solomon’s foreign wives initiate his downfall ( I Kings 11:1-11).
- B. The Divided Kingdom ( I Kings 12)
- C. The prophet Elijah is prominent in the Book (I Kings 17-19)
- D. Ahab’s wickedness and death- evil influence of Jezebel (I Kings 20-22).

Arrangement for Study:

**INTRODUCTION**

Lesson 1 – Chapters 1-2

Lesson 2 – Chapters 3-4

Lesson 3 – Chapters 5-7

Lesson 4 – Chapters 8-9

Lesson 5 – Chapters 10-11

Lesson 6 – Chapter 12

Lesson 7 – Chapters 13-14

Lesson 8 – Chapters 15-16

Lesson 9 – Chapters 17-18

Lesson 10 – Chapters 19-20

Lesson 11 – Chapters 21-22