

Day 166 - 1 Kings 11:1-40; Eccl. 1-2 • 1 Kings 11 records that the LORD was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice.

What was going to happen to Israel because Solomon did not keep the LORD's covenant and statutes (1 Kings 11:11-13)?

Jewish tradition states that Solomon is the author of Ecclesiastes. There are others, including Martin Luther, who feel that it was written after the Exile by an unknown author who used Solomon as his central character. Fragments of Ecclesiastes found at Qumran rule out any date later than 150 B.C. ¹

Day 167 - Ecclesiastes 3-7 •

- Eccl. 4:4 pictures the skilled worker who, motivated by competition, becomes a workaholic for nothing.
- On the other hand, Eccl. 4:5 pictures the opposite extreme - the fool who does not work at all and who, consequently starves to death.
- Eccl. 4:6 states the happy balance. ¹

Though Solomon was the wisest of men, his wisdom was insufficient to comprehend all the mysteries of life. (7:23) ¹

A wise and upright woman is a rare find. ¹ Solomon found one such man among a thousand. (7:27-28)

Fill in the blanks

- A cord of _____ strands is not quickly torn apart. (4:12)
- When you make a _____ to God, do not be late in paying it. (5:4)
- He who loves _____ will not be satisfied with _____. (5:10)
- Here is what I have seen to be good and fitting: to eat, to drink, and _____ oneself in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun during the few years of his life which God has given him; for this is his _____. (5:18)
- It is better to go to a house of _____ than to go to a house a feasting, because that is the end of every man, and the living takes it to _____. (7:2) A visit to a home stricken by tragedy reminds one of the brevity of life and the need for wise living. ¹

Day 168 - Eccl. 8-12; 1 Kings 11:41-43; 2 Chron. 9:29-31 •

The message of this book may be stated in the form of three propositions: (1) when you look at life with its seemingly aimless cycles and inexplicable paradoxes, you might conclude that all is futile, since it is impossible to discern any purpose in the ordering of events; (2) nevertheless, life is to be enjoyed to its fullest, realizing that it is the gift of God; (3) the wise man will live his life in obedience to God, recognizing that God will eventually judge all men. ¹

In conclusion, the book of Ecclesiastes instructs an individual to:

- _____ to the fullest the life that God has given (2:24-25)
- Make the most of every _____ (9:10)
- Live life with _____ toward God (12:13)
- Be aware of the future _____ (12:14)

Day 169 – 1 Kings 12; 2 Chron. 10:1-11:17 •

Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years.

He died and was buried in the city of his father David, and his son Rehoboam reigned in his place.

Jeroboam spoke to Rehoboam, saying, “Your father made our yoke hard; now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.” (1 Kings 12:4) King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had served his father Solomon on the matter. The elders advised the king to grant them their petition and speak good words to them.

Rehoboam forsook the counsel of his elders and consulted with the young men (~40 years old) who grew up with him. These men told him to respond, My power will be greater than my father's. (1 Kings 12:8-11)

The northern tribes revolted and made Jeroboam king over all Israel. This marks the beginning of “The Divided Kingdom”. The twelve tribes of Jacob (Israel) were no longer united. Refer to 1 Kings 11:11-12, 29-31. It was a turn of events from God that the LORD might establish His word, which He spoke through the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

Rehoboam assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, 180,000 chosen men who were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel. But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying, You must not go up and fight against your relatives the sons of Israel; return every man to his house, for this thing has come from Me. So they listened, and returned and went their way. (1 Kings 12:21-24)

Fill in the blanks

_____ established religious centers and worship. He made two golden _____ placing one in Bethel, which was on the road to Jerusalem, and the other in the northernmost part of his kingdom, Dan. Jeroboam also infiltrated the priesthood with _____. (1 Kings 12:25-33)

Day 170 – 1 Kings 13-14; 2 Chron. 11:18-12:16 •

A man of God from Judah came to Bethel while Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense. He prophesied against the heathen altar, stating that Josiah, from the house of David, would sacrifice the priests of the high places on this altar. This remarkable prediction, specifically naming Josiah, is fulfilled about 300 years later (2 Kings 23:15-20).¹

Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying “Seize him.” But his hand which he stretched out against the man of God dried up (stiffened, paralyzed) so that he could not draw it back to himself.

1 Kings Chapter 13 records the tragic death of the younger prophet who had just spoken to Jeroboam. An older prophet lied to the younger prophet in order to get him to eat bread and drink water in his house. Then the older prophet announced his doom for disobeying the command of the Lord.

Fill in the blanks

Abijah the _____ of Jeroboam became sick. Jeroboam sent his wife in disguise to inquire of Ahijah the prophet. His wife received a harsh message from the LORD God of Israel to relay to her husband – “You have done more evil than all who were before you, and have gone and made for yourself other _____ and molten images ... Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city the _____ will eat.” (1 Kings 14:1-17)

During the reign of Rehoboam, Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord.

Shishak the king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem with 1,200 chariots and 60,000 horseman. The Egyptian army took away all the treasures of the house of the Lord and of the king's house.

Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah, the southern kingdom, for seventeen years. There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.

Rehoboam died and was buried in the city of David, and Abijah (Abijam) his son reigned in his place.

Day 171 – 1 Kings 15:1-24; 2 Chron. 13-16 • In the 18th year of King Jeroboam, Abijah (Abijam) became king over Judah. He reigned three years. Abijam walked in all the sins of his father; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the Lord (1 Kings 15:3).

There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. Abijah had 400,000 warriors while Jeroboam had 800,000 warriors. God intervened in some supernatural way to give Judah victory. The death of half a million soldiers out of 800,000 severely crippled the Northern kingdom.

In the 20th year of Jeroboam king of Israel, a good king began to reign in the Southern kingdom (Judah).

Fill in the blanks

_____ did good and right in the sight of the Lord his God, for he removed the foreign _____ and high places, tore down the sacred pillars, cut down the _____, and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers and to _____ the law and the commandment. (2 Chron. 14:2-4)

Zerah the Ethiopian, probably a mercenary general of the Pharaoh, came out against Judah and Benjamin with an army of a million men and 300 chariots. Asa called to the Lord his God and the Lord routed the Ethiopians before Asa. (2 Chron. 14:9-15)

Azariah reminds Asa of the lessons of the period of the judges – “the Lord is with you when you are with Him, and if you forsake Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.” (2 Chron. 15:2)

The reforms of Asa included deposing the Queen Mother, Maacah (his grandmother). (2 Chron. 15:16).

In the 39th year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet. In his disease, he did not seek the Lord, but the physicians. Asa died in the 41st year of his reign.

Day 172 – 1 Kings 15:25-16:34; 2 Chron. 17; 1 Kings 17 •

Meanwhile, up North, in the second year of Asa king of Judah, Nabad the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel.

Nabad did evil in the sight of the Lord. (1 Kings 15:26).

Baasha the son of Ahijah of the house of Issachar conspired against and assassinated Nabad. Baasha reigned in his place, killing all the household of Jeroboam. Baasha did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of Jeroboam. Since Baasha chose to live in sin like Jeroboam, he would suffer the same fate as Jeroboam's family.

In the 26th year of Asa king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha became king of Israel. His servant Zimri conspired against and assassinated him. Zimri's reign was just long enough to kill all the household of Baasha. (1 Kings 16:15)

Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel. Omri and all Israel besieged Tirzah. Zimri burned the king's house over himself and died. The people of Israel divided into two parts. Some followed Tibni while others followed Omri, but Omri prevailed. Omri reigned twelve years. He did evil in the sight of the Lord and acted more wickedly than all who were before him.

List the length of reign for the following Northern Kings:

Nabad (1 Kings 15:25) – _____

Baasha (1 Kings 15:33) – _____

Elah (1 Kings 16:8) – _____

Zimri (1 Kings 16:15) – _____

Omri (1 Kings 16:23) – _____

Ahab (1 Kings 16:29) – _____

It was during the King Ahab's reign that we read about the prophet Elijah. God's miraculous provision for Elijah is recorded in 1 Kings 17.

Day 173 - 1 Kings 18-19 • 1 Kings 18 records three miraculous events that involved Elijah. Briefly list these miracles.

_____ (1 Kings 18:1-40)

_____ (1 Kings 18:41-45)

_____ (1 Kings 18:46)

Day 174 - 1 Kings 20-21 •

Ahab reigned as king over Israel (the Northern kingdom) for 22 years. He is remembered for two things: his wickedness and his marriage to Jezebel, who advanced Baal worship in Israel. ¹

In 1 Kings 21, the LORD sent Elijah to rebuke Ahab and Jezebel.

What did Ahab covet, and what was Jezebel's wicked scheme?

Day 175 - 1 Kings 22:1-40; 2 Chron. 18 •

Ahab's final battle is recorded in 1 Kings 22. The city of Ramoth-gilead had not been restored to Israel, and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah agreed to join Ahab king of Israel in battle to regain possession. At this time there were 400 prophets of the Lord that would say what they knew the king wanted to hear, because they were on Ahab's payroll. These 400 prophets told Ahab to "Go up, for the Lord will give it (Ramoth-gilead) into the hand of the king."

Now there was one other prophet of the Lord, whom Ahab hated (1 Kings 22:8). Jehoshaphat wanted to inquire of this prophet - Micaiah son of Imlah.

Using a tone of voice and gestures to indicate that he was speaking sarcastically, Micaiah told Ahab, "Go up and succeed, and the Lord will give it into the hand of the king."

Fill in the blanks regarding Micaiah's prophecy. (1 Kings 22:17, 19-23)

But then Micaiah the prophet spoke the actual message from the Lord - "I saw all _____ scattered on the mountains," ...

"I saw the Lord sitting on His _____, and all the _____ of heaven standing by Him on His right and on His left. The Lord said, 'Who will entice Ahab to go up and _____ at Ramoth-gilead?' Then a _____ came forward and said 'I will entice him. ... I will go out and be a _____ spirit in the mouth of the _____.' " Micaiah said to Ahab, "The Lord has put a deceiving spirit in the _____ of all these your prophets; and the Lord has proclaimed _____ against you."

Ahab ignored Micaiah's prophecy and went into battle (disguised). Ahab was struck by an arrow that penetrated a joint in his armor.

The battle raged that day while King Ahab was propped up in his chariot. The king died that evening and was buried in Samaria.

References

¹ *Ryrie Study Bible*, Moody Press, 1995, pp. 547-573, 1016-1031.