

# Bible Challenge 2018

## Week 12: March 18-24

### Outline:

1 Kings 1-2: Palace Intrigue and Solomon to be David's Successor  
1 Kings 3-4: Solomon's Reign as a Wise King  
1 Kings 5-7: Solomon Builds the Temple and his Palace  
1 Kings 8: The Dedication of the Temple  
1 Kings 9-10: Solomon's Prosperity  
1 Kings 11: Solomon's Fall into Sin and His Death  
1 Kings 12: The Foolishness of Rehoboam and the Division of the Kingdom  
1 Kings 13-16: Parallel Reigns and Wicked Kings  
1 Kings 17-19: Elijah and Ahab  
1 Kings 20: Ahab and Ben-Hadad  
1 Kings 21: Ahab and Naboth  
1 Kings 22: Ahab and Micaiah

First Kings covers about 120 years in the life of the people of Israel, basically from the death of King David to the reigns of Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah. Like with the books of Samuel, in the Hebrew Bible, Kings is a single book; it is just broken in two due to its length and the need to place it on two scrolls. And like the books of Samuel and Chronicles, we don't know its author(s) for sure, the Babylonian Talmud attributes the books of Kings to the prophet Jeremiah (the Talmud contains Hebrew commentary, tradition, and annotations on the Scriptures).

### Palace Intrigue and Solomon to be David's Successor

As David was growing old, the same old problems in his family started surfacing once again. Adonijah, David's fourth-eldest son and the child of his wife, Haggith, decided that he would position himself in a place where he could succeed his father as king. And so, Adonijah gathered people to himself that would support such a notion. When this was discovered by those loyal to David and Bathsheba, they organized quickly and had David repeat his promise to make Solomon the king.

What is particularly remarkable about this was the generosity of Solomon when he is finally officially made king, for rather than sending away and having Adonijah executed, he offered him forgiveness if he pledged his loyalty to Solomon, which he did. There is a point, though, before he knew whether he would receive mercy from the king and so Adonijah clung to the horns of the Altar...essentially pleading for God's protection. We will see this again, though with very different results.

After Solomon is officially established as King, David offers words of wisdom and counsel before dying, having reigned over Israel for forty years. And David remains to this day (in Jewish thought) the greatest of the Kings who ruled over Israel.

### Solomon's Reign as a Wise King

We know the story well of God's offer of blessing to Solomon and where he asked for discernment instead of wealth or long life. Because of the sincerity and wisdom of this request, God blesses Solomon with wealth and long life in addition to that discerning mind. The author quickly gives us an example of Solomon's wisdom in the form of a dispute over the life of a child. His offer to split the child revealed who the real mother was and exposed the wicked one. We are told that God gave Solomon more wisdom than the sages of the east and even more than Heman and Ethan the Ezrahites (who wrote Psalms 88&89 respectively). He is attributed with 3000 proverbs and 1005 songs (though the only Psalms we have from him are Psalms 72 and 127 and then the Song of Solomon).

### Solomon Builds the Temple and his Palace, the Dedication of the Temple, and Prosperity

Next to his wisdom, perhaps the best thing that Solomon is known for is the construction of the first Temple in Jerusalem, following the designs laid out by his father, David. Its construction took seven years and it proved to be massive in scope. Then again, his own palace took 13 years to construct, which causes most of us to pause and ask about priorities. Under Solomon, the kingdom thrived and his dwelling reflected the lavish wealth with which God had blessed him.

The dedication of the Temple was as elaborate as one can imagine, but note that it also included the sacrifice of thousands of animals.

Blood poured from the altar of the Temple to purify it and the people. It is a reminder of the cost of sin even at a time of great celebration. It is also here that Solomon speaks the familiar words pleading to God that if the people repent of their ways that he hear from heaven and forgive their sins and heal their land (1 Kings 8:33ff).

Chapters 9 and 10 give us an additional picture both of the wealth of Solomon's kingdom and how he has attracted people from all over the world, in this case, namely, the Queen of Sheba. One may wonder why the text goes on at length to describe the opulence of this kingdom, but remember, Solomon's kingdom is very much meant as a shadow of Christ's kingdom to come, thus with Solomon, opulence is described and with the new creation where the streets are described as being made of gold and the gates of pearl.

### Solomon's Fall into Sin and His Death

Yet Solomon pursues women. Understand that it was common for influential kings to enter into political marriages to secure treaties and borders with other nations. Solomon seemed to do this in abundance and while God permitted this sin, the sin catches up to him and we find Solomon sacrificing to their pagan idols. It is even said that he sacrificed to Chemosh — a pagan god that demanded child sacrifice. The horrors that this king entered into — it should stand as an ever present warning to us of the dangers of living like the neighboring nations live.

### The Foolishness of Rehoboam and the Division of the Kingdom

A Kingdom that it took great care for Rehoboam's grandfather, David, to establish was torn down with a single decision. Rehoboam, the young successor to his father, listened to the words of his friends and not to the words of the Elders who had more maturity, experience in political matters, and more wisdom. God gives the ten northern tribes into the hand of Jeroboam, who had fled to Egypt to escape Solomon's wrath. From this point forward, the kingdoms will be two, with the northern kingdom falling immediately into idolatry and sin and the southern kingdom sinking into idolatry as well, but having some bright lights on occasion that point the people back toward righteousness.

### Parallel Reigns and Wicked Kings

In the southern kingdom, there would be a few good kings, though as we read the accounts, most fall into idolatry. The following chapters contain the reigns of Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa (a good king), Jehoshaphat (a good king) and introduces us to Jehoram.

In the northern kingdom, all the kings would lead the people into idolatry. The following chapters record the reigns of Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, Ahab, and Ahaziah.

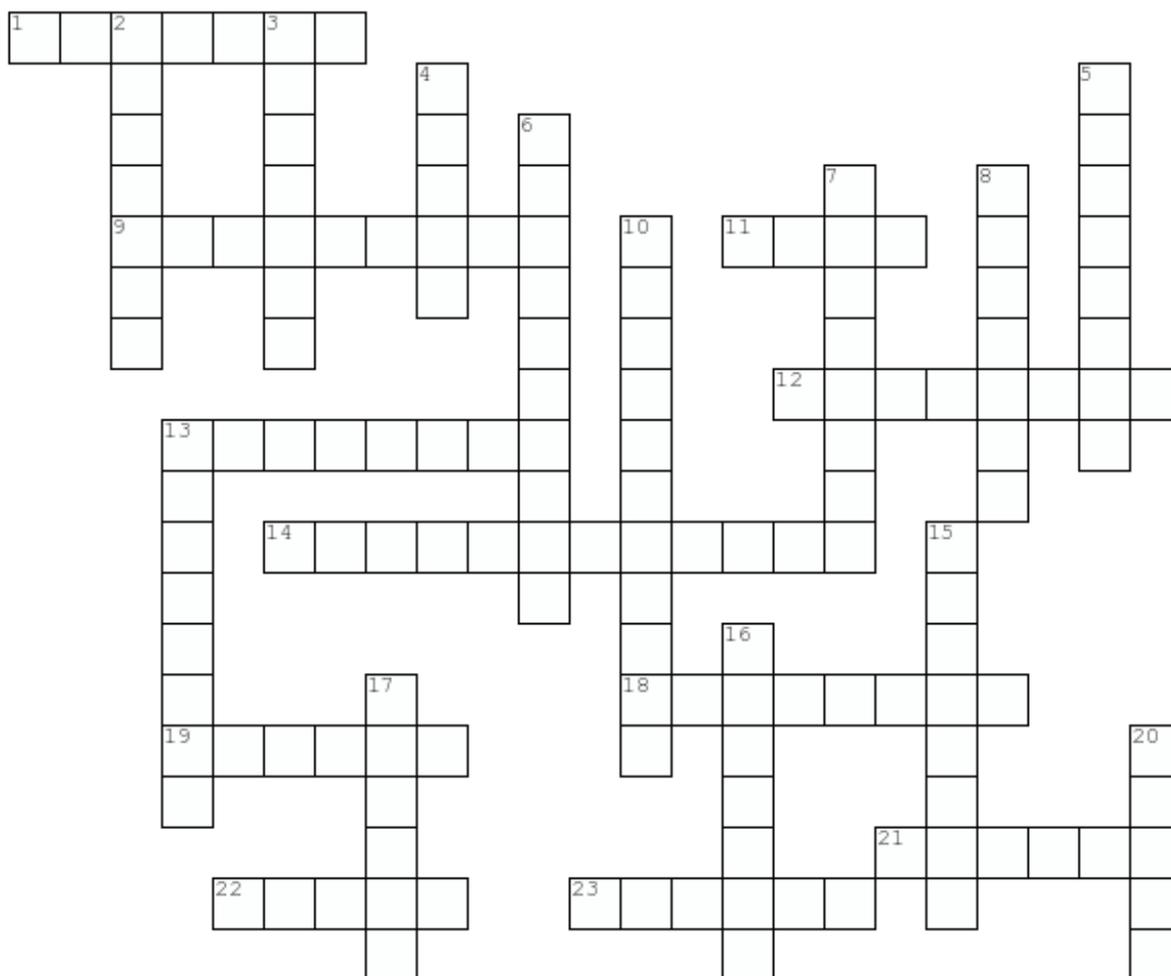
### Elijah and Ahab

The Elijah narratives play a significant role in the books of Kings. He, of course, is a forerunner of Elisha the miracle-worker and his role is to prepare the people to be taken out of the Land (just as John the Baptist, the greater Elijah, is a forerunner of the miracle-working Christ, and prepares the people to be taken out of the land after Pentecost). Ahab is one of the most wicked of the wicked kings and he marries the daughter of a Sidonian king. This wicked pair actively promote reckless idolatry in the land and God raised up Elijah to confront this pair. Much could be said about Elijah's adventures, but space does not permit. One can simply say that Elijah's ministry is marked by opposition, not just by Ahab and Jezebel, but also by an apathetic people. We can learn much from his life.

### Ahab and Ben-Hadad, Naboth, and Micaiah

These final sections of 1 Kings are usually considered part of the Elijah narratives as we see the prophet returning at the beginning of 2 Kings. Nevertheless, we are introduced to Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria whom God gives into Ahab's hand, to Naboth who loses his life because he will not sell off the family orchard, and to Micaiah, the righteous prophet through whom God speaks which leads Ahab to his death. As always, though more could be said of each of these accounts, though space does not permit it here.

## Week 12: 1 Kings



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### Across

1. This prophet prophesies the death of Ahab.
9. 'May He not leave us or forsake us that he may incline \_\_\_\_\_ to him, to walk in his ways...' (2 words)
11. Hiram, the king of this region, assisted Solomon with materials and labor in building the Temple.
12. Solomon's Son whose foolishness divided the kingdom.
13. It took this many years for Solomon to build his palace.
14. Jeroboam set up two of these, one in Bethel and one in Dan, (2 words — hint: think Aaron's error)
18. This son of David tried to take David's throne before David had died.
19. Next to Elisha and Moses, the most important Old Testament Prophet.
21. The prophet loyal to David and his wishes.
22. It took this many years for Solomon to build the Temple.
23. This man had a vineyard that he clung to, which cost him his life.

### Down

2. Solomon sacrificed to this god along with Molech.
3. The young woman hired to keep David warm in his old age.
4. This General ruled Israel as king for only 7 days.
5. The King of Syria that Ahab was supposed to kill.
6. When God asked Solomon what he wished, he asked for a \_\_\_\_\_ mind.
7. Solomon wrote 3000 of these.
8. The wicked wife of Ahab.
10. This 'good king' was the son of Asa and began ruling Judah in the fourth year of Ahab.
13. Ahab calls Elijah the \_\_\_\_\_ of Israel.
15. Solomon expelled this priest from the priesthood in fulfillment of the prophesy against the house of Eli.
16. It was this son that David wished to see on the throne.
17. Elijah had a showdown with the prophet of Baal and Asherah.
20. Elijah flees to Mt. Horeb for his life; another name for this mountain is Mount \_\_\_\_\_.