1. *Introduction*:

1 and 2 Kings in the English Bible were considered one book in the Hebrew Bible. The books were divided for the sake of convenience by those who translated the Old Testament into Greek some 200 years before Christ.

2. *Authorship*:

Jewish tradition assigns the authorship of the books of Kings to the prophet Jeremiah. Scholars have noted much language kinship between the books of Jeremiah and Kings. No conclusive argument against Jeremiah’s authorship has been raised.

3. *Situation*:

Solomon’s reign lasted forty years. After his death, God’s people divided into two kingdoms—Israel in the north, Judah in the south—for a period of about 210 years. Key individuals in the book are Solomon and Elijah. In the northern kingdom there were two major kings—Jereboam and Ahab with his wife, Jezebel. Kings Asa and Jehoshaphat led national revivals in the southern kingdom.

4. *Of Special Interest*:

-Comparing a ruthless and shameless woman to *Jezebel* is based on the biblical description of the wife of King Ahab.

-Legend says that the Queen of Sheba gave birth to a son by Solomon. This child supposedly became king of Ethiopia. A group of Ethiopian Jews trace their roots to this king.

-The name of King Ahab’s father, Omri, shows up in the ancient records of both the Moabites and the Assyrians. To the Assyrians, Israel was known as *the land of Omri*.

5. *A Brief Outline of 1 Kings:*

1 Kings 1-4 Solomon is established on the throne

1 Kings 5-8 He builds the temple for which David has prepared

1 Kings 9-11 Solomon’s splendor. His introduction of idolatry.

1 Kings 12-14 The kingdom is divided between Rehoboam of Judah and Jereboam of Israel

1 Kings 15:1-16:28 Lesser known kings of Israel and Judah

1 Kings 16:29-22:40 Ahab, King of Israel, and Elijah, God’s prophet

1 Kings 22:41-53 Kings Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah

6. *July Reading Guide*

Week of Jun 27-Jul 3 1 Kings 1-5

Week of Jul 4-10 1 Kings 6-10

Week of Jul 11-17 1 Kings 11-14

Week of Jul 18-24 1 Kings 15-18

Week of Jul 25-31 1 Kings 19-22