

1 KINGS WEEK TWO – September 9, 2021

Questions for 1 Kings 4-6 “Bigger and Better – King Solomon’s Ambition”

This week’s reading will seem like just lists of people, floor plans for Solomon’s building projects and a brief mention about Solomon’s wisdom. We’ll have some extra non-biblical material this week concerning Solomon’s building projects, but don’t let it keep you from reading these three chapters! There are clues in these texts that point to Solomon’s priorities and what it might mean for the future of Israel’s united kingdom.

1. Although the first half of chapter 4 seems like not much more than a list of names, what can you speculate about Solomon’s leadership priorities based on who he has in his court?
2. What conclusions can you make about Solomon’s rule based on his material resources? What were his priorities here?
3. Why do you think the author wanted to put so much emphasis on Solomon’s wisdom? We know that Solomon prayed for and received wisdom based on the narrative in chapter 3, but why, then, is 4:29-34 necessary?
4. Why was David not able to build the temple since it was his idea in the first place? Why does Solomon take on the project and how does it seem different than David’s original plans back in 2 Samuel 6-7?
5. Why is Solomon’s alliance with King Hiram of Tyre so important? What was the nature of the covenant they had with each other? What did each give and receive?
6. Where did Solomon get the “forced labor” (5:13) to build the temple? How was this problematic?
7. What conditions did God give for Solomon to build the temple and for God living among the Israelites?
8. How much Canaanite culture was evident in Solomon’s building projects and how was this good or bad?