



Getting started with 1 Kings

Is God really in control? Does He really care? How did it all end up like this?

Those must have been the king of questions going through the minds of the first readers of 1&2 Kings (the two books sit together.)

They found themselves in Babylonian exile, Jerusalem destroyed and the temple trashed. How? Why?

The writer of Kings tells Israel's history from God's perspective.

1 & 2 Kings are, unsurprisingly, about Kings. They cover the segment of history when Israel had kings, 970-586 B.C, following on from 1 & 2 Samuel where we read about Israel's first kings, Saul and David.

1 & 2 Kings are selective, covering a lot of ground with a particular focus on the leaders of God's people.

The key to ruling justly and wisely is obedience to God's Word. **1 Kings 2v1-4** is absolutely crucial for understanding these books, alongside **2 Kings 17v7-23**.

Read those two sections to get a sense of where the books are going...

When the leaders of God's people fail to obey God's Word and worship Him wholeheartedly, the people quickly follow in their footsteps. The painful exile that the first readers were experiencing was due to their wickedness and idolatry – they were reaping the curses that God had promised back in Deuteronomy 28. Far from being out of control, God is actually carrying out exactly what He promised. He is the One in complete control of nature and history.

God's people need a King who will rule wisely and justly as he listens to and obeys God's Word.

Structure

Chapters 1-12 – Fools and Horses

This section charts the rise and fall of King Solomon. A man of enormous wealth and many horses! He had God-given, world-renowned wisdom, but also a foolish weakness for women (and their gods). It started so brightly, including the construction of mammoth palaces and the long awaited Temple – but as his reign ends the kingdom is split.

Chapters 13-22 – Prophets and Kings

Throughout 1 & 2 Kings there is this interaction between the speakers of God's Word and those appointed to rule according to that word. If Solomon was the main character in the first half, Elijah is in focus here, particularly in his interactions with wicked King Ahab and his worse half Jezebel.

God's people need a King who will rule wisely and justly as he listens to and obeys God's Word. Will they get one?

Jesus in 1 Kings

- Jesus fulfils so much of the Old Testament imagery and characters. For example, He is the ultimate Temple – the meeting place of God and man, where God comes to live with His people.
- Prophets speak God's Word to the people. Jesus IS the Word to the people – the ultimate revelation of God.
- 2 Kings ends with hope – the people are in a right mess, but the kingly line is not snuffed out. Both books ache with hope for a people far away from God – God is still in control, and there is King who will rule justly and wisely as He perfectly obeys God's Word.
- Jesus is the King crowned with thorns so that we could be welcomed into the Royal Family.



RBT Grow Group is on Tuesday 30th October

Bring along some things from your reading of
Numbers to share with others.

Some RBT reading ideas:

- Meet up once a week to read it with a friend.
- Listen online at Biblegateway.com
- Write down a verse that struck you that day.
- Encourage someone by texting them a thought from what you've read.

Grow 1:1 questions to unlock the passage:

What does this teach me about God?

How does this point me to the Lord Jesus and His cross?

What does this teach me about myself?

How does this help me to pray?

What difference will this make to my week?



Here are some questions the Bible wants you to ask of itself. Use these to help you as you read your way through this month's book: (please don't feel like you have to fill in every question in loads of detail. These are a guide to help you learn from what you are reading.)

- What did you learn about Jesus and what it means to trust him? (Luke 24:45-47)
- What did you learn about yourself? (James 1:23 & 2 Tim 3:16-17)
- How were you corrected or rebuked or equipped for every good work? (2 Tim 3:16-17)
- What did you learn from the book that will help you keep going as a follower of Jesus? (Romans 15:4)
- What did you learn that will help you serve and build up the church? (Eph 4:11-16)
- What have you learnt that helps you love the Lord your God with all your heart & with all your soul & with all your mind? (Matt 22:37-40)
- What has helped you love your neighbour as yourself? (Matt 22:37-40)