

1 Kings 1

- 4 Abishag would become important later (2:17).
- 5 Adonijah was the fourth son (2 Samuel 3:4). Amnon (1) and Absalom (3) were already dead. Chileab (2) is never mentioned, so probably died young. By tradition, Adonijah had the best claim to the throne. He used some of Absalom's tactics.
- 7 Transfer of power in a monarchy is always difficult. So, Adonijah developed well-placed allies. Joab was already in disfavor due to Amasa (2 Samuel 20:9 – 13).
- 8 But several highly influential people did not go along.
- 9 Note: still sacrificing at places other than the tabernacle.
- 10 Adonijah must have known that Solomon was the heir apparent.
- 11 Nathan and Bathsheba teamed up to break the news to David.
- 13 David had promised Bathsheba that Solomon would be the heir, but had not made it official.
- 21 If Adonijah succeeds, Bathsheba and Solomon likely would be executed.
- 30 David sees the necessity of making a public declaration immediately.
- 33 Being anointed by the High Priest and a prophet would carry more weight with the people. The mule was the ride of kings. Giving Solomon David's mule was a sure sign of endorsement.
- 41 The noise of the celebration for Solomon reached Adonijah's party. He was informed of the reasons.
- 49 Everyone at Adonijah's party were afraid for their lives and scattered.
- 50 The horns of the altar were thought superstitiously to be safe, despite Exodus 21:14.
- 52 Solomon neither gave Adonijah a blanket pardon nor a death sentence.

1 Kings 2

- 1 Further instructions to Solomon, given in the presence of the whole court, are recorded in 1 Chronicles 28 – 29 including plans for the Temple given by the Spirit. David announced that Solomon was selected by God.
- 2 David's personal charge to Solomon to reign wisely. David repeated the promise that his throne would continue as long as they followed the Lord.
- 5 Solomon was to execute Joab for the deaths of Abner and Amasa (2:28 – 35).
- 7 Be good to Barzillai who fed David's men when they were fleeing Absalom (2 Samuel 19:31 – 39)
- 8 Execute Shimei who cursed David but got a reprieve (2 Samuel 16:5 – 13, 19:18 – 23, 1 Kings 2:36 – 46).
- 15 Adonijah makes a case to Bathsheba for a "favor."
- 17 Absalom tried the same trick with the ten concubines of David (2 Samuel 16:22).
- 21 Bathsheba may have been duped, but more likely she went along knowing what Solomon would do.
- 24 Adonijah was executed immediately.
- 26 Abiathar, who had sided with Adonijah, was removed from being High Priest, but only banished to his farm because of his history with David.
- 28 Joab tried to find protection at the horns of the altar also.
- 34 Benaiah did not want to overstep, so he went back to Solomon for a ruling, then killed Joab.

36 Shimei was ordered to build a nice house and live in it. Leaving Jerusalem would result in execution. Solomon waited three years. Shemei left town to recover two slaves, so was executed.

1 Kings 3

- 1 Marriage alliances are probably the problem Deuteronomy 17:17
- 2 The explanation for sacrificing at the high places: no Temple?
- 5 God gave Solomon one wish.
- 6 He asked for wisdom. Note that David was described as true, righteous, and upright.
- 11 Go liked the answer, so gave him wealth and conditional long life (if he does as well as David).
- 12 Wisest of all time.
- 13 Richest king of his era.
- 16 The story about dividing the baby. Note that they were both prostitutes. Also note that they got an audience with the king.

1 Kings 4

- 7 The provisions for one day are given in 4:22.
- 22 Translating to US measures and current prices: \$23,500 for flour, \$26,000 for corn meal, \$25,000 for grain-fed beef, \$50,000 for grass-fed beef, \$15,000 for sheep, plus the wild game. \$139,500 daily = \$3.9 million per month. Estimated to be enough to feed 14,000 people (officials, servants, and families of each). But, with a population of about 10 – 12 million people, less than \$5 per person per year. Courts in Persia and Turkey ate much more.
- 26 Probably 4000 stalls for horses as in 2 Chronicles 9:25.
- 32 3000 proverbs, 1005 psalms. See Psalm 72 & 127.
- 33 Also an expert in trees, animals, birds, insects and fish. The Quran says Solomon knew the languages of birds and ants.

1 Kings 5

- 1 Phoenicia imported food, so needed Israel. The Phoenician merchant marine controlled the Mediterranean Sea trade. So, this was a good match.
- 11 The flour and oil were worth about \$20 million.
- 14 Whether these Israelite laborers were paid or if this was their form of taxation is unknown. In this era, taxation in the form of labor was common.

1 Kings 6

- 1 Temple construction began in 967 BC
- 2 The tabernacle was 45' x 15' (15' tall). The Temple was 90' x 30' (45' tall)
- 5 Storerooms and apartments were on three sides
- 7 All stones were dressed at the quarry, not at the construction site.
- 15 The interior walls were paneled with cedar. The floor was covered with cypress.
- 18 The cedar panels were carved with buds and flowers, also palms and cherubs (29)
- 20 Then, everything was plated with gold. 2 Chronicles 3:8 says 600 talents. The conversion is unknown, but 75 pounds per talent is close, so 22.5 tons of gold, \$900 million. Other kings recorded bigger amounts as booty.
- 38 Seven years in construction.

1 Kings 7

- 2 Just one part of the palace was 150' x 75' (45' high). Other parts are in verses 6 – 7.
- 15 The two pillars of the Temple porch were 27' tall and a little under 6' in diameter.
- 23 The bronze laver (holding tank for wash water) was 15' across.
- 26 The large castings were 3" thick.
- 27 Carts were for moving a basin of water for washing sacrifices.
- 45 Other bronze utensils: pots, shovels, bowls.
- 49 Ten lampstands instead of one.
- 50 Other gold utensils: basins, trimmers, bowls, ladles, censers.

1 Kings 8

- 1 Assuming that the palace was built after the Temple, the dedication of the Temple was 20 years after Solomon became king (see 9:10). The last task was to bring the Ark from the tent in which David deposited it (2 Samuel 6).
- 2 Two holidays are in this month: Yom Kippur and Tabernacles. The dedication lasted 2 weeks (8:65). (8:5) has an uncountable number of sacrifices for the dedication. (8:63) has a count for Tabernacles. The Ark was moved on Yom Kippur, when the High Priest was allowed in the Most Holy Place.
- 4 The tabernacle furnishings were brought, too. The tabernacle likely was stored in the Temple storerooms.
- 8 Exodus 25:15, the poles were left attached to the Ark, and poking through the curtain. "To this day" indicates that this history book was started before the last chapter took place, which was after the destruction of the Temple.
- 9 The pot of manna and Aaron's rod were placed before the Ark (Hebrews 9:4, Exodus 25:21, Deuteronomy 10:5, Exodus 16:33, Numbers 17:10). Aaron's rod was too long. An omer of manna would be about the size of a gallon, which might fit if the tablets were not too big.
- 10 A cloud filled the tabernacle at its dedication, too. (Exodus 40:34 – 35)
- 15 Solomon reminded the people that the promise in 2 Samuel 7 was happening.
- 25 David will never lack a descendant to sit on his throne if... But, God did not set the bar impossibly high. Just be as faithful as David.
- 27 Solomon reminds Israel that God does not reside in a building (a pagan idea).
- 31 Solomon asks that, despite their inevitable abandonment of God, that He will take them back when they repent. Solomon made seven prayers (seven situations for sin and return), probably intentionally.
- 41 Solomon included foreign believers in his prayer, confident that the works of God would be told everywhere.
- 63 Peace offerings were eaten within 2 days (only a little fat was burned), so the number of animals gives a clue to the size of the crowd. Assuming 3150 bulls and 17,150 sheep per day, 75% of each to the people in attendance, 25% to the priests for preservation (like jerky), at 1000 pounds of dressed meat per bull and 100 pounds per sheep, assuming a pound of meat per person per day, about 3.5 – 4 million were present (perhaps a third of the population).

1 Kings 9

- 2 First time: 3:5.
- 6 Israel must continue with God if David's throne is to be filled.

- 10 See 2 Chronicles 8 for additional details.
- 11 To pay his debt to Hiram for cedar and stone, Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities on the Lebanese border (the tax revenue).
- 13 Hiram was not pleased with the city bargain, but they continued to do large deals. Solomon took the cities back, fixed them up, then gave them to Hiram again. (2 Chronicles 8:2)
- 14 About \$175 million at today's gold price.
- 15 Solomon built many cities and public works using forced labor from the Canaanites remaining in the land (20 – 21).
- 24 2 Chronicles 8:11 adds that the daughter of Pharaoh was not allowed to live in places to which the ark had come. She got her own palace.
- 26 Hiram helped Solomon establish a merchant marine based in Ezion Geber, at the tip of the Gulf of Aqaba (east side of Sinai) to trade with India and East Africa. Some Chinese records suggest trade with them, also, by way of Persian ports. One trip netted over \$600 million.

1 Kings 10

- 1 Sheba probably was in the location of today's Yemen, known for their trade in frankincense, gold, and precious stones.
- 2 Royalty typically arrived with fabulous gifts (see also verse 10, \$175 million in gold), but left with equally fabulous gifts (13)
- 3 Arab culture from long before Muhammed was devoted to riddles. The queen brought her best puzzles (also verse 1).
- 9 Whether the queen was a believer or just a politician is unknown.
- 10 Josephus wrote that the Queen of Sheba brought balsam root from which balsam gardens were cultivated in Jericho and Engedi.
- 11 Almug is thought to be a variety of sandalwood.
- 14 Solomon's income was about \$1 billion per year.
- 16 Each gold shield contained about 18.6 pounds of gold
- 17 The smaller shields contained 3.75 pounds of gold.
- 20 Solomon's throne was elaborate, costly, and representative of twelve tribes.
- 21 Silver, technically, was 1/12 the value of gold. But the overabundance of gold drove the value of silver to nearly nothing.
- 22 A sea-going trading tour took three years (East Africa, Arabia, and possibly India).
- 28 Although the Law prohibited accumulating horses and going to Egypt to buy horses (Deuteronomy 17:16), importing them was different, especially because they were then exported at a profit.

1 Kings 11

- 2 Deuteronomy 7:1 – 3 (no Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites as wives), 17:17 (do not multiply wives or gold)., 23:3 – 9 (no Moabites or Ammonites ever, Edomites and Egyptians permitted after three generations)
- 3 Song of Solomon 6:8 mentions that 60 queens and 80 concubines were present in the court at a time.
- 5 The foreign wives were not merely political alliances. His heart was turned to idolatry.
- 8 Although Solomon is not stated as sacrificing to idols, he built their high places.
- 9 God was angry with Solomon.
- 11 Punishment for Solomon's idolatry: division of the country.

- 12 The division will happen in the days of Solomon's son.
- 15 When David slaughtered all the men of Edom, some escaped (these details are missing from 2 Samuel 8).
- 17 Royal families had tremendous rallying power.
- 18 Although Pharaoh had given a daughter to Solomon, he hedged his bet by supporting Hadad.
- 23 Other escapees from David's conquests settled in Damascus, raising a new army. So, Solomon had repeated skirmishes to the south and the northeast, draining the treasury.
- 31 Solomon's chief general, Jeroboam, broke away after being told by a prophet that he would gain ten of the tribes because of Solomon's idolatry.
- 35 The garment was cut into twelve pieces (v 30) and was apportioned as 10 and one. Clearly, this is symbolic, not mathematical. First, there were 13 tribes (Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh were adopted by Jacob). Second, Simeon was merged with Judah when the land was apportioned (Joshua 19). Third, because Jeroboam opened up the priesthood to all, the Levites moved south. Fourth, Benjamin sided with Judah (11:21). So, the split was 9 versus 4.
- 38 Jeroboam is promised an enduring dynasty if he does as David did.
- 39 The throne of David will not be destroyed.
- 40 Word of the prophecy must have leaked, so Jeroboam escaped to Egypt where he lived until Solomon died.

1 Kings 12

- 1 Shechem was in the hill country of Ephraim, in the center of the country. This was a politically appropriate place for the coronation.
- 4 Jeroboam proposed a reduction in taxes to preserve unity (despite the prophecy, see verse 15).
- 7 The older statesmen advised Rehoboam to take the deal.
- 10 The young politicians advised Rehoboam to increase taxes and speak harshly.
- 16 The northern tribes rejected Rehoboam as king. But, lacking an alternative political structure, the north became tribal.
- 18 When Rehoboam, still arrogantly clueless, came back to collect taxes, the chief tax collector was killed by the people. Rehoboam escaped back to Jerusalem.
- 20 After the blatant tax revolt, the northern tribes sought Jeroboam to be king.
- 24 God sent a prophet to avert a civil war, leaving the country split.
- 27 Jeroboam was concerned that his people could be adversely influenced by the Levites if the northerners continued to go to Jerusalem for festivals.
- 28 Jeroboam revised the golden calf story, claiming that this was the god who had rescued Israel from Egypt.
- 29 Dan and Bethel, now calf-worship sites, were the northernmost and southernmost major cities of the Northern Kingdom.
- 31 Jeroboam opened up the priesthood to all and added high places for convenience.
- 32 Jeroboam set up festivals to compete with those in the Law.

1 Kings 13

- 2 Josiah, who was born about 80 years later, accomplished this as an adult, about a century later (2 Kings 23:15 – 20). The burning of human bones defiled an altar.
- 3 An immediate miracle validated the prediction.

6 Jeroboam's only request was for the restoration of his arm, which, oddly, God granted.
9 The Judean prophet had specific orders about food, drink, and path.
18 The motives of the old prophet for lying are unknown.
20 God used the lying old prophet to deliver a message to the Judean prophet. Despite the old prophet's claim, the Judean prophet was responsible for following orders.
28 The manner or the Judean prophet's death was miraculous as validation. The old prophet was not punished for his lie.
33 Jeroboam was not deterred by the prediction, its validation, his own malady and healing, or the manner of the Judean prophet's death (which surely was reported to him). Jeroboam opened the priesthood to all tribes.
34 Calf worship continued until Israel was carried away by Assyria. However, upon their return from captivity, it did not restart.

1 Kings 14

2 Ahijah (11:38 – 39), in addition to the “ten” tribes prediction, promised to Jeroboam an enduring dynasty if he was faithful like David.
3 The simple gift was designed to mimic that of a poor person, not a queen.
5 God prepared Ahijah for his meeting with the disguised wife of Jeroboam. The child would die and Jeroboam's dynasty would fail. This was accomplished in the reign of Jeroboam's son, Nabad (15:28 – 30).
13 The son of Jeroboam who died at this time was relatively good, so was permitted by God to be buried with honor.
15 Future captivity (about 200 years later) was predicted, a repetition of a curse in the Law (Deuteronomy 29:25 – 29).
19 The history of kings was recorded for posterity in nearly every nation. The authors of Kings and of Chronicles referred the reader back to these for other facts. The purpose of these historical books of the Old Testament was not history but about understanding God.
21 Solomon's Ammonite wife produced the heir to David's throne. Ammonites were prohibited from the assembly (Deuteronomy 23:3) although marry Ammonites is not specifically prohibited.
23 Although the Temple service continued, idolatry was rampant.
25 The division of Israel and the constant war between the parts (14:30) left Jerusalem, with the many tons of God in the temple, an attractive target. This raid was immortalized in a bas-relief on the side of the temple of Karnak. See 2 Chronicles 12:2 – 12. Shishak's plan was to colonize Judah, but the people humbled themselves after a visit from a prophet, so the Egyptians contented themselves with just the booty.
27 Well-polished bronze (copper plus tin) can be made to look like gold if a brass (copper plus zinc) finish is added.

1 Kings 15

2 Rehoboam's son Abijam succeeded him but reigned only three years. Rehoboam was only 58 at his death, so Abijam must have died young, but he fathered 22 sons (2 Chronicles 13:21). Some connect the Maachah with Absalom's granddaughter, but this would conflict with Matthew 1:18. See 2 Chronicles 13:2 – 20 for more details. Jeroboam and Abijam fought a colossal battle after Abijam made a speech about being the true king of all Israel and the sins of

Jeroboam. Jeroboam was the superior general, but Judah was helped by God. 500,000 men of Israel fell.

4 Despite his idolatry, God allowed his throne to continue for the sake of David.

5 A qualifier was added to David's glowing history with God, "Except in the matter of Uriah."

10 Asa must have been in his 20's when he became king since his father lived only to age 58.

11 Asa was encouraged by a prophet, Obed, concerning removing idols (2 Chronicles 15:1 – 9) . So Judah, along with, Benjamin and Simeon, and many immigrants from Manasseh and Ephraim, reverted to the ways of David and the country prospered (2 Chronicles 15:10 – 15).

13 Unlike Solomon, Asa did not tolerate the idolatry of his in-laws.

14 The removal of idolatry was not complete, but it was a good start.

16 The peace and prosperity broke down in Asa's 36th year (2 Chronicles 16:1). At some time before that, Ethiopia invaded, but Asa relied on God and was delivered (2 Chronicles 14:8 – 13), among other occasions.

17 Ramah was about 5 miles north of Jerusalem. Fortifying it would allow Baasha to control all trade by Judah to the north.

19 Asa bribed Syria to switch allegiance. Later, God will complain about this (2 Chronicles 16:7 – 10) through the prophet Hanani. Asa had been rescued by God several times, but this time resorted to politics.

20 Syria invaded the northern part of Israel, forcing Baasha to divert his resources.

22 Asa stole all the building materials from Ramaah and used them to fortify Geba and Mizpah, north and east of Ramah a few miles, reversing control of the border.

23 (2 Chronicles 16:12) Asa did not seek healing from the Lord but from physicians.

25 Dropping back to 14:20 to pick up the history of Israel, the overthrow of the house of Jeroboam by Baasha is recounted.

29 Accomplishing the prediction of Ahijah (14:7 – 14), Baasha killed all the males of Jeroboam's house.

34 But Baasha continued the calf worship cult.

1 Kings 16

3 Apparently, Baasha was supposed to turn the people back to Jehovah. His failure was to result in the same fate as the house of Jeroboam. His son, Elah, was assassinated by a general who went on to kill all the males of the house of Baasha (16:11).

15 Zimri lasted only a week. The army chose Omri as king. The army broke off the siege of Gibbethon of Philistia to besiege the capital of Israel, Tirzah.

18 Zimri killed himself by burning down the palace around himself.

21 However, some wanted Tibni, so proclaimed him king over about half of Israel. His brother Joram may have reigned a short while. The division within Israel lasted about four years, when Omri's forces killed the brothers.

24 Omri built a new capital, Samaria, which was used until the end of the country. Omri was evil, but his story is short. However, his dynasty lasted longer than most. Also, the Moabite Stone mentions the House of Omri, although his son, Ahab, was king at the time.

30 Omri was bad, but Ahab was worse (see 16:33).

31 Ahab married Jezebel, the daughter of the king of the Phoenicians., who brought in Baal worship, coexisting with calf worship.

34 Anecdote: Someone (Hiel) decided to rebuild the ancient city of Jericho, the curse spoken by Joshua (Joshua 6:26) came to pass. David had told his abused ambassadors (2 Samuel 10:5) to tarry at Jericho until their beards grew back. Either David referenced a new city on a different site nearby, or it was just a village without walls. Hiel rebuilt the fortifications.

1 Kings 17

1 First mention of Elijah, who plays a large role until 2 Kings 2. His first recorded prediction was of a drought. Tishbi is in Gilead. James 5:17 – 18 cites this incident and includes the detail that Elijah requested the drought. The historicity of the drought was confirmed by Meander of Ephesus, cited by Josephus.

3 The brook Cherith is near Tishbi. The hiding may have been for safety, for eases of supply, or to prevent entreaties to relent.

4 Many miracles surrounded Elijah.

7 Zarephath is about 75 miles from Tishbi by air, but probably closer to 100 miles by land. More importantly, it was a Phoenician town.

9 The story of this widow was used by Jesus (Luke 4:25 – 26) as an example of the kind of faith to which God responds.

12 Whether she was Lebanese or a displaced Israelite is unknown, but more likely Lebanese (“The Lord your God”).

16 Since the drought lasted 3.5 years (James 5:17 and Luke 4:25), Elijah must have stayed more than 2 years (18:1).

18 She made the assumption that the death of her son was due to her sin, a concept commonly believed but not in the Law or the gospel. (*cf.* Ezekiel 18).

20 Elijah seems to have been surprised by the death of the widow’s son.

24 Perhaps the miraculous flour and oil containers had become too common to continue to impact her.

1 Kings 18

2 God sent Elijah back to Ahab, presumably with instructions.

3 Some faithful people remained in Israel, just not a lot. Obadiah (not the one who wrote) had risen to high position. The other Obadiah wrote about Edom helping Babylon against Jerusalem, centuries later.

4 Apparently, hundreds of true prophets of God worked in Ahab’s Israel.

9 Obadiah fixated on the danger to himself as the messenger of Elijah.

16 But, when Obadiah told Ahab that Elijah wanted to see him, there were no fireworks.

19 The prophets of Asherah are not mentioned again in this story.

20 Mount Carmel sticks out into the Mediterranean, helping to form Israel’s only deep-water port (now Haifa).

24 Elijah proposed a contest between Jehovah and Baal. The people thought that was a good idea. The proposal seems to model Leviticus 9:24 when Aaron prepared the first sacrifice in the tabernacle. See also 1 Chronicles 21:26 and 2 Chronicles 7:1 when God sent fire on the altar David built at Jerusalem and at the inauguration of the Temple.

27 Elijah was not above a little mockery. He knew it would incite them to even dumber actions.

28 Such cutting during prophetic ecstasy was typical of pagans (see also Zechariah 13:6).

29 The 250 Baal prophets carried on all day.

- 30 Apparently, a former altar to Jehovah was there, also, despite the fact that such was not permitted by the Law. However, even good kings of Judah failed to dismantle them all.
- 32 Two seahs of seed is only about 4 gallons.
- 35 Dousing the sacrifice and the wood with water was not in the bargain. Elijah just added it for effect and to further obviate trickery (for example, fire concealed between the stones that, in time, ignites the sacrifice).
- 38 God's response also was beyond the bargain, consuming the rocks as well.
- 39 This repentance will not last long.
- 40 Mass executions were common in those times.
- 41 Continuing the showmanship, Elijah tells Ahab to go have lunch before it starts raining and ruins the picnic.
- 44 Telling his servant to look at the sky seven times probably was symbolic rather than impatience. The "man's hand" probably refers to a hand on an outstretched arm. The caution to Ahab was because the first rain after a long drought makes a sea of mud.
- 46 Elijah on foot outraced Ahab in a chariot over a distance of 25 miles.

1 Kings 19

- 2 Jezebel both wanted revenge for the deaths of the prophets of Baal, but more so the reputation and power she had lost in Elijah's display of power.
- 3 Many commentators insist that Elijah was not afraid because of the previous two years of miraculous food plus the events on Mount Carmel, rather that he was putting himself in a position to let God tell him the next step. However, "ran for his life" does not describe the actions of a secure person. He could have been safe in the court of Jehoshaphat of Judah. Beersheba is the southernmost town in Judah.
- 4 Elijah announced to God that he was done.
- 6 The food delivered by the angel, twice, was superfluous. He then survived 40 days with no additional food (8).
- 8 Horeb is also known as Mt. Sinai, which is about 200 miles from Beersheba.
- 10 Elijah repeated his answer (14) after a few signs (11 – 12), so the signs had little impact.
- 15 Three instructions: anoint Hazael over Syria, anoint Jehu over Israel (16), anoint Elisha as the next great prophet. These three would conspire to wipe out the house of Ahab. Hazael becomes king in Damascus in 2 Kings 8 after talking with Elisha. Jehu was anointed by a servant of Elisha in 2 Kings 9.
- 18 Elijah thought he was the last prophet. But God had preserved 7000 potential replacements, not just the 100 hidden by Obadiah (18:4), about which Obadiah had told Elijah (18:13).
- 19 Elisha must have been wealthy to have afforded 24 oxen. That much pulling power implies deep plowing and hard ground.
- 20 Going back to kiss his parents was not a delaying tactic as in Luke 9:59 – 62 and Matthew 8:21 – 22.

1 Kings 20

- 1 Alliances of kings was common, each king governing a small region around a walled city.
- 3 The objective was not annexation but booty: precious metals. The purpose of taking the royal family was to keep Ahab sending tribute.

6 After the first demand was accepted, Ben-Hadad saw a chance to demand more: the booty would include any valuables in the homes of the city.

9 Ahab declines the second demand, expecting that war will ensue.

10 Ben-Hadad vows to completely destroy Samaria.

13 A prophet delivered a message to Ahab without mentioning his idolatry, that Ahab would be victorious

15 Coming out of a walled city to fight with only 7000 men normally would be foolhardy.

16 Ben-Hadad was not expecting an invitation to fight.

20 The 232 young leaders (and 7000 soldiers) surprised the Syrians by attacking, putting the Syrians in disarray. Ben-Hadad fled.

22 A prophet informed Ahab that Ben-Hadad would be back the next spring.

23 Typical of pagans, the Syrians blamed their loss on “the gods.” They prepared to fight on the plains, as in Syria, rather than in the hills where Israel’s god supposedly was better.

24 The god thing probably was for the troops. Replacement of kings with captains would improve leadership and lessen the chance of retreat at the first sign of adversity.

26 Aphek: east of the Sea of Galilee in the Golan Heights.

28 God’s reason for delivering Israel was to combat pagan thinking, not to save Israel.

29 The size of the Israelite army is not given, but probably was smaller than the casualties among the Syrians (see also 30).

31 Interesting that Israelite kings were known to be merciful – at least by comparison to kings in other countries.

33 Ahab seized upon the opportunity to strike a deal with Ben-Hadad, which may have been politically expedient (it may have cost more in lives and goods to capture more of Ben-Hadad’s army). But, God will complain about this release, although we have no explicit knowledge of this being explained to Ahab beforehand.

36 Prophets often had strange requests. Refusal brought reprisal.

39 The reason for the wound was to make the prophet’s disguise and story believable.

40 Ahab fell for the analogy much like David did to Nathan’s story about the lamb.

42 Ahab’s punishment for releasing Ben-Hadad and the remnant of his army was to suffer in their place like a guard who lost a prisoner.

43 Whether Ahab made excuses like King Saul is unknown. But, Ahab knew that the sentence was certain (despite being a worshipper of Baal, Ashteroth, and the golden calves), so he became understandably depressed.

1 Kings 21

1 Jezreel was about 25 miles north of the capital, Samaria, perhaps the summer residence of Ahab.

3 Selling one’s ancestral inheritance was against the Law (Leviticus 25:23 – 28, Numbers 36:7 – 9). Whether Ahab expected the transfer to be permanent is unknown. The tribe of Ahab is unknown, so this may not have crossed tribal lines.

9 Proclaiming a fast, generally, was for the purpose of discovering the source of adversity by humbling themselves before God (1 Samuel 7:6). Naboth was placed at the head. Some say this was a place of honor, but more likely this was the position of the one accused.

10 At least two witnesses were required (Deuteronomy 17:6, 19:15, Numbers 35:30). Exodus 22:28 forbade revile God or ruler. Blasphemy was a capital offense (Deuteronomy 13:10, 17:2 – 5).

16 Naboth's sons were killed at the same time (2 Kings 9:26). Ahab may have been a relative and could then lay claim to the land. Or, maybe no other relative wanted to be accused of blasphemy so the land was essentially unclaimed.

20 Ahab greeted Elijah as an enemy, but did not seek to kill him, so Ahab held Elijah in some regard as a representative of God..

21 God told Ahab through Elijah that all his descendants would be killed as were the previous two dynasties. Further, dogs would lick up his blood at the place where Naboth was killed and Jezebel would be eaten by dogs. Finally, all his house would be eaten by dogs or birds, hence, no burials.

29 Ahab, the worst king, repented. God relented partially, stretching out the execution of some of the sentence into the time of Ahab's son.

1 Kings 22

2 Jehoshaphat had already formed a marriage alliance with Ahab by having his son marry Ahab and Jezebel's daughter (2 Chronicles 18:1, 2 Kings 8:18). The history of Jehoshaphat may be found in more detail in 2 Chronicles 17 – 20. Later in this chapter (41 ff), Jehoshaphat is described as a good king, a believer.

4 Ramoth-Gilead is near the border of Israel and Syria, so would change hands often. As implied by the lack of war for three years, Syria probably was weak at this time, so an alliance of Israel and Judah could be profitable. It is unclear what Judah would get out of this.

7 Jehoshaphat's second request implied that he put no stock in Ahab's prophets.

8 Ahab's petulance is again illustrated.

9 Micaiah probably was in custody for previous unpleasant prophecies (see v 26 – 27).

16 Ahab must have detected irony in Micaiah's prophecy.

17 Micaiah's prophecy depicted the outcome of the battle: defeat and a leaderless army.

20 Micaiah added more details of how his prophecy originated: God intended to persuade Ahab to fight and die.

22 God sent a lying spirit into the prophets of Ahab. Those prophets were already corrupt, so they would not need much of a push. One need not assume that God forced them to lie, only that the lying spirit helped cement their self-deception.

24 Zedekiah, the theatrical prophet from v 11, challenged Micaiah sarcastically.

25 Micaiah predicted the manner of Zedekiah's death in a way that would not make sense until it happened. A description of this coming to pass was not recorded.

28 The final piece of Micaiah's puzzle was that Ahab would die without seeing Micaiah again.

29 Amazingly, both kings still went forward with the plan to take back Ramoth-Gilead.

30 Jehoshaphat must have been gullible. Ahab's disguise would focus the enemy on Jehoshaphat.

33 The Syrians, apparently, were not interested in Judah, so when the ruse was detected, they turned back on Ahab. But, Jehoshaphat did exit the field, leaving his army leaderless.

34 The author specifies that Ahab was killed by a random arrow, not because the Syrians focused on him. Once wounded, Ahab exited also, leaving the army without a leader.

36 Per Micaiah's prediction, the army disbanded itself.

38 The prediction about dogs licking up Ahab's blood at the place where Naboth died came true.

47 In 2 Chronicles 20:22 – 24, Edom had been destroyed when an alliance between Judah's enemies was turned to in-fighting so that Judah did not need to fight at all. As a result, Edom had no royal family remaining.

48 Jehoshaphat tried to revive the prosperous merchant fleet of Solomon but the ships were destroyed by storms while in the home port. 2 Chronicles 20:35 – 37 adds that this was in partnership with Ahaziah, Ahab's son. Because of the alliance, Eliezer the prophet predicted the calamity.

49 Ahaziah wanted to build a second fleet, but one warning from God was enough for Jehoshaphat.

51 Ahaziah will die without a son (2 Kings 1:18), so the house of Omri died out as predicted.