OLD TESTAMENT · HISTORY · BOOK 11 OF 66

1 Kings

If the LORD be God, follow Him (18:21)

22	Jeremiah	c. 970–853 B.C.	2 Kingdoms
Chapters, 816 Verses	The Prophet	About 120 Years	Israel and Judah

STRUCTURE

The Book in Four Parts

The first half follows **Solomon** and the temple (1–11); the second follows the **divided kingdom** (12–16) and the prophet **Elijah** (17–22).



Each bar shows that part's share of the 816 verses.

I 1–4 · 161 verses

Solomon's Wisdom

David's charge, Solomon made king, and an understanding heart.

II 5:1–9:9 · 182 verses

The Temple

Built in seven years, filled with glory, and dedicated with prayer.

III 9:10–16:34 · 257 verses

Splendour and Division

The queen of Sheba, Solomon's fall, and the kingdom torn in two.

IV 17–22 · 216 verses

Elijah and Ahab

Drought, Mount Carmel, Horeb, Naboth, and Ahab's death.

DATES B.C. (APPROXIMATE)

From Solomon to Ahab

The dates follow the 480 years of 6:1 and the reigns recorded in Kings.

1:39
c. 970
Solomon anointed king

6:1
c. 966
Temple begun in Solomon's fourth year

6:38
c. 959
Temple finished after seven years

12:19–20
c. 930
The kingdom divides

16:23–24
c. 880
Omri builds Samaria

16:29
c. 874
Ahab becomes king of Israel

18:19–40
c. 860
Elijah on Mount Carmel

22:35
c. 853
Ahab dies at Ramoth-gilead

1 KINGS 3–4

Solomon's Wisdom

Solomon asked for an understanding heart, and God gave him more than he asked.

1 3:5

"Ask What I Shall Give Thee"

The LORD appears to Solomon in a dream at Gibeon.

2 3:9

An Understanding Heart

"Give therefore Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people"

3 3:12–13

Riches and Honour Too

God adds what Solomon did not ask for.

4 3:16–28

The Two Mothers

"Divide the living child in two": the true mother is revealed.

> *"And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore."*
>
> 1 Kings 4:29 (KJV)

Solomon spoke three thousand proverbs and a thousand and five songs (4:32). James writes, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God" (James 1:5).

The Kingdom Divided

MAP

The Kingdom Divided

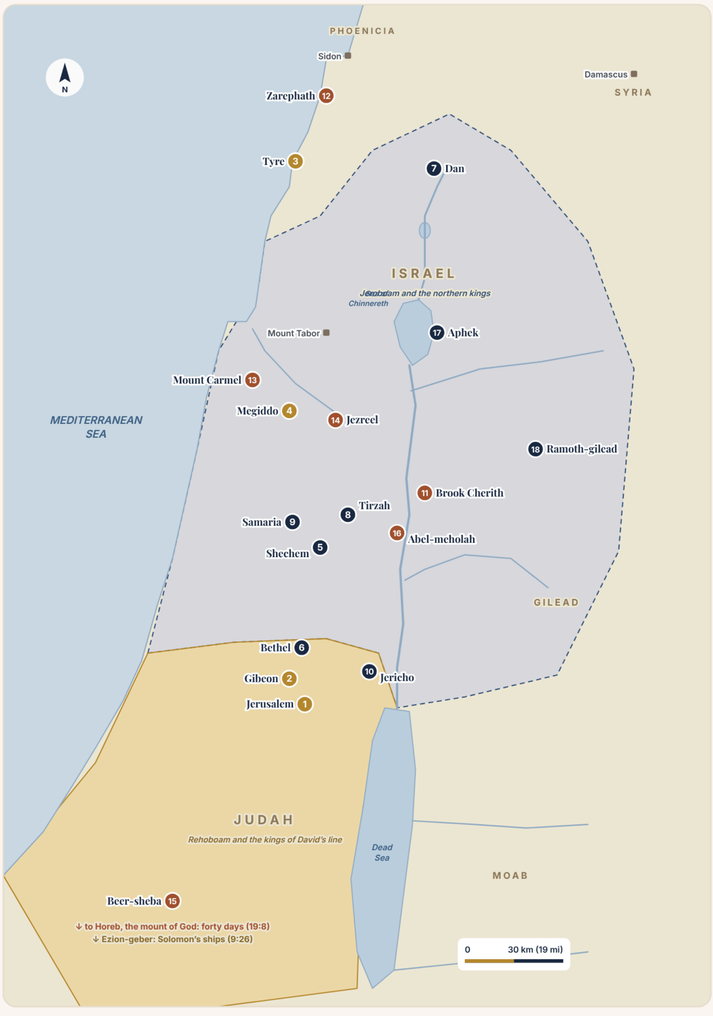
The places of 1 Kings in the order they appear. Gold markers belong to Solomon, navy to the divided kingdom, and rust to Elijah. The numbers match the cards below.

1 KINGS 1–22

The Kingdom Divided

From Solomon's glory to Elijah on Mount Carmel

c. 970–853 B.C. · Borders approximate



Solomon
Chapters 1–11

The divided kingdom
Chapters 12–16, 20, 22

Elijah
Chapters 17–19, 21

Judah (gold), Israel (blue)
After the division, c. 930 B.C. (12:19–21)

"How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow Him."

1 KINGS 18:21 (KJV)

Borders and several sites (the brook Cherith, Aphek and others) are approximate.

BibleStudyForAll.com · Map positions approximate · Scripture from the King James Version

1 1:38–39; 6–8

Jerusalem

Solomon. Solomon anointed at Gihon; the temple built and dedicated.

2 3:4–15

Gibeon

Solomon. The LORD appears in a dream: "Ask what I shall give thee."

3 5:1–12

Tyre

Solomon. Hiram king of Tyre sends cedar and fir for the house of the LORD.

4 9:15

Megiddo

Solomon. With Hazor and Gezer, one of Solomon's fortified cities.

5 12:1–20

Shechem

The divided kingdom. Israel rejects Rehoboam and makes Jeroboam king.

6 12:28–13:5

Bethel

The divided kingdom. Jeroboam's golden calf; the man of God cries against the altar.

7 12:29–30

Dan

The divided kingdom. The second golden calf, at the northern edge of the land.

8 14:17; 15:33; 16:23

Tirzah

The divided kingdom. Royal city of Israel's kings before Samaria.

9 16:24, 32

Samaria

The divided kingdom. Omri builds Samaria; Ahab builds a house of Baal there.

10 16:34

Jericho

The divided kingdom. Rebuilt by Hiel at the cost Joshua had foretold.

11 17:2–6

Brook Cherith

Elijah. The ravens feed Elijah bread and flesh, morning and evening.

12 17:8–24

Zarephath

Elijah. The widow's meal and oil do not fail; her son lives again.

13 18:19–40

Mount Carmel

Elijah. Fire falls from heaven: "The LORD, He is the God."

14 18:45–46; 21

Jezreel

Elijah. Elijah runs before Ahab; Naboth's vineyard is taken.

15 19:3

Beer-sheba

Elijah. Elijah flees from Jezebel on his way to Horeb, the mount of God.

16 19:16, 19–21

Abel-meholah

Elijah. Home of Elisha, called from the plough.

17 20:26–34

Aphek

The divided kingdom. Ahab defeats Ben-hadad of Syria, then spares him.

18 22:29–37

Ramoth-gilead

The divided kingdom. Ahab dies by "a bow at a venture," as Micaiah warned.

1 KINGS AT A GLANCE · PART 3 OF 5

The House of the LORD and the Kingdom Torn in Two

1 KINGS 5–9

The House of the LORD

David prepared; Solomon built. For the first time Israel had a permanent house for the ark and the name of the LORD.

6:1
480 Years
after the exodus, Solomon’s fourth year

6:2
60 × 20 × 30
cubits long, wide and high

6:7
No Hammer
stones made ready before they were brought

6:38
Seven Years
to build, lined with cedar and gold

> *“The glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.”*
> 1 Kings 8:11 (KJV)

1 KINGS 8:27

Solomon’s Prayer

“But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded?” Solomon asks God to hear every prayer made toward this house, in war, drought, sin and even exile (8:30–50).

IF YOU WALK BEFORE ME	IF YOU TURN AWAY
“I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever” 9:4–5	**Israel cut off; the house a proverb and a byword** 9:6–7

1 KINGS 11–12

The Kingdom Torn in Two

Solomon’s divided heart led to a divided kingdom.

1 · 11:4
A Heart Turned Away
Solomon’s many wives turn his heart after other gods.

2 · 11:29–31
Twelve Pieces
Ahijah tears his garment and gives ten pieces to Jeroboam.

3 · 12:13–16
Whips and Scorpions
Rehoboam answers roughly: “To your tents, O Israel.”

4 · 12:28–29
Two Golden Calves
Jeroboam sets them in Bethel and Dan.

5 · 13:1–3
The Man of God
He names Josiah three hundred years ahead (2 Kings 23:15–16).

6 · 11:36
A Light in Jerusalem
One tribe kept for David’s sake, as God had promised.

JUDAH (SOUTH)	ISRAEL (NORTH)
Rehoboam, son of Solomon 12:17	**Jeroboam son of Nebat** 12:20
Two tribes: Judah and Benjamin 12:21	**Ten tribes** 11:31
Capital: Jerusalem, with the temple 14:21	**Capitals: Shechem, Tirzah, then Samaria** 12:25; 16:24
One royal family, the house of David 15:4	**Throne taken by force again and again** 15:27; 16:9–10

1 KINGS AT A GLANCE · PART 4 OF 5

The Kings Until Ahab and Elijah the Tishbite

1 KINGS 14–22

The Kings Until Ahab

Every king is measured by one question: did he do right in the eyes of the LORD, as David did?

JUDAH · 14:21–15:24

Rehoboam, Abijam, Asa

Rehoboam and Abijam do evil; Asa removes the idols, "Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days" (15:14).

JUDAH · 22:41–50

Jehoshaphat

"He turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the LORD" (22:43).

ISRAEL · 15:25–16:22

Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri

Each walks in "the way of Jeroboam"; Zimri reigns seven days.

ISRAEL · 16:23–34

Omri and Ahab

Omri builds Samaria; Ahab marries Jezebel and serves Baal, doing "more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger" than all before him (16:33).

1 KINGS 17–21

Elijah the Tishbite

One man stood for the LORD when a nation followed Baal.

1 · 17:1

No Rain

"According to my word": three and a half years of drought (James 5:17).

2 · 17:2–16

Ravens and a Widow

God feeds His prophet at Cherith and at Zarephath.

3 · 17:17–24

The Widow's Son

The child lives: "the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth."

4 · 18:21–39

Mount Carmel

Fire from heaven: "The LORD, He is the God."

5 · 19:11–12

A Still Small Voice

At Horeb, God is not in the wind, the earthquake or the fire.

6 · 21:17–29

Naboth's Vineyard

"Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?"

> *"Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench."*
>
> 1 Kings 18:38 (KJV)

Christ in 1 Kings, Key Themes and Key Verse

LOOKING FORWARD

Christ in 1 Kings

Solomon, the temple and Elijah all point beyond themselves to Jesus Christ.

10:1–7 · MATTHEW 12:42

A Greater Than Solomon

“The queen of the south … came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.”

8:10–11 · JOHN 2:19–21

The True Temple

The glory filled Solomon’s house; Jesus “spake of the temple of His body.”

17:8–16 · LUKE 4:25–26

The Widow of Zarephath

Jesus pointed to Elijah’s visit to show God’s grace reaching the Gentiles.

2:4; 11:36 · LUKE 1:32–33

David’s Throne

God kept a lamp for David in Jerusalem until the Son of David came, “and of His kingdom there shall be no end.”

BIG IDEAS

Key Themes

Wisdom from God

Ask God for an understanding heart.

3:9–12

Prayer and the Temple

God hears prayer made toward His house.

8:27–30

A Whole Heart

Let your heart be perfect with the LORD.

8:61; 11:4

Sin Divides

Solomon’s idolatry tears the kingdom in two.

11:11; 12:28

God’s Word Comes True

Every word of the prophets is fulfilled.

13:2; 22:28

The LORD Alone Is God

Choose whom you will follow.

18:21, 39

God Keeps His Promises

Not one word of His good promise failed.

8:56

A Faithful Remnant

Seven thousand who never bowed to Baal.

19:18

Mercy to the Humble

God delays judgment when Ahab humbles himself.

21:29

KEY VERSE

“How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him.”

1 Kings 18:21 (KJV)