

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

Lesson 14 w/Answers

1 Kings Chapters 4 - 11



This week we will finish a quick look at the book of 1 Kings, and Solomon's life, as we prepare to move into the "wisdom" section of the Bible, beginning with the book of Psalms. In Psalms, we will look at hymns and praises, many of which can still be found in the worship and praise songs that we sing today, just as David and his followers did in seeking and worshipping God. So let's take a close look at Solomon's life, and reflect on both David and Solomon to see what we can discern as we study God's word together.

For this week we will be covering such a large section of scripture that, rather than have you read ahead before you answer any questions, the reading assignments for the week are referenced with each question below.

1. Read 1 Kings Chapters 4-8 and summarize the life of Solomon. List some of the insights that this passage gives us regarding his day-to-day living and what he accomplished.
 - a. ANSWER: The book of 1 Kings provides us insight into Solomon's life, such as what we see in chapter 4, where we observe that he was wiser than all other men and that he had achieved great fame. In addition, Solomon wrote over 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 psalms; he knew science, biology, and so on; and he had all of this wisdom some six centuries before Aristotle. We also know that he built the temple as well as his own house (the palace).
2. What is significant about Chapter 9 verses 6 and 7?
 - a. ANSWER: Twenty-four years into his reign, his heart began to wander; and in 946 BC, God tells Solomon that if he doesn't follow God the temple will become a house of ruin and his descendants will not inhabit the land. This prophecy is fulfilled exactly in 586 BC when the temple is destroyed, and again in 722 BC when the people are cut off from the land.
3. Why did God divide the kingdom in 931 BC?
 - a. ANSWER: God was forced to divide the kingdom because of Solomon's disobedience. This division set up two kingdoms with 10 tribes going to the Northern Kingdom and the 2 remaining tribes going to the Southern Kingdom. The Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom will rule in parallel from 931 BC to 722 BC; and, following the destruction of the Northern Kingdom, the Southern Kingdom will continue ruling until 586 BC.
4. Read 1 Kings Chapters 10 and 11. Why did Solomon fall into apostasy, even though he had all this wisdom?
 - a. ANSWER: Chapter 10 tells us that the riches and wealth that Solomon accumulated gained him great fame. In fact, some 1,400 miles to south, the Queen of Sheba hears of Solomon's splendor and wealth and comes to see it. Because of her trip and the relationship that develops between her and Solomon, Ethiopia today traces its country founder back to the child that is eventually born between Solomon and Sheba. In verse 23 of Chapter 10, we see that Solomon was greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. In chapter 11, we see however that he begins to worship the idols of his pagan wives, and from this he falls into apostasy.

5. Having now studied both David and Solomon, compare their personalities.

- a. ANSWER: David was committed in his worship of God, where Solomon was conflicted and "did evil in the sight of the Lord". David's character and behavior would be used to measure future kings' characters and behaviors. Furthermore, David spent his life fighting for everything, while Solomon was given everything. Born into great wealth, Solomon never needed to fight for anything. David was a king par excellence, while Solomon was a slothful king who knew all-too-well how to enjoy the easy life. David knew what it was like to not know where his next meal was coming from, while Solomon never had to worry about any need. David sinned often but would repent, while Solomon never repented and never turned back to God.

6. How did Solomon's sin affect later generations?

- a. ANSWER: Solomon's life demonstrates to us that others will sometimes suffer for our sins. Over the next 330 years, the people of Israel would be full of apostasy, worshipping idols as Solomon had done. He set a very bad example by allowing his sexual desires to rule all of his reasoning. His wisdom was ultimately confounded, and he sank deeper and deeper into idol worship. Consumed by this, he became useless as a king to God. Thus the kingdom became divided as a direct result of his sins. In the end, only the Southern Kingdom would stand, comprised of two tribes: one that God kept for David's sake and one that He kept for Jerusalem's sake.

As we conclude our study of God's three kings and the rise and fall the united kingdom of Israel, there is much we can learn from looking at the lives of Saul, David, and Solomon – and the lives affected by them during and after their reigns.

Next week, we will begin a look at the wisdom books and consider topics such as prayers, poetry, hymns, and praising and worshipping God.

As we close this lesson, consider what Solomon teaches us: "There is nothing new under the sun". So let's commit this week to follow God so that we do not repeat the mistakes of these three Kings as we face similar challenges to our faith and walk. We can see that our country also faces many challenges and struggles ahead in the coming years. With these challenges will also come opportunities.

During these days of uncertainty and promise, may God grant us His eternal peace and instill within us a strong desire to go in search of others needing to know Christ.

Have a great week everyone.

In Christ,

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