

1 Kings part 3

Tonight we're entering into the 11th book of the bible 1 kings

A few things to remember -

Although these are 2 different books in our Bibles they are to be read as one long story covering the that period of Israel's history known as 'The Monarchy.' 1st and 2nd Kings we said last week cover some 400+ years in the history of the nation of Israel.

Whats this book about? - *The theme of all of the books of the kingdom is to highlight the importance of good and godly leadership...and this is driving home by showing us the destructive consequences of kings and leaders who don't follow God's ways*

Tonight we're gonna recap a little...then spend the bulk of our time on the Prophet Elijah

Recap:

I. Chapters 1-10 Solomon's reign:

- A. His ascension*
- B. His plea for wisdom*

II. Chapter 11 Solomon's decline:

- A. In [Deut. 17:14-20](#), God gives specific instructions to the king and Solomon broke every single rule listed in this text. The kings of Israel, which are to be chosen from among the brethren (not a foreigner) shall not:*

- 1. Multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.'*

2. *Multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away*
3. *Greatly increase silver and gold for himself, in the form of heavy taxation and conscription of labor*
4. *Solomon...broke all 3 of those rules*
5. *God told Solomon his kingdom would be ripped away from his son*
6. *One of Solomons servants named Jeroboam would be called...to be king*

III. Chapter 12 The kingdom divides:

A. Rehoboam's harsh and prideful words

1. *Rehoboam's harshness and arrogance —it didn't merely result in the 10 northern tribes rejecting him; it resulted in those tribes rejecting the entire dynasty of David*
2. ***This is what Alexander Maclaren had to say — “Neither the foolish speaker (that would be Rehoboam) nor any man in that crowd dreamed of the unnumbered evils to flow from that hour. Since issues are so far beyond our sight, how careful it becomes us to be of motives! Angry counsels are always blunders. No nation can prosper when moderate complaints are met by threats.....”***

So It's here...where i want us to pick up tonight...and we're gonna see an interesting verse

1 Kings 12:15 (ESV) ¹⁵ So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of affairs brought about by the Lord that he might fulfill his word...

Summary: *So here's the situation, Rehoboam chose not to listen to wise counsel and this was the first domino in him losing almost all of his*

kingdom...but here we are reminded that In chapter 11 God had said this would happen...and now it's come to past

A. *1st Kings 12 is really important because it provides us with a look at a moment in history that addresses the question – **Is there human responsibility here? Or is this entirely a matter of Divine sovereignty?***

1. *So let's try to get perspectives here:*

- a) ***From Our perspective** we find a rash, proud, young king; and opposing him is a dissatisfied people saying, "Man, you've got to lighten our work load."*
- b) *Both parties — Rehoboam and the 10 northern tribes — each wanted their own way.*
- c) ***From heaven's perspective** the Lord working out His great purposes — despite men's sin, and by way of men's sin. it's presented in a very seamless way. There's a continuity that you just stand back and go, 'Wow!' Only God could do this!*
- d) ***Here's the point:** Guys, the death of Jesus on the cross, which is the single greatest sin and crime in the history of mankind, was at the same time the accomplishment of God's most merciful eternal purposes*
- e) *Look at Acts 2:23 Peter speaking to His country men says "**this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.**"*

B. ***Here's the point:** The sovereignty of God in the plan of redemption does not in the least affect the freedom of choice or the guilt of those involved in the cross of Jesus....So we see it from Earth. We see it from Heaven*

The remaining narrative of 1st Kings goes something like this — It covers 85 years. And it's going to talk about 8 kings in the north and 4 kings in the south, and how they relate to each other...let's read about it

1 Kings 12:20 (ESV) ²⁰ And when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel...

Summary: Jeroboam becomes the king over the 10 northern tribes. Remember back in *1st Kings 11:38* God promised that He would establish for Jeroboam a parallel dynasty to the House of David **if Jeroboam would walk in obedience to the Lord like David.**

This was what the voice of the Lord was saying to him...But look at who he's listening too

1 Kings 12:26–30 (ESV) ²⁶ **And Jeroboam said in his heart,** “Now the kingdom will turn back to the house of David. ²⁷ If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah.” ²⁸ **So the king took counsel and made two calves of gold.**

Summary - Here we see that Jeroboam was listening to every voice but the right voice...

- A. He was listening to himself - “Preserve your kingdom”
- B. He was listening to Ungodly counsel “Build golden calves”
- C. But He wasn't listening to the the Voice of the Lord:

Notice this...Because Jeroboam was listening to the wrong voice...He past on the wrong message

And he said to the people, **“You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough** (or in other words...going all the way to Jerusalem is too difficult

for you) *Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.*" ²⁹ *And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.* ³⁰ ***Then this thing became a sin, for the people went as far as Dan to be before one.***

Summary: *I think it's interesting, to see the angle the Jeroboam took to pitch this new religion to the people...He said "it's too far...worshiping God shouldn't cost you anything!" He sold it to them on the bases of convenience*

Chapters 13-16

Now in these chapters we see a string of kings...not all of them...but a few

Now understand that every king was judged on 3 things in scripture:

- A. Would they worship God alone?
- B. Would they get rid of idolatry in the Land? - "High places"
- C. Would they themselves keep their covenant with God"

- D. And against that criteria:
 - 1. There were none out of the 20 kings in the north that considered good and only 8 of the 20 kings in Judah were considered good
 - 2. **Important!!!:** Now as you look, and read through the rest of this book, it's important to note that for the remainder of this book all of these kings that are mentioned in this book, they take a back seat in to the ministry of the prophets, men of God who stood in the midst of the moral and spiritual darkness and proclaimed that God was calling individuals to stand up and serve him. How black was the backdrop that these prophets ministered in? Look at...

1 Kings 16:29–33 (ESV) ²⁹ In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri began to reign over Israel, and Ahab the son of Omri

reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. ³⁰ **And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord, more than all who were before him.** ³¹ **And as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, he took for his wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians,** and went and served Baal and worshiped him. ³² He erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria. ³³ And Ahab made an Asherah. Ahab did more to provoke the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

Summary: if it weren't bad enough for Ahab to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, he married Jezebel. Jezebel re-introduced Ba-al worship to the land of Israel. She imported 450 priests and prophets of Baal, placed them under the political umbrella of the Ahab's northern kingdom by subsidizing their occultic activity — essentially making anyone who believed in the one, true and living God a traitor to the king.

So it's against this black backdrop that we are introduced to one of the most, if not the most, famous of the prophets...

Chapter 17 - Elijah.

This guy's life speaks profoundly to the person who desires to be used by God, but wonders if they ever could be used by God.

Six chapters are devoted to this Elijah, beginning in 1st Kings 17 all the way into 2nd kings...

1 Kings 17:1–3 (ESV) ¹ Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."

Summary: Seemingly out of no where Elijah just shows up out of the blue We don't know much about his background...or his training...what is clearly identified is that this God a servant of God

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- A. **The name Elijah means, Yahweh is my God.** In the days when Ahab's government officially supported the worship of Baal and other gods, even the name of this prophet told the truth.
- B. **He was empowered by God:** *As the Lord...the God of Israel lives - IN a time when all thought that God had disappeared Elijah stands in the midst of the pages generation and says "The Lord lives!"*
- C. **He had incredible Faith - It's not gonna rain expect by my word! -** He wasn't prophesying rain...He was stopping the rain by faith - James speaks about him - *James 5:16–17 (ESV) ¹⁶ Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. ¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth.*
- D. **He loved God - 1 Kings 19:10 (ESV) ¹⁰ He said, "I have been very jealous (Zealous) for the Lord, the God of hosts...**
- E. **Here's the picture:** Elijah was a man who's life was consumed by His love for the Lord God...to the point were thats really all that was known about him...
- F. Did you know
 - a) He would be the first to raise the dead (this chapter)
 - b) He would shut up the heavens of 3 1/2 years
 - c) He would not taste death but be carried ups to heaven
- G. Holy Spirit is letting us know that pedigree, training, schooling and credentials are not the deciding factor in being used by God
 - 1. So many times we think that there are deciding factors that are tied to the value system of the world. I'm not diminishing training, schooling, abilities, and credentials. But they're not the deciding factor.

2. Love for the Lord is the essential qualification for serving the Lord

v.1 **Now Elijah** the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, **said to Ahab, “As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.”**

Think about this - He comes out of nowhere; and he stood before two of the most wicked people in all of the Bible (Ahab and Jezebel); and he says this — “As the Lord the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.” And then he just simply turns around and walks out...

H. He Stands up for the one true God - His life is really uncomfortable to the person who wants to come and sit in church, and then go out and live the rest of their time for some other master passion

1. His life will speak to the man or woman, young or old, that looks at the world around them, and says — “I’m just one person. Nobody knows who I am. Nobody knows who my parents are. I have no qualifications to think of. I have no training to put forth. What could I ever do? But, God, I love you. Here I am.”
2. Elijah’s life speaks to that man or woman in such a profound way to encourage you to stand for Jesus...

Chapter 18

Now He shows up 31/2 later...

1st Kings 18: 17 When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, “Is it you, you troubler of Israel?” And Elijah answered I have not troubled Israel, but you have, and your father’s house, because you have abandoned the commandments of the Lord and followed the Baals. 19 Now therefore send and gather all Israel to me at Mount Carmel, and the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.” 20 So Ahab

sent to all the people of Israel and gathered the prophets together at Mount Carmel. 21 And Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him..... 23 Let two bulls be given to us, and let them choose one bull for themselves and cut it in pieces and lay it on the wood, but put no fire to it. And I will prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood and put no fire to it. 24 And you call upon the name of your god, and I will call upon the name of the Lord, and the God who answers by fire, he is God."

Summary: Now this is without a doubt one the greatest spectacles in the entire Bible! It all happens upon Mt. Carmel. And it all happens in one day. There's the challenge. There's the contest, and the fire falling from heaven. And then there will be the return of the rain

I. **Here's the Picture:** There's Ahab — he'd be in his royal garb. There are 450 prophets of Baal dressed in all of their priestly attire — sashes and robes. There were hundreds of thousands of Israelites gathered around, looking at this spectacle. **And then there is this solitary figure with long hair and a leather belt.** It's one simple obscure man...challenging an entire nation...one man calling them back to the God they once loved and followed...but compromise has pulled them away

A. **Think about the fact that He didn't know what was gonna happen, he was just told to go in obedience** - So counter to our high strategy church culture

Now Elijah poses a challenge — The challenge is not to the prophets of Baal. It was to God's people.

1st Kings 18:21 And Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." And the people did not answer him a word.

Summary: *Elijah just offered clarity. He said, “Here’s clarity. There are two opinions” That’s all there is! There’s black and white; There’s right and wrong; There’s light and darkness.*

- A. **Here’s the point:** *If you are standing at church on Sunday, talking ‘Christian-ise’; and then you go out and you’re doing whatever you want the rest of the week — that is not an opinion; that’s called limping between two opinions*
- B. *You have been given the word, you have been given the resources...Chose who your gonna serve already*
- C. *What’s sad is that — outside of the church there are atheists who have complete clarity — they know where they stand...but people who come to church, week in and week out — they’re not so clear.*

Look at these profits of beal...they were a lot of things, but one thing they weren’t was flaky

1 Kings 18: “28 And they (the prophets of Baal) cried aloud and cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances, until the blood gushed out upon them.”

They had plenty of clarity, right? They were committed.

A commentator by the last name of Wiseman said this — “The practice of self-inflicted wounds to arouse a deity’s pity or response is attested in Ugarit when men ‘bathed in their own blood like an ecstatic prophet.”

They had all the clarity they needed for doing what they did. God’s people didn’t have clarity. And Elijah is there saying, “Let’s make things clear.”

1st Kings 18:29 And as midday passed, they raved on until the time of the offering of the oblation, but there was no voice. No one answered; no one paid attention.

So despite their rantings, their ravings, their self-mutilation — no fire came from heaven.

1 Kings 18:30 (ESV) ³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." And all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that had been thrown down

There was once an altar of the LORD at Carmel — and in Israel in general. But it was now a wreck — not just because it was ignored — it had been thrown down. Elijah is looking to revive something that once was, and now is not

1st Kings 18: 36 And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word.""

In other words — God, would you work so that people will know that this is your will?

1st Kings 18:37 Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back." Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, "The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God."

So 1st Kings closes with this magnificently obscure guy who came out of nowhere, and stepped into a world that was a train wreck of idolatry. And he becomes not only the major character of the second half of the book...He becomes one of the most important characters in the history of humanity

- A. God is still looking for a man, looking for a woman, whose very lives would say, "My God is the LORD Jesus Christ."*

Conclusion

“These 4 books speak to us about fragility and incompleteness of earthly kings and kingdom...you have kings who are given over to wickedness, and kings who are honorable yet filled with human weakness...how ever you read these books the one thing you can't get away from is that...with out fail...earthly kings will always fail”

Thats what makes Jesus a better king

A. Earthy kings like David, Solomon, Asa were good men but incredibly flawed man who would eventually succumb to the Pull of the World...lust the of the eyes/flesh/pride of life

1. Jesus has no failure in him - He was tempted by satan in Matt 4

1. Lust of the flesh (bread)

2. Pride of life (If your the Son of God...Throw yourself down)

3. Lust of the eyes (All the kingdoms of the world...if you bow)

4. Yet Jesus endured temptation...didn't succumb to the Paul of the World...endured the cross to save fro himself a people

B. In 1 and 2 kings we are confronted with Kings were controlled by their desire to keep their thrones But Jesus

1. Jesus came to serve - Earthy kings care more power and preserving their throne - *Matthew 20:26–28 (ESV) ²⁶ It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, ²⁸ even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

C. In Solomon we saw one who was filled with the Wisdom of God

1. Jesus IS the wisdom of God...in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge *Col 2:3*

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App: *The kings of this world will always fail...Jesus won't...bow to Jesus*