

## Lesson 11

### 1 KINGS

**PURPOSE** To receive the promises, one has to follow all commandments whole heartedly. Moreover, positions or blessings received may be taken back.

**Memory verses: 1 Kings. 9:5 & 11:11.**

*then I will establish your royal throne over Israel for ever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'There shall not fail you a man upon the throne of Israel.'*

*Therefore, the Lord said to Solomon, "Since this has been your mind and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant.*

### INTRODUCTION

Reign of King Solomon is considered as the golden age in the history of the Hebrews/Israel. Construction of the temple, law and order, and wisdom from God are the most important aspects of Solomon's reign. In the Hebrew Bible 1st and 2nd Kings is one book. The Septuagint translators

divided this book into two. 1st Kings starts with the greatness of the Hebrew people. 2nd Kings ends with tragedy of the people. 1st and 2nd Kings gives history of about 400 years (1000 to 600 B.C.). It records history from the death of David to the establishment of the kingdom of Judah and Israel. The main characters of 1st Kings are Solomon, Elijah, and Ahab.

Twenty kings of Judah are the descendants of David. Nine kings of Israel are from 9 different tribes. Eight of them were either killed or committed suicide. In Judah there was revival from time to time. There was no revival in Israel. Reign of Kings of Judah was 345 years and reign of Kings of Israel was 210 years.

About half of 1st King is the history of Solomon. He deserves honour because he built the temple. However, his action of marrying gentile women and making affiliations with these women's nation caused weakness in the kingdom. His gentile wives caused him to go after other gods and that was the reason for the deterioration of his kingdom. Therefore, he departed from this world as a heart broken man. The kingdom was divided into two. Most of the Kings were disobedient to God, His commandments, and Prophets. This further led to the deterioration of the kingdom. Israel was known as the northern and Judah was known as the southern kingdom. After the fall of Samaria, the northern kingdom came to an end under the attack of the Assyrians and the southern kingdom came to an end by the attack Babylon (B.C. 972 to 560).

In the original manuscripts the book is known as Melechim (Kings). In Hebrew manuscripts the books of Samuel, Kings, and Deuteronomy are one book. Septuagint translators may have divided this book to make it smaller. In Latin Vulgate, it is known as Liber Regum Tertius et Quartus or 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Kings.

## **AUTHOR**

Author of this book is not known. Jewish Talmud says that Prophet Jeremiah (Baba Barta) is the author of this book. Jeremiah was taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Then Babylon was defeated by Egyptians. Jeremiah died there, when he was over 90 years of age. It is believed that the book is written by Jeremiah while he was in Babylon or before that. Some believe that the book is written by a contemporary of Jeremiah. A prophet, who saw and experienced the pain, wrote this book with the help of historical books and facts.

Some of the historical books used by the author are mentioned in this book.

1 Acts of Solomon (1Kings. 12:41).

2 Chronicles of Kings of Israel are mentioned 17 times.

3 Chronicles of Kings of Judah are mentioned 15 times.

**PERIOD OF WRITING** B.C. 646 to 570 (1 Kings. 8:8, before the temple was **destroyed in B.C. 586**).

### **CHRIST IN 1ST KINGS**

Solomon is a shadow of Christ. Wisdom, greatness, wealth, peace and worship of Christ will reveal after His return in glory and everyone will know that He is greater than Solomon.

Elijah is shadow of Christ. His prophesy, miracle healing, etc are shadow Christ in him.

**MAIN TOPIC** Reign of Solomon, divided kingdom, Kings, prophets and leadership.

### **OBSERVATION OF THE BOOK**

About half of the 1st Kings is history of Solomon. The wisest man lived on the face of earth took Israel to the peak of its glory. The kingdom was divided into two after his death. Chapter 1 to 11 is one Kingdom and then 12 to 22 is the divided Kingdom.

### **ONE KINGDOM (CHAPTER 1 – 11)**

Wisdom, greatness, wealth and faithfulness of Solomon are unequal. His half-brother, Adonijah, started to be the king even before David died. As advised by Prophet Nathan Solomon was anointed as king. Solomon started marrying gentile women and his heart departed from God. Because of his wisdom and ability, the kingdom expanded to the borders of Babylon and Egypt.

The main reason for the greatness of Solomon is that he built the temple of God. At the dedication of the temple, his prayer brought the people and himself closer to God. His wealth paved way for the deterioration of the kingdom. He built heathen temples for his gentile wives. The wisest man became most foolish at his old age. God judged Solomon for his actions. Only a portion of the Kingdom that he ruled was under the reign of his heirs (only Judah).

### **DIVIDED KINGDOM**

After Solomon's death judgment of God came upon the kingdom. His son was foolish, and he increased taxes. The people rebelled and 10 tribes joined Jeroboam and 2 tribes joined Rehoboam. Thus, the kingdom was divided in to two. Then these two kingdoms became enemies to each other

and there were constant wars between them. Jeroboam's people became idol worshippers. All the Kings names are in the book. Prophet Elijah was ministering during reign of King Ahab. Ahab wanted to convert vineyard of Naboth to vegetable garden. Ahab was killed because he disobeyed the prophet of God, Micaiah. The book comes to an end with Jehoshaphat, King of Judah and Ahaziah, king of Israel.

There are 22 chapters in this book.

### **Questions**

1. Why is Solomon's reign known as the golden period of Israel?
2. In Latin Vulgate how is 1st Samuel to 2nd Kings divided?
3. How long did the Kings ruled? How many kings ruled in each of the divided kingdom?
4. What are the reasons of deterioration of Solomon's kingdom?
5. Why it is believed that the author of Kings is Jeremiah?
6. What are other books that the author used for writing the book?
7. How long is the writing period? Explain.
8. Make an observation about 1st Kings.
9. What is the main message in the book of 1st Kings?