



LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

I KINGS



July 12

October 18

AN EXPOSITIONAL STUDY THROUGH 1 KINGS

July 12 - October 18

© 2026 City Church
Beijing, China
All rights reserved.
Written by TJ Johnson

Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible,
English Standard Version®), © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry
of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.



LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

The Promise That Cannot Fail

I KINGS 1



July 12

Sermon Series

July 12, 2026	1 Kings 1	The Promise That Cannot Fail
July 19, 2026	1 Kings 2	Peace through Judgment
July 26 2026	1 Kings 3-4, 10	Wisdom to Serve
August 2, 2026	1 Kings 5-8	God's House
August 9, 2026	1 Kings 9, 11	Forbidden Love
August 16, 2026	1 Kings 12; 14:21-31	Rehoboam's Sin and God's Sovereignty
August 23, 2026	1 Kings 11:29-39;12:25-33; 13:1-6, 33-34- 14; 14:1-20	Jeroboam: Worship as a means to me
August 30, 2026	1 Kings 13	Dangers of False Prophets
September 6, 2026	1 Kings 15-16; 22:51-53	Generational Sin
September 13, 2026	1 Kings 15:9-24	Asa: Reforming Culture to the Glory of God
September 20, 2026	1 Kings 17-18	Elijah: Courage to Confront
September 27, 2026	1 Kings 19	Elijah: When Man is Weak God is Strong
October 4, 2026	1 Kings 20	Ahab: When Empathy Becomes an Enemy
October 11, 2026	1 Kings 21-22	Ahab: God's Mercy to the Chief of Sinners
October 18, 2026	1 Kings 22	Jehoshaphat: Making Deals with the Devil

Series Overview

As we begin a fifteen-week series through the book of 1 Kings, I hope you take time to read through the entire book to get a basic understanding of what's taking place within it. As you do, below are a few details to help you.

In 586 BC, the Babylonian army breached the outer walls of Jerusalem, pillaged the city, destroyed the Temple, murdered its citizens, and carried the survivors away to Babylon, where they would spend the next seventy years. The book of Kings was written during that exile, likely sometime in the mid-6th century BC. Many think Jeremiah—or a prophetic circle influenced by him—under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, collected the roughly 400-year history of the kings from David to Zedekiah as a means of explaining why the exile happened.

The events contained in 1 King take place nearly 500 years after the exodus from Egypt. Israel has conquered and settled in the land of promise; judges have repeatedly led a wayward nation back to God; and prophets and priests have mediated God to the people through the tabernacle, holy days, Sabbaths, and the Word of God. It was a God-given system meant to keep the people faithful to their covenant Lord. And yet, near the end of the Prophet Samuel's life, the people grow tired of this system and, in their desire to be like the other nations, they ask for a king. God warns Israel that a king would do more harm than good (1 Samuel 8), yet they reject God's counsel and demand their king anyway.

The first king was Saul—a tall, handsome man whom the people quickly embraced. After Saul foolishly offered a sacrifice in place of Samuel, disobeyed God's command to utterly destroy the Amalekites, and consulted a medium at Endor, God rejected him as king. In his place, God chose a lowly shepherd boy named David, the youngest son of Jesse—a man after God's own heart. David ruled over Israel for 40 years—7½ years over Judah in Hebron, and 33 years over all Israel from Jerusalem. During that time, he unified the nation, subdued their enemies, brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, and longed to build a house for the Lord.

1 Kings begins at the end of David's life, right as he passes the kingdom to his son, Solomon. And follows the succession of kings (northern and southern) up until the destruction of Jerusalem. What we will find in this book is the split and ultimate downfall of a nation. The kings were meant to rule according to God's laws, but they too often

Series Overview

failed to rule in righteousness. The hearts of the people turned away from God. As they forsook covenant, God brought upon them the covenant curses warned of in Deuteronomy.

While the book is arranged around the kings, in many ways it is a story about the prophets as well. In fact, in the Jewish Bible, it is listed among the Former Prophets. Kings is prophetic in that it centers attention on the words and works of God's prophets as they interact with the kings. For example, Nathan is faithful to remind David of Solomon's rightful role as future king. Ahijah informs Jeroboam that he is chosen to lead ten tribes. Micaiah prophesies Ahab's death. Isaiah is prophet during Hezekiah's reign. Huldah consults Josiah. There is the school of the prophets. And large swaths of the book cover Elijah and Elisha's interactions with various kings. Throughout Kings, we will find true and false prophets. How a king responds to a true prophet's words determines the rise or fall of his rule.

2 Kings ends in exile—the Temple destroyed, the kingship seemingly snuffed out. This is meant to be read in light of the everlasting covenant God made with David, promising that his throne would endure forever. As Kings comes to a close, the readers are left wondering how God will keep His promise when, by earthly standards, it seems as if David's line is dead. In many ways, it is a book anticipating a resurrection of sorts. The promise will ultimately be fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Son of David—crucified, dead, buried, and risen from the dead. As we read this book, it is meant to create a longing in our hearts for another King...the true Son of David, of whose Kingdom there will be no end.

Ps TJ Johnson

1 KINGS
Overview



 **1 & 2 KINGS: OVERVIEW**

 One Book 400+ years of history	 Purpose: To explain how Israel ended up in exile, calling God's people back to covenant faithfulness.	 THREE LEVELS OF INTERPRETATION:	 BIG IDEA:
 c. 970–560 BC Events Covered		 Israel's Story → The Church's Story	God keeps His promises, even when it seems impossible!
 Written c. 560–540 BC (Exile)		 An Individual's Story → Your Story	
 Author Likely Jeremiah		 God's Story → Jesus' Story	
 Genre Nevi'im (Former Prophets)			So trust His promises and faithfully walk in them.



Blessed Be The LORD

Sermon Outline

Title: The Promise That Cannot Fail

Text: 1 Kings 1

Proposition: God keeps His promises, even when it seems impossible! So trust His promises and faithfully walk in them.

- 1. The Promise (1 Kings 1:13, 17, 30).**
- 2. The Problem (1 Kings 1:1-4; 6-10).**
- 3. The People (1 Kings 1:7, 9).**
- 4. The Promise Fulfilled (1 Kings 1:44-48).**

Sermon Notes

Sermon Applications



Discussion Questions

1. Davidic Covenant & Jesus: As a group, trace the storyline of Jesus being the ultimate fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant and share what it means to you personally that “Jesus is King”.

The Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7) promised David an everlasting kingdom through his descendants, ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Jesus reigns as the eternal King, giving believers hope, salvation, and security. Personally, to know Jesus is King means we trust His sovereign rule and faithfully follow Him.

2. Old Age & Human Hope: As David, in his old age, experienced the limitations of the human body, in what ways have you experienced aging (yourself or others), and how does the gospel help you with these experiences?

Aging is inevitable, and no one can stop it. We have seen how age brings physical weakness and limitations. The gospel gives hope because Jesus promises eternal life and resurrection. At His return, believers will receive glorified bodies that will never suffer from aging, sickness, or death.

3. Parenting: Why do you think David never disciplined Adonijah? What are some unhealthy parenting practices you have observed today? How are you being intentional in training up the next generation?

Scripture does not explain why David failed to discipline Adonijah, though he may have been overly indulgent. Today, some parents avoid correction or set few boundaries. Believers should intentionally teach and model God's truth, whether as parents, mentors, or church members, helping the next generation follow the Lord.

4. Succession Planning: David had no plan for who would lead after him, and it nearly cost the kingdom. How can you intentionally prepare others to carry on your work—in your family, ministry, or workplace—when you are gone?

One way to prepare others is to work myself out of a job by intentionally mentoring future leaders. Through coaching, delegating responsibility, and encouraging those we train, we can help ensure that our family, ministry, or workplace continues to thrive after we are gone.



Discussion Questions

5. Outward Appearances: Adonijah was handsome and the obvious choice, but God chose Solomon. Where are you tempted to judge by outward appearance—in choosing leaders, friends, or even a spouse—rather than seeking God's heart?

People naturally judge by outward appearance, whether choosing leaders, friends, or a spouse. Yet God looks at the heart rather than external qualities (1 Samuel 16:7). We should seek God's wisdom and value godly character above appearance, recognizing that true leadership begins with a faithful heart.

6. Pride vs. Submission: Adonijah exalted himself and said, "I will be king." In what area of your life are you tempted to promote yourself rather than humbly accept God's will—even when His plan is not what you expected?

Note for leaders: invite participants to prayerfully examine areas where they may seek control, recognition, or success apart from God's timing and direction. Encourage honesty, but remind the group that this is not a time for judgment. Ask them to consider: "Where do I need to surrender my desires and trust God's plan more fully?"

7. Wise Counsel: Adonijah surrounded himself with people who told him what he wanted to hear. In what ways do we surround ourselves with one-sided council today? Who speaks honest, biblical truth into your life—even when it is difficult to hear?

It is easy to surround ourselves with people who think like us and agree with our opinions. However, this can create blind spots and make us reject correction. Godly people who speak biblical truth, even when difficult to hear, are more valuable than those who only tell us what we want.

8. Faith That Motivates Action: God chose to work through Nathan and Bathsheba in order to fulfill His promise regarding Solomon. What are some areas of your life where God is calling you to actively participate in fulfilling His promises?

Note to leaders. Remind your members that God fulfills His promises while graciously allowing His people to participate in His work. Encourage them to identify where God invites them to respond in faith through obedience, prayer, service, and action.



Blessed Be The LORD

9. God's Mercy: Solomon showed mercy to Adonijah when he fled to the altar. How has God shown you mercy when you were on the wrong side of His will, and how should that past mercy shape your present life?

Sometimes we do not recognize when we are going against God's will. Yet God patiently shows mercy and gives us opportunities to repent. His grace should lead us to humility, gratitude, and a desire to obey Him more faithfully, extending the same mercy to others that we have received.

10. Trusting When It Seems Impossible: In what ways did it seem like God's promises wouldn't come to pass in 1 Kings 1? Share a time in your life when you doubted God's promises and what helped you remain faithful in your doubt.

In 1 Kings 1, God's promise about Solomon becoming king seemed threatened when Adonijah tried to take the throne. In life, circumstances may make God's promises seem impossible, but God remains faithful. Remembering His past faithfulness helps us trust Him and remain obedient even during seasons of doubt.



Blessed Be The LORD

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports



STUDY GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

A Kingdom Firmly Established

1 KINGS 2



July 19

Sermon Overview

Church Family,

We know and proclaim that Jesus is King. Our perfect savior is on the throne and ruling and reigning as he sees fit for his sheep. Yet, like Israel in the time of the Kings, we still live under the rule of imperfect and flawed rulers and governments. In the language of St. Augustine, we still dwell in a world of 2 Cities: The City of Man and The City of God.

In the biblical era of the Israelite Kings, what was the magistrate required to do in order to prosper? This coming Lord's Day we will continue our series in 1 Kings and explore King David's last recorded charge to his son, Solomon. We will also examine the steps David's son took to ensure the kingdom was firmly established and how his earthy kingdom pointed to that of the Greater Son, King Jesus.

Brothers and sisters, we are called as a visible covenant community to publicly worship the one, true and living God. On behalf of the Elders of City Church, I hope you will join us this coming Lord's Day.

Sincerely,
Elder Grant Jones



Keep The Charge Of The Lord

Sermon Outline

Title: A Kingdom Firmly Established

Text: 1 Kings 2

Proposition: God is always faithful to the promises in his Word. His Kingdom is firmly established under the Lordship of Jesus and it will not be moved.

1. David's Instructions to His Son (v. 1 - 12)

2. Solomon's Response (v. 13 - 46)

a. Punishment for Wickedness (v. 13 - 25)

b. Mercy for Humility (v. 26 - 27)

c. Blood for Peace (v. 28 - 35)

d. Curses for Blessing (v. 36 - 46)

Sermon Notes

Sermon Applications



Keep The Charge Of The Lord

Discussion Questions

1. What it means to be a man can mean different things in different countries, cultures, and times (if you have time, feel free to discuss those stereotypes). David exercised a duty as a father to call his son (and future king) to prove himself a man. What was David's principal charge? Read 1 Kings 2:3. Note that David still presents this call to Solomon even though David himself was imperfect. **Do David's words to Solomon have any implications for parents' chief desire for their children? And further, how have you neglected and/or sought to practice this as parents? Children and Youth: Are there times when you wanted to go your own way, even though your parents were trying to call you to be faithful to God's commands?**

David's greatest charge was for Solomon to walk faithfully in God's ways (1 Kings 2:3). As a small group leader, encourage parents to consider whether their strongest desire is their children's faithfulness to Christ. Invite children and youth to reflect on trusting God's commands, even when they conflict with their own desires.

2. Antinomian is a word not commonly used in our day-to-day speech. Nevertheless, it's a term that describes a belief that once a person is a professing Christian, they are no longer under any obligation to obey the moral law of God. I hope most of us would disagree. However, in our lives, we can go through seasons reducing our obligation to God's law or, even worse, justifying active disobedience by thoughts of "Well, ultimately Jesus will forgive me, so my current disobedience is just fine". This mindset has the spirit of the antinomian position. **Do David's words to Solomon in 1 Kings 2:3 have any implications for the antinomian position? Discuss a season in your life where you justified a sin and ran away from calls of repentance (or were tempted to do so)?**

David's charge shows that God's people are called to ongoing obedience, not lawlessness (1 Kings 2:3). Encourage honest reflection without condemnation. Help the group distinguish between struggling with sin and justifying it. Emphasize that God's grace leads to repentance and faithful obedience, not an excuse for continued sin.



Keep The Charge Of The Lord

Discussion Questions

3. In 1 Kings 2:13-46, Solomon, as the magistrate, was executing his authority of the sword to punish crimes with a penalty of death. Many countries today have abolished the death penalty, and still many more individuals believe it should be abolished. **Do you ever wonder how to navigate the anti-death penalty opinion with God's righteous Law requiring the death penalty for more than a few crimes? Discuss (humbly) your views on the death penalty. OT civil law was specifically for the ethnically national Israel and was not binding on other nations. However, does the general principle (Example: Gen. 9:6) support civil magistrates today in outlining crimes requiring the death penalty?**

**Scan the QR code to read the article with 1 simple example and summary of a pro-death penalty view*



Encourage a humble, Scripture-centered discussion, recognizing that faithful Christians hold different views on capital punishment. Distinguish Israel's civil laws from principles that may apply today. Focus on God's justice, the value of human life, and the government's God-given responsibility to uphold justice (Gen. 9:6; Rom. 13:1–4).

4. From our perspective, we often can feel urgency to see crimes punished, and in many ways this is right and proper. However, as sinners, we may also be tempted to think delayed punishment justifies our current rebellion. Think of Joab; he is punished for former sins by Solomon, but his characterizing sin was unrighteous bloodshed that occurred under David's reign. Our God is not bound by time and yet is always perfectly just. From our vantage point, justice may seem delayed, but true justice always occurs consistently with the will of God. **Discuss any struggles you have had with a perceived delay in God's justice. From a human perspective, what are the dangers of delaying punishment (to varying degrees) and, conversely, of being too hasty to hand down punishment? (Examples: Parenting, Workplace, Civil Crimes, and Church).**

Encourage participants to reflect honestly on times they questioned God's timing. Discuss the wisdom of balancing patience with timely justice in parenting, church, and society. Remind the group that God's justice is never forgotten or delayed beyond His perfect wisdom, even when it seems slow from our perspective.



Keep The Charge Of The Lord

Discussion Questions

5. Elders are not the civil magistrates. However, the rule of ethnic/national Israel in the Book of Kings has general implications for leadership in many spheres of life that have authority structures. As we have recently studied at City Church, local congregations should be ruled by Elders. To be clear, the passage in 1 Kings 2 is NOT commanding Elders in the local Church to bear the sword. Elders are shepherds. One of the duties shepherds are charged with is church discipline. **Do Solomon's actions towards the sins of Adonijah, Abiathar, Joab, and Shimei have any implications on how Elders handle sin within the visible church they have been charged to oversee? Think about Solomon's specific words towards each of those 4 men. Can you see mercy, wisdom, patience, justice, and/or punishment in Solomon's dealings with any or all of the 4 cases mentioned?**

Encourage the group to compare Solomon's responses to each individual, noting both justice and mercy. Discuss how elders should exercise wisdom, patience, restoration, and, when necessary, church discipline. Emphasize that the goal of biblical discipline is God's glory, the church's purity, and the sinner's repentance.

6. Discuss ways you were convicted or challenged by the text, sermon, or small group questions. What are some things you should change, or that you should be encouraged to continue doing, moving forward in the coming weeks?

Encourage everyone to identify one specific conviction and one practical step of obedience. Keep the discussion application-focused rather than theoretical. Give participants time to share how they can pray for and encourage one another to faithfully apply God's Word in the coming week.



Keep The Charge Of The Lord

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports