



STUDY 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.



STUDY 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 & 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)			



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”.
- 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?
- 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?
- 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?
- 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?
- 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?
- 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?
- 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?



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?

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.



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?**

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)?**

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*





Keep The Charge Of The Lord

Discussion Questions

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).**

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?**

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?



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



STUDY GUIDE



An Expositional Study Through

Wisdom to Serve

I KINGS 3-4, 10



July 26

Sermon Overview

Wisdom is a key theme in the Bible. Wisdom was the object of Satan's temptation of Adam and Eve. Wisdom was the thing that placed Joseph second in command of all Egypt. Wisdom was the criteria for appointing leaders to assist Moses with caring for Israel. Wisdom is sought after in Proverbs. Wisdom is sung about in the Psalms. Wisdom (wise men) sought out the Messiah. I could go on, but I hope you get the point...wisdom is quite important for the Christian. This week we will study Solomon's encounter with wisdom and hopefully learn how to live wisely so that God is honored and others are blessed.

Seeking Wisdom with You,

Elder TJ Johnson



Wise And Discerning Mind

Sermon Outline

Title: Wisdom to Serve

Text: 1 Kings 3-4; 10

Proposition: Ask for God's grace to grant you wisdom in your life for the good of man and the glory of God.

- 1. Wisdom is Wrought by Grace (1 Kings 3:1-5).**
- 2. Wisdom is Infinite in Worth (1 Kings 3:5-14).**
- 3. Wisdom is Substantiated through Action (1 Kings 3:16-28).**
- 4. Wisdom is Edifying to Many (1 Kings 3:28; 10:1, 24).**

Sermon Notes

Sermon Applications



Wise And Discerning Mind

Discussion Questions

1. Define Biblical wisdom and share examples of wisdom in action.
2. Read Proverbs 3:14–15. What makes wisdom so valuable and desirable? Are there things you pursue more eagerly than wisdom—things that may be lesser in importance? Explain.
3. How does one gain wisdom?
4. Where do you need wisdom most right now, and what would applying it actually look like in that situation?
5. How have you benefited from the wisdom of others? Is there someone in your life right now who could benefit from the wisdom God has given you?
6. Read 1 Corinthians 1:24, 30. How does knowing that Jesus Himself is the wisdom of God change the way you understand, pursue, and apply wisdom?



Wise And Discerning Mind

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

God's House

I KINGS 5-8



August 2

Sermon Overview

One of the most fascinating studies in biblical theology is the Temple. It begins in Eden—the first Temple, with Adam serving as its priest—and culminates in the new heaven and earth, where Jesus Himself is the Temple. In other words, the Old Testament Temple was a shadow pointing to something greater. That substance is Jesus Christ. This is why Jesus says in Matthew 12:6, “Something greater than the temple is here.”

This Sunday, as we explore Solomon’s Temple, I hope to unearth a few hidden treasures from Scripture as they relate to Jesus—and then leave you with the challenge to keep digging and discover even more. Please take time to read 1 Kings 5–8. Begin by asking what this text meant to its original hearers—those in exile after the Temple’s destruction, many of whom had never even seen it. Only then should you read it in light of the New Testament’s revelation of the Temple’s true meaning: that Christ and His Church are now the Temple.

In Him,

Elder TJ Johnson



Sermon Outline

Title: God's House

Text: 1 Kings 5-8

Proposition: Solomon's Temple was a shadow pointing to the true temple—Christ and His Church. Therefore, let us enter boldly into the Father's presence, through the perfect work of the Son, and by the enabling power of the Spirit, worshiping in holy reverence the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Rest (1 Kings 5:3-4) | 6. Furniture (1 Kings 7:48-50) |
| 2. Effort (1 Kings 5:13-18; 6:38) | 7. Obedience (1 Kings 6:11-13) |
| 3. Dwelling (1 Kings 6:11-13; 8:13) | 8. Sacrifice (1 Kings 8:46) |
| 4. Beauty (1 Kings 6:15-32) | 9. Prayer (1 Kings 8:28-30) |
| 5. Guards God's Divine Presence (1 Kings 6:23-28) | 10. Glory (1 Kings 8:10) |

Sermon Notes

Sermon Applications



Discussion Questions

1. In what ways does 1 Kings 5-8 foreshadow Jesus as the true Temple?
2. Which of these is the most meaningful to you and why?
3. In what ways does 1 Kings 5-8 foreshadow the church as the true Temple?
4. Which of these is the most meaningful to you and why?
5. Read Revelation 21:22-27. What is this future vision meant to do in our lives today?
6. How has reading and studying 1 Kings 5-8 made your love for Jesus grow?
7. What questions do you have from 1 Kings 5-8 or the sermon?



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

Forbidden Love

I KINGS 9, 11



August 9

Sermon Overview

Dear City Church Family,

Many of us know the story of Solomon - his wisdom, his wealth, and the glory of the Lord coming at his dedication of the temple. But do we know the end of his story? 1 Kings tells us clearly that Solomon did not end well - he turned away from the Lord and began to worship other gods.

How could this happen to someone so wise and who had such powerful experiences with the Lord? This week we will look at Solomon's drift away from the Lord, his downfall, and the discipline that the Lord gave as a result. This story is a tragic reminder of the necessity to cling to the Lord above all else.

Clinging to Christ with you,

Elder Ben Whitmore



Keeping My Statutes And My Rules

Sermon Outline

Title: Forbidden Love

Text: 1 Kings 9, 11

Proposition: Solomon's downfall gives us a sobering warning of the potential we all have to drift away from the Lord, and challenges us to cling to Him more than wealth, power, and relationships.

1. Solomon's Drift

- a. Misaligned Desire (9:1, 9:11, 9:19)**
- b. Mismanaged Stewardship (9:10 - 14)**
- c. Mistaking Ritual For Obedience (9:25; 10:28; 9:14; 9:28; 11:3)**

2. Solomon's Downfall

- a. The importance of being equally yoked**
- b. The importance of stewarding our sexual desires**

3. Solomon's Discipline

- a. The Lord raised up adversaries**
 - i. Hadad from the South (11:14 - 22)**
 - ii. Rezon from the North (11:23 - 25)**
 - iii. Jeroboam from within (11:26 - 39)**
- b. Solomon's resistance to the Lord's discipline (11:40)**

Sermon Applications



Keeping My Statutes And My Rules

Discussion Questions

1. In the sermon, we saw three signs of drift in Solomon:

- Misaligned desire: his ambitions and plans were more self-oriented than God-oriented.
- Mismanaged stewardship: he treated what belonged to God as if it belonged to him.
- Mistaking ritual for obedience: he continued worshipping the Lord while not living in full obedience to His word.

Which of these three do you think is the greatest danger for you?

2. Why does the Bible forbid a believer from marrying a non-believer (2 Corinthians 6:14 - 18), and how might Solomon's story help us understand the danger?

3. Many people struggle to find a suitable spouse in the church, and they feel pressure to compromise and date non-believers. How can we as a church love and encourage our members who feel that pressure?

4. We know that David also sinned grievously against the Lord (2 Samuel 11), and yet 1 Kings 11:4 says that Solomon's "heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father." What did David do differently from Solomon that showed his heart was true to the Lord?

5. Many people only know about Solomon's wisdom and the fact that he built the temple to the Lord, but they don't know about his fall into idolatry. Why do you think this is?

6. Does reading about Solomon's fall make it difficult to trust other writings in Scripture attributed to Solomon (Proverbs, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes)? Ultimately, the authority of Scripture rests in God, and not in the person that God used to write. God used Solomon to record many true and beautiful things, even though he himself did not ultimately live by them.

7. What does the Lord's discipline look like in your life?



Keeping My Statutes And My Rules

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

Rehoboam's Sin and God's Sovereignty

1 Kings 12; 14:21-31



August 16

Sermon Overview

This week we find that Rehoboam's sin causes civil war among God's covenant people, and Jeroboam's sin causes the worship of pagan gods. Behind these evil acts is a good God who not only allowed these events to take place but, in some mysterious way, was using them to bring about His good purposes. These are real people who experienced real suffering as a result of their sin, and yet our text says, "it was a turn of affairs brought about by the Lord."

God's providence—or, more commonly referred to today as God's sovereignty—means that nothing takes Him by surprise, nothing happens without His allowance, and nothing is permitted except by His ordering of the events of history. As Psalm 115:3 reminds us: "Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases."

As we live in a world filled with sin and suffering, sometimes it might feel as if evil is going unchecked, that God is unable to overcome the works of the Evil One. But a proper understanding of His providence is meant to strengthen our weak knees so that when suffering comes to us, our faith will not falter. Rather, we can look back and say, "What you meant for evil, God meant for good." I pray each of us is granted a God-sized vision of God this Sunday as we study 1 Kings 12 and 14:21–31, and that this vision moves us into deeper love for Him.

Trusting with you,

Elder TJ Johnson



Brought About By The Lord

Sermon Outline

Title: Rehoboam's Sin and God's Sovereignty

Text: 1 Kings 12; 14:21-31

Proposition: While evil exists, it does not exist outside the sovereign reign and overarching plan of God; therefore, when suffering and evil come to us, we must trust God in the midst of our suffering, as we cling to the cross and await Christ's return, when He will fully and finally do away with all evil and sin and suffering.

- 1. The Lord Allows Evil (1 Kings 12:8).**
- 2. The Lord Limits Evil (1 Kings 12:21-24).**
- 3. The Lord Ordains Evil (1 Kings 12:15, 1 Kings 12:24)**

Sermon Notes

Sermon Applications



Brought About By The Lord

Discussion Questions

1. What evil has God allowed in your life, and how have you reconciled that with God's goodness?
2. What are some unbiblical ways Christians have tried to reconcile evil and God's goodness?
3. What are the dangers of not coming to a proper understanding that God allows suffering into our lives (over-realized eschatology)?
4. Share a time when you have seen God limit evil—in the Bible, in your own life, or in the world around you. How does this grow your love for God?
5. Can you share with the group ways God's grace has limited evil in our own heart?
6. Choose two or more texts where God's sovereignty over evil and human responsibility for evil are mentioned together, and explain them to the group.
7. What and who has helped you most during times of great suffering?
8. What questions do you have regarding God's sovereignty and evil?
9. Share your thoughts on Heidelberg Catechism 27 or Westminster Confession of Faith 5.4. *"The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God do so far manifest themselves in his providence, that it extends even to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and people. Such do not happen by a bare permission, but are joined with a most wise and powerful bounding, ordering and governing of them, in various dispensations, for his own holy purposes, yet so that the sinfulness of them comes only from the creature, and not from God, who, being most holy and righteous, is not nor can be the author or approver of sin."*
10. Share how Jesus allowed, limited, and ordained His own suffering, and how this can help you in your own suffering and your ever-increasing love for Him?



Brought About By The Lord

Prayer & Praise

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

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports