

The Book of 2 Kings

Listed Scriptures

2 Kings

Lesson Aim

- 1) That the students would have basic knowledge about the kings of Israel and Judah
- 2) That the students would learn from the strengths and weaknesses of the characters studied in this lesson

Memory Verse

"Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who delights greatly in His commandments" (Ps 112:1)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

2 Kings

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



After the division of the Israelite kingdom into the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, Israel and Judah existed side by side for two centuries. Sometimes they were at peace, sometimes they were at war. The Assyrians conquered Israel in the year 722 B.C. and the whole northern territory was annexed by the great Assyrian Empire. Judah also fell under Assyrian domination, but continued as a separate kingdom for almost a century and a half, until the Babylonians conquered them and swept them into captivity about the year 586 B.C.

Kings Named Joash

Joash (as mentioned in chapters 11, 12) was the 9th king of Judah, who became king at the age of seven, through the help of Jehoiada. His father was Ahaziah and his mother was Zibiah. His grandmother, Athaliah, killed all the potential heirs to

the throne after her son Ahaziah died. However, baby Joash was saved and hidden till he was seven (chapter 11). The Bible also spells his name as Jehoash. It is easy to be confused by the spelling of the names. There is another “Joash” (as mentioned in 13:9) who was the son of Jehoahaz of Israel. He became the 12th king of Israel. His name was actually Jehoash, but is sometimes spelled Joash.

Teachers should also refer to the Bible Background section in Lesson 7 for additional information.

W A R M U P



Last week, we looked briefly into some major characters during the period of the kings in the history of the Israelite nation. Do you still remember who they are and what major events occurred in their lives? Today, we continue to look at some of the prophets and kings, both from the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. Their failures should serve as a warning for us; their good examples, a source of inspiration.

Teaching Tips

Since some of the kings of Israel and Judah have the same names, it may be helpful to refer to a chart of all the kings of Israel and Judah, found in most Bibles.

B I B L E S T U D Y



Part 1

Elijah and Elisha

Throughout his life, Elijah walked with God. He was faithful in carrying out the instructions of God and preached whatever message God told him to, regardless of how the listeners would take it, or whether or not it would endanger his life. For instance, King Ahaziah was infuriated by Elijah’s prophesy that he would die, and sent his soldiers to try to arrest the prophet. However, not only did the soldiers fail to capture the prophet, all three batches of soldiers were killed by fire that came from heaven (2 Kgs 1). Thus, we can see the protection of God over those who

obey and walk with Him.

When Elisha, the apprentice of Elijah, knew that his master was soon to depart from this earth, he followed him closely. He had earlier asked to have a double portion of the Spirit that had been upon his master (2:9) and the condition for his request to be granted was that he had to personally witness Elijah being taken away. His close walk with Elijah demonstrated his eager sincerity to be filled with God’s power. As we know, Elisha was rewarded when Elijah was taken up by a whirlwind to heaven. The same applies when we wish to be filled with God’s power. It is not merely a matter of asking. How we conduct our lives and our perseverance in walking closely with God is ultimately the way to have God with us.

After succeeding Elijah, Elisha performed many great miracles, among which included:

- healing the water at Jericho (2:19–22)
- helping the three kings to defeat the Moabites (3:5–27)
- enabling the vessels of the widow to be filled with oil (4:1–7)
- prophesying that the woman of Shunem would bear a son (4:8–17)
- raising the son of the woman at Shunem (4:18–37)
- counteracting the poison in a pot of stew (4:38–41)
- feeding a hundred men with twenty barley loaves (4:42–44)
- healing Naaman, the general of Syria (5:1–14)
- causing the ax head to float (6:4–7)

Of the many events in the life of Elisha, there are two incidents worth noting:

- Elisha understood his position as the servant of God and did not allow himself to accept the gift of gratitude from Naaman after healing him. However, Gehazi was covetous and lied to secure the rewards for himself. For this he was afflicted with leprosy. This is a good reminder to all of us, that we should never use working for God as a route to obtain personal benefits (cf. 1 Tim 6:5).
- During the battle against the Syrians, when the city of Samaria was under siege, an Israelite officer did not believe Elisha’s words when he prophesied that the following day, they would have abundance of food. When God caused the Syrian army to imagine their being ambushed by the Israelites, they fled, leaving all their food supplies in their camp. The hungry Israelites plundered the camps and the officer who did not believe the words of Elisha was trampled to death during the great stampede in the rush for food. Thus the words of Elisha, “you shall see it with your eyes, but you shall not eat of it,” came true. This is another reminder about the importance of faith (cf. Heb. 11:6).



Part 2

The Kings of Judah and Israel

The latter half of 2 Kings records the rise and fall of the rest of the kings in Israel and Judah. Looking at their lives briefly, we can hope to learn from their failures and successes:

- a. Athaliah – Mother of Ahaziah (Ch 11). When she saw that her son had died, she killed all the royal heirs and made herself the ruler, and reigned for six years. Later, Jehoiada helped Joash, Ahaziah's son who was saved from Athaliah's plot, regain the throne.
- b. Joash (Jehoash) (Ch 12) was a king who walked in God's ways, being guided by Jehoiada the priest. He made renovations and repairs to the temple of God.
- c. Jehoahaz and, later, Jehoash ruled in Israel (Ch 13).
- d. Amaziah succeeded the throne after his father Joash was murdered. He was a good king who walked in God's ways, like his father. He also killed his father's murderers. During his reign, he led Judah in battle against Israel (Ch 14).
- e. Ahaz, the son of Jotham, did not keep the ways of the Lord when he became king (Ch 16). He turned to idol-worship and committed great evil, including sacrificing his children as part of the rites of worship (16:3). When the king of Israel joined forces with the king of Syria to attack Jerusalem, Ahaz did not seek the help of God. Instead, he sought help from the king of Assyria, and even offered him all the treasures to be found in the house of the Lord as well as in the treasuries of the king's house.
- f. Hoshea, the king of Israel, did evil in the sight of the Lord (Ch 17). During his reign, the Assyrians attacked Israel and made him a vassal. Chapter 17 outlines all the evil committed by the Israelites. The Assyrians besieged Samaria for three years. Some history scholars believe that the Samaritans are the descendants of the Israelites who had intermarried with the Assyrians. The conquest of Israel by the Assyrians, in the year 722 B.C., marked the end of the Northern Kingdom.

- g. Hezekiah was one of the last kings of Judah (Chs 18, 19). He was a good king who walked before God. He rebelled against the king of Assyria, and did not offer tribute to him, unlike the king of Israel. God heard the prayers of Hezekiah and protected Judah from the Assyrians. Sennacherib, the great king of Assyria, suffered a great defeat by the Lord God. He returned to his land and was ultimately killed by his own sons.

Hezekiah pleaded for an extension of his life when the prophet Isaiah told him about his impending death. God granted his request. Unfortunately, during the fifteen years of his extended life, he committed the grave mistake of showing off all the treasures of Judah to the Babylonian king. The Babylonians were the ones who came and ended the Judahite kingdom (Ch 20).

- h. Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, was probably the most evil king of all the kings of Judah (Ch 21). He practiced idolatry, sacrificed his children, dabbled in witchcraft and killed many innocent lives (vv. 3, 6, 7, 16). His son, Amon, who later succeeded him, was not a king who walked in the ways of God either.
- i. Josiah was a king who walked in the ways of God (Chs 22, 23). He restored the temple of God, removed idols and taught the people to turn back to God. Unfortunately, he made a wrong political move to fight against Pharaoh Necho, who joined the Assyrian king in alliance. Pharaoh Necho killed Josiah in battle.
- j. Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah were the last kings of Judah (Chs 24, 25). Essentially, these kings were almost like puppet kings of the Babylonian Empire, which was the strongest force in the Middle East at that time. The kingdom of Judah fell about the year 586 B.C.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1

What did Elisha ask of Elijah before Elijah was taken up to heaven?

2

Describe at least three miracles performed by Elisha.

- 3 Without referring to the notes in this workbook or the Bible, could you name some of the kings who were (a) evil and did not walk in God's ways, (b) good and walked in the ways of God?
- 4 Which empire conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel and in which year did Israel fall?
- 5 Which empire conquered the Southern Kingdom of Judah and in which year did Judah fall?

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



Part A- Remaining Watchful

From the lives of the many kings mentioned in this lesson, we have seen how some of them walked in the ways of God and how some did not. One does not become evil or good overnight. Human beings are social animals. The environment a person is in often shapes the person. One should therefore always examine his or her weaknesses. Here's a verse that warns us about the things to watch out for in ourselves:

Watch your thoughts; they become words.

Watch your words; they become actions.

Watch your actions; they become habits.

Watch your habits; they become character.

Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.

How much truth do you see in this short verse? Have you seen it happening to you? Take a moment to reflect and meditate on your thoughts, words, actions and habits. Then, in your workbook, write down the things you think you ought to watch out for in these areas. Take this piece of paper home with you today, keep it in a place where you can always reflect on it, so as to improve yourself.

Note to teacher: Give your students 10 minutes to meditate and fill out the sheet of paper. It is important to give the students time in class to think about certain issues, for they may not have the motivation or opportunity at home to do it on their own.

Part B- Trials and Temptations

Today, we may also have witnessed for ourselves how some people have fallen away from God. In fact, we may have been weak at times, and may have almost lost our faith. Talking about our fears or our lack of faith is not anything to be embarrassed about. In fact, it is one of the ways we make ourselves face our weaknesses, and try to conquer them. Fellowship with brothers and sisters often consists of sharing our fears and doubts so that we may encourage one another.

In this exercise, we will look at some of the areas in our lives where we may face temptations or trials that may draw us away from God. Write down the things that may draw you away from God and how you can help yourself, and how church brothers and sisters can help too. After that, you may want to discuss your answers as a class.

Areas in your life	Temptations/trials that may draw you away from God	How you can help yourself/How church brothers & sisters can help one another	Which specific Bible verses can help you?
Friends outside church			
Ideas/theories learned in school or from the media			
Problems in family			
Problems with people in church			
Others			



"Remember now, O Lord, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done what was good in Your sight." (2 Kgs 20:3)

These were the words of King Hezekiah when he prayed to God to allow his life to be extended. God answered his prayer and added another fifteen years to his life. Unfortunately, all the good deeds that Hezekiah had done before could not blot out the fact that in his later years, he committed the grave mistake of showing off all the treasures in his kingdom to the Babylonian king. It is important to realize that we have to persevere in holding fast to the words of God. Spiritual nurture and keeping God's teachings are not things we do for a moment and imagine will last forever. It is a lifelong battle and the victory is not ours unless we hold on to the very end.