

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kings and Chaos

The book of 1 Kings tells the story of the Kings of Israel beginning with the transition of King David's rule to that of his son Solomon then down through the generations. There were 120 years of united monarchy through the first three kings over Israel; King Saul, King David and King Solomon. They each ruled forty years. After these kings we see the reign of several kings who divided the people and led them away from God, and created chaos in the land.

Kingdom United (1 Kings 1-11)

It is the end of King David's rule and he is old and weak, perhaps even a little senile. In fact Bathsheba, his wife, and Nathan, the prophet, had to inform him that his Son Adonijah is trying to gain the throne rather than his son Solomon. David does set things right and instructs Solomon before he dies. Solomon loves the Lord and starts out well. He rules with both brains and heart. But Solomon loved many foreign women. This divided his heart and left him with the legacy of a divided nation.

Discussion Questions:

- What did King Solomon request from God when God asked him "what shall I give you"?
- Who supplied the lumber and the skilled labor to build the temple? What did King Solomon pay him?
- How many years did it take to build the temple?
- Who were the next 2 Kings who reigned over Israel after King Solomon? How did their reign divide the kingdom?
- Examine your heart: What is the legacy that you leave? To your family, to your friends, to your co-workers, to your fellow believers? Are there any adjustments you need to make?

Kingdom Divided (1 Kings 12-22)

The kingdom is now divided between North and South. This marks a chaotic period with 2 sets of kings and continual enmity between North and South. One of the worst of these kings was Ahab. He introduced the people to the worship of Baal. During the reign of King Ahab, Elijah, the man of God, comes against Ahab in a mighty show of God's power. Throughout Elijah's life he performs eight major miracles before the people. However, in the end he ran from a woman, Jezebel, in fear. He hid in a cave and the Lord came to him in a still, small voice?

Discussion Questions:

- Who were the eight separate kings who ruled in the North? Who were the four separate kings who ruled in the South?
- How many of these twelve kings in total were right in the eyes of the Lord?
- What was the miracle that the Lord performed through Elijah on Mount Carmel?
- Who was Jezebel? Why was Elijah afraid of her?
- What did Elijah pray for when Jezebel was after him to kill him?
- Read 1 Kings 8:31-32, Romans 4:5. Describe the contrast between the old testament and the new in light of these verses.
- Examine your heart: Are you counting on your own righteousness in any are of your life?