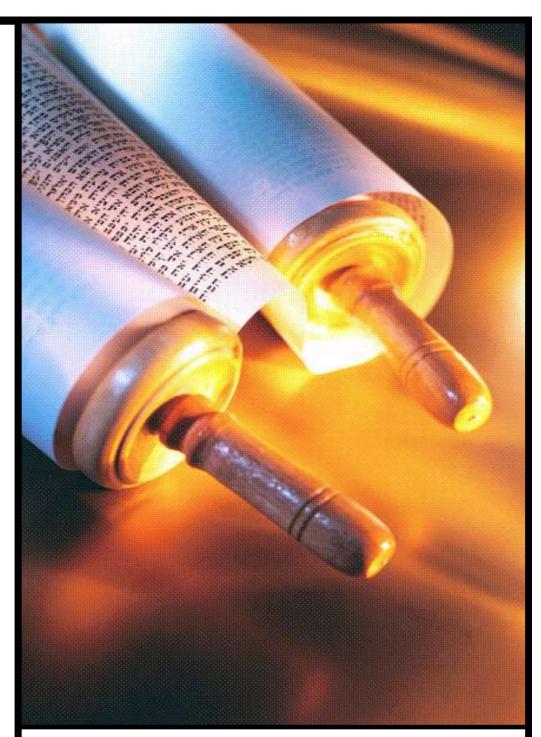
# BAPTISTWAY PRESS Dallas, Texas

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Adult
Bible Study
in
Simplified
English

# Study Guide



# 1st and 2nd Kings

LEADERS AND FOLLOWERS: FAITHFUL AND FAILED

INCLUDES BONUS EASTER LESSON

Marcia Miller

# ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN SIMPLIFIED ENGLISH Study Guide

### <u>1st and 2nd Kings:</u> <u>Leaders and Followers—Faithful and Failed</u>

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### Introduction

## 1st and 2nd Kings:

#### Leaders and Followers-Faithful and Failed

Twelve of the books of the Old Testament are called *the histories*. These twelve books are Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. These books tell the story of early Israel and Judah.

Israel was the land that God gave to Abraham. Abraham gave his land to his son Jacob. It was divided among Jacob's twelve sons and his son's sons. These groups are often referred to as the *twelve tribes of Israel*. When Solomon died, the land God promised to Abraham split into two kingdoms. The Northern Kingdom became known as Israel. It consisted of ten of the tribes. The Southern Kingdom became known as Judah. It consisted of the other two tribes.

1 Kings begins with the death of David. David was the second king of Israel and ruled for 40 years. Saul had been the first king. Solomon, the son of David, became the third king. The story of 1 and 2 Kings continues for about 400 years. At the end of 2 Kings, Jehorach is king. He was the second to last king of Judah.

During these years there were some good kings. There were also some bad kings. 1 and 2 Kings tells about them all. The account of each king tells about God keeping His promises. 1 and 2 Kings is a guidebook that shows people how to live. God blesses those who obey His laws. God punishes those who disobey Him. God uses every event in every life to further His purpose.

The theme of these two books is hope. There is hope for the present and for the future. Every past event was a part of God's plan. Leaders sometimes make poor choices. People sometimes follow bad leaders. God rewards. God judges. The world continues according to God's plan.

#### **Unit 1: Days of Glory, Days of Shame**

Unit 2: Work in Progress		
Lesson 4	Bad Results	1 Kings 15:9-19; 16:29-33
Lesson 3	Foolish Choices	1 Kings 12:1-20
Lesson 2	Solomon Prays	1 Kings 8:22-36, 41-51
Lesson 1	Solomon Asks for Wa	isdom 1Kings 2:10-12; 3:1-15

Lesson 5	Being Sent by God	1 Kings 18:1-2, 17-39
Lesson 6	Running and Hiding	1 Kings 19:1-18
Lesson 7	Good News, Bad News	1 Kings 22:6-28

#### **Unit 3: As a Nation Falls**

Lesson 8	A God for All People	2 Kings 5:1-19
Lesson 9	Heading Toward Disaster	2 Kings 14:23-29; 15:8-10, 13-14, 17-30
Lesson 10	Death of a Nation	2 Kings 17:1-18, 21-23

#### Unit 4: As Israel Went, So Goes Judah

Lesson II	Despair	2 Kings 18:1-12, 29-31; 19:1-11, 14-20
Lesson 12	Hope	2 Kings 22:1-20; 23:1-4
Lesson 13	The End	2 Kings 23:31-32, 36-37; 24:8-9, 18-20;

25:8-21

Easter Lesson: Do Not Be Afraid Matthew 28:1-10

1st and 2nd Kings: Leaders and Followers—Faithful and Failed

# **Word List**

#### Unit 1

Lesson 1

fear: trust

knowledge: a thing that is learned and

understood

reign: the time a king rules

**blessings:** the good things that God gives us

wisdom: learning based on sensible

judgment

Lesson 2

temple: a place of worship

**Ark of the Covenant:** a special wooden box, containing the agreement between God and His people, signifying the presence of

God

honor: praise

drought: dryness; a lack of rain

foreigners: people from strange or far-away

lands

Lesson 3

**bankrupt:** to leave without any money

foolish: silly

compromise: opposing sides coming to an

agreement

kingdom: a country or nation ruled by a

king or queen

Lesson 4

**prosperity**: the condition of enjoying wealth, success, or good fortune

idol: an image of a false god

altar: a table used to offer gifts to false gods

faith: strong belief; complete trust

**bribe:** to exchange money for protection; to

corrupt with money

prophet: a person who speaks God's Word

Unit 2

Lesson 5

Baal: a false god

**Asherah:** a false goddess **challenge:** a contest **mount:** a small mountain

sacrifice: something of value offered to

gods or God

Lesson 6

depression: sadness; a hopeless feeling of

being held down

messenger: the person who delivers a

message

**angel:** a servant of God who comes from

heaven

holy: sacred; Godly excellence

elements: basic matter of the universe;

earth, water, wind and fire

**anoint:** the act of pouring olive oil on a person's head, setting them apart to do

God's work

Lesson 7

alliance: a union between people seeking a

common goal

holy: sacred; Godly or morally excellent

mocking: making fun of

prophecy: God's Word concerning future

events

### **Word List**

#### Unit 3

Lesson 8

leprosy: a skin disease

compassion: sympathy; understanding

sorrow: great sadness

Lesson 9

captivity: taken as a prison

**disaster:** an even that causes people to

suffer

Lesson 10

exile: to be away from one's country as

punishment

punishment: penalty for sinning

#### Unit 4

Lesson 11

surrender: give in

diplomatic: official government efforts

despair: without hope

**disgrace:** agony **crisis:** emergency

judgment: formal opinion or decision

Lesson 12

authentic: real or genuine; not fake

**discovery:** something found **prophetess:** a female prophet

Lesson 13

justice: fair treatment

Zion: heavenly city; Jerusalem

#### **Bonus Easter Lesson**

tomb: a place dug out of a rock to be used

as a burial place

resurrection: coming back from the dead

# Nations and People from 1 and 2 Kings

**Assyria/Assyrians**: the land north of

Babyonia on the Tigris River; it is across the

river from today's Mosul, Iraq

**Babylonia/Babylonians**: the land between the Tigris and Euphrates River; today it is

Iraq

**Northern Kingdom (Israel)**: made up of ten of the tribes of Israel; its capital city was

Samaria

**Philistines**: people who lived in the land that was south of Phoenicia and west of

Judah

**Phoenicia/Phoenicians**: the land between Syria and the Mediterranean Sea; its capital

city was Tyre

**Southern Kingdom (Judah):** made up of two of the tribes of Israel; its capital city

was Jerusalem

# ◆1st and 2nd Kings◆



Adult Bible Study in SimplifiedEnglish

1 and 2 Kings: Days of Glory, Days of Shame

#### Lesson 1

Solomon Asks for Wisdom 1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:1-15

#### Lesson 2

Solomon Prays 1 Kings 8:22-36, 41-51

#### Lesson 3

Foolish Choices 1 Kings 12:1-20

#### Lesson 4

Bad Results 1 Kings 15:9-19; 16:29-33

#### DAYS OF GLORY, DAYS OF SHAME

The search for success begins with the search for wisdom. Wisdom begins with trust in the Lord. Solomon became king and asked for wisdom.

Solomon proved to be an impressive king. He did much good. He was granted wisdom. The opportunity for having it all was there. But he was also a tragic king. Solomon did not always follow God's will. When Solomon died Israel was in a civil war. War was the result of Solomon's sin.

The name *Solomon* means *peaceful*. The name was appropriate. During his reign there were no major wars with other nations. He built the temple in Jerusalem. This gave the people of Israel a place to worship God. He built many public buildings for his people.

However, Solomon made mistakes. He had many wives (700). He had many maidens (300). He used slave labor to build his buildings. He increased taxes. The foolish choices that Solomon made caused people not to like Solomon. This caused his nation to go to war with itself. The nation was divided. Two kingdoms meant two kings. Two kings were not better than one.

The family argument turned into a regional conflict. The kings that followed grew further and further away from God. God has always been in control. Even when bad things happen, God uses the events for His divine purpose. This was true in the times of the kings. This is true for the world today.

Marcia Miller wrote the Study Guide for 1 and 2 Kings. She is a graduate of the University of Texas and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Marcia has always had a heart for missions. She started doing missions as a young Girls Auxiliary member at her home church, First Baptist Church, Dallas. She has served as a volunteer missionary in Canada and the United States. She has worked as a Service Corps Volunteer with the International Mission Board in Southeast Asia (Malaysia and Singapore) and in the Caribbean Christian Publications office, where she wrote and edited Sunday School lessons for young children and their teachers.



1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:1-15

#### **Memory Verse**

"The **fear** of the Lord is the beginning of much wisdom. Fools hate wisdom and teaching."
(Proverbs 1:7)

#### **Word List**

fear: trust

**knowledge:** a thing that is learned and understood

reign: the time a king

rules

**blessings:** the good things that God gives

us

wisdom: learning based on sensible judgment

#### Things to Think About

1. What are the qualities of good leadership?

### **Solomon Asks for Wisdom**

It is difficult to like a *know-it-all*. These are the people who have all the answers. They let everyone know they are the experts. They believe they have the correct answers for every problem. They will not listen to another point of view. A know-it-all might have a lot of **knowledge**. But knowledge is not wisdom.

A wise person uses what he knows to make things better for everyone.

#### The Death of David (1 Kings 2:10-12)

David **reigned** as king of Israel for forty years. A king is the leader of his people. In Israel the king is also the judge of his people. David had been a good leader. He was not always a good judge. Some of his decisions were bad. The king was also a religious leader for his people. David worshipped God. He led his people to worship God. He sinned, but he still loved God.

When David died, his son Solomon became king. The father had taught the son how to be a good king. David told Solomon to always obey God's laws. A king expects the people to obey his laws. God expects everyone to obey His laws.

The people of Israel loved David. They were sad when he died. They remembered the good things he had done. They forgot the bad choices he had made.

David had a deep faith in God. He believed in justice. But David had made many mistakes. His reign was known for murder, secret dealings, and rebellious children.

Solomon wanted to be a wise leader. He wanted to be a good

- 2. What is knowledge?
- 3. What is wisdom?

# **Nations and People** from 1 and 2 Kings

Assyria/Assyrians: the land north of Babyonia on the Tigris River; it is across the river from today's Mosul, Iraq Babylonia/ Babylonians: the land between the Tigris and Euphrates River; today it is Iraq **Northern Kingdom** (Israel): made up of ten of the tribes of Israel; its capital city was Samaria Philistines: people who lived in the land that was south of Phoenicia and west of

Phoenicia/

Judah

Phoenicians: the land between Syria and the Mediterranean Sea; its capital city was Tyre Southern Kingdom (Judah): made up of two of the tribes of Israel; its capital city was Jerusalem

ruler. He had seen the good things his father had done. But Solomon had seen his father's mistakes, too. Solomon did not want to make unwise choices.

#### God Speaks to Solomon (1 Kings 3:1-15)

God came to Solomon in a dream. God asked, "What would you like for Me to give you?"

Solomon knew he was very young. He knew he lacked experience. He knew God's kindness to David was a result of David's love for God. God gives **blessings** to those who obey him. God blesses people not because they have to obey Him, but because they want to obey Him.

Solomon could have asked to become rich. He could have asked for a long life. He could have asked for all of his enemies to be destroyed. He could have said, "I want all the people to like me."

Solomon wanted a heart that hears and understands. He wanted to do what God would have him to do. Solomon knew he needed to be a wise king. If he could make wise choices all would go well for him and his people.

God was pleased when Solomon asked for wisdom.

God gave Solomon a wise and understanding heart.

Solomon's request was unselfish. God promised Solomon wisdom. God also promised Solomon wealth. God promised Solomon a long life as long as he continued to obey God's laws.

Good leaders do not demand loyalty. They earn it by being fair and humble.

Solomon was not perfect. He was, after all, human. All people sin. Solomon was not an exception to that. But Solomon is a role model for good leadership. He was a good leader because he knew that wisdom is very important.

#### 1 Kings 2:10-12

- **10** Then David died and was buried in the city of David.
- 11 He had ruled over Israel forty years. Seven years he ruled in Hebron. And thirty-three years he ruled in Jerusalem.
- **12** Solomon sat on the throne of his father David and things went well for the nation.

#### 1 Kings 3:1-15

- 1 Then Solomon made a marriage agreement with Pharaoh the king of Egypt. He took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the city of David. She stayed there until he had finished building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and the wall around Jerusalem.
- 2 The people were still giving their different gifts on altars, because no house had yet been built for the name of the Lord.
- **3** Now Solomon loved the Lord. He walked in the Laws of his father David. But he gave gifts and burned special perfume on different altars.
- **4** The king went to give a gift on the altar in worship at Gibeon, for that was where the most important altar was. Solomon gave a thousand burnt gifts on that altar.

- **5** The Lord came to Solomon in a special dream in Gibeon during the night. God said, "Ask what you wish Me to give you."
- 6 Then Solomon said, "You have shown great loving-kindness to Your servant David my father because he was faithful and right and good and pure in heart before You. And You have kept for him this great and lasting love. You have given him a son to sit on his throne this day.
- 7 Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child. I do not know how to start or finish.
- **8** Your servant is among Your people which You have chosen. They are many people. There are too many people to number.
- **9** So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people and know the difference between good and bad. For who is able to judge Your many people?"
- **10** It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this.
- 11 God said to him, "You have asked this, and have not asked for a long life for yourself. You have not asked for riches, or for the life of those who hate you. But you have asked for understanding to know what

- is right. Because you have asked this,
- 12 I have done what you said. See, I have given you a wise and understanding heart.

  No one has been like you before, and there will be no one like you in the future.
- 13 I give you what you have not asked, also. I give you both riches and honor. So there will be no king like you all your days.
- **14** And if you walk in My ways and keep My Laws and Word as your father David did, I will allow you to live a long time."
- 15 Solomon awoke, and saw it was a dream. He came to Jerusalem and stood before the Lord's special box of the agreement. There he gave burnt gifts and peace gifts, and made a special supper for all his servants.



1 Kings 8:22-36, 41-51

#### **Memory Verse**

"So let your whole heart be true to the Lord our God. Walk in His Laws and keep His Word, just as you are doing today." (1 Kings 8:61)

#### **Word List**

temple: a place of worship
Ark of the Covenant: a special wooden box, containing the agreement between God and His people, signifying the presence of God honor: praise drought: dryness; a lack of rain foreigners: people from strange or faraway lands

## **Solomon Prays**

Prayer is the act of talking to God. There are two kinds of prayer. Some prayers are public prayers. Public prayers are the ones heard in church, in public meetings or other public places. Private prayers are the prayers between a person and God. These are private thoughts. These are the private words between a person and God. No one hears these prayers except God.

Other words for prayer include: worship, praise, request, plea, entreaty, benediction and invocation.

#### Solomon's Temple

King David wanted to build a **temple** in Jerusalem. God told David, "No." David could not build the temple because of his sins. God promised David that the temple would be built. David's son, Solomon, would build the temple. When Solomon became king he was eager to begin building God's house. He built a beautiful temple in Jerusalem. The people of Israel had a place to come and worship God.

Solomon knew that this would be God's dwelling place.

God's presence dwelled in the temple. The temple had to be the very best. The temple was a large building. It held many people.

It was set on thirty-five acres of land. It took seven years to build. It was built with the best of materials. It was a stone building. It was paneled with cedar. It was inlaid with gold.

Inside the temple were two divisions. The first room was the Holy Place. This room was two-thirds of the entire space. The second room was the Holy of Holies. Inside this room was the

#### Things to Think About

- 1. How often do you pray?
- 2. What do you pray?
- 3. Where do you pray?

**Ark of the Covenant**. The Ark of the Covenant was a special box. It was built during the time of Moses. It represented God's presence. Having a special place for this box showed there was a place for God in His temple.

A curtain separated the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. The curtain was made of linen. It was blue, red and purple. Blue represented the heavens. Red represented the earth. Purple is red and blue added together. There was only one way into the Holy of Holies. It was through the purple curtain. Even today there is only one way to enter God's presence. We enter through knowing Jesus, the Savior.

After seven years the temple was completed. Solomon gathered the people together. They wanted to dedicate the building to God. They wanted the temple to be a place to worship God. They wanted a place that would last forever.

This was the place the people would come to find God. They would **honor** God. They would confess their sin. They would pray. He would forgive their sins. He would answer their prayers. He would dwell among His people.

#### Solomon Thanks God (1 Kings 2:22-36)

Solomon stood to talk to God. Solomon was king of a great nation. He humbled himself before God. He called himself God's servant. Solomon worshipped God. He knew that God's power was greater than his own.

Solomon honored God. God had kept His promise. God told King David that Solomon would build His temple. Now the building was built, just as God said. Solomon wanted God to keep His other promises. God said if Israel remained faithful to Him they would be blessed.
Solomon claimed this promise.

The temple was God's dwelling place. Solomon knew that God could not be kept in the temple. God is everywhere. This dwelling place was for the people to have a special place to be with God.

# Solomon Teaches As He Prays (1 Kings 8:41-51)

These are reasons for the people to come to the temple:

- 1. When a person does something wrong to his neighbor
- 2. When Israel does something wrong as a nation
- 3. When God uses **drought** to get the attention of Israel
- 4. When God uses natural disasters as punishment
  - 5. When foreigners come to pray
  - **6.**When Israel goes to war
- **7.**When a person sins and comes to ask forgiveness

Solomon wanted the world to hear about God. He wanted every person to know the

greatness of God. Solomon wanted his people to know the temple was for all who would come. It was not just for Israel.

The Lord is in His holy temple,

Let all the earth keep silence before

Him. (Habakkuk 2:20)

#### 1 Kings 8:22-36

- **22** Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord. And in front of all the people of Israel he lifted his hands toward heaven.
- 23 He said, "O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth below. You are keeping Your agreement and are showing loving-kindness to Your servants who walk in Your ways with all their heart.
- **24** You have kept Your promise to Your servant, my father David. Yes, You have spoken with Your mouth, and have done it with Your hand, as it is this day.
- 25 So now, O Lord, God of Israel, keep Your promise to my father David when You said to him, 'You will not be without a man to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons are careful to walk in My ways as you have walked.'
- **26** O God of Israel, let Your Word be made sure, which You have spoken to Your servant, my father David.
- 27 "But is it true that God will live on the earth? See, heaven and the highest heaven are not big enough to hold You. How much less this house which I have built!
- **28** But keep in mind the prayer of Your servant, O Lord my God. Listen to the cry and to the

- prayer which Your servant prays to You today. **29** Open Your eyes night and day toward this house, toward the place of which You have said, 'My name will be there.' Listen to the prayer Your servant will pray toward this place.
- **30** Listen to the prayer of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear in heaven where You live. Hear and forgive.
- 31 "If a man sins against his neighbor and has to make a promise, and he comes and makes a promise at Your altar in this house,
- **32** then hear in heaven and act. Judge Your servants. Punish the guilty forever by bringing his actions upon his own head, and free from guilt the one who is right and good, by returning his good to him.
- 33 "When Your people Israel do not win in battle over those who hate them, because they have sinned against You, but if they turn to You again and call on Your name and pray to You in this house,
- **34** then hear in heaven. Forgive the sin of Your people Israel. And return them to the land You gave to their fathers.
- 35 "When the heavens are shut up and give no rain because they have sinned against You, if they pray toward this place and call on Your name and turn from their sin when You bring trouble to them,
- **36** then hear in heaven. Forgive the sin of Your servants and of Your people Israel. Teach them the good way in which they should walk. And send rain on Your land, which You have given to Your people.

#### 1 Kings 8:41-51

**41** "When a stranger who is not of Your people Israel comes from a far country because of You,

42 (for they will hear of Your great name and

- Your powerful hand and Your long arm,) when he comes and prays toward this house,
- 43 hear in heaven where You are. Do all the stranger asks of You. So all the peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as do Your people Israel. Then they may know that this house I have built is called by Your name.
- 44 "When your people go out to battle against those who hate them, by whatever way You send them, when they pray to the Lord toward the city You have chosen and the house I have built for Your name.
- **45** then hear their prayer and their cry in heaven. See that the right thing is done to them.
- **46** "When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin), and You will be angry with them, give them to those who hate them, so they will be taken away to another land, far away or near.
- 47 When they do some thinking in the land where they have been taken, and pray to You in the land of those who hate them, saying, 'We have sinned and have done wrong and have done bad things,'
- **48** if they return to You with all their heart and soul in the land of those who hate them and have taken them there, and if they pray to You toward their land which You have given to their fathers, the city You have chosen, and the house I have built for Your name,
- **49** then hear their prayer in heaven where You are. See that the right thing is done to them.
- **50** Forgive Your people who have sinned against You and all the wrong they have done against You. Give them loving-pity in front of those who have taken them away, that they may have loving-pity on them.
- **51** For they are Your people and Your children whom You have brought out of Egypt, from the iron fire-place.



1 Kings 12:1-20

#### **Memory Verse**

"Happy is the man who does not walk in the way sinful men tell him to, or stand in the path of sinners, or sit with those who laugh at truth." (Psalms 1:1)

#### **Word List**

bankrupt: to leave without any money foolish: silly compromise: opposing sides coming to an agreement kingdom: a country or nation ruled by a king or queen

#### Things to Think About

1. How can you know what God wants you to do?

### **Foolish Choices**

There is a common pattern in family-run businesses. The father starts the family business. The son grows the business. The grandson either **bankrupts** the business or sells it to a multinational corporation.

This can happen in royal families, too.

David, the father, was a good king. The people loved him. When he died the people forgot some of his bad choices. They remembered the good things he had done.

Solomon, the son, was a good king. The people were disappointed at some of the decisions Solomon made. They did not forget everything wrong he did.

Rehoboam, the grandson, became king. He did not ask for God's help. He rejected the advice of his elders. Soon the people did not like him. Rehoboam found himself in trouble.

#### Rehoboam Makes Choices (1 Kings 12:1-15)

King Solomon died. Solomon's son Rehoboam was to become king. Solomon had been a wise king. He was wise because he asked God for wisdom. Rehoboam was not wise. He did not ask God for wisdom. In fact, Rehoboam did not ask God for anything.

The northern tribes of Israel wanted Rehoboam to leave Jerusalem. They wanted him to go to Shechem. They said, "Come and we will make you our king."

God wanted Rehoboam to stay in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was God's Holy City. This is where God's temple was. This is where

- 2. How do you choose your advisors?
- 3. Do you listen only to those who say what you want to hear?

David ruled. This is where Solomon ruled.

Rehoboam went to Shechem. The people said they were not ready to crown Rehoboam king. First they wanted some things from him. They started complaining about the things Solomon did. The people wanted Rehoboam to lower the taxes that Solomon had raised. They no longer wanted to be forced to work for the king.

The people were willing to make Rehoboam their king. They wanted the new king to require less from them. Rehoboam did not want to do this. He thought if he gave in to the people's demands it would make him a weak king.

Rehoboam was **foolish**. He did not seek God's advice. He did not pray. He did not ask God what he should do. He did not care what God wanted.

Rehoboam asked the advice of others. He did not listen to men with experience. He did not seek advice from wise men. Rather, he asked advice from men his own age. These were his friends. These were men who grew up with him. They liked living in the palace. They liked their places of honor. They liked their lives of privilege.

These friends did not understand what might happen if the people were not heard. Rehoboam's friends wanted Solomon to like them. They told him what he wanted to hear.

A good king follows God's law. Rehoboam listened to bad advice. Rehoboam made a bad choice.

#### The Results of Rehoboam's Choices (1 Kings 12:16-20)

Rehoboam announced his decision. He told the people he would

not cut their taxes. He said, "I will raise taxes." He said he would not stop making the people work in his palace. He said, "You must work harder." Rehoboam would not **compromise** with the people.

Compromise is not a sign of weakness.

Compromise is not a sign of defeat.

Rehoboam thought it was. He was wrong.

The people saw that Rehoboam was not listening to them. The northern tribes protested. They returned to their homes.

Rehoboam sent Adoram to force the people to obey the king. Adoram had been one of Solomon's advisors. He had been powerful. The people remembered some of the things he had done for Solomon. They had been afraid of him. Things had changed. The people were no longer afraid of Adoram.

The people killed Adoram.

Instead of Rehoboam, the northern tribes crowned Jeroboam their new king.

Rehoboam escaped Shechem. He went back to Jerusalem. He began making plans. He was going to send his army to Shechem. He was going to fight for the throne.

God told Rehoboam not to fight. This time Rehoboam listened. He told the army

to go home.

The Northern **Kingdom** and the Southern Kingdom were forever divided.

The Northern Kingdom became known as Israel. The Southern Kingdom became known as Judah. Rehoboam became king of Judah. This was God's plan for His people.

Rehoboam was king for seventeen years. He is remembered for his bad choices. He could have put the people's needs above his own ambition. He would have been a better king. Rehoboam lost most of his kingdom because of his poor choices.

Foolish choices can limit our options.

Foolish choice can keep us from the things we want most. Foolish choices can keep us from having what God wants to give us.

#### 1 Kings 12:1-20

- 1 Rehoboam went to Shechem. For all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king.
- 2 Now Jeroboam the son of Nebat was still in Egypt where he had run away from King Solomon. When Jeroboam heard the news, he returned from Egypt.
- **3** They sent for him. Then Jeroboam and all the people of Israel came and said to

#### Rehoboam.

- 4 "Your father made our load heavy. Take away some of the hard work and heavy load your father put on us, and we will serve you."

  5 Rehoboam said to them, "Leave for three days. Then return to me." So the people left.

  6 King Rehoboam spoke with the leaders who had worked for his father Solomon while he was still alive. He asked them, "What answer do you think I should give to these people?"

  7 They said to him, "Help these people today. Serve them. Answer them with good words. If you do, then they will be your servants forever."
- **8** But Rehoboam turned away from the wise words the leaders gave him. Instead he spoke with the young men who grew up with him and stood by him.
- **9** He said to them, "What answer do you say we should give to these people who have said to me, 'Take away some of the heavy load your father put on us'?"
- 10 The young men who grew up with him said, "This is what you should say to these people who said to you, 'Your father made our load heavy. Now you take some of the load from us.' You should say to them, 'My little finger is bigger around than my father's body!
- 11 My father gave you a heavy load. I will add to your load. My father punished you with whips. But I will punish you with scorpions.' "12 Then Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day as the king had

told them, saying, "Return to me on the third

day."

- 13 And the king was hard in his answer to them. For he turned away from the wise words the leaders had given him.
- 14 He spoke to them as he had been told by the young men. He said, "My father made your load heavy. I will add to your load. My father punished you with whips. But I will punish you with scorpions."
- 15 So the king did not listen to the people. The Lord had let this happen, that He might keep His Word, which the Lord spoke through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.
- 16 All Israel saw that the king did not listen to them. So they said to the king, "What share do we have in David? We have no share in the son of Jesse! To your tents, O Israel! Now look after your own house, David!" So Israel went to their tents.
- 17 But as for the people of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam ruled over them.
- 18 Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who ruled over those who were made to work, and all Israel killed him with stones. So King Rehoboam got on his war-wagon in a hurry to go to Jerusalem.
- **19** So Israel turned against the family of David to this day.
- 20 When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent for him to meet with the people and made him king of all Israel. Only the family of Judah followed the family of David.



1 Kings 15:9-19; 16:29-33

#### **Memory Verse**

"Have no gods other than me." (Exodus 20:3)

#### **Word List**

**prosperity**: the condition of enjoying wealth, success, or good fortune

idol: an image of a

false god

**altar:** a table used to offer gifts to false

gods

**faith:** strong belief; complete trust

bribe: to exchange money for protection; to corrupt with money prophet: a person who speaks God's Word

#### Things to Think About

1. What makes a good leader?

### **Bad Results**

Here is a popular nursery rhyme:

There once was a little girl

Who had a little curl right in the middle of her forehead.

When she was good, she was very, very good.

When she was bad, she was horrid.

Sometimes people are good when they don't mean to be.

Other times they are bad when they are really trying to be good.

#### King Asa of Judah (1 Kings 15:9-19)

Abijah was the son of Rehoboam. When Rehoboam died, Abijah became king of Judah. He ruled for two years. He was not a good king. He was not faithful to God.

Israel was much larger than Judah was. Israel was wealthier than Judah was. When Judah attacked Israel, the weaker nation won.

King Abijah's army defeated the army of King Jeroboam of Israel. By doing this, Abijah reclaimed several cities for Judah. This was important. People in these cities were able to go to the temple in Jerusalem. They would be able to pray to God.

Abijah died. His son, Asa, became the new king. Asa ruled for forty-one years. King Asa's rule was known for **prosperity**, peace and morality. Few kings could make this claim.

Asa's reign ended the use of sex in religious worship. **Idols** were destroyed. Asa removed his grandmother as queen mother. He had to do this because she worshipped the false god Asherah. Asa burned his grandmother's idol.

- 2. Why would a leader want to cause pain for his people?
- 3. Why would good people follow an evil leader?
- 4. Can paying a bribe ever be a good idea?

King Asa, however, did not destroy all of the other **altars** in Judah. There were many altars used in the worship of other idols. These altars did not please God.

As a attempted religious reform. He did some good. He did not do all that could have been done. As a wanted to please God, but his **faith** was not strong.

As a took gold and silver from the temple. He sent it to Benhadad, the king of Syria. This was a **bribe** that Judah could not afford. As a wanted a treaty with Benhadad. As a wanted to form an alliance between Judah and Syria. As a thought a new treaty between these kingdoms would stop Israel from attacking Judah.

As a did this without asking God's help.

Hanani, a **prophet** of God told Asa this was wrong. He said that because of sin, Judah would fight many wars. Asa put the prophet in jail.

As a had a foot disease. Some people think that God was punishing King Asa. He did not pray to God. He did not ask for God to help him. He relied on his doctors to heal his feet.

As a wanted to please God. However, in times of trouble he did not depend on God. When he had problems, As a depended only on human help.

In times of trouble, people should depend on God.

#### King Ahab of Israel (1 Kings 16:29-33)

King Ahab ruled over Israel for twenty-two years.

He did not obey God. Ahab did whatever Asa wanted him to do. His wife, Jezebel, encouraged him to worship the idol Baal.

He built an altar so that his people could worship the false god. He made a wooden likeness of the goddess Asherah.

#### The Best and the Worst Kings

Asa was a good king. Even so, he entered into a treaty with the king of Phoenicia. Asa did not ask God if this was a good treaty. It was an unwise thing to have done. This agreement caused problems for Israel. These problems lasted for many generations.

Ahab was a bad king. Ahab did more evil in the eyes of God than all the kings before him.

The best of the leaders were not very good. The worst of the leaders were as bad as they could get.

#### 1 Kings 15:9-19

- **9** In the twentieth year of Jeroboam the king of Israel, Asa began to rule as king of Judah. 10 He ruled for fortyone years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom.
- **11** And Asa did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, like David his father.
- 12 He sent away the men from the land who sold the use of their bodies in their religion. He took away all the false gods his father had made.
- 13 He stopped his mother Maacah from being queen mother, because she had made a hated object of the false goddess Asherah. And Asa cut down her hated object and burned it at the river Kidron.
- **14** The high places were not taken away. But Asa was faithful to the Lord with all his heart for all his days.
- **15** He brought into the house of the Lord the holy things of his father and his own holy things, silver, gold, and holy objects.
- **16** There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.
- 17 Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah. He built walls around Ramah to stop anyone from going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah.
- **18** Then As a took all the silver and the gold which were left in the storerooms of the

- Lord's house and the king's house, and gave them to his servants. King Asa sent them to Ben-hadad the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, who lived in Damascus. Asa said,
- 19 "Let there be an agreement of peace between me and you, as between my father and your father. See, I have sent you a gift of silver and gold. Go and break your agreement of peace with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will leave me."

#### 1 Kings 16:29-33

- **29** Omri's son Ahab became king of Israel in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah. He ruled over Israel in Samaria for twenty-two years.
- **30** Ahab the son of Omri did what was sinful in the eyes of the Lord more than all who were before him.
- 31 He thought it was a small thing to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. He married Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians. Then he went to serve the false god Baal and worshiped him.
- **32** He built an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria.
- 33 Ahab made an object of wood to look like the false goddess Asherah. So Ahab did more to make the Lord God of Israel angry than all the kings of Israel before him.

# ◆1st and 2nd Kings◆



Adult Bible Study in SimplifiedEnglish

#### 1 and 2 Kings: Work in Progress

#### Lesson 5

Being Sent by God 1 Kings 18:1-2, 17-39

#### Lesson 6

Running and Hiding 1 Kings 19:1-8

#### Lesson 7

Good News, Bad News 1 Kings 22:6-28

#### WORK IN PROGRESS

Two of Israel's greatest prophets were Elijah and Elisha. They served as a balance to the failed and faithless kings of Israel. Elijah was a model prophet. He stood boldly before a hostile crowd. He challenged Baal and Asherah. He won. Even though he had great faith, he sometimes wavered. Queen Jezebel told him to get out of town. Elijah ran as fast as he could.

Elisha was also a great prophet. He found himself in many conflicts between Israel and Syria. He had a strong and positive reputation in Syria. The people of Syria trusted him. God used Elisha to mediate between Israel and Syria.

Another prophet was Micaiah. He, too, was courageous. He stood up to King Ahab. Other prophets told Ahab what he wanted to hear. Micaiah told Ahab what God told him to say. This did not please Ahab. It was not a good thing to make Ahab unhappy. But Micaiah wanted to please God rather than the king. These three prophets preached in the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

When Jeroboam became the first king of the divided kingdom of Israel, he built two temples for idols. These temples were in the cities of Bethel and Dan. None of the kings who followed destroyed these temples. This was not pleasing to God.



1 Kings 18:1-2, 17-39

#### **Memory Verse**

"But with God all things can be done." (Matthew 19:26)

#### **Word List**

Baal: a false god Asherah: a false

goddess

mount: a small

mountain

**challenge:** a contest **sacrifice:** something of value offered to gods or God

#### Things to Think About

- 1. Do you allow other people or things to come between you and God?
- 2. What keeps people from being totally committed to God?

# Being Sent by God

During the mid-1950s there was a great drought in the state of Texas. The crops in the fields did not grow. The water levels in the lakes were low. Lawns were dying. People were warned not to waste water. The summers were hot and dry.

People went to church to pray. They asked God to make it rain.

There were men who said they could make it rain. They were called rainmakers. They asked for money from the towns in Texas. They said if a town paid them, they would make it rain.

Many people asked, "Can a person cause it to rain?"

They also asked, "Should tax dollars be used to pay for rain?"

#### God Speaks to Elijah (1 Kings 18:1-2)

It had not rained in Israel for three years. The earth was very dry. The people were thirsty. The crops were not growing. The people were hungry.

God was not happy with His people. He was not happy with King Ahab. The people were worshipping idols. Ahab had made **Baal** the official god of Israel. The queen, Jezebel, worshipped the goddess **Asherah**.

Elijah was a prophet. He had a message from God. He went to the king. Elijah told Ahab God was unhappy with Israel. God was punishing Israel by not sending them rain. He was punishing them because they were not worshipping the true God.

Ahab did not want to listen to Elijah. Ahab blamed Elijah for the drought. It is often easier to blame the evil on the good.

#### Elijah's Challenge (1 Kings 18:17-29)

Elijah said all the people should go to **Mount** Carmel. There were 450 prophets of Baal. There were 400 prophets of Asherah.

When the people gathered on the mount, Elijah told the men to go find two bulls. He told the Baal-worshippers to choose one of the bulls. He told them to build an altar. He told them to put the bull on the altar. He told them not to light the fire of the altar. This was the **challenge**: Which god could make fire? Baal or Asherah? It was a test to see which **sacrifice** would be acceptable.

The people stood before Baal's altar. They prayed for him to start the fire. They prayed from morning until noon. There was no fire. Elijah suggested that Baal was asleep. Elijah had faith in God. He knew that the true God never slept.

The men got louder. They danced. They jumped up and down. They tried to wake up Baal. Baal did not hear. Baal did not answer those who worshipped him.

#### God Answers Elijah's Prayer (1 Kings 18:30-39)

It was almost evening. Baal still had not started the fire. Elijah gathered twelve stones. Each stone represented one of the tribes of Israel. With these stones Elijah built an altar. This altar was for the One true God.

Elijah dug a ditch around the stones. He placed seeds in the ditch. He placed wood on the altar. He placed the bull on the wood.

Elijah had some men fill four jars with water. They emptied the water into the ditch. The men filled the jars again. The water went into the ditch. Again the jars were filled with water. Again the jars were emptied into the ditch. In all, twelve jars of water were poured into the ditch.

Elijah used the water to show that this was no trick. The water made it impossible for a fire to light. If fire appeared, it had to come from God. Elijah knew God could do the impossible.

Elijah prayed to God. He asked God to show Himself so the people would know He was the true God. Elijah wanted the people of Israel to return to God.

God answered Elijah. There was a fire on the altar. The wood burned. The stones burned. The water in the ditch evaporated.

The people fell down. They worshipped God. They remembered the God of their fathers.

The purpose of this event was to show that God was the true God. Only the true God can answer prayers. Only the true God can save someone from sin. Only the true God can make life worth living. Only the true God can send fire to Mount Carmel.

#### 1 Kings 18:1-2

1 After many days, the word of the Lord

came to Elijah, in the third year, saying,
"Go show yourself to Ahab. And I will send
rain upon the earth."

**2** So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the time without food was very hard in Samaria.

#### 1 Kings 18:17-39

17 When he saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is it you, the one who brings trouble to Israel?"

18 Elijah said, "I have not brought trouble to Israel. But you and your father's house have. Because you have turned away from the laws of the Lord, and have followed the false gods of Baal.

19 So now call together all Israel to me at Mount Carmel. And gather together 450 men who speak for Baal and 400 men who speak for the false goddess Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

**20** So Ahab sent news among all the people of Israel. And he brought the men who speak for the false gods together at Mount Carmel.

**21** Elijah came near all the people and said, "How long will you be divided between two ways of thinking? If the Lord is God,

- follow Him. But if Baal is God, then follow him." But the people did not answer him a word.
- **22** Then Elijah said to the people, "I am the only man left who speaks for God. But here are 450 men who speak for Baal.
- 23 Bring two bulls to us. Let them choose one bull for themselves and cut it up and put it on the wood. But put no fire under it. I will make the other bull ready and lay it on the wood. And I will put no fire under it.
- 24 Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The God Who answers by fire, He is God." All the people answered and said, "That is a good idea."
- 25 So Elijah said to the men who spoke for Baal, "Choose one bull for yourselves and make it ready first. For there are many of you. Then call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it."
- 26 So they took the bull which was given to them and made it ready. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, "O Baal, answer us." But there was no voice. No one answered. They jumped and danced around the altar they had made.
- 27 At noon Elijah made fun of them. He said, "Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god. It might be that he is in deep thought or has turned away. He could be away traveling. Or it may be that he is asleep and needs to have someone wake him."
- **28** So they cried with a loud voice. They cut themselves as they had done in the past, with swords and spears until blood poured out on them.
- 29 When noon passed, they cried out until the

- time for giving the evening gift. But there was no voice. No one answered. No one listened.
- **30** Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he built again the altar of the Lord which had been torn down.
- **31** Then Elijah took twelve stones, by the number of the families of Jacob's sons. The word of the Lord had come to Jacob's sons, saying, "Israel will be your name."
- **32** With the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord. And he made a ditch around the altar, big enough to hold twenty-two jars of seed.
- 33 Then he set the wood in place. He cut the bull in pieces and laid it on the wood. And he said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt gift and on the wood."
- **34** Then he said, "Do it a second time." And they did it a second time. He said, "Do it a third time." And they did it a third time.
- **35** The water flowed around the altar, and filled the ditch also.
- 36 Then the time came for giving the evening gift. Elijah the man who spoke for God came near and said, "O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that You are God in Israel. Let it be known that I am Your servant, and have done all these things at Your word.
- **37** Answer me, O Lord. Answer me so these people may know that You, O Lord, are God. Turn their hearts to You again."
- 38 Then the fire of the Lord fell. It burned up the burnt gift, the wood, the stones and the dust. And it picked up the water that was in the ditch. 39 All the people fell on their faces when they saw it. They said, "The Lord, He is God."



1 Kings 19:1-18

#### **Memory Verse**

"I will call You from the end of the earth when my heart is weak. Lead me to the rock higher than I." (Psalms 61:2)

#### **Word List**

depression: sadness; a hopeless feeling of being held down messenger: the person who delivers a message

**angel:** a servant of God who comes from heaven

holy: sacred; Godly

excellence

fire

**elements:** basic matter of the universe; earth, water, wind and

**anoint:** the act of pouring olive oil on a person's head, setting them apart to do

God's work

# **Running and Hiding**

There are those who love to have pity parties. Having a pity party means you sit around and feel sorry for yourself. It is usually a party for one person. Few people like to watch someone complain and complain and complain some more.

No matter how strong someone might be, though, **depression** can happen. Depression can totally take over the mind. A depressed person is very weighed down.

Even those who love God and serve Him daily have dark days. The important thing is what we do during these down times.

#### Elijah Gets Out of Town (1 Kings 19:1-9)

God sent rain to Israel. The rain proved that God was the only true God. The people of Israel returned to God. They began worshipping Him. They stopped worshipping Baal, Asherah and other idols.

Elijah ordered the prophets of Baal and Asherah to go to Kishon. God told Elijah to kill the prophets. Elijah obeyed God.

King Ahab told Queen Jezebel that the prophets of Baal were dead. She became angry with Elijah. Jezebel sent a **messenger** to Elijah. The messenger told Elijah that Jezebel was sending men to kill him.

Elijah was scared of Jezebel. He knew that Jezebel was able to have him killed. He knew that if he died, Jezebel would seem victorious. She would claim his death as a victory over God.

Jezebel would say she had overcome Elijah. She would say her

#### Things to Think About

- 1. Are you running from God?
- 2. Do you tell God what you want to happen?
- 3. Can a person hide from God?

false gods had more power than Elijah's God.

Elijah and his servant went to Beersheba. The servant stayed in Beersheba. Elijah went into the desert.

Elijah traveled a day into the desert. He sat down under an evergreen tree. Elijah was discouraged. He was depressed. He felt worthless. Elijah said to God, "Let me die." Then he went to sleep.

God sent an **angel** to Elijah. The angel came. "Get up and eat," the angel said. Elijah ate a loaf of bread. He drank a jar of water. He knew he was not going to die. God would not have sent him food if he was going to die. Elijah went back to sleep.

The angel woke Elijah a second time. Once again he ate bread and drank water. Elijah was now prepared to walk forty days and forty nights. It was 300 miles to Mount Sinai. Elijah would walk it in forty days.

Sinai was the mountain where God gave the Ten Commandments to the people of Israel (Exodus 3:1). Mount Sinai was considered a **holy** place. Elijah would meet God at Mount Sinai.

#### Elijah Meets God Face to Face (1 Kings 19:10-13)

Elijah went into a cave. This might have been the same cave where Moses saw the glory of God. Elijah knew how special this place was.

Elijah was feeling sorry for himself. He had faithfully served God. The people of Israel had turned from God. They had torn down God's altars. They had killed those who loved God. Elijah thought he was the only one left to worship God. And Jezebel

wanted to kill him.

The angel told Elijah to go to the top of the mountain.

Elijah heard a strong wind. He felt the earth move. He saw a great fire. God created these **elements**, but He was not *in* these elements.

Perhaps Elijah needed a calm heart before he could hear God. Then Elijah heard a still, small voice. The Word of the Lord came to Elijah. "What are you doing here?" God asked.. God was present.

Elijah responded in a very human way. He gave God a list of things that were wrong. Elijah reminded God that he had been faithful. It was the people of Israel who had not obeyed God's laws. Then Elijah said, "I'm the only one left to worship You."

# God Changes His World (1 Kings 19:14-18)

God told Elijah what he should do. God was changing His world. He needed Elijah to do His work.

God told Elijah to **anoint** two new kings. God wanted Hazael to become king of Syria. God wanted Jehu to become king

of Israel. God wanted Elijah to anoint Elisha as a prophet. Elisha would continue Elijah's work.

This would be a great change of leadership. These were the men God needed for His purpose. These changes would affect the entire region.

God was in control.

God told Elijah he was not alone. There were 7,000 people in Israel who worshipped God. They had remained faithful to Him. God knows who loves Him. God's love is greater than the love of His people.

God decides what he wants to happen. He prepares His selected people to fulfill His plan. It is our duty to obey Him.

#### 1 Kings 19:1-18

- 1 Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done. He told her how Elijah had killed with the sword all the men who spoke for Baal.
- 2 Then Jezebel sent news to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and even more, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow."
- 3 Elijah was afraid. He got up and ran for

his life. When he came to Beersheba of Judah, he left his servant there.

- 4 But he himself traveled for a day into the desert. He came and sat down under a juniper tree. There he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough now, O Lord. Take my life. For I am not better than my fathers."
- **5** When he lay down and slept under the juniper tree, an angel touched him. The angel said to him, "Get up and eat."
- **6** Then Elijah looked and saw by his head a loaf of bread made ready on hot stones, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and lay down again.
- 7 The angel of the Lord came again a second time and touched him, and said, "Get up and eat. Because this traveling is too hard for you."
- **8** So he got up and ate and drank. And he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mountain of God.
- **9** He came to a cave, and stayed there. The word of the Lord came to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"
- 10 Elijah said, "I have been very careful to serve the Lord, the God of All. For the people of Israel have turned away from Your agreement. They have torn down Your altars and have killed with the sword the men who speak for You. Only I am left, and they want to kill me."
- 11 So the angel said, "Go and stand on the mountain before the Lord." And the Lord

passed by. A strong wind tore through the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord. But the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind the earth shook. But the Lord was not in the shaking of the earth.

- **12** After the earth shook, a fire came. But the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a sound of gentle blowing.
- 13 When Elijah heard it, he put his coat over his face, and went out and stood at the opening of the hole. Then a voice came to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"
- 14 He said, "I have been very careful to serve the Lord, the God of All. For the people of Israel have turned away from Your agreement. They have torn down Your altars. And they have killed with the sword the men who speak for You. Only I am left, and they want to kill me."
- 15 The Lord said to him, "Go, return on your way to the desert of Damascus. When you get there, set apart Hazael to be the king of Syria.16 Set apart Nimshi's son Jehu to be the king
- of Israel. And set apart Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah to speak for God in your place.
- 17 Jehu will kill the one who gets away from the sword of Hazael. Elisha will kill the one who gets away from the sword of Jehu.
- **18** But I will leave 7,000 in Israel whose knees have not bowed down in front of Baal and whose mouths have not kissed him."



1 Kings 22:6-28

#### **Memory Verse**

"Good news from a far country is like cold water to a tired soul." (Proverbs 25:25)

#### **Word List**

alliance: a union between people seeking a common goal

**prophecy:** God's Word concerning future events

**holy:** sacred; Godly or morally excellent **mocking:** making fun

of

#### Things to Think About

- 1. How does God speak to us today?
- 2. How true is it that knowledge is power?
- 3. If you know something is going to

## **Good News, Bad News**

People love hearing the news. We want to know what is happening. It might be something that is happening down the street from us. It might be something that is happening on the other side of the world. People want to be "in the know."

Some people spend a large portion of each day watching the news on television. They watch program after program. These people are often called *news-junkies*. They want to be the first to know everything. They need to know all the news, all the time.

Much of the news is bad. We hear about war in the Middle East. We are reminded of the famine in Africa. There are typhoons in Asia. There are other times when we hear good news. A missing child is found. A man survives a plane crash.

Sometimes the news can be both good and bad. It depends on a person's point of view. A bad guy is caught. This is bad news for the bad guy. It is good news for those who have been his victims.

#### An Unholy Alliance (1 Kings 22:6-14)

King Ahab wanted something that he thought belonged to him. The king of Syria had promised Ahab certain cities. He said these cities would be returned to Israel. The king kept part of his promise. He returned some of the cities. He did not return them all. Ahab wanted the city of Ramoth-Gilead to be returned. Ahab wanted this city back.

Ramoth in Gilead was a large city. It was called a *safe city*. If one man wronged another and did not mean to, he could go to

happen, should you do something about it?

Ramoth. There he would have a fair hearing. His punishment would be fairly decided in Ramoth. He would not be afraid. The person he hurt could not take revenge.

King Ahab went to King Jehoshaphat of Judah. Ahab asked Jehoshaphat for help. They would form an **alliance**. Together they would fight the Syrians.

Jehoshaphat was a good king. Ahab was evil. Both kings considered Syria to be an enemy country. There is a famous saying: An enemy of my enemy is my friend.

Jehoshaphat agreed to help Ahab. First, however, Jehoshaphat wanted the advice of the prophets. He wanted to know if God approved of this plan.

Ahab also asked 400 prophets. These prophets spoke in the name of God. But they were not prophets of the only true God. These prophets said, "Go. Fight for Ramoth. You will have a great victory." These prophets did not have special talents. They did not speak for God. They were telling Ahab what they knew he wanted to hear.

Jehoshaphat, however, worshipped the true God. He wanted to hear from God's true prophets.

There was such a prophet. His name was Micaiah. Ahab did not want to hear what Micaiah had to say. Ahab did not like Micaiah's **prophecies**. Ahab complained. Micaiah's prophecies were always bad. Micaiah spoke the truth. He spoke the words of God. He did not say what Ahab wanted him to say.

Ahab blamed the messenger. He did not consider that his evil ways might cause the prophecies to be bad.

Micaiah was warned about Ahab. Others urged Micaiah to tell

Ahab what he wanted to hear. Micaiah was an honorable man. He listened to the true God. He spoke the words of the Lord.

A true prophet never changes the message. He is not ashamed of the truth. He does not fear speaking the truth.

#### A Holy Message (1 Kings 22:15-24)

Micaiah stood before King Ahab and King Jehoshaphat. Micaiah told the kings they should go to war. He said Ahab would win. Success would be his.

This is what the other prophets had said. He knew the words he said were not true. It was clear that Micaiah was **mocking** the king, his prophets and their prophecies.

Then Micaiah spoke the message from God. God wanted Ahab to go to war. That did not mean that Ahab's army would win. Micaiah knew this. He also knew that Ahab did not want to hear this.

Micaiah told Ahab how God had spoken. God was sitting on His throne in heaven. Angels and other spirits surrounded him. God asked, "How can we get Ahab to attack Ramoth?"

There were several suggestions. At last one spirit offered to be a lying spirit. This spirit would persuade the prophets that Ahab should go to war.

Zedekiah was one of Ahab's prophets.

He was angered by Micaiah's words.

Micaiah had insulted all the other prophets.

Zedekiah attacked Micaiah. He slapped

God' prophet.

Micaiah said Zedekiah would soon know which prophecy was true. The time would come. The prophets of Ahab would have to hide from the army of Syria.

God needed Ahab to go to war. God had an important purpose in this. God wanted the king on the battlefield. Ahab, the evil king, would die on the battlefield.

Promising victory led Ahab to make a choice. It was a bad choice for him. It was a good choice for the people of Israel.

# Micaiah Goes to Jail, Ahab Goes to War (1 Kings 22:26-28)

Ahab ordered that Micaiah should be arrested. He said the prophet should be given only bread and water. Ahab ordered Micaiah to stay in jail until he returned. Micaiah knew that Ahab would not return from the war. Ahab would die on the battlefield. His death was certain.

#### 1 Kings 22:6-28

- 6 Then the king of Israel gathered together the men who spoke for God, 400 men. He said to them, "Should I go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or should I not?" And they said, "Go. For the Lord will give it to the king."
- 7 But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not another man who speaks for the Lord here, that we may ask him?"
- 8 The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is only one other man whom we may ask of the Lord, but I hate him. He does not speak anything good about me, only bad. He is Micaiah the son of Imlah." But Jehoshaphat said, "Let not the king say that."
- **9** Then the king of Israel called a soldier and said, "Be quick to bring Micaiah the son of Imlah."
- 10 Now the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting on their thrones, dressed in their king's clothing. They sat at the grain-floor at the gate of Samaria. All the men who speak for God were speaking in front of them.
- 11 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made horns of iron for himself and said, "The Lord says, 'With these you will fight the Syrians until they are destroyed.' "
- **12** And all the men who spoke for God said so. They said, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and do well. For the Lord will give it to the king."
- 13 The man who went to call Micaiah said to him, "See, the words of those who speak for God are all in the king's favor. Let your words be like theirs and speak in favor of the king."
- **14** But Micaiah said, "As the Lord lives, I will say what the Lord says to me."
- 15 Micaiah came to the king. And the king said to him, "Micaiah, should we go to Ramothgilead to battle, or should we not?" He answered, "Go up and do well. The Lord will give it to the king."

  16 Then the king said to him, "How many times must I tell you to speak nothing but the truth in

- the name of the Lord?"
- 17 So Micaiah said, "I saw all Israel spread upon the mountains like sheep which have no shepherd. And the Lord said, 'These have no owner. Let each of them return to his house in peace.' "
- **18** Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not speak good of me, but bad?"
- 19 Micaiah said, "So hear the word of the Lord. I saw the Lord sitting on His throne. All those in heaven were standing by Him on His right and on His left.
- **20** The Lord said, 'Who will lead Ahab to go up and die at Ramoth-gilead?' And one said one thing, and another said another thing.
- **21** Then a spirit came and stood before the Lord and said, 'I will lead him.'
- 22 The Lord said to him, 'How?' And he said, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all those who will tell what will happen in the future.' Then the Lord said, 'You are to lead him, and do well. Go and do so.'
- 23 Now see, the Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these who tell what will happen in the future. The Lord has said bad things against you."
- 24 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came and hit Micaiah on the face and said, "How did the Spirit of the Lord go from me to speak to you?"
- **25** Micaiah said, "See, you will see on that day when you go into a room to hide yourself."
- **26** Then the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah and return him to Amon the leader of the city and to Joash the king's son.
- 27 Tell them, 'The king says, "Put this man in prison and feed him with little bread and water, until I return in peace." ' "
- 28 Micaiah said, "If you do return in peace, then the Lord has not spoken by me." And he said, "Listen, all you people."

# ◆1st and 2nd Kings◆



Adult Bible Study in SimplifiedEnglish

#### 1 and 2 Kings: As a Nation Falls

#### **Lesson 8**

A God for All People 2 Kings 5:1-19

#### Lesson 9

Ding Toward Disaster 2 Kings 14:23-29; 15: 8-10, 13-14, 17-30

#### Lesson 10

Death of a Nation 2 Kings 17:1-18, 21-23

#### AS A NATION FALLS

The Book of 2 Kings continues telling the history of Israel's two kingdoms. It tells the story of kings who would not obey God. These kings did not respect God. The people followed the kings' examples. The kings were evil. Some of the people became evil.

These were God's chosen people. There were always some that loved Him. God will always have a people.

The Book of 2 Kings starts with the end of Elijah's story. Elijah was a great prophet. He was so good that God did not allow Elijah to die. Elijah went to heaven in a chariot of fire.

Elisha took Elijah's place. He proved to be a greater prophet than Elijah. God gave Elisha the power to do many wonderful things.

The Book of 2 Kings has lessons for us to learn. We should serve only the true God. We should listen to the Word of God. We should listen to advisors who are worthy.



2 Kings 5:1-19

#### **Memory Verse**

"The good that comes from the Lord makes one rich, and He adds no **sorrow** to it." (Proverbs 10:22)

#### **Word List**

**sorrow:** great sadness

leprosy: a skin

disease

#### compassion:

sympathy; understanding

#### Things to Think About

- 1. Does God always answer prayer the way you think He will?
- 2. Are you willing to do whatever God asks of you?

## A God for All People

A man was walking in the desert. It was late at night. It was very dark. A voice said, "Reach down. Pick up some stones. Put them in your pocket." The voice spoke a promise: "In the morning you will be both glad and sad."

The man did as he was told.

The next morning the man looked at the stones. He discovered they were diamonds.

As the voice promised, the man was both glad and sad. He was glad he had picked up some of the diamonds. He was sad that he had not picked up more.

#### Finding a Cure for Leprosy (2 Kings 5:1-8)

Naaman was a good man. He was an army officer. He was important to the king of Syria. The people of his country respected him.

Naaman had a perfect life. Then Naaman got **leprosy**. This skin disease was easily caught. No one wanted it. People with leprosy were excluded from society.

There was a young girl in Naaman's house. She was from Syria. When Ahab was defeated, this girl was taken as a slave. She served Naaman's wife.

The girl felt **compassion** for Naaman. She wanted to help him. The girl told Naaman's wife about a man in Samaria. This was a man of God. This man could help Naaman.

Naaman asked the king of Syria if he could go to Syria. With permission to travel, Naaman took a medical leave of absence.

The king of Syria sent a letter with Naaman. It was for the king of Israel. The letter said Naaman was in Israel to be healed.

When the king of Israel read the letter he became mad. He thought it was a trick. The king knew he could not heal Naaman. The king thought the Syrians were seeking a reason to attack Israel.

Elisha heard about Naaman. Elisha sent word to the king. He said, "Have the man come here. I will show him there is a prophet in Israel."

#### **Obeying the Prophet (2 Kings 5:9-14)**

Naaman went to Elisha's house. A messenger met him at the door. The messenger said Naaman what to do. He told Naaman to go wash in the Jordan River seven times.

Naaman was not happy. He thought Elisha would meet him at the door. He thought the prophet would lay hands on his sores. He thought he would be healed.

Naaman wanted to be healed the way *he* thought it should be done.

Then Naaman thought about going to the Jordan River. This was not the river he would have chosen. It was not the river he wanted to wash in. The rivers in Syria were much better.

Naaman would have done anything to be healed. He thought God's healing was too simple. Go to the Jordan, wash seven times, and be cleaned.

Naaman's reaction was typical. He wanted a do-it-yourself approach. That approach is hopeless. Healing comes from God. Healing comes when and where God wants it to come.

Naaman went to the Jordan. He dipped himself into the river seven times. He was healed. It all happened just as Elisha said.

#### **Turning to God (2 Kings 5:15-19)**

Naaman was healed. He received God's healing because he asked to be healed.

Naaman believed in the power of the God of Israel. He had seen healing happen.

Naaman wanted to pay Elisha. Elisha refused. Elisha had a gift from God. He did not want to be paid for using that gift.

Naaman asked Elisha for something. He wanted to return to Syria with some dirt from Israel. He wanted to use the dirt to build an altar for God. It would be a holy place. This holy dirt would ensure the presence of God.

Naaman asked for divine forgiveness for future sins.

Naaman was an officer in the Syrian army. Certain things were expected of Naaman. He was expected to go to the temple of Rimmon. Rimmon was the Syrian god. Naaman had to participate in the Syrian rituals.

Elisha knew that Naaman had civic duties. These duties would conflict with the

idea of worshipping God. Elisha told Naaman, "Go in peace." Naaman was not to worry. God understood.

#### **God of Grace**

God always answers prayer. God does not always answers prayer the way we think He will. His answers always fulfill His purpose.

When we get to heaven we will be glad for the blessings we received. But we will be sad for not receiving more of what God wanted to give us.

God loves us. Because of His love for us, we can receive His grace.

Can your heart truthfully sing this song to God?

I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,

O'er mountain, or plain, or sea;
I'll say what you want me to say,
dear Lord,

I'll be what you want me to be.

#### 2 Kings 5:1-19

1 Naaman the captain of the army of the king of Syria was an important man to his king. He was much respected, because by

him the Lord had made Syria win in battle. Naaman was a strong man of war, but he had a bad skin disease.

- 2 Now the Syrians had gone out in groups of soldiers, and had taken a little girl from the land of Israel. She served Naaman's wife.
- 3 And she said to her owner, "I wish that my owner's husband were with the man of God who is in Samaria! Then he would heal his bad skin disease."
- **4** So Naaman went in and told his king, "This is what the girl from the land of Israel said."
- 5 The king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So Naaman went and took with him silver weighing as much as ten men, 6,000 pieces of gold, and ten changes of clothes.
- **6** He brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, "I have sent my servant Naaman to you with this letter, that you may heal his bad skin disease."
- 7 When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive? Is this why this man sends word to me to heal a man's bad skin disease? Think about it. He wants to start a fight with me."
- **8** Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes. So he sent word to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come to me. Then he will know that there is a man of God in Israel."
- 9 So Naaman came with his horses and his warwagons, and stood at the door of Elisha's house.
- 10 Elisha sent a man to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times. And your flesh will be made well and you will be clean."
- 11 But Naaman was very angry and went away. He said, "I thought he would come out to me,

and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God. I thought he would wave his hand over the place, and heal the bad skin disease.

- **12** Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away very angry.
- 13 Then his servants came and said to him, "My father, if the man of God had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash and be clean'?"
- 14 So Naaman went down into the Jordan River seven times, as the man of God had told him. And his flesh was made as well as the flesh of a little child. He was clean.
- 15 Then Naaman returned to the man of God with all those who were with him. He came and stood in front of Elisha and said, "See, now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel. So I ask you now to take a gift from your servant."
- **16** But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives, before Whom I stand, I will take nothing." Naaman tried to talk him into taking it, but he would not.
- 17 Naaman said, "If not, I ask you, let your servant be given as much dirt as two horses can carry. For your servant will not give burnt gifts or kill animals on the altar in worship to other gods any more. I will only give gifts to the Lord.
- **18** But may the Lord forgive your servant for this. My king goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there. He rests on my arm and I put my face to the ground in the house of Rimmon.
- When I put my face to the ground in the house of Rimmon, may the Lord forgive your servant."
- **19** And Elisha said to him, "Go in peace." So Naaman went away from him a short way.



2 Kings 14:23-29; 15:8-10, 13-14, 17-30

#### **Memory Verse**

"He will not let the guilty go without being punished. He brings the sin of fathers down upon the children even the grandchildren."
(Exodus 34:7)

#### **Word List**

bribes: money exchanged for special favors or protection captivity: taken as a prison disaster: an even that causes people to suffer

#### Things to Think About

1. Should a nation bribe another nation in the name of national security?

## **Heading Toward Disaster**

S O S is the international code for an emergency at sea.

Code Red signifies a fire emergency.

Code Blue is a medical emergency.

All around us there are signals for emergencies. And it seems the world is in a permanent state of emergency.

A nation must have good leadership. Otherwise, the bells, whistles, and attention getting devices are set off. The nation is in a state of emergency.

#### Jeroboam II Reigns (2 Kings 14:23-29)

Jeroboam II became king of Israel. He ruled for 40 years. During his reign Syria and Assyria were fighting. This meant that these two countries did not have time to bother Israel. Jeroboam II took advantage of the situation. Israel's army won wars with other countries. The kingdom grew in size. The economy got better. Jeroboam's reign would have been declared successful by worldly standards.

But these were good years not deserved. Social conditions were terrible. The poor continued to serve the rich. For them, there was no hope for the future. When there is no hope for the future, people are not free.

Israel did not worship God. Jeroboam refused to admit that he disobeyed God.

When the king died everything changed.

God notices when people suffer. He involves Himself in human history. The people did not worship God. Even so, God 2. What is the price of peace?

remained faithful to His promises to His people.

God gave Israel the chance to repent. However, the people did not change. There is a limit to God's patience.

#### Kings Come, Kings Go (2 Kings 15:8-10, 13-14)

Zechariah was the son of Jeroboam II. After ten years of fighting for the throne, Zechariah became king when his father Jeroboam II died. Zechariah ruled for six months. Then someone inside the palace turned against him. Zechariah was killed. Shallum became king.

Violence produces violence. Shallum reigned for only one month. Menahem killed Shallum just as Shallum had killed Zechariah. Menahem became king. He reigned for ten years.

Menahem did not have a good reign. He turned to Assyria for help. He paid Assyria money for **bribes**. The cost of this bribe drained the treasury. The people of Israel paid the price for years after Menahem died.

#### A Disaster Waiting to Happen (2 Kings 15:17-22)

Menahem died a natural death. Of the last six kings of Israel, only Menahem died naturally. Menahem was a failed leader. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord.

The Assyrian army invaded Israel. Menahem paid bribe money to King Tiglath-Pileser III of Assyria. He was also known as King Pul. To keep his throne, Menahem paid a bribe. Paying the money meant that Menahem recognized Assyria's power over Israel.

To have the money for Pul, Menahem raised taxes. Every rich

man paid fifty pieces of silver. These men did not like paying higher taxes. Paying the bribe kept the Assyrians out of Israel. Paying King Pul kept King Menahem on the throne.

## And All the Kings Fell Down (2 Kings 18:23-30)

Menahem died. His son Pekahiah became king. It was the same story.

Pekahiah did evil in the eyes of the Lord.

He ruled for two years.

Pekah was ambitious. He attacked the palace. Pekahiah was killed. Pekah became king. At the beginning of his reign, Pekah's army attacked Judah. The army destroyed many cities. There were great military victories. Pekah, however, did not notice that the people were suffering.

King Ahaz of Judah asked for help from the Assyrians. The Assyrians were happy to help. They marched into Israel. Many Israelites were taken to **captivity**. They were marched into Assyria.

Pekah did evil in the eyes of the Lord.

He reigned for twenty years. Hoseah killed

Pekah. Hoseah was the last king of Israel.

Israel's kings failed the nation. The

kings did not listen to God. They made foolish alliances with other countries. They made foolish choices to gain power. Israel moved toward national **disaster**. This happened because of poor leadership.

#### 2 Kings 14:23-29

- 23 In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, began to rule in Samaria and ruled forty-one years.
- **24** Jeroboam did what was sinful in the eyes of the Lord. He did not turn away from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel sin.
- 25 He took back the land of Israel from Hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, as was told by the word of the Lord, the God of Israel. The Lord spoke about this through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai. Jonah was the man from Gath-hepher who spoke for the Lord.
- 26 For the Lord saw that the trouble of Israel was very bitter. There was no one left of the servants or of those who were free.

  There was no one to help Israel.
- **27** The Lord did not say that He would destroy the name of Israel from under

heaven. So He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

- 28 Jeroboam fought Judah and took back Damascus and Hamath for Israel. The rest of the acts of Jeroboam, all he did and his strength are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.
- **29** Jeroboam was buried with his fathers, the kings of Israel. His son Zechariah became king in his place.

#### 2 Kings 15:8-10

- **8** In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah the son of Jeroboam became the king of Israel in Samaria for six months.
- **9** Zechariah did what was sinful in the eyes of the Lord, as his fathers had done. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel sin.
- 10 Then Shallum the son of Jabesh made plans against him and killed him in front of the people. And Shallum ruled in his place.

#### 2 Kings 15:13-14

- 13 Shallum the son of Jabesh became king in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah. He ruled for one month in Samaria.
- **14** Then Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah to Samaria, and killed Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and became king in his place.

#### 2 Kings 15:17-30

- 17 In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem the son of Gadi became the king of Israel. He ruled for ten years in Samaria.
- 18 Menahem did what was sinful in the eyes of the Lord. All his life he did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel sin.
- 19 King Pul of Assyria came to fight against the land. And Menahem gave Pul silver weighing as much as 1,000 men, that he might help him to be a powerful king.

- 20 Menahem took the money from all the rich men of Israel. He took fifty pieces of silver from each man to pay the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria returned and did not stay there in the land.
- **21** Now the rest of the acts of Menahem are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.
- **22** Menahem died, and his son Pekahiah became king in his place.
- **23** In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem became the king of Israel in Samaria. He ruled for two years.
- **24** Pekahiah did what was sinful in the eyes of the Lord. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel sin.
- 25 Then his captain Pekah the son of Remaliah made plans against him. He killed Pekahiah in Samaria, in the house of the king with Argob and Arieh. Fifty men of the Gileadites were with Pekah. He became king in his place.
- **26** Now the rest of the acts of Pekahiah are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.
- 27 In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah the son of Remaliah became the king of Israel in Samaria. He ruled for twenty years.
- 28 Pekah did what was sinful in the eyes of the Lord. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel sin.
- 29 In the days of King Pekah of Israel, King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria came to fight. The king of Assyria took Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, Galilee, and all the land of Naphtali. And he made the people go with him to Assyria.
- **30** Hoshea the son of Elah made plans against Pekah the son of Remaliah. He killed Pekah and became king in his place, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.



2 Kings 17:1-18, 21-23

#### **Memory Verse**

"Will those who sin never learn? They eat up my people like they eat bread. They do not call on the Lord." (Psalms 14:4)

#### **Word List**

punishment: penalty
for sinning
exile: to be sent away
from one's country as
punishment

#### Things to Think About

- 1. If a leader gives up his power, can he still lead?
- 2. Why do nations fail?
- 3. Why do people lose their way?

## **Death of a Nation**

A skydiver jumps from an airplane. The time between the jump and the parachute opening is called free-fall. Without a parachute the skydiver would speed toward ground. Without a parachute the skydiver would crash. Chances of surviving a crash like that are not good.

Israel was like the skydiver. Sin had moved the nation into a free-fall. The people were headed toward disaster. God would have opened His arms to make a safe landing. He had done so many times before. This time Israel did not turn to Him. This time there was a crash landing.

#### Hoshea Is King in Name Only (2 Kings 17:1-4)

Hoshea became king of Israel. He ruled for nine years. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord. He was not as evil as the kings which came before him.

Hoshea paid a bribe to Shalmaneser, the new king of Assyria. He had to obey Shalmaneser. Hoshea was the ruler of Israel, but he had no power.

Israel made an alliance with Egypt. This was not a wise agreement. Egypt was too weak to support Hoshea's plan to fight the Assyrians.

Shalmaneser heard about Hoshea's plan. He did not think this was happy news. The king of Assyria put Hoshea into jail.

#### The Nation Falls Down (2 Kings 17:5-18)

The Assyrians attacked Samaria. The attack went on for three

years. Finally the city fell to the Assyrians. The people were taken from their homes. They were taken to work in the cities of Assyria.

God's people had turned from Him. His people had sinned. They built altars and worshipped false gods. They burned sweet smelling oils to honor these idols. They angered God.

God allowed Israel to be taken captive. His people had sinned. God's **punishment** for His people sent them into **exile**.

God told His people not to worship other gods. God told them how to live. He told them what is pleasing to Him. They still would not change their lives. Instead, the people followed the leadership of their kings. They did not follow God.

God held His anger for years. Finally He punished His people.

#### **Israel, Broken (2 Kings 17:21-23)**

History speaks of the *Lost Tribes of Israel*. This phrase refers to the period of time Israel spent in exile.

The Northern Kingdom was lost because the families were scattered throughout Assyria. They were influenced by their new surroundings. They worshipped local gods. They married people who did not know the true God.

Most of the population of Israel left their homes. People from other nations came to Israel. They brought with them their own rituals and values. This created confusion throughout the land.

Israel could have avoided captivity. God's prophets had warned them. They had seen God's miracles. The people of Israel did not listen to the Word of God.

Disobedience causes people to be far from God. A person

who sins must ask for forgiveness. It is through forgiveness that a person comes to God. The gift God gives is everlasting life.

#### 2 Kings 17:1-18, 21-23

- 1 In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea the son of Elah became the king of Israel in Samaria. He ruled for nine years.
- 2 Hoshea did what was sinful in the eyes of the Lord, but not as bad as the kings of Israel before him.
- **3** King Shalmaneser of Assyria came up against him. And Hoshea became his servant and paid taxes to him.
- 4 But the king of Assyria found that Hoshea had been making plans against him. Hoshea had sent men to King So of Egypt, instead of giving taxes to the king of Assyria. He had done this year after year. So the king of Assyria shut him up and put him in chains in prison.
- **5** Then the king of Assyria came against all the land. He went up to Samaria and kept soldiers around it for three years.
- **6** In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria in battle, and took the people of Israel away to Assyria. He

- had them live in Halah and Habor, by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.
- 7 This happened because the people of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God. He had brought them up from the land of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. But they worshiped other gods.
- **8** They walked in the ways of the nations the Lord had driven out from the people of Israel. And they walked in the ways the kings of Israel had started.
- **9** The people of Israel did things in secret which were not right, against the Lord their God. They built high places for themselves in all their towns, from the smallest town to the strongest city.
- 10 They set up holy objects of the false goddess Asherim on every high hill and under every green tree.
- 11 There they burned special perfume on all the high places, as the nations did which the Lord carried away from them. They did what was bad and made the Lord angry.
- 12 They worshiped false gods, about which the Lord had told them, "You must not do this."

- 13 The Lord told Israel and Judah of the danger, through all His men who told what would happen in the future. He said, "Turn from your sinful ways and obey My Laws. Keep all the Laws which I gave your fathers, and which I gave to you through My servants and men of God."
- **14** But they did not listen. They were strong-willed like their fathers, who did not believe in the Lord their God.
- 15 They turned away from His Laws and His agreement which He made with their fathers. They turned away when He told them of danger. They followed false gods, and became empty. They followed the nations around them. But the Lord had told them not to act like them.
- 16 They turned away from all the Laws of the Lord their God and made objects to look like false gods. They made two calves and an object to look like the false goddess Asherah. And they worshiped all the stars of heaven and worked for Baal.
- 17 Then they gave their sons and daughters as burnt gifts. They told the future and used witchcraft. They sold themselves to do what is sinful in the eyes of the Lord. And they made Him angry.

**18** The Lord was very angry with Israel, and put them away from his eyes. None was left except the family of Judah.

#### 2 Kings 17:21-23

- 21 When He had torn Israel from the family of David, they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel away from following the Lord. He led them into sin.
- 22 And the people of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam. They did not turn away from them,
- 23 until the Lord put Israel away from His eyes. He spoke through all His servants who tell what will happen in the future that He would do this. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria until this day.

# ◆1st and 2nd Kings◆



Adult Bible Study in SimplifiedEnglish

1 and 2 Kings: As Israel Went, So Goes Judah

#### Lesson 11

Despair
2 Kings 18:1-12, 29-31;
19:1-11, 14-20

#### Lesson 12

Hope 2 Kings 22:1—23:4

#### Lesson 13

The End
2 Kings 23:31-32, 36-37;
24:8-9, 18-20; 25:8-21

#### AS ISRAEL WENT, SO GOES JUDAH

With Israel in exile, the Book of 2 Kings returns to the story of Judah.

The kings Hezekiah and Josiah were good kings. They encouraged the people to return to God. The prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah advised these two kings. Isaiah and Jeremiah were the two greatest prophets of Israel.

The kings of Israel had been evil. They made alliances with other nations. They did not lead their people to be true to God. God judged Israel. The people were sent into exile.

God would also judge Judah. The defeat of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem totally destroyed the people of God.

God had chosen to make the temple in Jerusalem his dwelling place. God's temple was destroyed in the destruction of Jerusalem. The destruction of the temple was the most devastating event in the Old Testament. Even so, God continued to love His people.



2 Kings 18:1-12, 29-31; 19:1-11, 14-20

#### **Memory Verse**

"You see his faith working by what he did and his faith was made perfect by what he did." (James 2:22)

#### **Word List**

surrender: give in diplomatic: official government efforts despair: without hope disgrace: agony crisis: emergency judgment: formal opinion or decision

#### Things to Think About

- 1. Should a country expect God to help people through a national emergency?
- 2. When faced with a **crisis** do you deal

## **Despair**

On April 12, 1861, the bloodiest war in American history began. This was the American Civil War. It was a war between the northern states and the southern states. Many families were torn apart. Some family members wanted the North to win. Some family members were for the South.

President Abraham Lincoln was praying for the soldiers. Preachers, politicians and private citizens were praying for the soldiers. Everyone was praying. Many of the prayers were for victory. But whom was God going to bless?

Many papers from this period of history include the same phrase. This phrase was: *With God on our side*. Which side was God on? Did He favor the North over the South?

The events God allows to happen always further His purpose.

#### Hezekiah, the Good (2 Kings 18:1-8)

Hezekiah was a good king. Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. He followed King David's conduct and character. He tore down altars used to worship false gods. He resisted the Assyrians. He destroyed the Philistines. Hezekiah did well in all he attempted to do.

When Hezekiah was in trouble, he prayed. The king trusted God. God was pleased.

#### **History: The Story of the Past (2 Kings 18:9-12)**

Hezekiah became king of Judah. Israel had been in captivity for 125 years. He knew what happened to the Northern Kingdom. He knew what happened when people disobey God.

#### Preparing for War (2 Kings 18:13-19)

Hezekiah prepared for war. He formed an alliance with Tyre and Egypt. He secured Jerusalem's water supply. Hezekiah built a

with it on your own? Do you trust God to help you through the situation?

3. Should we be surprised when our faith is tested?

tunnel through the rock. The tunnel ran from inside the city to outside the walls. This let clean water to flow into the city even under attack. He strengthened the city's walls. He stored weapons. He wanted to be ready for a long fight.

#### **A Test of Trust (2 Kings 18:29-31)**

The Assyrian army came. They completely overran Judah. Hezekiah knew he had to **surrender**. He begged forgiveness from Sennacherib, the king of Assyria. He paid a bribe to stop the attack. Despite Hezekiah's surrender, the Assyrians continued fighting.

The king of Assyria did not understand how Hezekiah could trust God. He thought such trust was foolish. He knew his army was stronger than Hezekiah's. He continued the war.

**Diplomatic** discussions took place. These talks were between Hezekiah's assistants and Sennacherib's assistants. These talks were held where the people could hear the discussions. Assyria used these talks to create fear in the hearts of the people. The attack on Hezekiah became an attack on God.

#### Despair, Disgrace, and Distress (2 Kings 19:1-11)

Hezekiah lost hope. He was full of shame. He did not know what to do. His country and his God had been **disgraced**. It was a **crisis** of the heart.

Hezekiah asked for advice from the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah told Hezekiah to have faith. God would handle the Assyrians in His own way. And He did just that.

The king of Assyria heard that the Ethiopian army was on its way. This army was fighting for the Egyptians. They were coming to Jerusalem. They would help Hezekiah fight the Assyrians.

Sennacherib turned his attention away from Jerusalem. He ordered his army to go and meet the other army. The king of

Assyria sent word he would return to Jerusalem.

#### Hezekiah Prays (2 Kings 19:14-20)

Hezekiah went to the temple. He prayed a powerful prayer. He praised God for being true to His Word. He complained that the Assyian king had mocked God. He talked to God about the current crisis. He asked God to deliver His people.

Isaiah told the king that God heard his prayer. God would save Jerusalem at least for the present.

Hezekiah prayed when he faced a crisis. We ought to do the same. Through prayer we find that God is present in our lives. As we trust Him we overcome life's crises.

#### 2 Kings 18:1-12

- 1 In the third year of Hoshea the son of Elah king of Israel, Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to rule.
- 2 He was twenty-five years old when he became king. And he ruled for twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah.
- **3** Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father David had done.
- 4 He took away the high places. He broke down the holy pillars used in worship and cut down the Asherah. And he broke in pieces the brass snake that Moses had made. For until those days the people of

- Israel burned special perfume 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 before him or after him.
- **6** For he held to the Lord and did not stop following Him. He kept His Laws which the Lord had given Moses.
- 7 And the Lord was with him. Hezekiah did well in every place he went. He turned against the king of Assyria and did not work for him.
- **8** He destroyed the Philistines as far as Gaza and its land, from the smallest town to the strongest city.
- **9** In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, the seventh year of Elah's son Hoshea king of Israel, King Shalmaneser of Assyria came to fight against Samaria. His army gathered around it.
- 10 At the end of three years they took the city. Samaria was taken by Assyria in the sixth year of Hezekiah and the ninth year of King Hoshea of Israel.
- 11 Then the king of Assyria carried the people of Israel away against their will to Assyria. He had them live in Halah and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.
- 12 Because the people of Israel did not obey the voice of the Lord their God. They sinned against His agreement and even all that the Lord's servant Moses told them. They would not listen or obey.

#### 2 Kings 18:29-31

- **29** The king says, 'Do not let Hezekiah lie to you. For he will not be able to save you from my power.
- **30** Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, "The Lord will save us for sure. And this city will not be given to the king of Assyria."
- **31** Do not listen to Hezekiah. For the king of Assyria says, "Make your peace with me and come out to me. Then every one of you will eat of his own vine and fig tree. And every one of you will drink the water of his own well.

#### 2 Kings 19:1-11

- 1 When King Hezekiah heard about it, he tore his clothes and covered himself with cloth made from hair. Then he went into the house of the Lord.
- 2 He sent Eliakim who was the head of the house, Shebna the writer, and the head religious leaders, to the man of God Isaiah the son of Amoz. They were covered with cloth made from hair.
- **3** And they said to him, "Hezekiah says, 'This day is a day of trouble, sharp words, and shame. For children have come to be born, but there is no strength to give birth to them.
- 4 It might be that the Lord your God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom his ruler the king of Assyria has sent to make fun of the living God. And the Lord your God might speak sharp words against what He has heard. So pray for those who are left of the Lord's people.'
- 5 The servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah.
- **6** And Isaiah said to them, "Tell your ruler, 'This is what the Lord says: "Do not be afraid because of the words you have heard spoken against Me by the servants of the king of Assyria.
- **7** See, I will put a spirit in him so that he will hear a made-up story and he will return to his

- own land. And I will have him killed by the sword in his own land." ' "
- **8** Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah. For he had heard that the king had left Lachish.
- **9** The king of Assyria was told, "See, King Tirhakah of Cush has come out to fight against you." So he sent men again to Hezekiah, saying,
- 10 "Tell King Hezekiah of Judah, 'Do not let your God in Whom you trust lie to you by saying that Jerusalem will not be given into the power of the king of Assyria.
- **11** You have heard how the kings of Assyria have destroyed all the lands. And will you be saved?

#### 2 Kings 19:14-20

- 14 Hezekiah took the letter from the hand of the men from Assyria, and read it. Then he went up to the house of the Lord, and spread the letter out before the Lord.
- 15 Hezekiah prayed to the Lord, saying, "O Lord the God of Israel, You sit on Your throne above the cherubim. You are the God, and You alone, of all the nations of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.
- **16** Turn Your ear, O Lord, and hear. Open Your eyes, O Lord, and see. Listen to the words Sennacherib has spoken against the living God.
- **17** O Lord, it is true that the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands.
- 18 They have thrown their gods into the fire. For they were not gods, but the work of men's hands, made from wood and stone. So they have destroyed them.
- **19** Now, O Lord our God, I beg You to save us from his power. Then all the nations of the earth may know that You alone are God, O Lord."
- **20** Isaiah the son of Amoz sent word to Hezekiah, saying, "The Lord, the God of Israel, says, 'I have heard your prayer to Me about Sennacherib king of Assyria.'



2 Kings 22:1—23:4

#### **Memory Verse**

"For a day in Your house is better than a thousand outside. I would rather be the one who opens the door of the house of my God, than to live in the tents of the sinful."
(Psalms 84:10)

#### **Word List**

authentic: real or
genuine; not fake
discovery: something

found

prophetess: a female
prophet

## Things to Think About

- 1. How can a national leader show people the way to God?
- 2. Why is reading God's Word important

## Hope

A man buys an old desk. He gets it home. He discovers an old piece of paper. The paper is an original copy of the *Declaration of Independence*. The value of his purchase increases greatly.

Antiques Roadshow is a television program. The show goes from city to city. They talk about old objects people have. The people bring their treasures to be evaluated. Sometimes a family's heirloom turns out not to be **authentic**. It is just an imitation of something rare and valuable. Someone might say a piece of furniture belonged to Marie Antoinette. It might be just a copy. An ordinary looking glass bowl might actually be quite valuable. It could be a crystal bowl worth thousands of dollars. We are often surprised by what we have.

#### Josiah, the Good (2 Kings 22:1-2)

Josiah was a child when he became king. He was eight years old. It is easy for an eight-year-old to be a good king. Josiah started out being good. He remained a good king all the years that he reigned. He ruled for thirty-one years. Josiah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.

#### The Temple Needs Repairs (2 Kings 22:3-8)

When he was twenty-six, Josiah paid to have the temple repaired. People had not been going to the temple. No one paid attention to the temple. It needed improvements.

Josiah sent his assistant Shapan with money to pay for the work. Josiah told him to give the money to the head religious in finding the way to Him?

leader. The head religious leader of the temple was Hilkiah.

Hilkiah met Shapan with news of a great **discovery**. The men working on the temple found the Book of the Law. This book had been lost for years. It had been carelessly misplaced.

Hilkiah gave the book to Shapan. Shapan read the book. He knew it was an important discovery.

#### Josiah Hears the Law (2 Kings 2:9-13)

Shapan showed the Book of the Law to King Josiah. The king was moved by the message of the book. He wanted all the people to hear the Word of God.

Josiah had a tender heart. He humbled himself before God.

#### Hudlah, a Prophetess, Speaks (2 Kings 22:14-20)

Hilkiah and Shapan and two other men went see Hudlah. She was a **prophetess**. She spoke the words of God. Hudlah said the words of the Law were true. God was going to bring trouble to Jerusalem. The people had turned away from God. This made God angry. He was going to punish His people for their sins.

Hudlah said something else. She said God knew Josiah was sorry the people had sinned. God promised the punishment would not happen during Josiah's life.

Josiah was a good king. His goodness delayed the people's punishment. It gave the people a time to repent. The four men went to Josiah. They told the king all that Hudlah had said.

#### Josiah Brings Back Worship (2 Kings 23:1-4)

Josiah called together all the leaders of Judah. The leaders and

the people of Jerusalem came to the temple. Josiah read the Book of the Law to the people.

Josiah stood before the people. He said he made an agreement with God. Josiah promised to follow God's Word. He said he would keep God's law with all his heart and soul. He promised to obey the God's words.

Josiah told the religious leaders to clean out the temple. He said to take away anything used to worship false gods.

All the people agreed to join the king in this agreement. A good king will always lead his people to God.

#### 2 Kings 22:1-23:4

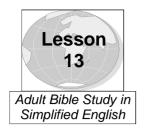
- 1 Josiah was eight years old when he became king. He ruled for thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath.

  2 Josiah did what is right in the eyes of the Lord. He walked in all the way of his father David. He did not turn aside to the right or to the left.
- 3 In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan the writer, the son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam, to the house of the Lord. He said,
- 4 "Go up to Hilkiah the head religious

- leader, that he may add up the money brought into the Lord's house which the door-keepers have gathered from the people.
- 5 Let the money be given to the workmen who are watching over the work on the Lord's house. And let them give it to the workmen who are doing the work on the Lord's house.
- **6** Have them pay the builders and the men who work with wood and with stone. Have them use it for buying wood and cut stone needed to work on the house.
- 7 But do not make them tell you how the money was spent that was given to them. For they are honest men."
- 8 Then Hilkiah the head religious leader said to Shaphan the writer, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.
- **9** Then Shaphan the writer came to the king and told him, "Your servants have taken all the money found in the house. And they have given it to the workmen who are watching over the work on the Lord's house."
- 10 Then Shaphan the writer told the king,

- "Hilkiah the religious leader has given me a book." And Shaphan read it in front of the king. 11 When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes.
- 12 Then he told Hilkiah the religious leader, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Micaiah, Shaphan the writer, and Asaiah the king's servant,
- 13 "Go, ask the Lord for me and all Judah about the words of this book that has been found. For the Lord is very angry with us, because our fathers have not listened to the words of this book. They have not done all that is written for us to do."
- 14 So Hilkiah the religious leader, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan and Asaiah went to Huldah the woman who spoke for God. She was the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, and watched over the clothes of the house. (She lived in the Second Part of Jerusalem.) They spoke to her.
- 15 She said to them, "This is what the Lord God of Israel says. Tell the man who sent you to me 16 that the Lord says, 'See, I will bring trouble upon this place and upon its people. All the words of the book which the king of Judah has read will come true
- 17 because they have turned away from Me and have burned special perfume to other gods. They have made Me angry with all the work of their hands. So My anger burns against this place, and it will not be stopped.'
- **18** But tell the king of Judah who sent you to ask of the Lord, 'This is what the Lord God of Israel says about the words you have heard.
- 19 "You heard how I spoke against this place

- and against its people. I said that they should be destroyed and laid waste. They should be hated and destroyed. But when you heard this, you were sorry in your heart. You put away your pride before the Lord. You have torn your clothes and cried before Me, and I have heard you," says the Lord.
- **20** "So I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace. Your eyes will not see all the trouble which I will bring upon this place." ' "So they returned to the king and told him what was said.
- **23:1** Then King Josiah sent men out to bring to him all the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem.
- 2 The king went up to the house of the Lord with all the men of Judah and all the people who lived in Jerusalem. The religious leaders, the men who speak for God, and all the people went with him, both small and great. And Josiah read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Law which was found in the house of the Lord.
- 3 Then the king stood by the pillar. There he made an agreement before the Lord. He promised to follow the Lord and keep His Word and His Laws with all his heart and soul. He promised to obey the words of this agreement that were written in this book, and all the people joined him in the agreement.
- 4 Then the king spoke to Hilkiah the head religious leader, and the religious leaders who were next in power, and the door-keepers. He told them to bring out of the Lord's house all the objects made for the false gods Baal and Asherah and for all the stars of heaven. He burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron. And he carried their ashes to Bethel.



2 Kings 23:31-32, 36-37; 24:8-9, 18-20; 25:8-21

#### **Memory Verses**

"We sat down and cried by the rivers of Babylon when we remembered **Zion**." (Psalms 37:1) "How can we sing the song of the Lord in a strange land?" (Psalms 37:4)

#### **Word List**

Zion: heavenly city;

Jerusalem

justice: fair treatment

#### Things to Think About

- 1. How can we avoid God's punishment?
- 2. Is God's justice always fair?

## Do Not Be Afraid

Liberty and justice for all.

These are the words that come at the end of the United States Pledge of Allegiance. Everyone wants to be free. People look at freedom differently. Often their views are affected by their culture or race.

God does not always allow people to be free. Some very good people might be in captivity. Some very bad people might have freedoms they don't deserve.

God's justice does not always seem fair. There are times when God must see His people suffer. Sometimes God fulfills His promises through suffering.

#### Jehoahaz Reigns Briefly (2 Kings 23:31-32)

Josiah died in a battle. His army was fighting Neco, the Egyptian Pharaoh. Neco killed Josiah.

Jehoahaz became king. He ruled for three months. Jehoahaz did evil in the eyes of the Lord. Even though Jehoahaz was evil, the people liked him.

Pharaoh Neco arrested Jehoahaz. The king was jailed. Then he was taken to Egypt. Jehoahaz died in Egypt. He was the first king to be captured by Neco.

Neco placed a very large tax on the people of Jerusalem. He made Eliakim the king. Eliakim's name was changed. He became known as King Jehoiakim. A new name for Eliakim did not make him a new person. The name did not change who he was.

#### Jehoiakim Tries to Be King (2 Kings 23:36-37)

Jehoiakim became king. He did all that Neco told him to do. The king ruled for eleven years. Jehoiakim did evil in the eyes of the Lord.

Jehoiakim increased taxes. He needed the money to pay bribes to Neco. Jehoiakim allowed children to hurt. They were burned on the altars of the false gods. He murdered those who were against him.

#### Jehoiachin Reigns (2 Kings 24:8-9)

Jehoiakim died. Jehoiachin became king. He ruled for three months. Jehoiachin did evil in the eyes of the Lord. He was taken into captivity. King Nebachadnezzar took Jehoiachin to Babylon.

#### Zedekiah Reigns (2 Kings 24:18-20)

Zedekiah became king. He ruled for eleven years. Zedekiah did evil in the eyes of the Lord. He did the same evil things that Jehoiakim had done.

Zedekiah loved liberty. He was willing to fight to keep his people free. Zedekiah fought the Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar. He lost.

Nebuchadnezzar had Zedekiah's family put to death. Zedekiah was forced to watch. Then Nebuchadnezzar put out Zedekiah's eyes. The king of Judah was taken into captivity. He lived in Babylon for the rest of his life.

Zedekiah was the last king of Judah.

#### **Babylonians Come to Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:8-21)**

Nebuchadnezzar led the Babylonian army into Jerusalem.

They broke down the walls of the city.

Almost every person in the city was taken away. These left were the poorest people.

They were left to care for the vineyards and plow the fields.

The Babylonian army attacked the temple. They stole everything of value. They took the silver and gold and brass. Anything that could be taken from the temple was stolen. Everything else was destroyed. The city of Jerusalem was burned to the ground.

The beautiful temple that Solomon built was totally destroyed. The house where God lived was gone. Jerusalem, the City of David, was destroyed. The people of Judah were gone. Judah was no more.

The people of Judah were taken into captivity. This marked the end of the Southern Kingdom.

God had warned that His people would be punished. He gave them the chance to repent. They did not. He finally did just what He said He would do. The people of Judah were gone, they were not forgotten. They would return, just as God promised they would. God wants His people to trust Him. He wants His people to obey Him.

#### 2 Kings 23:31-32

31 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king. He ruled for three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

**32** Jehoahaz did what was sinful in the eyes of the Lord. He did all that his fathers had done.

#### 2 Kings 23:36-37

36 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king. He ruled for eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebidah the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah.37 Jehoiakim did what was sinful in the eyes of the Lord. He did just as his fathers had done.

#### 2 Kings 24:8-9

8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king. He ruled for three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.

**9** Jehoiachin did what was sinful in the eyes of the Lord. He did just as his father had done.

#### 2 Kings 24:18-20

- 18 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king. He ruled for eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.
- 19 Zedekiah did what was sinful in the eyes of the Lord. He did all that Jehoiakim had done.20 For because of the anger of the Lord, this happened in Jerusalem and Judah until the

Lord put them away from Him. And Zedekiah

turned against the king of Babylon.

#### 2 Kings 25:8-21

- **8** On the seventh day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, Nebuzaradan came to Jerusalem. He was the captain of the soldiers, a servant of the king of Babylon.
- **9** He burned the house of the Lord, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem. He burned every great house with fire.
- **10** And all the Babylonian army who were with the captain of the soldiers broke down the walls around Jerusalem.
- 11 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the soldiers carried away to Babylon the rest of the people who were left in the city. And he carried away the soldiers who had run away from the battle.
- **12** But the captain of the soldiers left behind some of the very poor people of the land to take care of the vines and to plow the fields.
- 13 The Babylonians broke in pieces the brass pillars in the house of the Lord. And they broke in pieces the stands and the brass pool which were in the house of the Lord. Then they

carried the brass to Babylon.

- 14 They took away the pots, the tools for digging, the things for putting out the lamps, the dishes for special perfume, and all the brass dishes used for the work of the Lord's house.
- **15** And they took away the fire-holders and the wash-pots. The captain of the soldiers took away what was made of fine gold and what was made of fine silver.
- 16 The brass of the two pillars, the one pool, and the stands which Solomon had made for the Lord's house, was too much to weigh.
- 17 One pillar was five times taller than a man. The brass top piece on it was three armlengths tall. A network and pomegranates made of brass were all around the top piece. And the second pillar had the same, with a network.
- 18 Then the captain of the soldiers took Seraiah the head religious leader, and Zephaniah the religious leader next in power. And he took the three men who were keepers of the door.
- 19 From the city he took a captain who led the men of war, and five men found in the city who had spoken with the king about what should be done. He took the captain of the army, who called together the people of the land. And he took sixty men of the land who were found in the city.
- **20** Nebuzaradan the captain of the soldiers took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.
- **21** Then the king of Babylon killed them. He put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was taken away from its land.



Matthew 28:1-10

#### **Memory Verses**

"He is not here. He has risen from the grave, as He said." (Matthew 28:6)

#### **Word List**

resurrection: coming back from the dead tomb: a place dug out of a rock to be used as a burial place

#### Things to Think About

- 1. Why was it necessary for Jesus to live again?
- 2. What does the **resurrection** mean to you?
- 3. How does the resurrection help you to live a life of joy and purpose?

## Do Not Be Afraid

Jesus died on the cross on Friday. He was taken from the cross. His body was placed in a **tomb**. A big rock closed the tomb's entrance. Guards were placed outside the tomb.

The Jewish leaders were taking no chance. Jesus had said He would rise from the grave. The guards were ordered to keep Jesus' friends from stealing His body. The guards were considered fair observers. They would not participate in activities that were not right. They would not let anyone steal Jesus' body.

#### The Women Go to the Tomb (Matthew 28:1)

Early on Sunday morning, a group of women came to the tomb. Included in the group were four important women:

Mary Magdalene had been healed of demons by Jesus.

The other Mary was the mother of James—called *the lesser*—and Joseph.

Salome was the mother of James and John and the wife of Zebedee.

Joanna had been healed by Jesus and then helped finance Jesus' ministry.

These women were loyal followers of Jesus. They loved Jesus. They had been at the cross. They stayed even when Peter and the others left. They watched Jesus die. They watched as Jesus was put into the tomb.

These women understood. Jesus was dead and buried. Still they went to His tomb on Sunday morning.

#### **An Angel Appears (Matthew 28:2-4)**

As the women came to the tomb the earth shook. An angel from God appeared. The angel sat on the stone that had closed the tomb. God had triumphed over death.

The earth shook. The guards became like dead men. These men were paid to guard the dead. Now they looked as if they were dead. The dead man they were guarding became alive!

#### Do Not Be Afraid (Matthew 28:5-8)

The women must have been afraid. How could they *not* be afraid?

The earth shook. The stone rolled away. An angel appeared. And the women were told not to be afraid.

These women had followed Jesus. They left the lives they knew to follow Him. Now Jesus was dead. The women had lost everything. How could they not be afraid?

Then the angel spoke. The angel ordered them to act. The angel told them to *come* and *see* the empty grave. Then the angel told them to *go* and *tell* the others.

Being a follower of Jesus means we must act. We must do something. We must be an active participant in His ministry.

#### Jesus Appears (Matthew 28:8-10)

Of course, the women were afraid. But they heard great news. "Jesus is alive!" Indeed, that is great news. They were filled with joy.

The women ran to find the other followers of Jesus. Where were Peter, John, James and the other men?

The women made their way to find the men. On their way, they saw a man. It was Jesus! He was there, with them, in person.

The women worshipped Jesus.

He said the same thing the angel had told them. "Do not be afraid," He said. "Go and tell."

Forty days later, Jesus said good-bye to His followers. He was returning to heaven. Jesus had a message for His followers before He returned to heaven. It was the same message he gave the women. Jesus said, "Go and tell."

That is a message for all who follow Jesus today. We must tell others about Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

#### **Matthew 28:1-10**

- 1 The Day of Rest was over. The sun was coming up on the first day of the week.

  Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the grave.
- 2 At once the earth shook and an angel of the Lord came down from heaven. He came and pushed back the stone from the door and sat on it.
- **3** His face was bright like lightning. His clothes were white as snow.
- **4** The soldiers were shaking with fear and became as dead men.
- **5** The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus Who was nailed to the cross.
- **6** He is not here! He has risen from the dead as He said He would. Come and see the place where the Lord lay.
- 7 Run fast and tell His followers that He is risen from the dead. He is going before you to the country of Galilee. You will see Him there as I have told you."
- 8 They went away from the grave in a hurry. They were afraid and yet had much joy. They ran to tell the news to His followers.
- **9** As they went to tell the followers, Jesus met them and said hello to them. They came

and held His feet and worshiped Him.

10 Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My followers to go to Galilee. They will see Me there."