

Not Alone: God's Relentless Pursuit

Group Discussion Guide | June 7

Series overview and leader instructions

“Not Alone” is an 11-week journey through the Old Testament, tracing God’s desire to dwell with His people and His faithful work to bring redemption. Through every season—deliverance, provision, rebellion, exile, and restoration—we see one unified story of grace, pointing to Jesus and the promise of God dwelling with His people forever.

The sermons in this series will take a fly-over, covering multiple chapters—and sometimes multiple books—in a single sermon. You may find that some people in your group may be unfamiliar with these stories and benefit from some additional context.

We recommend incorporating videos from The Bible Project books of the Bible overview videos as needed. As the leader, you can decide whether to watch the videos as a group or send them out in your group chat or via email for people to watch on their own, or some combination of the two. Recommended videos will be linked in each week’s group guide.

Here is the overview video of 1 & 2 Kings: <https://bibleproject.com/videos/kings/>

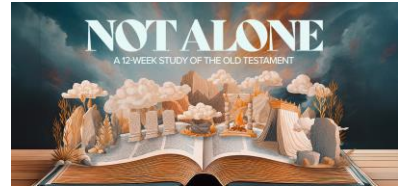
As always, use the group discussion guide below in the way that works best for *your* group. Prayerfully review the material and note the questions you sense the Spirit leading you to focus on. Linger on questions that yield fruitful discussion. Break into pairs or smaller groups for conversation or keep the discussion in the larger group. You know your group! Use this guide as a template but make it your own.

Opening reflection questions (10 minutes).

Begin your time together by inviting people to share their answers to the following:

In this week’s sermon, Emerson summarized what 1 & 2 Kings teaches us about human nature: Everyone thinks they can BE their own king and everyone thinks they can LIVE like a king. We know that’s not how it should be, but let’s just pretend for a minute you ARE a king or a queen.

- What would be the best part and why? Ideas: the palaces, the servants, the jewels, the private jets, the service to your country, the power . . . what would you most like about being king or queen?
- What would be the worst part of being a king or queen?



Discuss the sermon and books of 1 & 2 Kings (45 minutes).

- What stood out to you from Emerson's sermon?

We see some negative character traits in the kings—can we be self-aware enough to notice those traits in our own lives? Let's take a look.

(Note: If you have time, you could choose one of the passages to read before answering the related question; Scripture references are provided at the end of each question.)

- Solomon's son Rehoboam didn't like the wise advice his father's counselors gave him, so he listened to the advice of his friends instead. Can you think of a time you ignored good advice—or sought advice from someone you knew would tell you what you wanted to hear? (1 Kings 12:1-19)
- King Ahab listened to Jezebel when she told him that as king he could do what he wanted, even if it meant killing Naboth to take his vineyard. Share some moments in your life when you are tempted to think, "I should get to do what I want to do" regardless of how it affects those around you. (1 Kings 21:1-19)
- King Ahaz made an alliance with the powerful but dangerous king of Assyria. He sought protection from his enemies from an earthly king rather than God. Where do you see tendencies to rely on "allies" other than God when trouble come in your life or the lives of those around you? (2 Kings 16)
- Are there other ways you find yourself wanting to BE your own king or to LIVE like a king?

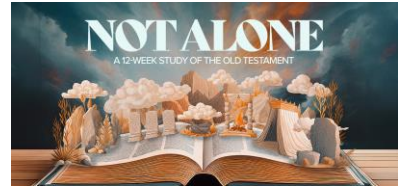
It's easy to judge the kings of Israel and Judah—and some of them did some truly terrible things—but we can identify similar patterns in our own lives. Like them, we often want to BE our own kings and LIVE like a king.

This "take what you want, do what you want" attitude has plagued humanity since the Garden of Eden. The desire to define for ourselves what is right and wrong, good and evil is at the heart of sin.

But Jesus—the one true King—shows us a different way. Let's go to the New Testament to see an example of how Jesus responds when faced with the sorts of temptations that Rehoboam, Ahab, Ahaz, and we fall prey to.

Read Matthew 4:1-11. Consider reading it out loud once, asking the following question, then inviting people to read it quietly to themselves again before answering.

- What does Jesus show us and teach us about how to respond to the temptation to be our own king?



Rehoboam and Ahab had people who spoke into their lives with ungodly counsel. They sought and listened to the advice of people who were greedy and lacked wisdom. They didn't put themselves in an optimal spiritual environment (to say the least).

Recognizing the way we want to BE our own kings and LIVE like kings is an important step. Ordering our lives in a way that encourages us to place Jesus on the throne instead is also vital.

Please take a moment to prayerfully consider each of the following questions before answering them:

- Can you think of a way the Holy Spirit is inviting you to reorder your life—your schedule, your priorities, your habits—so that Jesus is more firmly on the throne of your life?
- What is a specific way our life group can be the *opposite* of Rehoboam's friends and Jezebel? How can we encourage you when you are tempted to BE your own king or LIVE like a king?

Closing prayer (10 minutes).

Invite people to share their prayer requests. Consider asking a different person in the group to pray for each request.

Let everyone know you will be closing your time in prayer with words from David in 2 Samuel 22.

Closing prayer: Lord, you are our rock, our fortress, and our deliverer. You are the one in whom we take refuge. In our distress we call out to you. You reach down from on high and draw us out of deep waters. We call upon you, Lord, for you are worthy of our praise. May we remember that you alone are our true King. Amen.