

## 2 Kings & 2 Chronicles (Part 1)

### **Reading 2 Kings & 2 Chronicles with Associated Psalms (July 1-14):**

**-Psalm 82: Unjust Rulers.** In the heavenly “Hall of Justice” God calls to account human leaders who are responsible to defend the weak and oppressed, by God’s appointment; however, they “know nothing, understand nothing, and walk in darkness” (v.5). Failure to eliminate idols, and to defend the weak, were/are the two great failures of appointed leaders.

**-Psalm 83: Crush Your Enemies.** The coalition of enemy armies in 2 Chronicles 20 may be the backdrop for this Psalm, and the clear victory of the Lord. There are two four-verse stanzas in each of the two main divisions (vv.1-8 & 9-16), with a two-verse conclusion.

### **2 Kings 1-4– From Elijah to Elisha**

#### ***-Chapter 1: Elijah & Ahaziah***

The Lord continually provided his prophets to his people, such that they were without excuse to know the word and will of God. However, the kings and people continually refused to listen to the prophetic word from God. King Ahaziah typifies this.

#### ***-Chapters 2: Elijah’s Translation & Elisha’s Inauguration***

Bible trivia asks what two Old Testament figures went up to heaven without dying – and the answer is Enoch (Genesis 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:11). The heavenly host that supported Elijah’s ministry appears visibly to Elisha; and Elijah is taken up to heaven as Elisha now takes on the main prophetic role for Israel. The Spirit of Elijah now rests on Elisha. The solemn, yet humorous, account in 2 Kings 2:23-25 shows that Elisha is truly the Lord’s prophet to be honored.

#### ***-Chapter 3: King Joram***

While better than his father and other (Ahab and Jezebel), Joram still failed to do right during his reign (852-841 BC). This account shows the greatness of God in a victory over Moab. The king of Moab even sacrifices his firstborn son to appease his god (Chemosh is the Moabite god).

#### ***-Chapters 4: Elisha and the Widow’s Oil***

The focus continues on the prophetic ministry during the evil reigns of wicked kings of Israel. The miracles of God to Elijah now extend to Elisha as an encouragement to the prophet’s themselves, and a reminder to the reader, that these were true prophets of God.

### **2 Kings 5-8– Elisha’s Miracles**

#### ***-Chapter 5: Naaman Healed of Leprosy***

Elisha’s miracles show the Lord is not only God of Israel, but of all nations. A commander of the Syrian army (country of Aram) is healed. The Syrian, Naaman, heeds the word of Elisha (at the encouragement of his servants), while Gehazi (Elisha’s own servant) acts deceitfully.

#### ***-Chapters 6-7: Elisha & Syria***

The miracles of the floating axhead, and knowledge about the actions of the king of Aram/Syria show God’s provision for his people; and rule over the nations. As you read verse 17 consider the words of Robert Murray M’Cheyne, “If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference. He is praying for me.” The Lord fights for Israel over Aram/Syria. Meanwhile, the king of Israel blames Elisha and the Lord for the famine on the land that is actually a result of his own unfaithfulness. However, in the end the Lord continues to provide miraculous victory for his people.

#### ***-Chapter 8: Elisha and Joram & Jehoram***

The chapter gives conclusion to an account begun in chapter 4, and of those introduced in 1 Kings 19:15-16. We also get the reigns of king Jehoram (848-841 BC) in Judah (while king

Joram is king of Israel); and king Ahaziah (841 BC). This is possibly the setting for the *prophet Obadiah*.

### **2 Kings 9-11– King Jehu Destroys the House of Ahab**

*-Chapter 9: Jehu Anointed*

The account now begins of the king Jehu (841-814) last of the players from 1 Kings 19:15-16. Jehu goes on a “holy mission” to wipe out the house of Ahab in Israel and Judah.

*-Chapter 10: Jehu’s Killing Spree Continues*

Jehu continues to wipe out the house of Ahab, and ministers of Baal. On the one hand, this was the God-ordained judgment on Ahab’s wickedness, on the other hand Jehu’s zeal for violence was it a zeal for true justice. Jehu did not truly address the spiritual health of Israel (& Judah), and his actions further tear Israel apart. This makes for a weaker Israel in political and military strength – which will eventually result in God’s judgment on Israel by hand of the Assyrian exile.

*-Chapter 11: Athaliah & Joash*

This is similar to the account in 2 Chronicles 23; however, the Kings account has more to say about the participation of the military in the coup while the Chronicler says more about the presence and role of the temple officials. The Chronicler also emphasizes the popular support for the coup by “all the people” and “the whole assembly.” The Chronicler is also careful to show how only qualified persons entered the temple during the coup (cf. 2 Chronicles 23:5-6, 19).

### **2 Kings 12 & 2 Chronicles 24– Joash Repairs the Temple**

Following the coup, Joash begins his reign as king of Judah (835-796 BC). He is just seven years old when he becomes king, and reigns for 40 years. He does well while following the counsel of Jehoida the priest. The Chronicler’s account is longer and vv.15-22 are unique in Chronicles in order to emphasize divine retribution. Following Jehoida’s death, Joash turns to idolatry and murder’s Jehoida’s son. Finally, his own servant’s turned against him to avenge that murder.

### **2 Kings 13– Kings Jehoahaz & Jehoash**

The reign of Jehoahaz (814-798 BC) is lived under the threat of Aram/Syria. The “deliverer” in verse 5 may have been the Assyrian ruler (the enemy of my enemy is my friend). King Jehoash (798-782 BC) did not break the evil patterns (sins of Jeroboam), but did honor Elisha; and territory was regained during his reign.

### **2 Kings 14:1-22 & 2 Chronicles 25– King Amaziah**

The reign of king Amaziah (796-767 BC) is a mixed bag. 2 Kings 14:3 concludes that he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, but not as David had done. The Kings account then reports Amaziah’s various failures. The Chronicler divides the account of his reign in two parts – emphasizing divine retribution with good years from obedience (vv.1-13) and bad years following disobedience (vv.14-28).

### **2 Kings 14:23-29– King Jeroboam II**

The second half of 2 Kings 14 gives the account of the reign of Jeroboam II (793-753). The *prophet Amos* ministered during this time, according to Amos 1:1. This was also during the ministry of the *prophet Jonah*, according to 2 Kings 14:25.

### **2 Kings 15 & 2 Chronicles 26-27– Two Judahite Kings & Five Israelite Kings**

The Kings account gives us rapid fire reigns. There is internal Israelite rival factions, while facing external threats from Assyria. Read the Kings chapter slowly to track all that is happening. The Chronicler is focused only on Azariah, whom he calls Uzziah. The Chronicler, in typical form, divides the account into the good parts (vv.1-15) and bad parts (vv.16-23). Following a co-regency with Uzziah (during his illness), Jotham becomes Judah’s king. He is commended for not following Uzziah’s errors, and there is blessing for his fidelity to God’s

commands. The **prophet Isaiah** began his ministry during the reign of Uzziah, according to Isaiah 1:1 & 6:1. The **prophet Micah** began during the reign of Jotham (cf. Micah 1:1).

*See separate reading guides for Obadiah, Amos, Jonah, Isaiah, Micah*