



1 Kings

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.”*

I have noticed a few things about the chosen leaders in many of the Old Testament books. Either at the beginning or the end we have the death and rise of a leader. Exodus 2 has the rise of Moses. The end of Deuteronomy has the death of Moses and the rise of Joshua. Here in 1 Kings, we have the death of David. Yet, it is somewhat shocking that it only took 11 chapters for Solomon to ascend from kingly glory to a dishonoring mess. From that moment on, the kingship of Israel was doomed. I also noticed that God plays a prominent role in trying to steer the nation back to Himself through the prophets. Yet, the people ultimately would have none of it. They wanted their king, so kings they did receive.

Narrative

1 Kings opens with David asking his son to follow God and kill all his enemies. Solomon promptly goes out and enforces his kingdom by eliminating the enemies. There is a battle that ensues between the wisdom of God and human wisdom. Solomon then builds the 1st Temple of God and his own palace. Then we see the slow destruction of Solomon as he collects wealth and women. He leaves the pages of the Bible quietly in disgrace with the Lord. Then we see the line

of David walk away from God as each king replaces the next. Eventually, we have God provide council and guidance to the nation through prophets. The rest of 1 Kings is the battle between Gods word and the actions of men.

Intent

This book is a human account of the Kings of the Bible. God gave them Judges. Within all these Judges is grumbling and trials. A choice to follow God or have a King became clear.

Evidentially, they chose to have a King like other nations. 1 Samuel is about a human king. 2 Samuel tells the story of the King God chose. Could the Jewish people learn lessons on following God or men? 1 Kings answers that question.

1 Kings begins with King David pleading with his son Solomon to follow God. Within the next chapter we see King David then hand Solomon a list of people he held grudges against. Verse 1 Kings:2-6 says “*Deal with him according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray head go down to the grave in peace.*” This call from King David is repeated several times. Then Solomon goes out and kills all his adversaries. The rest of Solomon’s reign is based on magnificent wisdom and terrible decisions. Then we enter into the ever-changing Kings of Israel and Judah. 1 Kings is the (first part) telling of how Israel slowly continued to walk away from God. It is also God trying to lead his people back to him through the prophets.

Characters

David, Solomon, Elijah, Ahab, Jezebel, Micaiah, Jehoshaphat, other kings

Who wrote this book?

By tradition Jeremiah wrote the books.

Famous verses

1. 1 Kings Chapter 3:9 Solomon asks for wisdom
2. 1 Kings 11:13 God takes the kingdom away from Solomon and promises it to one tribe
3. 1 Kings 22:8, 18 Micaiah prophesy against Ahab

Controversies, issues, and Questions

- Who built God's temple? The easy answer is Solomon. The Bible tells us that. Yet, it was King David who collected the materials. David provided the money. David also gave Solomon the plans. A second interesting fact is the two houses. It took seven years to finish God's house. On the other hand, it took 13 years to build Solomons house. Tradition has it that Solomons palace was much larger than God's. it is not a big deal that one was bigger, but over time Solomons riches began to over shadow his relationship with God.
- Solomon was given wisdom to run the kingdom well. God also chose to bless Solomon with wealth and status. It's an interesting point to notice that Solomon grew in wisdom in kingly matters, yet he seemed to lack personal wisdom.
- God knew that if the nation was to stay Jewish, they needed to be Jewish. Solomon had a fascination with women. Particularly foreign women. In time, these women and their cultures played a role in Solomon moving away from his Jewish roots.

Connections

Solomons Temple of God consisted of an inner Holy Court that only Priests could enter. This place was separated by a large curtain. In Matthew 27 that curtain was still there from the second

temple built after the Babylonian captivity. When Jesus died this curtain tore in two signaling that all may now enter the holy place of God.