

# The Book of 2 Kings



## Part 2 5 more Studies in 2 Kings

## Introduction

The two books, 1 & 2 Kings, in the Hebrew Old Testament were one book. It was divided by the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) translators. They summarized these books as follows: I The Reign of Solomon; II Division of the Kingdom, and Parallel History of the Two Kingdoms; III Subsequent History of Judah to the Captivity.

1 Kings opens with the Hebrew nation in its glory. 2 Kings closes with the nation in ruin. Together they cover a period of about 400 years, from 1000-600 BC.

## Author

The author is not known. A Jewish tradition says it was Jeremiah. Whoever the author is, he makes frequent reference to state annals and other historical records existent in his day, such as: “The book of the acts of Solomon”; “The book of chronicles of the Kings of Judah”; and “The book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel” (1 Kings 11:41; 14:19, 29; 15:7, 23, 31; 16:5, 14, 27 etc.).

## Brief Outline of 1 & 2 Kings

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. The last days of David and Solomon’s Accession     | 1 Kings 1:1 – 1 Kings 2:46   |
| 2. The reign of Solomon                               | 1 Kings 3:1 – 1 Kings 11:43  |
| 3. History of the Divided Kingdom                     | 1 Kings 12:1 – 2 Kings 10:36 |
| 4. History of Judah & Israel to fall of North Kingdom | 2 Kings 11:1 – 2 Kings 17:41 |
| 5. History of Judah to the fall of Jerusalem          | 2 Kings 18:1 – 2 Kings 25:30 |

## Alternative Outline of 1 & 2 Kings

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The Golden Age   | 1 Kings 1-11          |
| 2. The Torn Kingdom | 1 Kings 12-2 Kings 17 |
| 3. The Last Days    | 2 Kings 18-25         |

## Please Note the following:

1. It is not necessary to look up all the Bible cross references listed in a particular question; your Growth Group Leader will summarize these Bible cross references for you.
2. Just a reminder that sometimes in our Growth Groups, people feel comfortable sharing very personal and sensitive things about their lives. This information **MUST BE CONFIDENTIAL and NEVER LEAVE THE GROUP.**

## Study 1 – Naaman Healed of Leprosy

2 Kings 5:1-27

*(Sermon on 03-Sep-2023)*

**Before we begin:** What is leprosy?

*Leprosy, also known as **Hansen's disease** (only since 1873), is a chronic infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium leprae*. It primarily affects the skin, peripheral nerves, mucous membranes, and the eyes. Leprosy is characterized by a wide spectrum of symptoms, ranging from mild skin lesions to severe disfigurement and nerve damage.*

*Leprosy has been historically stigmatized due to its visible symptoms, which can include skin lesions, nodules, and loss of sensation in the affected areas.*

*Leprosy is discussed quite often in the Bible. While its definition in modern times is different from biblical times, there is no doubt that the definitions overlap, and the modern form of the disease still illustrates important spiritual lessons today.*

*The term “leprosy” (including leper, lepers, leprosy, leprous) occurs 68 times in the Bible—55 times in the Old Testament (Hebrew = tsara’ath) and 13 times in the New Testament (Greek = lepros, lepra). In the Old Testament, the instances of leprosy most likely meant a variety of infectious skin diseases, and even mold and mildew on clothing and walls. The precise meaning of the leprosy in both the Old and New Testaments is still in dispute, but it probably includes the modern Hansen’s disease (especially in the New Testament) and infectious skin diseases.*

### Read 2 Kings 5:1-7

1. Locate Aram in the map in appendix 3.

*Blue rectangle – Aram is in present-day Syria.*

2. What surprises are there in verse 1?

*Naaman is a gentile army commander of a gentile country Aram and yet surprisingly God has granted him military success.*

*Despite his success – Naaman also has leprosy which is surprising since the culture of the dead would not expect a successful person to have leprosy; leprosy was seen as a curse from God!*

3. What is there to admire in the young servant girl in verses 2 and 3? What testimony does she give? How important is she to the story?

*The young girl was from Israel and had been captured, which means most likely her parents were killed when she was captured!*

*Yet despite her terrible misfortune, she was a) concerned about her master's condition (leprosy) and b) witnessed/suggested that her master should go and consult God's prophet {Elisha} in Samaria, as she believed he could cure her master's leprosy.*

*The young Israeli girl is key to the whole story. If she had not witnessed about Elisha, then Naaman would not have been cured! Also, more importantly, her witness meant that Naaman became a believer in the one true God.*

4. Who does Naaman consult and what's decided in verses 4 to 6?

*Naaman went to his master, the King of Aram, and the King agreed he should go to Israel and sent a letter to the King of Israel. Naaman brought 10 talents of silver, 6000 shekels of gold and 10 sets of clothing.*

*The value of what Naaman took with him (today's estimate \$1.2M) shows how desperate Naaman's situation was and how desperately the King of Aram wanted to help Naaman.*

5. Who is the King of Israel at the time? Why is the King of Israel so upset in v7? What do you make of his rant?

*The King of Israel at the time is King Joram (aka Jehoram) – see #9 in appendix 1. He is upset because a) it is beyond his power to heal Naaman of his leprosy and b) he had no relationship with the prophet of God (Elisha) who did have the power to heal Naaman; and c) he thought the King of Aram was deliberately picking a fight with him!*

### **Read 2 Kings 5:8-19**

6. How does Elisha react to the King of Israel's upset? Why?

*Elisha gently rebukes the King of Israel. It's only a problem to Joram because he doesn't have a relationship with God and His prophet. For Elisha, Naaman's leprosy is not a problem, because He knows what his God is capable of doing.*

*Elisha tells Joram to please send Naaman his way.*

7. What does Elisha's messenger tell Naaman to do in order to be cleansed from leprosy?

*Elisha's messenger (not Elisha himself) tells Naaman to wash himself seven times in the river Jordan, and that his flesh will be restored and he will be cleansed.*

8. How does Naaman react to Elisha's remedial instructions? Does Naaman have a right to be offended by Elisha?

*Naaman went away angry!*

*He expected Elisha to come out personally to him and call of the name of the Lord, wave his hand over the spot and cure his leprosy.*

*He also considered over rivers (in his homeland) – the rivers Abana and Pharpar of Damascus to be better than the rivers in Israel, and he should have perhaps have been told to wash in them. So, he went off in a huff.*

9. **Ponder:** Is Naaman's reaction typical of the response of some people to the Gospel today?

*Naaman's reaction reflects a typical response of human pride and resistance to accepting help or guidance that comes in a way that doesn't align with one's expectations.*

*Just as Naaman expected a grand solution to his ailment, some people may have preconceived notions about what the Gospel should be or what it should offer.*

*When the Gospel is presented in a way that challenges these expectations, pride and skepticism might arise.*

*Naaman's healing required him to follow a simple and unconventional instruction. Similarly, the message of the Gospel might seem too simple or counterintuitive to some. The concept of salvation through faith alone can be difficult to accept for those who are used to relying on their own works or rituals.*

*Naaman was a foreigner, and his initial resistance might be related to cultural or national biases. Similarly, people today might resist the Gospel due to cultural or social influences, considering it as foreign or incompatible with their worldview.*

*Naaman's healing came when he humbled himself and followed Elisha's instructions. Similarly, accepting the Gospel often requires humility and obedience—a willingness to surrender one's own understanding and follow the teachings of Christ.*



10. How do Naaman's servants' reason with him?

*The servants of Naaman used a brilliantly logical approach. If Elisha had asked Naaman to sacrifice 100 or 1,000 animals to the God of Israel, Naaman would have done it immediately. Yet because his request was easy to do and humbling, Naaman first refused.*

*Thank God for faithful subordinates who will speak to their superiors in such a way. Naaman was obviously angry, yet they were bold enough to give him the good advice he needed to hear.*

*Naaman's servants played a role in persuading him to follow Elisha's instructions. Likewise, the influence of friends, family, or fellow believers can impact how someone responds to the Gospel.*

*Naaman listened to his servants – dipped himself in the river Jordan seven times and was healed!*

11. What testimony does Naaman give in verse 15? How has he changed? What does he offer Elisha? How does Elisha respond in verse 16?

*Naaman was convinced by the one true God of Israel and said* Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant *Naaman has made a complete U-turn and now believes in God.*

*He offers Elisha a gift.*

*Elisha refuses to accept a gift.*

12. What does Naaman propose in verse 17? Why?

*Like many new believers, Naaman was superstitious in his faith. He held the common opinion of the ancient world that particular deities had power over particular places. He thought that if he took a piece of Israel back with him to Syria, he could better worship the God of Israel.*

*Even though the request came out of superstition, Elisha may have felt that available Israelite soil may have afforded Naaman with some tangible reminder of his cleansing and new relationship to God.*

13. What concession does Naaman ask in verse 18? Why?

*He also asked the Lord's forgiveness for when, as part of his job as the King's right-hand man, he had to accompany his master to the temple of Rimmon back in Aram and was required to bow down in the temple with his master. He asked Elisha for*

*allowance to direct his heart to Yahweh God even when he was in the temple of Rimmon.*

14. **Ponder:** What are we to make of Naaman's behaviour? Nevertheless, what does Elisha think in verse 19?

*Naaman's behaviour is naive and superstition but we have to say he genuinely believes. The Holy Spirit has to work in new believers to get rid of the baggage we bring with us.*

*Nevertheless, Elisha, the man of God, is okay with it – he simply tells Naaman to “go in peace”*

*Perhaps, Elisha left the matter up to Naaman and God. Perhaps Elisha trusted that the LORD (through His Spirit) would personally convict Naaman of this and give him the integrity and strength to avoid idolatry.*

15. **Ponder:** In what way does Naaman's testimony condemn Israel?

*Here is a gentile army commander who makes a complete U-turn and follows the one true God; whereas the majority of Israel are going after false gods and worshipping Baal.*

### **Read 2 Kings 5:20-27**

16. What bizarre thing does Elisha's servant, Gehazi, do? Why?

*As Gehazi heard Naaman and Elisha speak, he was shocked that his master refused to take anything from such a wealthy, influential, and grateful man. He figured that someone should benefit from such an opportunity, and he took the initiative to run after Naaman and take something from him. **Gehazi was motivated by greed and covetousness; which in turn led to telling lies to Naaman and Elisha!** Gehazi followed Naaman and made up a story of two young men from the company of prophets have come and he asked for two talents of silver and two sets of clothing (a talent weighed about 55KG and needed two servants to carry v23). Naaman is more than willing to give Gehazi the two talents. Gehazi hid them in his house so Elisha wouldn't know.*

17. How does Elisha find out what Gehazi has done and what are the consequences for Gehazi? Why are the consequences so severe?

*God's spirit revealed it to Elisha's spirit (v26)*

*The consequence was that Gehazi received Naaman's leprosy and it would also cling to his descendants!*

*The consequences were so severe because Gehazi's actions had negated the young girl's witness to Naaman and Elisha's actions in healing without taking any gift. The young girl and Elisha had acted for the glory of God; whereas Gehazi had acted for his own glory!*

***Gehazi was undoing what God had done: God wanted Naaman to know his FREE GRACE, but Gehazi was trying to put a price on God's goodness. The God of Israel did not accept bribes; he would not be manipulated by money or make room for human pride. His grace was/is free. Gehazi was implying otherwise and it would be at great cost to him!***

*As a man in ministry Gehazi was under a stricter judgment. When he allowed himself to covet what Naaman had, he thought only in terms of the money Naaman possessed. God allowed him to keep the riches, but also gave him the other thing Naaman had — severe leprosy.*

18. Compare Gehazi and Naaman.

*We see here an Israelite (Gehazi) who by an act of dishonor is cursed with it and we see a pagan (Naaman) who by an act of faith is cured of leprosy and blessed.*

19. Read **Luke 4:14-30**. How does this passage relate to **2 Kings 5:1-27**?

*In Luke 4:14-30, Jesus reads from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah in the synagogue in Nazareth, proclaiming that the words have been fulfilled in him. He speaks of healing, release, and good news to the poor. The people's initial response is positive, but when Jesus implies that He will be rejected by His own people and implies that His ministry might extend beyond their community, they become angry and try to harm him.*

*He then points out that back in Elijah's day – when Israel was in a 3 ½ year famine, God sent Elijah to a widow in Sidon even though there were plenty of widows in Israel. Similarly in Elisha's time, there were plenty of people who had leprosy but Elisha healed a man from Aram (Syria).*

*Jesus' point is Israel in his time is not different from Israel in Elijah's/Elisha – they are rejecting the truth from the one true God!*

*Jesus' other point is that the Good News (Gospel) is not just for the people of Israel but also the Gentile nations.*

*This makes them angry and they tried to throw him off a cliff!*



20. Read **Galatians 1:6-10**. How does this passage relate to **2 Kings 5:1-27**?

*Paul warns the Galatians that they are in danger of deserting Christ Jesus for a different Gospel.*

*There were some in Galatia who claimed/implied that Jesus was not enough, that Jesus' death alone was insufficient to win salvation. So, Jesus had to be supplemented. In Galatia, there was a "Jesus Plus Movement": Jesus plus circumcision; Jesus plus my good works.*

*But Paul says there is only ONE Gospel and it's the one he preaches and if anyone preaches anything different – even angels – they let them be cursed.*

*His bottom line is – being a servant of Jesus Christ – means always seeking God's approval, not the approval of human beings.*

*Just as Paul emphasizes the significance of the unadulterated Gospel message in Galatians, the story of Naaman in 2 Kings 5 underscores the importance of trusting in the prophet's guidance and following God's instructions instead of relying on one's own understanding or preferences. Both passages caution against straying from the true message of God and seeking human approval over divine guidance. Similarly, Gehazi strayed from God's way and went his own way, by extracting payment for God's grace in healing Naaman; which was totally the opposite of how Elisha (the man of God) administered God's grace to Naaman.*

21. Read **Luke 17:11-17**. How does this passage relate to **2 Kings 5:1-27**?

*Both stories involve leprosy and healing.*

*The common theme between Luke 17:11-17 and 2 Kings 5 is gratitude and recognition of God's healing power. In both stories, those who are healed respond differently to their healing. In Luke 17, most of the lepers do not express gratitude, while in 2 Kings 5, Naaman expresses gratitude and acknowledges the God of Israel. Both stories highlight the importance of acknowledging and being thankful for the blessings and healings received from God.*

22. **Ponder:** In what way do we have "leprosy"?

*Leprosy is often used metaphorically in the Bible as a picture of sin due to the way it affects and spreads within a person, leading to physical and social separation.*

*Here's how leprosy applies to sin:*

- *Just as leprosy **can start within the body without immediate visible signs**, sin can begin within a person's heart and mind before manifesting in actions.*

*Both leprosy and sin have the potential to cause damage that might not be immediately evident.*

- *Leprosy is **contagious** and **can spread** from person to person. Similarly, sinful behavior can influence and impact others, spreading negative behavior and attitudes.*
- *In many societies, people with leprosy were **isolated and separated from the community** due to the fear of contagion. Similarly, sin can lead to **isolation and separation** from God and from others as a result of guilt, shame, and the consequences of one's actions.*
- *Leprosy often **progresses slowly**, affecting more areas of the body over time. Sin can also have a **gradual and insidious progression**, leading a person to become more entangled in destructive behavior.*
- *Both leprosy and sin **require cleansing and healing**. In the Bible, God is often portrayed as the source of healing for both physical ailments and spiritual brokenness caused by sin.*
- *Just as a person with leprosy **needed to recognize their condition and seek healing**, individuals need to acknowledge their sin and turn to God for forgiveness and restoration.*
- *A person with leprosy is sometimes numb to any pain. Similarly, **we can be numb (oblivious) to the fact that we are a sinner or have sinned in a particular way – sin just creeps up on us – and creeps into our lives.***

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 2 Kings 5:1-27?

**God's Grace extends to all**



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and **Scripture is all about Him** (Luke 24:27), in what ways **2 Kings 5:1-27** point to Jesus?

How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- God is in control of all nations (Jews and Gentiles alike)*
- God can and often does work good from a bad situation (e.g., the girl's capture was a bad thing but from it came the girl's witness which led Naaman to a cure and to believing in God)*

- c. *Like the young girl, our testimony to others is so important and may lead others to Christ. We need to be bold in our witness, like the young girl!*
- d. *We should not limit/doubt what God can do. As we said in the last study, God is in the miracle business.*
- e. *Sometimes we foolishly think we know better than God's ways (like Naaman did). Naaman's initial skepticism about Elisha's simple instructions and his subsequent healing in an unexpected manner show that God's ways often defy human expectations. This teaches us to trust in God's plans, even when they seem unconventional.*
- f. *God's words and actions transform people (as they did Naaman).*
- g. *Ultimately, it's Naaman's humility and obedience that leads to his cure – it's the same for us – our humility and obedience in coming to our Lord Jesus for the cure!*
- h. *God has the power to heal and perform miracles.*
- i. *We should not forget to thank God when He does answer – Naaman thanked God and Elisha and brought a gift!*
- j. *The Holy Spirit has to work in new believers to get rid of the baggage we bring with us.*
- k. *Sometimes we can be convicted by non-believers!*
- l. *Watch out that we are not tempted like Gehazi!*
- m. *God's grace and salvation are not limited to a particular group of people. Our Lord Jesus is available to all!*
- n. *God's healing and salvation is not bought by wealth. Eternal things are bought by faith! Faith shown by the young Israeli girl, Naaman's servants and Naaman*
- o. *The grace of our Lord Jesus is sufficient.*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

*2 Kings 5:15: Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant."*

**Finish in prayer:** Ask God to help us to be bold in witnessing like the young servant girl. Ask God to help us set aside our pride like Naaman did and humble ourselves before Him. Ask God to reveal to us any "leprosy" in our lives and come to Him for forgiveness.

## Study 2 – Safe in the Shadow of the Lord

2 Kings 6:1-23

*(Sermon on 10-Sep-2023)*

### Read 2 Kings 6:1-7

1. What's the problem with the current accommodation for the prophets? What is their suggestion to Elisha?

*The prophets' seminary building is too small to accommodate the number of prophets. This suggests that Elisha has had a significant impact in his ministry. The prophets seek permission from Elisha to the Jordan to get "poles" wood and build a meeting place for them to use.*

2. How did Elisha respond to their suggestion?

*Elisha tells them simply to "Go!"*

*And when they ask Elisha to accompany them; he agrees.*

3. What mishap does one of the prophets have in verse 5 and what is his concern?

*As they began to cut down trees; one of the prophets' iron axhead flew off and fell in the water.*

*His concern was that the axhead was borrowed and wasn't his!*

4. How did "Elisha" help?

*Elisha asked the prophet where exactly the axhead fell in the water and he cut a stick and threw it at that spot in the water and the iron axhead floated. The prophet was then able to retrieve the axhead.*

*"God can do all things, he can make iron swim — we cannot — and yet you see the prophet did it, and he did it by the use of a stick. He cut down a stick. Was there any connection between the stick and the iron? I can't see any, and yet God does use means, and he would have us use means." (Spurgeon)*

5. **Ponder:** In amongst the story of the King of Israel and Naaman (in the last chapter) and the coming war between Aram and Israel (in the rest of this chapter), we have this story of a "floating Axhead"; why is this story here?

*Because God does care about the little details as well as the big picture.*

*And it shows God's power for a genuine need. The ax was borrowed and the young prophet can't go and buy another one (with what?).*

6. **Ponder:** What if Elisha had not gone with them?

*What if Elisha had not been asked? What if Elisha had declined the invitation? Doesn't this show God's providence for a future need?*

7. **Ponder:** What group of people are the beneficiaries of the miracles of 2 Kings 4:1-44 and this passage 2 Kings 6:1-7? What would that say to the people of Judah reading this book later when exiled in Babylon? What does it say to us?

*The miracles of 2 Kings 4:1-44 and 2 Kings 6:1-7 are done for the believing remnant. Aren't these miracles saying to the people of Judah who had been carted off into Exile: "here is the God available to you?" and "how God's arm works for those who fear Him; how near is God to the broken-hearted, to the poor and needy; turn and seek this God who offers Himself to you"*

### **Read 2 Kings 6:8-23**

8. What provision does God make, through Elisha, for the King of Israel?

*God, through Elisha, continually informs the King of Israel of the location of the invading Arameans!*

9. What does the King of Aram think is going on?

*The King of Aram thinks that one of his army is on the side of the King of Israel – i.e.; he thinks there is a traitor amongst his army (v11)*

*But it is in fact the prophet Elisha who knows the King of Aram's every move (v12).*

10. What does the King of Aram decide to do?

*He decides to send men to capture Elisha (v13)*

*Elisha is in Dothan – see **purple line** map appendix 1.*

11. When the city was surrounded, how does Elisha respond compared to his servant? How is the servant's response a common human response during challenging times?

*The servant was in a panic, not knowing what to do (v15)*

*Whereas Elisha says in v16 – "Don't be afraid... those who are with us are more than those who are with them"*

*During challenging times, it is easy to forget we have God with us (see Romans 8:31).*



*"We go to the phone rather than the throne!"*

12. What does Elisha pray in verses 17 and 18? What happens? What does the fire represent? (cf. 2 Kings 2:11)

*Elisha prayed in v17 for his servant's eyes to be opened and God answered; the servant saw the "spiritual reality" of the **"unseen protection"** of hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.*

*Elisha prayed in v18 that the invading Aramean army would be struck blind and the Lord answered and struck them blind. Note: this blindness was not so much complete blindness but some sort of visionary befuddlement – same Hebrew word used in Genesis 19:11 when the men at Lot's door in Sodom were struck blind.*

*These chariots of fire were a **manifestation of God's divine presence, protection and power**, sent to protect Elisha and his servant from their enemies. See the "taking up" of Elijah in 2 Kings 2:11.*

*The phrase "chariots of fire" has become famous in literature and culture as **a symbol of divine protection and intervention**.*

13. When have you experienced a situation where it seemed like you were surrounded, but God's protection and guidance were evident?

*At a time in my life when my life was falling apart – I read Romans 8:31 – "if God is for us, who can be against us" – this verse brought tremendous comfort – 'if I have God on my side, it doesn't really matter who is trying to destroy me, put me down, misunderstand me, falsely accuse me etc.; I have God with me!' This verse was instrumental in me becoming a Christian!*

14. How does Elisha trick the army of Aram?

*Because the Arameans were blinded; Elisha was able to trick them and lead them away from his city and lead them to Samaria where the King of Israel and his army were.*

15. What unexpected grace do the army of Aram receive? Is this a surprise to you? Yes/No/Maybe?

*Grace is often surprising because by definition it is undeserved!*

*What Elisha does here is answers evil with goodness (Romans 12:20-21).*

*Clemency often leads to peace!*

*It means God's grace is available not only to Israel but to Aramean/Syrian Gentiles. If we think that's surprising – isn't it surprising Jesus died for you and me? We didn't deserve it either! Not only that, we too have a Heavenly Banquet to look forward at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:6-9).*

16. **Ponder:** How can the stories in 2 Kings 6:1-23 strengthen our faith, even in seemingly impossible challenges?

*The stories in 2 Kings 6:1-23 help strengthen our faith because they show: Divine intervention; the power of prayer; God's protection; that we can walk by faith which overcomes fear; God's unseen work behind the scenes and help us to persevere as we learn the lessons of the past.*

17. Read **Psalms 91:9-16**. How does this passage relate to **2 Kings 6:1-23**?

*Both passages show:*

- *God's divine protection.*
- *God's deliverance from enemies.*
- *God's rescue of His people.*
- *Show perseverance of life.*

18. Read **Romans 8:31-39**. How does this passage relate to **2 Kings 6:1-23**?

*Both passages show:*

- *God's unfailing love*
- *Divine assurance that nothing can separate us from the love of God*
- *Overcoming obstacles with God's intervention*
- *God's sovereignty over all things can be trusted*
- *Encourages enduring in faith*

19. Read **2 Corinthians 4:16-18** and **2 Corinthians 5:7**. How do these passages relate to 2 Kings 6:1-23?

*These passages in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 and 5:7 emphasize the importance of walking by faith and not by what we see. Elisha's servant had to learn to walk by faith not by what he saw in front of him.*

*There is also the idea of not losing heart and persevering. The things we see and face in this world are temporary – whereas the things we cannot see are spiritual and eternal; so, we need to have an eternal perspective!*

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 2 Kings 6:1-23

*God's supernatural protection and intervention*

*The power of prayer and faith*



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and **Scripture is all about Him** (Luke 24:27), in what ways **2 Kings 6:1-23** point to Jesus?

- a. *God's people are under the divine protection of God in this passage which reminds us that because of Jesus we are under the divine protection of Jesus*
- b. *The Grace shown to the Aramaeans is a picture of the Grace of our Lord Jesus available to both Jew and Gentile.*
- c. *Elisha and his servant had "unseen" protection from God. We have "unseen" eternal protection through Jesus' death and resurrection. We have to walk by faith in what we cannot see [we haven't seen Jesus]*
- d. *Elisha's ministry and miracles foreshadow Jesus*

How does this passage **apply to your life?**

**In the ax-head story**

- a. *God cares about our simple "needs" too!*
- b. *God makes provision for our future needs!*
- c. *Are we bringing our simple needs to Him?*
- d. *In what ways have you seen God's providential hand in your life?*
- e. *How does knowing and believing that God cares about the little things in your life sustain you in tough times?*

**Elisha and the Arameans story**

- a. *God answers prayer. The power of prayer!*
- b. *Only God can open eyes that are spiritually blind.*
- c. ***We should be constantly praying "open our eyes that we might see!"***
- d. *We have the "unseen protection" of God!*
- e. *God intervenes in human affairs even in the face of overwhelming odds.*
- f. ***Let us not forget "those who are with us are more than those who are with them" (2 Kings 6:16) or as Paul puts it "if God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).***
- g. *God can shield us from harm and danger, even when it seems impossible to escape*
- h. *No one can touch or harm God's people unless God, the Defender, allows it!*

- i. Elisha and his servant had to walk by faith even when they couldn't fully understand it. Even if we haven't been shown the "unseen protection" we must walk by faith – not by sight! Faith can overcome fear!*
- j. The miracles of Elijah in the past and now Elisha – and of course Jesus' miracles should help us learn from the past – and miracles are in the Bible to help us have faith and belief!*
- k. Even when challenges seem unsurmountable, faith can give us strength and perseverance to press on!*
- l. Maintain an eternal perspective on the things we cannot see but which are permanent/eternal!*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

**2 KINGS 6:16** "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

**ROMANS 8:31** What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

**Finish in prayer:** Thanking God for His protection. Asking God to help us live by faith and not by sight.

## Study 3 – A Sure and Severe Deliverance

2 Kings 6:24-7:20

*(Sermon on 17-Sep-2023)*

### Read 2 Kings 6:24-33

1. What is the situation for Israel in v24?

*King Ben Hadad of Aram (Syria) mobilized his entire army and laid siege on Samaria (Northern Kingdom of Israel).*

2. What is the situation in Samaria in v25? How is this affecting the cost of products? (cf. Revelation 6:6)

*There was a great famine in the city because the siege lasted so long. The tactic was to surround the city, prevent all business and trading from entering or leaving the city, and to eventually starve the population into surrender. A donkey's head (not even kosher – Leviticus 11:3) sold for eighty shekels (2 pounds or 920g) of silver and a quarter of a cab (1/4 pound or 100g) of seed pods (dove dropping) cost five shekels (2 ounces or 58g). Note: five shekels of silver were more than a month's wages.*

*Note: Revelation 6:6 - Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, "Two pounds of wheat for a day's wages, and six pounds of barley for a day's wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!"*

*Note: we're meant to see this as judgment! See question 4.*

3. What terrible report does the King of Israel hear from the woman in verses 26 to 29?

*The people of Israel in desperation have resorted to cannibalism. A woman reported that things had become so desperate that she had agreed with another woman, that they eat her son one day and the other woman's son, the next. But when the next day came, the other woman had hidden her son!*

4. Should we be surprised by this? See Leviticus 26:27-29 and Deuteronomy 28:52-53.

*We shouldn't be surprised; this is not Aramean (Syrian) atrocity but God's divine judgment based on His covenant blessings for obedience and covenant curses for disobedience.*



*Leviticus 26:27-29:* <sup>27</sup> "If in spite of this you still do not listen to me but continue to be hostile toward me, <sup>28</sup> then in my anger I will be hostile toward you, and I myself will punish you for your sins seven times over. <sup>29</sup> You will eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters.

*Deuteronomy 28:52-53:* <sup>52</sup> They will lay siege to all the cities throughout your land until the high fortified walls in which you trust fall down. They will besiege all the cities throughout the land the LORD your God is giving you. <sup>53</sup> Because of the suffering your enemy will inflict on you during the siege, you will eat the fruit of the womb, the flesh of the sons and daughters the LORD your God has given you.

5. How did the King react to the woman's plight? Who does he blame? Why? (cf. 2 Kings 6:22-23).

*He tore his clothes in grief (v30) and he wore sackcloth on his body (v30).*

*He blames Elisha the prophet. Most likely because in the previous story from last week, Elisha told the King to release the Aramean army rather than kill them. Now they have returned to decimate Israel!*

*He didn't see the invasion as punishment for Israel's disobedience to God and he didn't repent; but instead found someone to blame!*

6. What does the King plan to do with Elisha?

*The King plans to kill Elisha – i.e., cut off his head (v31, 32).*

*Elisha is the scapegoat!*

*Killing Elisha won't stop the siege.*

*He could have asked Elisha for help, instead of planning to kill him!*

7. Why do you think Elisha already knows the King's plan?

*God has informed Elisha of the King's plan; just like Elisha knew what the King of Aram was planning in last week's story.*

8. Where is the King's anger really directed in verse 33b?

*The King's anger is really directed at the Lord.*

*No doubt Elisha has informed the King – to repent of his disobedience and wait on the Lord for deliverance. But the King (Jehoram/Joram) can see no point in waiting on the Lord any longer!*

**Read 2 Kings 7:1-2**

9. What outcome does Elisha promise in verse 1?

*Elisha promises a reversal of the situation. Elisha informs the King that the Lord promises by this time tomorrow; a seah (12 pounds or 5.5KG) of flour will sell for a shekel (2/5 ounce or 12g).*

10. The King's officer doubts Elisha's words. What promise does Elisha give the officer?

*Because the King's officer doubts Elisha's (God's) words by saying "Look, even if the Lord should open the floodgates of the heavens [Gen 7:11], could this happen?"*

*Elisha promises the officer, he will see it [the food sold at normal prices] but he will not eat it!*

### **Read 2 Kings 7:3-11**

11. What unlikely instruments does the Lord use in verses 3 to 11? Why does God do that?

*There were four men with leprosy (outcasts) at the entrance of the city gate, who decide they have 'nothing to lose' – so rather than die in the city from the famine, they decide to go over to the camp of the Arameans and surrender. If they are spared, great; if they are killed, they would have died back in Samaria anyway! God used lepers: a) to show His ways are not human ways and that He can use the most unlikely characters and most unlikely means to accomplish His achievements; b) To show He has the power to bring about miraculous deliverances in the most unexpected ways; c) to show He is a God who rewards faith like the leap of faith the lepers took by leaving the camp and venturing towards the Arameans*

12. What does the Lord cause the Arameans to do?

*God had caused the Arameans to hear the sound of chariots and horses and a great army (v6) and they thought the King of Israel had hired the Hittite and Egyptian Kings to attack him. So, they fled and abandoned their tents, horses and donkeys.*

*The lepers didn't keep the Good News to themselves and reported it to the Palace of the King of Israel.*

### **Read 2 Kings 7:12-20**

13. What plan does one of the King's officers come up with?

*The King of Israel thought the Arameans were trying to trap him by pretending to have fled (as in Joshau 8:4) and that they were only hiding waiting to pounce on the Israeli army!*

*One of the King's officers came up with a low-risk plan to send five men with five horses to find out what happened*

14. What do the men sent out discover?

*The men followed the way of the Aramean army all the way to the river Jordan and discovered the story of the Aramean's flight to be true! So, they reported this good news to the King of Israel.*

15. How are Elisha's words proven true in verse 16?

*Because the people went out and plundered the Arameans camp from all the stuff they left behind; a seah of the finest flour of sold for a shekel and two seahs of barley sold for a shekel – just as the Lord had spoken through the prophet Elisha*

16. In verses 17 to 20, what happened to the officer who had doubted Elisha back in verse 2?

*The officer who had scoffed and doubted Elisha's prophecy back in verse 2, was trampled [by hungry citizens] on at the gateway and died (v17, v20) and so he wouldn't eat the flour and barley at normal prices – just as Elisha had prophesied. God's promises through His prophets ALWAYS come to pass!*

17. **Read Deuteronomy 18:21-22.** How does this passage relate to **2 Kings 6:24-7:20**?

*The passage from Deuteronomy 18:21-22 cautions Israel (and us) to verify a prophet's words to check if they come to pass or not. All prophecy should be put on a shelf to be checked as to whether it comes to pass!*

18. **Read Psalm 146.** How does this passage relate to **2 Kings 6:24-7:20**?

*Psalm 146 cautions not to put our trust in princes, human beings, who cannot save but instead they/we are to trust in the Lord. Why? Because He is the maker of Heaven and Earth and everything in them. Because He is a God: remains faithful forever; upholds the cause of the oppressed; gives food to the hungry; sets prisoners free; restores sight; lifts up the lowly; loves those who are righteous; He*

*watches over the foreigner; sustains the fatherless and widows; and frustrates the wicked.*

*We see of all of what Psalm 146 says happening in the deliverance of 2 Kings 6:24-7:20.*

19. Read **Hebrews 12:18-29**. How does this passage relate to 2 Kings 6:24-7:20? *In verses 18-21, the author of Hebrews describes the Old Covenant scene at Mount Sinai. It **was marked by fear and trembling**, as the Israelites witnessed God's awesome power and holiness. Even Moses was trembling with fear as he approached the presence of God.*

*In verses 22-24, the author of Hebrews shifts the focus to the New Covenant reality through Jesus Christ. This is a contrast to the fear and trembling of Mount Sinai. Instead, it **describes a heavenly, spiritual Mount Zion**, where believers have come to experience the following:*

- 1. A city of the living God: This represents the heavenly Jerusalem, the dwelling place of God.*
- 2. Myriads of angels: It portrays the heavenly hosts in worship.*
- 3. The joyful assembly of the firstborn: This refers to believers who are part of the redeemed community.*
- 4. God as the judge of all: Believers have come to God, who is both just and merciful, and to Jesus, the mediator of the New Covenant.*
- 5. The sprinkled blood: This signifies the blood of Jesus, which brings forgiveness and speaks of better things than the blood of Abel.*

*And Hebrews 12 - v25 warns us not to “refuse Him who speaks”. It’s a warning of how perilous it is to not believe the Word of God. It cost the King of Israel’s officer his life. God takes unbelief seriously, especially when His word is mocked!*

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 2 Kings 6:24-7:20

**God's deliverance is sure and certain (and sometimes severe and unexpected)**



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and **Scripture is all about Him** (Luke 24:27), in what ways **2 Kings 6:24-7:20** point to Jesus?

- a. *Elisha continues to be a foreshadowing of Jesus*
- b. *The Good News of deliverance that the lepers had to tell points to the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus that we have to tell!*
- c. *The deliverance of God's people in Israel and the defeat of the enemy points to the deliverance Jesus brings and His defeat of the enemy Satan.*
- d. *The blessings of belief and the curses of unbelief show us the choice we have in Jesus!*

How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- a. *Sometimes people look to the government for answers instead of God*
- b. *We have a tendency to doubt God's word or even blame God, especially in difficult circumstances. God will either remove the problem or get us through the problem; but yet we still doubt.*
- c. *Why do we doubt God and yet put our faith in people or things? Is it because we have made God small and people big – instead of the other way around.*
- d. *Just because God hasn't answered yet; doesn't mean He won't answer. Sometimes God's answer is Yes; sometimes NO; and sometimes WAIT.*
- e. *God's Word never fails. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!*
- f. *Sometimes God uses an unlikely person or situation to remind you of His grace and mercy.*
- g. *God takes unbelief seriously, especially when His word is mocked!*
- h. *Like the lepers and the gatekeepers; we have Good News {of Jesus} to share and not keep to ourselves! Let's go and shout the Good News!*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

*Then they said to each other, "What we're doing is not right. **This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves.** If we wait until daylight, punishment will overtake us. Let's go at once and report this to the royal palace." (2 Kings 7:9)*

**Finish in prayer:** Ask God to deepen our trust in the Lord's providence. Ask God to help us rest in the assurance that God's Word never fails!



## Study 4 – The Lord who revives and slays

2 Kings 8:1-15

*(Sermon on 24-Sep-2023)*

**Before we begin:** Remind yourself of the story of the Shunammite woman from 2 Kings 4:8-37 and summarize the story.

*The story of 2 Kings 4:8-37 revolves around the prophet Elisha and a wealthy woman from Shunem. The woman and her husband were kind and hospitable to Elisha, offering him a place to stay whenever he passed through their town. In gratitude, Elisha wanted to do something for the woman, and she mentioned that she had no son and her husband was old.*

*Elisha prophesied that she would have a son, and indeed, she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. However, when the boy grew older, he suddenly became ill and died while in the fields with his father. Distraught, the woman laid the boy's body on Elisha's bed and rushed to find the prophet.*

*Elisha returned with her to her home and prayed fervently to God, and miraculously, the boy was revived and brought back to life. The woman's faith and hospitality had led to this extraordinary event, and she and her son received the blessings of God through Elisha's intervention.*

### Read 2 Kings 8:1-6

1. What advice did Elisha give the Shunammite woman in verses 1 and 2? And why?

*Elisha advises the Shunammite woman to leave the country with her family for a while because the Lord had decreed that there would be a famine in the land for 7 years. The woman took his advice and stayed in the land of the Philistines for 7 years.*

2. How has kindness been shown to you that has encouraged you and your faith?  
*When I first became a Christian; I was amazed at the kind offers of practical help I received. This encouraged me in my faith.*

3. On her return from the land of the Philistines, what does the Shunammite woman ask the King for?

*She appealed to the King for her house and land to be returned to her.*

4. Who is instrumental in her request being granted? Is this surprising after 2 Kings 5:27? What explanation might there be?

*Elisha's servant Gehazi who we know from 2 Kings 5:27 was afflicted with leprosy because he tricked Naaman into giving him gifts when Elisha, his master, had refused to take any gifts for healing Naaman's leprosy.*

*It's surprising that Gehazi is involved here because we were left with the impression that Gehazi was out of favour; and having leprosy, he would be isolated anyway.*

*Two explanations are possible: a) Gehazi has been healed of his leprosy by now; or b) this story in 2 Kings 8 occurred before the story in 2 Kings 5; and the stories in 2 Kings are not exactly in chronological order.*

*Of course, it's still possible that Gehazi has got leprosy and the conversation with the King is at a distance.*

5. What does this say about God's timing?

*It's typical of God's timing and sovereignty that Elisha's servant, Gehazi, should be talking to the King about the great things Elisha has done, when the Shunammite woman turns up to ask for the King's help.*

6. Why is the King so interested in the stories of Elisha? Given the King's attitude towards Elisha, is it surprising that he grants her request?

*The King could just have been curious about the great things Elisha did; like many were about the great things Jesus did in His time.*

*But having heard the great stories of Elisha; especially that Elisha had raised this woman's son back to life; it's understandable that if God was with her in this, that the King should also grant her land back. The King knew enough to know that God was with the woman and so her request was granted; and he was no doubt impressed with the inside stories of Elisha that he had heard from Gehazi!*

7. Does Luke 11:32 clarify what the King is like?

*Just like many in Jesus' time witnessed what Jesus said and did and knew He was from God; yet they did not repent; likewise, the King of Israel, does not repent. Yet a Gentile nation like Nineveh heard God's word and repented.*

## Read 2 Kings 8:7-15

8. Locate Damascus in the maps in appendix 2 and 3.

*Damascus is underlined in purple in the map in appendix 2 and in purple and below ARAM in appendix 3. Today Damascus is in modern day Syria.*

9. Who does Ben-Hadad King of Aram send to meet Elisha? Why?

*Ben Hadad King of Aram is ill and he sent Hazael to meet Elisha so as to consult the Lord and ask “will I recover from this illness?”*

**Note: the role of Hazael.**

**Back in 1 Kings 19:15-16 God told the prophet Elijah (Elisha’s predecessor) to:**

<sup>15</sup> The LORD said to him, “Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael<sup>(AB)</sup> king over Aram. <sup>16</sup> Also, anoint<sup>(AD)</sup> Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha<sup>(AD)</sup> son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah<sup>(AB)</sup> to succeed you as prophet.

*So, Elijah was to anoint Hazael as King over Aram and Jehu as King over Israel and anoint Elisha as prophet to succeed Elijah himself. Elijah only did the latter before he was taken up to Heaven; so, it’s going to be up to Elisha to fulfil the rest of these commissions.*

10. What are we to make of the gift to Elisha? How does it make you feel when someone is willing to “help” the church, such as through a gift, and yet not commit themselves to Christ?

*The “gift” can most likely be seen as a bribe to get an oracle from God. There is the idea that God can be “bought” or “manipulated” with gifts. Whereas as we saw with Naaman before, God cannot be bought and is not motivated or manipulated by gifts.*

*It’s lovely when someone wants to “help” “donate” to the church but it’s much more important that they commit to following Jesus!*

*I had a gift for our Youth Group from a Buddhist lady with a kind heart, who was impressed with how we ran activities for young people; but not so interested in the fact that we taught them about Jesus!*

11. How do we reconcile Elisha’s response in v10 to the question from Ben-Hadad, “will I recover from this illness”?

*Most commentators argue for a textual problem in v10.*

*Elisha’s message to the sick king can be read in two very different ways:*

- a) Go and say to him, ‘You will certainly recover.’ Nevertheless, the LORD has revealed to me that he will in fact die.”

*b) Go, 'You will certainly not recover.' For, the LORD has revealed to me that he will in fact die." The problem stems from the fact that the Hebrew for the words "not" and "to him" differ only slightly.*

*However, I think we can still have the first option with Elisha's message being contradictory. Elisha's answer to the King's question is both yes and no. Yes: if left to normal circumstances of healing, the King would recover; and no: Elisha who at that moment was "anointing" (?). Hazael as King, knew that this treacherous Hazael would use the King's illness to kill him and take over the throne. Therefore, Hazael could testify truthfully that the King's illness in itself was not a fatal one!*

**12. Why does Elisha weep over the coming kingship of Hazael?**

*Elisha weeps because he knows that the "anointing" of Hazael will lead to great harm being done to the nation of Israel. As v12 says: Hazael "will set fire to fortified places; kill young men with sword; dash their little children to the ground; and rip open their pregnant women"*

*God will use Hazael to pass judgment on the disobedience of Israel; which is why God told Elijah to anoint Hazael as King of Aram. God is in control of all things!*

**13. Read Ezekiel 33:10-11. How does this passage relate to 2 Kings 8:1-15?**

*Although God arranges for judgment on Israel to be implemented by Hazael of Aram; as Ezekiel 33:11 says, God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked but He would prefer that they turn from their wicked ways and live. As the verse says "Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, people of Israel!". There is an element of "divine sadness" in His judgment. Hence Elisha's tears!*

**14. Read Luke 19:41-44. How does this passage relate to 2 Kings 8:1-15?**

*On Palm Sunday Jesus rode into Jerusalem.*

*He stops and in His mind's eye sees the events that are to unfold in 40 years' time – in AD70 – when the Romans decimate Jerusalem. Like Hazael, the Romans are instruments for God's judgment on Israel's disobedience.*

*Like Elisha, Jesus too weeps for the people of Jerusalem and Israel – if only they would repent and believe and receive God's peace – but alas they won't.*

**What's the *BIG IDEA* of 2 Kings 8:1-15**

*God balances His desire to restore with His need to judge - the faithful/repentant restored & the faithless/unrepentant judged!*



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and **Scripture is all about Him** (Luke 24:27), in what ways **2 Kings 8:1-15** point to Jesus?

- a. *As always, Elisha foreshadows Jesus*
- b. *The restoration of the Shunammite's home and land reminds us of the restoration Jesus brings: forgiveness, a new life in Him and eternal life in Heaven.*
- c. *As Elisha wept over Israel; so, did Jesus!*
- d. *The Judgment of Israel points to Jesus the ultimate Judge!*

How does this passage **apply to your life?**

- a. *God has a plan for each of our lives. He foreknew the restoration of the Shunammite's land and the rise of King Hazael. He knows all that will happen in our lives too!*
- b. *God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them (Hebrews 6:10). The Shunammite woman was blessed by God (land restored) for her previous act of kindness to Elisha. As Jesus says in Matthew 10:41-42: <sup>41</sup>Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. <sup>42</sup>And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward." And Matthew 25:40: <sup>40</sup>"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'*
- c. *We are to be obedient to God's Word. The Shunammite trusted and obeyed God's instructions through Elisha.*
- d. *There are no coincidences with God – the woman turns up as Gehazi is talking to the King about her! That is not a coincidence!*
- e. *It's not enough to HEAR God's Word (the Gospel) as the King did; we must BELIEVE God's Word (the Gospel)*
- f. *We have restoration and a heavenly Promised Land to look forward to.*
- g. *God's judgment is both necessary and sad. God is the God who mingles His tears with the fire and brimstone!*
- h. *Elisha and Jesus both wept over unrepentant Israel. Do we weep over those lost from God? Does it motivate us to share the Gospel?*
- i. *All people must REPENT or REGRET!*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?



*<sup>11</sup> He stared at him with a fixed gaze until Hazael was embarrassed. Then the man of God began to weep.*

**Finish in prayer:** Ask God to help us remain humble and guard our hearts against pride. Ask God to let our lives reflect the gratitude and faith of the Shunammite woman, as we place our trust in His providence.

## Study 5 – One Big Evil Family

2 Kings 8:16-29

*(Sermon on 01-Oct-2023)*

### Read 2 Kings 8:16-24

1. Locate the kings mentioned in verse 16 in the chart in appendix 1.

Joram son of Ahab – King of Israel – see red circle

Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat – King of Judah – see blue circle

2. What confusion do we have with the name of the son of Jehoshaphat?

*The son of Jehoshaphat is Jehoram which is also another name for Joram, the King of Israel.*

3. What problem does King Jehoram of Judah have in verse 18?

*Even though Jehoram is the King of Judah (the Southern Kingdom) and not King of Israel (Northern Kingdom), he followed the ways of the worst King Israel had, Ahab, because Jehoram had married one of Ahab's daughters; and as often happens, but not always, in a mixed religious marriage, the non-believer can influence the believer in a negative way. This same thing happened in the past to King Solomon when he married wives who worshipped other false gods; his worship of the Lord God YHWH was affected.*

4. Why doesn't the Lord destroy Judah according to verse 19? (cf. 2 Samuel 7:12-16; 2 Samuel 21:17; 1 Kings 11:36 and 1 Kings 15:4). What does this say about God's faithfulness to His covenant promises?

*The Lord did not destroy Judah because He had made a promise to 'maintain a lamp' for [King] David and his descendants.*

*The idea of 'maintaining a lamp for David' is one of God's promises to David that there would always be a descendant of his on the throne of Israel. The "lamp" symbolizes the continuation of David's dynasty. It's like the "lamp" of David's Kingship continues to burn and doesn't extinguish. Ultimately, this promise is seen as a foreshadowing of the coming of Jesus Christ, who is a descendant of David and the fulfillment of God's covenant with David.*

*2 Samuel 7:12-16 –* <sup>12</sup>When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup>He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14</sup>I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. <sup>15</sup>But my love will never be taken away from him, as I

took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. <sup>16</sup> Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”

*2 Samuel 21:17 – <sup>17</sup> But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to David’s rescue; he struck the Philistine down and killed him. Then David’s men swore to him, saying, “Never again will you go out with us to battle, so that the lamp of Israel will not be extinguished.”*

*1 Kings 11:36 – <sup>36</sup> I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name.*

*1 Kings 15:4 - <sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, for David’s sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem by raising up a son to succeed him and by making Jerusalem strong.*

5. What problem does King Jehoram of Judah have in verses 20 to 22? Why do you think he has this problem?

*Edom rebelled against Judah. Since the time of David, Edom had been under the control of the Kings of Judah; but here Edom sets up its own King! And even though King Jehoram tried to defeat the Edomites, they surrounded him; and despite breaking through the Edomites, Jehoram’s army had to flee back home. The result was that the Edomites remained a constant thorn in Judah’s side by continuing to rebel. As did a Judean town called Libnah. You know you’re in trouble, when your own people are rebelling against you!*

*This all occurred because as a consequence of Jehoram marrying Ahab’s daughter and Jehoram following the wicked ways of Ahab!*

6. Locate Edom on the map in appendix 2 and 3.

**Edom is shown with green circle on the maps!**

*Note: Zair is located in southeast of the Dead Sea towards Edom and the location of Libnah (v22) is uncertain; but most likely in the south-western part of Israel.*

7. How is Jehoram’s reign summarized and who succeeds him?

*Jehoram’s reign can be summarized as him having these troubles of rebellion from Edom and Libnah as a result of his intermarriage with Ahab’s family.*

*King Jehoram of Judah was succeeded by King Ahaziah of Judah.*

8. What confusion do we have with the name of Jehoram’s successor?

*There is also a Ahaziah in the Kings of Israel, and he is Ahab’s son; so Ahaziah is most likely a family name – see appendix 1*

## Read 2 Kings 8:25-29

9. Locate the Kings mentioned in appendix 1.

*See blue circle and red circle in Appendix 1.*

10. What details are we given of Ahaziah King of Judah?

*Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king and only reigned one year. His mother's name was Athaliah [daughter of Ahab mentioned in v18 but no name given], a granddaughter of Omri (Ahab's father).*

*So, Ahaziah is son of Jehoram and Athaliah (Ahab's daughter).*

*Because of this association with Ahab's family; Ahaziah did evil in the eyes of the Lord, just as Ahab's family had done!*

11. What unlikely alliance is there in verse 28? What do they do?

*Ahaziah, King of Judah allied with Joram, King of Israel – to fight in a war against Hazael King of Aram at Ramoth Gilead. In some ways it's not such an unlikely alliance given both kings connected to Ahab's family.*

12. What happened to King Joram of Israel?

*King Joram was wounded by the Arameans; so he returned to Jezreel to recover from these wounds.*

13. Locate Ramoth-Gilead and Jezreel in the map in appendix 1.

*See underlined cities in yellow!*

14. How does the chapter end (v29). Why is this important? (Hint: you may have to read 2 Kings 9 to understand why)

*Ahaziah King of Judah went down to Jezreel to see the wounded Joram, King of Israel.*

*Both Kings are together and both Kings are connected to Ahab and have followed in his ways. Back in 1 Kings 19:16-17 – Elijah was told to anoint Hazael and Jehu – and they both would be the instruments of God's judgment on the wickedness of Ahab and his Baal worship. So v29 is setting us up for what will happen in chapters 9 and 10.*

15. **Ponder:** Does the Biblical mandate to not “be unequally yoked” apply here?

*There is certainly grave danger in God's remnant believers intermarrying with worshippers of false gods. We've seen that with King Solomon in a mighty way and with many of the Kings of Israel.*

**16. Read Romans 12:1-2. How does this relate to 2 Kings 8:16-29?**

*In Romans 12:1-2 the Apostle Paul encourages proper worship of God which means making our lives a living sacrifice to Him and not getting sucked in to what this world offers. It is easy for worldly things to distract us from proper worship of God. This relates to 2 Kings 8:16-29 where both King Jehoram and King Ahaziah were distracted from proper worship of the one true God YHWH by the intermarriage of a Judah King to an Israeli Baal worshipping family – and sadly they were influenced by the Baal worshipping family and suffer great consequences.*

**17. Read 1 John 2:15-17. How does this relate to 2 Kings 8:16-29?**

*1 John 2:15-17 warns against loving this world and anything in it; the danger being that we then can love the world and things in it more than God. John says this world is temporary, so instead John encourages us to do the will of God who lives forever. This relates to 2 Kings 8:16-29 in that the two Kings Jehoram and Ahaziah loved the “world” of Ahab's family and their Baal worship more than loving the one true God.*

**18. Read James 4:4; Galatians 1:10 and Colossians 3:1-2. How do these passages relate to 2 Kings 8:16-29?**

*James 4:4 – You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.*

*Galatians 1:10 – Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.*

*Colossians 3:1-2 - Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.*

*These verses warn against us being too friendly with this world where we try to please people instead of God and where we look for human approval rather than God's approval. We can't be servants of Jesus unless He is the number one priority. And because this world is temporary and Heaven is eternal – we are to set our minds on that eternal future. These verses relate to 2 Kings 8:16-29 in that the two*

*Kings, Jehoram and Ahaziah were more interested in pleasing the Baal worshipping Ahab family than following God and pleasing Him!*

19. **Read Ephesians 5:8-11.** How does this passage relate to 2 Kings 8:16-29? *These verses from Ephesians 5:8-11 contrast living in darkness or in the light. The fruit of darkness is evil whereas the fruit of light is goodness, righteousness and truth. The Apostle Paul urges us to have nothing to do with the darkness but instead to walk in the light of Jesus. The two Kings, Jehoram and Ahaziah, in 2 Kings 8:16-29 continued to walk in the darkness of Ahab's Baal worshipping family.*

20. **Read Revelation 21:23.** How does this relate to 2 Kings 8:16-29? *In Revelation 21:23 we have a picture of the New Heaven and Earth and a new Jerusalem where there is no need for the sun or moon to shine in it because the glory of God gives it light and the Lamb (Jesus) is the lamp. This relates to 2 Kings 8:16-29 in that a) we need to walk in the light not in the darkness that the two kings Jehoram and Ahaziah did and b) the lamp of David referred to in verse 19 finds its fulfilment in the lamp of Jesus – the light of the world!*

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 2 Kings 8:16-29

***The danger of being yoked to Darkness instead of the Light***



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and **Scripture is all about Him** (Luke 24:27), in what ways **2 Kings 8:16-29** point to Jesus?

- a. God maintaining a lamp for David and His descendants finds its fulfilment in Jesus the light of the World*
- b. The judgments that ultimately will befall King Jehoram and King Ahaziah point to Jesus the ultimate Judge of all things.*

How does this passage **apply to your life?**

- a. There are consequences when we go the world's way and not God's way*
- b. The dangers of compromising with the world we live in*
- c. We are to please God, not people!*
- d. We are to seek God's approval, not people's approval!*
- e. Choose our friendships carefully!*
- f. Nothing will stop God's will – He maintained a remnant in Judah so that David's lamp continued – to the coming of Jesus*



*g. We are to be shining lights for Jesus – the light of the world*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, for the sake of his servant David, the LORD was not willing to destroy Judah. He had promised to maintain a lamp for David and his descendants forever.

**Finish in prayer:** Ask God to help us live lives that reflect the enduring truth that while earthly kingdoms may rise and fall, God's sovereignty remains unshaken. Ask God to empower us to live as citizens of His heavenly kingdom, shining as lights in a world that needs God's love and redemption.

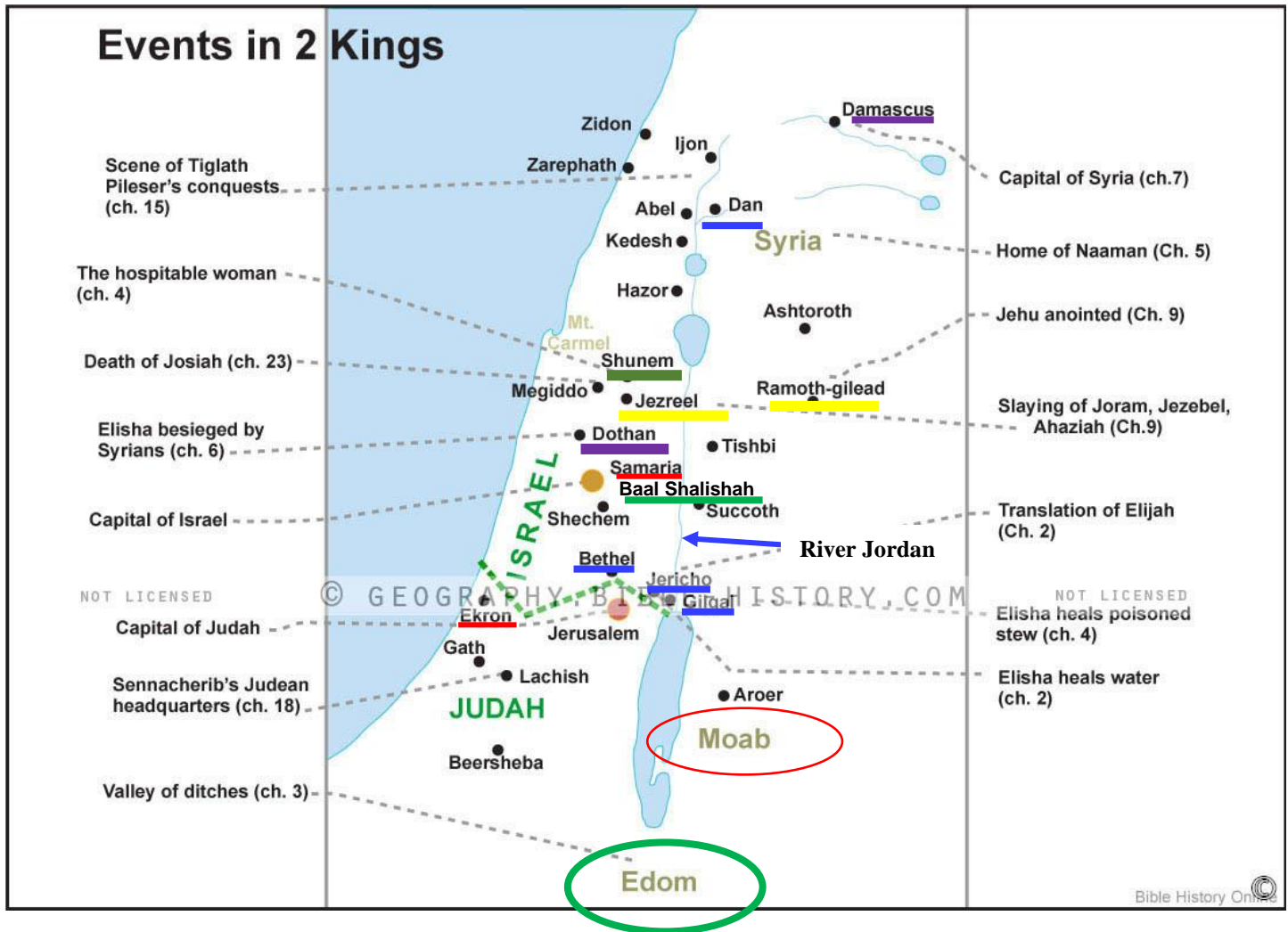
## Appendix 1 – The Kings of Judah and Israel

## Kings of Judah and Israel

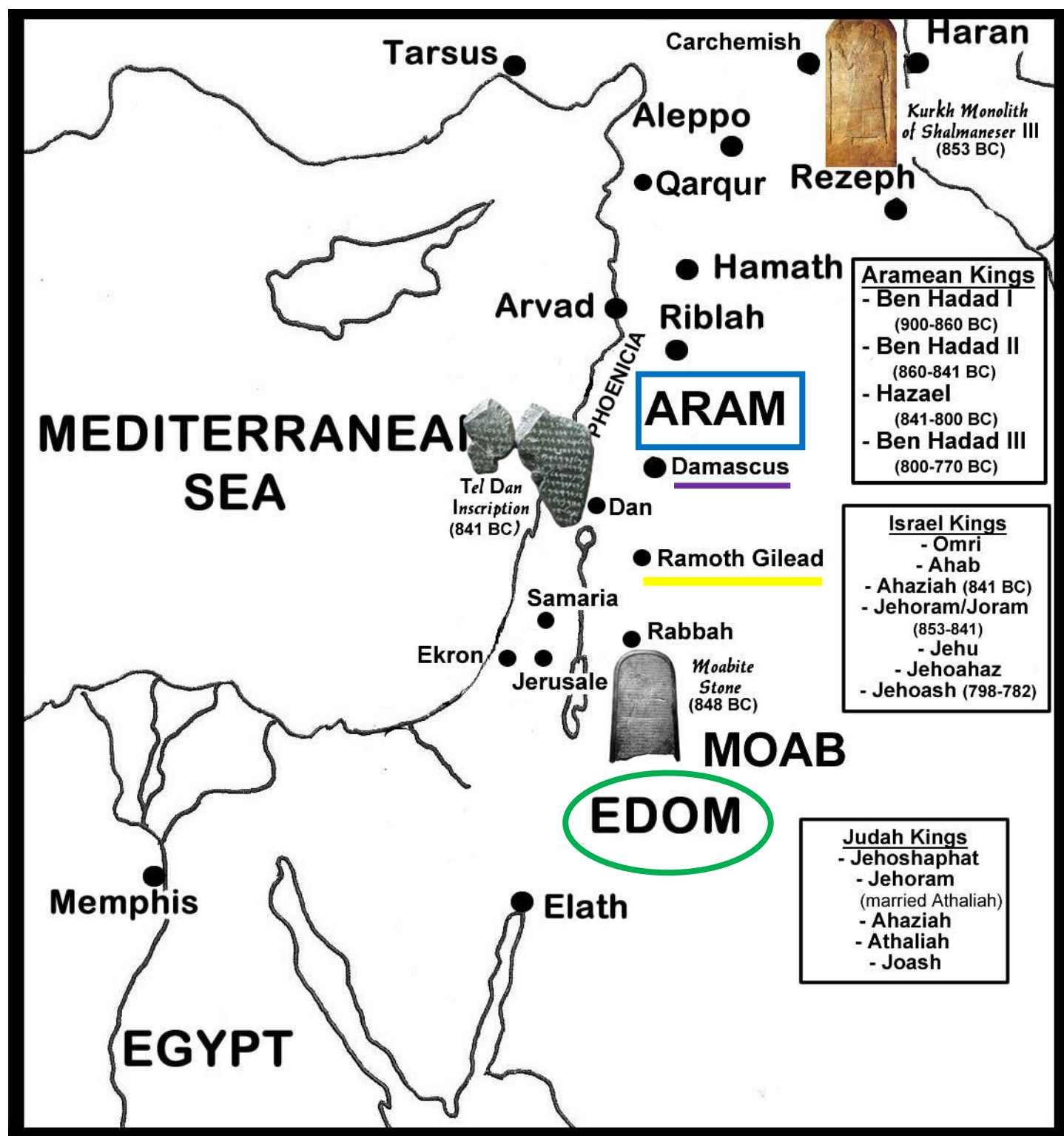
|         |              |
|---------|--------------|
| Saul    | 1050-1010 BC |
| David   | 1010-970     |
| Solomon | 970-930      |

| Judah (and Benjamin)   |          |          |            |                                | Israel (Ten Northern Tribes)               |          |          |           |                        |
|--|----------|----------|------------|--------------------------------|--|----------|----------|-----------|------------------------|
| King   | Reign    |          | Character  | Prophets                       | King                                       | Reign    |          | Character | Prophets               |
| 1. Rehoboam  | 931-913  | 17 years | Bad        | Shemaiah                       | 1. Jeroboam I                              | 931-910  | 22 years | Bad       | Ahijah                 |
| 2. Abijah  | 913-911  | 3 years  | Bad        |                                | 2. Nadab                                   | 910-909  | 2 years  | Bad       |                        |
| 3. Asa   | 911-870  | 41 years | Good       |                                | 3. Baasha                                  | 909-886  | 24 years | Bad       |                        |
| 4. Jehoshaphat   | 870-848* | 25 years | Good       |                                | 4. Elah                                    | 886-885  | 2 years  | Bad       |                        |
| 5. Jehoram   | 848-841* | 8 years  | Bad        |                                | 5. Zimri                                   | 885      | 7 days   | Bad       |                        |
| 6. Ahaziah   | 841      | 1 years  | Bad        |                                | 6. Omri                                    | 885-874* | 12 years | Bad       | Elijah<br>Micaiah      |
| 7. Athaliah  | 841-835  | 6 years  | Bad        |                                | 7. Ahab                                    | 874-853  | 22 years | Bad       |                        |
| 8. Joash   | 835-796  | 40 years | Good       | Joel                           | 8. Ahaziah                                 | 853-852  | 2 years  | Bad       |                        |
| 9. Amaziah   | 796-767  | 29 years | Good       |                                | 9. Joram                                   | 852-841  | 12 years | Bad       | Elisha                 |
| 10. Uzziah (Azariah)   | 767-740* | 52 years | Good       |                                | 10. Jehu                                   | 841-814  | 28 years | Bad       |                        |
| 11. Jotham   | 740-732* | 16 years | Good       | Isaiah<br>Micah                | 11. Jehoahaz                               | 814-798  | 17 years | Bad       | Jonah<br>Amos<br>Hosea |
| 12. Ahaz   | 732-716  | 16 years | Bad        |                                | 12. Jehoash                                | 798-782  | 16 years | Bad       |                        |
| 13. Hezekiah   | 716-687  | 29 years | Good       |                                | 13. Jeroboam II                            | 782-753* | 41 years | Bad       |                        |
| 14. Manasseh   | 687-642* | 55 years | Bad-repent | Nahum<br>Habakkuk<br>Zephaniah | 14. Zechariah                              | 753-752  | 6 mo     | Bad       |                        |
| 15. Amon   | 642-640  | 2 years  | Bad        |                                | 15. Shallum                                | 752      | 1 mo     | Bad       |                        |
| 16. Josiah   | 640-608  | 31 years | Good       |                                | 16. Menahem                                | 752-742  | 10 years | Bad       |                        |
| 17. Jehoahaz   | 608      | 3 mo     | Bad        |                                | 17. Pekahiah                               | 742-740  | 2 years  | Bad       |                        |
| 18. Jehoiakim  | 608-597  | 11 years | Bad        | Daniel<br>Ezekiel<br>Jeremiah  | 18. Pekah                                  | 740-732* | 20 years | Bad       |                        |
| 19. Jehoiachin   | 597      | 3 mos    | Bad        |                                | 19. Hoshea                                 | 732-712  | 9 years  | Bad       |                        |
| 20. Zedekiah   | 597-586  | 11 years | Bad        |                                | 722 BC Fall of Israel / Assyrian Captivity |          |          |           |                        |
| Destruction of Jerusalem, 9th Av, 586 BC, Babylonian Captivity |          |          |            |                                |  |          |          |           |                        |

## Appendix 2 – Events and Places in 2 Kings



# Appendix 3 – Map of Israel, Judah and Surrounding Nations



**Studies prepared by Paul O'Rourke**  
**July/August 2023**

**Resources:**

The MacArthur Study Bible

New Bible Commentary (Carson, France, Moyter & Wenham)

1 and 2 Kings (Donald J. Wiseman – Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries)

2 Kings – The Power and the Fury (Dale Ralph Davis)

2 Kings and 2 Chronicles – The Wiersbe Series (David C. Cook)

Halley's Bible Handbook – New Revised Edition (Henry H. Halley)

**Notes/Prayer Points**