

Originally, 1 & 2 Kings were one continuous book recording the varied and many stories of the kings of Judah and Israel. But for our purposes, we will be examining them as two distinct books. 1 Kings covers roughly 120 years, beginning with the last months of David's life, when Solomon is crowned king (970 B.C.), and ending with the death of Ahaziah, Israel's 8th king (853 B.C.).

The primary character in 1 Kings, however, is Solomon, the wisest of all kings, who counseled all peoples rich and poor with a wisdom that came not from his own intelligence, but from a discerning heart that was a gift from God. Solomon builds the great Temple in Jerusalem, completing it in 959 B.C. Within another 30 years, though, Solomon's son will have most of the kingdom taken from him because of Solomon's sin.

Solomon's downfall can be traced back to little points of disregard for God's Word -- things that probably seem like "no big deal." This pattern of ruin, and forfeit, that we have seen in almost every book of the Bible, begins with small choices to disobey, which ultimately lead our heart away from God. By the end of his life, Solomon is offering sacrifices to demon-gods of the surrounding people.

His sin split the kingdom, just as our sins can split a family, a church, or a relationship. If there is one lesson we can learn from the history of the Royals, it is that little wrongs have huge consequences.

Perhaps, the best way to summarize the theme of 1 Kings is by posing its most basic question:

WHOSE ADVISE WILL YOU FOLLOW?

As you read 1 Kings, you will be amazed at the number of counselors, wives, parents, mentors, priests and prophets who give counsel that is directly opposite of what God has instructed.

As we will see in the story of the disobedient prophet, we ought to be careful about the advice we receive from people. No matter how persuasive they may sound, their counsel is not sound if it goes against what God has said. The real test of people's advice is not how reasonable or friendly or harmless it seems, but how true it is to God's eternal Word.

1 Kings 13: 1-26

THE DISOBEDIENT PROPHET

Daniel A. Brown,

Ph.D.