

# READING PLAN + STUDY QUESTIONS

1+2 Kings

## READING PLAN OVERVIEW

- **SESSION 1:** 1 KINGS 1–8
  - SOLOMON'S CONSTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE
- **SESSION 2:** 1 KINGS 9–16
  - SOLOMON'S DOWNFALL + ISRAEL'S DIVISION
- **SESSION 3:** 1 KINGS 17–22
  - THE KINGS + THE PROPHET ELIJAH
- **SESSION 4:** 2 KINGS 1–8
  - THE KINGS + THE PROPHET ELISHA
- **SESSION 5:** 2 KINGS 9–17
  - THE MANY KINGS OF ISRAEL + JUDAH
- **SESSION 6:** 2 KINGS 18–25
  - THE DOWNFALL + CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH

## HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

- 1. READ THE GENRE + BOOK OVERVIEWS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES**
- 2. READ THE CHAPTERS IN THE BIBLE FOR EACH SESSION**
- 3. READ THE CHAPTER SUMMARIES ON [EVERYDAYSCRIPTURE.ORG](https://everydayscripture.org)**
- 4. ANSWER THE QUESTIONS + REFLECT ON THE READING**

This study encourages going at your own pace, allowing each session to be a day, a week, or however long you need. Each session contains questions to be used for individual reflection or small group discussion.

This study was made to be used alongside Bible reading. Although we have created chapter summaries, there is no substitute for reading God's Word.

## QUESTIONS TO GET YOU STARTED

- What type of literature is this book of the Bible? Does that affect the interpretation?
- Who is the intended audience of this book? What purpose does it serve?
- What does this passage of Scripture reveal about God's character?
- What can I learn from this Scripture passage? How does it apply today?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Everyday Scripture: 1 + 2 Kings](#)
- [Everyday Scripture: Old Testament History](#)
- [The Bible Project: 1 + 2 Kings Overview Video](#)

## GENRE OVERVIEW: OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY

The books of Old Testament History follow the story of the Israelite people. Immediately following the books of Old Testament Law, these books highlight the aftermath of the Israelites' disobedience to God's commands.

Joshua, the successor of Moses, led the Israelite people into the Promised Land of Canaan. Once they were settled, the Israelites appointed leaders and judges to rule over the land. Although God provided righteous judges and priests, the Israelites wanted to be like the other nations who were led by kings. Despite the warnings of God and the prophet Samuel, the Israelite people appointed a king named Saul.

Saul started out as a promising king but ultimately failed the Israelites. After Saul came an unlikely king, David, who had previously been a lowly shepherd and musician. God loved David and promised to send Jesus from his line of ancestors (the line of Judah).

David's son Solomon succeeded him as king and was one of the wisest and wealthiest men who ever lived. Like his father, Solomon had many moments of both righteousness and failure. David wrote most of the Psalms, and Solomon wrote a portion of wisdom literature during this time (Old Testament Poetry).

Following Solomon was king Rehoboam. Because of Rehoboam's poor leadership and unrighteousness, the Israelites rebelled against him and instead followed another leader, Jeroboam, which split the nation in two. Two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) remained loyal to Rehoboam. These tribes became known as the southern kingdom of Judah. The other ten tribes, led by Jeroboam, became the northern tribes.

Throughout this time period, God sent prophets to warn the Israelites that their rebellion and deviation from God's law would cause them to be removed from their land. After many messages of warning and opportunities for repentance, the Israelites did not turn back to God. Because of this, they were taken into captivity by different world powers and did not return to Canaan for seventy years.

After the captivity, a faithful remnant of Israelites returned to Jerusalem, the capital city of Judah. God helped establish the people and influenced the rebuilding of the temple. The books of Old Testament History show how God worked to restore and redeem the Israelite people.

### BOOK OVERVIEW: 1 + 2 KINGS

The books of 1 + 2 Kings continue the narrative from 1 + 2 Samuel, telling the history of Israel's kings. The story follows David through the end of his life and then follows his son, Solomon. Solomon was one of the wisest and wealthiest men who ever lived. Like his father David, Solomon had many moments of both righteousness and failure. During Solomon's reign, Israel was peaceful and prosperous. Solomon was tasked with building God's temple, a beautiful place of worship in Jerusalem.

1 + 2 Samuel depict the rise of Israel, while 1 + 2 Kings show the downfall and division of Israel. Instead of remaining faithful to God (like David and Solomon), the Israelites followed corrupt leaders and turned away from God, worshipping idols and deviating from God's desires for them.

After Solomon's death, the nation split and was divided between King Rehoboam (Judah) and King Jeroboam (Israel). While Judah remained more faithful than Israel, both kingdoms failed to worship God alone. Throughout this time, God sent prophets to warn the Israelites that their rebellion and deviation from God's law would lead them to be removed from their land. Specifically, two prophets named Elijah and Elisha led the way in calling the Israelites to repentance and challenging them to obey God alone. Eventually, both kingdoms were captured. Israel was overthrown by Assyria, and Judah was overthrown by Babylon. Despite their desire for a righteous king, the rebellion and faithlessness of the Israelites resulted in their own bondage and oppression.

## NORTHERN KINGDOM: ISRAEL

<b>JEROBOAM: 22 YEARS</b>
<b>NADAB: 2 YEARS</b>
<b>BAASHA: 24 YEARS</b>
<b>ELAH: 2 YEARS</b>
<b>ZIMRI: 7 DAYS</b>
<b>OMRI: 12 YEARS</b>
<b>AHAB: 22 YEARS</b>
<b>AHAZIAH: 1 YEAR</b>
<b>JORAM / JEHORAM: 12 YEARS</b>
<b>JEHU: 28 YEARS</b>
<b>JEHOAHAZ: 17 YEARS</b>
<b>JEHOASH: 16 YEARS</b>
<b>JEROBOAM II: 41 YEARS</b>
<b>ZECHARIAH: 6 MONTHS</b>
<b>SHALLUM: 30 DAYS</b>
<b>MENAHM: 10 YEARS</b>
<b>PEKAHIAH: 2 YEARS</b>
<b>PEKAH: 30 YEARS</b>
<b>HOSHEA: 10 YEARS</b>

## SOUTHERN KINGDOM: JUDAH

<b>REHOBOAM: 17 YEARS</b>
<b>ABIJAH: 3 YEARS</b>
<b>ASA: 40 YEARS</b>
<b>JEHOSHAPHAT: 25 YEARS</b>
<b>JEHORAM: 8 YEARS</b>
<b>JEHOAHAZ / AHAZIAH: 1 YEAR</b>
<b>ATHALIAH: 8 YEARS</b>
<b>JOASH: 40 YEARS</b> <b>*JEHOIADA</b>
<b>AMAZIAH: 29 YEARS</b>
<b>UZZIAH / AZARIAH: 52 YEARS</b>
<b>JOTHAM: 16 YEARS</b>
<b>AHAZ: 16 YEARS</b>
<b>HEZEKIAH: 29 YEARS</b>
<b>MANASSAH: 55 YEARS</b>
<b>AMON: 2 YEARS</b>
<b>JOSIAH: 31 YEARS</b>
<b>JEHOAHAZ: 3 MONTHS</b>
<b>JEHOIAKIM: 11 YEARS</b>
<b>JEHOACHIN: 3 MONTHS</b>
<b>ZEDEKIAH: 11 YEARS</b>

### SESSION ONE: 1 KINGS 1-8

#### SOLOMON'S CONSTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

- As David grew older, what was Abishag's unique role in caring for David?
- Who was Adonijah? Why did he assume that he would be the next king over Israel? Who did David appoint instead?
- In 1 Kings 2, David instructed Solomon to kill those who opposed him. Although David lived faithfully, how did his dying wish reveal some of his sinful desires? Who did Solomon kill in addition to Shimei and Joab?
- In 1 Kings 3:3-14, for what did Solomon ask God? What did God give him?
- How did Solomon display his wisdom towards the two woman who were fighting over the baby? What does it say about Solomon's humility that he was willing to help two prostitutes?
- 1 Kings 4 describes Solomon's extreme wealth. How do you think this will cause problems for Solomon in his leadership? How does one's attitude toward wealth and influence often reveal their character?
- 1 Kings 5 -6 recounts the materials, labor, and detail required to build the temple. How does this influence your view of the temple's size and scope?
- When Solomon brought the ark of the covenant to the temple, what did he do differently than David, who had brought the ark to the tabernacle (2 Samuel 6 and 1 Kings 8)? What does this reveal about Solomon's leadership?

## SESSION TWO: 1 KINGS 9–16

### SOLOMON'S DOWNFALL + ISRAEL'S DIVISION

- In 1 Kings 9:1–9, how did God warn Solomon? What would happen if Israel abandoned God?
- How did Solomon's wisdom and accomplishments influence the Queen of Sheba's faith (1 Kings 10:6–10)? How can our discernment and work ethic be reflections of our faith?
- In 1 Kings 11, how was Solomon's sin similar to David's? After Solomon's death, who reigned over Israel (1 Kings 11:43)?
- When Jeroboam confronted Rehoboam about the heavy burden on the Israelites, what two groups of people did Rehoboam consult? Why do you think the older group of men offered more compassionate advice?
- When the kingdom split in two, the temple was located in Jerusalem (in the southern kingdom of Judah). What was Jeroboam's solution to this in the north (1 Kings 12:25–33)? How does this remind you of Israel's rebellion in Exodus 32?
- God sent a prophet to warn Jeroboam. How did he respond to this wisdom (1 Kings 13:33–34)?
- After the deaths of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, who led Israel and Judah? Based on their leadership, do you think things will get better or worse for each nation? Why?
- How long did Zimri reign in Israel (1 Kings 16:15–20)? Why do you think his story was included in the Bible?



### SESSION THREE: 1 KINGS 17-22

#### THE KINGS + THE PROPHET ELIJAH

- How did God provide for Elijah? How did Elijah provide for the widow and her family (1 Kings 17)?
- In 1 Kings 18, Elijah challenged Abab, king of Israel, to a duel between God and the false god Baal. How did Elijah display incredible trust in God? How did God prove His authority over idols and false gods?
- During Elijah's duel, he poured water on the wood before God set fire to it. How was this an act of confidence in God? Why was this especially significant considering that Israel was experiencing a drought (1 Kings 18:33-34)?
- In 1 Kings 19, Elijah experienced hurricanes, great winds, and fire, but God chose to speak to him in a gentle whisper. Has God ever revealed something to you in a subtle way? Why do you think God chose this way to communicate?
- Israel was still successful in battle despite King Ahab's corrupt leadership. What does this say about God's ability to establish His plans despite poor human leadership (1 Kings 20)?
- Ahab and Jezebel were jealous of their neighbor's vineyard. How did their envy lead to their downfall? Does it surprise you that God responded to Ahab's repentance (1 Kings 21)?
- How would you compare Jehoshaphat's battle strategy to Ahab's (1 Kings 22:29-40)? Do you think that God influenced the "random" arrow that killed Ahab? Why or why not?

### SESSION FOUR: 2 KINGS 1–8

#### THE KINGS + THE PROPHET ELISHA

- Who did Ahaziah call on instead of God? As a result of Ahaziah's worship, what news did Elijah deliver (2 Kings 1)?
- In 2 Kings 2:9–12, what did Elisha ask for before Elijah's departure? How did Elijah leave? Where did he go?
- During a battle with the Moabites, God filled pools with water. What did the Moabites assume when they saw the liquid? How did this bold assumption cost them the victory (2 Kings 3:21–27)?
- In 2 Kings 4–5, do any of Elisha's miracles remind you of Jesus' miracles? (See Matthew 14:13–21, Mark 1:40–45, and John 11:38–44.)
- How can Elisha's prayer in 2 Kings 6:16–20 apply today? What does it mean to see through God's eyes?
- When Israel was facing a famine and their capital city (Samaria) was overthrown, how did Jehoram respond (2 Kings 6:33)? Have you ever felt this way in a time of despair or waiting?
- How can the events in 2 Kings 7 inspire you to trust God's promises and share the good news of His provision with others?
- Read 2 Kings 8:18–19. Whose family did Jehoram marry into? Why would this be problematic? Why did God allow him to remain on the throne?

### SESSION FIVE: 2 KINGS 9–17

#### THE MANY KINGS OF ISRAEL + JUDAH

- Review 1 Kings 21:23–24. How was this prophecy fulfilled in 2 Kings 9?
- In 2 Kings 10:24–27, what was the fate of Baal’s worshippers and temple? After God proved victorious over Baal in 1 Kings 18, why do you think some people still worshipped Baal?
- Why did Athaliah kill her entire family? How did Jehosheba save young Joash? Since Joash was so young at the start of his reign, who helped him lead Judah?
- In 2 Kings 12, how did Joash serve as a faithful king? Despite his righteous efforts, what did Joash fail to do?
- Based on what you’ve read, would you rather have lived in the northern or southern kingdom during this time? Why?
- Read 2 Kings 13:20–21. How does this passage highlight the role of God’s Spirit in Elisha’s life? Does this remind you of any other biblical events?
- View the chart of kings provided earlier in the study. Which king of the northern kingdom had the longest reign? According to 2 Kings 14:23–27, why did God allow Israel to prevail?
- How would you describe the kings’ wickedness in 2 Kings 15–16? In your opinion, who was the worst king?
- In 2 Kings 17, which nation conquered Israel? Why was Israel taken captive?

### SESSION SIX: 2 KINGS 18–25

#### THE DOWNFALL + CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH

- Despite Hezekiah's faithful leadership, what sinful decision did he make regarding the temple? How does respect for the temple display respect for God (2 Kings 18:15–16)?
- How did Judah's defeat of Assyria highlight that Judah was a more faithful nation than Israel?
- Read 2 Kings 20:16–19. What event did God tell Hezekiah would soon happen? Why do you think Hezekiah said that God's message was good?
- How did Manasseh undo the work of some of Judah's previous kings? How did Manasseh display the continuing disobedience of Judah?
- In 2 Kings 22, why did Josiah mourn after reading God's law? What is the difference between conviction and shame?
- What celebration did Josiah reinstate in 2 Kings 23:21–26? How does this serve as a way to remember God's provision (Exodus 12)?
- In 2 Kings 24, which nation conquered Judah? What items did they take from the temple (2 Kings 24:10–17)?
- How would the story of Evil-Merodach and Jehoiachin have provided future hope for the people of Israel?