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Leading the Kingdom

CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

153rd General Assembly

- **TUESDAY @ 9:00 AM** in 417 CAP
- **TUESDAY @ 12 NOON** in 123 CAP

Capitol Commission Bible Studies are held every Tuesday morning at 9:00am in 417 CAP, and again at 12 Noon in 123 CAP. The weekly Bible study is *nonpartisan and non-denominational*. The study for the 2016 General Assembly is the book of First Kings.

I pray that this study will be edifying to you. I am here to serve you and to be a resource for prayer and counsel. Please accept my study in the Word of God, as evidence of my desire to serve you.

– Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission Bible Studies

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Tuesday, 12 January 2016

First Kings 1 – “Leading the Kingdom”

The 2000 presidential election would be determined in the state of Florida. Television networks announced that Vice President Al Gore had carried the state, and then it was reported that Texas Governor George W. Bush had won. Experts predicted the race would be close, but none imagined it would almost be “too close to call.” The 2000 presidential election was so close that it took five weeks to determine the winner.

The election was complicated and convoluted with allegations of disenfranchisement and voter fraud, resulting in bitter disputes, lawsuits, and requests for recounts. For the first time in 112 years, a candidate won the popular vote but lost the electoral vote. Gore eventually conceded the election publicly, and Bush became the forty-third president of the United States.

While the election was certainly controversial, and though Gore did not conceal his discontent with the ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court, the process was peaceful. Although demonstrators protested and discussions were impassioned, there were not any threats from armed rebellion or physical violence from either of the parties. Although the transfer of power was protracted and regretful, it was nevertheless democratic and nonviolent, which reveals much

concerning the American process, since, *historically*, the confusion involved in the election has not always resulted in such a manner.

First Kings begins with a power struggle that resulted in Solomon’s rise to the throne. *The opening chapters of First Kings reveal the depravity that can manifest itself in all us.* First Kings begins with a critical moment in the history of a nation, and addresses both political and spiritual power. Ultimately, we learn that living in a fallen world necessitates that God’s people act astutely and resolutely to promote the Lord’s sovereign purposes.

A KINGDOM DIVIDED

The two books of Kings were originally a single work within the Hebrew Bible. As the title of the book suggests, the two works depict the history of the kings of Israel and Judah from the time of Solomon until the Babylonian captivity.

A king’s tremendous success – by means of administrative competence or political prowess – does not necessarily constitute success to God. *The Lord evaluates an individual’s contribution on the basis of one primary examination: obedience to his revealed Word, the Holy Bible.* The test of obedience alone determines either failure or success with God. The Lord does not evaluate success on the basis of outward appearance (1 Sam 16:7).

I Samuel 16:7 – But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

I Peter 3:3-4 – Your adornment must not be merely external . . . but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

Scripture reminds us that true beauty is not based upon external adornment; rather, it arises from one’s inner self (1 Pet 3:3-4). Consequently, the book of Kings is quite selective with the details that it records concerning the life of each king. Momentous economic and political contributions are often neglected with relative silence because *God’s concern is primarily the spiritual vitality of a king’s reign.*

The reign of Solomon begins a weakening of the kingly office, which eventually becomes so decadent that God can seldom use the kings as his representative. Consequently, subsequent to Solomon’s rule, God will primarily utilize a different office to further his sovereign purposes: the prophet. Not only were the prophets associated with the kings and rulers of the nation, but also they spoke to the general populace. The reason for the messages they proclaimed is crucial to understand.



Capitol Commission Bible Studies

Tuesday (12 January) @ 9:00am – 9:30am, 417 CAP

Tuesday (12 January) @ 12 Noon – 12:45pm, 123 CAP

lunch provided from sponsorship by State Representative Bruce Williamson



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It would be a grave mistake, however, to assume that, because of the great interest of the prophets in the monarchy, they were themselves primarily politicians. Their political activity is always subservient to a religious end. They did serve as the counsellors, but they did so in order that the theocratic kingdom might prosper [Edward J. Young, *My Servants the Prophets* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952; reprint, 1983) 82].

Due to their indifference with spiritual matters and frequent apostasy, which resulted in them being in violation of God's will, the kings often conflicted with the prophets, who served as God's spokesmen. The message of First Kings "is that of a nation passing from affluence and influence to poverty and paralysis." To discern the enduring values of First Kings, "we must keep before the mind two thrones—that on earth with its succession of kings, and that in the heavens with its one King." When examining "the former we see the failing government of men, and in looking at the latter we see the unfailing government of God" [G. Campbell Morgan, *Living Messages of the Books of the Bible*, 2 vols (New York: Revell, 1912) 1:177].

A KINGDOM CHALLENGED

(*I Kgs 1:1-10*) Solomon is the primary character in chapters 1—11 of First Kings. Chapter 1 begins with his ascension to the throne, and chapter 11 is concluded with his death. Chapters 1—2 reveal the events associated with Solomon's rise to the throne.

First Kings begins with David in old age and soon to die. Two of his sons, Adonijah and Solomon, are in opposition for the right to inherit the throne. Amply concerned for the threat to the purposes of God, the prophet Nathan acted decisively and shrewdly in response to Adonijah's attempts to seize the throne, rather than being passive for God's will to be accomplished.

NATHAN ACTED DECISIVELY AND SHREWDLY . . . RATHER THAN BEING PASSIVE FOR GOD'S WILL TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.

Adonijah is similar to David's other son, Absalom, who sought to instigate a rebellion to depose God's chosen king. The difference between the two sons is whom they enlisted for help, yet both sons relied upon their charisma, embellishments, and handsomeness (cf. 2 Sam 15:1-12; 1 Kgs 1:5-9). Absalom secretly plotted his revolt by persuading the common people. Adonijah, however, conspired to seize the throne by convincing his brothers (excepting Solomon) and other influential men from David's court.

Although responsible for his behavior, the fundamental cause of Adonijah's behavior is related to the fact that "his father had never crossed him at any time by asking, 'Why have you done so [viz. proclaimed yourself king]?' (1 Kgs 1:5-6). David was much too *laissez-faire* with Adonijah; consequently, this son had little respect for God-given authority. The uprising was brief because Solomon was anointed as king prior to the death of his father, King David.

Bible study luncheon sponsored by:
State Representative Bruce Williamson
Georgia House District 115

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A KINGDOM LED RESPECTFULLY AND WISELY

(*I Kgs 1:11-37*) The prophet Nathan had been King David's trusted advisor, and was also the one through whom God promised an eternal kingdom (cf. 2 Sam 7:4-17; 12:1-15; 1 Chron 29:29). Solomon was God's choice for the throne (2 Sam 12:24-25), yet the Davidic line was not exempt from power struggles (2 Sam 15:1—18:33; 20:1-22). Nathan, therefore, instructed the queen mother, Bathsheba, to remind the king that he had already sworn – by the will of God – that he would cede the throne to her son, Solomon, subsequent to his death. *Leaders must be led occasionally*, thus Nathan and Bathsheba did so with respect and wisdom.

LEADERS MUST BE LED OCCASIONALLY . . . WITH RESPECT AND WISDOM.

A KINGDOM NECESSITY

(*I Kgs 1:38-53*) Solomon was crowned king at the Gihon spring, which was the primary water source of Jerusalem, and thus a prominent gathering locale of the people. A feature of the natural topography was the jubilant "uproar" of the coronation, which echoed less than a mile down the valley to Adonijah (1:40-41). Adonijah and his supporters fled in terror when the news of Solomon's coronation was announced. Fearing reprisal, they fled to "the horns of the altar" (v. 51; cf. Exod 21:12-14). While it is possible that Adonijah sought atonement for his rebellion against Solomon (cf. Exod 19:12; 30:10), it is more likely that he fled for safety not sanctity. *Religion is often something insincere people employ only for personal profit.*

Solomon demonstrated his noble and responsible character by acting with royal authority, in light of God's blessing (1 Kgs 1:48) without acquiescing to his father or having others act on his behalf (vv. 52-53). Adonijah was offered release, but only if he would prove himself to be "worthy." **A primary emphasis of First Kings 1 is the absolute necessity for God's people – who are "strangers and pilgrims" in this world (11:13) – to make decisions that are able-minded and steadfast so as to foster the Lord's sovereign purposes.**

Thank you for allowing Capitol Commission the nobility to provide Bible studies to you. If you have any questions, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.

About Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission state ministers are pastors-missionaries who teach weekly verse-by-verse Bible studies for legislators, lobbyists, and staff members. The Bible studies are hand-distributed to each legislative office, emailed, and made available throughout the Capitol community. Capitol Commission is a ministry of the church seeking to proclaim the gospel message, and to help believers mature through verse-by-verse Bible teaching. In the Bible, we see God's love for the world, especially those who have been placed in authority. This is the foundation for our ministry to you.

The church is instructed to submit and to honor government leaders (Rom 13:1-7), and to pray for their eternal salvation (1 Tim 2:1-4). The desire of Capitol Commission is to witness God transform the hearts and lives of elected officials, lobbyists, and staff members. We apply this mandate to four primary areas of discipleship: (1) *evangelize* those who have not known saving faith in Jesus Christ; (2) *establish* those who desire to grow in their faith and knowledge of Scripture; (3) *equip* those called to spiritual leadership; and, (4) *encourage* churches to participate with us in ministry.

NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION BIBLE STUDIES:
Tuesday, 19 January @ 9:00am in 417 CAP
and again (with lunch) @ 12 NOON in 123 CAP