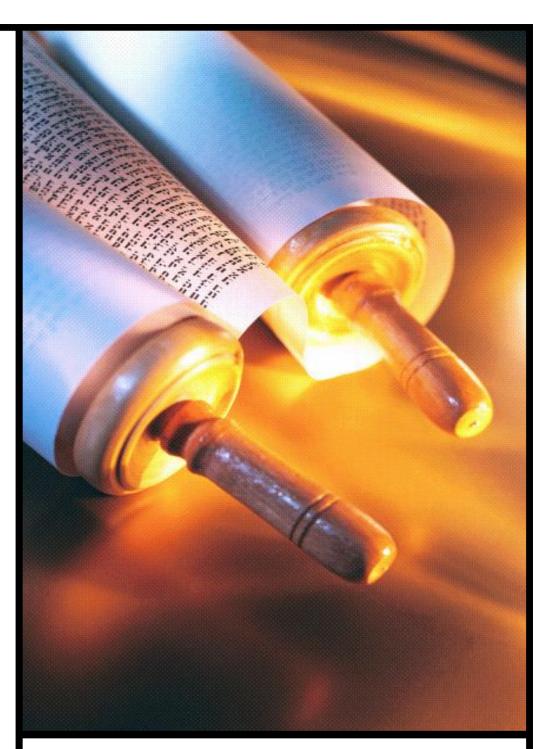
# BAPTISTWAY PRESS Dallas, Texas

baptistwaypress.org

Adult
Bible Study
in
Simplified
English

# Teaching Guide



# 1st and 2nd Kings

LEADERS AND FOLLOWERS: FAITHFUL AND FAILED

INCLUDES BONUS EASTER LESSON

Julia Wrotenbery

# ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN SIMPLIFIED ENGLISH Teaching Guide

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

Copyright © 2008 by BAPTISTWAY PRESS®. All rights reserved.

Permission is granted for a church to make as many copies of this publication as needed for use within its ministry. Copies of this publication are not to be sold, distributed, or used in any other manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations. For information, contact BAPTISTWAY PRESS, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 333 North Washington, Dallas, TX 75246-1798.

BAPTISTWAY PRESS® is registered in U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW LIFE Version, Copyright © 1969, 1976, 1978, 1983, 1986, Christian Literature International, P. O. Box 777, Canby, OR 97013. Used by permission. Identified by "N.L.V."

First edition: February 2008

# **BAPTISTWAY Management Team**

Executive Director, Baptist General Convention of Texas

Charles Wade

Director, Missions, Evangelism, and Ministry Team

Wayne Shuffield

Ministry Team Leader

Phil Miller

Publishing consultant, Positive Difference Communications

Ross West

# **Language Materials Team**

Writer for 1st and 2nd Kings Teaching Guide

Julia Wrotenbery, Agape Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas

Editor for 1st and 2nd Kings Teaching Guide

Jennifer Carson, Trinity Baptist Church, Lake Charles, Louisians

Director, Office of Intercultural Initiatives

Patty Lane

# Introduction for Teachers

he purpose of this teaching guide is to provide teachers with a plan for teaching a quality Bible lesson while helping participants improve their English language skills. Use of this material is suggested for International Sunday School classes or any Bible study group taught at a Basic English level.

The Teaching Guide begins with listings of the Lesson Focus, Focal/Background Text, and Memory Verse, all of which provide the premise for the lesson. This information is followed by a teaching plan under headings of Connect with Life, Guide the Study, and Encourage Application. At the end of each lesson, Supplemental Teaching Ideas are provided under those same headings. As the teacher, you may pick and choose from these helps to use along with the student's Study Guide to fit the lesson to your class members' abilities and needs.

The Bible text printed in the lesson material is from the NEW LIFE Version of the Bible (NLV), an inexpensive translation (not a paraphrase) which uses only an 850-word vocabulary. The NLV is available from Christian Literature International, P. O. Box 777, Canby, Oregon 97013; e-mail christian@canby.com; telephone (orders only) 1-800-324-9734.

The NLV Bible often uses simplified phrases to express terms generally familiar to anyone raised in a Christian environment. In the Teaching Guide, these terms will usually be expressed using the NLV terminology, followed by the more common term in parentheses; for example, "proud religious law-keeper (Pharisee)" or "early preacher (prophet)." The teacher has the option of using the NLV term for new Christians or beginning students, or the common term where it will be better understood and less cumbersome in teaching. Once a word or phrase has been introduced in the Word List or teaching procedures, however, the familiar expression may be used to help students add it to their vocabulary.

Prayer is sometimes specifically suggested in the teaching procedures. It should be an integral part of your lesson plan. Use your own judgment as to where it best fits into the teaching session.

The writers and editors wish you success and give you prayerful support in your teaching of this Adult Bible Study in Simplified English.

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English is published by the Baptist General Convention of Texas and follows the same curriculum plan as the Bible Study for Texas materials, but has no Texas emphasis. Teachers may wish to purchase Bible Study for Texas lesson comments and teaching guides as additional resources. These may be ordered through your church or directly from the Sunday School/Discipleship Division, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 333 North Washington, Dallas, TX 75246-1798, e-mail baptistway@bgct.org; FAX 214-828-5187; or toll-free telephone 1-800-355-5285.

#### About the writer

Julia Wrotenbery wrote this series of lessons from 1 and 2 Kings. She earned a B.A. degree in English from Baylor University and an M.R.E. degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. In addition, she also holds an M.A. in English from The University of Texas in Austin. After 30 years of teaching high school and college English, she has spent the years since retirement working with English as a Second Language students at University Baptist Church and Agape Baptist Church, Fort Worth, where she and her husband, Carl, are currently members.

# Suggestions for Teaching

#### **General Suggestions**

- 1. Provide language edition Bibles so students can read the focal passage in their native languages.
- 2. Beginning students may require three sessions to complete one lesson.
- 3. Review the Word Study before beginning the study. Provide page (see resources) for class to keep vocabulary studies in their notebooks.
- 4. Prepare 9-12 core sentences which tell the most important part of the Bible focal text. Illustrate each sentence with stick figures and symbols in *picture sequence* form (see details below).
- 5. Prepare lesson outlines or written materials before class—make your own cling sheets by cutting apart white plastic garbage bags and writing on them with markers. The plastic bags will cling to the wall.

#### **Bible Comments/Focal Text**

- 1. Help students hear English and practice their pronunciation by modeling phrases and sentence. Allow the entire class to repeat. Be consistent with stress and intonation. Speak naturally.
- 2. Allow individual students to read a sentence or paragraph at a time. For further practice, ask students to tell sections from Bible comments in their own words.
- 3. When time allows, pairs may read the lesson again to each other.
- 4. Class may close books and listen as a native speaker reads the section again.
- 5. Discuss lesson using "Things to Think About."

#### **Memory Verse**

- 1. Challenge class members to say the Memory Verse several times each day.
- 2. Provide Study Sheets for students to write Memory Verses.
- 3. Write phrases or individual words on separate pieces of paper. Give to students to place in order.
- 4. Write entire verse on board. Read in unison. Erase key words a few at a time. Recite verse until entire verse is erased and class can repeat by memory.
- 5. Make a symbol for each word or phrase of the

verse. 6. Use the symbols as a reminder for saying the verse.

#### **Picture Sequencing (Lipson Method)**

This method is especially suited for teaching beginners. It consists of a series of pictures with accompanying sentences that tell a story. It may be used solely for oral production (using pictures alone) or for integrated skills (engaging students in reading and writing the story).

You may use real pictures, videotape, pictures that are professionally drawn, or stick figures

Other benefits include the following:

1. Relaxed, low-anxiety atmosphere as students focus on the pictures and create their own sentences to tell the story

Focus on fluency, not just accuracy Focus on a message or task rather than form or grammar

Minimal error-correction as students tell the story

- 2. Pictures (even stick figures) convey meaning in every language.
- 3. The same set of pictures can be used with more than one level of students by making the sentences easier or more difficult.
- 4. The use of pictures helps students learn the language in "chunks" rather than words in isolation.
- 5. The only item needed is a piece of chalk—or a marker, if using a cling sheet or overhead transparency.

#### Preparation

- 1. Put a story into sentences that are suitable for the level of your students. Try to tell the story with a maximum of ten sentences. For low beginners, choose the simplest and fewest words possible. Keep sentences in their most basic form, so students can combine sentences later.
- 2. Draw simple pictures or stick figures to illustrate key points in the story. These serve as prompts for the telling of the story. Other drawing tips:

An "x" in a small square beside a picture enables you to cue for a negative as you tell the story.

Direct quotations may be indicated with a cartoon-type bubble.

# **Suggestions for Teaching**

#### **Procedure**

- 1. Introduce the story by following your prepared script of sentences (for consistency) and pointing to the pictures as you speak. This will give students the main idea and help them think in chunks of language (as in real-life language use).
- 2. Introduce the new words as you again reference the pictures. Use props and/or dramatization as needed to establish understanding. Work on individual sounds and word stress as students repeat new words.
- 3. Lead students in repetition of the story, one sentence at a time, working on sentence stress and intonation.
- 4. Lead the class in one more repetition of the story (going straight through and continuing to refer to the pictures throughout the story).
- 5. Ask the class to tell you the story as you cue the story sequence by pointing to the pictures. (You become "stage prompter" at this point.)
- 6. Then ask for a single volunteer to tell the story. (This may open the door for several more proficient students to use what they know.)
- 7. Divide the class into small groups of 3-5 students to give each person practice in telling the story. (Inevitably, the most eager student will go first, followed by another "semi"-eager student. By the time it is the least proficient student's turn, he/she will have learned a lot by listening, will have observed a good model at least a couple of times, and will have bolstered courage for risk-taking.)
- 8. Follow with questions to review story (begin by naming the setting, the characters, etc.—easy questions).
- 9. Conclude with life application questions that require some thought and give students opportunity to express opinion, emotion, and their own ideas.

#### Lesson Expansion

If the setting and circumstances permit, use these ideas:

- —Sequencing pictures (a set for each pair of students) while listening to you or to a taped voice tell the story
- —Picture sequencing without hearing the story told
- —Matching pictures and sentences
- —Scrambled sentences to arrange in order (writing numbers or letters in front of sentences to show sequence; cutting up sentences and moving around to position correct order)

- —Strip story (cutting up sentences, issuing one strip per student, asking students to arrange themselves in order, having them retell the story by contributing the portion on their paper strip)
- —Cloze (supplying a written copy with every n<sup>th</sup> word blank; students work in pairs to fill in the missing words)
- —Dictation (teacher or student telling the story while students write what they hear)
- —Provide a copy of the sentences for each student. Ask that they read the story to a partner.
- —Ask students to write the story in their own words.

# Bible passage as content for reading *Procedure:*

- 1. Tell the parable or story using pictures. Use animation and simple sentences.
- 2. Ask questions about the main idea of the story.
- 3. Read story aloud while students follow along and underline unknown words. Go over the meaning of these words with the whole class.
- 4. Intermediate or advanced students: Have students read silently a second time to look for answers to two or three questions about details that you have written on the board. Ask students to discuss their answers with a partner. Then go over answers with the whole class.
- 5. Beginning or low-intermediate students: Read story again and ask students to repeat it with you line by line.
- 6. Invite the class to read the story with you in unison.
- 7. Ask pairs to read the story to each other.
- 8. Ask for volunteers to tell the story in their own words.
- 9. Make drawings large enough for the back row to see.
- 10. Select a list of new words in the story—unfamiliar words that the students would not likely be able to figure out from context (generally 8-10 new words per lesson).
- 11. List the new words in categories: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs. When listing verbs, you may write both simple present and past tense forms (e.g., eat/ate, walk/walked). Basic beginners would do well to tell the story in present tense, but high beginners could work in present tense, then retell the story in past tense.

# **Suggestions for Teaching**

# **Checklist for Successful Classrooms**

Right Kind of Input

- 1. New language in every lesson
- 2. Input that is slightly above the students' current level of proficiency
- 3. Content relevant to the students' real-life needs and interests
- 4. Language learned in meaningful chunks, not words in isolation
- 5. Comprehensibility achieved by use of the following:
  - -Realia or authentic materials
- —Simplified language (rephrasing, repeating, clear enunciation)
- —Demonstration and multiple examples rather than explanation
  - —Lots of gestures and nonverbal language

#### Low Anxiety Environment

Students should not be afraid to make mistakes or take risks in language learning. The following factors contribute to a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere and build a sense of community:

- —Personally greeting and bidding farewell to students
- —Sincere and frequent affirmation
- —Minimal error correction from the teacher
- —Frequent reference to the culture(s) of the students
- —Smiles and laughter that are commonplace
- —Connecting with students through eye contact and positioning yourself on students' eye level
- -Calling students by name

#### Checklist for Real-Life Interaction

- 1. Pace activities with a balance of noisy/quiet and still/active
- 2. Attention to different learning styles (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic)
- 3. Variety in grouping (predominately pairs and small groups of three or five; using whole class in initial presentation and again for feedback and wrap -up at the end)
- 4. A focus on a task or message rather than form (grammar)
- 5. Provision for all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
- 6. Avoidance of questions for which answers are known

- 7. Use of information gap activity in which partners have different pieces of information and must ask each other questions in order to fill in their gaps of understanding
- 8. Other useful activities: surveys, interviews, roleplay, problem-solving, and interactive games
- 9. Review previous material.

Some suggestions based on material developed for the EFL Training Manual—Beyond our Borders.

# Resources for 1st and 2nd Kings

#### From BaptistWayPress

www.baptistwaypress.org

Posted a week in advance of the first Sunday of use.

**Teaching Resource Items:** Go online to www.baptistwaypress.org and click on "Teaching Resource Items." Permission is granted to download these teaching resource items, print them out, copy as needed, and use in your class.

Additional Teaching Plan: Enrichment teaching help is provided in the Internet edition of the Baptist Standard. Access the free Internet information by checking the Baptist Standard website at www.baptiststandard.com. Call 214-630-4571 to begin your subscription to the printed edition of the Baptist Standard.

#### **Lesson 1: Solomon Asks for Wisdom**

#### **Lesson Focus**

Asking God's wisdom in the right beginning place for any leader.

#### **Focal Text**

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

# **Background Text**

1 Kings 1-3

# **Memory Verse**

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of much wisdom. Fools hate wisdom and teaching." (Proverbs1:7)

#### Connect with Life

- 1. Ask the group these questions:
- Can you think of any stories in which a person is to be granted a wish? (Example: Aladdin and his magic lamp)
- What if God were to say: "I'll give you whatever you ask for." What would you ask for? Discuss possible answers to this question.

# **Guide the Study**

- 2. Discuss briefly the introduction to 1 and 2 Kings and Unit One from the study guide. Point out on a map of Bible times where the countries involved are located.
- 3. Ask a student to read aloud 1 Kings 2:1-12. Make a handout including the following questions. Distribute the handout and suggest students answer and discuss the questions after reading 1 Kings 2:1-12.
- How long did David reign? (7 years in Hebron and 33 years in Jerusalem)
- What instructions did David give Solomon about Joab? (To see that he was punished for the death of Abner)

- What had Joab done to deserve this? (Joab killed Abner.)
- What were David's instructions about the sons of Barzillai? (That Solomon be kind to them and let them eat at his table)
- Why did he ask this of Solomon? (Because they had stood by him in Gilead)
- What had Shemei done to deserve punishment? (He had called down curses on David.)
- What advice did David give Solomon about how to live? (Walk in God's ways and keep his laws.)
- What promise did God make to David that David asked Solomon to remember? (One of his descendants would always be on the throne if they kept God's laws)
- 4. Refer to the context of today's passages. Have a student read all or part of this section. Discuss this section briefly.

Ask: *How is this situation like our modern situation?* Be sure to point our the political scene and the importance of character.

- 5. Choose someone to read 1 Kings 3:1-15. If your students do not read well, divide the passage among four students: vv.1-4, vv. 5-9, vv. 10-13, vv. 14-15.
  - Ask this question about vv. 1-4:
- What was apparently Solomon's first official act? (Alliance with Pharaoh of Egypt and marriage to his daughter)
- Why did the people sacrifice in the "high places?" (The temple had not yet been built.)
- How did Solomon show love to God? (He walked according to the statutes of his father David, but he sacrificed in the high places.)
- 6. After reading vv. 5-9, ask these questions:
- Why had Solomon gone to Gibeon? (In order to offer sacrifices to God)
- What surprising vision did Solomon receive? (God appeared to Solomon and told Solomon that He would give him whatever he asked.)

- Solomon praised God for being kind to David. For what reason had He been so generous to David? (David had been righteous and upright and had followed God's laws. As a result of this, David had a son to follow him on the throne—a very important blessing to a king.)
- What attitude would you say Solomon shows to God's offer? (He was modest and humble and admitted he was not wise enough to make decisions between right and wrong for God's great nation.)
- What did he ask for? (A discerning heart, good judgment, and clear knowledge of what God would consider right or wrong)
- 7. After reading vv. 10-13, ask these questions:
- What was God's response to Solomon's request?
   (God was very pleased with Solomon for his request because he had not asked for long life, wealth, or the defeat of his enemies.)
- Did God grant his desire? (Yes. In fact, no one was ever more noted for wisdom than Solomon.)
- What did God also promise? (Riches and honor and a high reputation)
- In verse 14 God gives a conditional promise.
   What is the promise and what are the
   conditions? (He will have wealth and a long life
   <u>if</u> he keeps the laws and follows God's
   leadership.)
- Did Solomon believe God's promises after he realized he had been dreaming? (Yes. Visions and dreams were an accepted way of hearing from God.)

# **Encourage Application**

8. Re-examine this question from the beginning of the session: "What would you wish for?" Discuss any changes in perspective after studying today's lesson.

Ask:

- Why was Solomon's request so pleasing to God?
- What attitude on our part does this seem to recommend?
- Do good leaders need these qualities?
- 9. Discuss *Things to Think About* from the study guide.

- 10. Review the word list. Amplify and discuss as needed.
- 11. Read and discuss the memory verse. How does this lesson reinforce that statement?
- 12. Close with prayer that God might give us wisdom to serve Him better.

#### **Lesson 2: Solomon Prays**

#### **Lesson Focus**

God calls for faithfulness to Him as we pray for our needs to be met.

#### **Focal Text**

1 Kings 8:22-36; 41-51

# **Background Text**

1 Kings 7:1-9:9

# **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)

#### **Connect with Life**

- 1. Ask the class these questions:
- Have your ever attended the dedication of a building?
- What kind of building was it?
- What do people do at the dedication of a building? (Usually there is a formal ceremony where speeches are made about the use of the building. Sometimes there is a ribbon cutting to symbolize its being open to the public. For the dedication of a church, there may be a sermon, communion service, prayers, Bible reading or singing of hymns. It is a solemn occasion.)

Then tell the class that Solomon's building the temple for the worship of God was so important that all the nations were invited. The king himself stood before the altar with hands outstretched to God. It was perhaps the most important event since God delivered them from captivity in Egypt. This was the first permanent building for worshipping God. They had been using a portable tabernacle.

# **Guide the Study**

2. Discuss the word list. Be sure everyone

understands how the words are used.

Copy a picture of the Ark of the Covenant and a floor plan of Solomon's temple to show the class. Any Bible encyclopedia or handbook should have these.

- 3. Ask a student to read vv. 22-26. Then pose these questions:
- What is the first emphasis in the prayer? (There is no one so great as God.)
- What reason does Solomon give for this statement? (God keeps His promises.)
- There is a condition that must be met in order for the people to see this promise fulfulled. What is it? (God kees His promises to those who follow His way wholeheartedly.)
- God also kept a promise to David. What was it? (His son Solomon would sit on the throne.)
- There was more to God's promise in verse 26. What was it? (There will be a king of David's line as long as those kings obey God and keep His ways.)
- 4. Select a good reader to read 8:27-30. Then ask the class to summarize those verses in 2-3 sentences. (Suggested summary: God is too big to be completely housed in the temple. His proper home is heaven, but His presence can also be in the temple day and night. Prayers directed there will be heard. The plea is that He will both hear and forgive.)
- 5. Let a volunteer read vv. 31-36. Then ask the class to explain what is meant. (Suggested explanation: As king, Solomon is to have any wrong-doer swear an oath before the altar. Then Solomon must pray to God to guide him to declare a person innocent or guilty. If the nation has sinned against God, then the people must pray toward the temple. If they are repentant, God will answer by sending rain to stop the drought.)
- 6. Read aloud vv. 41-51. These words deal with

foreigners in the land. As the verses are read, record notes on the board that show how foreigners should be dealt with. Then share with the class. (Suggested points to include: Foreigners are also under God's protection. If they commit sin but repent and beg forgiveness, the people should forgive them. If the people become so angry that they send them into captivity, the Israelites should be ready to forgive them and pray that God will show them mercy.)

#### **Encourage Application**

- 7. Examine the memory verse. Notice that this advice is repeated frequently in these books of the Bible. Recite it together and then to each other in pairs.
- 8. Discuss *Things to Think About*. How does Solomon's prayer differ from yours?
- 9. Read over the list of reasons for going to the temple. How do these compare to our going to church?
- 10. Close with prayer that we may live up to the memory verse and that our prayers may lift up others as well as ourselves.

#### **Lesson 3: Foolish Choices**

#### **Lesson Focus**

When a leader makes a foolish decision, the results can be tragic and long-lasting.

#### **Focal Text**

1 Kings 12:1-20

# **Background Text**

1 Kings 11-12; 14:21-31

# **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. (Psalm 1:1)

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Ask the class: *Have you ever heard the term* "peer pressure?"

Explain that this term refers to the tendency of people to push others to do what they do. If those people are wise, the peer pressure might not be to do bad things, but if someone yields to the pressure and does what his conscience tells him is wrong, he is walking the wrong direction.

Ask: Do you know of such occasions when this has happened?

Say: In today's lesson we meet a young man who does this.

# **Guide the Study**

- 2. Go over the word list. Suggest that students see how these words relate to this lesson.
- 3. Select a person to read 1 Kings 12:1-15.

Say: This takes place after Solomon's death. His son Nehoboam is to become king. His rival in power is Jeroboam, who is not Solomon's son.

Ask the group these questions:

• Where does Rehoboam go? (Shechem)

- For what purpose? (To be made king)
- *Where is Jereboam at this time?* (In Egypt)
- Why? (He fled from Solomon's anger.)
- What request did the people make to Rehoboam? (Lighten the burdens your father put on us.)
- What did Rehoboam indicate he would do? (Consider it for three days)
- What advice did the elders give him? (Lighten the burdens.)
- What advice did he receive from his peers?
   (Make the burden greater and punish more severely.)
- Which group did Rehoboam listen to? (His friends)
- 4. Ask for a volunteer to read 1 Kings 12:16-20. Ask this question: *What followed Rehoboam's decisions?*

Summarize the responses for the class by saying this: The ten tribes rebelled and went home. When Rehoboam sent Adoram to urge them to obey the King and the laws, the people stoned him to death. Rehoboam escaped by jumping into his chariot and rushing away. God told Rehoboam and his people to return to Jerusalem and not to fight the ten tribes.

# **Encourage Application**

5. Examine the questions from *Things to Think About* and discuss them.

In addition, ask the class to discuss these questions:

- Rehoboam asked two groups for advice. Who else should he have asked? (God and God's representatives)
- Where else did Rehoboam go wrong? (He did not listen to the people.)
- What results did Rehoboam's foolish decisions have? (The ten northern tribes refused to have Rehoboam as king. They selected Jereboam who also made foolish decisions and failed to

1st and 2nd Kings • Unit 1: Days of Glory, Days of Shame	• Lesson 3: Foolish Choices	Page 12
consult God about what to do.)		
6. Recite together the memory verse. Practice saying it to a partner.		
7. Suggest that students begin a file of helpful verses which can be used as a daily devotional thought. Supply 3X5 cards so they can write a verse on each card.		
8. Close with prayer that God will guide us in making decisions.		

#### **Lesson 4: Bad Results**

#### **Lesson Focus**

Where there is poor leadership, the people perish.

#### **Focal Text**

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

# **Background Text**

1 Kings 15:1-16:34

# **Memory Verse**

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

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Throughout history countries have struggled with bad leaders. Many of these were over thrown

Ask: What examples can you think of? Be sure to discuss leaders such as Adolf Hitler from Germany, Benito Mussolini from Italy; Joseph Stalin from Russia; General Franco from Spain and any others you can think of.)

Ask: What made these such bad leaders?

# **Guide the Study**

- 2. Examine the word list from the study guide. Discuss these words.
- 3. Appoint a reader for 1 Kings 15:9-17. Ask the group these questions:
- Describe what Asa as anew king did that was good. (He did what was right in God's sight. He rid the nation of the male prostitutes in the pagan worship rites. He got rid of all the idols. He removed his grandmother from the office of Queen Mother because she had made an Asherah pole to worship. He burned the Asherah pole. His heart was committed to God all his life. He returned the dedicated silver and gold to the temple.)

- Which of Asa's faults are revealed in these verses? (He did not destroy the high places where some had begun to worship idols.)
- 4. Ask for a volunteer to read 1 Kings 15:17-19. Have a student explain why King Baasha of Israel was fortifying Ramah. Be sure students understand he was doing this to prevent anyone from leaving or entering Judah. Remind them that King Baasha was waging war against Asa.
- 5. Choose a reader for 1 Kings 15:18-19.

Ask someone to explain what Asa does next. Be sure everyone understands Asa's bribe. Asa takes silver and gold from the temple treasure and some from his palace. He uses this to persuade Ben-Hadad to break his treaty with Israel and form one with him. Then he dismantled Ramah to protect his border.

6. Ask someone to read 1 Kings 16:29-33. These verses tell about the ten tribes of Israel.

Ask the class to summarize the reign of Ahab in Israel.

# **Encourage Application**

7. On a chalk board or poster board make two columns. Label one column *Asa of* Judah. Label the other one *Ahab of Israel*.

Ask: What qualities characterize these tow rulers? (Asa loved God but was too weak to do all he needed to do. He did not always ask God's guidance before making decisions. Ahab never asked for God's help. He worshipped Baal, and he did more evil than all the kings who came before him.)

8. In light of the leadership shown by these two kings, decide what qualities a good leader must show. Work together to make a list on a chalkboard or overhead.

1et and 2nd Kings	I Init 1: Dave	of Clory	Dave of Shame	Lesson 4: Rad Posults
ist and zild Kings	• Uliil I. Days	oi Gioiy,	Days of Shalle •	Lesson 4: Bad Results

Page 14

9. Help students to identify leaders with whom they are familiar. These leaders may be on the international, national, local or family level. These leaders may include religious and political leaders.

Pass out a brightly colored index card or piece of paper. Ask class members to write down some of these leaders' names. Have them place this paper in their Bible near 1 Kings 15-16.

Instruct class members to pray for the leaders on their paper that God will develop and sustain the qualities of a good leader in each of them.

- 10. Recite together the memory verse. Add this one to your 3X5 cards.
- 11. Close with a prayer that God would guide us to put Him first and to ask for His wisdom in every decision.

### **Lesson 5: Being Sent by God**

#### **Lesson Focus**

God calls for our full commitment to Him instead of to any other god, including the god of easy success.

#### **Focal Text**

1 Kings 18:1-2, 17-39

# **Background Text**

1 Kings 17-18

# **Memory Verse**

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

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Ask the group this: Can you think of a time when leaders wanted to do was something that would anger God?

If no one mentions it, explain how the United States continued to allow slavery for the first hundred years of its life. Another example would be Adolf Hitler's efforts to wipe out Jews.

Tell the group that something similar happened when Israel was divided into two kingdoms. It happened during the time of King Ahab.

# Guide the Study

- 2. Ask a student to read aloud the introduction to Unit Two. Point out how few were following God's laws.
- 3. Select another class member to read 1 Kings 18:1 -2.

Ask:

- What did God tell Elijah to do? (To present himself to King Ahab)
- What did God offer to do if Elijah would do this? (Send rain to end a 3-year drought)
- 4. Ask one of your more fluent students ahead of

time to summarize vv. 3-16 and report to the class.

If no such student is available, ask someone to read the following summary: Ahab had been looking for Elijah. Ahab had sent Obadiah to find him. Obadiah and some others faithful to God had been trying to keep the king from finding Elijah. Obadiah had even found caves to hide some of God's priests from Ahab. Obadiah found Elijah and told him. Obadiah was afraid for Elijah's life and for his own if Elijah disappeared after the king discovered Elijah was found. Elijah assured Obadiah this was God's will.

- 5. Call for a volunteer to read 1 Kings 18:17-20. Ask the following questions:
- When Ahab met Elijah, of what did he accuse Elijah? (Of being a troubler of Israel)
- How did Elijah answer? (He said Ahab and his family were causing trouble because they were worshipping idols instead of God.)
- What did Elijah order Ahab to do? (To meet him on Mount Carmel along with the people of Israel and 450 priests of Baal and 400 priests of Asherah)
- Did the king obey Elijah? (Yes)
- 6. Designate a reader for 1 Kings 18:21-22.

  Ask: How did the people respond to Elijah's plea to choose between God and Baal? (They refused to answer.)
- 7. Have someone read 1 Kings 18:23-24.

Ask for a volunteer to explain Elijah's proposal. Be sure the class understands the proposal.

Summarize by saying: Elijah suggested that they get two bulls, one for the 450 prophets of Baal and one for the prophet of God. These were to be cut up for sacrifice and placed on piles of wood but not set afire. Then Baal's prophets could call on Baal to set the sacrifice afire. Elijah will do the same and call on the Lord to set his sacrifice afire. Whoever answered his worshippers' pleas would show himself to be the true God. The people agreed to

the test.

8. Ask a class member to read 1 Kings 18:25-30.

Summarize what happened for the class by saying: The prophets of Baal prepared the sacrifice and began to call on Baal. When he did not send fire they got louder. At noon Elijah began to taunt them that Baal might be asleep or on a trip. He urged them to call louder. They screamed and cut themselves to draw blood. By the time for evening prayers nothing had happened. No one answered.

- 9. Choose a reader for 1 Kings 18:31-39. Ask the class these questions:
- Describe how Elijah set up his sacrifice. (He dug a deep trench around the twelve stones he laid for the altar. He placed wood on the altar and the cut up bull. Then he had the people pour four large containers of water all over it. 'They did this three times.)
- What did he do next? (He offered a brief prayer that God would send fire to consume the sacrifice.)
- What happened after the prayer? (A fierce fire came upon the altar. The bull, the wood, the twelve stones, and all the water were consumed. Some of the soil even burned.)
- *How did the people react?* (They began to cry out that the Lord was the One true God.)

#### **Encourage Application**

10. Go over the word list. Make sure everyone is clear about the words' meanings.

Note that the false gods Baal and Asherah represented fertility. Explain that they were worshipped with the use of temple prostitutes and other vile practices.

- 11. Explore *Things To Think About* from the study guide.
- 12. Recite the memory verse together. Add it to your 3X5 cards.
- 13. Think through the history of God's people. Reflect on how many times they expected God to prove Himself to His people the Exodus from

Egypt, the cloud and pillar of fire to lead them through the desert, the entry into Canaan, the battles with enemies, etc.

Ask class member to think about this question: *Do I keep asking God to prove to me He is God?* 

14. Close with prayer that our faith and our obedience might be strengthened.

### **Lesson 6: Running and Hiding**

#### **Lesson Focus**

Even though serving God may be so discouraging and threatening that we want to give up, we must continue to listen to God and be faithful.

#### **Focal Text**

1 Kings 19:1-18

# **Background Text**

1 Kings 19

# **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." (Psalm 61:2)

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Tell the class this story: Jeff was a young minister of a small church in a difficult inner-city area. He worked very hard visiting the people of the area. No one seemed interested. Some were hostile. Jeff wanted to quit. He was depressed and felt he could not be successful in reaching these people. After a long night of agonizing prayer, he felt God telling him not to give up. There were some who were beginning to be interested. Soon there would be results.

Ask: If you were in Jeff's place, what would you do?

# **Guide the Study**

- 2. Select someone to read 1 Kings 19:1-4. Ask these questions:
- What did Ahab tell Jezebel? (Elijah had discredited Baal and Asherah and killed all their prophets.)
- *How did Jezebel react?* (She swore to have Elijah killed before the next day.)
- What did Elijah do when he heard this? (He ran for his life. He left his servant in Beersheba and

- went a day's journey into the desert.)
- When Elijah got into the desert, what did he do?
   (He rested under a tree and begged God to let him die because he had failed.)
- 3. Ask a volunteer to read 1 Kings 19:5-7.

Ask for the class to summarize these verses. If class members have difficulty, use the following summary: Elijah fell asleep. Then an angel touched him and told him to eat and drink. Elijah found hot bread and a jug of water. He ate and drank and slept again. The angel repeated this a second time.

- 4. Have someone volunteer to read 1 Kings 19:8-14. Then ask these questions:
- What did Elijah do after eating and sleeping the second time? (He walked forty days and forty nights to the mountain of the Lord and spent the night in a cave.)
- When God spoke to him and asked him what he was doing there, what was his reply? (He began to complain that he was the only faithful follower left in all Israel, although Obadiah had told him there were a hundred followers hidden in caves. He felt very sorry for himself.)
- What did God instruct him to do? (God was going to allow His presence to pass by Elijah. First there was a mighty wind, then an earthquake and a fire. Elijah knew God's presence had not yet come. Then He heard a whispered voice. He covered his eyes as Moses had done and came out to hear God.)
- What did God ask him this time? (What are you doing here, Elijah?)
- 5. Recruit a reader for 1 Kings 19:15-19. Ask the following:
- What does God tell Elijah to do? (Go back the way you have come and go to Aram (Syria).
   Crown a new king for them, Hazael. Then go to crown Jehu king of Isreal and anoint Elisha to be a prophet after you.)
- What jobs did God have for Jehu and Hazael?

- (Hazael was to kill all the people who had rejected God. Jehu was to kill all who escaped Hazael and Elisha was to kill all who escaped Jehu.)
- What good news did God give Elijah? (God had 7,000 people still in Israel who continued to be faithful and had never worshipped Baal.)
- 6. Summarize the end of 1 Kings 19 by reading this to the class: Elijah goes to find Elisha. He is plowing with twelve yoke of oxen. Elijah throws his cloak over Elisha as a way of calling him to become a prophet. Elisha kills the oxen and uses them as a sacrifice over a fire of his farming tools. Then he gives the meat to the people and follows Elijah.

# **Encourage Application**

- 7. Go over the word list from the study guide. Make sure the words' meanings are clear.
- 8. Discuss *Things to Think About* from the study guide.
- 9. Go over the memory verse. Add this verse to your collection of 3X5 cards.

Discuss how God puts a desire in the hearts of his followers to seek Him rather than run from Him.

10. Point out to the group that Elijah became frightened and tried to escape the job God had given him, but God called him back, forgave him, and continued to use him. Close with prayer that we might be faithful followers whom God can use for His purposes.

Lesson 7: Good News, Bad News

#### **Lesson Focus**

Being faithful to God means speaking God's truth even when doing so is lonely and dangerous.

#### **Focal Text**

1 Kings 22:6-28

# **Background Text**

1 Kings 22

# **Memory Verse**

"Good news from a far country is like cold water to a tired soul."

(Proverbs 25:25)

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Say to the class: Everyone receives both good news and bad news. It might be a high grade on a test, or a failing one. Your boss may tell you he's raising your salary, or that the business is downsizing and you are out of a job. Your doctor may tell you that you're in excellent health, or that you have a fatal disease.

Ask everyone to share with the class some good news and bad news. Then tell them that the book of 1 Kings ends with both good news and bad news.

# **Guide the Study**

2. Ask a student ahead of time to read and summarize 1 Kings 22:1-5 for the context.

If no one is available to do this, ask a class member to read this summary: After Elijah's demonstration on Mount Carmel, there were three years of peace. Then Ahab decided Ramoth Gilead really belonged to Israel, and he wanted to go to war against Aram (Syria) to get it back. He sent for Jehoshophat, king of Judah, to enlist his help. Jehoshophat felt they had to seek God's approval.

3. Now ask another class member to read 1 Kings

22:6-9. Restate to the group what happened in verses 6-9.

Say: Ahab called all his 400 prophets and asked them whether he should go to war. All of them were in favor. Jehoshophat then asked for Ahab to send for one who was a prophet of the Lord. They sent for Micaiah who Ahab claimed never said anything good. Micaiah told Ahab to go. He would win.)

- 4. Select a reader for 1 Kings 22:10-13. Ask these questions:
- Where did the kings wait? (On their thrones which had been placed by the threshing floor by the gate of Samaria)
- An invention of Zedekiah's seemed to make them all optimistic.
- What had he made? (Horns of iron to gore the enemy)
- What did the rest of the 400 prophets advise? (Attack, for the Lord will bring victory.)
- When the messenger found Micaiah, what advice did he give the prophet? (Tell the king what he wants to hear.)
- How did Micaiah reply? (I must tell Ahab what God tells me to say.)
- When Ahab asked Micaiah what he should do, what was the reply? (Attack and be victorious.)
- 5. Let a volunteer read 1 Kings 22:16-21. Pose these questions:
- Micaiah's prophecy was perhaps said so sarcastically that Ahab did not believe him and ordered him to tell the truth. Then what did Micaiah say? (He described a vision he had seen. He saw Israel scattered in the hills like sheep without a shepherd. The Lord said to let all the people go home in peace.)
- How did Ahab react? (He told Jehoshophat, "I told you so.")
- *Micaiah continued the vision. Describe it.* (God was sitting on His throne surrounded by his angels. He asked who should entice Ahab to his death. Several made suggestions. The one

spirit volunteered to entice Ahab to his death in battle.)

- 6. Have someone read 1Kings 22:22-28. Ask:
- The volunteer spirit is asked how he planned to entice Ahab. What was his plan? (He would send a lying spirit into the prophets. They would tell him the wrong things. Ahab will attack and die.)
- Notice that God tells the spirit his plan will work. When Micaiah made the point that all 400 priests were lying, what was the reaction? (Zedekiah, who was very pro-war, slapped Micaiah. But Micaiah hinted that Zedekiah also faced disaster.)
- *How did Ahab respond?* (He ordered Micaiah to be placed in prison until Ahab's safe return.)
- What did Micaiah have to say then? (If you do return safely, then the Lord has not spoken to you through me.)
- What was Micaiah's last statement? ("Mark my words, all you people.")
- 7. Ask the class: *What do you expect to happen?* Wait for responses, then summarize the last few verses in the chapter.

Say: The king of Aram ordered his charioteer not to fight with anyone except Ahab. When they saw Jehoshophat they started to attack him, but their commander knew it was not Ahab and stopped them. Ahab had disguised himself, but he was accidentally shot with an arrow. He was taken away from the battle but later died. Toward the end of the day a voice was heard ordering everyone to return home. Ahab was returned to Samaria and buried. His son, Ahaziah became king. Ahaziah was evil and worshipped Baal. He only reigned two years. As for Jehoshophat, he returned to Judah and had a long and prosperous reign. He followed the Lord in his rule.

# **Encourage Application**

- 8. Examine and discuss the word list. See if the students can use the words correctly in a sentence.
- 9. Recite and memorize the memory verse. Add this

to your 3X5 cards.

10. Discuss Things to Think About.

Ask this question: If a person has a clear message from God, why would he go against God's advice? Have you ever done this?

11. Close with prayer that we will all seek God's guidance and follow it.

#### **Lesson 8: A God for All People**

#### **Lesson Focus**

God helps all who call on Him and follow His instructions.

#### **Focal Text**

2 Kings 5:1-19

# **Background Text**

2 Kings 2-5

# **Memory Verse**

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

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Refer to the introduction to Unit Three in the study guide. Discuss and ask that the class keep in mind the list of things we all need to do.

# **Guide the Study**

2. Summarize a few of the remarkable works the Lord led Elisha to do in the first four chapters of 2 Kings.

Say: When Elijah asked Elisha what he could do for him, Elisha asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit. One of the things Elisha did was to call down a curse on a gang of youths who jeered at him. Bears attacked and killed them. He was able to purify the water supply of a community. Another time he asked the Lord to provide water in the desert for the three armies of Israel, Judah, and Edom. Later he asked God to increase the oil a widow had so that she could sell it and pay her debts. Later he even brought a child who had died back to life.

- 3. Choose someone to read 2 Kings 5:1-3. Then ask these questions:
- Where does the action begin? (Aram, which is

Syria today)

- Who is the chief character? (Naaman)
- *Describe him.* (He was a highly regarded commander in the Aram Army. He had been a leader in winning a victory for his country.)
- What was his problem? (He had leprosy.)
- Who offered some helpful suggestions? (An Israelite slave girl who attended Naaman's wife)
- What did she suggest? (If he could go to Israel to see the prophet of the Lord, he might be healed.)
- 4. Select a reader for 2 Kings 5:4-10. Here are some questions to pose:
- What did Naaman do at this point? (He told the king of Aram what the slave girl told him.)
- What was the king's reaction? (He urged Naaman to go, and he wrote a letter the king of Israel.)
- When the king of Israel got the letter, he tore his clothes. Why? (He thought Aram was looking for an excuse to attack him, since he could not cure leprosy.)
- When Elisha heard about it, what did he do? (He told the king to send Naaman to him.)
- What were Elisha's words? (Send him to me "and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel.")
- What did Naaman do? (He took his horses and chariots and drove up to Elisha's door.)
- 5. Ask a volunteer to read 2 Kings 5:11-14. Have the class discuss these questions:
- What did Elisha do? (He sent a messenger out to Naaman.)
- Do you think Naaman was offended not to see the prophet? What was his message? (Go wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and you will be cured.)
- How did Naaman react? (He was angry.)
- What had he expected? (He thought Elisha would come out, call on his God, wave his arms over the spot and he would be healed.)

- Why did Naaman resent the instructions? (If washing in a river could cure him, he could have done that in Damascus in his own river.)
- How was he persuaded to try what Elisha instructed? (His servant wisely pointed that if he had been asked to something great he would have been eager to do it. They persuaded him to try the Jordan.)
- What happened? (He washed seven times and was cured.)
- 6. Choose a reader for 2 Kings 5:15-19. Ask:
- After being cured, what did Naaman do? (He went back and saw Elisha to thank him.)
- What did he say about the God of Israel? (He is the only true God.)
- What did he offer Elisha? (A gift of money)
- What did Elisha do? (He refused to accept anything for what he had done.)
- What request did Naaman make then? (He wanted to take back enough soil of Israel for two donkeys to carry so that I might make an altar to the God of Israel. He insisted he would never offer sacrifices to anyone but the Lord God of Israel.)
- For what does Naaman ask forgiveness? (He is concerned that when he helps the king of Aram to enter the temple of the god Rimmon and has to bow down with him to Rimmon the God of Israel will not forgive him.)
- What does Elisha tell him? (God will forgive him.)

# **Encourage Application**

- 7. Examine the word list. Pass out slips of paper listing all the words covered so far. Go over these briefly, asking for definitions or sentences.
- 8. Recite and discuss the memory verse. Add it to your 3X5 cards.

Discuss how the story of the diamonds in the study guide emphasizes the meaning of this verse.

9. Discuss *Things to Think About*. Ask if anyone has a testimony about answered prayer that was different from what was expected.

10. Close with the class singing *I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go* as their prayer. You may need to provide words to the complete hymn or have someone to sing it as a solo.

### **Lesson 9: Heading Toward Disaster**

#### **Lesson Focus**

God will only wait so long for His people to repent before He punishes them.

#### **Focal Text**

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

#### **Background Text**

2 Kings 14 and 15

# **Memory Verse**

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

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Say: World history is full of incidents in which one government is overthrown by ambitious people or downtrodden ones. Think of Adolf Hitler's success in countries when some citizens helped the invader for their own advancement. There were so many they were referred to as the Fifth Column. And country after country fell. Just recently the people of Burma, led by their monks, tried to secure more freedom and were defeated. Pakistan underwent a coup that changed its government a few years ago. Kenya is embroiled in civil war because of an election some felt was unfairly counted. These types of disturbance are not new. Leaders of men are often unwise. This was also true in the Old Testament. Poor leaders who are foolish and selfish bring disaster on the nation, and the people suffer.

# **Guide the Study**

- 2. Ask a student to read 2 Kings 14:23-25. Here are some questions to pose:
- Which two kings are mentioned? (Amaziah, son of King Joash of Judah, and Jeroboam, son of

King Jehoash of Israel)

- Notice that this is the second Jeroboam, not the first. How long did Jeroboam II rule Israel? (Forty-one years)
- What kind of king was he? (He did restore the boundaries of Israel, but he did evil in the eyes of the Lord like the first Jeroboam. He was a political success but a spiritual failure.)
- Notice that when a king of Israel is mentioned, his counterpart in Judah is also named.
- 3. Ask someone to read 2 Kings 14:26-29. See if a volunteer will attempt to summarize these verses.

If no one is available to do so, ask a class member to read the following: God saw the suffering of the people. Even though Jeroboam did evil, God used him to relieve the suffering of the people. He fought and recovered Damascus and Hamath for Israel.

Explain that in the next few verses, we learn that Jeroboam died and was replaced by his son, Zechariah. These verses also include information about what is happening in Judah during this time. We learn that in Jeroboam's (Israel's king) 37<sup>th</sup> year, Amaziah is replaced by his son Azariah in Judah.

4. Appoint a reader for 2 Kings 15:8-10. Say: In Azariah's 38<sup>th</sup> year as king of Judah, Zechariah, son of Jeroboam began to reign in Israel.

#### Ask:

- *How long did Zechariah reign?* (6 months)
- What kind of king was he? ("He did evil in the eyes of the Lord.")
- What ended his short reign? (Shallum conspired against him and assassinated him. Then Shallum became king.)
- 5. Have someone read 2 Kings 15:13-14. Ask:
- Who are the two kings? (Shallum in Israel, Uzziah in Judah)

- How long had Uzziah been reigning when Shallum became king? (Thrity-nine years)
- How long was Shallum's reign? (One month)
- What happened? (Menahem assassinated him and took his place.)
- 6. Choose a student to read 2 Kings 15:17-22. Ask these questions:
- How long had Azariah reigned in Judah when Menahem assassinated Shallum? (Thirty-nine years)
- How long did Menahem reign in Israel? (Ten years)
- What kind of king was he? (He was as evil as the first Jeroboam.)
- What disaster is described in verse 19? (Assyria invades Israel led by King Pul—also known as Tiglath-Pileser).
- Of what cowardly act was Menahem guilty? (He bribed King Pul with 1,000 talents of silver in order to retain some power in Israel. Then he taxed the wealthy people fifty talents of silver each.)
- When Menahem died, the only king to die a natural death in many years, who succeeded him? (His son Pekahiah)
- 7. Let a volunteer read 2 Kings 15:23-30. Then see if volunteers can answer these questions:
- *How long did Pekahiah reign?* (Two years)
- What kind of king was he? (He did evil in the eyes of the Lord just as the first Jeroboam had done.)
- What is said of Judah? (Pekahiah came to the throne in the 50<sup>th</sup> year of King Azariah of Judah.)
- What happened to Pekahiah? (One of his officials, Pekah, conspired with others to kill him and become king.)
- *How long did Pekah reign?* (Two years)
- Who was Judah's king at this time? (Azariah)
- In what year of his reign did Pekah come to the throne of Israel? (Fifty-second)
- How did Pekah act as a king? (He did evil as had the first Jeroboam.)
- The final crumbling of Israel as an independent nation occurs in this passage. What happened? (Tiglath-Pileser returned and conquered many

- areas of Israel–all of Naphtali, Galilee, Gilead, and a number of others. Then he deported a large number of Israelites to Assyria as captives.)
- What happened to Pekah? (He was assassinated in the twentieth year of King Jotham of Judah, Uzziah's son.)

# **Encourage Application**

- 8. Examine the word list. Be sure the meanings are clear and the words can be used.
- 9. Discuss *Things to Think About* from the study guide. Ask these questions in addition:
- Israel failed because of poor leadership. What phrase is used over and over to show the main reason? (He did evil in eyes of the Lord.)
- Name some of the shortcomings of these kings in addition to that. (They were ambitious for themselves. They did not meet the needs of the people. They did not ask for God's guidance, etc.)
- 10. Examine the memory verse. Recite it together and add it to your 3X5 cards.

Discuss how the kings of Israel illustrate the truth of this verse.

11. Close with a prayer that we might learn from this lesson the consequences of disobeying God. Also pray for the leaders of our church, our governing bodies, and our elected officials.

.

#### Lesson 10: Death of a Nation

#### **Lesson Focus**

The people brought destruction on themselves because of their unfaithfulness to God.

#### **Focal Text**

2 Kings 17:1-18, 21-23

# **Background Text**

2 Kings 17

# **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)

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Tell the class: Some of you may have had this experience. If not, try to imagine how it would feel. Suppose your whole town is notified that they will be forcibly moved from their homes to another country where customs and language are different. Other people will be put in your home. Then imagine that you recognize it is your own fault. You have caused the disaster by your own actions. If you can imagine this, you may begin to feel like the Israelites did when this happened to them.

#### **Guide the Study**

2. Choose a person to read 2 Kings 17:1-6.

Tell the class this: Hoshea is the last king of Israel. After 9 years of reign he was taken captive to Assyria.

Ask these questions:

• What has gotten him into trouble? (Israel had been paying bribes to Assyria after Assyria's first attack and the 1,000 talents of silver. Now he conspired with Egypt to turn against Assyria. This enraged Assyria, of course. King Shalmaneser also found that Hoshea had

- stopped paying bribe.)
- In addition to taking King Hoshea captive, what did Shalmaneser do? (He invaded the country and laid siege to the city of Samaria for three years. Most of the rest of the people were deported.)
- 3. Let someone volunteer to read 2 Kings 17:7-13. Say to the class: *These verses tell why Israel is being punished so severely.*

On a chalk board or poster board ask the class to list some of their sins. Help the class members to include the following ideas:

- They worshipped other gods.
- They followed the evil practices of the other nations God had led them to drive out.
- They followed pagan practices their evil kings introduced.
- They used the high places to worship other gods.
- They built altars and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree.
- They burned incense to other gods.
- They refused to listen to the prophets of the Lord or to obey His laws.

Re-read verses 7 and 8 as a summary.

4. Have a student read 2 Kings 17:14-19.

Ask someone to summarize vv. 14-15. If no one is able, read the following summary: The people were warned not to do evil things, but they were stiff-necked and did not listen. They wanted to do what their neighbors did. They rejected God, His laws, and His covenant and so became as worthless as their idols.

Ask:

- What kind of idols did they make for themselves? (They cast two calves as idols.)
- What else did they worship? (The stars and Baal)
- What horrifying rite did they use in worship? (They sacrificed their own children.)

- 5. Read v. 20 to the class to show God's reaction.
- 6. Choose a volunteer to read 2 Kings 17:21-23.

Ask the class to discuss how the sinful decline began when the two kingdoms were torn apart and Jeroboam, the king of Israel, brought in pagan practices.

# **Encourage Application**

- 7. Discuss *Things to Think About*.
- 8. Check the word list for understanding.
- 9. Recite the memory verse together. Discuss how it fits this lesson.

Ask: How would you sum up the lesson this passage carries?

10. Close with a silent prayer of confession and asking forgiveness. Recite together the Lord's Prayer.

# Lesson 11: Despair

#### **Lesson Focus**

People who are faithful to God can count on God to care for their needs.

#### **Focal Text**

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

# **Background Text**

2 Kings 18-19

# **Memory Verse**

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

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Say: One of the greatest landmarks in Texas is the Alamo in San Antonio. During the Texas fight for independence from Mexico, a huge army under the Mexican General Santa Anna attacked this small fort. The defenders of the Alamo had asked for reinforcements, but they did not get there. Santa Anna asked for surrender. When it was refused, he told the defenders there would be no quarter. That is, no prisoners would be taken—everyone would be killed. The Texans did not surrender and disaster befell them. Hezekiah felt despair when Jerusalem was attacked by Sennacherib of Assyria, but God came to his rescue.

# **Guide the Study**

- 2. Examine the introduction to Unit Four. Have someone read it as an overview.
- 3. Examine the word list from the study guide. Be sure everyone understands the meanings. Point out that the words themselves indicate an unhappy ending.
- 4. Choose a student to read 2 Kings 18:1-4. Ask the

class to help paraphrase these verses.

If this task is too difficult for the class, read the following summary: King Hezekiah came to the throne in Judah during the reign of Hoshea in Israel. Hezekiah was twenty-five years old and reigned for twenty-nine years. He was a righteous man and kept God's laws. He tore down the high places and Asherah poles, broke the sacred stones, and smashed the bronze serpent Moses had put up because the people had begun to burn incense to it and even named it. His goodness was compared to David's.

5. Have a volunteer read 2 Kings 18:5-12. Point out that in vv. 5-8 Hezekiah is highly praised because of his obedience to and reverence for God.

Ask class members these questions:

- In the following verses, what did Hezekiah accomplish? (He rebelled against Assyria and pushed back the Philistines to Gaza.)
- Look at v. 9. The story shifts to tell what is happening in Israel. What happened? (In Hezekiah's fourth year and Hoshea's seventh, King Shalmaneser of Assyria laid siege to Samaria for three years. He then captured Hoshea and deported most of the rest of the citizens of Samaria.)

Ask someone to re-read the v. 12. This verse repeats the reason for Israel's punishment.

6. Let one of the students read 2 Kings 18:13-16. Point out to the class that Hezekiah is so afraid he apparently does not consult the Lord about this move.

Ask:

- What happened? (Sennacherib assaults all the fortified cities and captures them. Now he is ready to attack Jerusalem.)
- What does Hezekiah do? (He panics, apologizes for not paying tribute and pays in silver and gold. He had to take some from the temple to make enough. He even stripped the gold off the door posts.)

- 7. Select a reader for 2 Kings 18:17-19. Ask the class the following questions:
- Describe the action here. (Sennacherib sent a group to Jerusalem to threaten and intimidate the people of Judah.)
- What is the message? (Sennacherib points out that they have no defense against him and asks them what makes them think they can withstand him since he has just defeated Israel.)

Explain that in the next few verses the messenger taunts them about being helpless. They reply that they are depending on the Lord their God. The commander then tells them that the Lord has sent him

8. Allow a volunteer to read 2 Kings 18:29-31. Point out that the messenger is lying to the people and trying to undermine Hezekiah.

Ask:

- What does the messenger offer? (Come out and surrender, and you will not be harmed. You will be able to eat under your own vine.)
- Would you trust him?
- 9. Appoint a reader for 2 Kings 19:1-4. Ask:
- What did Hezekiah do to show his distress? (He tore his clothes.)
- What does he hope will happen? (That God will hear the blasphemy and rescue Judah)
- Who goes to see Isaiah? (All the priests go wearing sackcloth. Hezekiah sent the priests to pray for the remnant.)
- 10. Ask someone to read 2 Kings 19:5-8.

Ask: What does Isaiah report that the Lord said? (Do not be afraid. God has heard the commander blaspheme. God will make him react to a certain report and go home. Furthermore, he will be cut down.)

11. Read to the class 2 Kings 19:9-13. Let the class members explain these verses.

If students have difficulty, ask someone to read this explanation: Sennacherib told the messenger that they were deceived if they thought their god could stop him. Sennacherib pointed out how many countries he had taken because their gods could not

defend them. He also warned them not to depend on Egypt, as they were weak.

12. Choose a reader for 2 Kings 19:14-20.

Ask: Hezekiah prays to God. What did he say? (First he praised God for His power, His creation of the world. Then he asked God to open His eyes and ears to hear and see the insults given Him. Then Hezekiah admits that the other gods did fail. The Assyrians destroyed the idols which were powerless anyway. Then he begged God to show His power.)

#### **Encourage Application**

13. Recite together the memory verse from the study guide. Add it to your 3X5 cards.

Discuss how this New Testament verse fits this lesson. Ask: Who would the faithful man be?

- 14. Discuss Things to Thing About.
- 15. Locate words and music to the hymn *Who Is On the Lord's Side?* Provide these for the class. Have the class sing the hymn or have a soloist sing it as the closing prayer.

#### Lesson 12: Hope

#### **Lesson Focus**

Our only hope is to turn in faith to God and live in faithfulness to Him.

#### **Focal Text**

2 Kings 22:1- 23:4

#### **Background Text**

2 Kings 22:1- 23:30

# **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)

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Say: There is an ancient Greek story about one of their gods gathering all manner of evil and locking it in a box. This box was entrusted to a young woman named Pandora with instructions never to open it. She became curious and peeked inside. To her horror all manner of plagues and other evils swarmed out. There was only one good thing there—hope. Only hope could make life bearable. In Josiah's time with only disaster before them, God gave him reason to hope.

# Guide the Story

- 2. Ask three people to read 2 Kings 22:1-2, 3-8, and 9-13. Then ask the class to divide into three groups with the readers being the discussion leaders. Each group should paraphrase or summarize the verses for their group to share when the groups are ready.
- (Vv. 1-2) We meet Josiah who became king at the age of eight when his father King Amon was assassinated. From his early childhood, he was good. As he grew older he did not turn from the path of righteousness either to the right or to the

- left. He ruled for 31 years. He was compared with King David.
- (Vv. 3-8) In his eighth year of Josiah's reign, he was preparing to have the temple cleaned and repaired. Money had been collected for this purpose. Hilkiah, the High Priest was to supervise and disperse the money for repairs and pay for the workers. The secretary, Shaphan and other officials did so. Hilkiah told them he had found a Book of the Law in the temple. Shephan returned to Josiah to report.
- (Vv. 9-13) Shaphan took the book to the king and read it to him. When Josiah heard it, he tore his clothes as a sign of great distress. He sent Shaphan and others to Hilkiah to ask him about what they had read. Josiah knew the Lord was angry that the preceding kings had strayed so far from God's teaching and laws. He knew God was angry with all of Judah.
- (Vv. 14-20) Hilkiah joined the group to go for advice to a prophetess named Hulda. She inquired of the Lord. He was indeed angry at what His people had done in turning away from Him and worshipping false gods. The people would surely be punished for their sins. However, Josiah responded with humility and a concern to set things right. Because he himself had behaved righteously, God let him live out his life and be buried in peace. The country would have a number of years before their punishment came. The messengers took this message back to the king.)
- 3. Select someone to read 2 Kings 23:1-4. Ask these questions:
- When Josiah heard Huldah's report, what did he do? (He called a meeting.)
- Who attended? (All the elders of Jerusalem and Judah attended, plus prophets and priests and the general public, from the least to the greatest.)
- *Where was the meeting?* (In the temple)
- What happened first? (Josiah read the whole

Book of the Law to the people.)

- Then what did Josiah do? (Standing by the pillar of the temple, he renewed the covenant and promised to uphold all its provisions.)
- What was the reaction of the people? (They, too, were stricken by what they had done. They all pledged themselves to the covenant.)

# **Encourage Application**

4. Discuss *Things to Think About* from the study guide.

Add these questions:

- Do you feel the people and the king were sincere?
- How will they be able to prove themselves?
- 5. Recite together the memory verse. Discuss its meaning.

Ask:

- Do you think the people of Judah now feel this way?
- Do you think most Christians feel this way?
- 6. Close by leading a prayer of confession for the group and asking God to help us keep His laws and commands.

#### Lesson 13: The End

#### **Lesson Focus**

God eventually, and sometimes swiftly, judges people's unfaithfulness.

#### **Focal Text**

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

# **Background Text**

2 Kings 23:31 - 25:21

# **Memory Verse**

"We sat down and cried by the river of Babylon, when we remembered Zion." (Psalms 37:4)

(1 Sum 5 7 . 1)

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Say: Some have made treaties which they hoped would keep them safe, but treaties can be broken.

Ask the group to suggest countries in the modern world which have tried to stave off disaster but were unable to do so. Suggested answers include Darfur, Congo, Pakistan, Afghanistan, etc.

Say: In today's lesson Judah is facing their doom.

# **Guide the Study**

2. Write these short passages on slips of paper and give them to the group: 2 Kings 23:29-30; 23: 31-32; 23:36-37; 24:8-9; 24:18-20. Let them try to piece together the story in brief.

Note: Much of the story is omitted in these verses, but it is easy to see how promptly after King Josiah was killed in battle that the disaster God foretold overtook the people. The kings following Josiah were evil, even Josiah's son. The army which brought final defeat and destruction of the temple and Jerusalem was not Assyrian, but Babylonian. The king of Babylon was Nebuchadnezzar.

- 3. Now choose someone to read 2 Kings 25: 8-12. Have the group answer these questions:
- Who is the king of Babylon? (Nebuchadnezzar)
- Who is his commander of guards? (Nebuzaradan)
- What was done to Jerusalem by Nebuzaradan? (He broke down the walls.)
- Who was taken captive? (Most of the people, especially the leaders)
- Who was left to tend the vineyards? (The poorest people)
- 4. Choose a reader for 2 Kings 25:13-15. Describe the destruction of the temple.

Say: They tore down the pillars of the temple and stripped the bronze off to send back to Babylon. They also took all the vessels and tools used in worship which were bronze. The sacred special vessels of silver and gold were all taken.

- 5. Select someone to read 2 Kings 25:16-17. Ask:
- How much plunder did the Babylonians take? (More than could be weighed)
- Describe the pillars. (Each pillar was twentyseven feet tall and topped with an ornately carved capital which was four and a half feet high.)
- 6. Ask a person to read 2 Kings 25:18-21. Here we find prisoners being taken.

Ask:

- What kind were selected? (Leaders—the high priest and the one next in rank, the door-keeper, the officer in charge of the fighting men, five royal advisers, the secretary and sixty of his men who were left in the city)
- What was the next step? (They were taken before Nebuchadnezzar.)
- What did the king tell his officer to do with them? (Execute them)

# **Encourage Application**

- 7. Prepare ahead of time a complete list of the vocabulary words. Ask various students to define them or use them in a coherent sentence.
- 8. Prepare ahead of time a list of all the memory verses used this quarter. Ask several students to read their favorite. Discuss as needed.
- 9. Discuss *Things to Think About*. End the discussion with this question: *What do you feel is the essential lesson in the books of 1 and 2 Kings?*
- 10. Close with prayer that we may remember that disobeying God leads to punishment. Ask God for His help in our daily living.

**Easter Lesson: Do Not Be Afraid** 

#### **Lesson Focus**

Jesus' resurrection can enable us to put away our fear and live with joy and purpose.

#### **Focal Text**

Matthew 28:1-10

# **Background Text**

Matthew 28

# **Memory Verse**

"He is not here. He has risen from the grave, as He said."

(Matthew 28:6)

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Tell the group: All of us have experienced fear at some time. A child may have a nightmare and awaken screaming. The driver of a car may see a truck about to collide with him. A homeowner may face the fear of having a foreclosure with no place to go.

Ask: Would one or two of you recount a time you felt real fear?

Allow time for responses, then say: Some fears are self-induced by worry. Some people enjoy being frightened by horror movies like The Chain Saw Massacre. In today's lesson we see a group of women being confronted by an angel of God. They are afraid. But the angel urges them not to fear.

# **Guide the Study**

2. Tell the class this: *The Book of Matthew begins* with the birth of Jesus. It tells of His life and His teachings. It proceeds to His death in Chapter 27. Jesus died a cruel and degrading death.

Now read Matthew 28:1. Ask:

- What day is it? (The third day after the crucifixion, the day after the Sabbath)
- What time of day was it? (Dawn)

- Where were the women going? (To the tomb of Jesus)
- Who are the women? (Mary Magdalene and "the other" Mary).
- 3. Although Matthew names only two people, other sources name others. Read aloud from the study guide the section under Matthew 28:1. Explaing that other sources indicate these women wanted to prepare Jesus' body with funeral spices since there had not been time after the crucifixion because the Jewish Sabbath began at sundown on Friday.
- 4. Have someone read Matthew 28:2-4. Here are some questions for discussion:
- What occurred to frighten the women as they approached? (An earthquake and the appearance of the tomb)
- Has anyone in the class actually been in an earthquake? Describe it for the class. Were you frightened?
- What do you think the angel looked like?
- Why would this be frightening?
- What did the angel do? (He rolled the stone away and sat down on it.)
- How did the guards react? (Like dead men apparently they apparently fainted)
- 5. Choose a reader for Matthew 28:5-7. Questions to ask:
- What did the angel say? (Don't be afraid. I know why you are here. Jesus is no longer dead but is risen.)
- Would this make you more or less afraid?
- Perhaps the angel felt the women needed more reassurance so he made another suggestion. What was it? (Come see where he lay.)
- Can you picture the women making their way in the gloom of dawn, seeing and hearing and feeling the earthquake, and then seeing a heavenly being who seemed to glow with light? How would you feel?
- Finally, the angel sent them on their way to do

what? (Go and tell the others the good news that Jesus is alive and will meet them in Galilee.)

- 6. Ask for a volunteer to read Matthew 28:8-10.
- *How do the women feel?* (They feel both afraid and joyful. They apparently believe the news because they hurried away to tell the disciples.)
- What surprises them next? (Suddenly they see Jesus Himself. He greets them.)
- What do they do when they recognize Him?
   (They fall to their knees and clasp His feet in worship.)
- What does Jesus tell them? (Don't hold on to me but quickly go to the disciples and tell them to meet me in Galilee.)
- If you had been there—the first to see the risen Christ—how would you feel?

# **Encourage Application**

- 7. Discuss *Things To Think About* from the study guide.
- 8. Recite together the memory verse. Discuss its meaning for us.
- 9. Close with a prayer of thanksgiving that Jesus Christ is alive and with us today.