

THE BOOK OF

1 Kings

BIBLE STUDY GUIDES FOR SMALL GROUPS

RELATIONAL BIBLE STUDY SERIES

CREATED BY STEVE CASE

Who's In Charge Here?

OPENING QUESTION

Are you more of a leader or more of a follower who empowers leaders?

READ 1 Kings 1:1—53.

1. What's the situation at the start of *chapter 1 (vs 1-4)*?

- A. A void in leadership.
- B. Everyone does what is right in their own eyes (*Judges 21:25*).
- C. King David is so old it seems like he's on his deathbed.
- D. King Saul's descendants are getting ready to seize the kingship.
- E. David's advisors/physicians tried a common practice for old men.
- F. The Philistines are attacking Israel.
- G. David got a private caregiver, and a pretty one at that.
- H. All the Israelites were in mourning.
- I. Other.

2. Why did Adonijah make himself king?

- A. He was accustomed to getting whatever he wanted.
- B. Based on the birth order, he was next in line to become king.
- C. David had promised Adonijah the throne.
- D. Adonijah's mother, Haggith, wanted him to be king.
- E. God had made it clear that Adonijah would be the next king.
- F. The military made Adonijah the king.
- G. The priests and prophets anointed him.
- H. He was a conniving opportunist, conspiring to do wrong.
- I. Other.

3. Who got excluded from Adonijah's ceremony to make himself king?

- A. King David.
- B. All of David's sons.
- C. The royal officials.
- D. Beniah, David's bodyguard.
- E. Nathan the prophet.
- F. The priests.
- G. Bathsheba.
- H. Solomon.
- I. Other.

4. What stopped Adonijah from becoming the next king?

- A. Solomon stepped up and claimed the throne.
- B. God intervened.
- C. David made it clear Solomon would be the next king (*1 Chron. 28*).
- D. Quick planning and intervention by Nathan the prophet.
- E. Quick planning and intervention by Bathsheba.
- F. David hadn't yet died, so he was still the king.
- G. The boisterous public announcement that Solomon was the new king.
- H. Solomon had to become king so he could build the temple.
- I. Other.

5. How would you have responded if you were Solomon?

- A. Thank you, mother.
- B. Thank you, God.
- C. I'd wait until I received more wisdom from God (*1 Kings 3:9*).
- D. Don't ever trust your siblings.
- E. Eliminate Adonijah.
- F. Eliminate Adonijah's co-conspirators.
- G. Make Adonijah your assistant.
- H. Other.

6. Where do you see people seeking power today?

- A. It seems to be what politics is all about.
- B. It seems to be what business is all about.
- C. It seems to be what sports is all about.
- D. In my family.
- E. In my marriage.
- F. In my church.
- G. I do a fair amount of this at times.
- H. Other.

7. How can the whole mess of seeking power be prevented?

8. How do you respond when more than one person claims to be, or acts like, the leader?

A Bloody Mess

OPENING QUESTION

When have you seen two powers fight against each other?

READ 1 Kings 2:1-46.

1. What did David include in his final instructions to Solomon?

- A. Watch out for Adonijah.
- B. Make sure Joab has a bloody end to his life; and Shimei, too.
- C. Build a temple for Yahweh.
- D. Follow/Obey everything God has revealed.
- E. Take good care of Bathsheba.
- F. Make our family dynasty secure.
- G. Be kind to Barzillai's boys who helped me when I fled from Absalom.
- H. Don't have too many wives.
- I. Other.

2. What made Solomon's kingship "firmly established" (vs 12, 46)?

- A. God firmly established it.
- B. Solomon firmly established it.
- C. It was more firmly established in vs 46 than in vs 12.
- D. All the leaders endorsed Solomon.
- E. The people of the land rallied behind Solomon.
- F. David had clearly established Solomon's rule.
- G. Solomon's kingship was still being threatened.
- H. The elimination of potential rivals.
- I. Other.

3. Why did Adonijah make a special request to Bathsheba (vs 17)?

- A. Bathsheba was the most powerful person in the kingdom.
- B. Adonijah was still conspiring to become king.
- C. Adonijah felt compassion for Abishag.
- D. Abishag and Adonijah would make such a striking couple.
- E. Bathsheba was pretty, but she wasn't pretty smart.
- F. New kings took the previous king's concubines (1 Sam 16:21-22).
- G. It wasn't a big deal.
- H. It was a big deal.
- I. Other.

4. Why did Joab suddenly fear for his life?

- A. He didn't. Joab had been King David's faithful military leader.
- B. He didn't. The horns of the altar would save him (*Ex 21:14*).
- C. Solomon had just eliminated Adonijah.
- D. Bathsheba had pronounced his doom.
- E. David never forgave Joab for killing Absalom (*2 Sam 18:10-15*).
- F. Guilt for killing Abner (*2 Sam 3*).
- G. Guilt for killing Amasa (*2 Sam 20*).
- H. Other.

5. Why did Solomon deal with Shimei the way he did?

- A. David had mercifully spared Shimei's life (*2 Sam 19:19-23*).
- B. Solomon wasn't bound to David's promise.
- C. David told Solomon to one day have Shimei killed.
- D. Shimei was a loyal servant of David and Solomon.
- E. Solomon honored Shimei with a house in Jerusalem.
- F. Shimei agreed to Solomon's parameters for him.
- G. Shimei's blood was on his own hands when he briefly left Jerusalem.
- H. Other.

6. Where do you see God in this bloody chapter?

- A. I don't.
- B. All over the place.
- C. If I look hard enough, I might be able to find it.
- D. Justice.
- E. Mercy.
- F. It's the Great Controversy all over again.
- G. People always go for power.
- H. Generations transition; God remains eternal.
- I. Other.

7. Why were there so many threats to Solomon establishing the kingdom?

8. What are the similarities between *1 Kings 2* and the world in which you live? What are the differences?

Wise Guy

OPENING QUESTION

Where do you like to worship? When do you like to worship?

READ 1 Kings 3:1–28.

1. Why did Solomon marry Pharaoh's daughter?

- A. It was love at first sight.
- B. God advised Solomon to do this.
- C. David advised Solomon to do this.
- D. This secured a political alliance.
- E. Solomon experienced bouts of loneliness.
- F. Solomon considered this a wise method of evangelism.
- G. He needed an interior decorator and house cleaner.
- H. Hebrew men were always attracted to Egyptian women.
- I. Other.

2. Why did Solomon choose to go to Gibeon to offer sacrifices as king?

- A. Any place would do, as long as there were sacrifices.
- B. Gibeon had a mixed history (*Joshua 9 & 10; 2 Samuel 2 & 21*).
- C. Worship at the local altars (high places) broke the 2nd commandment.
- D. It was the major high place near Jerusalem.
- E. The wilderness tabernacle resided there (*2 Chronicles 1:3*).
- F. The ark remained in Gibeon (*2 Samuel 6*).
- G. Jerusalem had no place to worship at this time.
- H. Gibeon was in Benjaminite territory—King Saul's tribe.
- I. Other.

3. In his dream, what did Solomon ask for from God?

- A. Wisdom.
- B. Understanding.
- C. More wives.
- D. Wealth and peace.
- E. Faithfulness to God's covenant.
- F. A personal relationship with God.
- G. It was only a dream; not reality.
- H. An awake conversation with God; not just a dream.
- I. Other.

4. What did God promise Solomon?

- A. Wisdom.
- B. Understanding.
- C. Wives.
- D. Wealth and peace.
- E. A temple in Jerusalem.
- F. Respect and honor.
- G. Whatever Solomon wanted.
- H. Other.

5. What made Solomon's judgment of the two prostitutes difficult?

- A. It wasn't difficult for Solomon.
- B. It was a "she said," "she said," argument.
- C. Nobody else witnessed it.
- D. They were prostitutes who appealed to the king.
- E. One child was dead and another was about to die.
- F. Solomon had a knack for discerning liars.
- G. This was a test case early in Solomon's reign.
- H. Other.

6. When could you use more wisdom?

- A. Just about every day.
- B. When I face something and I don't know what to do.
- C. Dealing with certain people in my family.
- D. Facing dilemmas.
- E. Sometimes I just feel so stupid (can I say that?).
- F. The times I'm being tested.
- G. I can't think of anything.
- H. Other.

7. What would you say if God asked you, "What do you want?"

8. Who are the wisest people in your life?

Amazing

OPENING QUESTION

How many people come to your large family gatherings?

READ 1 Kings 4:1–34.

1. What's remarkable about Solomon being the king of all Israel (vs 1)?

- A. It's not remarkable.
- B. Solomon wasn't King David's firstborn son.
- C. King David started by ruling only Judah; ruling all Israel 7 years later.
- D. Solomon had eliminated all competitors to the throne.
- E. God orchestrated all of this.
- F. All Israel wanted Solomon to be their king.
- G. This shows that anyone can become king.
- H. This shows that not just anyone can become king.
- I. Other.

2. What caught your attention about Solomon's high officials (vs 2-6)?

- A. Nothing in particular.
- B. So many strange names.
- C. The number of royal officials keeps increasing with each new king.
- D. The priests seem to be subject to the king.
- E. It's not all about the military.
- F. Why did wise Solomon need an advisor (vs 5)?
- G. It seems like a good organizational chart.
- H. It seems like a bad organizational chart.
- I. Other.

3. What are your thoughts about a monthly crew to provide all your food?

- A. It sounds royal!
- B. I could use that kind of help at my house.
- C. It seems "over the top"—too extreme.
- D. It seems way too stressful to me.
- E. It seems like a wise plan, especially with such a large household.
- F. What about the months that have no harvests?
- G. I'd like to have a job where I work just one month each year.
- H. I wonder if this was God's idea or Solomon's idea.
- I. Other.

4. Why was there peace throughout Solomon's empire?

- A. There wasn't peace.
- B. People were nice.
- C. People were content (*vs 25*).
- D. Solomon was a great military warrior, so the people felt safe.
- E. God provided peace.
- F. This was due to Solomon's wisdom.
- G. God's promises had been fulfilled (*Genesis 12:1-3; 15:5 & 18*).
- H. David had done all the fighting already.
- I. Other.

5. What made Solomon so wise?

- A. It was all a gift from God.
- B. It's what Solomon asked from God when God offered him one wish.
- C. Solomon had a photographic memory (before there were photos).
- D. Solomon studied a lot.
- E. Being married to so many women.
- F. Interacting with so many other wise men.
- G. Expertise in so many different areas and on so many topics.
- H. Other.

6. If you were an ambassador sent to Solomon, what would you ask him?

- A. How did you become so wise?
- B. What would make my ruler a better ruler?
- C. What should I do when I don't know what to do?
- D. Would you sign my copy of *Solomon's Success Secrets*?
- E. How can we be more like you?
- F. What's going to happen after you die?
- G. Why don't you go on "Jeopardy" or "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire"?
- H. Other.

7. What amazes you the most about Solomon and his kingdom?

8. Where do you go when you're seeking wisdom? How do you get it?

How To Build Something Great

OPENING QUESTION

How do people who like your parent(s) relate to you?

READ 1 Kings 5:1–18.

1. Why did Hiram send ambassadors to Solomon?

- A. Congratulate the new king on his new role/status.
- B. Get a read on the new king.
- C. Re-establish good terms between neighboring nations.
- D. Assess whether or not the Israelites could be conquered.
- E. Check out just how wise Solomon was.
- F. Increase trade between the two countries.
- G. That's what friends do.
- H. Ask Solomon to enter a new treaty against the Philistines.
- I. Other.

2. Why did Solomon start making plans to construct a new temple?

- A. David had made all the preparations; Solomon just followed through.
- B. Solomon needed outside help.
- C. With peace on all sides, the Israelites could focus on something else.
- D. A prophet told Solomon to do this.
- E. It gave Solomon something to do.
- F. Solomon wanted to please God.
- G. The new temple was a memorial to King David.
- H. Solomon had always wanted to do this.
- I. Other.

3. What did Hiram have that Solomon needed?

- A. More land for the Israelites.
- B. Greater experience in construction.
- C. Wood.
- D. Gold.
- E. Food.
- F. Architects.
- G. Laborers.
- H. More wives.
- I. Other.

4. How did Hiram respond to Solomon's request?

- A. Hiram converted and began to worship Israel's God.
- B. A close political alliance.
- C. This meant a financial windfall for Hiram.
- D. He provided even more than Solomon asked.
- E. Hiram treated this as a gift to Solomon—no payment needed.
- F. A promise to always be friends.
- G. Please pay me with gold.
- H. Other.

5. What do you think of Solomon's labor force?

- A. It was huge!
- B. The tax burden would become heavy (*1 Kings 12:4*).
- C. Who was left to farm the land?
- D. Working only one month out of three seems "family-friendly."
- E. The two months "at home" meant working in Israel rather than Tyre.
- F. The temple must have been magnificent!
- G. Government projects overspend and under-deliver.
- H. Other.

6. What seems MOST important for building God's temple?

- A. Location, LOCATION, location.
- B. Sustained focus—no distractions.
- C. Lots of money.
- D. Skilled workers.
- E. Directions from God.
- F. Buy-in from the people.
- G. A great overall plan with all the pieces working together.
- H. Pure and holy worshipers.
- I. Other.

7. When have you been part of something big, like so many people coming together to build Solomon's temple?

8. How important to you is your place of worship?

Building God's House

OPENING QUESTION

What changes would you like to make to the place where you live?

READ 1 Kings 6:1–38.

1. Why did the temple get constructed 480 years after leaving Egypt?

- A. Deliverance from Egyptian slavery was still a historical marker.
- B. This helps us know the date the Israelites departed from Egypt.
- C. Symbolically, 12 tribes x 40 years in the wilderness = 480.
- D. God had been dwelling with his people in a tent for 100s of years.
- E. It had been a long time.
- F. Time matters to God.
- G. The Messiah would come 480 years later.
- H. It doesn't mean anything to me.
- I. Other.

2. What caught your attention about the dimensions of Solomon's temple?

- A. Nothing.
- B. It seems quite definitive.
- C. It seems rather large.
- D. It seems rather small.
- E. It's twice the size of the wilderness tabernacle.
- F. Permanent rather than portable.
- G. Similar shape.
- H. These dimensions seem holier than the wilderness tabernacle.
- I. Other.

3. Why construct the temple in silence (vs 7)?

- A. Silence (not cleanliness) is next to godliness.
- B. Constructing the temple was an act of worship.
- C. God told Solomon to do it this way.
- D. The work crews were large enough to handle this.
- E. Preschools nearby demanded a quiet zone.
- F. This demonstrated honor and reverence for God.
- G. This stands in contrast to most construction sites.
- H. It was one of Solomon's strange idiosyncrasies.
- I. Other.

4. What promise did God make to Solomon (vs 11-13)?

- A. Solomon would be the wisest man in the world.
- B. The temple would be completed.
- C. The temple would become one of the seven wonders of the world.
- D. God dwells with his people in the sanctuary on earth.
- E. The same promise God made to King David.
- F. It all depends on obedience.
- G. It all depends on God.
- H. Other.

5. What stands out to you about the description of the Most Holy Place?

- A. Nothing.
- B. My eyes just kind of glazed over.
- C. It seems very ornate.
- D. Covered with gold, even the floor.
- E. The dimensions are a cube, just like the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:16).
- F. It housed the Ark of the Covenant.
- G. Two giant, golden angels from wall to wall.
- H. Other.

6. Prioritize from 1-9 what's most important for God's dwelling:

- _____ Location, LOCATION, location.
- _____ Sustained focus—no distractions.
- _____ Lots of money.
- _____ Skilled workers.
- _____ Directions from God.
- _____ Buy-in from the people.
- _____ A great overall plan with all the pieces working together.
- _____ Pure and holy worshipers.
- _____ Other. _____.

7. Put an X on the continuum based on the type of building where you prefer to worship God.

SIMPLE, PLAIN STRUCTURE

CRAFTED, ORNATE STRUCTURE

8. When do you sense God is in your house? When do you sense you are in God's house?

A Special Place

OPENING QUESTION

Is your house more about function or beauty? What about your church?
On the continuum, put an 'H' for your House and a "C" for your C hurch:

FUNCTION

BEAUTY

READ 1 Kings 7:1–51.

1. Why did it take 13 years to build Solomon's house?

- A. It was much bigger than the temple.
- B. He didn't have as many workers for his second construction project.
- C. Solomon ran low on cash.
- D. God hadn't provided plans for it like he did for the temple.
- E. Solomon cared more about his house than about God's house.
- F. He needed more room for his Egyptian wife.
- G. He needed more room for his many wives.
- H. Other.

2. Why did Solomon have a Hall of Judgment as part of his palace?

- A. It's what he spent most of his time doing—administering justice.
- B. He needed a place to work.
- C. Making judgments takes a lot of time and space.
- D. Solomon used the space to train judges to administer justice.
- E. It functioned like a Supreme Court at that time.
- F. Establishing and maintaining justice is the job of every government.
- G. Solomon wanted people to be in awe of him.
- H. Other.

3. What does Solomon's palace seem like to you?

- A. Amazing.
- B. Over-the-top.
- C. Way too big.
- D. I have a hard time imagining it.
- E. Lots of cedar.
- F. No place to play.
- G. Fit for a king.
- H. Other.

4. Who was “Hiram from Tyre” (vs. 13)?

- A. The king of Tyre (*1 Kings 5:1*).
- B. A common name in those days in that part of the world.
- C. A pure Israelite.
- D. A pure pagan.
- E. The best person for the job.
- F. A relative of Bezalel and Ohaliab (*Exodus 31:1-11*).
- G. Someone especially selected by God.
- H. Other.

5. What is the significance of the two bronze pillars in front of the temple?

- A. Their names—Jokin (he is strong) and Boaz (in strength).
- B. Boaz was the great-great-grandfather of Solomon.
- C. Their size.
- D. Structurally vital to hold the temple together.
- E. The fact there were two of them.
- F. All the pomegranates.
- G. Designed to instill awe and worship.
- H. Other.

6. How does Solomon’s temple compare to the wilderness tabernacle?

- A. They were the same.
- B. They were quite different.
- C. They served the same purpose.
- D. Both were designed by God (*Exodus 25:8-9; 1 Chronicles 28:19*).
- E. One was temporary and the other was permanent.
- F. Both remind readers of Ezekiel’s temple (*Ezekiel 40-48*).
- G. Both remind readers of the New Jerusalem (*Revelation 21-22*).
- H. Other.

7. What stands out to you regarding the construction described in this chapter?

8. What role(s) do you play in your house? What role(s) do you play in your church?

When God Shows Up

OPENING QUESTION

Who is someone you know who makes a big impact just by showing up?

READ 1 Kings 8:1–66.

1. What did Solomon take to the new temple?

- A. The ark of the covenant.
- B. The candlestick, table of showbread, and altar of incense.
- C. The altar of burnt offering and the laver.
- D. The frame of the tabernacle and its coverings.
- E. The priests.
- F. The leaders of the 12 tribes of Israel.
- G. All the people of Israel.
- H. Lots of sheep for sacrifices and offerings.
- I. Other.

2. What was in the ark of the covenant?

- A. The 10 commandments written in stone.
- B. The entire covenant.
- C. The Pentateuch (*Genesis–Deuteronomy*).
- D. Aaron's rod and a pot of manna (*Ex 16:33–34; Num 17:10; Heb 9:4*).
- E. Lots of gold.
- F. The presence of God.
- G. A shining cloud/mist.
- H. Nothing.
- I. Other.

3. Why did the priests leave the temple?

- A. They had finished what they came to do.
- B. God told them to leave.
- C. Humans can't survive where God is present.
- D. Humans can't survive unless God is present.
- E. The priests weren't holy enough to be there.
- F. God's presence overwhelmed them.
- G. They left only the Most Holy Place.
- H. The thick cloud made it impossible for them to do their work.
- I. Other.

4. What did God's covenant promise to David include (*2 Samuel 7:4-17*)?

- A. The Messiah would come.
- B. Kingship for generations of faithful kings.
- C. A permanent place for God's presence with his people—the temple.
- D. Victory over all enemies and protection from future foes.
- E. Safety from natural disasters.
- F. Forgiveness for future sins.
- G. Many descendants—like the stars in the night sky.
- H. Other.

5. Which future sins did Solomon address in his prayer?

- A. Breaking the covenant.
- B. Selfishness.
- C. No longer praying.
- D. Sexual unfaithfulness.
- E. Spiritual unfaithfulness.
- F. Failure to worship Yahweh.
- G. Any and every sin(s).
- H. Other.

6. What do you include in your worship to God? What could you include?

- A. Public prayers.
- B. Spoken blessings.
- C. Music.
- D. Vows and promises.
- E. Praise about actions God has already done.
- F. Praise about anticipated future actions by God.
- G. Feasting.
- H. Gifts and offerings.
- I. Other.

7. When, if ever, have you been overwhelmed by God's presence?

8. When have you worshiped God with all-out celebration? When will you?

Achievements and Consequences

OPENING QUESTION

When you were young, what did people predict you would do later in life?

READ 1 Kings 9:1–28.

- 1. Why did God appear to Solomon a second time (vs 3)?**
 - A. It had been a while since they had talked.
 - B. God's response to Solomon's temple dedication prayer (8:22-53).
 - C. God warned Solomon: Breaking the covenant ends everything.
 - D. God just wanted to touch base with Solomon again.
 - E. This repeated the covenant God had made with David.
 - F. This repeated what God had said to Solomon previously (3:5).
 - G. God is always present, but not always visible or audible.
 - H. A hint of the future—Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed.
 - I. Other.
- 2. Why would God destroy such a beautiful temple built to honor him?**
 - A. God wouldn't do that.
 - B. God did do that.
 - C. Nebuzaradan did this (2 Kings 25:8-10).
 - D. The temple no longer served its original purpose.
 - E. God warned that disobedience leads to destruction.
 - F. The temple is a mockery when people break their covenant with God.
 - G. Buildings don't matter to God.
 - H. The temple no longer honored God (2 Kings 21:4-7).
 - I. Other.
- 3. What made the 20 towns given to Hiram a "bad gift" from Solomon?**
 - A. The towns were worthless.
 - B. There weren't enough of them.
 - C. Solomon was cheap and didn't want to give away too much.
 - D. Not every gift is a winner.
 - E. Solomon had already given Hiram a lot (5:10-12).
 - F. Hiram was greedy for more.
 - G. Hiram expected more after giving Solomon so much gold (vs 14).
 - H. Hiram wanted towns closer to Jerusalem, not closer to Tyre.
 - I. Other.

4. Why did Solomon use “forced labor” (slavery) for his building projects?

- A. The slaves were good workers.
- B. There have always been slaves.
- C. This was 1,000 BC, not the “politically correct” times like today.
- D. The Israelites didn’t want to do this type of work.
- E. God told Solomon to do this.
- F. The Israelites had already been slaves in Egypt.
- G. That’s what the unconquered Canaanites became (*Judges 1:28-35*).
- H. Other.

5. Why didn’t Solomon use Israelites for his slave labor?

- A. He did.
- B. They had already “done their time” as slaves in Egypt.
- C. Solomon needed Israelites to oversee the slaves.
- D. Every civilization has its “haves” and “have-nots.”
- E. This was the Promised Land for the Israelites, not the Palestinians.
- F. Solomon did make life miserable for the Israelites (*12:4*).
- G. A slave’s life can be a happy life—if you will just accept it quietly.
- H. Other.

6. Why did Solomon give offerings and burn incense three times a year?

- A. That’s what God required.
- B. Solomon stood in the place of the priests by doing this.
- C. All Israelites were supposed to do this (*Deut. 16:16*).
- D. Bringing a gift “to the priest” was bringing it “to the Lord” (*Lev. 3*).
- E. These weren’t the only times Solomon went to the temple.
- F. Solomon wanted to be a good example to others.
- G. Lots of offerings weren’t a big deal because Solomon had so much.
- H. Other.

7. What are things God has done in the past that you rarely think about now (*vs 9*)?

8. What were Solomon’s major achievements? What have been yours so far? What do a person’s achievements have to do with God? What do consequences have to do with God?

Israel's Golden King

OPENING QUESTION

What would you do if you had a ton of gold?

READ 1 Kings 10:1–29.

1. Why did the Queen of Sheba visit Solomon?

- A. Forge a treaty between their two countries.
- B. Test Solomon to see just how wise he might be.
- C. The reputation of the new temple was something to see.
- D. Find out about Solomon's God.
- E. She wanted to get acquainted with Solomon's wives.
- F. Get a consultation about her country's problems.
- G. Do a gift exchange.
- H. She loved to travel.
- I. Other.

2. What was Solomon's impact on the Queen of Sheba?

- A. He made it on her list of "Top 10."
- B. She couldn't believe what she heard.
- C. She couldn't believe what she saw.
- D. Impressed by Solomon's great God, she converted.
- E. Spicey.
- F. Gifts galore (*vs 11*).
- G. A proposal for shared progeny.
- H. Everyone must be pleased to be in Solomon's kingdom.
- I. Other.

3. What was the relationship between Solomon and gold?

- A. They went together "like peas and carrots."
- B. He built a giant structure covered with gold.
- C. Even his ivory throne was covered with gold.
- D. Solomon's annual gold intake was 666 talents (*see Rev 13:18*).
- E. Solomon shared his gold surplus with others.
- F. Others shared their gold with Solomon.
- G. Solomon got more gold because of his wisdom.
- H. He preferred gemstones for decorating.
- I. Other.

4. What amazes you the most about Solomon?

- A. His wisdom.
- B. His stupidity.
- C. His God.
- D. His gold.
- E. Everyone in the world came to him.
- F. His many wives.
- G. The humility and selflessness he demonstrated.
- H. Other.

5. What does Solomon's military arsenal reveal to you?

- A. He dominated all other nations with his military.
- B. His military continued to grow.
- C. Solomon had a lot of insecurities.
- D. He trusted God for protection.
- E. His obedience to God's instructions (*Deuteronomy 17:16-17*).
- F. His humility (*Deuteronomy 17:18-20*).
- G. He became an arms dealer (*1 Kings 10:29*).
- H. Other.

6. What would you say to King Solomon if you could?

- A. You're amazing!
- B. Be careful.
- C. What counsel do you have for me?
- D. Thank you for the books of the Bible you wrote.
- E. Tell me more about God.
- F. Tell me more about love.
- G. Please share (your wisdom and gold) with me.
- H. Other.

7. What do *verses 14-29* say about God? What do they say about Solomon? What difference does that make?

8. Who do you go to for wisdom? Who comes to you for wisdom?

No Big Deal

OPENING QUESTION

What's something that's a big deal to you? What's something that's not?

READ 1 Kings 11:1–43.

1. What would you say about Solomon and his women?

- A. It's no big deal.
- B. It is a big deal.
- C. It would be great to be Solomon.
- D. It would be great to be one of Solomon's women.
- E. The concubines were mainly for cleaning the palace.
- F. This went against God's covenant (*Deut 12:14; 17:17; 10:17-18*).
- G. He did this for political alliances to make his kingdom more secure.
- H. It's the same thing his father, King David, had done (*2 Sam 5:13*).
- I. Other.

2. Who did Solomon follow?

- A. Himself.
- B. Nobody.
- C. Yahweh—God.
- D. The covenant God made with him (*1 Kings 9:2-9*).
- E. His foreign wives.
- F. The gods of his foreign wives.
- G. His passions.
- H. It changed from one stage of his life to another.
- I. Other.

3. Write in "good" or "bad" for the following actions Solomon took:

- _____ Asked for wisdom when God offered a gift of Solomon's choice.
- _____ Built the temple for Yahweh.
- _____ Built his palace.
- _____ Married 700 women and recruited 300 concubines.
- _____ Married foreign women.
- _____ Set up shrines for worshipping foreign gods.
- _____ Promoted Jeroboam.
- _____ Tried to kill Jeroboam.
- _____ Other.

4. What happened with the prophet Abijah's interaction with Jeroboam?

- A.** This quick, out-of-the-blue prediction came as a complete surprise.
- B.** In addition to speaking the message, Abijah acted it out with visuals.
- C.** The prophetic statement was a promise.
- D.** The message was conditional upon Jeroboam being faithful.
- E.** Solomon approved of this message.
- F.** It led to Jeroboam having to run for his life to a foreign country.
- G.** It gave Jeroboam reason to return to become the next king of Israel.
- H.** Other.

5. What enemies did Solomon have?

- A.** Most of the women in his harem.
- B.** The prophets in Israel.
- C.** Hadad the Edomite—a survivor from earlier Israelite attacks.
- D.** Pharaoh in Egypt.
- E.** Rezon the gang leader.
- F.** Jeroboam.
- G.** The pagan gods.
- H.** Other.

6. What counsel would you have given to Solomon (if you could have)?

- A.** Follow the God-given wisdom you share with others.
- B.** Turn your enemies into friends.
- C.** Take time to pray.
- D.** Be as great as you can be—make an impact no one will forget.
- E.** Obey the terms of the covenant God made with you.
- F.** You are addicted to your excesses; try fasting from some of them.
- G.** There are consequences to every good and bad choice you make.
- H.** Other.

7. Was Solomon more devoted to God in the first half of his life or the second half? What about King David? What about you?

8. What's something that's no big deal to God? What's something that is a big deal to God? How do you relate to these things?

Split

OPENING QUESTION

Who do you know who can do the splits and not get hurt?

READ 1 Kings 12:1–33.

1. Why did Rehoboam choose Shechem as the place for his coronation?

- A. The royal palace was there.
- B. The ark of the covenant resided in Shechem.
- C. God promised the land to Abram there (*Genesis 12:6-7*).
- D. Jacob purchased that spot for his children (*Genesis 33:18-20*).
- E. Joseph was buried there (*Joshua 24:32*).
- F. It was between Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal (*Deuteronomy 11:29-32*).
- G. Shechem was a City of Refuge (*Joshua 20:7*).
- H. Joshua led all Israel in rededication there (*Joshua 24:1,14-18*).
- I. Other.

2. What was the dynamic at Shechem at this time?

- A. Potential rebellion because kings living in luxury charged high taxes.
- B. The prophecy God had sent through Ahijah (*1 Kings 11:29-40*).
- C. The return of Jeroboam as a potential new king.
- D. Punishment for Solomon breaking God's covenant repeatedly.
- E. Old counselors vs. young counselors.
- F. A chasm between king and commoners.
- G. God's direct intervention.
- H. A new generation had come of age.
- I. Other.

3. What happened because the kingdom split?

- A. Split power made new leaders want more power.
- B. Confusion.
- C. Prosperity.
- D. Civil war.
- E. A return to the God of their fathers.
- F. Exchanging old rituals and practices for new ones.
- G. A split kingdom, but a united commitment to Yahweh.
- H. More and more pagan practices.
- I. Other.

4. Why didn't Rehoboam squash the rebellion?

- A. His remaining army wasn't large enough.
- B. Rehoboam feared for his own life.
- C. The young counselors were split in their advice about what to do now.
- D. The older counselors were split in their advice about what to do now.
- E. He figured he could lure them back to Jerusalem's annual festivals.
- F. God sent a message through Shemaiah to not fight.
- G. When there's a split like a civil war, everyone loses.
- H. Other.

5. What did Jeroboam do as the new king of Israel?

- A. Lived and ruled by God's covenant (1 Kings 11:37-38).
- B. Communicated regularly with the common people.
- C. Led the 10 tribes in worship.
- D. Fortified key cities for protection.
- E. Renewed Aaron's idolatry (cf. *Exodus 32:4* and *1 Kings 12:28*).
- F. Became the role model for future kings of Israel.
- G. Instituted pagan worship in Israel.
- H. Other.

6. What are common reasons religious groups split?

- A. New leaders.
- B. Old leaders.
- C. Apostasy.
- D. Financial problems.
- E. Forgetting their history.
- F. Changing to be current.
- G. Power and control issues.
- H. Other.

7. Why do young people often rebel against their elders? Why do older people not listen well to young people?

8. Mark on the continuum below how you relate to People (X), Beliefs (✓), and Religious Practices (O).

FLEXIBLE

UNCHANGING

Prophetic Message(s)

OPENING QUESTION

Read it in the Bible or hear a human messenger—which would you prefer?

READ 1 Kings 13:1-34.

1. Why did a prophet of Judah go to Bethel to deliver a message?

- A. This was the prophet's attempt to unite the kingdom after it had split.
- B. Jeroboam invited the prophet.
- C. God sent the prophet.
- D. The prophet desecrated the altar at Bethel.
- E. To endorse Jeroboam as Israel's king, not King Rehoboam of Judah.
- F. He wanted to warn Jeroboam that he needed to change.
- G. It was a call for the people of Israel to return to Yahweh as their God.
- H. That's what prophets do—they deliver messages for God.
- I. Other.

2. How did the Israelite king relate to this unnamed prophet from Judah?

- A. He demanded to know why the prophet didn't stay in Judah.
- B. It sparked an invitation to become one of Jeroboam's new priests.
- C. Jeroboam reacted with anger to the prophet's message.
- D. He invited the prophet to come to the palace to eat.
- E. Jeroboam told his soldiers to seize the prophet.
- F. The king asked the prophet to pray for him.
- G. They became lifelong friends.
- H. The prophet's message motivated Jeroboam to worship God.
- I. Other.

3. Why didn't the prophet accept Jeroboam's invitation for a palace meal?

- A. The prophet wasn't hungry.
- B. The prophet didn't trust Jeroboam.
- C. The prophet was vegan and Jeroboam served meat.
- D. God specifically told the prophet to return to Jerusalem immediately.
- E. He was hoping for another invitation from another prophet.
- F. Eating with Jeroboam would show approval of his idol worship.
- G. Everyone knew the food at the palace wasn't very good.
- H. He feared Jeroboam might poison him.
- I. Other.

4. Why did the second prophet lie to the first prophet?

- A. He was a false prophet.
- B. He was a lying prophet.
- C. He was jealous God hadn't given him the message for Jeroboam.
- D. The first prophet would believe anything.
- E. Even prophets get tested.
- F. The Bible doesn't tell us.
- G. He hadn't received God's messages for a while and wanted a reboot.
- H. Other.

5. What made the first prophet's death an "act of God"?

- A. Nothing; it wasn't an "act of God."
- B. Everyone dies eventually.
- C. It came right after the second prophet made his prediction.
- D. Lions don't live in that part of the world.
- E. The lion killed the prophet, but just stood by the donkey.
- F. The prophet directly disobeyed the message God gave him.
- G. God doesn't kill prophets or allow them to be killed.
- H. The lion killed the first prophet, but not the second one who came by.
- I. Other.

6. What good came out of this tragic story?

- A. No good came from this.
- B. Jeroboam changed his ways.
- C. Israel and Judah reunited.
- D. The lying prophet gave the dead prophet an honorable burial.
- E. The first prophet's prediction came true (*2 Kings 23:15-20*).
- F. The people of Bethel were clear about God's messages to them.
- G. Jeroboam's descendants didn't repeat his mistakes.
- H. Other.

7. How do you determine whether or not a message really is from God?

8. How do you respond when God sends you a message you don't like? What is your response when you do like the message from God?

Going Downhill

OPENING QUESTION

Would you rather go uphill or downhill when you: jog? bike? drive?

READ 1 Kings 14:1-31.

1. What made Abijah's sickness such a big deal?

- A. It wasn't a big deal.
- B. Sickness is always a big deal.
- C. Parents often overreact.
- D. Abijah had a history of sickness.
- E. This sickness seemed extra serious.
- F. Abijah was the heir to Jeroboam's throne/kingdom.
- G. This could throw kingly succession into upheaval.
- H. It might threaten the promised dynasty (*1 Kings 11:38*).
- I. Other.

2. Why did the king send his disguised wife to Ahijah to ask about Abijah?

- A. Ahijah was Jeroboam's "go-to" prophet.
- B. Jeroboam didn't trust his self-appointed religious leaders.
- C. He expected a good word from Ahijah about Abijah.
- D. Ahijah had called and predicted Jeroboam would become the king.
- E. Royalty had to pay more for prophesies, so go disguised.
- F. Jeroboam and Ahijah weren't on speaking terms.
- G. Jeroboam felt guilty for all the pagan practices he had initiated.
- H. Jeroboam was confident he could fool the aging Ahijah.
- I. Other.

3. What message did Ahijah give Jeroboam's wife?

- A. Tell me who you are.
- B. Have we met before?
- C. What brought you here?
- D. I'll give you three wishes.
- E. Tell Jeroboam he's doing a great job.
- F. If your son goes vegan, he will get well.
- G. How are you doing with God's covenant (*1 Kings 11:29-39*)?
- H. Because of God's unending mercy, you will never be judged.
- I. Other.

4. How would you summarize Jeroboam's reign?

- A. A lot like King David.
- B. A lot like King Solomon.
- C. A combination of good and bad.
- D. He led God's people from Yahweh to paganism.
- E. A long reign.
- F. Faithful to the covenant.
- G. The standard used to measure and describe Israel's ensuing kings.
- H. Other.

5. How well did Rehoboam do as the king of Judah?

- A. He had a rough start, but did better after that (*1 Kings 12:12-19*).
- B. He obeyed God's prophetic instruction (*1 Kings 12:21-24*).
- C. His reign was shorter than that of David, Solomon, and Jeroboam.
- D. As good as can be expected.
- E. He and his people turned to idolatry.
- F. He and his people turned to Yahweh.
- G. He fought a lot but had little success.
- H. Other.

6. What's likely to make you go downhill in your relationship with God?

- A. Nothing.
- B. Anything.
- C. Some things.
- D. It's my natural selfishness—I want things my way.
- E. Busyness—I don't have enough time for God.
- F. Cultural influences—society's expectations and standards.
- G. My insecurities—it's either me or my perception of God.
- H. It's a roller coaster—ups and downs.
- I. Other.

7. Why do people in powerful positions often go contrary to God?

8. Why do so many people follow leaders who lead them away from God?

This Doesn't Sound Good

OPENING QUESTION

Who is the leader of your home? church? country? Are they good or bad?

READ 1 Kings 15:1-34.

1. What do we know about King Abijam of Judah?

- A. Not much.
- B. He sounds like an unspectacular king.
- C. He stands out as a Godly king.
- D. He stands out as a wicked king.
- E. A reign of three years doesn't sound impressive.
- F. He sounds similar to King Rehoboam of Judah.
- G. He sounds similar to King Jeroboam of Israel.
- H. It seems like he was a mommy's boy (*vs 2*).
- I. Other.

2. What made King Asa a good king?

- A. His father Abijam.
- B. His grandmother Maacah.
- C. His great-great-grandfather David.
- D. He chose to follow Yahweh.
- E. He led the people of Judah to follow Yahweh.
- F. His long reign of 41 years.
- G. Stopping pagan worship.
- H. Warring against evil Israel.
- I. Other.

3. Why did King Asa give the temple gold and silver to the king of Aram?

- A. This broke King Baasha's blockade of Jerusalem at Ramah.
- B. King Asa didn't trust Yahweh to take care of him and the people.
- C. A prophet told him to do this.
- D. He would have lost it in war anyway (*1 Kings 14:25-26*).
- E. He also gave from his own royal treasuries (*1 Kings 15:15:18*).
- F. He wanted to end the perpetual war with Israel.
- G. He wanted to win the war against Israel.
- H. Since God hadn't rescued him, he had to do something himself.
- I. Other.

4. What did King Asa get in return from the king of Aram?

- A. Nothing.
- B. The king of Aram came and attacked Jerusalem.
- C. The king of Aram attacked cities in Israel.
- D. King Baasha removed the blockade at Ramah.
- E. King Asa pillaged the town of Ramah.
- F. The war against Israel ceased.
- G. A message came from God via a prophet.
- H. Other.

5. What do we know about King Nadab of Israel?

- A. Not much.
- B. He had Jeroboam for a father.
- C. He was a lot like Jeroboam.
- D. He was quite different from Jeroboam.
- E. An insurrection killed him and all of his relatives.
- F. He seemed like a nice guy.
- G. This marked the end of Jeroboam's family reign (*1 Kings 11:37-38*).
- H. Other.

6. Why does evil seem so prevalent?

- A. That was just in Bible times.
- B. It remains true today.
- C. Satan is more powerful than God.
- D. Satan sometimes appears to be more powerful than God.
- E. It starts with individual selfishness.
- F. The battle between good and evil continues on a grand scale.
- G. God has limited evil in the universe to this one planet.
- H. Other.

7. What does it look like to not be wholeheartedly devoted to God (*vs 3*)?

8. Why is it so hard to find a good leader? Why is it so hard to be a good leader?

Getting Worse, and Worse

OPENING QUESTION

Describe a time when things seemed bad to you, but then they got worse.

READ 1 Kings 16:1-34.

1. What message did prophet Jehu deliver to Israelite King Baasha?

- A. You are my person to lead at this time.
- B. You're just like Jeroboam—picked from the bottom; placed on top.
- C. You're just like Jeroboam—you led my people into idolatry.
- D. I had hoped for so much more from you.
- E. King David was your role model.
- F. You destroyed Jeroboam's family; now your family will be destroyed.
- G. Those who honor me, I will honor.
- H. The end is near for you.
- I. Other.

2. How did the Israelite King Elah do?

- A. He restored the worship of Yahweh in Israel.
- B. Success for two years.
- C. Like father, like son.
- D. Elah had a drinking problem.
- E. Nobody was happy with his reign.
- F. I've never heard of this guy.
- G. A military coup eliminated Elah, his family, and even his friends.
- H. Read about it in The Book of the History of the Kings of Israel.
- I. Other.

3. What was Zimri's reputation and impact?

- A. Minimal.
- B. Insurrectionist.
- C. Faithful.
- D. God-fearing.
- E. King for only seven days.
- F. A warrior, not a king.
- G. Someone who was really on fire (vs 18).
- H. One who worshipped regularly.
- I. Other.

4. How did Omri become Israel's next king?

- A. Overthrowing the existing king.
- B. God appointed and anointed him as king.
- C. The people came together and chose him to be their king.
- D. It took several years of battle within Israel to determine the next king.
- E. He built a new palace to replace the burned one.
- F. Maintaining Baal as Israel's god pleased the Israelite people.
- G. Relocating the capital to Samaria.
- H. Other.

5. What stands out in your mind when you think of King Ahab?

- A. One of Israel's best kings (*1 Kings 20:13, 28*).
- B. One of Israel's worst kings (*1 Kings 21:25*).
- C. He married Jezebel, Ethbaal's daughter, who promoted Baal worship.
- D. Building an altar and temple for Baal in the capital city—Samaria.
- E. The showdown with Elijah in the next two chapters.
- F. Naboth's vineyard (*1 Kings 21*).
- G. His alliance with Judah's King Jehoshaphat (*1 Kings 22*).
- H. A random arrow killed him (*1 Kings 22:34-35*).
- I. Other.

6. What is your reaction to this series of Israel's kings?

- A. I'm glad I didn't live back then.
- B. I wonder why God doesn't just give up on us completely.
- C. It's not as bad as what we experience today.
- D. Kings and other leaders carry large responsibilities and influence.
- E. There is none who is righteous; no, not one (*Psalms 14:3 and 53:3*).
- F. The greatest want of the world is the want for good leaders.
- G. Three things remain—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest is love.
- H. Other.

7. How do the leaders of God's people today compare to those in *1 Kings 16*?

8. How do you relate to leaders when their policies and actions seem ungodly to you?

Food and Water

OPENING QUESTION

What's your favorite food? What's your favorite drink?

READ 1 Kings 17:1-24.

1. How would you describe Elijah?

- A. Bold.
- B. Crazy.
- C. Spiritual.
- D. An unknown person who came out of nowhere.
- E. God's Messenger.
- F. King Ahab's friend.
- G. Good-looking.
- H. Influencer.
- I. Other.

2. What was Elijah's message?

- A. No rain for three years.
- B. No rain until I say.
- C. Your rain god, Baal, won't be able to give you rain—powerless.
- D. Who will you worship—Yahweh or Baal?
- E. You won't see me for a while.
- F. I'm not leaving until you repent.
- G. Return to Yahweh.
- H. Return to a closer family life (*Malachi 4:5-6*).
- I. Other.

3. How did Elijah survive when he went into hiding?

- A. He wasn't hiding.
- B. He had stockpiled food so he could survive on his own.
- C. He dug a well for water.
- D. Elijah trusted God to provide for him.
- E. He kept making fast-food runs.
- F. Birds brought him food; the brook provided running water.
- G. He prayed a lot.
- H. A bunch of other prophets were hiding with him (*1 Kings 18:4*).
- I. Other.

4. Why did Elijah go to Zarephath?

- A. That was his second home.
- B. It was better to be outside the land of Israel at that time.
- C. Ahab chased him there.
- D. God told Elijah to go there.
- E. A widow there needed Elijah in order for her to survive.
- F. This way Jesus could talk about it later (*Luke 4:25-26*).
- G. Elijah had a message for the people of Zarephath.
- H. Other.

5. What testing did the widow face?

- A. Starvation.
- B. Trusting a stranger.
- C. Living in a pagan country.
- D. Serving Elijah before serving her son or herself.
- E. The death of her son.
- F. Trusting Elijah.
- G. Trusting Elijah's God.
- H. Other.

6. Which of the following actions came from God? Which one(s) didn't?

GOD'S ACTIONS	NOT GOD'S ACTIONS	
_____	_____	No rain.
_____	_____	Food for Elijah.
_____	_____	The brook drying up.
_____	_____	The widow running out of food.
_____	_____	The widow always having food.
_____	_____	The death of the widow's son.
_____	_____	The resurrection of the widow's son
_____	_____	Other.

7. When confronted with a big challenge, are you more likely to take a bold stand or run and hide—how do you decide which one to do?

8. Is it more challenging for your faith to live with unfaithful followers of God or with people who don't believe in your God?

Face-Off

OPENING QUESTION

When have you been outnumbered? What happened?

READ 1 Kings 18:1-46.

1. What would you expect if King Ahab and Elijah met face-to-face?

- A. Ahab would kill Elijah.
- B. Elijah would kill Ahab.
- C. One of them would flee.
- D. They would forgive each other.
- E. The two of them would plan a worship service.
- F. Obadiah would be in the middle of it.
- G. Yahweh would be in the middle of it.
- H. Jezebel would be in the middle of it.
- I. Other.

2. Who created the problem—the three-and-a-half-year drought?

- A. Ahab.
- B. Elijah.
- C. Yahweh.
- D. Baal.
- E. The Israelites.
- F. Jezebel and the prophets of Baal.
- G. The previous wicked kings of Israel.
- H. The generations of Israelite Baal worshipers.
- I. Other.

3. What deal did Elijah make with Ahab, Baal's prophets, and the people?

- A. Majority rules.
- B. Last man standing wins.
- C. Let's make this a prayer contest.
- D. The side that can do better magic is the winner.
- E. The God who answers with fire is the true God.
- F. Whoever worships better will get God's attention.
- G. We're not leaving until this gets settled.
- H. We're not leaving until we get some rain.
- I. Other.

4. Why did the prophets of Baal do what they did in front of Baal's altar?

- A. They loved to shout.
- B. They loved to dance.
- C. They became desperate.
- D. Sometimes you just gotta do what you gotta do.
- E. They were crazy.
- F. They had no other options.
- G. Elijah taunted them into it.
- H. Other.

5. Why did Elijah do what he did in front of Yahweh's altar?

- A. He had to repair the altar because it was broken.
- B. He asked others to help him.
- C. He had to completely depend on God showing up.
- D. This forced him to apologize for taunting Baal's prophets.
- E. Elijah merely did what God had told him to do.
- F. This was Elijah's regular worship practice.
- G. Elijah made it obvious this would require supernatural action.
- H. Other.

6. What did it take for the rain to fall?

- A. Fire had to come before rain.
- B. The people had to return to Yahweh.
- C. The prophets of Baal had to be eliminated.
- D. A change in the natural weather patterns.
- E. More prayer.
- F. A supernatural change in the weather.
- G. Pray seven times—God's perfect number.
- H. Other.

7. When do you face the stark decision of having to choose between God or something/someone else?

8. When is it obvious that God is God? When is it not obvious that God is God?

A Life Or Death Message

OPENING QUESTION

Have you ever felt like you were about to die?

READ 1 Kings 19:1-21.

1. Why did Jezebel vow to kill Elijah?

- A. Elijah had just killed all of Jezebel's prophets of Baal (*1 Kings 18:40*).
- B. Jezebel actually feared Elijah.
- C. Jezebel was accustomed to killing followers of Yahweh.
- D. Kill or be killed.
- E. King Ahab had no control to stop Queen Jezebel.
- F. It was just a bunch of bravado talk (like *1 Kings 20:10*).
- G. Jezebel voiced what Ahab wanted.
- H. This was a test for the triumphant prophet after Mount Carmel.
- I. Other.

2. Why did Elijah run for his life?

- A. Jezebel threatened to kill him within a day.
- B. God couldn't protect Elijah from Jezebel.
- C. Elijah crashed emotionally after the high experience on Carmel.
- D. It's what I would have done.
- E. Physical exhaustion affected his spiritual stamina.
- F. Emotional exhaustion overpowered Elijah's faith/trust in God.
- G. "Safety first" is the motto for all of God's followers.
- H. Elijah forgot what God had already done in his life.
- I. Other.

3. Why didn't Elijah die?

- A. He ran for his life (and he was a great runner—*1 Kings 18:46*).
- B. God protected him.
- C. Jezebel wasn't really going to kill him.
- D. Elijah wanted to die—he was suicidal (*vs 4*).
- E. God provided food and rest.
- F. Thousands of faithful Israelites came to Elijah's aid.
- G. God still had more thing for Elijah to do.
- H. Eventually he did die.
- I. Other.

4. Which event Elijah experienced do you think was a message from God?

- A. The angel's message and actions (*vs 5-8*).
- B. Going 40 days to Mount Sinai/Mount Horeb—the mountain of God.
- C. God's question: "What are you doing here?"
- D. The mighty wind (*vs 11 cf. Exodus 14:21-22; Exodus 19:16*).
- E. The earthquake (*vs 12 cf. Exodus 19:18-19*).
- F. The fire (*vs 12 cf. Exodus 3:1-6; Exodus 19:18*).
- G. The still, small voice (*vs 12*).
- H. Other.

5. What was God's message to Elijah at this time?

- A. Stop your whining.
- B. Go back to your post in Israel.
- C. I want you to kill Jezebel.
- D. You need to see a counselor.
- E. What are you doing here?
- F. You feel like you're all alone, but you really aren't.
- G. I have messages for you to deliver to some key people.
- H. You need to start mentoring someone who will take your place.
- I. Other.

6. How do you respond to this story about Elijah?

- A. I can relate.
- B. I can't relate.
- C. God has never spoken to me.
- D. I haven't heard a "still, small voice" (unless it was my own thoughts).
- E. I'd like to be Elijah.
- F. I'd like to be Elisha.
- G. I need more discernment to discover God's message(s) for me.
- H. Other.

7. Shortly before his crucifixion, Jesus was "transfigured" (see *Mark 9:2-13*) and Moses and Elijah met with him. What do you think Elijah might have said to Jesus at that time?

8. If God asked you, "What are you doing here?" what would be your answer? What would be your attitude?

A Break For Ahab

OPENING QUESTION

Who had the upper hand against you when you were a child?

READ 1 Kings 20:1-21.

1. What was happening in the Northern Kingdom of Israel at this time?

- A. Samaria remained the capital.
- B. Elijah's Mount Carmel event led to a national revival.
- C. Ahab and Jezebel had started to worship Yahweh.
- D. Baal worship continued to flourish.
- E. Israel dominated other nations.
- F. Other nations dominated Israel.
- G. Each Spring, the annual battles determine who ruled (*2 Sam 11:1*).
- H. Prophets of Yahweh prophesied.
- I. Other.

2. What's the story about Ben-Hadad?

- A. His name means "son of the god named Hadad."
- B. Hadad was the god of agriculture for Aram—like Baal for Israel.
- C. Ben-Hadad ruled over a lot of smaller city-states.
- D. His ancestors had made treaties with Israel.
- E. He wanted to make a treaty with Israel.
- F. He wanted to dominate Israel.
- G. Elijah would anoint his replacement (*1 Kings 19:15*).
- H. Naaman was his military general (*2 Kings 5:1*).
- I. Other.

3. Why did God promise deliverance for wicked King Ahab (*vs 13*)?

- A. As the king, Ahab had led a revival of Israel back to Yahweh.
- B. This miracle might convince Ahab that Yahweh was God.
- C. Ahab was open to anything at this time.
- D. Jezebel no longer influenced Ahab.
- E. Ben-Hadad needed to be stopped.
- F. God continued to speak through his prophets.
- G. This is pure grace from God—a gift Ahab didn't deserve.
- H. The Israelites were still God's people.
- I. Other.

4. Why did the much smaller army of Israel defeat the army of Aram?

- A. They caught them by surprise.
- B. Obedience to prophetic messages brings good results.
- C. God makes the difference, not your size or might or skill.
- D. Ben-Hadad and his military leaders were cocky.
- E. Ben-Hadad and his military leaders were drunk.
- F. The battle took place in the hills—advantageous for the Israelites.
- G. God loves to free his people from bullies.
- H. Other.

5. Why did the Arameans fight the Israelites again the next year?

- A. They thought the Israelites had just been lucky the previous year.
- B. The Israelites were strong in the hills, but not on the plains.
- C. A new and bigger army would make a difference.
- D. Humans have a tendency to keep trying to dominate others.
- E. They fulfilled God's prediction through the prophet again.
- F. That's just what the Arameans did each Spring.
- G. The Arameans needed to discover that Yahweh is Lord of all.
- H. Other.

6. Why did Ahab make a treaty with Ben-Hadad?

- A. He had him right where he wanted him.
- B. Ahab never thought he should actually kill Ben-Hadad.
- C. It reversed the power position in favor of Ahab.
- D. Peace is better than war.
- E. Forgive and forget.
- F. Ahab got some Israelite cities returned in the treaty.
- G. This increased the trade between the two countries.
- H. He didn't expect a prophetic message acted out against his actions.
- I. Other.

7. When and where do you receive prophetic messages from God today?

8. The officials of Aram said Yahweh was the God of the hills, not the plains (vs 23). What part(s) of your life is Jesus lord? What part(s) of your life is Jesus not lord?

Power Positions

OPENING QUESTION

Who is someone who has power over you? Who do you have power over?

READ 1 Kings 21:1-29.

1. Why did King Ahab want Naboth's vineyard?

- A. This was just a way to show King Ahab's power over others.
- B. It would make a great vegetable garden.
- C. Ahab really wanted the grapes.
- D. This particular soil was to die for.
- E. It was simply a matter of convenience—nearby.
- F. Ahab's family and Naboth's family had a bad history as neighbors.
- G. This was going to be a gift for Jezebel.
- H. Ahab wanted to make it a prayer garden.
- I. Other.

2. Why didn't Naboth trade or sell his vineyard to King Ahab?

- A. Naboth (means "prophecies") wasn't intimidated by an earthly king.
- B. The land was a gift from Yahweh, not to be sold (Numbers 36:7).
- C. Ahab wasn't following Yahweh, so Naboth wouldn't follow Ahab.
- D. Naboth was holding out for a better price.
- E. Naboth needed to check with his wife first.
- F. He was very sentimental, so he wouldn't release the inherited land.
- G. This particular vineyard was his life.
- H. The vineyard didn't actually belong to Naboth.
- I. Other.

3. How did King Ahab get what he wanted (the vineyard)?

- A. Persistence.
- B. Power.
- C. Pouting.
- D. He placed it in God's hands.
- E. He let his spouse take care of things.
- F. Political leaders might consider themselves above the law and others.
- G. Lies and deceit to sway public opinion and actions.
- H. Manipulation, teaming up with "sons of Belial" (2 Corinthians 6:15).
- I. Other.

4. What happened when King Ahab crossed paths with Elijah this time?

- A. It was like a family reunion.
- B. They picked up right where they had left off (*1 Kings 18:41-46*).
- C. Ahab immediately knew this would not go well for him.
- D. Elijah seemed hesitant to deliver God's message to Ahab.
- E. Ahab wished Jezebel would have been by his side.
- F. God communicated his judgment to King Ahab through Elijah.
- G. Ahab returned the vineyard to Naboth's family.
- H. Other.

5. How did King Ahab respond to God's judgment delivered by Elijah?

- A. He did a power play as king to eliminate Elijah.
- B. Pouting and self-pity.
- C. Sought counsel from Jezebel.
- D. King Ahab repented.
- E. Tried to negotiate with God.
- F. Asked for one more chance.
- G. King Ahab humbled himself, and did so publicly.
- H. Other.

6. Why did God forgive King Ahab instead of wiping him out (*vs 21*)?

- A. That's God's preferred action—forgiveness.
- B. All heaven was rejoicing.
- C. God cared more about Ahab than Naboth.
- D. Justice happens, but usually not immediately.
- E. God didn't forgive King Ahab.
- F. God is always forgiving, which can be a problem.
- G. Ahab really wasn't that bad.
- H. Other.

7. What do you do when you don't get what you want?

8. What seems fair, and what seems unfair in this story?

Ups and Downs

OPENING QUESTION

In your life, do you seem to experience more ups or more downs?

READ 1 Kings 22:1-53.

1. Why did Jehoshaphat agree to team up with wicked King Ahab (vs 4)?

- A. Ahab wasn't that wicked.
- B. Jehoshaphat was just as wicked as Ahab.
- C. Jehoshaphat wanted to make alliances with nearby kings.
- D. This was an attempt to unite Judah with the tribes of Israel.
- E. Ahab and Jehoshaphat were related through marriage (2 Kings 8:18).
- F. They shared a common enemy—Aram.
- G. Jehoshaphat simply followed Ahab's lead.
- H. Jehoshaphat wasn't in full agreement with Ahab.
- I. Other.

2. Why consult with Yahweh after saying "Yes" to Ahab (vs 5)?

- A. Jehoshaphat always asked God for input.
- B. Getting confirmation from God is a good thing to do.
- C. Asking God after deciding kept Jehoshaphat in charge.
- D. Jehoshaphat had some reservations about Ahab's plan.
- E. It's dangerous to follow a wicked leader/king.
- F. Jehoshaphat was looking for a good way out of this situation.
- G. He wanted to see his good friend Micaiah.
- H. Jehoshaphat didn't trust Ahab's 400 prophets.
- I. Other.

3. What message did Micaiah deliver?

- A. The same message as Ahab's prophets.
- B. The opposite message of Ahab's prophets.
- C. Only what God told him to say.
- D. Micaiah taunted King Ahab.
- E. He predicted the death of Ahab.
- F. He predicted the death of Jehoshaphat.
- G. He was the true prophet and all the others were false prophets.
- H. A message both kings chose to obey.
- I. Other.

4. How did things go in the battle?

- A. Just the way Ahab and Jehoshaphat hoped.
- B. Just the way Micaiah prophesied.
- C. Ahab avoided the attack by disguising himself.
- D. Jehoshaphat was the main target of the enemy.
- E. Jehoshaphat proved to be a scaredy cat.
- F. The Israelites reclaimed Ramoth-Gilead.
- G. The Arameans maintained control of Ramoth-Gilead.
- H. Other.

5. How would you summarize Jehoshaphat's rule as the king of Judah?

- A. More good than bad.
- B. More bad than good.
- C. Wishy-washy.
- D. He did the best he could do.
- E. You'll find more positive things in *2 Chronicles 17-20* than *1 Kings 22*.
- F. Too many alliances with pagan rulers.
- G. Major trust in God (*2 Chronicles 20*).
- H. Other.

6. How would you summarize your life so far?

- A. More good than bad.
- B. More bad than good.
- C. Wishy-washy.
- D. I've done the best I can.
- E. It depends on who you ask.
- F. It's more of a journey than just one moment in time.
- G. Lately things have gotten better.
- H. Lately things have gotten worse.
- I. Other.

7. Does interaction with wicked people strengthen your commitment to God or weaken it?

8. What's an example of you consciously choosing something because of God? What's an example of you unconsciously doing something without God?

