DESCRIPTION

At a dark moment in Israel’s history, the *lost book of the Law* was found in the temple. The discovery of this book ushered in an era of revival and reformation. Ironically, this story is told in 2 Kings 23, a book that itself needs to be rediscovered by a new generation of readers. This course is a recovery operation, and develops a reading 1 & 2 with sensitivity to the literary, historical, and theological dynamics of this incredible story. Starting with the death of a king, the book ends with the death of kingship, and the future of God’s people hanging—so it seems—by a slender thread. The book of Kings has a powerful message for our contemporary world, with matters of faith often marginalized, and changing paradigms emerging. As we will discover, the establishment of the monarchy represented a crucial stage in the story of Israel, with a host of questions about leadership, divine sovereignty, identity, courage in the midst of crisis, and the drama of trust in the prophetic word.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES
At the end of the course, students should be able to:
• demonstrate a broad knowledge of 1 & 2 Kings in terms of content, themes, and theological purposes for its composition.
• understand this sweeping and expansive narrative as a sophisticated and highly nuanced work of theology, with all its attendant complexities, triumphs and tragedies.
• perform competent exegesis of selected texts with sufficient literary appreciation and theological depth.
• take preliminary steps toward disseminating the message of this book to various audiences in the academic world and the church.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED TEXTS

For the research paper in the course we will use a required text, my recent book on the career of Jeroboam in 1 Kings: Keith Bodner, Jeroboam’s Royal Drama (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) Supplementary materials will be posted within the discussion forums, and the course bibliography can also be used for the discussion questions and for the research paper.

OUTLINE

PART I. 1 Kings

Week 1. Introduction / The Accession of Solomon (1 Kings 1-2)
Week 2. Constructive Criticism (1 Kings 3-9)
Week 3. Divided Heart, Divided Nation (1 Kings 10-13)
Week 4. Northern Exposure (1 Kings 14-18)
Week 5. Prophetic Contests (1 Kings 19-22)

PART II. 2 Kings

Week 6. Chariots and Fire (2 Kings 1-3)
Week 7. Days of Elisha (2 Kings 4-8)
Week 8. Jehu’s Reign (2 Kings 9-12)
Week 9. Requiem for Samaria (2 Kings 13-17)
Week 10. Hezekiah’s Assyrian Crisis (2 Kings 18-21)
Week 11. Babylon Rising (2 Kings 22-24)
Week 12. Judah’s Captivity (2 Kings 25)
Week 13. FINAL EXAM

ASSESSMENT

1. Discussion Forums 25%
2. Reflection Questions 25%
3. Research Paper 25%
1. **Discussion Forums**  
During each week we will have the opportunity to engage in online class discussions of the relevant chapters under consideration. Students will be divided into groups, with each group responsible to share their opinions on a given question with the class. The questions in the discussion forums will also be the questions on the final exam at the end of the course. Each student is expected to make a useful contribution, either in the form of opinions proffered, critical engagement, relevant contribution from a key secondary source, or responses to comments from the group.

Assessment is cumulative, and will comprise 25% of the total grade.

**Forum Discussion Evaluation Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completeness of post</td>
<td>addresses none of the questions presented; far too short; nearly all are incomplete</td>
<td>addresses less than all of the questions; shorter in length; several answers are incomplete</td>
<td>addresses all parts of the questions; respectable length; somewhat complete</td>
<td>completely addresses all parts of the questions; respectable length; complete response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promptness and Initiative</td>
<td>initial posting after Tuesday; does not respond to most postings; rarely participates freely</td>
<td>initial posting on or before Tuesday; responds to most postings several days after initial discussion; limited initiative</td>
<td>initial posting on or before Tuesday; responds to most postings within a timely manner; requires occasional prompting to post</td>
<td>initial posting on or before Tuesday; consistently responds to postings in a timely manner; demonstrates good self-initiative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of Post</td>
<td>utilizes poor spelling and grammar in most posts; posts appear &quot;hasty&quot;</td>
<td>errors in spelling and grammar evidenced in several posts</td>
<td>few grammatical or spelling errors are noted in posts</td>
<td>consistently uses grammatically correct posts with rare misspellings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance of Post</td>
<td>posts topics which do not relate to the discussion content; makes short or irrelevant remarks</td>
<td>occasionally posts off topic; most posts are short in length and offer no further insight into the topic</td>
<td>frequently posts topics that are related to discussion content; post prompts further discussion of topic</td>
<td>consistently posts topics related to discussion topic; cites additional references, post prompts further discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression Within the Post</td>
<td>does not express opinions or ideas clearly; no connection to topic</td>
<td>unclear connection to topic evidenced in minimal expression of opinions or ideas; mostly unsubstantiated opinions</td>
<td>opinions and ideas are occasionally substantiated; stated clearly with occasional lack of connection to topic</td>
<td>expresses substantiated opinions and ideas in a clear and concise manner with obvious connection to topic</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Contribution to the Learning Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>does not make effort to participate in learning community as it develops; seems indifferent</td>
<td>occasionally makes meaningful reflection on group’s efforts; marginal effort to become involved with group</td>
<td>frequently attempts to direct the discussion and to present relevant viewpoints for consideration by group; interacts freely</td>
<td>aware of needs of community; frequently attempts to motivate group discussion; presents creative approaches to topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**

### 2. Reflection Questions

Every week one question will be posted under this category, yielding a total of 12 for the entire course. These questions are inductive and engaging, and based on each weekly section of 1 & 2 Kings. For instance, the *reflection question* for week 1 is as follows: “In your opinion, how is Solomon characterization in 1 Kings 1-2? Comment on his first words and early actions in the narrative.” This assignment will allow the student to explore a range of issues in 1 & 2 Kings, and provide a chance for in-depth thinking on each major section of the text. It is expected that each question will require a solid paragraph (single-spaced) response, and the student is free to employ various secondary sources where appropriate. When completed, this assignment should be emailed as an attachment to the professor as a Word or .pdf document.

Due: one week after the end of term, for 25% of total grade.

**Reflection Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Quality</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to write clearly and cogently. Provides adequate personal examples. Writing is well organized and builds to a definite conclusion.</td>
<td>Ability to write cogently. Provides some personal examples. Writing is organized and leads to a conclusion.</td>
<td>Provides generalized examples. Writing is not well organized and lacks a concise conclusion.</td>
<td>Writing difficult to follow. Lacks specific examples. Work it is not organized and lacks a conclusion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insights, Understanding and deductive reasoning</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work conveys clear awareness of the impact that knowledge of truth about God has on understanding of self in relation to God and the world as well as the response we are to make to God. Clear connection between work reviewed during the past week and reflections.</td>
<td>Work conveys awareness of the impact that knowledge of truth about God has on understanding of self in relation to God and the world as well as the response we are to make to God. There is a connection between work reviewed during the past week and reflections.</td>
<td>Work conveys some awareness of the impact that knowledge of truth about God has on understanding of self in relation to God and God. Makes no little mention of required response. Some connection between work reviewed during the past week and reflections.</td>
<td>Work conveys little direct awareness of the impact that knowledge of truth about God has on understanding of self. Reflection appears unconnected to concepts reviewed during the week.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness of areas of tension with own values and that of surrounding</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work conveys clear awareness of the tensions created when</td>
<td>Work conveys an awareness of the tensions created when</td>
<td>Work conveys some awareness of the tensions created when</td>
<td>Work conveys little awareness of the tensions created when</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Research Paper
Since this course is designed for those who will be involved in various levels of leadership in the church and the academy, this assignment presents an opportunity to carefully consider matters of application, scholarship, and relevance of the Kings material. This paper is to be 3500 words in length, and provides the chance to showcase research skills combined with careful exegesis and theological interpretation. Our subject matter for this paper is the Jeroboam narrative in 1 Kings 11-14, and there are a range of possible topic options. For instance: how is Jeroboam characterized in 1 Kings, and how does his career move from great promise to disaster? Or:
What is the contribution of 1 Kings 13 to the larger history of Israel in Kings? Or: The prophet Ahijah is an important figure in the story, how is he presented? Students are free to choose any topic within 1 Kings 11-14—and our textbook should be helpful here—but given that the paper is due at the end of week 8, it is recommended that a topic be selected no later than week 3.

Due at the end of week 8, for 25% of the total grade.

**Rubric for Final Paper**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identifies Issues/Problems</strong> (if applicable)</td>
<td>Demonstrates a clear and deep understanding of the contemporary issue clearly based in theological understanding of contemporary culture</td>
<td>Demonstrates a clear understanding of the contemporary issue based in theological understanding of contemporary culture</td>
<td>Demonstrates an understanding of the contemporary issue based on theological understanding of contemporary culture</td>
<td>Demonstrates superficial understanding of the contemporary issue based on limited theological understanding of contemporary culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connections: Theory and Practice.</strong></td>
<td>Makes appropriate, insightful and powerful connections between the issue/problem and the material covered.</td>
<td>Makes appropriate and insightful connections between the issue/problem and the material covered.</td>
<td>Makes appropriate but somewhat vague connections between the issue/problem and the material covered.</td>
<td>Makes little or no connection between the issue/problem and the material covered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration of all material covered</strong></td>
<td>Accurately and precisely integrates all relevant conceptual material from the course. References clearly recognizable.</td>
<td>Accurately integrates relevant conceptual material from the course. References recognizable.</td>
<td>Limited integration of conceptual material from the course. References somewhat obscure and difficult to identify.</td>
<td>Integrates few or no concepts from the course. References difficult to find.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendations</strong></td>
<td>Makes realistic, appropriate and insightful recommendations clearly supported by the theological principles learnt.</td>
<td>Makes realistic and appropriate recommendations clearly supported by the theological principles learnt.</td>
<td>Makes realistic or appropriate recommendations supported by the theological principles learnt.</td>
<td>Makes realistic or appropriate recommendations with limited support from the theological principles learnt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incorporation of redemptive mission of God, call of the church and understanding of eschatology</strong></td>
<td>Response clearly framed in terms of God’s redemptive mission, eschatology and consequent call to and mission of the church as covered in the course.</td>
<td>Response framed in terms of God’s redemptive mission, eschatology and consequent call to and mission of the church as covered in the course.</td>
<td>Response contains some references to God’s redemptive mission, eschatology and consequent call to and mission of the church as covered in the course.</td>
<td>Response contains little reference to God’s redemptive mission, eschatology and consequent call to and mission of the church as covered in the course.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 & 2 Kings – Syllabus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formulation of Response</th>
<th>Response clearly addresses the problem in a way that fosters transformation/redemption based on sound theology.</th>
<th>Response addresses the problem in a way that fosters transformation/redemption based on sound theology.</th>
<th>Response addresses the problem. Response is not necessarily redemptive.</th>
<th>Response does not address problem directly. Tends to be prescriptive and not redemptive.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adaption as opposed to adoption</td>
<td>Message clearly adapted to perceived audience but avoids temptation to adopt cultural mindset. Clearly confronts and addresses problem without condemnation.</td>
<td>Message adapted to perceived audience but avoids temptation to adopt cultural mindset. Confronts and addresses problem without condemnation.</td>
<td>Message somewhat adapted to perceived audience. Mostly avoids temptation to adopt cultural mindset. Exhibits some accommodation with culture.</td>
<td>Message not adapted to perceived audience. Tendency to accommodate culture and avoid presentation of the truth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Final Exam
To be written during the last week of term, this exam is an opportunity for the student to share insights gleaned over the duration of the course. As mentioned above, there will be no new or surprise questions, only those encountered and discussed during the course. Each week we will have four questions in our discussion forums, and these will provide the material for the final exam. Consequently, exam preparation will be relatively easy, as the student is simply expected to integrate our course discussions, and present final responses to the questions we have discussed together. This is an opportunity to draw all of our resources together, and share our learning in a useful way.

To be written during the final week of term, for 25% of the total grade.

Student Time Expectation Table

| Weekly Reading and Listening (12 weeks) | -- | 60 hours | 5 hours/week |
| Weekly Discussion (10 weeks) | 25% | 20 hours | 2 hour/week |
| Reflection questions (12 responses) | 25% | 10 hours (student schedules) |
| Research paper | 25% | 36 hours (student schedules) |
| Final Exam Prep | 25% | (student schedules) |
| Total Grade | 100 % | 126 hours | 10.5 hours/week (average) |
BIBLIOGRAPHY


DeVries, Simon J. 1 Kings. WBC, 12; Waco, TX: Word, 1985.


Leithart, Peter. 1 & 2 Kings. Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible; Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2006.


