

The Book of 2 Kings



Part 4 Final 4 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

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|---|------------------------------|
| 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

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|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 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 – These are Dark Days

2 Kings 16:1-20

(Sermon on 05-Nov-2023)

Before we begin: From chapters 13, 14 and 15, what are your impressions of the behaviour of the Kings of Israel (Northern Kingdom) and your impressions of the behaviour of the Kings of Judah (Southern Kingdom)?

2 Kings 13

1. **Jehoahaz** of Israel (2 Kings 13:1-9):

- Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, reigned over Israel in Samaria for 17 years.
- **He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord allowed the Israelites to be oppressed by Hazael, king of Syria.**
- Jehoahaz sought the Lord's favor, and God showed mercy to Israel, allowing them to temporarily regain some strength during his reign.

2. **Jehoash** of Israel (2 Kings 13:10-25):

- Jehoash, also known as Joash, succeeded Jehoahaz as king of Israel.
- He reigned for 16 years and **also did evil in the eyes of the Lord.**
- Elisha, the prophet, was on his deathbed during Jehoash's reign. Jehoash visited Elisha, who prophesied victories over Syria for Israel. Jehoash struck the ground three times, symbolizing partial victories over Syria.

2 Kings 14

1. **Amaziah** of Judah (2 Kings 14:1-22):

- Amaziah became king of Judah after his father, Joash.
- He reigned for 29 years in Jerusalem.
- Amaziah initially did what was right in the eyes of the Lord **but later turned away from God. He challenged Jehoash, the king of Israel, to battle and was defeated.**
- Amaziah was eventually killed in a conspiracy, and his son, Azariah (Uzziah), became king of Judah.

2. **Jeroboam II** of Israel (2 Kings 14:23-29):

- Jeroboam II was the son of Jehoash and the 14th king of Israel, reigning in Samaria.

- He became king after the death of his father Jehoash and reigned for 41 years, one of the longest reigns in the history of the northern kingdom of Israel.
- Jeroboam II **did evil in the sight of the Lord, continuing the sinful practices of the previous kings of Israel.**
- Despite his wickedness, under his rule, Israel experienced a period of military expansion, reclaiming territories that had been lost to neighboring nations. This period was marked by prosperity and stability for Israel.
- The prophet Jonah, the son of Amittai, likely lived during Jeroboam II's reign, although his story is more prominently featured in the Book of Jonah in the Old Testament.

2 Kings 15

The following are the kings of Israel and Judah mentioned in 2 Kings 15:

1. **Azariah** (Uzziah) of Judah (2 Kings 15:1-7):

- Azariah, also known as Uzziah, began his reign over Judah when he was 16 years old.
- He reigned for 52 years in Jerusalem and **did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.**
- Under his rule, Judah experienced prosperity and military success.

2. **Zechariah** of Israel (2 Kings 15:8-12):

- Zechariah became king of Israel and reigned in Samaria for six months.
- **He did evil in the sight of the Lord** and was assassinated by Shallum, who took the throne after him.

3. **Shallum** of Israel (2 Kings 15:13-16):

- Shallum assassinated Zechariah and became king of Israel.
- He reigned for only one month in Samaria before being overthrown by Menahem.

4. **Menahem** of Israel (2 Kings 15:17-22):

- Menahem became king of Israel and reigned for ten years.
- **He did evil in the eyes of the Lord** and imposed heavy taxes on the people.
- Menahem died, and his son Pekahiah succeeded him.

5. **Pekahiah** of Israel (2 Kings 15:23-26):

- Pekahiah, the son of Menahem, became king of Israel and reigned for two years.

- **He did evil in the sight of the Lord** and was assassinated by Pekah, one of his military commanders.

6. **Pekah** of Israel (2 Kings 15:27-31):

- Pekah assassinated Pekahiah and became king of Israel.
- He reigned for 20 years in Samaria and **did evil in the eyes of the Lord**.
- Pekah was eventually assassinated by Hoshea, who succeeded him as king

7. **Jotham** of Judah (2 Kings 15:32-38):

- Jotham was the son of Uzziah (also known as Azariah) and the 11th king of Judah.
- He became king after his father, Uzziah, and reigned in Jerusalem for 16 years.
- Jotham **did what was right in the eyes of the Lord**, according to all that his father Uzziah had done. However, the high places were not removed, and the people still sacrificed and burned incense on them.
- During his reign, Judah enjoyed stability and prosperity. Jotham strengthened the defenses of Jerusalem and conducted various building projects.
- Jotham died and was succeeded by his son Ahaz, who later became one of the wicked kings of Judah, leading the kingdom into idolatry and spiritual decline.

Impressions of the Kings of Israel (2 Kings 13, 14, 15):

The kings of Israel during this period are marked by a cycle of disobedience and idolatry. Many of them did evil in the sight of the Lord, following in the sinful ways of their predecessors. Assassinations and conspiracies were common, indicating political instability. Despite this, some kings, like Jeroboam II, experienced military success, leading Israel to temporary prosperity. The reigns of these kings were often characterized by a lack of faithfulness to God's commandments, leading to moral and spiritual decline.

Impressions Kings of Judah (2 Kings 13, 14, 15):

In Judah, the picture is more mixed. While some kings, like Amaziah and Jotham, did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, they often tolerated the existence of high places, centers of idol worship. Others, like Azariah (Uzziah), were faithful to God but suffered personal downfall due to pride. **The righteous kings of Judah tried to maintain the worship of YHWH but were not always successful in eliminating idolatrous practices completely.** Political stability and economic

prosperity were present during the reigns of some of these kings, contributing to a sense of order in the kingdom.

But overall, we're left with the sense that both kingdoms (North and South) are spiraling out of control and declining due to continued disobedience. Is exile ahead?

If you were living in Israel (Northern Kingdom) at the time, would you think the grass is greener in Judah (Southern Kingdom)? Yes/No/Maybe?

It's possible the people living in the Northern Kingdom of Israel might have looked at the Southern Kingdom of Judah with a sense of envy or longing for stability, especially during the times of crisis/invasion. However, as we can see the Southern Kingdom is also spiralling out of control just like the Northern Kingdom; albeit at a slower rate!

Before we begin: Read 2 Chronicles 28 to get some details of King Ahaz of Judah and make some notes.

- *Ahaz was age 20 when he became King*
- *Ahaz reigned 16 years*
- *Unlike his ancestor, King David, Ahaz did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord*
- *Offered sacrifices in wrong places – even child sacrifices!*
- *Delivered into Aramean hands – many of the people taken to Damascus*
- *Judah also plundered by the Northern Kingdom (King Pekah)*
- *The prophet Oded cautions the Northern Kingdom for taking the people of Judah captive and says they should be sent back*
- *Ahaz looked to Assyria for help*
- *Judah suffered attacks from the Edomites and the Philistines*
- *The King of Assyria – Tiglath Pileser came but gave Ahaz trouble, not help!*
- *Ahaz tried to pay off Tiglath Pileser with things from the temple and the palace – but that did not help!*
- *In this time of trouble, Ahaz became even more unfaithful to God – offering sacrifices to the gods of Damascus thinking these gods helped the King of Aram, so they might help him too – but they were his downfall!*

- *As a result, Ahaz turned away from proper temple worship and built high places for sacrifices!*
- *Ahaz was succeeded by his son Hezekiah*

Read 2 Kings 16:1-4

1. Locate the Kings of Israel and Judah mentioned in verses 1 to 4, in the list of Kings in appendix 1?

Red rectangles – Pekah 18th King of Israel and Ahaz 12th King of Judah

2. What assessment is given of King Ahaz in verses 2 to 4?

- *Unlike his ancestor, King David, Ahaz did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord*
- *Ahaz followed the ways of the Kings of Israel*
- *Ahaz even sacrificed his own son in the fire and engaged in detestable practices of the surrounding nations that the Lord had driven out*
- *Ahaz offered sacrifices and burned incense at the high places, hilltops and under spreading trees. These sacrifices were not just to YHWH*

3. In what ways has King Ahaz reached a new low in Judah?

- *This is the first instance of Judah imitating Israel's (Northern Kingdom) apostasy!*
- *He also participated in the pagan worship of the god, Molech. Molech was worshipped by heating a metal statue representing the god until it was red hot, then placing a living infant on the outstretched hands of the statue, while beating drums drowned out the screams of the child until it burned to death.*

The Canaanite nations that occupied Canaan before the time of Joshua also practiced this terrible form of human and child sacrifice. God would bring judgment upon Judah for their continued practice of these sins.

This reminds us that the war against the Canaanites in the Book of Joshua — as terrible and complete as it was — was not a racial war. God's judgment did not come upon the Canaanites through the armies of Israel because of their race, but because of their sin. If Israel insisted in walking in the same sins, God would bring similar judgment upon them.

Read 2 Kings 16:5-9

4. Locate the places mentioned in verses 5 to 9 on the map in appendix 2.

See red circles

5. Who combined forces in verse 5? What was the outcome?

King Rezin of Aram and King Pekah of Israel combined forces, but they could not overpower Ahaz!

6. **Ponder:** What would have happened to the “Davidic promise” (*that there would be one of David’s descendants on the throne of Judah forever*) if King Rezin of Aram and King Pekah of Israel had succeeded in overpowering King Ahaz? (see Isaiah 7:1-9)

From the Isaiah passage (v6) it’s clear that the intention was to dethrone Ahaz and install an Aramean (Syrian) King. If this had happened, then the line of David and the promise of one of David’s descendants being on the throne continually, would again, be in jeopardy.

Isaiah 7:1-9 says:

When Ahaz son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, was king of Judah, King Rezin of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel marched up to fight against Jerusalem, but they could not overpower it.

² Now the house of David was told, “Aram has allied itself with Ephraim”; so, the hearts of Ahaz and his people were shaken, as the trees of the forest are shaken by the wind. ³ Then the LORD said to Isaiah, “Go out, you and your son Shear-Jashub, to meet Ahaz at the end of the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Launderer’s Field. ⁴ Say to him, ‘Be careful, keep calm and don’t be afraid. Do not lose heart because of these two smouldering stubs of firewood—because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and of the son of Remaliah. ⁵ Aram, Ephraim and Remaliah’s son have plotted your ruin, saying, ⁶ “Let us invade Judah; let us tear it apart and divide it among ourselves, and make the son of Tabeel king over it.” ⁷ Yet this is what the Sovereign LORD says: “It will not take place, it will not happen,

7. What territory was gained by Rezin, the King of Aram in verse 6?

Rezin recovered Elath and drove out the Judeans, which in turn allowed the Edomites to live there. A strategic capture to have a stronghold in the South as well as attacking from the North.

8. What shameful compromise does King Ahaz of Israel make in verses 7 and 8?
What is wrong with his compromise?

Ahaz declares himself to be King Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria’s servant and vassal and he asks Tiglath-Pileser to save him from the King of Aram and the King of Israel. Rather than trusting in the Lord, Ahaz trusted in a foreign false-god worshipping King!

Furthermore, Ahaz took the silver and gold in the Temple of the Lord and in the treasuries of the royal palace and sent it as a gift to the King of Assyria. The former are not his gift to give!

9. What is so sad about verse 7?

King Ahaz has sadly chosen the wrong person to be a servant/vassal of! Sadly, there's no mention of the Lord! Ahaz does not consult the Lord!

10. What does Tiglath-Pileser accomplish in verse 9?

Tiglath-Pileser attacked Damascus (Aram/Syria) and captured it.

Tiglath-Pileser deported the inhabitants of Damascus to Kir (uncertain whether near Edom or in Babylon – more likely the latter) and he put the King of Aram, Rezin, to death!

Read 2 Kings 16:10-20

11. How does King Ahaz pervert the worship at the temple? Why? (see 2 Chronicles 28:23) Who is at fault? Just Ahaz?

King Ahaz saw an altar in Damascus and sent the priest Uriah a sketch of it and a detailed construction plan.

Uriah built the temple in readiness for Ahaz's return from Damascus.

When Ahaz returned, he made offerings on this new altar.

He also moved the Lord's bronze altar.

Ahaz then made the new altar the altar for all offerings and sacrifices and just used the Lord's altar for seeking the Lord's guidance.

Uriah did just as Ahaz ordered (v16)

Ahaz bears the greater blame in this matter; but the high priest Urijah also bore significant blame in the replacement of the LORD's altar with this one of pagan design. Uriah not only allowed Ahaz to do this; he participated in his evil and idolatrous plans.

*2 Chronicles 28:23 - He offered sacrifices to the gods of Damascus, who had defeated him; for he thought, "**Since the gods of the kings of Aram have helped them, I will sacrifice to them so they will help me.**" But they were his downfall and the downfall of all Israel.*

12. What else does King Ahaz do in verses 17 and 18? Is this, okay?

Ahaz even cut off the side panels and removed the basins from their movable stands. He also removed the Sea from the bronze bulls that supported it and set it on a stone base.

God had given explicit instructions on how the temple was constructed and how worship was to take place.

13. According to 2 Chronicles 28:27, King Ahaz was not buried in the tombs of the Kings of Israel. Who else was NOT buried in the tombs of the Kings of Israel?

What message is being sent whenever a King isn't buried in the royal tombs?

The following Kings were not buried with the Kings of Israel:

Jehoram King of Judah (2 Chronicles 21:20)

Joash King of Judah (2 Chronicles 24:24-25)

Uzziah King of Judah (2 Chronicles 26:23)

Manasseh King of Judah (2 Chronicles 33:20)

The message is that these kings are not worthy to be buried with the Kings of Israel because they have broken God's covenant, so severely; and God takes covenant obedience very seriously!

14. **Optional Question:** In verses 19 and 20, we have the usual summary of the King's reign and death. Perhaps there's a glimmer of hope? Who succeeds Ahaz? Is he a good King? To find out, read 2 Kings 18.

Ahaz's son, Hezekiah, succeeds him.

How merciful is God that He doesn't give us Ahaz-upon-Ahaz.

2 Kings 18:3-6 says this about Hezekiah:

He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, just as his father David had done.⁴ *He removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it. (It was called Nehushtan.)*⁵ *Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. **There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him.***⁶ *He held fast to the LORD and did not stop following him; he kept the commands the LORD had given Moses.*

Hezekiah also rebelled against the Assyrian king, refusing to serve him, which led to a military campaign against Judah. Despite facing immense pressure, Hezekiah remained steadfast in his trust in God. He sought the counsel of the prophet Isaiah and prayed earnestly for God's intervention. In response to his faith and prayers, God miraculously saved Judah by sending an angel (2 Kings 19:35) that destroyed

the Assyrian army, showcasing God's power and faithfulness. Hezekiah's reign exemplifies devotion to God and reliance on divine guidance in the face of external threats.

Read Proverbs 3:5-8

15. How do these verses relate to **2 Kings 16:1-20**?

Proverbs 3:5-8 says: ⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. ⁷ Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. ⁸ This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

Proverbs shows what King Ahaz should have done but failed to do!

Read Deuteronomy 4:2

16. How does this verse relate to **2 Kings 16:1-20**?

Deuteronomy 4:2 says: Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

Ahaz's erection of a pagan altar and his many changes to worship, as well as his introduction to worship/offerings/sacrifices on high places are a complete contradiction to this command from Deuteronomy 4:2.

Read Psalm 1

17. How do these verses relate to **2 Kings 16:1-20**?

Psalm 1 offers two ways to live. The way of the wicked or the way of the Lord. Ahab chose the way of the wicked!

Read Matthew 7:7-12

18. How do these verses relate to **2 Kings 16:1-20**?

Matthew 7:7-12 says: ⁷ "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹ "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹ If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! ¹² So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Matthew 7:7-12 encourages us to ask, seek and knock on God's door. And the promise is that God will give good gifts to those who ask (v11). Ahaz did not ask, seek or knock. He looked to a pagan King, Tiglath-Pileser, for his help and trusted in him as his saviour rather than God.

Read Romans 1:18-32

19. How do these verses relate to **2 Kings 16:1-20**?

In Romans 1:18, the Apostle Paul says the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness. That pretty much describes King Ahaz.

Then Romans 1:23 says - people exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. That pretty much sums up Ahaz false worship.

Romans 1:25 says – people exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is praised forever! Ahaz exchanged the truth of God for the lie of pagan worship from Damascus!

Read Revelation 22:18-19

20. How do these verses relate to **2 Kings 16:1-20**?

In Revelation 22:18-19 warns against the consequences of adding to God's Word. The consequence in this case is that a person who adds to God's Word will suffer plagues (described in Revelation) AND will not share in the tree of life in Heaven! Ahaz tried to add pagan worship to God's pure worship! God will not stand for it – back then or TODAY!

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **2 Kings 16:1-20**?

NO COMPROMISE!



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and **Scripture is all about Him** (Luke 24:27), in what ways **2 Kings 16:1-20** point to Jesus?

- a. Ahaz sacrificed his son to a false god which gave him and Judah nothing whereas God sacrificed His Son, Jesus, to save the world!
- b. Ahaz looks to Tiglath-Pileser as his saviour – we have Jesus as our Saviour!
- c. Ahaz is not a faithful and obedient King – Jesus is the ultimate and faithful King!

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

- a. *Ahaz did not follow God's way; he followed his own way. We must follow God's way (as per Proverbs 3:5-8). Ask God to guide our paths!*
- b. *Ahaz looked to a pagan King for his help and trusted Him as His saviour. We must come to God alone for our help and trust in His Son as our Saviour. We should not be saying "My troubles are too complex for me to lean upon YHWH's assurances, but I can see a clear and very obvious way to solve this problem with someone else's help".*
- c. *Ahaz compromised with a pagan King. We must not compromise with the world and forsake the things of God*
- d. *We must stand up against behaviour and laws of government which contradict God's Word – no compromise!*
- e. *The worship of YHWH alone was not enough for Ahaz; he was attracted to foreign deities. What are we attracted to?*
- f. *Is the Gospel of Jesus and the Cross/Resurrection enough for us – or do we want to add/take away from that?*
- g. *Is orthodox worship enough for us?*
- h. *Ask God to help us build altars of devotion in our hearts, dedicating ourselves to God's purposes and to God's glory.*
- i. *The priest Uriah went along with Ahaz's proposed pagan worship. Evil is helped by weakness as well as wickedness! In what ways are we being weak?*
- j. *Will we learn from the mistakes/sins of Israel and Judah's history?*

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

*V20 - Ahaz rested with his ancestors and was buried with them in the City of David. And **Hezekiah his son succeeded him as king.***

Finish in prayer: Pray that we would learn from the mistakes of Israel and Judah. Ask God to help us build altars of devotion in our hearts, dedicating ourselves to God's purposes and for God's glory. Ask God to continually guide us on paths of righteousness.

Study 2 – The End of the Line for the Northern Kingdom

2 Kings 17:1-41

(Sermon on 12-Nov-2023 – Ian Warrell)

Read 2 Kings 17:1-6

1. Find the Kings mentioned in the list of Kings in appendix 1.

See red rectangles in appendix 1 - King Hoshea (#19 and last King of Israel) and Ahaz (#12 of Judah).

2. How is King Hoshea of Israel's reign described in verse 2?

He did evil in the sight of the Lord but not like the Kings of Israel who preceded him.

3. What does King Shalmaneser of Assyria discover about King Hoshea?

Hoshea had been Shalmaneser's vassal and was paying him tribute. But Shalmaneser discovers that Hoshea is a traitor and had sent for help from the King of Egypt and so had stopped paying him tribute.

4. What happens to Samaria and what happens to the Israelites?

Shalmaneser invaded Israel and laid siege on Samaria for 3 years. Samaria was captured and the Israelites were deported to Assyria.

5. Locate the places mentioned in verse 6 in the maps in appendices 2 and 3.

Blue circle of Medes on appendix 2.

Blue circles on appendix 3 – Halah, Gozan, Habor River, Media Israelite Settlements

Read 2 Kings 17:7-23

6. What sins are listed in verses 7 to 13 as the reason for the Israelites' exile?

V7 – They worshipped other gods

V8 – They followed the practices of the driven out surrounding nations – plus practices introduced by previous kings of Israel

V9 - Secretly improper worship and high places

V10 – Sacred stones, Asherah poles

V11 – High places

V12 – Idol worship

V13 – Disobeyed God's laws and commandments

7. What sins are listed in verses 14 to 17 as the reason for the Israelites' exile?

V14 – They did not trust in the Lord

V15 – They rejected the Lord's decrees and His covenant; followed worthless idols; and imitated the surrounding nations

V16 – Forsook God's commandments; worshipped golden calves and Asherah poles and Baal

V17 – Sacrificed sons and daughters; practiced divination and sorcery and provoked God's anger!

8. What did the Lord decide to do in verses 18 to 23? Why?

He removed Israel from His presence because He was angry with them because Israel and Judah did not keep the commandments of the Lord their God. They persisted in the sins of Jeroboam!

9. Which tribe is spared from exile (for the time being) and how are they described?

The tribe of Judah is spared at this time but they did not keep the commands of the Lord their God either! They followed the practices introduced to them by the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

10. What's so significant about verse 23?

God had warned them through His servants the prophets. They were exiled in Assyria and still there at the time of writing of 2 Kings!

Read 2 Kings 17:24-41

11. Who did the King of Assyria bring to resettle Samaria?

The King of Israel brought people from Babylon, Kuthah, Avva, Hamath and Sepharvaim to resettle Samaria!

12. How does God warn the foreigners who have resettled in Samaria?

These foreigners didn't worship the Lord, so God sent lions and they killed some of the people.

13. How does the King of Assyria remedy this in verses 27 and 28?

He sent for one of the priests who had been taken captive to return from exile to teach the settlers what God required. Irony in that they were exiled for NOT following God's teaching!

14. Does this remedy work? What does the foreigners' worship look like in verses 29 to 39?

No, the remedy didn't work!

The foreigners made their own gods to worship based on their nationality and culture. They even made child sacrifices and worshipped other gods as well as the Lord God; i.e., syncretism. This broke the first commandment and the covenant with the Lord.

15. How is worship in Israel summarised in verses 40 to 41?

They would not listen but persisted in their former practices. They worshipped the Lord PLUS idols AND passed this practice on to their children and grandchildren.

Read Matthew 6:19-24

16. How do these verses relate to **2 Kings 17:1-41** and how are these verses a remedy to what was happening in Israel at the time?

We need to ask where our treasure is? What's in our hearts? Israel's (in 2 Kings 17) treasure was not in the Lord; likewise, the foreign settlers! They were tempted by worldly ungodly influences.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:6-13

17. How do these verses relate to **2 Kings 17:1-41**?

Paul lists examples from history, so that we are not tempted.

We are meant to learn from the history of Israel in 2 Kings so we are not tempted to do the same things as them!

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **2 Kings 17:1-41**?

God will not tolerate the worship of anything or anyone BUT Him – be careful not to be tempted!



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and **Scripture is all about Him** (Luke 24:27), in what ways **2 Kings 17:1-41** point to Jesus?

Jesus was tempted by Satan to worship Satan and forsake God – but Jesus remained obedient.

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

- a. Remain pure in our worship*
- b. Remain obedient in our worship*
- c. Beware of the influences of the world*
- d. Learn from the history of Israel*
- e. Where is our treasure? Where is our heart?*
- f. Beware of the temptations and trappings of this world*
- g. There is a way out of temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13) if we care to take it!*

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

V18 -Only the tribe of Judah was left, *this shows that God's promise to King David to have some one remain on his throne is still in play!*

Finish in prayer: Ask God to help us learn the lessons from history. Ask God to give us the strength to resist the allure of worldly desires, so that we can worship Him alone.

Study 3 – The End of the Line for the Southern Kingdom

Kings 24:1-20a

(Sermon on 19-Nov-2023 – Ian Warrell)

Before we begin: Read 2 Kings 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23 as we will not study them.

1. Using the list of Kings of Judah in appendix 1– list each King of Judah and summarize their reigns; making an assessment as to whether they were a good King or a bad King. Share these notes with your group.

Hezekiah – good king. There was no one like him – before or after (18:5)

Manasseh – evil king (21:2). He erected altars to Baal/Asherah; sacrificed his own son (21:3-6). He did more evil than the Amorites (21:11)

Amon – evil like his father, Manasseh (21:20-22)

Josiah – 8 years old when he became king (22:1). He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord (22:2) and he followed David. Under Josiah, the book of the law was found (22:8-20). Josiah renewed the covenant with the people and God (23:1-25). Josiah was a good king (23:25). But because of the sins of Manasseh, the Lord said He would remove Judah from His presence (23:27) – just like He had done with the Northern Kingdom of Israel!

Jehoahaz – He did evil in the eyes of the Lord (23:32)

Jehoiakim – made by King by Pharaoh Neco (23:32) and he also did evil in the eyes of the Lord (23:37)

Read 2 Kings 24:1-7

1. In verse 1, who invades Judah and how does King Jehoiakim of Judah react initially and then after three years?

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and King Jehoiakim became his vassal for 3 years. Then after 3 years, Jehoiakim changed his mind!

2. Who is sent in verse 2 and by whom? Is this surprising?

Babylonian, Aramean, Moabite and Ammonite raiders are sent. They are sent by the Lord. This is not a surprise. See 2 Kings 23:27 - So the LORD said, "I will remove Judah

also from my presence as I removed Israel, and I will reject Jerusalem, the city I chose, and this temple, about which I said, 'My Name shall be there.'"

3. What reasons for this invasion are given in verses 3 and 4?

a. Because of the sins of Manasseh

b. Because of the innocent bloodshed in Jerusalem which the Lord was not willing to forgive/overlook.

4. Who succeeds King Jehoiakim?

His son Jehoiachin

Read 2 Kings 24:7-16

5. How is King Jehoiachin's reign summarised? Is this a surprise?

He reigned in Jerusalem for only 3 months. It's not really a surprise, given the invasion from Babylonian and other raiders.

6. Who surrenders to King Nebuchadnezzar in verses 10 to 12?

King Jehoiachin, his mother, his attendants, his nobles and his officials all surrendered. King Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin prisoner!

7. What happens to the contents and the people of Jerusalem in verses 13 to 16? Is this a surprise? (cf. 2 Kings 20:16-18)

a. All the treasure from the Lord's temple is removed

b. All of Jerusalem is exiled: officers, craftsman, artisans; 10000 in total

c. Only the poorest people are left behind

d. Jehoiachin, his mother, wives, officials, leading men of the land and 7000 fighting men and 1000 craftsman and artisans are exiled

This not a surprise – God told Hezekiah this would happen in 2 Kings 20:16-18:

¹⁶ Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD: ¹⁷ The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your predecessors have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the LORD. ¹⁸ And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

Read 2 Kings 24:17-20a

8. Who becomes King of Judah now? By whose order?

Jehoiachin's uncle Mattaniah is made King by the King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and his name was changed to Zedekiah.

9. What was King Zedekiah's reign like? Make notes from 2 Chronicles 36:11-21 and Jeremiah 32:1-5 and Jeremiah 52:1-11.

2 Kings 24:19 says that Zedekiah did evil in the eyes of the Lord.

2 Chronicles 36:11-21 says Zedekiah did evil in the eyes of the Lord and did not humble himself before Jeremiah the Prophet. He also rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah was stiff necked and had a hard heart and would not turn to the Lord.

Jeremiah 32:1-5 says Zedekiah imprisoned Jeremiah because Jeremiah prophesied that Babylon would capture Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 52:1-11 says Zedekiah did evil in the eyes of the Lord. He rebelled against Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem; Zedekiah fled but was captured. His eyes were put out and he was imprisoned in Babylon.

10. What's the outcome for Jerusalem and Judah in verse 20a? Why?
He thrust both Israel (Northern Kingdom) and Judah (Southern Kingdom) out of his presence. Why? Because of the Lord's anger against their continued disobedience and idolatry!

11. **Ponder:** How do you feel knowing that God will fulfill His word even when it is a fulfilment of judgment?

It is a great comfort to know that God is a God of both mercy/grace and judgment; He balances this perfectly. He is the same, yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8)

12. **Ponder:** Are you surprised that God seems to have run out of patience with His people? What about the Davidic promise?

Not surprised! God has been patient for over 350 years of the Kings of Israel and Judah. The Davidic promise looks in jeopardy but we have learnt that God's promises cannot be derailed.

13. **Ponder:** Do you agree that God often gives nations the leaders they deserve? Yes/No/Maybe?

Yes! He seems so in most cases! Yet there are some countries today like North Korea where the people don't seem to have a choice but to follow their leader. They can only secretly worship the Lord because to do it openly would mean being sent to a work camp or death! Having said that, there are many people in North Korea who have gone a long with the dictatorial leadership! It's the same sort of think in Russia and China. We need to pray for repentance and revival in these nations, as well as our own!

Read Matthew 24:1-2

14. How does this passage relate to 2 Kings 24:1-20a?

In 2 Kings 24, Jerusalem was destroyed. Later to be rebuilt in Ezra and Nehemiah's time; and again, later in Herod's time where it was expanded. Now Jesus, in Matthew 24, predicts the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple for exactly the same reason – disobedience and rebellion against God!

Read Luke 21:20-24

15. How does this passage relate to 2 Kings 24:1-20a?

Likewise, Jesus predicts the dreadful fall of Jerusalem (which happen 40 years after Jesus in AD70). Which is similar to the fall of Jerusalem in 2 Kings 24

Read Revelation 18:1-8

16. How does this passage relate to 2 Kings 24:1-20a?

Revelation predicts the Fall of Babylon.

Babylon is symbolic of Rome in this case but is also symbolic of ANY nation that persecutes, mistreats, exiles God's people.

God will eventually bring an end to evil wicked regimes. We see this happen throughout history. All the historic empires are gone!

Read Daniel 2:21; Psalm 22:28; Job 12:23; Jeremiah 18:17-20; Isaiah 40:23 and Romans 13:1.

17. How do these verses relate to 2 Kings 24:1-20a?

All these verses say that God is sovereign and in control of all things...

Daniel 2:21 says – God sets up Kings

Psalm 22:28 says – God has dominion over all things. He rules over all nations.

Job 12:23 says – God makes nations great and destroys them; He enlarges nations and disperses them

Jeremiah 18:17-20 says – God brings princes to naught and reduces rulers of the world to nothing

Romans 13:1 says – God is in control of establishing authorities

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **2 Kings 24:1-20a**?

God's judgment must be executed because He is Holy!



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and ***Scripture is all about Him*** (Luke 24:27), in what ways **2 Kings 24:1-20a** point to Jesus?

- a. The innocent blood shed by Manasseh unnecessarily points to the innocent blood shed for us which was necessary!*
- b. Jesus is the answer to the exile of sin we live in*
- c. Any temple reference in the Old Testament can always point to the Spiritual Temple of our Lord Jesus!*

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

- a. What God declares through His prophets must take place. God ALWAYS keeps His promises*
- b. Our sins must and will be punished. God is holy and cannot abide sin (Habakkuk 1:13)*
- c. Our sins cause us to be in exile from God. We therefore need a Saviour (Jesus)*
- d. Ask God to forgive our sins*
- e. Ask God to help us to be faithful and obedient to His Word and to align our will with His!*
- f. Ask God to help us resist the temptations of the world*

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

V3 - Surely these things happened to Judah according to the LORD's command

Finish in prayer: Ask God to forgive the times we have turned away from His commandments and pursued our own desires. Ask God to help us be steadfast in our faith, to seek His wisdom for our lives and to align our will with His will. Ask God to help us resist the temptations of this world.

Study 4 – A Whisper of Hope

2 Kings 24:20b-25:30

(Sermon on 26-Nov-2023)

Before we begin: Remind yourself what happened in 2 Kings 24:1-20a and make some notes. Who made Zedekiah the King of Judah?

- *Jehoiakim was King of Judah and a vassal for three years to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and then rebelled.*
- *The Lord sent raiders from Babylon, Aram, Moab and Ammon because of the sins of the previous wicked King, Manasseh.*
- *Jehoiachin became King of Judah for 3 months; he was also an evil King*
- *Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem and took Jehoiachin prisoner*
- *All the people were exiled except for the poorest people*
- *Nebuchadnezzar made Jehoiachin's uncle, Mattaniah, King of Judah and changed Mattaniah's name to Zedekiah. He also did evil in the eyes of the Lord.*

Read 2 Kings 24:20b-25:21 (see also Jeremiah 39:1-10; 40:7-9; 41:1-3, 16-18; 59:4-27 and 2 Chronicles 36:17-20)

1. What does Zedekiah do in 2 Kings 24:20b? What did Jeremiah say about this in Jeremiah 32:1-5?
 - *Zedekiah rebelled against the King of Babylon (v20b)*
 - *Zedekiah had imprisoned the prophet Jeremiah because Jeremiah had prophesied that the Lord would hand over Jerusalem to the King of Babylon and the city would be captured*
 - *Jeremiah said King Zedekiah would not escape the hands of the Babylonians and that the King of Babylon would take Zedekiah to Babylon and if Zedekiah fights, he will not succeed.*
2. What does Nebuchadnezzar do to Jerusalem in verses 1 to 3 of chapter 25? For how long?

Nebuchadnezzar marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. He encamped around Jerusalem for 2 years. Famine struck the city and there was no food for the people to eat.
3. What does Nebuchadnezzar do in verses 4 to 7? What happens to King Zedekiah?

The remaining Judean army fled to Arabah in the Jordan Valley. The Babylonian army pursued King Zedekiah and the army as far as the plains of Jericho. Zedekiah was captured and his sons were killed before his eyes. Then Zedekiah's eyes were put out and was taken shackled to Babylon.

4. What prophecy is fulfilled? (cf. Ezekiel 12:13)

In Ezekiel 12:13, Ezekiel prophesies that Zedekiah would be taken to Babylon but he will not see it [because his eyes are put out in 2 Kings 25:7] and he will die in Babylon!

5. What happens to Jerusalem in verses 8 to 10?

King Nebuchadnezzar set fire to the temple, the palace and all the houses of Jerusalem and every important building was burned! The walls of Jerusalem were also demolished.

6. Why did God allow the destruction of Jerusalem? (cf. 2 Chronicles 36:14-16; Lamentations 4:13; Ezekiel 8-9)

***2 Chronicles 36:14-16** says – the leaders of the priests and the people became more and more unfaithful; following detestable practices of the other nations and defiling the temple. Even when God took pity on them and sent messengers to tell them to turn back to him; they mocked them, despised their words; which aroused God's anger.*

***Lamentations 4:13** says the destruction happened because of – the sins of the prophets, the iniquities of the priests who shed the blood of the righteous
In Ezekiel 8 and 9, Ezekiel sees a vision of: the idolatry that took place in the Temple (chapter 8) which results in the idolaters being judged and killed (chapter 9)*

7. What happens to the remainder of the people in verses 11 to 17?

The commander of the Babylonian guard, Nebuzaradan, carried the remaining people in Jerusalem off to Babylon. Some of the poorest people were left behind to work the vineyards and fields.

8. What objects are carried away in verses 11 to 17?

The two bronze pillars (27ft or 18 cubits high), the moveable bronze stands of the Sea were broken up and the bronze was taken to Babylon. Also, all the bronze

articles, censers and sprinkling bowls were taken and all that was made of silver and gold.

9. Who was taken captive in verses 18 to 21?

Seraiah the chief priest; Zephaniah the priest next in rank. 3 doorkeepers. The officer in charge of fighting men. 5 royal advisers. The secretary in charge of conscripting the people of the land and 60 of his men found in the city. They were all brought to the King of Babylon at Riblah, in the land of Hamath (purple circle in appendix 2) and there they were executed.

Read 2 Kings 25:22-24

10. Who is made governor of the people left behind in Judah? What does he advise the army to do?

Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan. He advises "do not be afraid of the Babylonian officials. Settle down in the land and serve the King of Babylon and it will go well"

Read 2 Kings 25:25-26

11. What happens to the governor Gedaliah and what do the people of Judah do?

Ishmael (of royal blood v25) son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama came with 10 men and assassinated Gedaliah and also men of Judah and Babylonians who were with Gedaliah. At this, all the people fled to Egypt for fear of the Babylonians.

Read 2 Kings 25:27-30

12. Remind yourself what had happened to King Jehoiachin (cf. 2 Kings 24:10-12) *Jehoiachin surrendered in 2 Kings 24:12 and was taken prisoner with his mother, attendants, nobles and officials.*

13. Who is the new King of Babylon? Who does he release?

Awel-Marduk (aka Evel-Merodach in KJV) He released Jehoiachin from prison

14. What's the relationship between Awel-Marduk and Jehoiachin like?

Awel-Marduk spoke kindly to Jehoiachin and gave him a seat of honour higher than any of the other kings in Babylon. Jehoiachin ate regularly at King Awel-Marduk's table and was given a regular allowance.

15. Is there **a whisper of hope** in verses 27 to 30?
The line of David is still going, through Jehoiachin!

Read Jeremiah 29:1-14

16. What **promises** and what **hope** are there in these verses for the exiles?
Jeremiah writes to the exiles in Babylon, telling them that God says they are to settle in Babylon and continue to pray and worship the Lord and after 70 years of exile (29:10), they will return. Jeremiah says God has plans to prosper them, not to harm them. They are to seek God and call on Him and He will listen and He will bring them out of exile!

Read Matthew 1:1-17 (especially verses 12 to 16)

17. What **sure hope** is found in amongst this failed, dilapidated and captive people?
Here with a genealogy of our Lord Jesus from Abraham down to Joseph, the husband of Mary. 14 generations from Abraham to David, 14 generations from David to the Exile; and 14 generations from the Exile to Jesus, the Messiah. In v11 and v12, King Jeconiah (footnote says Jeconiah is aka Jehoiachin) is mentioned which preserves the family line of David through the exile. So, God's Davidic promise is maintained and then fulfilled in the birth of our Lord Jesus.

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **2 Kings 24:20b-25:30**?

God always gives hope

OR

A whisper of hope



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and **Scripture is all about Him** (Luke 24:27), in what ways **2 Kings 24:20b-25:30** point to Jesus?

a. The Davidic line of Jehoiachin points to Jesus, the Messiah

b. The temple is destroyed and will be rebuilt in 70 years which points to Jesus, the temple destroyed and rebuilt in 3 years!

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

- a. God always keeps His promises*
- b. He is in control even when there seems no hope. He provides a whisper of hope with the release of Jehoiachin – which turns out to be a certain hope in Jesus*
- c. We are part of a temple that cannot be destroyed. We are spiritual stones and Jesus is the cornerstone (1 Peter 2:5)*
- d. We are in spiritual exile because of our sin. Jesus gives us a way out of that spiritual exile because of His death and resurrection*
- e. Like Jehoiachin, we can put aside our prison clothes (because of our captivity in sin) and put on Jesus clothes of righteousness!*

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

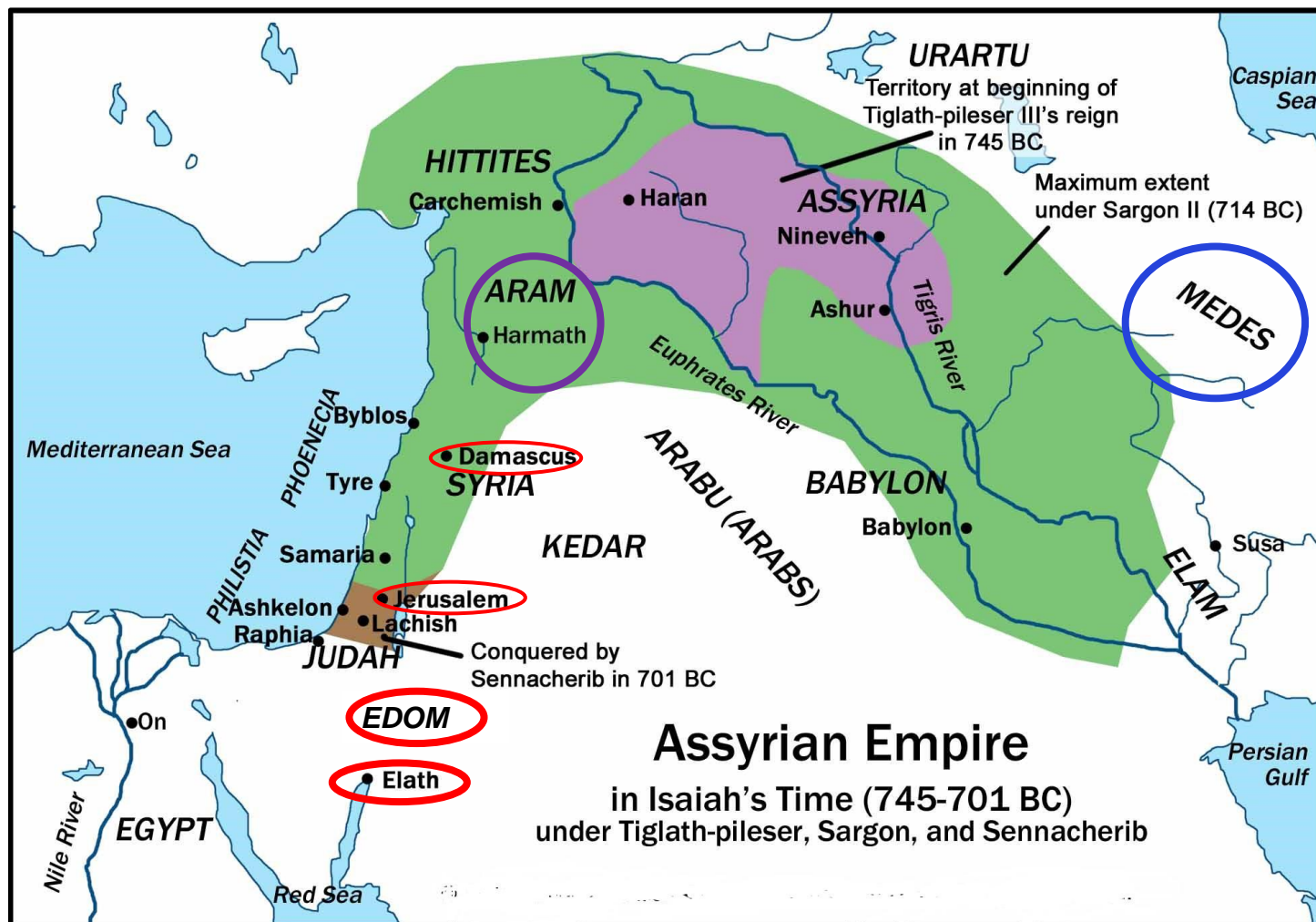
²⁷ *In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the year Awel-Marduk became king of Babylon, **he released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison**. He did this on the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month.*

Finish in prayer: Thank God, despite the continued rebellion of Israel and Judah, that there is a sure and certain hope that His promises to King David find their fulfilment in one of King David's descendants; our Lord Jesus! Thank you, Jesus!

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

Appendix 2 – Map



Appendix 3 – Exile



Studies prepared by Paul O'Rourke
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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