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## Adonijah Sets Himself Up as King - 1 Kings 1:1-27

**Topics:** Advice, Age, Ambition, Beauty, Caring, Discipline, Drinking, Expectations, Follow-through, Instructions, Invitation, Life, Loyalty, Parents, Partnerships, Promises, Questions, Rebellion, Sacrifice, Surprises, Swearing, Timing, Waiting, Weaknesses, Youth

### Open It

1. Why is the succession from one ruler to the next a particularly vulnerable time for a nation?
2. What instances do you know of when a parent's will has been bitterly contested between siblings?
- \* 3. Who are some of the "elders" in your life—older people in a position of authority over you?

### Explore It

4. What was one of the practical provisions made for David in his old age? (1:1-4)
- \* 5. With David in a weakened condition, what did Adonijah decide to do? (1:5)
6. What was at least one reason why Adonijah had grown up to be rebellious and ambitious? (1:6)
7. Which of David's officials supported Adonijah? (1:7)
8. Which of David's officials did not join the rebellion? (1:8)
- \* 9. What did Adonijah do in order to establish his influence and build support for his succession? (1:9-10)
10. Which officials and relatives were conspicuously missing from Adonijah's guest list? (1:10)
11. What warning did Nathan the prophet carry to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother? (1:11)
12. What advice did Nathan have for Bathsheba? (1:12-14)
13. Of what promise did Bathsheba remind David? (1:17)
- \* 14. What action did Bathsheba urge David to take before the decision was out of his hands? (1:18-20)
15. What did Bathsheba fear if David were to die under the present circumstances? (1:21)
16. Who came into the king's chambers to corroborate Bathsheba's story? (1:22-23)
17. Of what activities in the court did Nathan give a thorough account to the king? (1:24-26)
18. What question did Nathan ask of the king in light of what had transpired in the kingdom? (1:27)

### Get It

- \* 19. Why is it important to the rest of the passage to understand how old and frail David was?
- \* 20. To what extent was David responsible for the way his son Adonijah behaved?
  21. Why were certain people not asked to Adonijah's sacrifice?
  22. Why might Nathan have considered it wise to send Bathsheba to David first?
  23. How can it be useful to ask a question about someone's motives, even if you think it might be safe to assume you know what he or she wants?
  24. What, if anything, obligates someone's relatives to respect his or her wishes after he or she is dead?
  25. What was one characteristic of Adonijah that had drawn Israel to other leaders in the past?

### Apply It

26. What steps do you need to take to ensure that promises you have made will be kept, whether or not you are around to enforce them?
- \* 27. How can you come to an older person in an attitude of loyalty and assistance, rather than telling him or her what to do?
28. The next time you must discipline a young person, how can you do so with the perspective of his or her long-term development?

## David Makes Solomon King - 1 Kings 1:28-53

**Topics:** Abandon, Answers, Authority, Blessing, Call, Celebration, Character, Denial, Evil, Failure, Fear, Goodness, Good News, Government, Joy, Justice, Mercy, Praise, Promises, Protection, Questions, Relationships, Running, Swearing, Thankfulness

### Open It

1. What feelings go along with following through on a promise you have made?
- \* 2. What are some of the greatest blessings a person can experience in his or her old age?
3. What did you and your siblings fight about when you were teenagers?
4. EXPLORE
5. What oath did King David reiterate to his wife Bathsheba? (1:28-30)
- \* 6. What did David command Zadok, Benaiah, and Nathan to do? (1:32-34)
- \* 7. When did David intend Solomon's reign to begin? (1:35)
- \* 8. How did Benaiah express his approval and his gratitude to David? (1:36-37)
9. What important ceremony was performed for Solomon that had not been done for the rebel, Adonijah? (1:38-39)
10. What was the mood among the people when Solomon was crowned king? (1:40)
11. Who brought the news to Adonijah and his supporters while they were still feasting? (1:41-42)
12. How did Jonathan son of Abiathar explain what he had just seen and the noise that Adonijah could hear? (1:43-45)
13. What circumstances made David's provision for the succession more authoritative and final? (1:46-48)
14. What did Adonijah's guests do when they heard the news of Solomon's coronation? (1:49)
15. Why did Adonijah seek sanctuary at the altar of God? (1:50-51)
16. How did Solomon respond to his brother's plea for mercy? (1:52)
17. How did Solomon show his authority over Adonijah? (1:53)

### Get It

- \* 18. How did David demonstrate his kingly skills by the way he handled the dispute between Adonijah and Solomon?
19. What traditional elements of the coronation of a king of Israel were present in Solomon's coronation?
- \* 20. In what sense was it a compliment or blessing to wish David that his son would be even greater than he had been?
21. In terms of political power, why is a defeated rival a dangerous person to have around?
22. How important is the loyalty of one's friends when the going gets rough?
23. What are the advantages of choosing your own successor in a job or a position of authority?
24. In what sense was it up to Adonijah to determine how he would be treated under his brother's authority?

### Apply It

25. What person who has been working against you should you give the benefit of the doubt before you take strong action against him or her?
- \* 26. This week how can you help a friend achieve a goal that is very important to him or her?
27. How can you bless or affirm an "elder statesman" in your life?

## David's Charge to Solomon - 1 Kings 2:1-12

*Topics:* Age, Children, Consequences, Death, Earth, Faithfulness, Government, Guilt, History, Instructions, Insults, Justice, Kindness, Law, Leadership, Murder, Obligation, Parents, Peace, Promises, Punishment, Relationships, Remembering, Righteousness, Strength, Swearing, War, Wisdom

### Open It

- \* 1. Which of your life goals or values would you like to see carried on by your children?
- 2. In what respect is a knowledge of the country's history important for anyone in leadership?

### Explore It

- \* 3. What did David feel it was important to do before he died? (2:1)
- 4. With what words of encouragement did David begin his charge to Solomon? (2:2-3)
- \* 5. In what sense was Solomon responsible for the continuation of God's promise to David? (2:3-4)
- 6. What actions from the past did David hold against Joab? (2:5)
- 7. What did David tell Solomon to do with regard to Joab? (2:6)
- \* 8. What did David want to make sure Solomon did for the sons of Barzillai of Gilead? (2:7)
- 9. What wrong that David suffered did he want Solomon to settle after his death? (2:8-9)
- 10. What expression does the writer of 1 Kings use to describe David's death? (2:10)
- 11. How long did David reign over Israel? (2:11)
- 12. How secure was Solomon's kingship from the beginning? (2:12)

### Get It

- \* 13. According to David, what must Solomon do as king in order to prosper?
- 14. What condition had God built into His covenant with the house of David?
- 15. Why did David believe that Joab did not deserve to die peacefully of old age?
- 16. How did Joab injure David when he killed first Abner and then Amasa?
- 17. Why do you think David did not punish Joab himself?
- 18. Why would a person who had befriended you in your hour of need be the most likely to be remembered in your will?
- 19. Although David had sworn that he would not execute Shimei, how did he make sure that justice was done?
- \* 20. What personal "vote of confidence" did David repeat twice in his charge to Solomon?

### Apply It

- \* 21. What can you do to insure that someone's act of kindness or generosity toward you will not be forgotten?
- 22. Why should you take the fear of the Lord and the observance of His commands as seriously as did King Solomon?

## Solomon's Throne Established - 1 Kings 2:13-46

**Topics:** Accountability, Ambition, Anger, Blessing, Children, Conversation, Death, Desires, Evil, God's Will, Guilt, Marriage, Obedience, Parents, Peace, Prophecy, Questions, Rules, Security, Self-Centeredness, Swearing, Wives

### Open It

- \* 1. What has been your reaction when someone tried to influence you by sending one of your close friends or relatives to ask a favor?
- 2. What motivates people to test limits or to see if they can get by with more than is allowed?

### Explore It

- 3. After Solomon became king, who came to see his mother Bathsheba? (2:13)
- 4. How did Adonijah present himself as a "hard luck" case? (2:15-16)
- \* 5. What request did Adonijah want Bathsheba to make for him? (2:17-18)
- 6. How did King Solomon show honor to his mother? (2:19-20)
- \* 7. Why was Solomon outraged when his mother presented Adonijah's request? (2:21-22)
- \* 8. What oath did Solomon swear regarding Adonijah after Adonijah had revealed his true colors in making the request for Abishag? (2:23-24)
- 9. What sentence was carried out against Adonijah? (2:25)
- 10. Why did Solomon refrain from executing Abiathar although he had been one of the conspirators? (2:26)
- 11. How did the removal of Abiathar from the priesthood fulfill a prophecy from long ago about Eli's descendants? (2:27)
- 12. How did Joab, the last conspirator, react to the news of what Solomon was doing? (2:28)
- 13. Why was Benaiah forced to kill Joab in the tent of the Lord before the altar? (2:31-32)
- 14. What order did Solomon give to Shimei "on pain of death"? (2:36-37)
- 15. According to Solomon, who was most familiar with the wrongs that Shimei had done to David? (2:44)
- 16. Who executed justice on behalf of King Solomon? (2:46)
- 17. By the end of the chapter, what was the result of all of the decisions made by King Solomon? (2:46)

### Get It

- 18. Why was Adonijah's request to marry Abishag really another bid to take the kingship away from Solomon?
- 19. When is it a good idea to be skeptical of the motives of someone who asks you to intercede for him or her with someone you know?
- \* 20. Why would it have been unwise for Solomon to leave people like Adonijah, Abiathar, and Joab unrestrained and unpunished?
- 21. In what sense did Solomon let Adonijah and Shimei "hang themselves"?
- 22. What was good or bad about Solomon choosing to ignore the tradition in Israel that made the "horns of the altar" a place of refuge from those seeking vengeance for murder?
- 23. To what extent are we obligated to fulfill a promise that we were tricked into making?
- \* 24. Why are greed and the thirst for power such difficult desires to reverse in the life of an individual?

### Apply It

- 25. How can you develop a healthy realism toward the people who ask favors of you?
- \* 26. What daily habit can you cultivate that will add to your wisdom in making difficult decisions?
- 27. What can you do to guard against being tricked by people who only want to use or harm you?

## Solomon Asks for Wisdom - 1 Kings 3:1-15

*Topics:* Administration, Approval, Choices, Covenant, Discernment, Faithfulness, Government, Honor, Justice, Kindness, Law, Love, Obedience, People, Pleasure, Promises, Righteousness, Sacrifice, Spiritual Gifts, Wealth, Wisdom, Youth

### Open It

- \* 1. What have you fantasized you would ask for if you had three wishes?
- 2. If you had to stand trial, what qualities would you value most in a judge?

### Explore It

- 3. With what country did Solomon make an alliance by marriage? (3:1)
- 4. What major projects did Solomon undertake? (3:1)
- 5. Where were the people of Israel making sacrifices at this time? (3:2)
- 6. How did Solomon show that he loved God? (3:3)
- 7. What was one area in which Solomon did not entirely please God? (3:3)
- 8. What impressive sacrifice did Solomon offer at Gibeon? (3:4)
- \* 9. What did God say to Solomon in a dream while he was at Gibeon? (3:5)
- 10. How did Solomon see his own place in the history of God and Israel? (3:6)
- 11. What did Solomon find humbling about being king? (3:7-8)
- 12. In Solomon's view whose nation was Israel? (3:8)
- \* 13. What request did Solomon make of God and for what purpose? (3:9)
- 14. How did God feel about what Solomon had chosen to request? (3:10)
- \* 15. What difference did it make that Solomon asked God for wisdom? (3:10-14)
- 16. What other things might Solomon have asked for when God gave him one request? (3:11)
- 17. What did God promise to Solomon in response to his request? (3:12)
- 18. What did God promise to Solomon that he had not asked for? (3:13)
- 19. What blessing did God offer to Solomon if he would walk in His ways as David had? (3:14)
- 20. What did Solomon realize when he awoke from his sleep? (3:15)
- 21. How did Solomon offer his praise and thanksgiving to God? (3:15)

### Get It

- 22. What was one practice of Solomon that had evidently not been the custom of David?
- 23. What did God reveal about His nature by meeting Solomon at the most important high place?
- \* 24. Given the opportunity to ask God "for whatever you want [Him] to give you," what sort of request would you expect from our human nature?
- 25. Why are awe and humility appropriate reactions to the responsibility of governing a nation?
- \* 26. Why are riches and honor of less ultimate value than wisdom?

### Apply It

- \* 27. What practical steps can you take to place a higher value on wisdom this coming week?
- 28. What can you request from God and be fairly certain that He will say yes?
- 29. How can you seek God's wisdom as a matter of habit?

## A Wise Ruling - 1 Kings 3:16-4:34

**Topics:** Arguments, Awe, Children, Death, Deceit, Government, Greatness, Insight, Judgment, Justice, Leadership, Listening, Lying, Security, Serving, Teaching, Understanding, Wisdom

### Open It

1. What are some of the characteristics of an opulent (rich) life-style?
- \* 2. What sorts of knowledge can bring a person fame in this day and age?

### Explore It

3. Who came to King Solomon with a dispute to be settled? (3:16)
- \* 4. What series of events was described by one of two prostitutes who came to Solomon? (3:17-21)
- \* 5. What version of events did Solomon hear from the second prostitute? (3:22)
6. How did Solomon confirm his understanding of the situation before he proceeded? (3:23)
7. How did Solomon propose to settle the argument? (3:24-25)
- \* 8. How did Solomon settle the matter? (3:24-27)
9. How did the two women react differently to the prospect of “dividing” the baby? (3:26)
10. What was Solomon’s ruling in the case of the disputed child? (3:27)
11. What was the reaction when word got out about Solomon’s ruling? (3:28)
12. What positions of leadership constituted the “chief officials” of Israel under Solomon? (4:1-6)
13. What was Solomon’s system for keeping his household supplied throughout the year? (4:7)
14. What were some of the measures of the prosperity of Israel and Judah? (4:20-21)
15. What was one of the key national blessings during Solomon’s lifetime? (4:25)
16. What was God’s primary gift to Solomon? (4:29)
17. How did Solomon’s wisdom compare to that of the wisest men of his day? (4:30-31)
18. What were some of Solomon’s intellectual accomplishments? (4:32-33)
19. What was the response of other kings when they heard of Solomon’s wisdom? (4:34)

### Get It

- \* 20. Why is it a good idea to be sure you understand the facts before jumping to a conclusion?
- \* 21. In the case of the prostitutes, how was Solomon so sure that he could tell the real mother from the pretender?
22. Why is it such a big job to provision a king or head of state?
23. What were the different evidences of Solomon’s wisdom?
24. How did the wisdom Solomon requested from God end up bringing him fame and wealth as well?
25. Why is peace the greatest blessing that a nation can enjoy?
26. What sources of wisdom has God given us?

### Apply It

27. What positive qualities can you affirm in a leader or your church or community this coming week?
- \* 28. In what situation do you need to step back, look at God’s perspective, or investigate further before making a judgment?

## Preparations for Building the Temple - 1 Kings 5:1-18

*Topics:* Ambassadors, Approval, Bargaining, Craftsmanship, Enemies, Foundation, Friendship, Intentions, Name, Peace, Praise, Promises, Relationships, War, Wisdom, Work

### Open It

1. What is the most satisfying agreement you've ever reached (or contract negotiated)?
- \* 2. Who has been one of your favorite bosses, coworkers, or assistants? Why?
3. Why is it ideal to begin a big project only when other areas of your life are reasonably stable?

### Explore It

4. Why did Hiram king of Tyre send envoys to King Solomon? (5:1)
5. What intention did Solomon declare to Hiram in his return message? (5:2-5)
- \* 6. What assistance did Solomon ask from Hiram in his project to build a temple for the Lord? (5:6)
- \* 7. How did Hiram react to Solomon's message and his plans for the future? (5:7)
8. What did Hiram request in return when he agreed to supply all of David's building materials? (5:8-9)
9. What goods and resources changed hands between Israel and Tyre? (5:10-11)
10. What promise did God fulfill for Solomon? (5:12)
11. What was the relationship between Tyre and Israel during the reigns of Hiram and Solomon? (5:12)
12. Why were Solomon and Hiram able to help each other? (5:12)
- \* 13. How did Solomon recruit and organize the workers from Israel? (5:13-14)
14. How many workers of different sorts did Solomon have for the work on the temple? (5:15-16)
15. What was prepared as the foundation for the temple? (5:17)
16. What international partnership was involved in building the temple? (5:18)

### Get It

17. How did Solomon demonstrate wisdom in the steps he took to prepare for building the temple?
- \* 18. Why does it make more sense to call upon recognized experts than to try to do everything yourself?
19. Why was Solomon concerned with getting the very best materials and craftsmen for the work on the temple?
20. Why would a person's friends be favorably disposed toward his or her children?
21. What makes it possible for individuals or nations to be glad about one another's accomplishments?
- \* 22. What makes it possible for people to work well together?
23. What can individuals do to make the work environment more pleasant for all?

### Apply It

- \* 24. How can you cooperate with and draw on someone else's strengths to serve God more effectively in the near future?
25. What friendship with someone of an older generation can you cultivate this week?



## Solomon Builds the Temple - 1 Kings 6:1-38

**Topics:** Abandon, Accomplishments, Administration, Craftsmanship, Details, History, Management, Preparation, Promises, Quality, Results, Schedule, Tasks, Work

### Open It

- \* 1. What project have you undertaken that has given you great satisfaction?
- 2. What examples do you know of where measurement has proven crucial to the successful completion of a project?
- 3. What's some task that you have worked on for more than a year, and what's good or bad about how long you've been working on it?

### Explore It

- 4. What are the different ways of expressing the date that the temple was begun? (6:1)
- 5. What was unusual about the building activity on the actual temple site? (6:7)
- 6. Besides stone what was the chief building material for the temple? (6:8-10)
- \* 7. What word did Solomon receive from God concerning the temple? (6:11-13)
- 8. What was God's promise to David, which He vowed to carry out if Solomon and Israel were obedient? (6:12-13)
- \* 9. What was a unique characteristic of the inner sanctuary and its furnishings? (6:20-22)
- \* 10. What impressive sculptures were to be found in the inner sanctuary? (6:23-28)
- 11. What symbols appeared throughout the temple, carved into the wood? (6:29-35)
- 12. How long did it take to complete the temple? (6:37-38)

### Get It

- 13. Why do you suppose Solomon was so exacting in the specifications for the temple of the Lord?
- \* 14. What attitudes and values were evidenced by the fact that the Israelites used only the finest materials in building the temple?
- 15. What's significant about the fact that no iron tool was heard on the temple site itself?
- 16. What was the king's role in the building of the temple?
- \* 17. Why was great care and expense in the construction of the temple not enough to ensure that God would always live among the Israelites?
- 18. Even though God blessed the building of the temple, what did He really want from the Israelites?
- 19. What does God want from us besides mere attendance at church?
- 20. What significance did "inner" and "outer" areas have for the architects of the temple?

### Apply It

- \* 21. In what activity for the Lord can you evidence your reverence through your concern for quality and your avoidance of shoddiness?
- 22. To what unmeasurable or unobservable areas of life do you want to remember to give daily attention?

## Solomon Builds His Palace - 1 Kings 7:1-51

*Topics:* Abundance, Accomplishments, Administration, Craftsmanship, Delegation, Details, Employment, Experience, Home, Instructions, Jobs, Productivity, Reputation, Responsibility, Results, Tasks, Training, Value, Wealth

### Open It

- \* 1. What feelings do you have when you enter a stately and impressive building?
- 2. How does an architect or artisan become nationally known?
- 3. Why is experience so important when you are looking for a tradesman for a demanding project?
- 4. What do you think of when you hear the word palace?

### Explore It

- 5. How long did it take to complete Solomon's palace? (7:1)
- 6. What were some of the unique features of the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon? (7:2-6)
- 7. What were three of the structures that Solomon had built? (7:7-8)
- \* 8. What was notable about the man Solomon brought from Tyre as chief craftsman for his projects? (7:13-14)
- \* 9. In what sense was Hiram not a foreigner in Israel? (7:14)
- 10. What material was used to make the pillars for the temple and their decorations? (7:15-20)
- 11. What names were given to the pillars of the temple? (7:21)
- \* 12. What were the impressive characteristics of the Sea that Hiram made for the temple? (7:23-26)
- 13. How does the passage describe the ten movable stands? (7:27-37)
- 14. What other items were cast from bronze? (7:38-40)
- 15. What method was used for making all of the objects of burnished bronze? (7:45-46)
- 16. What amount of bronze was used in the construction of the temple? (7:47)
- 17. What were some of the gold furnishings Solomon had made for the temple? (7:48-50)
- 18. How were the items that King David had collected for the temple incorporated into the finished project? (7:51)

### Get It

- 19. Why was it appropriate that the temple was finished before the palaces?
- 20. What impression do you think the palace of King Solomon made on visitors? Why?
- \* 21. Why would Solomon go to the trouble of bringing in a famous craftsman for the bronze work?
- 22. What adjectives do you think should describe buildings and articles used in the worship of God?
- 23. What do you think the plants and animals in the decorations of the temple signified?
- 24. What conclusion do you draw from the fact that the weight of bronze used was so great that they didn't even try to weigh it?
- \* 25. Why were the items in the treasury of the temple of special significance to all Israel?

### Apply It

- 26. What gift can you offer freely to God this week without "weighing or measuring" it?
- \* 27. How can you affirm a skilled person who uses his or her talents for the glory of God?

## The Ark Brought to the Temple - 1 Kings 8:1-66

**Topics:** Accomplishments, Actions, Anger, Blessing, Celebration, Commitment, Confession, Covenant, Dedication, Earth, Enemies, Fear, Fellowship, Forgiveness, Glory, Guilt, Heart, Heaven, History, Humility, Joy, Judgment, Law, Love, Mercy, Name, People, Praise, Prayer, Promises, Repentance, Right, Sin, Soul, Swearing, War, Words

### Open It

- \* 1. What was the most memorable Fourth of July celebration in your experience? What made it so?
- 2. Why does a locked box arouse so much curiosity?
- 3. What things do you own that you reserve for only very special occasions or observances?

### Explore It

- \* 4. When did Israel bring the ark of the covenant into the newly completed temple? (8:1-2)
- 5. What religious activity was taking place while the ark was being brought to the temple? (8:3-5)
- 6. Where was the ark of the covenant placed in the new temple? (8:6-8)
- 7. What did the ark contain? (8:9)
- 8. What happened when the priests withdrew from the Holy Place? (8:10)
- \* 9. How did Solomon explain the significance of the event to the people? (8:12-21)
- 10. What praises did Solomon offer at the beginning of his prayer? (8:22-24)
- \* 11. How did Solomon express his awe and humility before the Lord? (8:27-28)
- 12. How did Solomon ask God to regard the temple and the prayers offered there? (8:29-30)
- 13. What sorts of prayers did Solomon envision being offered at the temple? (8:31-40)
- 14. Why did Solomon pray that even the foreigner's prayer would be answered? (8:41-43)
- 15. What cycle of sin and repentance did Solomon consider inevitable? (8:46-51)
- 16. Of which of His own actions does Solomon remind God in asking Him to remember His people? (8:52-53)
- 17. What were three aspects of Solomon's blessing of the whole assembly? (8:56-61)
- 18. How long did Israel celebrate the dedication of the temple? (8:62-65)
- 19. What was the mood of the people as they returned to their homes? (8:66)

### Get It

- \* 20. Why isn't it possible to build a "house" for God?
- 21. Why was the dedication of the temple the culmination of Israel's history to that point?
- 22. What details of Christ's life, death, and resurrection are important for us to remember?
- \* 23. Why was rebellion and repentance such a prominent theme in Solomon's prayer?
- 24. When God's people are unfaithful, why can they expect an interruption of the peace and blessing they have enjoyed?
- 25. What did Solomon know about the human tendency to sin?
- 26. How did God show His acceptance of the temple as Israel's place to meet Him?
- 27. How can we today dedicate our lives to God's service?

### Apply It

- \* 28. What opportunity will you have this week to rehearse the details of God's covenant with His people?
- 29. In what way can you dedicate your life, home, and possessions to God's use?
- 30. Where can you set aside time and space to meet with God in a spirit of awe and repentance?

## The Lord Appears to Solomon - 1 Kings 9:1-28

**Topics:** Achievements, Appearance, Disobedience, Fellowship, Forsake, Gifts, Heart, Idolatry, Integrity, Law, Marriage, Name, Obligation, Partnerships, Possessions, Prayer, Rejection, Righteousness, Sacrifice, Slavery, Wealth, Worship

### Open It

1. Who in your family has been a “hard act to follow” because of his or her achievements?
- \* 2. How do you tend to react to warnings?

### Explore It

3. When did the Lord appear to Solomon a second time? (9:1-2)
- \* 4. What positive response did God make to the prayers Solomon had offered at the dedication of the temple? (9:3)
- \* 5. What “if” did God reiterate to Solomon concerning his relationship to God? (9:4-5)
- \* 6. What did God promise to do if Solomon or his descendants failed to obey His commands? (9:6-9)
7. During what time period was Solomon busy with building the temple and palace? (9:10)
8. How did Hiram feel about the “gift” Solomon gave him in thanks for the raw materials for the temple? (9:11-13)
9. For what sorts of projects did Solomon conscript laborers? (9:15-19)
10. Who provided the slave labor in Solomon’s kingdom? (9:20-21)
11. What sorts of positions were filled by Israelites? (9:22-23)
12. How did Solomon go about fulfilling the temple obligations? (9:25)
13. What seafaring venture did Solomon and Hiram enter into together? (9:26-28)

### Get It

14. What could possibly cause God to reject Israel and the temple that had been built for Him?
15. What conclusion would passers-by draw if they were to see the temple in Israel devastated?
16. Why was it wise that Solomon did not make any Israelites slaves?
- \* 17. What behavior does God expect of His people today?
- \* 18. Why is it so abhorrent to God for His people to turn away from Him and worship other gods?

### Apply It

- \* 19. What practices can help you to live in obedience to God day by day?
20. What “temple” can you ask God to consecrate?

## The Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon - 1 Kings 10:1-29

**Topics:** Answers, Believe, Craftsmanship, Gifts, Greatness, Happiness, Justice, Love, Mind, Praise, Questions, Righteousness, Testing, Wealth, Wisdom

### Open It

- \* 1. Who is the most famous or important visitor you have ever entertained?
- 2. Why do we often have to “see for ourselves” before we will believe something?

### Explore It

- \* 3. Why did the queen of Sheba come to visit Solomon? (10:1)
- 4. What gifts did the queen of Sheba bring to Solomon? (10:2)
- \* 5. What was the queen’s reaction to Solomon’s wisdom and his court? (10:4-7)
- 6. Why did the queen of Sheba offer praise to God? (10:9)
- 7. What did the queen of Sheba receive from Solomon before she returned to her country? (10:13)
- 8. What were some of the measures of Solomon’s wealth? (10:14-17)
- 9. What unique piece of furniture was created specifically for Solomon? (10:18-20)
- 10. What was the availability and value of precious metals in Solomon’s day? (10:21-22)
- \* 11. In what two areas was Solomon graced with greater wealth than anyone else in the world? (10:23)
- 12. Why did people continually come seeking an audience with Solomon? (10:24-25)

### Get It

- 13. What kind of “hard questions” do you think the queen of Sheba asked Solomon?
- \* 14. In what way did a visit to Solomon’s court reveal that God loved Israel?
- 15. What does a visitor mean when he or she brings a gift to the host?
- 16. What were some of the evidences of Solomon’s power?
- \* 17. Why is wisdom valued equally or above possessions?

### Apply It

- \* 18. How can you place a higher value on wisdom among the people you encounter on a daily basis?
- 19. How can you use a small gift to indicate esteem for someone you visit this week?

## Solomon's Wives - 1 Kings 11:1-43

*Topics:* Age, Anger, Appearance, Attitude, Children, Covenant, Death, Devotion, Enemies, Evil, Gifts, Heart, History, Idolatry, Law, Marriage, Murder, Prophecy, Punishment, Rebellion, Rewards, Righteousness, Running, Sacrifice, Wives

### Open It

1. What experience do you have of yourself or someone close to you “getting in with the wrong crowd”?
- \* 2. What are the potential problems of a marriage between two people of different faiths?

### Explore It

- \* 3. What was one of Solomon's primary downfalls and areas of disobedience against God? (11:1-2)
4. How many wives did Solomon marry? (11:3)
5. What happened to Solomon's devotion to God as he got older? (11:4)
- \* 6. What gods did Solomon allow to be worshiped in Israel because of his foreign wives? (11:5-8)
- \* 7. What reason did God have to be especially angry with Solomon? (11:9-10)
8. What word did God speak in judgment of Solomon? (11:11)
9. Why did God choose not to utterly destroy Solomon and remove the whole kingdom from him? (11:12-13)
10. What was the history of the first enemy God raised up against Solomon? (11:14-22)
11. To which of David's battles did Rezon's enmity harken back? (11:23-25)
12. Which of the rebels against Solomon came from the ranks of his own officials? (11:26-28)
13. What prophecy did Ahijah reveal to Jeroboam when they were alone? (11:29-33)
14. What conditions would Jeroboam have to meet in order for God to be with him? (11:34-39)
15. How did Solomon respond to the presence of Jeroboam? (11:40)
16. How long did Solomon reign over the combined tribes? (11:42)

### Get It

17. How did the condition of Solomon's heart differ from David's before him?
- \* 18. Why is it not acceptable to follow God any less than completely?
19. In what countries did Solomon's enemies take refuge during his lifetime?
20. Why did the prophet Ahijah deliver his message to Jeroboam in such secrecy?
- \* 21. Why isn't a word from God or a supernatural intervention by God any guarantee against our human tendency to sin?

### Apply It

- \* 22. What “loves” and influences should you examine to be sure that they are not drawing you away from devotion to God?
23. What can you do to cultivate a wholehearted commitment to God this coming week?

## Israel Rebels against Rehoboam - 1 Kings 12:1-24

**Topics:** Advice, Age, Answers, Death, Delegation, Escape, Home, Listening, Loyalty, Mercy, Obedience, People, Prophecy, Rebellion, Rejection, Serving, War, Youth

### Open It

- \* 1. When you need advice about something you want to do but are unsure about, to whom do you turn?
- 2. What are the pros and cons of old age? youth?

### Explore It

- 3. Where did Solomon's son Rehoboam go to be crowned king? (12:1)
- 4. Where was Jeroboam when he heard the news of Solomon's death? (12:2)
- 5. What request did the people want Jeroboam to bring to Rehoboam on their behalf? (12:3-4)
- 6. Initially, what did Rehoboam tell the people who came to him? (12:5)
- \* 7. What did the elders of Israel, Solomon's advisors, advise Rehoboam? (12:7)
- \* 8. To whom did Rehoboam turn for a second opinion? (12:8)
- 9. What advice did the young men give Rehoboam? (12:10-11)
- \* 10. What did Rehoboam ultimately decide to tell the people? (12:12-15)
- 11. How did Jeroboam and the people respond to Rehoboam's harshness? (12:16)
- 12. What happened when the king tried to conscript forced labor from among the Israelites? (12:18-19)
- 13. Whom did the people of Israel proclaim king? (12:20)
- 14. What part of the kingdom was loyal to Rehoboam? (12:21)
- 15. Why was Rehoboam preparing for war? (12:21)
- 16. What word did Shemaiah bring to Rehoboam from the Lord? (12:22-24)
- 17. Why did God instruct Judah not to fight? (12:24)

### Get It

- 18. How did God prevent civil war in the kingdom of David and Solomon?
- 19. Why are harshness and fear not the best means of generating respect and loyalty?
- 20. What made Jeroboam a "natural" for leading the protest and then the rebellion?
- \* 21. Why is the advice of older people often sounder than the advice of younger people?
- \* 22. What older, more mature Christians do you have access to when you need advice?
- 23. Why is it pointless to try to oppose something that is ordained by God?
- 24. In what relationship do you need to resist using force and intimidation?

### Apply It

- \* 25. To what mature Christian could you turn for advice on some area of difficulty in your life?
- 26. How can you be respectful of people whom you might normally be able to dominate or push around?

## Golden Calves at Bethel and Dan - 1 Kings 12:25-33

*Topics:* Advice, Celebration, Choices, Fear, Idolatry, Laziness, Loyalty, Murder, Sacrifice, Self-Centeredness, Sin, Worship

### Open It

- \* 1. To what extent do you think people can be motivated by fear?
- 2. What are the pros and cons of finding a more convenient way of doing things?

### Explore It

- 3. Where did Jeroboam consolidate his power as king of Israel? (12:25)
- \* 4. Why did Jeroboam see traditional religious practices as a threat to his power and an advantage for Rehoboam? (12:26-27)
- 5. What prompted Jeroboam to make two golden calves? (12:28)
- \* 6. To what human vice did Jeroboam appeal in offering Israel alternate sites for worship? (12:28)
- \* 7. What became of the moral and spiritual climate of Israel when worship was instituted at Bethel and Dan? (12:29-30)
- 8. Where did Jeroboam build shrines? (12:31)
- 9. Who were the priests who served at Jeroboam's command? (12:31)
- 10. What practice of Judah did Jeroboam imitate by creating a new festival? (12:32-33)
- 11. What role did Jeroboam play in the worship at the festival? (12:33)

### Get It

- 12. What motivated Jeroboam to depart from the historical laws and practices of Israel?
- \* 13. Why was Jeroboam afraid of Israel's traditional religious practices?
- \* 14. What was particularly heinous about the worship alternatives Jeroboam gave the people of Israel?
- 15. What was the quality of Jeroboam's advisors?
- 16. Why should our own desires and convenience never dictate the terms of our worship of God?
- 17. What is likely to happen if we hold too tightly to the things we now possess?

### Apply It

- 18. How can you be sure that you are not changing the nature of your worship to suit your own needs and wants?
- \* 19. What fear can you leave before the throne of God before it motivates you to take inappropriate action?



## The Man of God from Judah - 1 Kings 13:1-34

**Topics:** Age, Angels, Anger, Consequences, Death, Disobedience, Evil, Follow, Gifts, Healing, Hospitality, Judgment, Lying, Mourning, Prayer, Prophecy, Punishment, Sacrifice, Serving, Sin, Truth

### Open It

- \* 1. When have you encountered a “wolf in sheep’s clothing”?
- 2. What are some examples of guilt by association?

### Explore It

- 3. Where did the prophet come from who met Jeroboam making sacrifices at the altar? (13:1)
- 4. What did the man of God say would happen to the altar at Bethel? (13:2)
- 5. What sign did the man of God claim would confirm the prophecy? (13:3)
- 6. What did Jeroboam try to do when he heard the prophecy? (13:4)
- 7. What happened to Jeroboam when he tried to capture the man of God? (13:4)
- 8. What happened at Bethel to confirm the truth of God’s Word through the prophet? (13:5)
- 9. What did the man of God do at Jeroboam’s request? (13:6)
- 10. What did God do in answer to prayer? (13:6)
- 11. What invitation did the king extend after he had been healed? (13:7)
- 12. How did the man of God respond to the king’s invitation? (13:8-10)
- 13. Where did the second prophet catch up to the man of God? (13:11-14)
- \* 14. How did the man of God respond to the old prophet’s invitation to come back and eat and drink? (13:15-17)
- \* 15. What deception did the old prophet use to get the man of God to come back with him? (13:18-19)
- 16. What revelation came to the old prophet while he was eating with the man of God? (13:20-22)
- \* 17. What happened to the man of God when he left the home of the old prophet? (13:23-24)
- 18. What did the old prophet know immediately when he heard about a lion standing beside a body on the road? (13:25-26)
- 19. What did the old prophet do for his brother prophet whom he had tricked? (13:27-30)
- 20. What special instructions did the old prophet give his sons and why? (13:31-32)
- 21. What sinful practices did Jeroboam continue? (13:33-34)

### Get It

- 22. How did the man of God show Jeroboam that God was with him in powerful ways?
- 23. Why would God send someone to confront Jeroboam in such a dramatic fashion as did the man of God?
- 24. How might you have felt if you were the “man of God” and an older prophet claimed God’s authority and contradicted your instructions?
- 25. What is potentially good or bad about using deception to put someone to the test?
- \* 26. How do we know that God’s clear instructions are not meant to be corrected or amended?
- \* 27. Why is it easier to resist temptation that comes from an enemy than from a friend?

### Apply It

- \* 28. In what situation should you pray for the courage to do what you know to be God’s will?
- 29. What young Christian could use your prayers that he or she would see through and resist subtle temptations?

## Ahijah's Prophecy against Jeroboam - 1 Kings 14:1-31

**Topics:** Age, Anger, Answers, Blessing, Blindness, Consequences, Death, Deceit, Evil, Family, Gifts, Goodness, Idolatry, Jealousy, Mourning, Prophecy, Punishment, Sickness, Sin, War, Wealth, Wives

### Open It

- \* 1. What sorts of circumstances will make even a “nonreligious” person pray to God?
- 2. What feelings does a parent experience when his or her child is very sick?
- 3. What drives us to put up a good front even when things are not going well?

### Explore It

- \* 4. What misfortune drove Jeroboam to consult with a prophet? (14:1-2)
- 5. What elaborate scheme did Jeroboam concoct for his wife to carry out? (14:2-4)
- 6. What was the physical condition of the prophet Ahijah? (14:4)
- \* 7. How did Ahijah know the identity of his visitor? (14:5)
- \* 8. When Jeroboam's wife arrived, what kind of news did Ahijah have for her? (14:6)
- 9. What was God's evaluation of Jeroboam's reign as communicated through the prophet? (14:7-9)
- 10. What did God decree concerning Jeroboam's descendants? (14:10-11)
- 11. What was to become of the son about whom Jeroboam had initially inquired? (14:12-13)
- 12. Whom was God going to use to “cut off” the family of Jeroboam? (14:14)
- 13. For what sins did God hold the people of Israel accountable? (14:15-16)
- 14. What happened when Jeroboam's wife returned home? (14:17-18)
- 15. What was the nationality of Rehoboam's mother (Solomon's wife)? (14:21)
- 16. What was the spiritual condition of Judah under Rehoboam? (14:22-24)
- 17. How did God use the king of Egypt to punish Judah? (14:25-26)
- 18. How did Rehoboam choose to carry on a pretense of wealth and power? (14:27-28)
- 19. What was the relationship between Jeroboam of Israel and Rehoboam of Judah? (14:30)
- 20. What was the name of the son that succeeded Rehoboam in Judah? (14:31)

### Get It

- \* 21. Why do you think Jeroboam tried to question the prophet anonymously?
- \* 22. Why do we try to “fool” God when we know it's not possible?
- 23. Against what yardstick was Jeroboam judged?
- 24. In what sense was the answer about the sick son the best news Ahijah had for Jeroboam's wife?
- 25. What is difficult about having a relative or friend die anonymously, without a funeral or mourners?
- 26. What is notable about Ahijah's prophecy against Jeroboam in contrast to the conditional promise when Ahijah first told him he would be king?
- 27. How were the sins of Jeroboam and Rehoboam similar although they were enemies?
- 28. How can we be assured that the blessings God gives us will continue?
- 29. What are some ways in which people try to look more wealthy or powerful than they really are?

### Apply It

- \* 30. What Christian friend could you ask to hold you accountable in an area where your obedience is challenged?
- 31. How can you avoid calling on God only when you are afraid or in great need?

## Abijah King of Judah - 1 Kings 15:1-24

**Topics:** Bargaining, Comparisons, Death, Devotion, Disobedience, Family, Gifts, Heart, History, Idolatry, Obedience, Righteousness, Sin, Strength, War, Wealth

### Open It

1. When you were young, when was a time you wished for someone older and stronger to come to your rescue?
- \* 2. Why do people do “spring cleaning”?
3. In what situations is distraction of your opponent a useful tactic?

### Explore It

4. How long did Rehoboam’s son reign when he succeeded his father? (15:1-2)
- \* 5. In what way was Abijah like his father? (15:3)
6. Why did God strengthen Jerusalem in spite of Abijah’s disobedience? (15:4)
7. What was the chief instance in which David failed to keep God’s commands? (15:5)
- \* 8. How long was Abijah’s son Asa in power in Jerusalem? (15:10)
- \* 9. What were some of the righteous actions taken by Asa? (15:11-14)
10. What was the relationship between Judah and Israel during the time of Asa? (15:16)
11. What did Israel’s fortification of the city of Ramah do to Judah? (15:17)
12. Where did Asa seek help for Judah’s predicament? (15:18)
13. How did the king of Aram help Asa, king of Judah? (15:20-21)
14. What did Asa do with the abandoned building materials at Ramah? (15:22)

### Get It

15. How did David’s commitment to God influence the history of Judah after him?
- \* 16. What was remarkable about Asa, given the character of his father?
17. How did Asa show that he did not exempt his own family from God’s standard of righteousness?
18. What seemed less than wise about Asa’s deal with Ben-Hadad?
19. Why do we often turn to human sources of help before we turn to God?
- \* 20. What area of your life could use a thorough spiritual “housecleaning”?

### Apply It

- \* 21. When can you take an hour or two for reflection on areas of your life that may need to change?
22. How can you work toward consulting God first whenever you face difficulties even before you assess your own options?

## **Kings of Israel - 1 Kings 15:25-16:34**

**Topics:** Accountability, Achievements, Anger, Comparisons, Death, Drinking, Evil, Family, History, Idolatry, Leadership, Murder, Plans, Prophecy, Punishment, Rebellion, Sin, Strength, Unfaithfulness, War

### **Open It**

- \* 1. Why should a judge be held accountable to the same standards he or she imposes on others?
- 2. What determines whether a rebel inside a government is more successful than the person he or she overthrows?

### **Explore It**

- 3. Who was the prophet that God sent to pronounce judgment on Baasha, king of Israel? (16:1)
- \* 4. What was Baasha's problem? (16:2-4)
- 5. Who was Baasha's successor? (16:6)
- \* 6. Of what deed was Baasha considered guilty although he had been God's tool to punish Jeroboam? (16:7)
- 7. Who led the revolt against Baasha's son Elah? (16:8-10)
- 8. How did Zimri treat Baasha's family once he became king? (16:11-12)
- \* 9. For what actions did God hold Baasha and his family accountable? (16:13)
- 10. How long did Zimri manage to hold on to power in Israel? (16:15)
- 11. To whom did the Israelites turn for leadership when Elah was dead? (16:16-17)
- 12. What became of the rebel Zimri? (16:18)
- 13. Which of the two factions was successful in replacing Zimri? (16:21-22)
- 14. What major project did Omri undertake as king? (16:23-24)
- 15. Who was the first king of Israel to rule from the city of Samaria? (16:24)
- 16. How did Omri compare to his predecessors? (16:25-26)
- 17. What is God's assessment of idols? (16:26)
- 18. How did Ahab compare to the kings of Israel before him? (16:30)
- 19. What new form of worship did Ahab add to Israel's idolatry? (16:31)

### **Get It**

- 20. Why would it be especially significant that Baasha's house was going to come to the same end as had Jeroboam's?
- 21. Why did several kings of Israel in a row die violent deaths?
- \* 22. Why might kings after Jeroboam have felt that the "sin of Jeroboam" would be a good practice to prolong?
- 23. What "idols" would some of today's world rulers prefer that we serve rather than the living God?
- 24. Why does God take it so seriously when a person leads others into sin?
- 25. When we break the commands of God, how can we know whether we have led anyone else into sin?
- \* 26. Who is likely to follow your example?

### **Apply It**

- 27. When you are involved in correcting a fellow Christian, how can you avoid falling into the same sin you are pointing out to him or her?
- \* 28. How can you remind yourself to set a good example for the people who may copy your actions?

## Elijah in Hiding - 1 Kings 17:1-24

**Topics:** Accusation, Believe, Death, Despair, Faith, Fear, God's Will, Guidance, Instructions, Obedience, Poor, Prayer, Priorities, Promises, Prophecy, Resurrection, Serving, Sickness, Swearing, Truth

### Open It

- \* 1. How do you go about assessing the truth of the news stories you read and hear every day?
- 2. What was one of the worst pieces of news you've ever had to convey to another person? the best news?

### Explore It

- 3. Where did the prophet Elijah come from? (17:1)
- 4. What was the prophecy that Elijah took to Ahab, king of Israel? (17:1)
- 5. After speaking with Ahab, why did God direct Elijah to hide? (17:2-3)
- 6. How were Elijah's needs met while he was alone in the desert? (17:5-6)
- 7. Where did God send Elijah after the brook dried up? (17:7-9)
- 8. What two requests did Elijah make of the widow at Zarephath? (17:10-11)
- 9. What did the widow consider inevitable for herself and her son during the drought in Israel? (17:12)
- \* 10. What step did Elijah ask the widow to take in faith? (17:13)
- 11. What promise did Elijah make if the widow would be obedient to God? (17:14)
- \* 12. What did the Lord do for Elijah, the widow, and her son? (17:15-16)
- 13. What did the woman of Zarephath assume when her son became ill and died? (17:17-18)
- 14. When Elijah took the son from his mother, what question did he have for God? (17:19-20)
- 15. How did Elijah go about petitioning God for the boy's life? (17:21-22)
- \* 16. How did the widow react when her son was returned to her alive? (17:23-24)

### Get It

- 17. How do you imagine Ahab felt about Elijah after Elijah pronounced judgment on him?
- 18. What would make you willing or unwilling to be the one to pronounce judgment on a really evil person?
- 19. What was unusual about the ways God chose to provide for Elijah during the drought?
- 20. What kind of faith is required for living with just enough for each day and no more?
- \* 21. How would the miracle of the flour and oil have appeared to the widow in retrospect if her son had died?
- 22. What indicates that Elijah did not expect the death of the widow's son?
- 23. Why did God raise the widow's son from the dead?
- 24. What is the importance of action to back up our words as believers?
- \* 25. In what way do you find it easy or difficult to obey God when you don't know what the outcome will be?
- 26. In what peculiar but sufficient ways is God meeting your needs today?

### Apply It

- \* 27. What step of faith do you need to take at this time in your life?
- 28. What evidence do the people around you need in order to believe that you are a child of God?

## Elijah and Ahab - 1 Kings 18:1-46

**Topics:** Ambassadors, Answers, Appearance, Arguments, Believers, Challenge, Choices, Confidence, Decisions, Disobedience, Faithfulness, Fear, Heart, Hiding, Holy Spirit, Honor, Idolatry, Instructions, Murder, People, Power, Promises, Prophecy, Punishment, Respect, Revenge, Running, Sacrifice, Silence, Suffering, Swearing, Testing, Waiting, Worship, Youth

### Open It

- \* 1. What is so exciting about a showdown between long-standing rivals?
- 2. What is good or bad about Christians' holding office in a secular government?

### Explore It

- 3. What did God tell Elijah to do after almost three years of drought? (18:1-2)
- 4. What was Obadiah's story? (18:3-4)
- 5. What were Ahab and Obadiah looking for as they traveled through the land? (18:5-6)
- 6. Whom did Obadiah meet in the course of his journey? (18:7)
- 7. What attitude did Obadiah have toward Elijah? (18:7)
- 8. Why was Obadiah dismayed by Elijah's orders? (18:8-12)
- 9. What did Obadiah assume about Elijah's ability to escape the king? (18:12)
- 10. Why did Obadiah feel he didn't deserve to die at the hands of an angry Ahab? (18:12-14)
- 11. What promise did Elijah make to allay Obadiah's fears? (18:15)
- 12. Whom did Elijah hold accountable for Israel's troubles? (18:18)
- 13. What groups did Elijah want to assemble? (18:19-20)
- \* 14. How did the people respond when Elijah confronted them with their double-mindedness? (18:21)
- \* 15. How did the people respond to the confrontation Elijah proposed between Baal and God? (18:22-24)
- 16. How did Elijah taunt the prophets of Baal when their god did not ignite the sacrifice? (18:27-29)
- 17. What preparations did Elijah make in the sight of the people before he prayed to God? (18:30-35)
- 18. How did Elijah address God in prayer? (18:36-37)
- \* 19. What happened to the altar of the Lord when Elijah prayed? (18:38)
- 20. How did the people react when they saw fire burn up Elijah's offering? (18:39)
- 21. What vengeance did Elijah exact against the prophets of Baal? (18:40)
- 22. What prediction did Elijah make to Ahab concerning the drought? (18:41)
- 23. In what attitude did Elijah wait for the Lord's answer? (18:42-44)
- 24. What happened when the power of the Lord came upon Elijah? (18:46)

### Get It

- 25. What did Obadiah's closeness to Ahab enable him to do for the people of God?
- 26. What might the faithful of that day have believed about why the king had been unable to capture Elijah for three years?
- 27. Why do you think stories abound with clear showdowns between good and evil?
- 28. Why does sarcasm cut to the core of our self-respect?
- 29. What measures did Elijah take to make the lighting of his sacrifice much harder than the sacrifice to Baal?
- \* 30. What did Elijah perceive that God was doing in Israel through this showdown?
- 31. Despite the drama of the fire's consuming the sacrifice, why did Elijah not assume that God would come through with the promised rain?
- \* 32. To what extent is God obligated to answer our prayers to vindicate His own name?

### Apply It

- \* 33. How can we be confident of the power of God yet humble about our ability to dictate anything to Him?
- 34. What “god” might the Lord use you to unmask before a friend or acquaintance?

## Elijah Flees to Horeb - 1 Kings 19:1-21

**Topics:** Alone, Angels, Circumstances, Covenant, Death, Despair, Faithfulness, Fear, Gentleness, Instructions, Life, Power, Prayer, Rejection, Running, Sacrifice, Serving, Sleep, Swearing, Waiting, Weaknesses, Zeal

### Open It

- \* 1. What was one of the loneliest moments you can remember?
- 2. Why do you suppose natural disasters have been called “acts of God”?

### Explore It

- 3. Why was Queen Jezebel determined to kill Elijah the prophet? (19:1-2)
- \* 4. What did Elijah pray when he had fled to a lonely place? (19:3-5)
- 5. How did God miraculously care for Elijah in the desert? (19:6-9)
- 6. What did God say to Elijah when the prophet had taken refuge in a cave? (19:9)
- \* 7. How did Elijah express his despair about his circumstances? (19:10)
- 8. What did God command Elijah to do? (19:11)
- 9. What disturbances of nature did Elijah witness from inside the cave? (19:11-13)
- 10. In which of the manifestations that Elijah saw was God present? (19:11-13)
- 11. What question did God repeat in the “gentle whisper”? (19:13)
- 12. What was Elijah’s reply after seeing the demonstrations of God’s power? (19:14)
- \* 13. What “marching orders” did Elijah receive from God? (19:15-17)
- 14. How many faithful worshipers did God report to be in Israel? (19:18)
- 15. Where was Elisha when Elijah found him? (19:19)
- 16. What symbolic action did Elijah perform when he found Elisha? (19:19)
- 17. What did Elisha call his family together to do before he left to follow Elijah? (19:20-21)

### Get It

- \* 18. To what extent do you think Elijah was justified in being discouraged by his circumstances?
- 19. Why did God reveal Himself to Elijah when the prophet was discouraged?
- 20. What strikes you as unusual about God’s question to Elijah in the cave?
- \* 21. In what settings have you felt that you were the only believer?
- 22. Of all of the manifestations of God’s power, which might have Elijah wished God would show to his enemies?
- 23. What important lesson did Elijah learn about how God chooses to speak to people?
- 24. How was Elijah to be involved in the punishment of God’s enemies?
- 25. How did Elisha make a dramatic break with his past before he followed Elijah?
- 26. What would be difficult about making a sudden break with your present life-style if God were to ask you to do it?

### Apply It

- \* 27. In what discouraging circumstances can you remind yourself that God is in control?
- 28. What habit could you cultivate to make you more ready to respond to God’s call at a moment’s notice?



## The Defeat of Ben-Hadad - 1 Kings 20:1-43

**Topics:** Advice, Anger, Answers, Bargaining, Children, Compromise, Consequences, Death, Delegation, Disobedience, Drinking, Escape, Freedom, God's Will, Judgment, Leadership, Partnerships, Peace, Preparation, Prophecy, Running, Strength, Submission, Swearing, War, Wealth, Wives, Youth

### Open It

1. When have you had to draw the line in terms of “knuckling under” to another person?
- \* 2. Why do we often prefer to be generous as opposed to exacting justice?
3. What unreasonable demands have been placed on you from time to time?

### Explore It

4. What was Ahab's predicament when Ben-Hadad besieged Samaria? (20:1-3)
5. After Ahab had agreed to be subservient to the king of Aram, what more was demanded of him? (20:4-6)
6. How did the elders of Israel advise Ahab to respond to the latest demand from Aram? (20:7-9)
7. What did Ben-Hadad swear to do to Ahab and Israel? (20:10)
8. Why did Ahab say, “One who puts on his armor should not boast like one who takes it off”? (20:11)
9. What did one of God's prophets tell Ahab about the outcome of the ensuing battle? (20:13)
10. How did Ahab develop the specific battle plan? (20:14-17)
11. What did Ben-Hadad assume about his ability to subdue Israel? (20:18)
12. What was the result of the battle between the young officers and the Aramean army? (20:19-21)
13. What warning did Ahab receive from the prophet after his victory? (20:22)
14. What false conclusion did the Arameans draw from their defeat in the first encounter? (20:23-27)
- \* 15. Why did God determine that He would cause the small army of Israel to defeat the large army of Arameans on the plains? (20:28)
16. What was the extent of the disaster that came upon the Arameans? (20:29-30)
- \* 17. What plan did Ben-Hadad's official come up with to save his life? (20:31-32)
- \* 18. What did Ahab do when he had Ben-Hadad at his mercy? (20:33-34)
19. What dramatic action did the prophet take in order to have an illustration when he confronted Ahab? (20:35-38)
20. What “parable” did the prophet tell to get Ahab to condemn himself? (20:39-40)
21. What sentence did the prophet pronounce on Ahab for not killing Ben-Hadad? (20:42)

### Get It

22. When God comes to the assistance of a nation, what can we reasonably conclude and not conclude about its leadership?
23. What sorts of things are human beings willing to die for rather than give up?
24. Why aren't numbers and weapons the only determinants of the outcome of a battle?
25. What does it tell us about Ahab's character that he would follow God's instructions only when it suited him?
26. When is it inconvenient for us to obey God?
27. Who is responsible for defending God's name when it is maligned?
- \* 28. What might have motivated Ahab to spare the rival king when he was at Ahab's mercy?
29. When is mercy not a good thing to grant?
30. Ultimately, how do we know that God is not a “live and let live” kind of God?
31. Why is it easier for us to see a failing in someone else than in ourselves?
- \* 32. In what areas do you find yourself tempted to compromise with the forces of evil?

## **Apply It**

33. What can you do to motivate yourself to obey God this week even when it's inconvenient?
- \* 34. In what situation do you need to avoid being unduly merciful or kind to someone in order to stop bad or evil acts?

## Naboth's Vineyard - 1 Kings 21:1-29

**Topics:** Accusation, Anger, Consequences, Death, Deceit, Enemies, Evil, Family, Fasting, Greed, Humility, Idolatry, Instructions, Judgment, Lying, Murder, Obedience, Power, Punishment, Questions, Repentance, Selfishness, Sin

### Open It

- \* 1. How do most people feel about a bully who takes what he or she wants by force?
- 2. How reasonable do you think it is to expect a notorious villain to “turn over a new leaf” after being caught?

### Explore It

- \* 3. What did Ahab want from Naboth the Jezreelite? (21:1-2)
- 4. On what grounds did Naboth refuse to sell his vineyard? (21:3)
- \* 5. What was Ahab's mood when he didn't get what he wanted? (21:3-4)
- 6. What did Ahab's wife Jezebel do to end his unkingly sulking? (21:5-10)
- 7. What conspiracy took place in Naboth's city in response to Jezebel's letters? (21:11-14)
- 8. What news did Jezebel take back to Ahab? (21:15-16)
- 9. What did God command Elijah to do? (21:17-19)
- 10. How did Ahab greet Elijah when they met? (21:20)
- \* 11. What was the judgment Elijah pronounced on Ahab and his house? (21:20-24)
- 12. What additional information did the author of the story give us about Ahab? (21:25-26)
- 13. How did Ahab react to Elijah's words? (21:27)
- 14. What was God's response to Ahab's penitence? (21:28-29)

### Get It

- \* 15. To what extent should rulers, bosses, or leaders be able to do whatever they want within the boundaries of their authority?
- \* 16. In what ways do we need to restrain and discipline our desires even if they are, on the surface, “good”?
- 17. In what way was Ahab responsible for what Jezebel did without his knowledge but in his name?
- 18. How many people were involved in the wicked scheme that killed the innocent Naboth?
- 19. Why is it impossible for an evil ruler not to taint those he or she rules?
- 20. Why did Ahab consider Elijah his enemy?
- 21. What were some of the measures of Ahab's wickedness?
- 22. Why does God sometimes hold back His hand of judgment when a truly evil person shows repentance?

### Apply It

- \* 23. How can you turn an unfulfilled desire into an occasion for humility before God rather than a cause of bitterness?
- 24. How can you learn from other Christians?

## Micaiah Prophecies against Ahab - 1 Kings 22:1-53

**Topics:** Achievements, Children, Death, Deceit, Dishonesty, Evil, Faithfulness, Families, Giving Up, God's Will, Guidance, Hatred, History, Humiliation, Idolatry, Instructions, Insults, Integrity, Lying, Partnerships, Peace, Prophecy, Questions, Righteousness, Sacrifice, Success, Swearing, Truth, Unity, Victory, War

### Open It

1. When have you been asked for an opinion and you knew what answer the questioner wanted to hear?
- \* 2. Why do we sometimes insist on following through on our plans even when we've received good advice against it?

### Explore It

3. How had affairs changed between the rival kingdoms of Israel and Judah? (22:1-3)
4. What was bothering the king of Israel? (22:3)
5. What favor did the king of Israel ask of the king of Judah? (22:4)
- \* 6. What one condition did Jehoshaphat impose before he went into battle with Ahab? (22:4-5)
7. What was the unanimous counsel of the four hundred prophets? (22:6)
- \* 8. What did Jehoshaphat find lacking in the advice of the prophets? (22:7)
- \* 9. What did Ahab tell Jehoshaphat about the one remaining prophet of the Lord? (22:8)
10. Where were the two kings when Micaiah was summoned before them? (22:10-12)
11. How did the messenger who summoned Micaiah advise him to counsel the kings? (22:13)
12. What one criterion did Micaiah use to determine what he would say? (22:14)
13. What was the first answer that Micaiah gave to Ahab? (22:15)
14. How did Micaiah's message change when the king insisted he wanted the truth? (22:16-17)
15. What story did Micaiah tell about a consultation in heaven? (22:19-23)
16. What did Ahab decide to do with Micaiah while he went to war? (22:26-27)
17. How did the two kings dress when they went into battle against Ramoth Gilead? (22:29-30)
18. Why did Jehoshaphat narrowly miss being killed in battle? (22:31-33)
19. How was Ahab wounded in spite of the fact that he had concealed his identity? (22:34)
20. How did the armies of Israel and Judah react when they heard of Ahab's death? (22:36)
21. Although Ahab was given a king's burial, how was the prophecy against him fulfilled anyway? (22:37-38)
22. What kind of king was Jehoshaphat? (22:41-44)
23. What were some of Jehoshaphat's accomplishments and failures? (22:43-50)
24. How was Ahaziah like his father Ahab? (22:51-53)

### Get It

25. What are the indications that Jehoshaphat respected God?
26. What might have been the tone of Micaiah's voice when he first gave the answer he knew Ahab wanted to hear?
- \* 27. Why would someone totally ignore God's revealed will and do what he or she wants anyway?
28. How had Ahab's advisors changed the definition of "prophet" from what Micaiah understood it to be?
- \* 29. How can we conduct our lives in such a way that we are not expecting God to "rubber stamp" all of our goals and desires?
30. What can we learn from the fact that even Ahab knew that Micaiah alone was a prophet of the living God?
31. What purpose is there in a believer taking a stand for the truth even when he or she is ignored?
32. How did Ahab take advantage of Jehoshaphat's desire for peace and cooperation?

33. What are the pros and cons of trusting someone who has demonstrated scorn for God's wisdom?
34. When, if ever, do you think Ahab realized that his prophets had been lying?
35. As far as we know from this account, what became of the prophet Micaiah?

### **Apply It**

36. How can you pray so that you will be ready to represent God's Word even when it is unpopular with those around you?
37. Before you act on a significant decision you now face, how should you pray?
- \* 38. What can you do to be receptive the next time someone wisely advises you to not do something that you really want to do?