Study Questions
The Books of 1 & 2 Kings
by Paul R. House

1 Kings

*Intro*

*Introductory Organization Meeting*

- Sell Books
- Distribute Materials
- Ice Breaker Exercise

**The Rise of Solomon** (page 85)

Lesson 2  *up to but not including*  

**David Advises Solomon** (page 95)  

v. 1:1-53

1. Other than restudying Genesis and Exodus our Bible Study Group’s most recent Old Testament study were the Books of Samuel. How do the first two chapters of 1 Kings continue the story line of 2 Samuel?
2. Why did Adonijah think he was Israel’s next king?
3. How did Adonijah attempt to show he was to be king?
4. Bathsheba and Nathan inform/remind David that he had sworn that Solomon was to be king after himself. Are these two “double-teaming” and manipulating a frail old man or acting as God’s emissaries to right a wrong?
5. Why did David have his servants take Solomon to Gihon on David’s mule?

**David Advises Solomon** (page 95)  

Lesson 3  *up to but not including*  

**Solomon’s Reign** (page 105)  

v. 2:1-2:46

1. Just before David dies he gives Solomon several pieces of advice. First he advises that Solomon “observe what the Lord your God requires” and “Walk in his ways.” What are the two benefits that will come if Solomon heeds this advice?
2. Next David gives Solomon advice about Joab, Shimei and the decedents of Barzillai (all of whose dealings with David were related in Samuel.) What is the advice? Does it surprise you to find such counsel in a Biblical context?
3. Bathsheba’s last appearance in the Bible is to make a request that Abishag (the young woman who cared for David, the last woman added to his harem) “be given in marriage” to Adonijah. Is this the act of a “good natured rather stupid woman” or a woman all too familiar with politics in the halls or power warning her son of jet another power plan by Adonijah?
4. What is the consequence to Adonijah? Adonijah is Solomon’s older half-brother. Does what Solomon ordered distress you?
5. How does Solomon deal with Adonijah’s two supporters Joab and Abiathar? Is this troubling? Why or why not?
6. What had Shimei son of Gera done that ended up getting him killed?
7. Why did Solomon believe Abiathar deserved to die? Why did he spare Abiathar's life? What principles should guide us in determining whether or not to be merciful to someone who threatens us?

8. Why are the first two chapters of 1 Kings theologically important?

**Solomon’s Reign** (page 105)  
**up to but not including**  
**v. 3:1-4:34**

**Solomon Builds the Temple and Palace** (page 120)  
1. The nest nine Chapters cover Solomon’s Kingship. This record of Solomon’s reign can be broken into three phases. What are they?
2. Perhaps in answer to the Lesson 2, Question 4, God appears to Solomon in a dream and is told to “ask for whatever you want.” Rather than wealth or power or even health what does Solomon ask for? What are the implications? How is this important for Messianic lineage?
3. Why is God pleased with what Solomon decides to ask for? How does God respond?
4. What areas of your life need a wise and understanding mind?
5. Now comes the famous story of the two women both claiming to be the mother of a baby that most all of us learned as children. Why is this such an important story in the bible?
6. Chapter 4 starts with lists of hard to pronounce names. Why are they included? What was the author’s purpose?
7. Next the resources that flowed to the King and his possessions are described. How does this differ from previous leaders of the people? It this troubling? Why or why not?
8. What four theological ideas do these two chapters reinforce?
9. What are some modern day applications that can be found in this first phase of Solomon’s story?

**Solomon Builds the Temple and Palace** (page 120)  
**up to but not including**  
**v. 5:1-6:38**

**Palace Construction** (page 129)  
1. How did the dead King David play a role in the building of Solomon’s Temple?
2. Even though Israel’s neighbors (Tyre, Sumeria, Assyria, Babylon) were or had already built worship centers, why were Israel’s activities significant? (See page 122 or if e-book see Kgs 5:1-9:9)
3. As Solomon starts building the Temple God make him a promise (1Kgs 6:13) that he will “live among the Israelites.” But God’s promise is contingent upon what?
4. Looking at 6:14-38 how much artistic effort went into the construction of the temple? How do you think art should be used in the worship of God?

**Palace Construction** (page 129)  
**up to but not including**  
**v. 7:1-8:13**

**Solomon’s Thanksgiving** (page 140)  
1. Chapter 7 is a description of the Temple decorations and furnishings. We recently studied Exodus. How similar or dissimilar to the tabernacle “tent of meeting” is this larger grander Temple (FYI our word Tabernacle is Middle English via French from Latin tabernaculum meaning ‘tent’)
2. Compare the size of the temple (6:2) with the size of Solomon's own house. What do you think about the comparison?
3. Our book begins the discussion of Chapter 8 with the statement that it is “one of the most
theologically significant texts” on all of 1 & 2 Kings. Why?
4. Much of page 137 and the top of 138 (if e-book commentary on 8:2) is a discussion of when the dedication ceremony occurred. Is this just scholars trying to show how smart they are or is there a nugget of something important there?
5. Verse 8 says that there was nothing in the Ark except the tablets. Many of us learned that it also contained Manna and Aaron’s rod wee in the Ark. What does our commentary say about that?
6. What is the symbolism of a cloud filling the temple once the Ark is in its new home?

Solomon’s Thanksgiving (page 140)
Lesson 7 up to but not including v. 8:14-8:63

God’s Second Appearance to Solomon (page 150)
1. Solomon has built a Temple for God. But Solomon’s prayer asks “even if the highest heaven cannot contain you” will God really dwell on earth in the Temple. His prayer goes on to answer his own question in four ways. What are the four reasons that Solomon believes God will use the Temple to “live among the Israelites”?
2. Solomon’s dedication prayer contains seven petitions. What is the significance of the number 7? What are the seven petitions?
3. One of the seven petitions prays for those who come to the Temple but do not “belong to your people Israel.” It that surprising? Why or why not?
4. Five of the seven petitions start with a consequence of disobeying God and asking that He ultimately forgive. Isn’t this a bit odd presupposing disobedience and specific dire consequences? What is the hidden message? Who was the audience?
5. What key ideas are expressed in verses 29-30? How would you apply those ideas to your own life?
6. Solomon ends with a blessing. The blessing has 3 parts. What are they?
7. In our commentary’s discussion of part 3 of the blessing, Paul House has an interesting statement; “This concern for monotheism is at the heart of all Old Testament Theology. Why is that? What are the implications, if any?
8. The ceremony ends with sacrifice. Huge numbers of animals are killed and sacrificed. These sacrifices were “fellowship” of “peace” offerings where the blood and entrails were given to God and the remainder eaten by those participating? Does this surprise you or change your previous understanding of Israelite sacrifice?

God’s Second Appearance to Solomon (page 150)
Lesson 8 up to but not including v. 9:1-28

Solomon’s Wisdom and Wealth (page 160)
1. When God appears to Solomon a second time we says that He heard the prayers covered in Chapter 8 and that He had “consecrated” the Temple Solomon had built by “putting my Name there forever” and the word “Name” is capitalized. What is going on here? Are we talking about a sign our front or something; “Yahweh’s Place”? Explain what you think God is saying.
2. What does the word “theophany” mean? What is the significant of the two Solomon has experienced so far?
3. Every communication from God about the line of David comes with a caveat? What is that caveat? Why is it repeated ad infinitum?
4. How do you think God’s people today can maintain their holiness in the world in which we
live? How can we be in the world but not of the world?
5. Our book says there are five canonical functions of Chapters 5 through 9. What are they?
6. The five points above tell us three things about God and our relationship to him. What are these three theological significant things listed?
7. Our book lists three things we should learn and apply today. What are those three applications?
8. The third application deals with leadership. What is your reaction to what the book says of leaders?

**Solomon’s Wisdom and Wealth** (page 160)
Lesson 9

**The Divided Kingdom and the Rise of Idolatry** (page 176)

1. The commentary says that the Queen of Sheba traveled to see Solomon for two reasons. What was the second reason? If, before you had read this question, I asked you why the Queen of Sheba visited Solomon what answer would you have given? Why is it that the colloquial version of this tale only mentions wealth and wisdom?
2. If someone came to visit you to know you well, what things in your life would catch their attention? What parts of your life would you like to change so that impression you really want to make would be visible?
3. “The weight of gold that Solomon received annually was 666 talents.” What if anything does 666 signify? What if anything does this tell us about that much wealth?
4. The description of Solomon’s wealth includes the statement that “Nothing was made of silver because silver was considered of little value in Solomon’s day.” Our commentator mentions the intended audience of Kings1.2 again and the reaction this statement would have invoked. Who was the audience and what was the emotional message?
5. Solomon married hundreds of foreign born women. What had God said through Moses about this sort of thing? And Solomon’s wealth caused a third problem. What was it?
6. What sin did Solomon commit that destroyed the covenant relationship? What did God decree as a result?
7. What was the bottom line reason that God was angry with Solomon? How important is the inclination of our heart? How is that connected to obedience?
8. The book mentions four canonical purposes contained within the last two and a half Chapters (9:10 thru 11.) What are they?
9. What three theological learns are found in these 2½ Chapters?
10. Our author suggests five things we can learn and try to apply in today’s world. Which of the five did you find most meaningful. Which if any surprised or troubled you?

**He Divided Kingdom and the Rise of Idolatry** (page 177)
Lesson 10

**Ahijah Prophesies against Jeroboam** (page 190)

1. The nation of Israel divides into two kingdoms upon Solomon’s death. This has hugely tragic consequences. The Bible says this is a result of Solomon’s idolatry. One man sins hundreds of thousands ultimately suffer. What is your reaction?
2. Rehoboam, Solomon’s son, goes north to secure to secure his kingship. He seeks advice from the elders. And then he totally blows it. What is going on here? Where did the family wisdom his father exhibited go?
3. So Jeroboam, who has been told through a prophet that he will be God’s king of the
Northern Tribes defensively fortifies and then does what!?

4. Now a prophet with obvious miraculous powers gives Jeroboam a second chance. And how well does Jeroboam listen?

5. Chapter 13 sort of comes out of nowhere and doesn’t seem to fit quite where it is. Yet the author of our commentary says these few pages have six important messages for us. What are they?

**Ahijah Prophesies against Jeroboam** (page 190)  
*up to but not including* v. 14:1-15:34

**Jehu Prophesies against Baasha** (page 199)

1. Jeroboam’s son becomes very ill. And he who would not heed the unnamed prophet’s message sends his disguised wife to the original prophet, Ahijah, who’d said God would make him King. But, Ahijah wasn’t only not helpful, he had a dreadful message. Summarize the message Ahijah gives the wife to take home to Jeroboam.

2. Jeroboam is a disaster as king. The answer to question #1, above, tells us what God thinks of his kingship. Yet our commentary says one could argue that his is one of the more important stories in the Bible. Why?

3. Now we get a brief summary of the kingship of Rehoboam, Solomon’s son. Not to outdone on the idolatry sin thing he does Jeroboam one better and adopts the Canaanite religion. We are only one generation beyond Solomon and two beyond David. What do you think is going on?

4. Rehoboam dies and is succeeded by his son Abijam (same as Abijah, different Bible versions have it either way) who is just as bad as his father. Our text asks and answers the question, “Why does God allow him to rule at all?” What is the answer?

5. Finally along comes a good-one twenty years after the death of Solomon, King Asa. What was it Asa did “right in the eyes of the Lord”?

6. The next one (king) up north, Nadab, was so bad his one of his own assassimates him. What we know about him is he continued his father’s ways and his father’s sin, “which he had caused Israel to commit.” Comment on the last part of the previous sentence, the direct quote. How can a King cause a whole nation to sin?

7. Nadab’s assassin, Baasha, kills all the decedents of Jeroboam (perhaps just the male decedents.) Why did we know this was going to happen? Who foretold it?

8. How did Baasha do in the eyes of the Lord?

**Jehu Prophesies against Baasha** (page 199)  
*up to* v. 16:1-34

**Elijah’s Opposition to Idolatry and Oppression** (page 208)

1. What was the prophet Jehu sent to tell Baasha?

2. Baasha ruled the Northern Kingdom 24 years. Yet all we know about him is (a) he warred with Asa, (b) he did evil in the eyes of the Lord and (c) his decedents are to end up just like Jeroboam’s. Yet our commentary says there is much to be learned from three verses about him 16:5-7. What are the three things emphasized in these three verses?

3. Baasha’s son Elah succeeds him. He rules 2 years. He is not even in battle when he is assassinated. What is his ignoble end?

4. The next King, Zimiri, lasted only 7 days. It is possible he might have been forgotten asl together and not ended up in the story except during his brief 7 day tenure he did what?  
   (note, this time it specifies “family” = male heirs.)

5. Then there isn’t even agreement as to who follows the seven-day king. The Omri and Tibni
factions fight and Omri comes out on top. We can say two things about Omri (1) he sinned more than all those before him and (2) he was the father of who?

6. The preceding five chapters (12-17) have three major canonical turning points what are they?

7. Name a few of the theological learnings of the previous five chapters.

8. There is one overriding application that applies equally well today, “Whatever leads away from clear biblical teaching” is what?

Elijah’s Opposition to Idolatry and Oppression (page 208)  

Lesson 13 up to v. 17:1-18:46

Elijah Flees Jezebel (page 221)

1. Does our tale of the leaders of the decedents of Israel (Jacob, the father of the 12) change in focus beginning with Chapter 17? How? (Hint: Prior to Chapter 17 the leading actors were Kings. Now we seem to have co-stars.)

2. Right at the beginning of our commentary about Elijah the book says he played four roles? What are those four skills?

3. Ahab, son of Omri, is king of the Northern Tribes. The worship of the god Ball gets official support within the Israeli government.
   - How does this happen?
   - Who is Ball?
   - What do the believers of this deity believe? What powers does this god supposedly have?

4. Elijah bursts onto the scene out of nowhere in audience with Ahab.
   - What does he tell Ahab?
   - How is this proclamation a focused strike at the heart of the matter?
   - He is told to move twice. How does this further focus the challenge?

5. If you had been the widow, how would you have felt about Elijah's request of you?

6. Proving to the readers his credentials as a prophet of God, Elijah performs miracles while in Zarephath. What are those miracles?

7. Do you see yourself more like Elijah or like Obadiah? Why?

8. So far perhaps only Ahab and those close to him know of the confrontation between The Lord God and Ball. However, now Elijah orchestrates a dramatic miraculous demonstration. What are the key elements that would leave the original readers of this Biblical tale in awe, shaking their heads?
Elijah Flees Jezebel (page 221) (page 221)

Ahab and Jezebel Murder Naboth (page 231)

1. Who is Jezebel? Where is she from? What role has she played in the worship of Baal?
2. Why is Jezebel so upset with Elijah that she threatens his life?
3. What does Elijah do? Here is a man, The Lord God’s prophet, who just acted in God’s behalf on Mount Carmel performing miraculous deeds. Explain his actions.
4. Elijah experiences an appearance of The Lord (theophany). He is in a high place, lots of frightening things happen, and his head and eyes are covered. What does this bring to mind?
5. “Also, anoint Jeru son of Nimnshi king over Israel.” Who is Jeru? Why is this mentioned here? [Ahab is succeeded by his son Ahaziah 1Kgs22:40. Who dies without a heir and is succeeded by his brother Joram 2Kgs1:17. Jeru ultimately becomes king but not until 2 Kings Chapter 9 after being anointed by an underling of Elisha.]
6. Up until now, prophets have just sort have shown up. Now The Lord God tells Elijah to appoint Elisha as his successor. What does that tell you if anything?
7. There is an invasion by Ben-Hadad king of Aram (Syria) and the Bible tells us God provides Ahab assistance through an unnamed prophet. What is going on here? Ahab is promoting Ballism. Why is God helping him?
8. An interesting statement is made by one of Ben-Hadad’s officials. He says that they lost the battle because the Jewish God is “god of the hills.” Why is the Lord God thought to be a “god of the hills”?
9. 1 Kgs 20:39-40 provide a parable of Ahab's mistake. Are you sometimes too busy to think through what God really wants of you? Are you sometimes influenced by worldly or monetary gain and choose to not do the right thing?

Ahab and Jezebel Murder Naboth (page 231)

Elijah Denounces Ahaziah (page 242)

1. Now Elijah reenters the narrative and immediately denounces Ahab the king God just helped through the unnamed prophet. What is going on here in your opinion?
2. Ahab is still at war with Syria. And the other Jewish king, the king of Judah, Jehoshaphat, offers to help. But Jehoshaphat wants to consult with The Lord. What does Ahab do?
3. When Jehoshaphat insists that a prophet of The Lord be summoned what happens? What is Ahab told will happen to him?
4. The Ahab- Jehoshaphat army was ultimately victorious so was Micaiah’s first answer a false one? What price did Micaiah pay for delivering a true word from God? Are there prices we sometimes need to pay to completely follow what God want of us?
5. So Ahab takes two precautions. What are the two precautions? Why is one or both of these precautions important to the narrative?
6. How is Elijah’s prophecy about Ahab’s death fulfilled?
7. Who replaces Ahab as king?