

# Commentary Notes - I Kings

by Walter Beuttler

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*Walter Beuttler's sermon on I Kings explores the themes of divine sovereignty, the establishment and failure of Solomon's reign, and the prophetic ministry of Elijah.*

**Scripture:** 1 Kings 3:3

**Topics:** "Godly Leadership", "Spiritual Decline"

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## Description

Walter Beuttler preaches on the Book of I Kings, highlighting the contrast between the unchanging throne of God and the failing thrones of men. The message emphasizes that human governments without God are destined to fail, and the rejection of God's government leads to dire consequences that can only be remedied by returning to Him. The reign of Solomon showcases both his greatness, marked by God's blessings and warnings, and his eventual failure due to disobedience, idolatry, and compromise.

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## Transcript

### A. THE BOOK OF I KINGS

1. The first book of Kings continues the history of the kings of Israel and Judah in their relation to the divine Sovereign
2. Throughout the book there are two thrones in view, the throne of God and the throne of man
3. The throne of God is seen immovable in the midst of the changing governments of man
4. The throne of heaven is seen filled, while the throne of the earth is sometimes vacant
5. God's throne is seen permanent; while man's throne is increasingly failing

### B. THE MESSAGE OF THE BOOK

1. All forms of human government without God are doomed to failure
2. God, being left out of the government of men, reigns independently of them, instead of by them
3. God causes man's rejection of his government to work itself out into its evil consequences

4. There is no remedy for the evil consequences of the rejection of God's government, except by a return to that government

(With due acknowledgment to G. Campbell Morgan--Living Messages of the Books of the Bible)

#### REIGN OF SOLOMON, 1:1-11:43

##### A. ESTABLISHMENT OF SOLOMON, 1:1-2:46

1. "The kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon," 2:46. Show how from:

(1) 1:1-2:25 - By the exposure and execution of Adonijah, the usurper of Solomon's throne

(2) 2:26-27 - By the removal of Abiathar from the priesthood for helping Adonijah

(3) 2:28-34 - By the flight and death of Joab, the military leader who supported Adonijah

2. What is contained in 2:1-9? David's last words addressed to Solomon

##### B. BEGINNING OF SOLOMON'S REIGN, 3:1-11:43

1. The beginning of Solomon's reign was marked by what, 3:3? By a love for God and walking in his ways

2. How is Solomon privileged in 3:5-15? In that God appeared to him in a dream by night

3. Comment on God's offer in 3:5: God trusted Solomon's love to ask only what was compatible with that love

4. What, specifically, did Solomon ask in 3:9? "An understanding heart," (a hearing heart, Hebrew; "a heart that hearkeneth," Rotherham)

5. Comment on Solomon's reply in 3:6-9: It is marked by utter selflessness and abandonment to God

6. Comment on God's reply in 3:10-14: It evidences God's unmitigated pleasure but also betrays an awareness of human failure

7. What is evident from:

(1) 3:16-28, 4:29-34? That God has given Solomon what he

had asked, namely an understanding heart

(2) 4:1-28? That God gave Solomon what he did not ask, namely, material prosperity

8. Note the geographical extent of Solomon's kingdom, 4:21: The Euphrates was the northern boundary, the Mediterranean the western boundary, and Egypt was the southern boundary, while the Great Syrian desert was the eastern boundary

##### C. BUILDING THE TEMPLE, 5:1-8:66

1. At long last the country is in what state, 5:1-12? In a state of external and internal peace

2. Draw a parallel between 5:13-18 and I Cor. 12:4-31: The building of God's temple is accomplished by a diversity of ministries

3. Make some general observations from the description of the temple in 6:1-38, 7:13-51:

(1) The design of the temple preserved the basic pattern of the tabernacle

(2) The magnificence of the temple was in keeping with the One who was to occupy it

(3) Its erection in silence (6:7) was symbolic of the reverence in which Jehovah was held

4. What is especially to be noted from 6:1-14? That the continued blessing of God was not dependent upon the beauty of the house of worship, but on the continued obedience of the worshipper

#### D. SOLOMON'S GREATNESS, 9:1-10:29

1. What does God do in:

(1) 9:1-2? He appears to Solomon a second time

(2) 9:3-5? He promises to establish Solomon

(3) 9:6-9? He warns that failure to follow God will lead to abandonment by God

2. What is described in:

(1) 9:10-28? Solomon's enterprises and resources

(2) 10:1-13? The visit of the queen of Sheba

(3) 10:14-29? The wealth and splendor of Solomon

#### E. FAILURE OF SOLOMON, 11:1-10

1. Comment on Solomon's failure in the light of Deut. 17:14-20: His failure originated in his disregard of God's law

2. Note the various elements which played a part in Solomon's failure from:

(1) 10:14-29 - Extravagance. He made limitless expenditures for his own self-gratification

(2) 11:1-3 - Ostentatiousness. In line with the customs of the East, this multiplicity of mistresses was to enhance his own renown

(3) 11:1-3 - Evil companionship. These women of foreign lands and heathen religions exerted an ultimately disastrous influence upon him

(4) 11:2 - Misplaced affection. He allowed the affections of his heart to be taken from God and bestowed upon less worthy objects

(5) 11:4 - An imperfect heart. His heart, while not discarding the worship of Jehovah, no longer retained its former delight in God

(6) 11:6 - Compromise. His heart shared his affections between two contradictory and irreconcilable loyalties

(7) 11:9 - Ingratitude. Solomon is reproached because he turned from God who had appeared unto him twice

(8) 11:10 - Idolatry. To please his wives, he participated in idolatrous worship

(9) 11:11 - Disobedience. By degrees he infringed upon the sovereignty of God which led to the infringement of his deity

(10) 12:4 - Oppression. He did not only copy the Pharaohs' magnificence, but also their disregard of the burdens of the people

(11) Eccl. 2:1-11 - Substitution. The joy and satisfaction once found in God is now vainly sought in other sources

3. Observe the time of Solomon's failure from:

(1) 2:12 - Not while he was insecure but after "his kingdom was established greatly"

(2) 5:4 - Not during a time of conflict and danger, but in a time of peace and safety

(3) 10:14-29 - Not during a time of need but at a time of prosperity

(4) 11:4 - Not when he was young and immature, but when he was old and experienced

(5) 11:9 - Not before God appeared to him, but after he did it twice, 3:3-10; 9:1-2

DECLINE OF KINGDOM, 11:11-22:53

A. DIVISION OF KINGDOM, 11:11-16:34

1. How did God rend the kingdom apart in:

(1) 11:14-25? By stirring up two adversaries

(2) 11:26-40? By raising up Jeroboam

(3) 12:1-24? By the folly of Rehoboam

2. Comment on 11:38 in the light of Jeroboam's deeds in 12:25-13:34: God provided Jeroboam with every incentive for walking in his ways

3. Show how the history of Jeroboam, 11:26-14:20 reveals the sovereign reign of God:

(1) 11:11 - In his sovereign will by which he gives the kingdom to whom he pleases

(2) 11:26-39 - In his sovereign choice to select men for an instrument

(3) 11:11; 12:1-19 - In his sovereign providence to exercise control over events

(4) 13:33-34 - In his sovereign grace bestowing time for a change of ways

(5) 14:1-11 - In his sovereign law to pronounce judgment

(6) 14:12-18 - In his sovereign power to execute judgment

4. Wherein did God reveal himself to Jeroboam in:

(1) 13:1-5? - In the vindication of his deity

(2) 13:4? - In the exercise of his omnipotence

(3) 3:6? - In the granting of mercy

(4) 13:11-32? - In his inviolable sovereignty

5. Read the accounts of the rest of the kings of Israel and Judah in 14:21-22:53. Now tell:

(1) What characterized the reigns of these kings in general? Evil deeds and disregard of God

(2) On what single factor did their fortunes or misfortunes depend? On their individual relationship to God

(3) The significance of the statement "in the sight of the Lord" That the right or wrong of their acts was judged by the standard of God, not by their own

**B. MINISTRY OF ELIJAH, 17:1-22:53**

1. What, on the whole, was the purpose of Elijah's ministry? To demonstrate the sovereign reign of God in every realm

2. Specifically, how is God revealed in:

(1) 17:1-16? - As provider in need

(2) 17:17-24? - As having power over death

(3) 18:17-41? - As the only true God

(4) 18:42-46? - As sovereign over the elements

(5) 20:13-34? - As Lord of hosts

(6) 20:35-43 - As demanding implicit obedience

(7) 21:1-26 - As a God of justice

(8) 21:27-29 - As the Merciful One

(9) 22:19-23 - As sovereign over spirits

(10) 22:30-38 - As the Mighty One

3. Elijah's behaviour in 19:1-4 shows what? That he too was subject to human failings, James 5:17

4. What is Elisha doing in 19:19-21?

(1) He makes an irrevocable surrender

(2) He feeds the people with his sacrifice

5. Comment on 20:37: The wounds of a prophet are essential elements of his ministry in that they make him the eloquent sign of his message with a keener edge and greater effectiveness

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