

1 Kings

In 1 Kings, the story of David continues onwards from where it ended in 2 Samuel. The book opens with David, in his old age, about to die, and the attempt to establish the kingly succession after his death. Despite the fact that Solomon was a younger son through the efforts of his mother Bathsheba and the prophet Nathan, he was named as King. The first half of 1 Kings relates Solomon's reign and the building of the temple.



Inspiring quotes

When David's time to die drew near, he charged his son Solomon, saying: ²"I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, be courageous, ³and keep the charge of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his ordinances, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn.

(1 K 2.1-3)

¹¹He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; ¹²and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence.

(1 K 19.11-12)

Jewish tradition attributes the authorship of 1 Kings to Jeremiah but there is no evidence for this or, indeed, for any other author within the book itself. In style and theology it is very similar to Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel and 2 Kings, and so it is often thought to form a collection of writings which scholars call the 'Deuteronomistic histories'.

W a d a b ?

Next to nothing.

This name implies (and intends to imply)

a theological connection with the book of Deuteronomy, since the outlook of all these books seems very similar. It is suggested that the



Look out for...

Obviously, one of key features of 2 Kings is the account of how the two kingdoms split apart. As you read look out for any explanations that the author might be seeking to offer about why the split took place.

One of the major conflicts of the book is between those faithful to God (especially Elijah) and those faithful to Baal or Asherah (especially Jezebel). Watch out for this and reflect on why it might be that the worship of other Gods was so attractive.

There are many significant women in 1 Kings whose actions often change the course of history for good or ill. Look out for them as you read.



What could this mean for me?

1 Kings is keen to tell the story of the consequences, long into the future, of the actions of powerful people. Reflect on this theme and ask yourself what the authors of this book might want to say to those in power today.



Discussion group questions

Were there any parts of the book that you particularly liked or which inspired you?

Were there any parts of the book that you disliked or which troubled you?

What did you think the book was about?

Talk about the women in the story – who is your favourite woman from 1 Kings and why?

Discuss Rehoboam in chapter 12, what do you think about the way he responded to the people from the northern tribes? Can we learn anything today from this on how to handle difficult occasions and decisions?

Prophets are important in 1 Kings – from what you know of them in this book what do you think the major features of a prophet were?

Did you read anything in the book that touched you, expanded your faith or made you think more deeply about your life and how you live it?



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