

Lesson #19

PREPARATION FOR LESSON: read 2 Kings 2, 4, 5, 6, 17, 19, 25

BACKGROUND for 1 and 2 Kings

(2 Kings covers religious history from 852 – 561 BC.)

Author and Date: Levite **historians** recorded events as they happened over 400 years, from 975 – 562 BC.

Levite **scribes** then selected certain events from the historical records to form the book of Kings.

scribes compiled the first edition c. 580; after a later event, a 2nd edition was compiled c. 560 BC.

1 Kings begins with the **building** of the Temple; 2 Kings ends with the **burning** of the Temple.

Theme: The religious history of Jewish kings continued

Purposes: To give spiritual answers to the Jews in exile in Babylon.

To explain why God let His people be exiled and His Temple burned – it was their disobedience.

To let them know David's family line still exists; this means God's promises can still be fulfilled.

Altho they are in exile, if they repent, God will take them back to the land of promise.

Main People: Elisha, Hezekiah, Josiah

OUTLINE

- I. Elisha's Ministry 1-9
- II. Israel's Exile 10 – 17
- III. Judah's Exile 18 - 25

EXPLANATIONS

Elisha and the teenage gang 2:23-24

Elisha is mocked by a gang of 42 teenage boys who tell him: *go on up, you baldhead*

Go on up means *We want another whirlwind to come and get rid of you.*

You baldhead means *you are like a leper, an outcast, unwanted.*

In defiance of God, the teenagers are telling God's prophet, *Get out of our lives.*

We want nothing to do with you or your message.

Elisha calls down a *curse* in the name of Yahweh; *curse* means *God's judgment.*

Rather than condemning the young men, Elisha asks God to punish them if they deserve judgment.

God's response is to send bears that maul them; the Hebrew implies that some are killed.

God wants people to know there are consequences when they defy Him.

People had lost their fear of God's consequences - this was to put that fear back in them.

Naaman 5:10, 14

His *leprosy* was some kind of skin disease, but it did not isolate him from society.

The number *seven* in the Bible represents that which is complete or total.

When Naaman showed *complete* obedience in submerging himself 7 times, he has *complete* healing.

His obedience is evidence of his faith - coming to God in God's way.

Gehazi 5:27

For his lies, deception and misrepresentation of the prophet, he is punished with the skin disease of Naaman.

Because he had more knowledge and responsibility, he received more consequences.

The skin disease would be in his family, generation after generation

Lessons: The more knowledge and responsibility we have, the greater the consequences when there is disobedience.

Sin is not fair; disobedience brings suffering, not just to us, but also to innocent people around us.

Elijah and Elisha

Elijah had a 21 year ministry 873 - 852 BC

Elisha had a 60 year ministry 862 - 796 BC

The Exile of Israel chapter 17

The **northern** nation was taken off the map and her people sent into exile because...

...of sin: idolatry, immorality, human sacrifice and the occult 2 Kings 17:7-18

...over a period of 208 years not one of their 19 kings followed God.

Assyria conquered them and sent them to the north of Assyria and to the east around Nineveh in 722 BC.

They become known as the *10 lost tribes*, meaning they were relocated.

They never returned to the promised land as a group or national unit.



EXPLANATIONS *continued*

God's Anger is the Jewish expression for **God's response to disobedience or evil.**

He separates Himself **from** the evil and sends consequences **for** the evil.

The Samaritans chapter 17

Foreign Gentiles were brought in to populate northern Israel.

Because they were settled around Samaria they became known as *Samaritans*.

The Jewish poor who had been left in Israel intermarried with these Gentiles.

The Samaritans developed into a race of people who were part Jew and part Gentile.

They had a mixture of Jewish and pagan beliefs.

These are the Samaritans of the New Testament who had an entire province.

Today there are 2 communities of Samaritans in the land of Israel with some 600 people.

Hezekiah's insistent prayer for longer life chapter 20

God answered his prayer and gave him 15 additional years.

The one time he honored God - in 701 BC, he asked God to intervene and save him from the king of Assyria.

King Sennacherib lost 185,000 troops in one night; historian Herodotus said they died from bubonic plague.

Sennacherib lived another 20 years but was a defeated king; he never acknowledged the God of the Jews.

The rest of the 15 years Hezekiah dishonored God, wasting opportunities and living only for himself.

He became proud and careless; he did not ask God for wisdom and gave information to an enemy country.

He had a son during this time, but never taught him about God; that son became the worst king Judah ever had.

The exile of Judah chapter 25

The **southern** nation of Judah was taken off the map and her people sent into exile because...

...while there was outward reform under Hezekiah and Josiah, there was no inward change. Isa. 29:13

...in 344 years, only 7 of their 20 kings followed God partially; only Josiah followed God completely.

Babylon conquered them and sent them to the east in the area of Babylonia in 586 BC.

APPLICATION: Old Testament stories are for our instruction. (1 Cor. 10:11) Hezekiah instructs us about prayer.

He insisted on longer life rather than accepting God's will. They became the worst 15 years of his life.

God wants us to ask Him for things and He delights in giving answers. But there are times we can want something so badly, we ignore God's answers of *no*. If we keep insisting, He will let us have it, but it will damage our personal and spiritual life. It will never give us the joy or happiness we expected. So the more desperately we want something for ourselves, the more important it is to say, *Please give me this or that if it is Your will*. While that is never easy, we can be assured, *God always gives the best to those who leave the choice with Him*.

When Hezekiah received the threatening letter, he presented it to God saying,

Look at the situation. Provide an answer so everyone can know You are God.

There may be times we will receive devastating news and feel absolutely helpless. This is the time to present it before God saying, *Look at the situation. Give me wisdom to know what to do. Give me strength to do it. Provide me with answers so others see there is a God and You do make a difference in my life.*

This is the kind of prayer God delights to answer.

