

1 and 2 Kings

The goal of this Bible Class is to give the students a working knowledge of the books of 1 and 2 Kings. It is based on an expository approach to teaching the Bible, preparing the students for the worship of our Savior. The various lessons are to be viewed by the teacher as thematic suggestions to help with preparation. While the lessons are not intended to be read to the class word for word, the main ideas should be the substance of what is taught. The teacher, in preparation for the class, should consider reading through the whole curriculum before beginning the class, as well as the books of 1 and 2 Kings several times. This will provide the instructor with a broad and comprehensive understanding of the books as they are being taught. At the end of the course, the class will be concluded with a Bible Knowledge Evaluation. The instructor should be sure to review the material sufficiently that the students are able to correctly answer the questions on the evaluation at the end of the course.

It is important that the instructor be not only knowledgeable about the material, but also able to teach it with enthusiasm and conviction. Students best learn from teachers that are themselves excited about the scriptures. The use of maps, diagrams, white boards etc. is extremely helpful. Some of these have been provided in the curriculum. It is suggested that the class be conducted in an interactive manner. This can be accomplished by having them read short portions of the scripture texts, asking them questions, and wholeheartedly encouraging them to ask questions. All students should be encouraged to bring a Bible to class.

The inclusion of the Westminster Shorter Catechism as part of the curriculum is designed to help the students acquire a broad understanding of Christian doctrine along with the specific Bible teaching. The Elders of the church will coordinate the specific questions and answers to be used in the class.

It will become evident to the teacher that this course curriculum, while not dealing with every verse and concept in the books of 1 and 2 Kings, is comprehensive and deeply theological. It is designed to help the students understand the books in their wider biblical context, with emphasis on its place in the redemptive history of God's covenant people. The students will be confronted with and asked to understand and remember fairly difficult concepts. It should be remembered that children are able to comprehend much more than we often give them credit for. While this class will be a challenge for both the teacher and the students, the rewards for the efforts of those in the class will be surprising and exciting.

NOTE! - In each lesson there is likely more material written than can be taught in detail in the time allotted for the class. Part of teacher preparation will be to read through the material several times and to make decisions as to what portions to emphasize and what others to summarize or skip altogether.

Our primary source for the information found in these lessons is:

Leithart, Peter, *Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible – 1 and 2 Kings* (Grand Rapids, MI, Brazos Press, 2006)

In preparation for these lessons, it would also be helpful to consult some of the following:

Henry, Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, (Peabody, MS, Hendrickson Publishers, 1991)

Jordan, James B. *Through New Eyes – Developing a Biblical World View* (Brentwood, TN, Wolgemuth and Hyatt, Publishers, Inc

Keil, C.F. and Delitzsch, F. *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes – Volume III – 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther* (Grand Rapids, MI, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986)

Leithart, Peter, *A House for My Name: A Survey of the Old Testament*, (Moscow, ID, Canon Press, 2000).

1 and 2 Kings

Lesson 1 – Introduction

Objective – To introduce the students to the authorship, historical and theological context, main themes and literary flow of the books of 1 and 2 Kings

❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class this term

❖ **Attendance and Accountability**

Introduce yourself

Introduce your substitute teacher

The teacher is asked to take attendance at the beginning of each class period in order to provide encouragement and extra help to students when they miss a class.

Make sure all class members know each other’s **names**.

Requirements – Writing utensils, Bibles, a good night’s sleep

There will be **tests** on the outlines of the books and some other material

Memory verses will be assigned

We will take **attendance** each week and have some **accountability** questions as well. For the next few weeks, the question will be, “**Have you gotten a good night’s sleep, brought your Bible and writing materials, worked on your memorization, and done any other assigned homework?**”

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.

❖ **Schedule – No need to go over this with the students**

This lesson will be one of introduction to the books of 1 and 2 Kings. The remainder of the schedule for these books will be:

Week 2 – 1 Kings 1-4

Week 3 – 1 Kings 5-8

Week 4 – 1 Kings 9-11

Week 5 – 1 Kings 12-16

Week 6 – 1 Kings 17-19

Week 7 – 1 Kings 20 - 2 Kings 1

Week 8 – 1 Kings 2-4

Week 9 – 2 Kings 5-8:6

Week 10 – 2 Kings 8:7-10:36

Week 11 – 2 Kings 11-13

Week 12 – 2 Kings 14-17

Week 13 – 2 Kings 18-20

Week 14 – 2 Kings 21-23

Week 15 – 2 Kings 24-25 / Review

Week 16 – Review / Student Evaluation

NOTE: Refer to the Student Evaluation at the end of the lessons to familiarize yourself with the information that the students will be expected to know at the end of these lessons. This will help to guide your discussion and emphasis as you teach.

❖ **Lesson – Introduction to 1 and 2 Kings**

A. Authorship – A Jewish tradition in the Talmud (fourth century A.D.) declares that Jeremiah was the author of 1 and 2 Kings. While the books of Jeremiah and 1 and 2 Kings have much in common (e.g. Jeremiah 52 and 2 Kings 25 are almost identical), we must say that **the human author of 1 and 2 Kings is not known with certainty.**

B. Background - 1 and 2 Kings originally appeared as a single book in the Hebrew Bible and was divided into two books when the Old Testament was translated into Greek, probably during the third century B.C.. The reason for this division was a very practical one. In the Hebrew language the book of Kings fit onto one scroll, but in the Greek language the book took up two scrolls (and thus became two books, 1 and 2 Kings).

As we read the books of 1 and 2 Kings we see that they draw from other sources mentioned by name. The “Book of the Acts of Solomon” is mentioned in 1 Kings 11:41. Frequent reference is made to the “Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah” and the “Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel”. These latter references do not refer to the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles in the Old Testament, but rather to manuscripts that no longer exist.

C. Historical Context – (A brief review of Biblical history will be helpful for the students to place the books of 1 and 2 Kings in their historical context – Write the following on the board as you ask the questions that follow. You should proceed rapidly as this material should be very familiar to your students...no more than 5 minutes!! If all of your students are well versed in Old Testament history, this section can be abbreviated or skipped*.)

God → Creation → Adam and Eve → Cain and Abel Seth → Many Generations → Noah → Ham, Japheth, Shem → Many Generations → Abram (Abraham) → Isaac → Jacob (Israel) → 12 Sons by 4 women → Joseph to Egypt → Jacob and 11 Sons to Egypt → Slavery in Egypt → Moses → Joshua → Judges (Samuel) → Saul → David

Questions*:

- In the beginning who created the heavens and the earth? **God**
- In what book of the Bible do we find this creation account? **Genesis**
- Who were the first man and woman? **Adam and Eve**
- Who were their first two children? **Cain and Abel**
- What happened to Abel? – **Cain killed him**
- Who did God give to Adam and Eve in place of Abel? **Seth**
- As time went on, men and women became more and more evil and so, what did God decide to do? **Destroy the earth by flood**
- Who did he save from this destruction? **Noah, his wife, his sons (Ham, Japheth and Shem), and their wives**

- After many generations, God called a man, descended from Shem, to come out of Ur of the Chaldeans and to go to the land of Caanan where he made a covenant with him. Who was this man? **Abram, later Abraham**
- What son was born miraculously to Abraham and Sarah? **Isaac**
- Isaac and his wife Rebekah had two sons. What were their names? **Esau and Jacob**
- Esau was unfaithful to the covenant of Yaweh, whereas Jacob was faithful.
- Jacob married two women. What were their names? **Leah and Rachel**
- Jacob had how many sons by Leah, Rachel and the two concubines? **12**
- What happened to the second-youngest son, Joseph? **He was sold into slavery by his brothers and taken to Egypt**
- What happened to Joseph in Egypt? **He became second in command of Egypt**
- Eventually, his father and brothers joined him there. This takes us to the end of the book of Genesis
- After a time, what happened to the Hebrews in Egypt? **The Egyptians enslaved them**
- Where in the Bible do we find this account? **Exodus**
- Who did God raise up to bring the Israelites out of slavery? **Moses**
- God gave the Ten Commandments and the case laws to Moses on which mountain? **Sinai**
- What did God have Moses build while the Israelites were at Mt. Sinai? **The Tabernacle**
- The book of Exodus ends with Israel at Mt. Sinai
- Which book of the Bible gives us laws on tabernacle worship and the case laws? **Leviticus**
- From Mt. Sinai, where did Moses lead the Israelites? **to the border of the Promised Land**
- Where in the Bible do we read about this? **Numbers**
- Which book of the Bible is a series of sermons on the law by Moses while Israel was camped on the edge of the Promised Land (far side of the Jordan River)? **Deuteronomy**
- Who actually took the Israelites into the Promised Land and conquered it? **Joshua**

***Start here if class is familiar with early Old Testament history**

- After the conquest of the Promised Land, how was Israel ruled? **Judges**
- In what book of the Bible is the times of the Judges described? **Judges**
- Name some of the judges. **Gideon, Samson, Deborah, etc.**
- Who was the last judge of Israel? **Samuel**
- In what book of the Bible do we read about him? **1 Samuel**
- In the days of Samuel, what kind of ruler did the people of Israel demand? **King**
- Who was the first king of Israel? **Saul**
- Saul sinned against God and so God had Samuel anoint a new king. Who was he? **David**
- The reign of David, in which he finishes the conquest of the Promised Land and unites Israel under his throne, is the main theme of which book of the Bible? **2 Samuel**
- What was David's great sin? **Adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband, Uriah the Hittite**
- Who was the son of David who rebelled against him and took the kingship of Israel away from David for a short while? **Absalom**
- Who was the son who was later born to David and Bathsheba and who would become king of Israel after David? – **Solomon**

As we come to 1 Kings, David is old and dying and there is a conspiracy brewing on the part of one of his sons (Adonijah) to take over the throne.

D. Literary Flow – Dorsey, in his book *Literary Structures of the Old Testament*, states that the books of 1 and 2 Kings seem to comprise seven fairly well defined parts, each of which have their own internal arrangements. We will use the following outline for our study of these books (Go through this outline several times to help the students begin to memorize it):

A. 1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built

B. 1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established

C. 1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri

D. 2 Kings 2:1–8:6 - Elisha and His Miracles

C’ 2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu

B’ 2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls

A’ 2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed

E. Main Themes – Historical, Prophetic, Evangelical

Though most commentators emphasize the historical content of the books of 1 and 2 Kings, these books can be seen as containing at least three concurrent themes - **Historical, Prophetic, and Evangelical:**

1. Historical - The Greek translation of the Old Testament (and our modern English translations), group the books of 1 and 2 Kings with Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Chronicles together as the “historical books” since they deal with the history of the people of God from the time they reach the Promised Land until the exile. The focus of this history, though, is not really on the people, but rather on the kings who ruled them. The books are primarily a political history, but with much details of the personal lives of the kings and their immediate families included in the text. The personal faithfulness or sinful failings of these kings greatly influenced their subjects and was responsible, to a large degree, for either the blessings or judgments of God upon the whole nation.

As we will learn, though the Kingdom of Israel was united as **twelve tribes** under the rule of Saul, David and Solomon, it became divided into two Kingdoms after Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, came to the throne (Have students look at the chart “*Kings of Israel and Judah*” and the map)

a) The Northern Kingdom – This kingdom consisted of all of the tribes of Israel except for Judah and Benjamin. These **ten** tribes, first ruled by Jeroboam, were also known as “Israel”, “Ephraim” and “Samaria”. The kings who ruled this kingdom were almost universally unfaithful to Yaweh, often leading Israel into idol worship other abominable practices. These kings came from nine (9) different families (dynasties) over a period of approximately 200 years. Ultimately, the Lord raised up the Assyrians and their ruler, **Sargon II**, who invaded Israel and took the ten tribes into exile in **722 B.C**

b) The Southern Kingdom – The tribes of **Judah and Benjamin** comprised this Kingdom, first ruled by Rehoboam. This Kingdom was known simply as “Judah”. Many of her kings were godly rulers (e.g. Jehoshaphat, Josiah, Hezekiah), but some engaged in the same sorts of sins as the kings of the Northern Kingdom (e.g. Manasseh, Amon). In the end, Judah too fell due to idolatry and the Lord raised up the **Babylonians** under **Nebuchadnezzar** who invaded Judah, destroyed the temple and took the people into exile in **586 B.C.**

1 and 2 Kings not only records the history of Israel’s (and particularly of their kings’) unfaithfulness to Yaweh, but also the history of Yaweh’s faithfulness to keep His promises. This is especially true in the case of David. (Have a student read 2 Samuel 7:12-16). The Lord promised David that he would never fail to have a descendant on the throne of Israel. In 1 and 2 Kings we will find that David’s descendants who rule after him (first over all of Israel, and later over the southern kingdom of Judah) are at times very faithful to Yaweh and His covenant, and at other times are unfaithful, and even idolatrous. Yet, through it all, Yaweh keeps His promise to maintain the line of David and, with the exception of the wicked queen Athaliah, all of the rulers of Judah were descendants of David. Ultimately, this points to Jesus who, as far as His humanity, was a direct descendant of David.

2. Prophetic – Though we rightly think of 1 and 2 Kings as historical books, we will see that **prophets** play a major role in the events that unfold in their pages. In the Hebrew Bible, the book of Kings was considered the final book in the group of books called the Former Prophets (consisting of the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings). Immediately following the Former Prophets were the Latter Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and The Twelve, a collection of our Minor Prophets on a single scroll). Thus the Jewish understanding of these books placed 1 and 2 Kings at the **center** of the books of the Prophets. We can see that this dual background of the **prophets** in the Hebrew Bible and **history** in the Greek Bible reflects two very important aspects of understanding 1 and 2 Kings.

Moreover, as we see in our outline of the books, the very center sections of 1 and 2 Kings (1 Kings 17 - 2 Kings 13) focus much more on the prophetic ministry of **Elijah** and **Elisha** than on the historical events that are taking place at the time, or even on the kings themselves.

In all, at least 10 prophets are mentioned by name in the books of 1 and 2 Kings: Nathan, Shemaiah, Ahijah, Jehu, Elijah, Micaiah, Elisha, Jonah, Isaiah, and Huldah. (Have students look again at the chart “**Kings of Israel and Judah**” noting very briefly which prophets spoke during the reigns of each of the kings). Many other prophets were active during this time as well, though they are not specifically named in the books of 1 and 2 Kings: e.g. Joel, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Amos, and Hosea. The accounts of their ministries can be found in the specific books of the Old Testament that bear their names.

The prophetic word to the kings of Israel and Judah and to the people they ruled was not quite what you would expect. In the face of idolatry and other sins on the part of Israel, the prophets did not simply tell the kings and the people, “Stop doing that, and start worshipping

and obeying Yaweh alone, or else you will die!” Instead, what they said was more like, **“Israel has sinned; Israel is already dead. Cling to God! Trust in Yaweh who raises the dead!”**

1 and 2 Kings takes through a series of events that will show Israel that she cannot save herself but must put her confidence in the power and mercy of God. She cannot trust in:

a. Wisdom – Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived, yet his wisdom did not keep him from marrying pagan wives who led him into gross idolatry. Though the book of Proverbs, written by Solomon, gives us great insight into how princes in the kingdom are to live wisely and become wise kings. However, the book of Ecclesiastes, also written by Solomon, teaches us that true wisdom from God is often elusive, difficult to understand, and impossible to control. In fact, though “wisdom” is used 21 times in 1 Kings 1-11, it is never used again in these books afterward. Wisdom alone will not save Israel, nor will it save us.

b. Law – Deuteronomy 17:18-20 requires that all kings of Israel must keep the Law of God before him “all the days of his life”. As we will see, throughout the time of 1 and 2 Kings, the Law of God is disobeyed or neglected at every turn. This disobedience results in punishment to the kings and the people and, as a result, there is some repentance and reform, at least on the part of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. However, we will also see that, even when there is repentance, as in the days of Josiah, “The Lord did not turn from the fierceness of his great wrath with which his anger burned against Judah.” (see 2 Kings 23:26). Wisdom cannot save Israel, and neither can obedience to the Law. Israel is still dead!

c. Temple – When Solomon prayed to God at the time of the dedication of the temple, he asked God to forgive the people when they sinned and prayed towards the temple for forgiveness. God responds by promising he will see and hear from the temple and forgive them. However, throughout 1 and 2 Kings, temple worship is defiled and idolatry becomes widespread, especially in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. In the end, when the Southern Kingdom of Judah also becomes idolatrous, God destroys the temple. Wisdom, law, and the temple will not raise Israel from the dead. Israel will “die” by being taken into captivity and it is only God will raise them back from the dead afterwards.

3. Evangelical – Many Christians make the mistake of thinking of the God of the Old Testament as a God of “law and wrath” and the God of the New Testament as a God of “grace and mercy” in Jesus. Over and over again as we study 1 and 2 Kings we will see that all of the historical events and the prophetic ministry reveal God to be longsuffering and merciful to His people. The judgments that God brings on evil kings and the disobedient people in these books are real and harsh, but they often come after years and years of patience, and of bearing with them. Even when He sends both Israel and Judah into exile, it is with the hope of return...of a resurrection from the dead. In the end, 1 and 2 Kings is a gospel text, revealing a God who so loved the world that He will send His only begotten Son (a descendant of David) to save them.

Moreover, as we said earlier, the center sections of 1-2 Kings focus on the ministries of Elijah and Elisha. Elijah can be seen as a type of John the Baptist who battled the false religion of the day and prepared the way for the ministry of Jesus who would bring salvation to His people. The very center of the books of 1-2 Kings focuses on the miracles of Elisha, who followed Elijah as the primary prophet to the Northern Kingdom. Elisha worked more miracles than any other Old Testament prophet and performed them both towards Israelites as well as Gentiles. He can be seen as a type of Jesus who also worked many miracles as signs that true salvation had come, both to Israel and to the whole world. Thus the very heart of the books of 1 and 2 Kings (as well as the books as a whole) is a gospel message! 1 and 2 Kings then, is historical, it is prophetic, and it is evangelical. It is the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Unity in the Christian church today (or between brothers or sisters in Christ who are at odds with each other for that matter!) does not then rest on the efforts of men. As Leithart said, “The hope for union for a divided church is in a God who always calls Israel back from exile, who always raises the dead.”

- ❖ **Homework** – Read 1 Kings 1-4; Begin to memorize the catechism questions and answers for this quarter and the outline for 1 and 2 Kings.
- ❖ **Prayer / Prep for Worship**

Kings of Israel and Judah

UNITED KINGDOM

Saul 1050-1010 BC*
David 1010-970
Solomon 970-930

Divided Kingdom

SOUTHERN KINGDOM **JUDAH (AND BENJAMIN)** **1 Dynasty (Family)****

NORTHERN KINGDOM **ISRAEL (TEN NORTHERN TRIBES)** **9 Dynasties (Families)**

King	Dates*	Years of Reign	Prophets**		King	Dates*	Years of Reign	Prophets***
Rehoboam	931-913	17	Shemaiah		Jeroboam	931-910	22	Ahijah
Abijah	913-911	3			Nadab	910-909	2	
Asa	911-870	41	Azariah		Baasha	909-886	24	
					Elah	886*885	2	
					Zimri	885	7 days	
					Omri	885-874	12	Elijah
Jehoshaphat	870-848	25	Jehu		Ahab	874-853	22	Micaiah
Jehoram	848-841	8			Ahaziah	853-852	2	
Ahaziah	841	1			Jehoram	852-841	12	Elisha
Athaliah**	841-835	6			Jehu	841-814	28	
Joash	835-796	40	Joel		Jehoaz	814-798	17	Jonah
Amaziah	796-767	29			Jehoash	798-782	16	Amos
Uzziah	767-740	52			Jeroboam II	782-753	41	Hosea
Jotham	740-732	16	Isaiah		Zechariah	753-752	6 mo.	
Ahaz	732-716	16	Micah		Shallum	752	1 mo.	
Hezekiah	716-687	29			Menahem	752-742	10	
Manasseh	687-642	55			Pekahiah	742-740	2	
Amon	642-640	2	Nahum		Pekah	740-732	20	
Josiah	640-608	31	Habakkuk Huldah		Hoshea	732-712	9	
Jehoahaz	608	3 mo.	Zephaniah					
Jehoikim	608-597	11						
Jehoiachin	597	3 mo.						
Zedekiah	597-586	11						

**586 BC, Fall of Southern Kingdom
and Babylonian captivity**

**722 BC Fall of Northern Kingdom
and Assyrian Captivity**

* All dates are BC and approximate

** Athaliah, granddaughter of Omri, was the only ruler of Judah who was not from the line of David

*** Some prophets ministered at the same time as one another and/or during the reign of multiple kings

1 and 2 Kings

Lesson 2 – 1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built

Part 1 – 1 Kings 1-4 – A New Creation, a New Adam, A New Abraham

Objective – To help the students to see that God keeps his promises and is bringing about a new creation through the death resurrection and ascension of Jesus as foreshadowed in the rise of Solomon to the throne

- ❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.
- ❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 1 Kings 1-4, and work on memorizing the outline of 1 and 2 Kings?”
- ❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.
- ❖ **Scripture Memorization** – Briefly introduce these verses today
1Kings 3:9 Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?”
- ❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly go through
 - A. **1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built**
 - B. **1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established**
 - C. **1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri**
 - D. **2 Kings 2:1–8:6 - Elisha and His Miracles**
 - C’ **2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu**
 - B’ **2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls**
 - A’ **2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed**

❖ **Review** – Last week we say that the center of the books of 1 and 2 Kings can be viewed from at least three different perspectives:

Historical – The books give us a history of the time from the rise of Solomon to the throne, through the division of Israel into the two kingdoms of Israel (10 tribes on the north) and Judah (2 tribes of the south) and southern kingdoms and to the time of the exile of the Israel to Assyria, and Judah to Babylon.

Prophetic – At least 10 prophets are named in these books and the very center of the books is the account of Elijah and Elisha, the two most important prophets of this time in Israel’s history. The main message the prophets brought was, “Israel has sinned, Israel must die (or Israel is already dead) and she must look to Yaweh who raises the dead!

Evangelical - Though Israel will fall into sin and be sent off into exile, yet even in this God gives them the hope of a return from captivity...of a resurrection from the dead! Thus, we

ended our study last time by saying that 1 and 2 Kings brings out the gospel message of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus!

❖ Lesson – 1 Kings 1-4 – A New Creation, a New Adam, a New Abraham

Introduction

Many books of the Bible **end** with the death of a main character (Genesis, Deuteronomy, Joshua, 1 Samuel), but the books of 1 and 2 Kings **begin** with the death of a main character, David. This could be a picture of the coming death of the nation of Israel as she descends into sin. However, the emphasis of these first few chapters is not on David's death, but rather on the rise of Solomon to the throne...on **resurrection**.

In these first few chapters of 1 Kings, we will see that Solomon is like a **new Adam**, ruling over newly created Israel. God will also use this wise ruler to bring new creation/resurrection blessings to himself, the nation of Israel, and the whole world, just as He promised to **Abraham**!

Chapter 1 – Solomon's Rise to the Throne

David, though not a perfect man by any means, has ruled Israel well, conquering all of her enemies and ushering in a time of peace for the first time in the history of the nation. He now sits, not only as the king of Israel, but as the ruler of the entire civilized world. The time of his death is near and he is so sick that he cannot even keep himself warm.

Verses 1-4 Abishag, the Shunamite is brought in to take care of David, and even to lie with him to keep him warm. While he lies passively with Abishag, David's son Adonijah is plotting to take over the throne of Israel. This reminds us of the time in David's past when he lay with Bathsheba when he should have been out with the army of Israel fighting her enemies in Rabbah.

Verses 5-10 Adonijah ("My Lord is Yaweh"), David's fourth son is now is oldest living son, and so perhaps might see himself as the rightful heir to the throne. However, Solomon has already been chosen by God to succeed David (see 2 Samuel 7 and 12:24-25 – Solomon is the one promised by God in 2 Samuel 7, the one who is beloved of the Lord).

In the garden of Eden, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was a tree of rule, since rulers need to be able to discern good and evil. Adam and Eve grasped at this fruit before God was willing to give it to them and this resulted in judgment. By grasping at the throne of Israel, Adonijah is following in Adams footsteps:

- 1) Adonijah says, "I will be king" (v. 5) just like Adam and Eve believed the serpent who said to them, "...you will be like God, knowing good and evil".
- 2) Adonijah offers sacrifices near the stone of Zohelath which means "serpent's stone", reminding us of the serpent in the Garden of Eden.
- 3) This stone is by En Rogel which was a valley with a spring of water, bringing to mind the Garden of Eden with its four rivers.

However, God has another "Adam" in mind to be king over Israel - Solomon

Verses 11-27 - Nathan and Bathsheba conspire together and inform David of Adonijah's actions. Bathsheba reminds David of the oath he swore to her that Solomon would be king after him (v. 17).

Verses 28-40 – David takes action and orders Solomon to be anointed king at Gihon (v. 33), which is a spring and the main source of water for the city of Jerusalem. This reminds us once again of the Garden of Eden and the waters flowing from it. Solomon will be a new and better Adam than Adonijah. Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, one of David's military commanders, carry out David's order.

Solomon rides on David's own mule (v. 33, 38, 44). This shows that Solomon is to sit on David's throne. He is anointed with oil **from the tabernacle** (v. 39), a clear picture that he is God's choice as king over Israel, and all of Israel rejoices with great joy (v. 40)! All of this foreshadows Jesus, (the greatest Adam!!) who is the King sent in fulfillment of the oath that Yaweh promised to Israel. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit and triumphantly rode on a donkey into Jerusalem to take his place on His throne (first the cross, then at the right hand of the Father in heaven).

Verses 41-53 – Adonijah and his allies are informed of David's actions of anointing Solomon as king and all of the allies flee without a fight (v. 49). Adonijah is afraid, so he arises and goes quickly to the tabernacle where he takes hold of the horns of the altar. This is a plea for the blood of the sacrifices to cover his transgression. Solomon begins his rule by showing mercy to the usurper, Adonijah. He sends Adonijah out of his presence but allows him to live in house arrest...much as God sent Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden into the world, but allowed them to live.

Chapter 2 – The Death of David and Solomon's early Reign – Driving out the Serpents!

Verses 1-11 – The Death of David - The time of David's death is approaching and he gives Solomon a two-fold charge related to his rule:

1) Verse 2 - Be strong and prove yourself a man – This is similar to the charge that Moses gave to Joshua in Deuteronomy 31:23: Then He inaugurated Joshua the son of Nun, and said, "Be strong and of good courage; for you shall bring the children of Israel into the land of which I swore to them, and I will be with you." and also similar to the charge that God gave to Joshua several times in Joshua 1.

2) Verse 3 - Keep the Law – David gives a seven-fold description of the Law which Solomon is to keep, once again giving us a hint that Solomon's reign is to be a type of a new creation.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. Keep the charge | 5. His judgments |
| 2. Walk in His ways | 6. His testimonies |
| 3. Keep His statutes | 7. As it is written in the Law of Moses |
| 4. His commandments | |

The word "prosper" in verse 3 can be translated "do wisely" and hints at the wisdom that Solomon will receive from the Lord. It is also the same word as found in Genesis 3:6 where

the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is said to be able to “make one wise”. Again this shows us that, through the diligent study and faithful keeping of the Law, Solomon will be a wise ruler in Israel, discerning good and evil. David tells Solomon that, by following after the Lord and by keeping his ways, the Lord will fulfill his promise to maintain David’s family line on the throne of Israel. (see 2 Samuel 7 and Psalm 89, especially verse 3). We will see God keep this promise as we study 1 and 2 Kings.

A primary duty of a law-keeping king is to deal with evildoers who break the law and threaten the peace of the kingdom. One of Adam’s first job as ruler of the creation was to deal with his enemy, the serpent. Solomon, the new Adam, will have to deal with a series of “serpents” as well. David mentions 2 specific “serpents”:

- a) Joab – David’s military commander who sided with Adonijah in his rebellion and also was guilty of murdering Abner (2 Samuel 3,4) and Amasa (2 Samuel 20)
- b) Shemei – the man of the family of Saul who had cursed David and hurled stones at him and his men as they were fleeing from Absalom.

David instructs Solomon to use the wisdom (see verses 6 and 9) to bring these two men to justice.

On the other hand, Solomon is to show kindness to Barzillai, a picture of the covenant of God being extended to the Gentiles.

Verses 12-46 – Solomon’s Early Reign – Driving out the Serpents!

God, through David, has placed Solomon as a new Adam over the now firmly “created” “garden” (nation) of Israel. This “garden” is threatened by “serpents” (enemies) and, unlike the first Adam, Solomon will expel these “serpents” from the garden in various ways.

1. Adonijah – v. 13-25

Adonijah was a false Adam, grasping at the rule of the Kingdom (Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil). Just as the serpent sought to rule the garden by seducing Eve, Adonijah attempts to take over the throne a second time, by asking for Abishag as his wife.

The brides of the king represent the people of the kingdom and asking for Abishag (who was, in a sense, a bride of David) is tantamount to claiming the throne. Solomon has the wisdom to see through Adonijah’s request and he has him executed for this second attempt to seize the crown.

2. Abiathar – v. 26-27

Solomon sees the connection between Adonijah’s request and renewed efforts by David’s old guard to regain control of the kingdom. Yet he shows mercy to Abiathar because

- a. He carried the ark of the covenant before David
- b. He stayed loyal to David through many trials

He removes (exiles) Abiathar from being priest. This word “removed” is the same word used of Adam. (“God **drove out** the man” from the Garden of Eden – see Genesis 3:24)

Solomon sends Abiathar home, fulfilling the prophecy concerning the fall of the house of Eli whose sons, Hophni and Phineas, were sinful priests in the days of Samuel. (See 1 Samuel 2 and 3)

3. Joab – v. 28-35

Joab had been David's trusted military commander, but had acted unrighteously at least three times:

1. He murdered Abner, the commander of Saul's army, after Abner had killed Joab's brother in self-defense. (See 2 Samuel 3)
2. He helped kill David's son Absalom, who had tried to take over David's throne, even though David had commanded Abner to capture Absalom alive (See 2 Samuel 18).
3. He murdered Amasa after David had made Amasa the commander of his army in place of Abner. (See 2 Samuel 20)

When Joab hears the news about Abiathar, he flees to the altar and grasps hold of the horns, much like Adonijah had done. However, murderers do not receive immunity from execution by grasping the horns of the altar (See Exodus 21:12-14). Solomon orders Benaiah to execute Joab right at the altar and declares that David and his descendants are innocent of the murders of Abner and Amasa.

4. Shimei – v. 36-46

Shimei had received leniency from David though he was deserving of death for cursing the Lord's anointed king. Solomon orders him to live in Jerusalem all of his life, but Shimei disobeys and pursues his runaway slaves into Gath and so Solomon has him executed.

Summary: Solomon's name means "peace" and he is not to be a man of war. However, there can be no peace in the "garden" until the "serpents" are driven out. Solomon's dealing with his enemies secures the borders of the kingdom of Israel, eliminates fear on the part of the people, and ushers in a time of unheard of peace and prosperity for Israel and the surrounding nations as we will see in chapter 4.

Chapter 3 – The Wisdom of Solomon

Verses 1-3 – Treaty with Pharaoh

Solomon enters into a treaty with Pharaoh, king of Egypt and marries his daughter. This may be a picture of the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham to bring the covenant blessings of Yaweh to all nations. Later, Jesus will covenant with a bride from the nations (the Gentiles) and yet remain faithful to His Father. No where in the text is Solomon's marriage to Pharaoh's daughter condemned and, in fact, verse 3 says that, at least at this point in his life, "Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David...". Later in Solomon's life, his foreign wives will turn his heart away from the Lord.

Verses 4-15 – Solomon Asks for Wisdom

Solomon's worshipping at the high places seems to not be an ideal practice (See verse 3), however, God appears to him there. When Adam fell asleep, the Lord brought Eve to him. Solomon falls into a deep sleep, the Lord appears to him and gives him Lady Wisdom. Solomon's asking for "an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil" is, in a sense, asking for the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (i.e. wisdom to rule). This is yet another picture that Solomon is a new Adam ruling over a new creation. The Lord is pleased to grant this request and gives Solomon

everything he didn't ask for as well (long life, riches, the defeat of his enemies). Perhaps this is what inspired Solomon's teaching in Proverbs that wisdom is the most important thing (e.g. Pr 4:1-13, 8:12-21, Pr 16:16)

Verses 16-29 – Solomon's Wise Judgment – A New Abraham

Have the students recall the story of the dispute between the two prostitutes:

This account is a clear demonstration of Solomon's wisdom given to him by the Lord. In the telling of it, the women are not named and sometimes it is even hard to tell which one is speaking, or which child they are talking about, a picture of how difficult it is to render judgments in the flesh. Whereas Adam listened to his wife and judged wrongly, Solomon listens to these two women and judges rightly. His judgment exposes the very heart of the two women. He truly has divine power to discern good and evil!

The true mother of the living baby was willing to give up her son in order to save him. This account reminds us of Abraham who was willing to give up Isaac and this willingness actually saved Isaac. Because of this, God made covenant with Abraham, promising to multiply his offspring and to bless both his household and the whole world (see Genesis 22). Solomon, the new Abraham has placed the kingdom (the "sons and daughters") of Israel into the Lord's hands, asking for godly wisdom to govern her. The result, in Chapter 4 will be a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham in that He will cause Israel to become as numerous as the sands on the seashore and He will greatly bless her with material prosperity and peace. This also looks forward to Jesus, the living son, who will be willing to sacrifice himself to save the world.

Chapter 4 – Prosperity, Dominion and Wisdom Under Solomon's Reign

Verses 1-28 – Prosperity and Dominion

An outline of Kings 4:1-28 could look something like this

- A. Solomon's officials and deputies (4:1-19)
 - B. Judah and Israel eat, drink, and rejoice (4:20)
 - C. Solomon rules over the Kingdom from the River to Egypt (4:21)
 - D. Provisions of Solomon's table (4:22-23)
 - C' Solomon rules over everything west of the River (4:24)
 - B' Judah and Israel are living in safety (4:25)
- A' Deputies provide for Solomon's household (4:26-28)

A. and A' - The chapter begins with a list of officials in Solomon's kingdom, including priests (verses 1-6), followed by a list of twelve governors (verses 8-19). Solomon is surrounded by his administrators and priests much as Yaweh sits on His throne surrounded by the host of heaven on his right and left (See 1 Kings 22:19). The number of the governors (twelve) in verses 8-19 reminds us of the original twelve tribes of Israel. However the twelve regions do not correspond directly to the twelve tribal lands. In fact, half are mentioned in connection to a city. This is evidence that the Kingdom of God moves historically from a tribal arrangement to that of a city, ultimately to the New Jerusalem. Verse 7 states that the twelve governors over all Israel "provided food for the king and his household; each one made provision for one month of the year." Verses 27 and 28 are very similar to verse 7.

D. The very center of this outline (verses 22-23) is the list of the bountiful provisions for Solomon's table brought forth by the twelve governors, one each month. The provisions consist of grain and seven animals, another new creation motif. These animals include both sacrificial animals (oxen, pasture fed oxen, sheep) representing **Israel** and clean non-sacrificial animals (deer, gazelles, roebucks and fatted fowl) representing **God-fearing Gentiles**. These provisions were not just for Solomon and his family but for all who sat at his table, including permanent Gentile guests such as Barzillai and visiting Gentile dignitaries such as the Queen of Sheba, whom we will meet later. Solomon is a new Abraham and this blessing of the Lord fulfills His promise to Abraham - Genesis 22:18 "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

B. and B' The covenant blessings of Solomon's reign were not just for those who sit at his table. They were for every Israelite! Verse 20 says that "Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and rejoicing". Verse 25 states the "Judah and Israel dwelt safely, each man under his vine and fig tree, from Dan as far as Beersheva, all the days of Solomon." This too fulfills God's promise to Abraham Genesis 22:17 "blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which *is* on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies..

C. and C' – **Have a student read 1 Kings 4:21 and 24.** By defeating all of her enemies, both from without (through David) and from within (through Solomon), God has caused Solomon, the new Adam to rule over the dominant political power in the known world. The word for "dominion" in verse 24 is the same word as found in Genesis 1:26 when God said that man was to have dominion over all of the creation. Solomon, the new Abraham, reigns over an Israel whose borders stretch to the full extent of the promise given by Yaweh to Abram. Genesis 15:18 On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates. This political power has ushered in a time both of unheard of prosperity and of peace in Israel as Solomon "...had peace on every side all around him."

Verses 29-34 – Wisdom and Worship

In these verses, Solomon's wisdom is extolled in a sevenfold manner, the center of which is **wisdom** (proverbs) and **worship** (songs):

29 And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore.

30 Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt. 31 For he was wiser than all men—than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the surrounding nations.

32 He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five.

33 Also he spoke of trees, from the cedar tree of Lebanon even to the hyssop that springs out of the wall;

he spoke also of animals, of birds, of creeping things, and of fish.

34 And men of all nations, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom, came to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

Verse 29 tells us that God has given Solomon a three-fold wisdom:

- 1) Wisdom = Practical wisdom – The ability to decide what is the just and useful course to pursue
- 2) Understanding = Keeness of insight to arrive at the correct solution of difficult and complicated problems
- 3) Largeness of heart = Mental capacity to embrace the most diverse departments of knowledge. This includes scientific knowledge of plants and animals as well.

The wisdom of Solomon exceeds that of all of the men in his kingdom, East and West, Jew and Gentile... like the sand of the seashore. Verse 34 tells us that “men of all nations from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom, came to hear the wisdom of Solomon.” This also points to Jesus, the Greater Solomon, who one day will be visited by wise men from the East and who himself will travel to Egypt. The Kingdom of Jesus Christ now encompasses the whole world.

May the Lord grant us all wisdom to walk in His ways and to take godly dominion in every corner of His Kingdom and over every facet of life (ecclesiastical, political, educational, economical) within that Kingdom

❖ **Homework** – Read 1 Kings 5-8; Work on memorizing Westminster Shorter Catechism questions and answers, the outline for 1 and 2 Kings, and 1 Kings 3:9.

❖ **Prayer / Prep for Worship**

1 and 2 Kings
Lesson 3 – 1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built
Part 2 – 1 Kings 5-8 - Solomon Builds the Temple

Objective – To have the students understand that worship is the center of the Christian life, much as the building and dedicating of the temple was Solomon’s crowning achievement.

- ❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.
- ❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 1 Kings 5-8, and work on your memory materials?”
- ❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.
- ❖ **Scripture Memorization - 1Kings 3:9** **Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"**
- ❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review
 - A. **1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built**
 - B. **1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established**
 - C. **1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri**
 - D. **2 Kings 2:1–8:6 - Elisha and His Miracles**
 - C’ **2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu**
 - B’ **2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls**
 - A’ **2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed**
- ❖ **Review** – Use this series of questions to review the last lesson:
 - 1) The book of 1 Kings begins with the account of the death of who? **David**
 - 2) Which son of David tried to take over the throne? **Adonijah**
 - 3) How is Adonijah like Adam in the garden of Eden. **He grasps at the rule of Israel like Adam grasped at the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. He offers sacrifices at the “serpent’s stone” which is in a valley with a spring of water, reminding us of the Garden of Eden with its four rivers**
 - 4) Who comes to David to try and convince him to place Solomon on the throne after him? **Bathsheba and Nathan the prophet**
 - 5) What does Solomon ride on to show that he was the rightful king? **A donkey**
 - 6) What “serpents” did Solomon deal with when he first became king?
Adonijah, Abiathar, Joab, Shimei

7) What did Solomon ask for when God allowed him to ask for anything he wanted?

Wisdom

8) In chapter 4, Solomon's provisions are mentioned. Are they just for Solomon and his family? **No, they are for all who dined at Solomon's table, including Gentile God fearers.**

9) Who else experiences prosperity under Solomon's reign? **Every Israelite and the Gentiles of the surrounding nations as well**

10) This is a fulfillment of God's promise to bless all of the nations that he made to who? **Abraham**

❖ Lesson – 1 Kings 5-8 – Solomon Builds the Temple

Chapter 5 – Solomon Prepares to Build the Temple

In 2 Samuel 7, the Lord promised David that his son (Solomon) would build the temple. During his lifetime, David had gathered many of the materials that would be used in the building of the temple. As we come to 1 Kings 5, we see Solomon finishing this task of preparing to build!

In verses 1-6, Solomon requests the aid of the Gentile Hiram of Tyre (point to Tyre on map) in providing cedar and cypress trees to be used to build the house for Yaweh. The temple of the Lord is to be a place of worship for all nations, not just the Israelites. Ultimately, the Gentiles are to be a part of the temple of the Holy Spirit, the body of Christ. In verses 7-9, we see that Hiram is a God-fearer who expresses his delight in providing the materials that Solomon needs. In return, Hiram requests that Solomon provides food for his household which Solomon is glad to do (see v. 10-11). Solomon, like Jesus, is the "bread of life" to the Gentiles.

Verses 12-18 show us that the wisdom of Solomon results in peace between Jew and Gentile and they work side by side to gather the materials for the temple which will soon be built. Of all his feats, Solomon's greatest accomplishment as king of Israel was the building of a house for the name of Yaweh.

Chapter 6:1-38, 7:13-51 – Solomon Builds the Temple

These two portions of 1 Kings, which tell of the building of the temple by Solomon, form a sandwich around 7:1-12 which describes the building of Solomon's palace and other buildings.

Note to teacher – It would be good at this time to briefly review the rooms and furniture in the original tabernacle as we will see changes in this architecture when we discuss the temple structure. Hand out or draw a diagram or use a wall chart if you have one:

1) Outer courtyard – Bronze altar and laver of cleansing

2) Holy Place – Altar of incense, table of showbread, golden lampstand

3) Holy of Holies – Ark of the covenant containing the Ten Commandments, Aaron's rod that budded, and the jar of manna.

The temple was like the tabernacle in many ways, but much more glorious in its appearance. Verse 2 tells us that the temple (which consisted of the inner and outer sanctuary) was about **twice** as long and wide as the tabernacle in the wilderness and had an outer courtyard that was open and not surrounded by tent curtains.

Some other noteworthy features of the temple (**See diagrams of the temple and compare with tabernacle; see also table: Comparison – Tabernacle and Temple Architecture and Furnishings**):

1) There is a porch in the front of the temple (6:3). The porch had two 27-foot tall bronze pillars at the front of it with carved lilies and pomegranates on the top of them (see 7:15-22).

These pillars have names:

a) Jachin (on the right) = “He shall establish” – Perhaps a reference to the priesthood

b) Boaz (on the left) = “In Him is strength” – Perhaps a reference to the king

2) There were windows in the outer sanctuary/palace – 6:4

3) The inner and outer sanctuaries were surrounded on three sides by three sets of rooms built on top of one another. The rooms on the bottom were smaller than the rooms higher up, thus the temple resembled a mountain. These rooms were used by the priests and for storage. – 6:5-6, 6:8-10

4) The inside walls of the temple are paneled with cedar boards with carvings of angels, palm trees and flowers on them. The floor is made of cypress boards.– 6:15-18

5) The temple floor as well as the walls were covered with gold which is much more glorious than the dirt floor of the tabernacle – 6:19-22, 30

6) The palace/outer sanctuary had a golden altar of incense and table of showbread like the tabernacle before it. However, instead of one, there were ten golden lampstands, five on each side, in this room. – 7:48-49

7) Two 15 foot tall cherub statues, overlaid with gold, stood wing tip to wing tip at the back of the inner sanctuary/house (holy of holies) behind the ark of the covenant – 6:23-28

8) Instead of curtains, there were gold-covered doors with cherubim, palm trees and open flowers carved on them between the inner sanctuary/house and the outer sanctuary/palace. – 6:31-36

9) Instead of an outer courtyard with tent curtains around it, the outer court of the temple is open-air. In this area were three types of furnishings:

a. A bronze sea (a huge basin 15 feet across and 7 ½ feet deep) which rested on 12 bronze oxen. This is a much larger and more ornate version of the laver of cleansing found in the outer court of the tabernacle – 7:23-27

b. Ten water carts or “chariots” with water lavers (basins) on them with angels, lions and palm trees carved into them stood in two lines proceeding eastward from the front of the temple – 7:27-39

c. The altar of sacrifice – larger than the bronze altar in the courtyard of the tabernacle – see 2 Kings 16:14

Verses 40-51 of chapter 7 includes lists of the bronze utensils (7:40-47) used in the courtyard for less holy purposes and the gold furnishings and utensils (7:48-50) for use in the temple (God’s house) which is the more holy place. The bronze utensils could also be thought of as representing the Israelites (and us), who all have different jobs in the kingdom of God.

We can think of the temple in several ways: **Note – Cover this section very briefly!**

1) **The House of God** - The tabernacle as well as the temple is spoken of in Scripture as God's house. In general we can say that the temple is described in more kingly terms (porch, outer sanctuary - literally "palace", and inner sanctuary- literally "house") whereas the tabernacle was more priestly in its emphasis (outer courtyard, holy place, holy of holies).

2) **A New Garden of Eden** – Solomon, as we have repeatedly said is a type of new Adam, and this is reflected in the temple as well.

- There is much wood as well as carved, flowers, fruits and vegetables - all garden themes
- The cherubs in the inner sanctuary and the two pillars Jachin and Boaz, remind us of the guardian cherubs at the entrance to the Garden of Eden.

- Eden is a "well-watered place" and the temple has many water vessels in it

Thus the temple represents a return to the Garden of Eden and a rolling back of the curses that were placed on Adam and Eve.

3) **A Holy Mountain** – The rooms on the side of the temple cause the structure to resemble a mountain and there are steps going up from the courtyard to the porch/outer sanctuary and from the outer sanctuary to the inner sanctuary. Thus Jerusalem is the new Mt. Sinai, where all of God's people can come and worship Him.

4) **The Bride of Yaweh** – The temple is described as having a face (6:3 "before" = face), ribs (6:5 "chambers" = ribs) and shoulders (6:8, 7:39 "side" = shoulder) . The use of the word "chamber/rib" particularly reminds us of Eve, the bride of Adam. Thus the temple can be thought of as the beloved nation of Israel, the bride whom Yaweh is pleased to dwell with.

Chapter 7:1-12 – Solomon's House

Sandwiched in between the two accounts of the building of the temple is a discussion of the building of Solomon's palace and other buildings. These structures are physically connected to the temple itself and resemble it in many ways. Just as the temple consisted of the porch, outer sanctuary and inner sanctuary, Solomon's buildings are also described in three portions:

a) **7:6 – Hall of Pillars** – This corresponds to the **porch** in the temple in which were the two pillars, Jachin and Boaz.

b) **7:2-5 - House of the forest of Lebanon** – This corresponds to the **outer sanctuary** of the temple: Both are paneled with cedar (6:15, 7:3); both have "ribs" (6:5 – "chambers" and 7:3 – "beams" are the same Hebrew word – lit. "ribs"); both have windows (6:4, 7:4-5)

c) **7:7 – Hall for the throne / Hall of Judgment** – This corresponds to the **inner sanctuary** of the temple, where God's throne, the ark of the covenant, was found. Both of these areas are described as paneled from floor to ceiling with cedar boards (6:15-16, 7:7). This close connection between palace and temple shows us that Solomon is indeed a new Adam who takes his throne alongside Yaweh and rules with him. This of course points to Jesus the King of Kings and Lord of Lords who rules from heaven at the right hand of the Father. It also

points to the New Testament church who has been given the keys to the kingdom of heaven and who now rules and reigns on earth in the name of Jesus (see Matthew 16:17-20).

Chapter 8 – Solomon Dedicates the Temple

The dedication of the temple found in chapter 8 is the very center point and climax of the account of the reign of Solomon found in 1 Kings 1-11.

Verses 1-11 – The Ark Brought into the Temple – For years during David’s reign, the ark of the covenant was kept in a tent on Mt. Zion in Jerusalem, while the rest of the tabernacle was at Gibeon. Verses 1-11 tell of the bringing of the ark of the covenant by the priests into the inner sanctuary of Solomon’s temple, thus reuniting the two. The glory of the Lord (Holy Spirit) then fills the temple to such an extent that the priests could not continue to minister. The previous division of the ark and the tabernacle reminds us of the crucifixion of Jesus (the True Temple – see John 2:19-22) and the bringing of the two together again reminds us of His resurrection. In the end, it is not Jesus, but rather the temple made by human hands that will be destroyed (by Titus and the Roman army in A.D. 70).

Verses 12-21 – Solomon’s Address and Blessing - In verses 12-21 Solomon addresses and blesses this assembly, declaring to them that God has kept the promise He made to David that Solomon would be the one to build a temple for the name of Yaweh to dwell in.

The frequent use of the work “assembled / assembly” and “congregation” in Chapter 8 again points to the fact that the temple also represented the people of God, the bride of Yaweh, who are blessed with the presence of God among them.

Verses 22-54 – Solomon’s Prayer of Dedication - The center and climax of chapter 8 is Solomon’s prayer of dedication found in verses 22-54. In this prayer, it is the **name** of Yaweh (mentioned 12 times!) that is prominent. Thus when Israel sins and repents, they do not pray to the bricks and mortar of the temple building per se, nor do they simply recommit themselves to obeying the Law. When they pray “towards the temple” it is to Yaweh Himself that they pray, confessing loyalty to his name and pledging obedience to Him. Thirteen times in chapter 8 Solomon asks that Yaweh would **listen/hear** to his cry and to that of the Israelites and the Gentiles. He asks that Yaweh’s **eyes** would be open towards the temple and His people (v. 29,52); that He would **teach** them the good way in which they should walk (v. 36), etc. Their prayers are to be prayers of faith that it is only the Lord Himself (and ultimately Jesus, the “True Temple”) who can save them from their sins and cause them to walk in His ways and to bless them.

In 2 Samuel 7, not only did God tell David that his son would be the one to build the temple (2 Samuel 7:12-13a), but Yaweh also said of Solomon, “...I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. **I will be his Father, and he shall be My son...**” (see 2 Samuel 7:13b-15). This promise of God seems to form the basis of Solomon’s prayer of dedication. Solomon stands as a “son of Yaweh”, a mediator between God and the people who prays not only for himself and all of Israel but for the Gentiles in the nations round about them as well (v. 22-54). He then blesses those assembled (v. 54-61), offers peace offerings to the Lord (v. 62-64) and holds a feast for all in attendance (v. 65-66).

Jesus is the ultimate “Son of Yaweh” who intercedes for His people, both Jew and Gentile (Hebrews 7:25), who blesses them, who offered himself as a sacrifice to reconcile them to God, and who feeds them with His Word, both in this life and in eternity.

Verses 22-26 – Solomon begins his prayer

Before he presents his actual requests before the Lord, Solomon begins his prayer in a manner that would be good for us to follow, both in formal worship and in our homes and “prayer closets” as well.

- 1) **Posture** - He stands (v. 22) or kneels (v. 54) and spreads out his hands towards heaven in anticipation of receiving gracious answers from the Lord – v. 22
- 2) **Praise** - He praises the Lord as the only true God who keeps covenant with His people, who is merciful, and who has kept all of His promises. – v. 23-24
- 3) **Promises** - He asks God to continue to keep His promises that He made to David to always have a descendant on the throne of Israel. – v. 25-26

Verses 27-40 and 44-54 – Solomon prays for Israel

Solomon begins by confessing the obvious fact that Yaweh cannot be confined to any one building, not even the temple, for he is Lord of Heaven and Earth.

Then, as a “son of Yaweh”, Solomon acts as a sort of mediator between God and the people by praying for them, foreshadowing the great Mediator, Jesus, who prays for His people before the Father in heaven.

The specific prayers of Solomon are:

- 1) He prays that Yaweh would hear his prayers for the people– v. 28-30
- 2) He prays for God to punish those who swear oaths and do not keep them and to uphold the cause of the righteous– v. 31-32
- 3) He prays for God to hear and forgive during times of God’s judgment on them for their sins – v. 33-40
- 4) He prays for God to give them victory over their enemies – v. 44-45
- 5) He prays for God to deliver them from captivity (exile) when they repent of the sin which caused God to send them out of the land – v. 46-53

Solomon’s prayer is actually quite prophetic. The curses he mentions are similar to those in Deuteronomy 28 and are the very curses that Israel (and particularly her kings) will bring upon herself as we proceed through the books of 1 and 2 Kings: Defeat by enemies, drought, famine, exile, etc.

Verses 41-43 – Solomon prays for the Gentiles

This section of Solomon’s prayer seems to be the center of the prayer of dedication. Yaweh has established His people Israel in the Promised Land to be a light to the Gentiles, that they too might be drawn into the covenant of love with Him and become a part of His people. Throughout Israel’s history the Jews consistently fail to see their ministry to the Gentiles as a central part of their calling as the priestly people of God. By the time we get to the New Testament, we see that the Gentiles have been excluded from the temple and the worship of God altogether!

Verses 55-61 – Solomon blesses the assembly – After praying Solomon rises from his knees and blesses the assembly. He then blesses the Lord for his faithfulness to keep all of His promises. He then states his desire that the Lord would be with them always, that He would cause them to walk in obedience to Him, that the Lord would remember the words of Solomon’s prayer, and that the people would always be loyal to Yaweh and to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments

Verses 62-66 – Peace offerings and a feast –

Following Solomon’s blessing and charge, peace offerings are made to the Lord and the people sit down to a fourteen day feast!! As you will recall from your study of Leviticus 3, the Peace offering was a voluntary offering brought to the Lord out of gratitude for the Lord’s blessing or in fulfillment of a vow. It was the only offering in which the offerer got to eat some of what was offered. Thus it was a picture fellowship between the Israelites and Yaweh and among the Israelites themselves. Solomon’s feast resulted in the people returning to their tents “joyful and glad of heart for all the good that the Lord had done for His servant David , and for Israel His people.” – v. 66

RCC Distinctive – Weekly Communion and the Agape Meal

The sacrament of Communion in the New Testament Church is comparable to the Peace offerings of the Old Testament. It is a meal with the Lord and with one another, remembering the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross for our sins, and celebrating our restored fellowship with God and His people. Like Solomon and Israel at the temple dedication, at RCC we hold a weekly feast after our worship service to begin to put into practice the lessons we have learned in the service by practicing grace and hospitality towards one another in the context of a meal eaten together.

Conclusion- Unfortunately, we shall see that 1 and 2 Kings is the story of a rejected temple. It is sad indeed that, after Solomon’s prayer, very few of Israel’s kings ever resort to prayer again when troubles come to the nation. In fact, when God later sends enemies to invade Israel because of her unfaithfulness, instead of turning towards the temple (Yaweh/Jesus) in repentance and prayer, the kings ruling at the time will often plunder the treasures of the temple to pay off their invaders. Jesus, the True Temple of God was also rejected and plundered by those He came to save. May we be those who turn towards the Lord in our time of trouble that he might deliver and heal us.

❖ **Homework** – Read 1 Kings 9-11, Continue memory work

❖ **Pray / Prep for Worship**

Comparison - Tabernacle and Temple Architecture and Furnishings (2 Kings 6,7)

Tabernacle	Temple
Curtains / tents / poles	Wood /stone / gold
No porch or pillars	Porch with pillars – Jachin and Boaz (6:3, 7:15-22)
No windows in Holy Place	Windows in Holy Place (6:4)
No rooms surrounding the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies	Rooms on three sides of Holy Place and Holy of Holies – Like a mountain (6:5-6,8-10)
Cloth walls, dirt floor	Walls and floor of wood overlaid with gold (6:19-22,30)
Holy Place – Table of showbread, altar of incense, golden lampstand	Holy Place - Table of showbread, altar of incense, ten golden lampstands (7:48-49)
Holy of Holies – Ark of the covenant with two cherubs on the cover	Holy of Holies – Ark of the covenant with two cherubs on the cover; Two 15 foot tall cherubs overlaid with gold at back of room (6:23-28)
Curtain between Holy Place and Holy of Holy	Wooden door overlaid with gold with cherubim, palm trees and open flowers carved on them between Holy Place and Holy of Holies (6:31-36)
Outer courtyard surrounded by curtains	Outer courtyard is open air
Laver of cleansing	Bronze sea – 15 feet across 7 1/2 feet deep, resting on 12 bronze oxen (7:23-27)
No water carts/chariots	Ten water carts/chariots with angels, lions and palm trees carved into them in two rows proceeding eastward from the front of the temple (7:27-39)
Bronze altar	Larger bronze altar (2 Kings 16:14)

1 and 2 Kings
Lesson 4 – 1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built
Part 3 – 1 Kings 9-11 - Solomon’s Glory and Downfall

Objective – To help the students to see that nothing in this life should come between them and their devotion to the Lord

- ❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.
- ❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 1 Kings 9-11, and work on your memory materials?”
- ❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.
- ❖ **Scripture Memorization : QUIZ NEXT WEEK! 1 Kings 3:9 Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"**
- ❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review
 - A. **1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built**
 - B. **1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established**
 - C. **1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri**
 - D. **2 Kings 2:1–8:6 - Elisha and His Miracles**
 - C’ **2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu**
 - B’ **2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls**
 - A’ **2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed**
- ❖ **Review** – In our last lesson we learned of Solomon’s gathering of the materials for the temple, of his building both the temple and his own palace and of his dedicating the temple. As we come to chapter 9, we see the nations (represented by the queen of Sheba) streaming to Solomon and to Yaweh as they see the blessings of the Lord on Israel.
- ❖ **Lesson - 1 Kings 9-11 - Solomon’s Glory and Downfall**
Chapter 9 – God’s Appearance, Solomon’s Achievements
Verses 1-9 – God’s Appearance - In chapter 3, God had appeared to Solomon in a dream while he was at Gibeon. Now, after the dedication of the temple, God once again appears to Solomon (v. 1-2).
 - Verses 3-5 - The Lord tells Solomon that he has heard his prayer and that he has put his name on the temple forever. He will prosper Solomon and Israel as a whole, as long as Solomon and his sons are faithful to Yaweh and to His Law as David had been. Even when

he sinned, David did not turn to other gods, but sought Yaweh for forgiveness and restoration. Solomon and his sons are to do likewise.

- Verses 6-9 – On the other hand, the Lord told Solomon that, if he or his sons did not keep His commandments, but went and served other gods, then the Lord would remove His name from the temple and cast the temple (the king and his people) out of His sight. The language used in these verses is similar to that of Deuteronomy 28 and likely reminded Solomon of all curses that would fall upon Israel, should they fall into idolatry. And, just as the Lord had told the Israelites in Deuteronomy 28:37, He says here that He would also make Israel to “be a proverb and a byword among all peoples” (the Gentiles). The Gentile nations around Israel were to come and pray towards the temple, knowing that the temple was called by the name of Yaweh (see 8:41-43). However, when they pass by the ruined temple they will be astonished and learn that God’s judgment is upon Israel because of her unfaithfulness.

Verses 10-14 – Solomon and Hiram – Hiram had been very generous with Solomon in providing materials for the building of the temple (cedar and cypress trees and gold). However, it seems as though Solomon fails to be as generous with Hiram. He gives Hiram cities in Galilee (northern Israel) that are unsatisfactory to Hiram. Verse 12 says that Hiram “went” from Tyre and this is the same word used in verse 9 speaking of the Lord who “brought” Israel out of Egypt. The Lord brought Israel out of Egypt and gave them a land flowing with milk and honey, whereas Solomon brings Hiram out of Tyre and gives him a land he calls Cabul which means “displeasing / dirty”. This account of a quarrel between Solomon and Hiram is like a cloud on the horizon, foretelling of the troubles that Solomon will soon face because of his own unfaithfulness to Yaweh.

Verses 15-28 – Solomon’s Achievements – Most of the rest of chapter 9 is taken up with a list of Solomon's other building achievements (his house, the wall of Jerusalem and various cities). These achievements are noteworthy and a picture of Solomon exercising his new-creation dominion over his kingdom. In verse 24, Solomon’s Egyptian bride comes into the house that Solomon has prepared for her, much as Yaweh brought Eve to Adam once the garden was prepared and just as Yaweh brought his bride, Israel, into the Promised Land that He had prepared for them. Additionally, in verses 26-28 we see Solomon building a navy for the first time in the history of Israel, a further picture of the dominion rule of the Kingdom of God spreading to the nations.

However, in addition to his quarrel with Hiram, several other events in this chapter seem somewhat ominous:

- 1) Israel under Joshua had never fully defeated Gezer (see Joshua 19:10). Neither David nor Solomon drove the Caananites fully from the land but put them to forced labor (e.g. 19:20-23). It is Pharaoh who captures Gezar and gives it to his daughter as a dowry for her marriage to Solomon. Thus it seems that Pharaoh, in some ways, is acting more like a son of Yaweh than Solomon.
- 2) Solomon builds storage cities for his treasures (v. 19), much as Pharaoh of Egypt did at the time of the Israelite captivity (see Exodus 1:11).
- 3) Solomon is beginning to accumulate horses and chariots (v. 19) which is forbidden of Israelite kings (see Deuteronomy 17:16). We will see more of this in chapter 10.

Thus it seems as though Solomon's Israel is becoming more like Egypt, thus setting up the "exodus" of the ten northern tribes which we will see when the kingdom is divided in chapter 12.

Chapter 10 – Solomon's Height of Glory

Verses 1-13 – The Queen of Sheba's Praise of Solomon – It is likely that Sheba was on the Arabian peninsula, possibly in modern day Yemen, and was the home of the Sabean people.

(Show this on a map if possible). Some say that the queen of Sheba visited Solomon because she wanted to negotiate some sort of peace treaty or at least a trade agreement with him. However, in Matthew 12:42, Jesus says, "The queen of the South (Sheba) will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth **to hear the wisdom of Solomon**; and indeed a greater than Solomon *is* here." Verse 1 says that when she "heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came..." It was for the sake of meeting and getting to know Solomon (and Solomon's God) that caused her to travel so far. The same will later be said of the wise men from the east who followed the star and when they came to Jerusalem, they said, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." (see Matthew 2)

The queen of Sheba's bringing of gold, spices and precious stones is a picture of the wealth of the Gentiles (and especially of the Gentiles themselves) coming to Solomon, to Israel and to Yaweh Himself. This theme will be seen throughout the rest of the Old Testament and ultimately culminates in the coming of the wise men to Jesus in the New Testament. Isaiah 60:1-6 is an example of this **(Have a student read)**:

The queen of Sheba is extremely impressed with everything she sees:

- 1) Verses 2-4a - Solomon himself – Solomon answers all of her question (some say her riddles) with wisdom and skill
- 2) Verse 4b – Solomon's palace
- 3) Verse 5a – Solomon's banquet feast
- 4) Verse 5b – The Worship of Yaweh – The word "entryway" ("ascent" KJV) is better translated "ascension" as in the ascension (whole burnt) offering in the temple, which was a picture of the offerer being transformed from a sinful, fleshly person into a godly, heavenly person (See Leviticus 1).

In verses 7 and 8, the queen of Sheba expresses how overwhelmed she is by both the wisdom and the prosperity of Solomon and how happy those who serve with Solomon and who hear his wisdom must be.

Have a student read verse 9. Verse 9 may be evidence that the queen of Sheba became a believer as a result of all that she had seen and heard while in Solomon's court. She praises Yaweh and restates the promise that God gave to Solomon (and to David before in

2 Samuel 7) to maintain Solomon's dynasty. In verse 10, she expresses her gratitude to Solomon by giving him all of the great wealth she had brought with her. Solomon returns the favor in verse 13 by bestowing costly gifts on the queen of Sheba as well.

Verses 11 and 12 say that in addition to the vast amount of gold, spices and precious stones given to Solomon by the queen of Sheba, he also increases his wealth through the fleet he had sent to Ophir with Hiram of Tyre's men that we learned of in 9:27-28. These accounts set us up for chapter 11 in which we learn of the astronomical amount of wealth that Solomon accumulates and what he does with it.

Verses 14-29 – Solomon's Money / Power

Solomon's wealth takes two basic forms:

1) Power – The accumulation of horses and chariots seen in verses 26,28-29 represents an increase of Solomon's military might. As we mentioned in Chapter 9, this was a violation of the command given to Israel's kings in Deuteronomy 17:16 (**have a student read**). It is particularly grievous that Solomon acquires his horses and chariots from Egypt, the one place that the king is commanded NOT to send his people back to get horses from.

Additionally, Solomon sells chariots to the Hittites and the kings of Syria (verse 29). The Hittites are among those Canaanite tribes that Solomon failed to fully defeat (see 9:20). Both the Hittites and the Arameans will be raised up by God as enemies of Israel in response to Solomon's sin later on in 1 and 2 Kings.

2) Money – The word "gold" is used 13 times in chapters 9 and 10. It comes to Solomon from various sources and in large quantities. In verses 16-22 we learn that he uses this gold to make elaborate decorations for his palace (gold shields), to build an ornate throne for himself, and to make expensive drinking vessels. Solomon's accumulation of gold and silver is so massive that silver becomes virtually worthless in Israel (see verse 27). Deuteronomy 17:17 clearly forbids Israel's king to amass gold and silver (**have a student read**).

Chapter 11 – Solomon's Downfall

Verses 1-13 – Solomon's foreign wives - Deuteronomy 17:17a says of Israel's king, "Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; These verses document Solomon's disobedience of this clear command of Scripture beginning with verse 1 (**Have a student read**). This series of events unfold as follows:

Verses 1-3 - Solomon marries many wives from the nations that the Lord had forbidden Israel to intermarry with. In fact, verse 3 says that he had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines (wives with no dowry)! Though Pharaoh's daughter was likely a believer, the other foreign wives of Solomon clearly are not.

Verses 4-8 – Solomon's foreign wives turn his heart after their pagan gods. Just as Adam listened to his wife and turned towards obedience to Satan, so Solomon listens to these foreign wives and turns towards their gods. This occurs after Solomon is old and has let down his spiritual guard. Solomon becomes just as ambitious in his worship of these gods and in building worship centers for them as he had been in his devotion to Yaweh. In the

center of these five verses is the tragic statement, “Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not fully follow the Lord as did his father David.” (1 Kings 11:6).

Verses 9-13 - Solomon, in marrying these wives and in worshiping their gods brings upon himself the very curses which the Lord warned him about in 9:6-7 (**Have student read**). The Lord becomes righteously angry and says that He will tear the kingdom out of Solomon’s hand (verse 11). However, in His mercy and in order to keep His promise to David, the Lord will allow one tribe (the combined tribes of Judah and Benjamin) to remain for Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, to rule over.

Verses 14-40 – Solomon’s Adversaries

Just as Solomon (and Israel who followed him) raised up enemy gods against Yaweh, so too the Lord raises up enemies against Solomon and the nation:

1) Verses 14-22 - Hadad the Edomite – Edomites were descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob who had at one time wanted to kill Jacob. Their land was to the south and east of Israel. In David’s time, Joab, his commander, had apparently killed many Edomites, though Hadad had escaped. Leithart says that Hadad’s life follows closely that of Israel in her first exile to Egypt and later exodus:

<i>Verses</i>	<i>Hadad</i>	<i>Israel</i>
14-15	Carried to Egypt to escape Joab and the army of Israel	Jacob took his clan to Egypt to escape famine
18	Treated well by Pharaoh	Jacob and family treated well by Pharaoh
19	Marries Pharaoh’s sister-in-law	Joseph marries daughter of an Egyptian priest
20	Son is raised in Egyptian home	Moses raised in Egyptian home
21-22	Seeks to return the land when David dies	Exodus from Egypt to the promised land

In this comparison, it seems as though Solomon and Israel have become like the pagan Caananites in the Promised Land who are about to be displaced. Solomon at one time had full control over Edom (see 9:26) but now the Lord is taking this away.

2) Verses 23-25 - Rezin in Damascus – Damascus is the capital of Syria, to the north of Israel. Remember, it was Solomon who had provided arms to the Syrians (10:29). Rezin’s biography also reminds us of another part of Israel’s history

<i>Verses</i>	<i>Rezin</i>	<i>Israel</i>
23	Flees from his Lord Hadadezer	David fled from his master Saul
24	Gathers a band of followers to himself	David gathered a band of followers to himself in the wilderness
24	Moves to Damascus to become king over Syria	David moved from wilderness to become king over Israel

In this comparison, Solomon is like Saul who had disobeyed God and was taken off the throne by the Lord.

3) **Verses 26-40 – Jeroboam in Israel** – His story also follows this same portion of Israel’s history:

<i>Verses</i>	<i>Jeroboam</i>	<i>Israel</i>
28	A valiant warrior	Saul and David were valiant warriors
28	Faithfully served Solomon	David faithfully served Saul
29-39	Meets Ahijah, a prophet from Shiloh, who tells him he will be king	David was anointed by Samuel, a prophet who grows up with Eli in Shiloh
30	Ahijah tears his new cloak symbolizing the tearing of the kingdom away from Solomon	Torn robe of Saul symbolized that the kingdom of Israel was being torn from him.
38-39	Promises from God	David received similar promises from God
40	Solomon seeks to kill him	Saul sought to kill David
40	He flees to Egypt	David fled into the wilderness

Though Solomon’s name means peace, and his rule has been characterized by Israel having it’s greatest peacetime prosperity in its history, yet he ends his reign in strife, seeking to kill Jeroboam, in defiance of the prophecy from the Lord.

Verses 41-43 – Solomon’s Death

Having ruled Israel for forty years, Solomon dies and is buried in Jerusalem and Rehoboam his son reigns in his place.

It is interesting that, through all of his sin, Solomon maintained his wisdom. In fact, verses 23-24 say So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. 24 Now all the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart (see also Ecclesiastes 2:9). It is at the very peak of his genuine, God-empowered wisdom that Solomon sins against the Lord in the greatest manner! As Solomon later said in Ecclesiastes 1:18, (apart from faith in and obedience to Jesus Christ) “...in much wisdom *is* much grief, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.” As we read at the end of the book of Ecclesiastes, it appears as though Solomon repented from his idolatry near the end of his life

May the Lord Jesus grant us the humility and faith to continue to follow Him in the wisdom he gives us.

❖ **Homework** – Read 1 Kings 12-16, work on memory material – Quiz on 1 Kings 3:9 next week!

❖ **Pray/Prep for Worship**

1 and 2 Kings

Lesson 5 – 1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established

Objective – To help the students to see that, just as sin among Israel’s rulers became worse and worse, so too besetting sins in our lives need to be dealt with swiftly and surely so that they do not grow worse as well.

- ❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.
- ❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 1 Kings 12-16, and work on your memory materials?”
- ❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.
- ❖ **Scripture Memorization : QUIZ** – **Have each student turn in a copy of - 1 Kings 3:9 Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"**
- ❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review
 - A. **1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built**
 - B. **1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established**
 - C. **1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri**
 - D. **2 Kings 2:1–8:6 - Elisha and His Miracles**
 - C’ **2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu**
 - B’ **2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls**
 - A’ **2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed**

❖ **Review** – Because of Solomon’s sin, the Lord, through the prophet Ahijah, told Jeroboam that ten of the tribes of Israel would be torn from the house of David and given to him to rule. Yet in His mercy, the Lord will leave 2 tribes (Judah and Benjamin) for Solomon and his sons to rule over in keeping with the promise that He made to David. **(Have a student read 2 Samuel 7:12-16)**. Solomon hears of this prophecy and sought to kill Jeroboam, who then flees to Egypt. As we have said before, Israel under Solomon has become like Egypt in the days of Moses. Jeroboam’s “exodus” is from Israel to Egypt. Here he will be protected by Shishak, king of Egypt until the death of Solomon.

❖ **Lesson - 1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established**

Chapter 12 – Jeroboam’s Rise and Fall

Verses 1-24 – Jeroboam’s Rise – After the death of Solomon, all of Israel goes to Shechem to crown Rehoboam king and he meets them there. After hearing of Rehoboam’s coronation, Jeroboam is summoned from Egypt and he, along with “the whole assembly of Israel”,

approach Rehoboam with a request. Solomon had put the people to much labor in his building projects and Jeroboam and the people ask Rehoboam for relief from this “burdensome service”.

Rehoboam first consults with the “elders who stood before his father” and they advise him to grant the request and to be a “servant to these people” (v. 7). The advice of the elders to Rehoboam was wise. A godly king who shows himself to be a true servant of his subjects will win their loyalty and service. Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, yet He came to earth as a humble servant and gave Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of His people (Matthew 20:26-28, Luke 22:24-30).

Rehoboam then consults men his own age (probably in their 30’s and 40’s; Rehoboam is 41 at this time) and they advise him to be even harder on the people than Solomon had been. They think that a show of power and discipline towards the people is what is needed. Rehoboam, fails to take the counsel of Solomon in Proverbs 13:20 He who walks with wise *men* will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed and he takes the advice of the younger men. When they hear of this, Jeroboam and the people are angered and they revolt against Rehoboam and crown Jeroboam king over the ten northern tribes. Yet this event is not apart from the sovereign decree of God (**Have a student read verse 15**). Additionally, God’s promise to David was not set aside in that Rehoboam retains Judah and Benjamin to rule over (see v. 20-21).

Solomon had become a like a new Pharaoh. He had turned to Egypt for horses, set up false worship and transformed Israel into an Egyptian tyranny. The people of Israel had hoped to be liberated from this tyranny by Rehoboam. When they saw that Rehoboam was determined to be even more like the Pharaoh who enslaved the Israelites in the days of Moses, they sought a deliverer in the person of Jeroboam. As the ten tribes begin their “exodus” from Rehoboam’s rule, Rehoboam pursues them to destroy them, just like Pharaoh in Egypt had done. The Lord through Shemaiah the prophet, prevents him from doing this, much as the Lord stopped Pharaoh’s army from recapturing the Israelites at the Red Sea.

Jeroboam starts out as a New Moses. He asks Rehoboam for relief from the oppression as Moses had (see Ex 5:1-14) and leads God’s people in an exodus from the New Egypt that Rehoboam’s kingdom had become. However, Jeroboam will soon become a New Aaron, leading Israel into idol worship and rebellion against Yaweh.

Verses 25-33 – Jeroboam’s Fall – The Law of God required that the people travel to Jerusalem three times a year for certain feasts (Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles). Jeroboam fears that these journeys/feasts will cause the heart of the people of the northern tribes to be turned back to Rehoboam and will result in the downfall of his newly formed kingdom and his own death as well (v. 25-27). He decides to use idolatrous religious worship and tradition to achieve his political goals. Though Jeroboam starts as the New Moses, seeking deliverance for the oppressed people of Israel, he becomes a New Aaron who had led Israel into calf worship in the wilderness (See Exodus 32).

Jereboam takes Aaron's sin much farther than Aaron did. He makes two golden calves instead of one (12:28) and sets up two new worship centers in Bethel (in the south) and Dan (in the north) (12:29) – **see map**. Jeroboam goes so far as to use Aaron's own words when he says to the people, "Here are your gods, O Israel which brought you up from the land of Egypt" (c.f. Exodus 32:4). He also makes shrines on the high places (12:31a), sets up a false priestly system (12:31b), creates a new feast day in the eighth month to replace the feast of Tabernacles (12:32), and sacrifices on altars during this feast (12:33). Later Jeroboam even names his two sons after Aaron's sons (see 1 Kings 14:1,20).

Chapter 13 – The Man of God and the Old Prophet

Verses 1-10 – The Man of God – Just as God was swift to judge Aaron and Israel in the wilderness when they became idolatrous, so too He is quick to bring judgment on the idolatrous worship which Jeroboam led into Israel. The Lord sends an unnamed "man of God" from Judah to Bethel who pronounces a curse upon the altar which Jeroboam had made declaring that it will be split in two. He prophesies that one day a child named Josiah will be born in David's family who will bring an end to this idolatrous worship and priestly system (12:2). Though the pronouncement of judgment is swift, yet this child Josiah will not be born for nearly 300 years! (see 2 Kings 22). God indeed is a longsuffering God!

Jeroboam's hand withers as he stretches it out from the altar in calling for the arrest of the man of God, a picture of his rule over Israel "withering" and being torn from his hand. Just as Jeroboam is like Aaron, this man of God is like a Moses figure and the splitting of the altar in verse 5 reminds us of Moses "splitting" the tablets of the covenant when he saw Aaron and the Israelites engaged in the worship of the golden calf. Jeroboam pleads for the man of God to pray to the Lord that his hand (his rule) would be restored and he does so, again of the picture of possible restoration for Jeroboam and his reign over Israel. However, verses 33-34 will put an end to this hope once and for all.

In verses 7-10, Jeroboam asks man of God to come home to him to refresh himself and to eat. To do so, the man of God would have to violate a clear command that he had received from the Lord not to eat or drink anything in Bethel, nor to return to Judah by the way he came. Additionally, eating and fellowshiping with another is a sign of peace between two parties. God (represented by this "man of God") is by no means at peace with Jeroboam, and so the man of God declines Jeroboam's invitation.

Verses 11-34 – The Old Prophet – What follows is a strange account which has baffled many a Bible commentator. The events are as follows (**Go over this quickly**):

- An old prophet from Bethel hears from his sons what the man of God had said and done and pursues the man of God on his donkey. (13:11-14)
- This old prophet at first tries unsuccessfully to persuade the man of God to stop and eat with him. (13:15-17)

- The old prophet then lies and says that the Lord told him to bring the man of God to his home to eat. This persuades the man of God to go to the old prophet's house and eat. (13:18-19)
- This lying old prophet is then used of God to declare the Lord's curse upon the man of God for having disobeyed the Lord's commandment to not eat nor drink while in Bethel. (13:20-22)
- The man of God resumes his journey and is killed by a lion on the way. (13:23-25)
- The old prophet hears of this and travels by donkey to the place where the man of God's corpse lies, with the lion still standing guard over it. (13:26-28)
- The old prophet then takes the body of the man of God, places it in his own tomb, mourns over his death, and declares his desire to be buried in the same tomb since the word which the man of God spoke to Jeroboam will surely come to pass. (13:29-32)

So what can we make of all of this?

- Since the man of God, the old prophet and even Jeroboam are not named in verses 11-32, it is possible that, through this event, the Lord is giving a picture of the future of Israel and Judah, both of whom will stray from the "way" of God ("way" is used **nine** times in this chapter!)
- The old prophet may represent the northern tribes of Israel who have become unfaithful to Yaweh
- The man of God may represent the southern tribes of Judah (and Benjamin) who at first remain faithful to Yaweh, yet later are enticed into the same sorts of sins as Israel.
- Lions are often used in Scripture as pictures of God's judgment on men and nations
- The man of God is not allowed to be buried in his home in Judah, a picture of the exile which will come to both Israel and Judah
- The old prophet longs to be reunited with the man of God in his death, a picture of Israel and Judah coming together after their exiles.

Whereas Aaron repented from his sin of leading Israel into idol worship, verses 33-34 tell us that Jeroboam, the New Aaron, does not. This lack of repentance will result in God's judgment on Jeroboam and his family. Throughout the rest of 1 and 2 Kings, Jeroboam will be mentioned over and over as other kings of Israel continue to walk in "the way of Jeroboam".

Chapter 14 – End of the Reign of Jeroboam and Rehoboam

Verses 1-20 - Judgment on the House of Jeroboam – In response to Jeroboam's leading Israel into idolatry and his persistent rebellion, the Lord sends sickness to Jeroboam's son Abijah. Jeroboam devises a scheme for his wife to go to Shiloh in disguise and inquire of Ahijah the prophet as to what will become of their son. The Lord tells Ahijah that she is coming and Ahijah confronts her by saying of Jeroboam, "you have done more evil than all who were before you, for you have gone and made for yourself other gods and molded images to provoke Me to anger, and have cast Me behind your back." (14:9). Ahijah pronounces God's judgments:

1) Verses 10-14 - All the house of Jeroboam will be destroyed, beginning with their son, Abijah, who will die as soon as Jeroboam's wife returns home. This is a tragic reversal of the Passover in which all of the firstborn of Israel were spared. As soon as Jeroboam's wife crosses the threshold of her home, Abijah dies (14:17).

2) Verses 15-16 - All of the northern kingdom of Israel will be uprooted from the land and sent into exile because of the sin of Jeroboam. This is a reversal of the whole exodus from Egypt as Israel will be sent back over a river (the Euphrates) into a Gentile land (Assyria) once again.

Having reigned over Israel for 22 years, Jeroboam himself also comes to his own death in verses 19-20 and Nadab, his son, reigns in his place.

Verses 21-31 – Reign of Rehoboam – Throughout the rest of 1 and 2 Kings we will see that the rulers northern kingdom of Israel will continue to sin by “following in the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat”. Judah, on the other hand, will frequently sin by building and worshipping at “high places” which compete with Jerusalem as centers of worship. Idolatry, sodomy and prostitution often accompanied worship at these high places. This high place worship is exactly what Rehoboam leads Judah into as we see in verses 22-24. The outcome of these abominations is that the Lord empowers Shishak king of Egypt to invade Jerusalem and take away all of the treasures in the temple and the king's palace as well. This foreshadows the later invasion by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon which will result in Judah's exile.

It is interesting that Sishak also takes the gold shields that Solomon had made. Rehoboam replaces them with bronze shields, a clear picture of the glory fading from the rule of Solomon's descendants. After the death of Rehoboam, his son, Abijam, rules in his place. Unfortunately, he will not be any more faithful to Yaweh than Rehoboam had been.

Chapter 15 –16 – Further (Boring) Reigns of Kings of Israel and Judah

It took the author of 1 and 2 Kings eleven chapters to describe the reign of Solomon with all of his wisdom, building projects and other accomplishments for the Kingdom of God. The pace of the narrative increases considerably after that and this seems to be related to the relative unfaithfulness of the kings of Israel and Judah compared to David and Solomon (in his early reign).

As Israel and her kings continue to walk in the way of Jeroboam, and Judah's kings (with many notable exceptions) sin as well, the history of these kings becomes fairly predictable... even dry and boring: Rise → Sin → Fall . The details of their falls are often not even given in the text. Sinful, idolatrous kings will rise, sin, and fall in rapid succession with no great or beautiful accomplishments and with few words being said about them by the author. Thus the reader will often need to consult the chart on the chronology of these kings in order to even know when and over which kingdom a particular king ruled.

As Leithart has pointed out, “Idols are lifeless and therefore cannot impart life. Lifeless idols only make for lifeless people. When the initial titillation has passed, idolatry quickly yields to dryness and death.” Abijam was one such “lifeless” king.

15:1-8 – Abijam (Judah – 2nd King) – The son of Rehoboam and the second king of Judah (See chart of the kings of Israel and Judah), Abijam’s “heart was not loyal to the Lord his God as was the heart of his father (actually great grandfather) David.” He was often at war with Jeroboam, but no other details are given of his unfaithful life. He dies after a reign of only 3 years and Asa, his son reigns in his place.

15:9-24 – Asa (Judah – 3rd King) - After two unfaithful kings, the Lord raises up Asa who breaks this string and represents a sort of a “third day (or third king) resurrection” for the kingdom of Judah. Read what a godly king that Asa was - **Have a student read 15:11-13**. Though he did not remove the high places, verse 14 says, “Asa’s heart was loyal to the Lord all his days.” Even so, Asa was not a perfect king. There is ongoing war between Judah and Israel (under Baasha), a sign that all is not well. Secondly, Asa forges an unwise treaty with Ben Hadad of Syria to strengthen his hand against Baasha, relying on a powerful Gentile nation instead of the Lord (see 2 Chronicles 16:7-10). The price for this, as it was under Rehoboam, is the emptying of the treasuries both in the temple and in the king’s house. After ruling Judah for forty one years, Asa dies and his son, Jehoshaphat, reigns in his place.

15:25-32 – Nadab (Israel – 2nd King) – This son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in the second year of Asa’s reign and he reigned a mere two years. Nadab was essentially a clone of Jeroboam and the Lord brings his short reign to an end through his murder by Baasha who takes over as king in Israel. Baasha also fulfills the prophecy of Ahijah against the house of Jeroboam given in 14:10-11 by killing the entire house of Jeroboam. (15:29). Thus the reign of the family of Jeroboam over Israel ends here.

15:33 – Chapter 16:7 – Baasha (Israel – 3rd King) – Baasha, who reigns over Israel 24 years is no more godly than was Nadab whom he murdered (see 15:34). He walks in the way of Jeroboam and the Lord sends His Word “against Baasha” in the form of Jehu. **When Israel’s rulers sin against the Lord, the Lord Himself becomes their enemy!** The curse that Jehu pronounces against Baasha and his family in 16:2-4) is nearly identical to the one that Ahijah had pronounced on Jeroboam and his kin (c.f. 14:7-11). Verse 7 says that this curse comes upon Baasha and his family both because of his being **like** the house of Jeroboam, and because he had **destroyed** the house of Jeroboam (interesting!). He dies and his son Elah ascends to the throne.

16:8-14 – Elah (Israel – 4th King) – Elah was the son of Baasha and reigned for two years while Asa ruled over Judah. He apparently is sinful as well (16:13) and, while in a drunken stupor, his chariot commander Zimri murders Elah in Tirzah. Zimri then proceeds to carry out the prophecy of Jehu by killing all of the family of Baasha. He then becomes king in place of Elah. This ends the dynasty of Baasha.

16:15-28 – Zimri (Israel – 5th King) and Omri (Israel – 6th King) – While Zimri is carrying out his brutal murder, Israel’s army is besieging the Philistine town of Gibbethon as they had been for **twenty four years** (see 15:27), a picture that the Lord had weakened Israel in her idolatry. After reigning in Tirzah for only 7 days, those in Israel’s army at Gibbethon hear of the murder of Elah and make Omri (their commander) king. They also abandon their unsuccessful twenty four year effort in Gibbethon and instead besiege Tirzah. When Zimri sees this, he commits suicide by burning the king’s palace down around himself which the author of 1 and 2 Kings connects to his own sin to walking in the way of Jeroboam. Omri comes to the throne of a kingdom that cannot conquer her enemies and that is literally destroying itself! There is civil war between Omri and those in Israel who follow Tibni, with Omri eventually prevailing. He also builds Samaria, the new capital of Israel.

Leithart has pointed out that Omri can be seen as a sort of counterfeit David:

<i>Omri</i>	<i>David</i>
Military commander who fights Philistines	Military commander who fights Philistines
Succeeds the suicidal king Zimri	Succeeds the suicidal king Saul
Comes to the throne after a civil war	Comes to the throne after a civil war
Divides his reign between two capitals, Tirzah and Samaria	Divides his reign between two capitals, Hebron and Jerusalem
Buys Shemer for his capital	Buys the threshing floor of Araunah for the temple

Unlike David, not only does Omri continue in the sin of Jeroboam, verse 25 tells us that he “did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and did worse than all who were before him.” Omri reigns over Israel twelve years and dies and Ahab his son reigns in his place. Unfortunately, although kings and dynasties (families of kings) come and go in the northern kingdom of Israel, idolatry and other sin remain and even worsen!

16:29-34 – Ahab (Israel – 7th King) – Ahab will be a central figure in the entire central section of 1 and 2 Kings and he is introduced here. He is the seventh king of Israel and will bring idol worship and other sinful practices to their fullness.

If Omri was a counterfeit David, then Ahab can be seen as a counterfeit Solomon in that he marries a foreign, idol-worshipping wife and leads Israel into further idolatry. Ahab thinks it is a trivial thing to simply walk in the sins of Jeroboam (v. 31) and “did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him” (v. 33) by:

- 1) Marrying Jezebel a Sidonian princess who will prove to be one of the most wicked women ever described in the Bible.
- 2) Bringing Baal worship to Israel. Jezebel (whose name means “Baal exalts” or “Baal is husband to”) brought with her the worship of the Sidonian god Baal. Her father was Ethbaal (“with Baal”). It is ironic that Hiram of Tyre (a Sidonian) had helped Solomon build the Lord’s temple while Ahab, the false Solomon, builds a temple to Baal in Samaria.

As we come to chapter 17, we will see the Lord confront Ahab in the form of the prophet Elijah. May the Lord give us grace to break free from our own besetting sins and to walk in holiness and pure devotion to Him.

❖ **Homework** – Read 1 Kings 17-19, work on memory materials

❖ **Pray / Prep for Worship**

1 and 2 Kings

Lesson 6 – 1 Kings 17-2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri

Part 1 – 1 Kings 17-19 – Elijah Confronts Ahab and Baal

Objective – To help the students to see that, despite the sin of individuals or nations, God will always preserve His people.

- ❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.
- ❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 1 Kings 17-19, and work on your memory materials?”
- ❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.

Scripture Memorization : NEW VERSE: 1 Kings 18:37 – Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.

- ❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review
 - A. **1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built**
 - B. **1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established**
 - C. **1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri**
 - D. **2 Kings 2:1–8:6 - Elisha and His Miracles**
 - C’ **2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu**
 - B’ **2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls**
 - A’ **2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed**

❖ **Review** – In our last lesson we saw the rise and fall of Jeroboam as king over the ten northern tribes of Israel. Jeroboam begins a long line of kings from many different families who lead Israel into gross idolatry and wickedness. Ahab, the seventh king of Israel, along with his evil wife Jezebel, brings these practices to their zenith. The sending of Elijah and Elisha to confront this sin forms the center of the books of 1 and 2 Kings

❖ **Lesson - 1 Kings 17-19 – Elijah Confronts Ahab and Baal**

Chapter 17 – Yaweh Confronts Baal - The Coming of Elijah

Verses 1-7 – Elijah proclaims a drought - God is not slow in bringing His judgments to bear on Ahab and Jezebel. Like we saw in chapter 13 with the “sudden” coming of the man of God to confront Jeroboam, chapter 17:1 brings the sudden appearance of Elijah, the prophet of God, to confront Ahab. Whereas the man of God in chapter 13 disobeyed the Lord and was destroyed by a lion, Elijah will obey and be fed by God, and used by God to feed others.

Israel has become like Egypt in the days of Moses, full of idol worship. The life of Elijah will follow that of Moses rather closely:

- 1) v. 1 – Moses confronted Pharaoh and announced the coming of judgment on Egypt in the form of the ten plagues and Elijah confronts Ahab the king and announces the coming of a drought in Israel.
- 2) v. 2-5 - Elijah leaves Israel and crosses the Jordan just as Moses led the people of God out of Egypt, across the Red Sea and into the wilderness.
- 3) v. 6-7 – Just as the Lord provided water, manna and even quail in the wilderness for the Israelites in the days of Moses, so too God provides water, bread, and meat for Elijah by the Brook Cherith in spite of the drought in the land of Israel.

In chapters 18 and 19 we will see more comparisons between Elijah and Moses and we will also see that Elisha, who will follow Elijah as the prophet to Israel, will be like a new Joshua.

Part of the judgment on Israel is Yaweh withdrawing His special presence from them as pictured in Elijah leaving Israel. The Israelites under Ahab are not just facing drought (and the famine that follows it) but also a famine of the Word of God as the voice and presence of God (as embodied in Elijah) crosses the Jordan into the wilderness.

Yaweh will have no other gods before him and, in many cases, the plagues of Egypt in the days of Moses were a confrontation by Yaweh of the gods of Egypt (river god, frog god, sun god, etc. see Exodus 12:12). In the same way, the Lord confronts and defeats Baal (the Sidonian god of the forces of nature – clouds, weather, etc.) by causing rain to cease in the land of Israel. Baal cannot provide water for his followers, but Yaweh provides a banquet in the wilderness for Elijah. Not only does God defeat Baal in Israel, he will travel right into Baal's land (Sidon) and works miracles there as well!

Verses 8-24 – Elijah/Yaweh goes to the Land of Baal

Yaweh allows the Brook Cherith to dry up and sends Elijah to Zarephath in the land of Sidon, the “home field” of Baal himself! The drought and famine are present in this Gentile land as Elijah is sent to a widow and her son who are suffering its effects in Zarephath. Wherever the presence of Yaweh is, there will be life and blessings, even to the Gentiles! Baal is unable to provide even a crust of bread for this poor woman and her son, but Yaweh will bring life to both of them in two miraculous ways!

1) Verses 13-16 - He provides flour and oil to make bread for as long as the widow and her son need it. Elijah tells the widow to use the last of her flour and oil to make him some bread first. This reminds us of the giving of our tithes on the first day of the week, trusting that the Lord will multiply His blessings to us as we are faithful to give the first fruits of our labors to Him. Yaweh is indeed the Lord of life!

2) Verses 17-24 - He uses Elijah to raise her son from the dead – Up to this point in the history of Israel, there have been no recorded resurrections from the dead. Elijah prays to the Lord and her son is raised back to life. Yaweh is Lord of life and death! It is interesting to note that, when her son dies, the widow assumes that it is because of her own sin (see verse

18) and so has no hope of a good outcome. Even our own sins are no barrier to the grace and mercy of God, for He is Lord even over our own sins!

It is also interesting to see the importance of prayer and obedience in the life of every Christian. If we hope to have the Lord hear our words (prayers) and answer us, we must be willing to obey His words to us (the Scripture). Elijah obeys the Lord's commands to leave Israel, to hide by the Brook Cherith, and to go to Zarephath. Elijah then prays fervently to the Lord on behalf of the widow's son. As James 5:16b tells us, The effective, **fervent** prayer of a **righteous** man avails much. The Lord listens to the voice of fervent, righteous Elijah and answers him **exactly** according to his request (compare verse 21 with verse 22).

Chapter 18 – Yaweh Defeats Baal

Verses 1-18 – Elijah's Message to Ahab – It is the **third** year of the drought (death) and now Yaweh is about to once again send rain (life) to His people, a clear picture of death and resurrection. The Lord ends Elijah's exile from the land of Israel and sends him to Samaria to give the word to Ahab that the drought will now come to an end. In verse 2 we see that the famine due to the drought has been severe in Samaria.

While Elijah travels with news of the coming of **life-giving** rain from Yaweh, we are introduced to **Obadiah**, a God-fearing member of Ahab's court, who also brought life to 150 prophets by hiding them in caves and bringing them bread and water in order to hide them from the murderous spree of Jezebel (see verses 4,13). Wherever Yaweh and his people go, there is life and safety. Wherever we find the followers of Baal such as Jezebel, we also find misery and death. In verses 5 and 6 we learn that Ahab is more concerned about saving his livestock than in stopping Jezebel or in leading Israel in repentance for the Baal worship he has led her into. Sinful man often looks for ways to escape the judgment of God rather than simply confessing and forsaking the sin that has brought the judgment upon them in the first place.

Verses 7-19 - Elijah meets Obadiah on his way to Samaria and commands him to go to Ahab and tell him that he has arrived. Obadiah is afraid that if he does so, Elijah will simply leave again and Ahab will be angry with him. Elijah swears by the Lord that he will indeed present himself before Ahab and Obadiah obeys Elijah's command. When Ahab meets Elijah he accuses him of being a "troubler of Israel". Yaweh has indeed troubled Israel for the great trouble (sin) that Ahab and Jezebel led her into, and He is about to "trouble" Baal as well! From this point in the narrative forward, Elijah (Yaweh) takes full command over Ahab.

Verses 19-40 – Baal is Defeated!

In verses 19-20, Elijah commands Ahab to gather all Israel, as well as the false prophets of Asherah and Baal, to him on Mt. Carmel. Though Ahab is ruler over the northern kingdom of Israel, it is Yaweh who rules over the rulers of men and Ahab complies exactly with the command of Elijah without saying a word. It is interesting that Ahab is silent from verse 18 through verse 41, a clear picture that Baal and all other false gods are silent and powerless in the face of Yaweh, the one true God. Elijah rebukes Ahab and the people for worshipping Baal while thinking that they could worship Yaweh at the same time (v. 21-22). Here too,

the worshippers of Baal are silent and do not answer Elijah a word. In verses 23-24, Elijah draws the battle lines between Yaweh and Baal (Have a student read these verses). Ahab, the prophets and the people prepare the sacrifice and though they cry aloud from morning until noon, nothing happens, proving that Baal is no true God!

Yaweh then begins to mock Baal and his followers (Have a student read verses 27-28). The idol-worshipping people even feel that they need to shed their own blood to persuade Baal to hear their prayers. This is in sharp contrast to Jesus who will shed his own blood for His people. In verse 29 we see the **three fold** answer of Baal to his follower's cries and self-mutilation:

- 1) There was no voice
- 2) No one answered
- 3) No one paid attention

Baal is no true god because he has no voice, he doesn't answer prayer, and he doesn't care about his followers at all!

On the other hand, in verse 30, Yaweh (through Elijah) calls His people to come near to Himself even though neither Ahab, nor the false prophets, nor the people Israel have yet repented! Elijah prays a simple prayer asking for God to make all the people to know that He is the Lord God. Yaweh, who does have a voice, and who does answer prayer, and who does care about His people, answers with fire from heaven. Though this fire could easily have been sent by God to consume the people for their idolatry, instead it consumes the bull of the sacrifice, pointing forward to Jesus who "...demonstrate(d) His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8. What a longsuffering and merciful God we have!

Leithart points out that Elijah's (Yaweh's) confrontation with Baal and the covenant renewal that takes place afterward reminds us again of Moses and some of the events in Exodus 20-24 and chapter 32 as well:

- Both Elijah and Moses set up altars of twelve stones, representing the twelve tribes of Israel (1 Kings 18:10-32; Exodus 24:4)
- In both events, Yaweh shows His glory in fire and Israel confesses Yaweh as Lord (1 Kings 18:39; Exodus 24:7)
- After the incident of the golden calf, Moses calls for the true followers of Yaweh to execute the idolaters (Exodus 32:25-29) Elijah too commands the people to seize the prophets of Baal and to destroy them and they obey.

And now, after the **fire** of the Lord has destroyed Baal worship in Israel, wonderful **rain** from the heaven comes at last (see verses 44-45), a picture of God's blessing and favor. This reminds us that the fire of God's judgment that He poured upon Jesus was followed by the pouring out of the "rain" of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples who became rivers of living water flowing into the world.

It seems at this point in the narrative, that there is a glimmer of hope for Ahab. He has complied with all of Elijah's commands, he has eaten and drunk (a picture of reconciliation),

and he has gone home to rule once more. Unfortunately, Ahab is a weak, sinful man in all ways, and Jezebel will soon quench whatever small spark of spiritual fire which now glows in Ahab.

Chapter 19 – The Empire Strikes Back!

When Ahab tells Jezebel of the events on Mt. Carmel, she immediately makes death threats against Elijah. Elijah “sees” this and he “goes” (not “flees” or “ran” as some translations render this Hebrew word. Elijah is not in a self-absorbed panic!) In verses 4 and 10 we see that Elijah is in despair, not only for his own life, but also for the fact that, despite the demonstration on Mt. Carmel, Ahab, Jezebel, and Israel as a whole has not repented. Elijah’s despair causes him to naturally feel that he is alone. Yaweh is not frustrated, nor is he in retreat. He is leading Elijah, and his journey is not a blind fleeing for his life, but to specific destinations; first into the wilderness (v. 4-7) and ultimately to Mt. Sinai (Horeb) (v. 8).

Israel has become idolatrous Egypt and Elijah is again like Moses who first led Israel into the wilderness where Yaweh fed them with bread from heaven. In verses 4-8 Elijah goes into the wilderness and is fed by the Lord. Mt Sinai is the place where Yaweh made covenant with His people and where God revealed himself to Moses (see Exodus 34). Elijah goes up on Mt. Sinai and, in verses 11-12, the Lord reveals himself to him there as well.

After the incident with the golden calf, Sinai was also the place where Moses pleaded with Yaweh to spare the people. However, having seen that Israel has not repented after the confrontation and miracle on Mt. Carmel, Elijah instead becomes like a prosecuting attorney who brings charges against Ahab and the people of Israel. (Have a student read v. 14) Yaweh the Great Judge hears his case and rules in Elijah’s favor. The Lord will raise up Hazael as king of Syria, Jehu as king over Israel, and Elisha as the successor to Elijah, all of whom will be used of to carry out the death sentence on Ahab and his family. This three-fold “death” will be followed by a “resurrection” in the form of the prophet Elisha and the seven thousand in Israel who have remained faithful to Yaweh. Yaweh will always preserve His people alive, and cause them to flourish.

Elisha who succeeds Elijah is like a new Joshua who succeeded Moses . When Elijah finds him, Elisha is plowing with the twelfth of 12 pair of oxen, a picture of his leading of Israel. Elijah passes by Elisha, much as Yaweh passed by Elijah in verse 11 and he receives Elijah’s mantle, a type of anointing for ministry. The sacrifice that Elisha offers and the meal he feeds the people (a type of Peace Offering) tell us that Elisha becomes like one of the priests of Israel, interceding before Yaweh on their behalf and giving hope for continued covenantal relationship with Yaweh. Yet even the word, example and teaching of the prophets will not be enough to turn the hearts of successive kings, nor of those they rule, back to true worship of God and to holy living. Ultimately, only God Himself, in the person of Jesus can preserve His people. He will preserve us as well!

❖ **Homework** – Read 1 Kings 20-2 Kings 1; Work on memory material

❖ **Prayer / Prep for Worship**

1 and 2 Kings

**Lesson 7 – 1 Kings 17-2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri
Part 2 – 1 Kings 20-2 Kings 1 – The Three Falls of Ahab**

Objective – To help the students to see the three falls of Ahab as a reflection of sin against the Holy Spirit, Jesus, and God the Father and to also reflect on the awful consequences of unrepentance and failing to obey God’s Word.

❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.

❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 1 Kings 20-2 Kings 1, and work on your memory materials?”

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.

Scripture Memorization : QUIZ NEXT WEEK! 1 Kings 18:37 – Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.

❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review

A. 1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built

B. 1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established

C. 1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri

D. 2 Kings 2:1–8:6 - Elisha and His Miracles

C’ 2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu

B’ 2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls

A’ 2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed

Review / Introduction – In our last lesson, we saw that, Israel’s (and later Judah’s) kings were not faithful to the Lord. He raises up prophets like Elijah and Elisha to announce judgments on wicked kings like Ahab and to lead those who do remain faithful to Yaweh. Elijah orchestrated Yaweh’s defeat of Baal on Mt. Carmel and then successfully escaped evil Jezebel. After meeting with Yaweh on Mt. Sinai, Elijah sought out Elisha who will succeed him as Yaweh’s prophet in Israel.

Introduction to 1 Kings 20-22 – The Three Falls of Ahab

Reformation Covenant Church Distinctive – Three Falls, Three Recoveries

Some Bible scholars have noted that the Trinitarian nature of God (Father, Son, Spirit) is reflected in man, His image bearer, in man’s quest to obtain Glory (Father), Knowledge (Jesus, the Son, the Word) and Life (Holy Spirit). The book of Genesis records three sinful

falls that have also been seen by some commentators as emphasizing sin against one person of the Trinity more than the other two:

- 1) The Fall of Adam (Genesis 3) – Adams sin was one of impatience and grasping after Glory (Rule - the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil). This can be seen as primarily a sin against the Father.
- 2) The Fall of Cain (Genesis 4) – Cain sinned by murdering his own brother which can be seen as being more a sin against the Son, Jesus, who came to earth as a man and is not afraid to be called an “elder brother” by His followers.
- 3) The Fall of the Sethites (Genesis 6) – Christians (sons of God) intermarried with the pagans (daughters of men). This can be seen as a sin against the Holy Spirit by living unholy lives.

These three falls in Genesis were followed by three “recoveries”

- 1) Abraham was patient in waiting for the birth of Isaac (Genesis 16-21)
- 2) Jacob, though estranged from his brother Esau, was later reconciled to him (Genesis 22-33)
- 3) Joseph resisted the unholy advances of Potiphar’s wife while he was a slave in Egypt (Genesis 39)

Saul, the first King of Israel also sinned in these three ways:

- 1) Sin against the Father - 1 Samuel 13:1-15 - Saul refused to listen to Samuel (both a prophet and judge in Israel) and offered sacrifices before Samuel arrived. Sins of refusing to listen to the voice of God through His can be seen as sins against the Father
- 2) Sin against the Son - 1 Samuel 14:24-46 – Like Cain, Saul sins against his Israelite brothers by placing them under a rash oath of fasting while fighting the Philistines and later threatening to kill his own son Jonathan who inadvertently broke the fast.
- 3) Sin against the Holy Spirit - 1 Samuel 15 – Saul failed to execute the wicked pagan king Agag of the Amalekites. Unholy alliances with unbelievers can be seen as sins primarily against the Holy Spirit

In 1 Kings 20-22, we will see that Ahab sins in these same three ways, only in the reverse order from the sins of Saul

1 Kings 20 – Improper treaty with Ben Hadad (Sin against the Holy Spirit)

As we come to 1 Kings 20, we see that the Lord has raised up an enemy of Ahab in the person of Ben Hadad, king of Syria. Ben Hadad surrounds Samaria and demands the riches of Israel, along with her women and children as a ransom. Though Ahab at first agrees to these terms, he refuses to comply when Ben Hadad demands even more (see verse 6). As Ben Hadad prepares his attack, the Lord “suddenly” sends a prophet to Ahab who tells him the good news (for a change!) that Ahab will defeat the Syrian army so that he “...shall know that (Yaweh) is the Lord”. Verses 15-22 give the details of this battle, which ends in a great victory for Ahab’s troops. The prophet comes back to Ahab and tells him that in the spring of the next year, Ben Hadad will come again.

The servants of Ben Hadad make a theological assessment of his defeat (**Have a student read verses 23-25**) saying that Yaweh is only a god of the hills. This is a direct challenge to Yaweh Himself which He will not take lightly! As the spring of the year comes, Ben Hadad again musters his troops and goes to Aphek which is on a plain southwest of Samaria. A second “man of God” comes to Ahab and assures him that Yaweh will again give him victory so that Ahab will once again “...know that (Yaweh) is the Lord”. Verses 29-30 give us the details of the battle of Aphek which reminds us of Joshua and the battle of Jericho.: There is a 7 day wait, the walls fall down on the Syrians and the victory is purely through the strength of Yaweh!

Unfortunately, just as Saul spared Agag the Amalekite king, so too Ahab spares Ben Hadad the king of the Syrians and makes a treaty with him. In verses 35-43 a third prophet (man of God) comes to rebuke Ahab. In a rather strange account, the man of God first asks a neighbor to strike him (as Ahab should have struck Ben Hadad). When he refuses to do so he is killed by a lion, a graphic picture of the destruction that awaits Ahab. A second neighbor, complies with the prophet’s request and is spared. This man of God then goes to Ahab and tells him a story (**Have a student read verses 39-42**). This story reminds us of the one Nathan told to David he came to rebuke David for his sin of committing adultery with Bathsheba, and having Uriah her husband killed (see 2 Samuel 12). The man of God says that Ahab should have struck Ben Hadad but he refused to do so and so will be struck down. When confronted with our sin, we should be convicted, angry at ourselves, and sad for the consequences of them. We should then cry out to God for mercy and forgiveness and be ready to make restitution for them. Unfortunately, Ahab does not repent or even ask for the “ransom of silver” (from the story) or cry out to God in conversation, but goes back to his house sullen and displeased. **The forging of unholy alliances with unbelievers can be seen as a sin primarily against the Holy Spirit.**

1 Kings 21 – Improper treatment of Naboth (Sin against Jesus, the Son)

Idolatry is not just sin against God in heaven. It has great personal and political consequences that affect many people...it is not a “victimless sin”. Ahab (and Jezebel’s) idolatry has led them into unholy alliances with the pagan Gentile king Ben Hadad and, in 1 Kings 21, it will lead to the murder of a fellow Israelite and the theft of his property as well! (**Have a student retell the account from verses 1-16 of Ahab, Jezebel and Naboth, summarized below:**)

- Ahab wants Naboth’s vineyard, which is near to his palace, to turn it into a vegetable (herb) garden
- Ahab offers to give Naboth a better vineyard in return, or to pay Naboth for it
- Naboth refuses on the grounds that it would violate Leviticus 25 which stated that all of the land of Israel belonged to Yaweh and so could not be permanently sold.
- Ahab pouts
- Jezebel sees Ahab pouting and tells him that she will get the vineyard for him
- Jezebel uses the elders and nobles of Samaria to bring false charges of blasphemy against Naboth and find evil men to act as false witnesses.
- Naboth is stoned after he is found guilty of these false charges

- Jezebel tells Ahab of Naboth's death and encourages him to seize Naboth's vineyard
- Ahab does so

We can see many similarities in this account between Ahab (and Jezebel) and other sinful men from Scripture:

- Ahab (with Jezebel) is David, seizing what is dear to Naboth and arranging for his neighbor's death as David did with Bathsheba and Uriah. Naboth's murder happens while Ahab lies on his bed, much like David who was far away in his palace when Uriah died in the battlefield.
- Ahab (with Jezebel) is Cain, attacking a "brother" Israelite as Cain did to his brother Abel
- Ahab is Adam, taking forbidden fruit, the fruit of another's vineyard just as Adam (and Eve) did in the Garden of Eden

We might also see this whole account as representing what is going on in the history of Israel at this time:

- Naboth's vineyard can represent Israel with Naboth being the faithful people within her who still make decisions based on the Law of God and not on their own selfish desires.
- Ahab on the other hand wants to turn Israel (vineyard) into Egypt (vegetable garden). The only other place in Scripture where the phrase "vegetable garden" is used is Deuteronomy 11:10, referring to the land of Egypt.
- Wicked Ahab wants to drive Naboth out and take possession of his land, a reversal of what Israel once did to the wicked Caananites who lived there.
- As Leithart points out, the name "Naboth" in Hebrew is close in spelling to the name "prophets". Ahab and Jezebel's killing of the prophets of God (see 1 Kings 18:4) and Naboth is also what marked the nation of Israel as a whole who consistently failed to listen to the prophets sent to her. Jesus pointed this out in his parable of the vineyard and the wicked tenants in Matthew 21:33ff (see also Mathew 23:29-39).

This sin of Ahab and Jezebel against their brother Israelite, Naboth, can be seen as **sin against the Son, Jesus who is our elder brother and the Word of God** (which they ignored in order to commit this sin). Naboth's murder outside of the city on the basis of false charges of blasphemy foretells of the false charges and murder of Jesus outside of Jerusalem. This later murder will be both the greatest injustice and the greatest hope for the world!

Verses 17-29 – The Lord Condemns Ahab

Elijah is dispatched by the Lord to go to Ahab. Though Jezebel was the primary instrument in the murder of Naboth, Ahab, as king of Israel, is rightly blamed by God (see verses 19-20). Even though it was Eve who was deceived by the serpent, as head of the Garden, Adam too was rightly blamed for the sin of the taking of the forbidden fruit. Elijah pronounces judgment against Ahab and his whole household as well as against Jezebel (**Have a student read verses 21-24**). Verses 25-26 are a chilling reminder to Christians to never be unequally yoked together in marriage with an unbeliever for they will likely turn the heart of the Christian against the Lord.

Verses 27-29 bring two surprises:

- 1) Ahab repents (at least temporarily)
- 2) God shows mercy to him by delaying the full judgments against him until after his death.

Reformation Covenant Church Distinctive – One God, One Bible

Some Christians are tempted to think of the Bible as two distinct books (Old Testament and New Testament) portraying two different ways of God dealing with His people (Law and strict justice in the Old Testament and grace and mercy in the New Testament). Just as the Lord dealt mercifully with Ahab in 1 Kings 21, we can see countless examples the Old Testament of God dealing in patience, mercy and grace with sinful men. The Lord is the same throughout all of history and His Word proclaims the same gospel message of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus from Genesis-Revelation.

1 Kings 22 – Improper response to Micaiah, the Prophet (Sin against the Father)

The history of Israel is one in which Yaweh speaks to them over and over, primarily through His Word and His prophets. As Israel and her leaders disobey God's Word, He sends prophets to warn them of judgment to come. Israel consistently rejected the word of the prophets sent to her and so continued on a path towards judgment and exile.

Ahab has been warned repeatedly by prophets throughout his reign and, apart from his temporary repentance at the end of 1 Kings 21, he has consistently ignored their words of warning. Here in chapter 22 we see Ahab's final rejection of the words of the prophet Micaiah, and his death as a result.

Verses 1-28 – Micaiah Warns Ahab

Not since chapter 15 have we heard anything about Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah. "Jehoshaphat" means "Yaweh judges" and he appears here in the text at the time of God's final judgment upon Ahab. In verse 2, Jehoshaphat (probably unwisely) visits Ahab and Ahab requests that the two form an alliance against the king of Assyria to try and capture Ramoth Gilead, an important border town between Israel and Syria. Jehoshaphat is a godly king in most ways and wisely asks Ahab to inquire of the Lord regarding this request.

(Have a student retell the events of verses 6-28 summarized below:)

- Ahab gathers about four hundred prophets who all say that they should go against Ramoth Gilead
- Jehoshaphat recognizes these prophets as not really serving Yaweh and asks for a prophet of Yaweh to speak
- Micaiah is brought forward and initially speaks in agreement with the false prophets
- Ahab realizes that Micaiah is being deceptive and commands him to tell the truth
- Micaiah prophesies Israel's defeat and Ahab's death
- Zedekiah, one of the false prophets strikes Micaiah on the cheek
- Ahab orders Micaiah sent to his own city to be imprisoned

Some interesting details:

- The four hundred prophets who supposedly speak for Yaweh remind us of the four hundred prophets of Baal who were defeated by Yaweh through Elijah on Mt. Carmel (see 1 Kings 18). False prophets can be raw pagans or those who claim true faith in God. This incident

foretells of both Israel and Judah's downfall due to listening to false prophets, many of whom claim to be followers of the one true God

- "Micaiah" means "who is like Yaweh". He is the only true voice of Yaweh in this situation.

- In verse 10 the kings are at a **threshing floor** by the **gate** of Samaria. Throughout the Bible city gates and threshing floors are places of judgment.

- Though Yaweh intends to deceive Ahab by luring him into a battle which will bring about his own death, he warns Ahab ahead of time of this deception. Ahab refuses to listen to this warning and so is without excuse.

Verses 29-40 – Ahab Dies in Battle

These verses give the details of Ahab's futile attempts to escape the judgment of God.

1) Verses 29-33 - He tries to disguise himself and make Jehoshaphat a target of the Syrians instead.

2) Verses 34-37 – God uses the "random" shooting of an arrow by a soldier to kill Ahab. Israel retreats from the battle.

3) Verses 38-40 – Ahab is buried in Samaria and, as his chariot is washed, the dogs lick up his blood in fulfillment of Elijah's prophecy against him (see 1 Kings 21:19)

Like Saul before him, Ahab failed to heed the voice of God through His prophets and this can be seen as sin primarily against God the Father.

1 Kings 22:41-2 Kings 18 – Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah

We placed 2 Kings 1 with the end of 1 Kings in our curriculum because it concludes the account of Ahaziah introduced in 1 Kings 22:40 and 51ff. A brief account of the reign of Jehoshaphat is sandwiched in between the introduction of Ahaziah (1 Kings 22:40) and the account of the rest of his reign and serves as a (mostly) godly contrast of his life with that of wicked king Ahaziah, son of Ahab:

1) Jehoshaphat "did not turn from...doing what was right in the eyes of the Lord" (verse 43) except that he did not stop the high place worship and he made peace with wicked king Ahab. On the other hand, Ahaziah, who ruled Israel after Ahab, is a very wicked king (**Have a student read 1 Kings 22:51-53**).

2) After a 25 year reign (1 Kings 22:42), Jehoshaphat dies and his son, Jehoram, reigns in his place, a continuation of the dynasty (family reign) of David (1 Kings 22:50). Wicked Ahaziah's reign will be a brief two years and he has no sons (1 Kings 22:51, 2 Kings 1:17) .

3) Moab, a Gentile nation to the southeast of Israel, rebels against Ahaziah. God will not allow wicked kings of Israel to rule over Gentiles for long, but rather raises them up against Israel. This is in contrast to Jehoshaphat who ruled over the Gentile nation of Edom by way of a deputy (see 1 Kings 22:47).

4) Ahaziah is injured in a fall from which he never recovers. This is also in contrast to Jehoshaphat who simply "rested with his fathers" (1 Kings 22:50)

Even with knowing the history of the defeat by Yaweh of Baal of the Sidonians on Mt. Carmel, Ahaziah sends messengers to inquire of Baal-Zebeb, the god of the Philistines (Ekron) when he is injured. Yaweh immediately sends Elijah to meet the messengers and to tell them to give a message of rebuke to Ahaziah and to announce his impending death. When the messengers return to Ahaziah, they describe Elijah a “a hairy man” which in the Hebrew is “Baal (lord) of hair”. Elijah is the “Baal” they should be inquiring of, not Baal-Zebeb! Instead of heeding the words of Elijah, Ahaziah sends three captains of 50 soldiers each in succession to Elijah. The first two groups are burned up with fire from heaven which Elijah calls down upon them, reminding us once again of the fire from heaven which God sent on Mt. Carmel. The third captain humbles himself and begs for mercy for him and his soldiers. Elijah accompanies him to king Ahaziah and delivers the judgment of God to him.

Interestingly, there are a lot of “ups” and “downs” (pictures of heaven and earth, rising and falling) in this account:

Verse 2 - Ahaziah falls **down** from his upper room, a picture of his reign as king coming to an end

Verses 4,6,16 - The Lord, through Elijah says to Ahaziah, “You shall not come **down** (to rule again from the throne) from the bed to which you have gone **up**, but you shall surely die.”

Verses 9, 11 – The captain of the first group of soldiers goes **up** to Elijah who was on a hill (a picture of Elijah in the heavenlies with God), and both he and the second captain tell Elijah that king Ahaziah has commanded him to, “Come **down!**” This is a direct challenge to God’s authority!

Verses 10, 12 – Instead of coming down, Elijah sends fire **down** from heaven to consume the first two groups of soldiers as a picture of God’s judgment on Ahaziah and those who serve him

Verse 13,14 – The third captain of fifty soldiers went **up** to Elijah, but he falls **down** on his knees (humbles himself) and pleads for Elijah not to send the fire of God **down** on them.

Verse 15 – The angel of the Lord instructs Elijah to “Go **down** with (the captain)” to Ahaziah.

Yaweh is the Lord of heaven and earth and Elijah’s position on a hill represents this. He is willing to come down to earth in the person of Elijah both in judgment in the case of wicked Amaziah, and in mercy in the case of the humble captain. This reminds us of Jesus whose coming to earth marked a time of rebuke and judgment to the wicked religious leaders of His day and a time of rejoicing and hope for those who were eagerly looking for his coming. He does not merely sit in heaven and throw fireballs at us. Our Lord is a God who draws near to His people!

In verses 17-18 we see that, in accordance with 1 Kings 21:29, the Lord in His mercy does not bring the dynasty of Ahab to an end in Ahab’s lifetime, nor even in the lifetime of his son, Ahaziah. Another son of Ahab, Jehoram (Joram) will be the last king in the line of Omri.

❖ **Homework** – Read 2 Kings 2-4; work on memory material –**QUIZ ON 1 Kings 18:37**

❖ **Prayer/Prep for Worship**

1 and 2 Kings

Lesson 8 – 2 Kings 2:1-8:6 – Elisha and His Miracles

Part 1– 2 Kings 2-4 – Elisha Receives the Mantle of Elijah

Objective – To help the students better trust in the Lord who gives them life, both in this world and in eternity.

❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.

❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 2 Kings 2-4, and work on your memory materials?”

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.

Scripture Memorization : QUIZ – Have each student write out 1 Kings 18:37 on a piece of paper and hand it in – Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.

New Memory Verse: 2 Kings 6:16 So he answered, “Do not fear, for those who *are* with us *are* more than those who *are* with them.”

❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review

A. 1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built

B. 1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established

C. 1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri

D. 2 Kings 2:1–8:6 - Elisha and His Miracles

C’ 2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu

B’ 2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls

A’ 2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed

Review / Introduction – In our last lesson we saw the three falls of Ahab which correspond to sins against the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit and remind us of the fall of Saul and the three falls in Genesis (**Have the students review this briefly**). Ahab’s son Ahaziah also falls (literally and spiritually) leaving Johoram (Joram), another son of Ahab, as the last ruler of Israel in the dynasty (family line) of Omri.

We come now to the very center and heart of 1 and 2 Kings. In 2 Kings 2:1-8:6, the focus is on the life and ministry of Elisha who will replace Elijah as Yaweh’s voice in Israel. This reminds us of John the Baptist who, like Elijah, spent a lot of his ministry in the wilderness and prepared the way for Jesus. John the Baptist is even called “Elijah” in Matthew 11:14,

Mark 9:9-13, and Luke 1:17. And so, Elisha can be seen as a forerunner of Jesus. Elisha will perform more miracles than anyone in Scripture other than Jesus himself and his miracles have similar significance in the history of Israel as those of our Savior.

However, we can also see similarities between Elisha and **Jesus' disciples**. He follows hard after Elijah (as Jesus' disciples did) and receives a double portion of his spirit when he leaves, much as Jesus' disciples received the Holy Spirit when Jesus ascended to His throne.

❖ Lesson – 1 Kings 2-4 – Elisha Receives the Mantel of Elijah 2 Kings 2 – Elijah Ascends, Elisha's Ministry Begins

John the Baptist said in no uncertain terms that he was to decrease in importance while Jesus was to increase (John 3:30). So too, Elijah's ministry has come to an end and it is time for Elisha, the proto (pre)-Jesus, to begin his ministry. Verse 1 tells us that Elijah will be taken up into heaven "by a whirlwind". Before he leaves the earth, Elijah makes an interesting trip. He goes from Gilgal (verse 1) to Bethel (verses 2-4) to Jericho (verses 5-7), three cities associated with the early conquest of the Promised Land by Joshua:

- Gilgal was where Israel was first encamped after crossing into the Promised Land (Joshua 4-5)

- Bethel was associated with Ai, the second city that Israel conquered (Joshua 7-8)

- Jericho was the familiar city of first conquest for Israel in the Promised Land (Joshua 6)

After visiting these three places, Elijah and Elisha cross over the Jordan and out of Israel.

Israel has sinned and will be exiled by Yaweh and this journey by Elijah and Elisha may be seen as a picture of a reversal of the conquest of the Promised Land.

Yaweh had assured Elijah that there were still many faithful followers of Him in Israel and we meet some of these "sons of the prophets" in Bethel and Jericho. Twice they tell Elisha what he already knows and would rather not hear; that Elijah is about to be taken from him (verses 3,5). Jesus' disciples were filled with sorrow at the thought of Him leaving them as well (John 16:1ff). After Elijah uses his mantle to part the Jordan River, he and Elisha cross over. There Elijah tells Elisha to ask him for whatever he wants. Solomon was given a similar command by Yaweh in 1 Kings 3 and what did he ask for? (wisdom to rule). Elisha requests something even greater than this when he asks for a double portion (literally a "double mouth") of Elijah's spirit, the Holy Spirit. To be filled with the Holy Spirit is even better than having godly wisdom to know right from wrong. The Holy Spirit is our teacher, our comforter, our guide into all truth and the one who empowers us not just to know God's Law, but to keep it as well. It will also be by the Holy Spirit that Elisha is able to perform his many miracles.

Elijah has been a sort of "incarnation" or embodiment of Yaweh:

1) His mantle (which represents Elijah himself) is used of Yaweh to part the Jordan River

2) He has the Holy Spirit and Elisha asks for a "double mouth" of this.

Now, in verse 11, a fiery chariot appears with horses of fire which takes Elijah up into heaven. This too reminds us of Yaweh Himself in Psalm 104:1-4 in which Yaweh rides in a chariot of fiery angels. Jesus also went away from this earth and yet He did not leave His

church alone but sent the fullness of the Holy Spirit so that the church is now the full “embodiment” of God on earth:

2 Corinthians 6:16b ... For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them and walk among *them*. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” (see also 2 Corinthians 5:20)

Elisha is distraught over Elijah’s leaving (verse 12). Nevertheless he takes up the mantle (the ministry) of Elijah and uses it to once again part the waters of the Jordan River and re-enter the land of Israel. As the new Joshua, Elisha will now be God’s instrument to begin a new conquest of the Promised Land. Jesus too re-entered Israel after His baptism in the Jordan River and His anointing with the Holy Spirit (see Matthew 3:13-17), and the apostles began their “conquest” of the world for Jesus after they were filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2) as well! The life and ministry of Elisha is a demonstration that Yaweh has not abandoned His people!

In verses 15-18, the sons of the prophets recognize that the spirit of Elijah now rests on Elisha, yet they still want to search for Elijah in case he has only left them temporarily. Elisha discourages them from this activity and rebukes them when they search for Elijah but do not find him. This fully establishes Elisha as the true prophet of God, the embodiment of Yaweh in Israel.

In verses 19-22, Elisha begins his “conquest” in the same place that Joshua did, in **Jericho**. However, instead of destroying Jericho, Elisha uses salt, a picture of seed, to “heal” the water so that the land surrounding the city becomes fruitful once again. It can also be implied that before the waters were healed, the people had been unfruitful as well, that is unable to bear children.

Elisha then goes up to Bethel (verses 23-24), reminding us again of Joshua who led Israel from Jericho to Ai (near Bethel) in his conquest of the Promised Land. Some youths of the city mock Elisha as he is going up calling him a “bald head”. Elisha responds by calling down a curse on the youths and forty two of them are mauled by bears. This is a bit of a strange account but we might recall:

1) Bethel is one of the centers of golden calf worship began by Jeroboam. Some commentators have suggested that these “youths” may have been followers of, or perhaps even young priests in, this golden calf worship

2) Elijah had been a hairy man (recall 1 Kings 1:8) and the “head” over Elisha. Their mocking may have been a reference to Elijah (and Yaweh) no longer being there as a “hairy covering” (guide and protector) for Elisha, and a statement that Elisha should also depart this earth (“go on up”) as Elijah did. However, Yaweh is still at work in Israel, and Elisha’s curse is a picture of the judgment that is over this golden calf worship and all who follow after it. Fittingly, in verse 25, Elisha then goes to Mt. Carmel (where Yaweh, through Elijah, had defeated Baal) and then to Samaria, where Israel’s wicked king now rules.

2 Kings 3 – The Battle Against Moab

Jehoram, the second son of Ahab to come to the throne after him, reigns twelve years over Israel. Like his father and brother (Ahaziah) before him, he is a wicked king in most respects and continues the long line of the kings of Israel who “persisted in the sins of Jeroboam...”. The one exception to this is that he “put away the sacred pillar of Baal that his father (Ahab) had made”.

The rest of chapter 3 is taken up with the account of Israel and Judah’s war against Moab. In the days of Ahab, Moab had been a vassal state of Israel and had been placed under tribute (see verse 4). Upon Ahab’s death Mesha, king of Moab, refused to bring this tribute any longer (v.5). In response to this, Jehoram musters his troops and enlists the aid of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. Having seen God’s judgment on Ahab when he joined forces with him, you might think that Jehoshaphat would be reluctant to “be unequally yoked together with unbelievers” (2 Corinthians 6:14) once again! Instead, the specifics of these two kings joining forces is surprisingly similar to the account of Ahab and Jehoshaphat in 1 Kings 22:

- 1) Jehoshaphat’s response to the king of Israel’s request is nearly identical in both cases (see 1 Kings 22:4 and 2 Kings 3:7). It may be that one of Jehoshaphat’s weaknesses is that he values bloodlines and tribal relations over godliness.
- 2) To his credit, in both instances Jehoshaphat requests that a “prophet of the Lord” be brought forward to hear what Yaweh would say to them in regards to the battle. (see 1 Kings 22:7 and 2 Kings 3:11)

Have a student give the basic sequence of the battle:

- The armies of Israel and Judah travel to Moab by way of Edom (verses 7-9a)
- The king of Edom joins the kings of Israel and Judah – see map (verse 9)
- Israel runs out of water and Jehoram grumbles that God has raised them up to destroy them (verses 9-10, 13)
- Jehoshaphat calls for a prophet of the Lord (verse 11)
- Elisha prophesies that the Lord will provide water and Israel/Judah/Edom will triumph over Moab (verses 12-19)
- The Lord provides water that looks like blood from the perspective of the army of Moab causing Moab to think that the armies of Israel/Judah/Edom have attacked each other (verse 20-23)
- Moab attacks Israel/Judah/Edom and are defeated (verses 24-25)
- The king of Moab offers his firstborn son as a sacrifice and this results in Israel retreating from the battle (verses 26-27)

The details of the preparations for and the events of the battle (verses 8-27) remind us of:

1) Joshua’s conquest of Jericho (see Joshua 6 as a comparison)

- Both involve a seven day “roundabout” march see (2 Kings 3:9)
- Both involve Israel gathering at the walls of a city (2 Kings 3:19,25,27)

2) The exodus of Israel from Egypt (ask students if they can think of examples)

- Both events involve a journey through Edom before coming to Moab and the Promised Land)

- Both events involve the Lord providing water in a miraculous way
 - Both involve grumbling
 - In both events, God uses water to save Israel and to destroy her enemies
 - The water looks like blood, reminding us of the Nile turning to blood in Egypt
 - There are songs in both events (song of Moses, the song that Elisha's musician plays)
- The purposes of Yaweh in the events of this battle are mysterious and raise many questions:
- 1) Why did He give wicked King Jehoram and his army water in the wilderness?
 - 2) Why did He not rebuke Jehoshaphat from joining forces both with Jehoram and with the pagan king of Edom?
 - 3) Why did He not judge and destroy Jehoram in battle as he had Ahab before him?
 - 4) Why did He give Israel and her allies an initial victory only to let Moab escape out of their hand?
 - 5) Who is the one who had this "great indignation" against Israel after the sacrifice of the king of Moab's son? the people/army of Moab? Chemosh, the god of Moab? Yaweh?

There are no easy answers to these questions. No doubt we can say that God acts in history for many reasons at the same time:

- For His overall kingdom purposes and the glory of His name
- For judgment of the wicked
- For mercy on the wicked
- For blessing of His people
- For chastisement of His people
- For individual blessing, mercy, judgment, chastisement

The sovereign purposes, plans and ways of God in history and in our own lives are often (nearly always?) a mystery to us. However, what we can say for sure is that God is always sovereign **in love**, and He always sovereign **for good** in the lives His children

2 Chronicles 16:9 says "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of *those* whose heart *is* loyal to Him."

What we do know is that Israel and her wicked kings are under God's judgment and, in His own way and time, Yaweh will bring them to justice and exile them from the Promised Land. Judah will follow in Israel's footsteps and suffer the same God-ordained consequences. So too will the pagan nations around Israel. The only hope of the world is trust in Yaweh and in Jesus, the Messiah to come.

2 Kings 4 – Elisha's First Miracles

In the Deuteronomy 30:19, Moses warns the people, "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, *that* I have set before you **life and death**, blessing and cursing; therefore choose **life**, that both you and your descendants may **live**." Trusting in and following hard after Yaweh brings life by all definitions of the word. Lack of faith in and rebellion against Yaweh brings death in all its forms. Of godly wisdom, Proverbs 8:35-36 says "For whoever finds me finds **life**, And obtains favor from the LORD; 36 But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; All those who hate me love **death**."

The kings of Israel who descended from Omri (Ahab, Ahaziah and Jehoram) have all been those who have loved death or have brought about much death:

- Ahab had Naboth murdered
- Jezebel murdered the prophets of God
- Ahaziah had foolishly sent troops to oppose Elisha, resulting in over 100 deaths

On the other hand, Yaweh, through His prophets bring life and peace. Elijah had been used of God to bring needed food to a Gentile widow and her son in Zarephath near Sidon, and later, God used him to raise her son from the dead. Here in 2 Kings 4 we see four of the life-giving miracles of Elisha:

1) Verses 1-7 – Provision of oil for a widow of one of the sons of the prophets.

(Have a student give the details of this miracle)

- Widow of one of the sons of the prophets is in poverty and her two sons are in danger of being sold into slavery by the creditors
- Elisha asks her what she has and she replies, "...nothing...but a jar of oil."
- Elisha orders her to borrow many vessels from all of her neighbors
- Elisha then orders her and her sons to shut themselves in their house and pour the oil from the jar into the vessels
- The oil from the one jar miraculously fills all of the vessels
- The widow is ordered by Elisha to sell the oil to pay her debts

Ask the students, "What is oil often a picture of in the Scriptures?" Answer – The Holy Spirit. We might see the creditors as representing the kings of Israel who are those who "devour widows' houses" (see Matthew 23:14). Elisha comes as one like the Holy Spirit, giving life to those who are faithful in Israel but who have been widowed (i.e. left with no godly protection by virtue of her ungodly kings). Yaweh is the true "kinsman redeemer" paying all of the debts of His people. This points to Jesus who will redeem His people who are helplessly in debt to God for their sins.

2) Verses 8-37 – Raising of the Shunammite's Son from the dead

(Have a student give the details of this miracle)

- Elisha goes to Shunem, a city in Israel, where he meets a woman who provides food for him each time he travels there and provides a room for him to stay in as well
- Elisha asks Gehazi, his assistant, how he can reward this woman's generosity and he answers that she has no children
- Elisha gives her a word from the Lord that she will have a son by the next year and this happens
- When the son is older, he becomes ill in the field and eventually dies
- The Shunammite woman travels to Elisha at Mt. Carmel where she pours out her sorrow to him over the death of her son
- Elisha sends Gehazi ahead of him to Shunem and orders Gehazi to lay Elisha's staff on the face of the dead boy. This he does
- When Elisha and the Shunammite woman arrive, the boy has not revived and so Elisha shuts himself in the room with the boy, prays for him and lays himself on top of the boy
- The boy comes back from the dead and is presented alive to his mother.

The Shunammite woman recognizes Elisha as representing God Himself and even has her husband build him what amounts to a miniature temple complete with furniture and a

lampstand. Unlike the kings of Israel who bring death to the people, Yaweh, through His prophet Elisha, brings life and even resurrection life to His people.

3) Verses 38-41 – Purifying the pot of stew

(Have a student give the details of this miracle)

- In the midst of a famine in the land of Israel, Elisha travels to Gilgal and sits down with the sons of the prophets to eat
- A stew is prepared into which is placed (what turns out to be) poisonous gourds
- The sons of the prophets recognize that the stew is poisonous and tell Elisha about it
- Elisha puts some flour into the pot of stew and it miraculously becomes fit to eat.

The sins of both the kings of Israel and all the idolatrous people have brought God's judgment of famine (death) into the land and the food that is left also brings death. Israel's hope is not in her kings, nor even in the sons of the prophets themselves. Only as the prophets cry out to Yaweh (as "embodied" in Elisha) for help does food and the life that results from it come. This pot of stew which brings death is "resurrected from the dead" and brings life giving sustenance to Elisha and the sons of the prophets. Though we are dead in our sins, Yaweh give us salvation life through faith in Jesus. He also sustains us in our salvation, feeding us every day from His word and every week through the sacrament of communion.

4) Verses 42-44 – Feeding of the one hundred men

(Have a student give the details of this miracle)

- A man comes from Baal Shalisha bringing 20 loaves of bread "of the firstfruits" and some ripened grain to Elisha
- Elisha tells the man to give the food to the sons of the prophets
- The man questions the ability of this small quantity of food to feed one hundred men.
- Elisha tells him that the Lord has said that, not only will it feed all of them, but there will be food left over.
- The food is set before the men and indeed, they all eat with food left over, as the Lord had said.

The feast of Firstfruits was a week long celebration in the late Spring of the year right after the feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread. This feast celebrated both the Lord's provision of an early harvest and the hope it bought that the full harvest in the Fall would be provided by Him as well. During this feast, a barley sheaf is lifted up towards heaven by the priest and then lowered back down. In the New Testament, Jesus is called "the firstfruits" by virtue of His being "lifted up", both in His resurrection and in His ascension into heaven, guaranteeing the resurrection and everlasting life of His people.

1 Corinthians 15:20-23 But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.²¹ For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead.²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.²³ But each one in his own order: **Christ the firstfruits**, afterward those *who are* Christ's at His coming.

Twice in the New Testament, Jesus miraculously feeds many people with very little food to start with (See Mark 6:30-44 and 8:1-21). Elisha, speaking and acting for Yaweh does the same thing, once again proving that the life of God's people, both in this world and in

eternity is from the Lord. Deuteronomy 8:3b "...that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every *word* that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.

Though Yaweh sustains His faithful people, even so, Israel will continue in her sin and ultimately be sent into exile. This only goes to prove that her hope is not in the wisdom of Solomon, nor the temple sacrifices, nor even in great prophets like Elijah and Elisha. Israel's hope is only Yaweh himself who can raise Israel from her death bed and he will do so, both in restoring her after her exile, and definitively in the person of His Son, Jesus.

❖ **Homework** – Read 2 Kings 5:1-8:6; work on memory material

❖ **Pray / Prep for Worship**

1 and 2 Kings
Lesson 9 – 2 Kings 2:1-8:6 – Elisha and His Miracles
Part 2– 2 Kings 5:1-8:6 – Baptism unto Life

Objective – To help the students see that the Lord uses even His enemies to bring chastisement and deliverance to all His people

- ❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.
- ❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 2 Kings 5:1-8:6, and work on your memory materials?”
- ❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.
- ❖ **Scripture Memorization : 2 Kings 6:16 – So he answered, “Do not fear, for those who *are* with us *are* more than those who *are* with them.”**
- ❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review
 - A. **1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built**
 - B. **1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established**
 - C. **1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri**
 - D. **2 Kings 2:1–8:6 – Elisha and His Miracles**
 - C’ **2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu**
 - B’ **2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls**
 - A’ **2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed**

Review/Introduction – In our last lesson we saw that the very center of 1 and 2 Kings is not her kings, but Yaweh himself, as seen in the life and miracles of Elisha. This week we will continue to see the Lord use Elisha to work still more miracles, bringing hope both for the restoration of Israel after her exile, and for the Gentiles as well.

During this period of her history, the Syrians (Arameans) are the greatest threat to Israel:

- 1) God raised up Rezin, king of Syria to oppose Solomon after he fell into sin – 1 Kings 11
- 2) Beh Hadadm, king of Syria joined forces with Asa, king of Judah, against Baasha, king of Israel – 1 Kings 15
- 3) God used Ahab to defeat Ben Hadad and the Syrians twice – 1 Kings 20
- 4) God used the king of Syria to defeat and kill Ahab – 1 Kings 22

In this lesson, Syria once again takes center stage. She will be used of the Lord to His judgments on Israel, and she will be the object of His mercy as well.

- ❖ **Lesson – 2 Kings 5:1-8:6 – Baptism unto Life**
- 2 Kings 5 – The Healing of Naaman the Syrian**
- Verses 1-8 – Naaman, the Leper**

In verse 1, Naaman the Syrian is introduced and spoken of in glowing earthly terms. He is:

- 1) Commander of the army of the king of Syria
- 2) A great and honorable man in the eyes of the king
- 3) Victorious in battle – His victories are even attributed to Yaweh
- 4) A mighty man of valor (reminding us of David's mighty men of valor)

Yet in spite of all these earthly accolades, Naaman is a leper. This leprosy is not of the same type as we see today, but rather is a severe flaking of the skin with a discoloration of the hair. In the Old Testament, leprosy is associated with uncleanness and/or sin (death). All of us, regardless of our position or accomplishments in this life, are sinners, dead in our sins and in need of the cleansing blood of Jesus and the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit (see Titus 3:5). So too is Naaman, a Gentile who is outside of the covenant of God.

(Have a student read verses 2-7). It is interesting that Naaman is brought into covenant with Yaweh initially through the words of a young Israelite girl. She directs Naaman to Elisha to be cured of his leprosy. In this she shows more spiritual insight than the king of Syria and even than Jehoram, king of Israel. Syria's king, being a man who thinks only in terms of earthly power appeals to Israel's king to heal Naaman. Jehoram, being a man who understands the sovereign power of God, but not His mercy nor His use of prophets to accomplish His purposes, merely despairs of his own inability to carry out the king of Syria's request. Naaman cannot help himself and neither can these two kings. Only Yaweh can cure him both of his leprosy and of his spiritual deadness as well.

Verses 9-19 – Naaman is cured

Elisha, hears of Jehoram's despair and directs the king to have Naaman come to him to be cured. Verses 9 and 10 are a picture of **God, the temple, and the priests**:

1. God – Elisha (Yaweh's representative) is inside his house and doesn't talk directly to Naaman, just as the Israelites were denied access to the Holy of Holies in the temple
2. The temple – Elisha's house reminds us of the temple, where Israelites and God-fearing Gentiles went to offer sacrifices and to be evaluated by the priests in regard to uncleanness
3. Priests – The messenger sent by Elisha to Naaman is like the priests in the temple who directly interacted with those who came to the temple.

Have a student read verses 11-12 – When Naaman hears what Elisha would have him do to be cured of his leprosy, he is at first very angry because

- 1) Elisha did not come out and speak to him directly – Elisha is a servant of Yaweh, not of Naaman
- 2) Elisha did not put on a show of power in curing him – Yaweh accomplishes His purposes in His own way.
- 3) Naaman is directed to perform a simple task of washing in a river in Israel (the Jordan) instead of in a river in Syria – This shows a disdain for the people and the land of God. Naaman has humbled himself by heeding the advice of an Israelite servant girl in coming to Elisha, yet all three of these reasons show how **prideful** Naaman still is despite his illness.

Yaweh mercifully defeats Naaman's pride once again through the words of Naaman's servants. **Have a student read verses 13-19.** Naaman humbles himself and washes (dips, plunges) seven times in the Jordan river. Naaman enters the water as a sinful, prideful, adult leper. He comes out of the water with the "flesh of a little child", a clear picture of salvation, of a new creation.

RCC Distinctive – What Does Baptism Do?

The Westminster Confession of Faith says this about baptism: "Baptism is a sacrament of the new testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, (Matt. 28:19) not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible Church; (1 Cor. 12:13) but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, (Rom. 4:11, Col. 2:11-12) of his ingrafting into Christ, (Gal. 3:27, Rom. 6:5) of regeneration, (Tit. 3:5) of remission of sins, (Mark 1:4) and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life. (Rom. 6:3-4) Which sacrament is, by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in His Church until the end of the world. (Matt. 28:19-20)". Leithart has said, "How can water do such wonders? Because baptism is not simply water, but water and word, water and promise. God does wonders, but He promises to do wonders through water." At RCC we believe that God, through the means of the simple ritual of baptism, accomplishes all that His Word says. Those who have been lawfully baptized are to be considered Christians, children of God, unless by their lives, they prove otherwise, as determined by the elders through the lawful use of church discipline.

Naaman is not only cured of his physical ailment, but of his spiritual deadness as well. In verses 15-19, Naaman returns to Elisha, professes faith in Yaweh and commits to worshipping only Him. He asks for two mule-loads of earth from Israel to take back with him to Syria, a picture that Naaman now considers himself one of the people of the Promised Land. However, he does not simply abandon his citizenship, nor his position in Syria and Elisha does not require him to do so. As part of his duties, Naaman will have to accompany the king into pagan temples and even bow down. He asks Elisha to intercede for him in this matter that the Lord would forgive him in this duty. Elisha places the blessing of God upon Naaman and he departs.

Verses 20-27 – Gehazi, the Leper

Though Naaman has moved from death to life, and has drawn near to Yaweh (and to Elisha), Elisha's servant, Gehazi, moves in the opposite direction. In verse 16, Elisha declined to receive a gift from Naaman for having been used of God to cure him of his leprosy. Gehazi is greedy and, like Jonah (see Book of Jonah), despises the fact that Yaweh, through Elisha, has been merciful to Naaman the Syrian (a Gentile). He pursues Naaman and lies to him in order to get silver and clothing from him. Notice that Naaman, who is no longer prideful but thankful, gives Gehazi **twice** as much silver as he asks for. Though Gehazi tries to hide the plunder, the Lord has revealed this sin to Elisha who confronts him about it. The leprosy that once was on Naaman will now cling to Gehazi and even to his descendants.

While Naaman was able to draw near to Elisha (to Yaweh) after he was cleansed of his leprosy, Gehazi “went out from his presence”. Gehazi represents Israel and her kings who through her idolatry and greed are under Yaweh’s judgment. When Israel sins, the Lord turns to the Gentiles, both to extend His covenant to them and to use them as His means of punishing Israel for her sin. Gehazi has lusted after Gentile wealth and he will also get the Gentile exclusion and uncleanness.

2 Kings 6 – The Syrian Invaders

Verses 1-7 – The Raising of the Ax Head

In between the conversion of Naaman the Syrian and the Syrian siege of Samaria is an account of yet another miracle of Elisha, the raising of the ax head. **(Have a student read verses 1-7)**. Ahab and his sons have brought poverty and famine to the land of Israel and yet Yaweh has preserved his people and the sons of the prophets are even building at this time. In the midst of their construction a borrowed ax head slips off of its handle and falls into the Jordan River. Because it was borrowed, the borrower will have to redeem the ax by paying its owner to replace it. Since iron was scarce in Israel, this would apparently have placed quite a hardship on the borrower. He has a debt he cannot pay and so would become a slave to the owner until he could pay for a new ax head

It could be said that the ax head represents Israel herself who, like Jonah, has sunk into death under the wicked rule of these kings. She will be taken off into captivity (slavery). Elisha raising the ax head is a picture Yaweh acting as a kinsman redeemer, paying the debts for His people and bringing her back from captivity. It is interesting that Elisha uses a stick of wood to accomplish the task, reminding us of the wood of the cross by which Jesus redeemed us from our sins.

In 2 Kings 6:8-8:6 we will see the Yaweh miraculously rescue both Elisha and all Israel from the Syrians who would have enslaved them.

Verses 8-23 – Elisha is Rescued from the Syrians

In verses 1-13, we see that the Lord has given Elisha insight into the thoughts and commands of the king of Syria during his war with Israel. Elisha reports to the king of Israel what he has been shown by the Lord and so frustrates the attempts of the king of Syria to defeat Israel. At first the king of Syria thinks that one of his own men is a traitor, but when he learns that it is Elisha who is the informant, he sends a great army to Samaria to capture him. When they surround the city, Elisha prays for the Lord to strike the soldiers blind. He then leads them into the city and rescues them from the king of Israel who would have killed them. Elisha then gives the soldiers food and drink and sends them back to the king of Syria.

“Seeing” plays a large roll in this account:

- 1) Verses 8-12 – Elisha can, in a sense, “see” the king of Syria and reports his words and actions to Jehoram, king of Israel.
- 2) Verse 13 - The king of Syria cannot see where Elisha is so he sends his army to “Go and see where he is...”.

3) Verses 14-17- As the soldiers surround the city, Elisha's servant despairs. Elisha prays that the Lord would "open his eyes that he may see" the angelic host that defends Samaria. **(Have a student read verse 17)**

4) Verses 18-19 – When the soldiers come down to Elisha, Elisha prays and the Lord strikes them with **blindness**.

5) Verses 20 – Once Elisha leads the soldiers inside the gates of Samaria, he prays that the Lord would "open the eyes of these men that they may see."

Like Elisha's servant and the Syrian soldiers, so often we are "blind" to the meaning and future path of our lives. Only the Lord, in His wisdom and love can order and interpret our circumstances rightly. We too would be wise to obey the words of Elisha to his servant, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." (See also Romans 8:31)

Elisha's feeding and freeing of the Syrian soldiers may seem a bit surprising as a battle strategy, but once again, Yaweh's ways are not our ways and He has more in mind than a simple military victory over Israel's enemies:

- 1) This event ought to have humbled Jehoram, king of Israel, and convinced him that only through faith in and submission to Yaweh can his enemies be defeated. Instead, because of his wickedness and Israel's idolatry, his enemies are blessed (fed) by God and set free.
- 2) This event ought to have humbled Ben Hadad, king of Syria, as well. He purposely seeks out Elisha, the prophet of Yaweh, to kill him, yet the Lord shows great mercy to his soldiers who clearly could have been executed. Instead of humbling him, Ben Hadad stops sending raiding parties and launches a full scale assault against the city of Samaria, a plan that will ultimately fail.

The gospel of God's love and forgiveness is for all the nations and Israel ought to have been a shining example of this to the countries round about them. Instead she is under God's judgment for her idolatry and Yaweh is using the pagan nations to humble her until she turns in repentance to Him. However, Yaweh is just and will also punish those nations who oppress His people until such time as they too come to repentance and faith.

Verses 24-33 – The Syrian Siege

In verse 24, Ben Hadad, king of Syria, besieges Samaria. This means that his army surrounded the city and simply waited for the people inside to run out of food and starve.

Verses 25-29 detail the effects of this siege on the Samaritans:

- 1) Verse 25 - Food becomes scarce and very expensive and people begin to eat things that would normally repulse them (donkey's heads and dove dung!).
- 2) Verses 26-31 – Some people, in their sinful desperation, began to practice cannibalism, as seen in the case of the two women and their sons **(Have a student read verses 26-29)**.

This incident reminds us of a similar one that occurred in the times of Solomon, when the two women approached Solomon and asked him to render a just decision regarding their sons

(Briefly summarize 1 Kings 3:16-28). However, the differences are striking and point out that Israel is under judgment and that Jehoram is no Solomon!

Solomon and the two women	Jehoram and the two women
One son is dead through an accident	One son is dead through murder and cannibalism
The mother of the living son asks Solomon to help her save her son	The mother of the living son asks Jehoram to help her to murder and eat her son
Solomon renders a just judgment and restores the living son to his mother	Jehoram renders no just judgment, but simply tears his clothes and mourns

The sin of Jehoram and all Israel has resulted in famine and the destruction of children, the future of Israel. Jehoram, upon seeing this horrible event, ought to have humbled himself and repented over this sin. Instead, he mourns over the **effects** of the sin by tearing his clothes and putting on sackcloth. Then, in verses 31-33, he blames God (in the person of Elisha) for the effects of the sin and even plots to kill Him (Elisha)! What a foolish king! Elisha simply captures the messenger sent ahead by the king and waits for Jehoram to come.

2 Kings 7:1-8:6 – Syria Defeated

2 Kings 7:1-The Syrians Flee

When Jehoram arrives, Elisha “defeats” him with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (see Ephesians 6:17) (**Have a student read verses 1-2**). He prophesies an end to the Syrian siege and a return to plenteous, inexpensive food in Israel. An officer of the king doubts the Word of God and Elisha prophecies that he will not see the prosperity to come.

The rest of chapter 7 is the account of the Lord’s miraculous deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Syrians in fulfillment of Elisha’s prophecy. No battle is actually fought, but rather the Syrians simply flee. What caused them to flee from Samaria? (**Have a student read verses 6-7**). Jehoram has been powerless to bring relief to Israel from the siege and famine and has been unwilling to repent of the sin that caused it. However, Yaweh, in His great mercy works while all Israel sleeps in removing this enemy from them. Additionally, the Lord uses the outcast of Israel to once again bring prosperity to her. (**Have a student summarize verses 3-5 and 8-16**):

- Four lepers decide to surrender to the Syrians
- They discover that the Syrians have fled, leaving food and great riches behind
- Though they at first begin to take all of the riches for themselves, the lepers have a pang of conscience and decide to take the “good news” to the king and to the citizens of Samaria
- When the king is informed of the lepers’ story, he sends a group of soldiers to the Syrian camp and they find it just as the lepers had described.
- The Israelites plunder the Syrian camp

The phrase “good news” used by the lepers in verse 9 is used in the Old Testament to tell of the times of deliverance of Israel from her enemies and of the coming Messiah (see Isaiah 61

for example). This phrase is used throughout the New Testament to describe the coming of Jesus and His message of the Kingdom of God. (see Matthew 9:35, 11:4, Mark 1:14, and Luke 4:14-20 for example). Jesus has come to bring release from sin and from the enemies of God to all who, like the lepers, are poor in spirit.

In verses 7-20, Elisha's prophecy concerning the king's officer is fulfilled and, instead of partaking in the prosperity that has come to Israel, he is trampled at the gate of the city.

2 Kings 8:1-6 – The Shunammite's Land is Restored

Have a student read these verses

These verses are the last personal interaction that Elisha has with Jehoram, the last king of Israel in the line of Omri (Omri → Ahab → Ahaziah → Jehoram). In the midst of (probably) the same famine that had oppressed Israel in chapter 6, Elisha commands the Shunammite woman and her son to flee the land of Israel. She complies and they reside for 7 years in the land of the Philistines where their lives are preserved from the devastating effects of the famine. This reminds us of God preserving David in the Philistine country when Saul was pursuing him, and preserving Jesus in Egypt when Herod sought his life. Just as he had restored the Shunammite woman's son to her after he had died (recall 2 Kings 4:8-37), so here in these verses the Lord uses Elisha to restore her land to her. This event looks ahead to Israel's coming exile of seventy years, after which she will be restored to the Promised Land as well. Jehoram for once responds positively to a woman's appeal, and the prophet's counsel and gives justice to the Shunammite woman, proving that

The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *Like* the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.
Proverbs 21:1

❖ **Homework** – Read 2 Kings 8:7-10:36; Work on memory materials

❖ **Pray / Prep for Worship**

1 and 2 Kings

Lesson 10 – 2 Kings 8:7- 13:35 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu

Part 1– 2 Kings 8:7-10:36 – Judgment on the House of Ahab

Objective – To show the students that continued sin brings God’s judgment on those who sin as well as those around the sinner who are affected and influenced by their actions. This ought to result in godly fear!

- ❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.
- ❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 2 Kings 8:7-10:36, and work on your memory materials?”
- ❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.
- ❖ **Scripture Memorization : QUIZ NEXT WEEK - 2 Kings 6:16** – So he answered, “Do not fear, for those who *are* with us *are* more than those who *are* with them.”
- ❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review
 - A. 1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built
 - B. 1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established
 - C. 1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri
 - D. 2 Kings 2:1–8:6 – Elisha and His Miracles
 - C’ 2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu
 - B’ 2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls
 - A’ 2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed

❖ **Review/Introduction** – In our last lesson we saw how the Lord used the Syrian empire to bring chastisement to Israel and how the Lord showed mercy on the Syrians as well (Naaman, the blinded Syrian soldiers, etc). In this lesson, we will see Yaweh carry out His promised judgment on the descendants of Ahab.

More than ten years have passed since the Lord had told Elijah that He would judge Ahab’s house (**Have a student read 1 Kings 19:14-18**). Ironically, as we saw in 2 Kings 8:1-6, Jehoram seems to actually be responding better to the counsel of Elisha and to the righteous appeals of his citizens than did his father Ahab.

However, we must remember:

- 1) God had already judged that Ahab and Jezebel’s wickedness warranted a wiping out of their family line as rulers over Israel (see 2 Kings 21:21ff)
- 2) Jehoram has, by and large, walked in the ways of the sins of his father and mother (2 Kings 3:1-3)

3) Specifically, Jehoram had, in the past, sworn to kill Elisha, the Lord's prophet (see 2 Kings 6:31) which is nearly the same as swearing to kill Yaweh Himself. It was only by the intervention of the Lord that he was not able to carry out his threat.

So, why then has the Lord delayed his judgment on the family of Ahab? Leithart suggests two reasons for this delay:

- 1) To allow the sins of the family of Ahab to become "full" and worthy of the judgment that will come
- 2) To give time for Elisha to assemble and disciple the "sons of the prophets" as a faithful remnant that will be the start of a renewed Israel after the judgment of God has passed.

As we saw in our week 6 lesson, in response to the continued wickedness of Ahab and Jezebel, the Lord promised to raise up a "trinity" of men who would be used as His instruments of wrath. (See 1 Kings 19:14-18 again and ask the students if they can remember who the members of this "trinity" are):

1) Hazael, king of Syria in place of Ben Hadad

2) Jehu, king of Israel in place of Jehoram

3) Elisha, prophet of Yaweh in place of Elijah - We have already seen many miracles worked by Elisha (**Ask your students if they can name some of them**):

- Healing of the water - 2 Kings 2:19-22
- Bears maul the boys - 2 Kings 2:23-25
- The widow's oil - 2 Kings 4:1-7
- The birth and resurrection of the Shunammite woman's son - 2 Kings 4:8-37
- The healing of the pot of stew - 2 Kings 4:38-41
- The feeding of the 100 - 2 Kings 4:42-44
- Naaman's leprosy healed - 2 Kings 5:1-19
- The ax head restored - 2 Kings 6:1-7
- The Syrian soldiers blinded and restored - 2 Kings 6:8-23

We tend to think of these miracles (and those of Jesus) as simple acts of God's mercy on individuals or groups. However, with these miracles, God brings division between people by showing a distinction between those He blesses (His faithful followers and Gentiles) and those He does not (the wicked kings of Israel and their followers). The miracles themselves are a sign, if not a direct act, of God's judgment.

❖ Lesson - 2 Kings 8:7-10:36 - Judgment on the House of Ahab

2 Kings 8:7-29 - The Rise of Hazael, King of Syria and the Two "Ahabs" of Judah

In 2 Kings 8:7-15 we see Hazael, the second of this "trinity of God's wrath" come to power in Syria. Elisha comes to Damascus (the capital of Syria) and Ben Hadad, the king is ill. When he hears that Elisha is in the city, Ben Hadad immediately sends him gifts by way of his officer, Hazael, in order to inquire of Elisha as to whether or not he will recover from his sickness. Note the sharp contrast between Ben Hadad, the pagan Gentile king who seeks the counsel of the Lord through Elisha, and Ahaziah, the wicked king of Israel, who sought out Baal-Zebub of the Philistines instead of Elijah when he was injured (recall 2 Kings 1).

Elisha's response to Hazael's question is a bit ambiguous in the original Hebrew. It could sound like either, "Say, 'not living you shall live'" (meaning he will die) or "Say to him, 'living you shall live'". Hazael chooses to hear the latter version and so relays to the king that he shall indeed recover from his illness, all the while plotting to murder Ben Hadad himself. Elisha is aware of Hazael's intentions and weeps as he tells him so in verses 11 and 12. In verse 15, Hazael murders Ben Hadad and reigns in his place, fulfilling the word of the Lord that was spoken to Elijah in I Kings 19

It has been nearly five chapters since we heard anything of Jehoshaphat, the king of the southern kingdom of Judah. Jehoshaphat was, by and large, a godly king but with at least one glaring weakness: He tended to form close alliances with the wicked kings of Israel (Ahab and Jehoram). The rest of 2 Kings 8 is taken up with the account of two of the kings of Judah, Jehoram (also called Joram from verse 16 onward) and Ahaziah, who followed Jehoshaphat on the throne of Judah, but whose reigns bear a striking resemblance to those of the kings of Israel (see verses 18 and 27):

- Both walked in the ways of the kings of Israel
- Both did evil in the sight of the Lord
- Both married daughters of Ahab

Unfortunately, Judah is becoming like Israel in her idolatry and wickedness.

Both of these kings of Judah even have names that are identical to kings of Israel - Jehoram and Ahaziah!

Just as Moab revolted against Israel in 2 Kings 3, so too Edom revolts against Judah during Jehoram's (Joram's) reign as king of Judah as we see in verses 20-22. And just as Israel was unsuccessful in her attempts to fully conquer Moab, so too, Jehoram and the soldiers of Judah fare no better with the Edomites. They are able to escape from the Edomite troops who had surrounded them but Edom remained in revolt against Judah. Libnah, near the Philistine border, also revolts at this time. It seems that when Judah joins Israel in her idolatry and wickedness, she also shares in God's judgments against her. Jehoram, king of Judah later dies and is replaced on the throne by his son Ahaziah.

Verses 25-29 give us the account of the short (one-year) reign of Ahaziah over Judah. As we shall later see, Ahaziah's mother, Ahtaliah will become infamous in Judah for her wickedness. Ahaziah, like his grandfather before him, forms an alliance with Jehoram, king of Israel and goes with him to fight against Hazael, king of Syria at Ramoth Gilead, the very city where Ahab had died (see 1 Kings 22:29ff). Like Ahab, Jehoram is wounded in this battle and has to return to Jezreel, the very town where Ahab had stood by while his wife, Jezebel, had Naboth murdered in order that Ahab could steal his vineyard (recall 1 Kings 21). This use by the Lord of Hazael of Syria to wound Jehoram is only the beginning of God's judgment against the house of Ahab!

2 Kings 9 – Vengeance on Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Jezebel

In chapter 9, the third of the "trinity of God's wrath" comes to power; Jehu, who will become king over Israel. In verses 1-6, Elisha sends one of the "sons of the prophets" to take a flask

of oil, travel to Ramoth Gilead, and anoint Jehu as the next king over Israel. Jehu is actually a son of Jehoshaphat, the former king of Judah, further testimony that the lines between wicked Israel and the relatively more godly Judah are being blurred. God's purpose in raising Jehu to the throne of Israel are detailed in verses 6–10 – **Have a student read these verses.** Vengeance belongs to the Lord and Jehu will be used of God to "...avenge the blood of (His) servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel." (verse 7). "Messiah" in Hebrew and the word "Christ" in Greek both mean the same thing: the anointed one. Jehu is the only king of the northern tribes of Israel who will be anointed with oil and he will indeed be a Messiah or Christ figure in the hands of the Lord as he violently destroys the house of Ahab.

In verses 11 and 12, Jehu informs the servants of Jehoram as to the purpose of the coming of one of the sons of the prophets. In verse 13, the blowing of the trumpets, the laying of garments under Jehu's feet, and the peoples' declaration that "Jehu is king" reminds us of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem before he was crucified. (See Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:28-40, John 12:12-19). The first thing that Jesus did was to cleanse the temple of the money changers. Jehu's first task as king of Israel will be to cleanse the land of the descendants of Ahab and Jezebel.

In verses 14 and following, we find that Jehoram has traveled to Jezreel to recover from his wounds, and Ahaziah, king of Judah is there with him. Jehu travels to Jezreel with the sole intent of killing Jehoram. When Jehu is seen approaching Jezreel, two messengers are sent out, one at a time, to approach Jehu and ask him if his intentions are peaceful. Both times Jehu rebuffs the messenger and commands them to join with him. The watchman on the wall of Jezreel reports this to Jehoram and Ahaziah and recognizes Jehu because he drives his chariot "furiously". This word literally means "like a madman" and is related to the word "madman" used of the son of the prophet who anointed him king (see verse 11). Jehu is like one of the prophets, the furious wrath-bearer of the Lord, and one to be rightly feared!

Seeing that Jehu is approaching the city, Jehoram himself along with Ahaziah, king of Judah, mount their chariots and meet Jehu outside of the city. Jehoram also asks Jehu if he comes in peace, and Jehu gives him a stinging rebuke (**Have a student read verse 22**). There can be no peace for God's people as long as His unrepentant enemies still hold power.

RCC Distinctive – Peace through Wrath

It is common in Christian circles to think of the Bible as two completely different books, Old and New Testament, and to think of God as being a God of wrath and violence in the Old Testament and a God of mercy and peace in the New. However, in Matthew 10:34-36, Jesus said, "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.³⁵ "For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law';³⁶ "and 'a man's enemies will be those of his *own* household.' Throughout his life, Jesus warned the religious leaders of Israel that God's judgment was coming upon them for failing to lead Israel in proper worship and holy living. Later they will be held responsible for

putting Jesus and his disciples to death as well. Matthew 23:29-36 summarizes Jesus' condemnation of them: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous,³⁰ "and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.'³¹ "Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.³² "Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' *guilt*.³³ "Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?³⁴ "Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: *some* of them you will kill and crucify, and *some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city,³⁵ "that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.³⁶ "Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

Judgment fell upon these religious leaders and their followers in 70 A.D. when Jerusalem, including the temple, was destroyed by the Roman army. The peace that the Lord promises to His people comes as the gospel is preached to unbelievers and they are either converted or destroyed by Him. This has been true throughout history and is found in both the Old and New Testaments as well.

Jehoram then flees and Jehu kills him with a bow and arrow and orders his body to be thrown on the field of Naboth whom Jezebel had murdered in order to steal his vineyard for Ahab. Jehu pursues Ahaziah and has him killed as well.

Jehu then takes the Lord's campaign of holy vengeance to Jezebel, the wicked queen mother. From a high window in the city wall, she asks Jehu if he intends peace towards her. She insults Jehu by calling him "Zimri", who 1 Kings 16:8-20 had murdered Elah king of Israel and his family, yet he only reigned for 7 days. Jehu calls up to the window asking if anyone is on his side. When two or three eunuchs look out the window, Jehu commands them to throw Jezebel from the window to the pavement below, which they do. Her body is trampled under the horse and chariot of Jehu. While he eats and drinks, the dogs of the city consume most of Jezebel's corpse fulfilling the word of the Lord in 1 Kings 21:23 (**Have a student read**)

2 Kings 10 – Vengeance on the Extended Family of Ahab

Having destroyed the kings of Israel and Judah and the queen mother (Jezebel) of Israel, Jehu now has control of Jezreel. In chapter 10, Jehu will complete his task as the avenger of blood for Yaweh beginning in Samaria.

Verses 1-11 - Seventy "Sons" of Ahab - Instead of traveling to Samaria himself, Jehu employs a different strategy in bringing God's judgment on the house of Ahab. He sends two letters to the rulers of Jezreel (who were in Samaria?), to the elders of Samaria and those who had reared Ahab's sons (probably his grandsons).

1) In the first letter (verses 2-3), Jehu challenges them to set one of Ahab's sons/grandsons on the throne and to have him lead the men of Samaria in battle against Jehu and his men. The leaders in Samaria have heard about what Jehu did to Jehoram and Ahaziah and want no part of a fight with Jehu! They send a letter back to Jehu telling him that they will be his servants and will await his instructions

2) In his second letter, Jehu gives conditions of peace. He says that they are to “take the heads of” Ahab’s sons to him at Jezreel. In the Hebrew, this statement can mean that they are either to bring the sons (heads) alive to Jezreel or that they are to decapitate the sons and bring their literal heads to him. The leaders of Samaria take Jehu’s instructions literally and slaughter Ahab’s sons and send their heads to Jehu. Jehu receives the heads, has them placed in two piles by the city gate and, in the morning, uses them as an object lesson to the people of Jezreel that the Lord is true to His word concerning the house of Ahab. He then proceeds to wipe out all the remaining family, priests and friends of Ahab’s house.

Verses 12-14 – Ahaziah’s Forty-two Brothers - Because Ahaziah, the king of Judah, had associated himself so closely with Jehoram (Joram) and the house of Ahab (in marriage, worship, and political alliance), his family shares in the judgment that falls on Ahab’s house. Here we see brothers of Ahaziah meeting Jehu on the way to Samaria and 42 of them and their families are executed.

Verses 15-17 – Ahab’s Family in Samaria - Jehu then travels to Samaria and wipes out the remnants of Ahab’s family (and friends perhaps) that dwell there. Jehu is joined in this venture by Jehonadab, the son of Rechab. The Rechabites were Gentiles and descendants of the righteous Kennezeit Caleb, famous in Numbers for his devotion to the Lord and His people.

Verses 18-27 – Baal Worshipers - The vengeance of the Lord against the house of Ahab comes to a climax in the execution of all the worshippers of Baal and the destruction of the temple of Baal as well. Jehu does this deceitfully by declaring that he intends to offer a “great sacrifice” to Baal. He calls for all of the prophets, priests and servants of Baal to assemble at the temple of Baal. When he has them all gathered and all of the worshippers of Yaweh excluded, he assigns eighty men to guard the exit doors and goes in and makes his sacrifice. He then sends the soldiers in and they kill every one inside, destroys the idols inside, and tears down the temple of Baal, literally turning it into a toilet! (“refuse dump”). Thus as verse 28 says, “Jehu destroyed Baal (not just Baal worship) from Israel”

This account in Kings records seven judgments of the Lord through Jehu against the house of

1. Jehoram (Joram)
2. Ahaziah
3. Jezebel
4. Seventy sons (grandsons) of Ahab
5. Forty-two brothers of Ahaziah
6. The remaining family and friends of Ahab
7. The worshippers of Baal and Baal’s temple

This seven-fold event is like a new creation, wiping out the influence of Ahab and those he spawned and influenced and (hopefully) ushering in a time of renewed devotion to Yaweh. Unfortunately, Israel will not depart from her sin and will continue down the path to exile.

The events of the vengeance of Yaweh through Jehu against the house of Ahab raises a couple of interesting questions:

1) Why does Yaweh destroy not only Ahab (earlier) and Jezebel, but Ahab's son (Jehoram), grandsons, distant relatives, priests and friends as well as the brothers of Ahaziah, king of Judah? Some things to consider are:

a) Baal and other idol worship and the related sins that accompany it had permeated the entire culture of the northern kingdom of Israel and had begun to do so in Judah as well. Much as in the days of Noah, or in the times of Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah, the judgment of God at this time was an all consuming fire, cleansing the land and avenging the blood of those faithful ones executed by Ahab and Jezebel.

b) Sin on the part of the leaders of Israel (or of any nation, church, business, family, etc.) affects all of those under their stewardship. Exodus 20:4,5 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness *of anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth;5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me,

c) The judgment of God against sin in a society at times also affects some of the elect of God as well. A good example of this in Scripture is the exile of Israel and Judah which sent the likes of Daniel and his three godly friends into captivity as well.

As the scripture says, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31).

Now have a student read verses 29-31

2) How do we explain the Lord's use of Jehu who seemed so zealous for Yaweh, yet was unfaithful to Him just as Jeroboam (and Ahab, and Jezebel and Jehoram, etc.) had been?

One way to answer this question is to say that the Lord uses sinful men to accomplish his holy purposes. We see this over and over in Scripture (recall Joseph's brothers, Saul, etc.) We will see this later in 2 Kings as Yaweh uses the Assyrians and the Babylonians to exile His people from the land. The people of God are never to ultimately trust in a man (not even in a king), but in the Lord Himself for their salvation.

In verses 32-36 we learn that Jehu ruled Israel another 28 years and, during his reign, the Lord began to take away parts of the land of Israel and give it over to Hazael and the Syrians. This is a foreshadowing of the full exile of Israel (and later Judah).

❖ **Homework** – Read 2 Kings 11-13, work on memory material; QUIZ ON 2 Kings 6:16 next week!

❖ **Pray/Prep for Worship**

1 and 2 Kings
Lesson 11 – 2 Kings 8:7- 13:35 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu
Part 1– 2 Kings 11-13 – The Death of Athaliah and Elisha

Objective – To help the students understand that even the restoration of right worship is no substitute for faith and trust in the Lord.

- ❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.
- ❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 2 Kings 11-13, and work on your memory materials?”
- ❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.
- ❖ **Scripture Memorization : QUIZ - Have each student write out verse and hand in - 2 Kings 6:16 – So he answered, “Do not fear, for those who *are* with us *are* more than those who *are* with them.”**

New Scripture Memorization: 2 Kings 17:22-23 – For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all his servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.

- ❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review
 - A. **1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built**
 - B. **1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established**
 - C. **1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri**
 - D. **2 Kings 2:1–8:6 – Elisha and His Miracles**
 - C’ **2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu**
 - B’ **2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls**
 - A’ **2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed**

❖ **Review/Introduction** – In our last lesson we saw how God used Jehu (who was anything but perfect) to bring His judgments on the house of wicked Ahab and Jezebel. We saw that peace in the Kingdom of God usually comes through the conversion or destruction of God’s enemies. In this lesson we will see the destruction of Athaliah, the wicked queen of Judah and the ushering in of the reign of Joash, a new Solomon (whose name means “peace”), who will work to rebuild Yaweh’s house of rest, the temple. However, we will also see that even the temple can become an idol which cannot save Judah, and we will also see the northern kingdom of Israel continue on her road of idolatry which will ultimately lead to her exile as well.

❖ Lesson – 2 Kings 11:1-13:35 -

2 Kings 11 – Destruction of Athaliah, the False Mother of Judah; Joash Becomes King

As we come to 2 Kings 11 we ought to be very alarmed. Up until now, the southern kingdom of Judah has seen an unbroken succession of kings from the family line of David. This will be interrupted in dramatic fashion as Athaliah comes to the throne. **Have a student read verses 1-3.** In 2 Kings 8 we learned that Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, was “granddaughter of Omri, king of Israel”. She was of the family (a daughter?) of Ahab, the wicked king of Israel, and walked in the evil ways of her father. Instead of preserving the family line of David, she proves herself to be a false “mother”. She seizes the throne by having her own grandsons murdered. In this act, Athaliah hand resembles Jezebel who was a murderess and a “false mother” in Israel as well. Only baby Joash is preserved from Athaliah’s killing spree through the bravery of Jehosheba (“the Lord has sworn an oath), his sister. Her name is strangely similar to that of Bathsheba (“daughter of an oath”) who helped preserve her son Solomon as God’s chosen heir to the throne after David (recall 1 Kings 1). Jehosheba acts as a true mother in Judah by being willing to turn against her own grandmother. In her deed she not only saves her brother’s life, but is used of the Lord to keep His promise (His “oath”) to David of maintaining his family line on the throne.

The rest of chapter 11 is the account of the preserving and crowning of Joash as king over Judah by Jehoiada the priest, and the execution of Athaliah for her murderous coup. Some observations that can be made to the class are:

1) Jehoiada, the priest - When Jezebel was on her murder spree, the Lord raised up the warrior Jehu to destroy her and her house. Yaweh will do a similar thing with Athaliah in Judah, this time raising up Jehoiada the priest.

- Jehoiada is introduced in verse 4, but is not identified as a priest until verse 9. A priest has not taken a prominent role in the account of 1 and 2 Kings since the time of Solomon when Zadok aided Bathsheba, his mother, and Nathan, the prophet, in convincing David to name Solomon as his successor to the throne (Recall 1 Kings 1). This renewed emphasis on the priesthood redirects our attention back to the **temple** itself, as we shall see later.

- Jehoiada is a man of faith and action and is used by the Lord to:

a) Restore the line of David to the throne (verses 4-12) Like David, Jehoiada takes his “mighty men” (palace soldiers) and uses them to guard Joash as he brings him forward and even gives them David’s weapons to use to fulfill this task (see verse 10)

b) Execute the murderess Athaliah (verses 13-16)

c) Renew covenant between Yaweh and His people (verse 17)

d) Destroy Baal worship in Judah (verse 18)

- In some sense, we might even say that Jehoiada rules over Judah during Joash’s early years. Joash is only seven years old when he is crowned king and, if we look ahead to chapter 12, we see that “Jehoash (Joash) did what was right in the sight of the Lord **all the days in which Jehoida the priest instructed him.**” (2 Kings 12:2)

2) Athaliah, the new Jezebel – The overthrow of Athaliah completes the destruction of the house of Ahab and, as Leithart has pointed out, is similar to Jehu’s actions regarding Jezebel:

Jehu and Jezebel – 2 Kings 9-10

Jehoiada and Athaliah – 2 Kings 11-12

Secret coronation (9:1-10)	Secret coronation (11:4-8)
Trumpets announce new king (9:13)	Trumpets announce new king (11:14)
“Jehu is king” (9:13)	“Long live the king” (11:12)
a king cries “treason” (9:23)	a queen cries “treason” (11:14)
Jezebel is killed (9:30-37)	Athaliah is killed (11:15)
house of Baal destroyed (10:18-28)	house of Baal destroyed (11:18)

3) Joash – The life of Joash in many ways resembles that of Moses, and especially Solomon:

Moses	Joash
Saved from the murderous plot of Pharaoh by his mother and sister, Miriam (Exodus 2:1-10)	Saved from murderous plot of Athaliah by Jehosheba, his sister (2 Kings 11:2)
Mother is his nurse (Exodus 2:9)	Nurse is hidden with him (2 Kings 11:2)
Leads Israel in an exodus from Egypt, Pharaoh’s army destroyed (Exodus 3-14)	Judah released from bondage to Athaliah who is destroyed (2 Kings 11:4-16)
Builds the tabernacle (Exodus 26-31)	Repairs the temple (2 Kings 12:1-16)
Institutes proper worship in Israel including many Sabbath (seventh day) feasts (Leviticus)	Is crowned in the seventh year, when he is seven years old, in the seventh year of Jehu king of Israel leading to Sabbath rest for the people of Judah. (2 Kings 11:18-12:2)

Solomon	Joash
Is called Yaweh’s son (2 Samuel 7:14)	Is called the “king’s son” (2 Kings 11:4,12) Hidden, raised, and crowned in Yaweh’s house (the temple) and is surrounded by temple guards (2 Kings 11:2-12);
Coronation contested by Adonijah (1 Kings 1-2)	Coronation contested by Athaliah (2 Kings 11:13-14)
Rival (Adonijah) executed (1 Kings 2:13-25)	Rival (Athaliah) executed – 2 Kings 11:13-16)
Name means “peace” and ushers in time of peace (Sabbath rest) for all the people of Israel (1 Kings 4:21-24)	Is crowned in the seventh year, when he is seven years old, in the seventh year of Jehu king of Israel leading to Sabbath rest for the people of Judah. (2 Kings 11:18-12:2)
Builds the temple (1 Kings 6)	Repairs the temple (2 Kings 12:4-16)
Craftworkers listed (1 Kings 5:13-18, 6:7)	Craftworkers listed (2 Kings 12:11-12)
Forty year reign (1 Kings 11:42)	Forty year reign (2 Kings 12:1)
Tolerates the “high places” (1 Kings 3:2-3)	Tolerates “high places” (2 Kings 12:3)

2 Kings 12 – Joash Repairs the Temple

Joash (also spelled “Jehoash”) followed the Lord as long as Jehoiada, the priest was there to guide him (12:2). 2 Chronicles 24 tells us that after the death of Jehoiada, Joash allowed

Judah to fall back into idolatry. We have a hint of this in 2 Kings 12 in verse 3 where we see that Joash tolerated high place worship even while Jehoiada was alive.

In verses 4-16 we have the account of the early zeal of Joash to restore temple worship in Israel. Not since the days of Solomon has the temple seen this sort of emphasis in 1 and 2 Kings. As Israel continues in her idolatry, the early reign of Joash gives the reader some hope that Judah will not follow the same path.

In verses 4-5, Joash instructs the priests to collect money from the people to repair the temple and to carry out the work themselves. Verses 6-7 tell us that the priests failed to use the money they collected to do the repair work. It seems likely that the priests either mismanaged the funds or simply kept them for themselves. In this it could be said that they resembled Hophni and Phineas, the sons of Eli who kept the offerings of the people for themselves (Recall 1 Samuel 2:12-17).

In verses 7-16, Joash changes his plan and instead has the priests simply collect the money in a sealed box and give it to paid workers who carried out the repairs of the temple. The author of 2 Kings makes a point of telling us that, unlike the priests, the workers “dealt faithfully” with the money that was given to them to repair the temple and so Joash did not require them to give a written account of how they spent the money. As much as we could be encouraged by the repairing of the temple by Joash and by the fact that, at least during the lifetime of Jehoiada, Joash “did what was right in the sight of the Lord”, several aspects of this account ought to be disturbing to us:

1) The lack of faithfulness on the part of God’s priests, as we have pointed out previously
2) The fact that not enough silver or gold was collected to make into new glorious tools to be used in the temple (see verse 13). This restored house of Yaweh will lack the glory of the one built by Solomon.

3) At the time of the dedication of the temple, Solomon had asked the Lord to hear the prayers of the people when they prayed to Him towards the temple during times of crisis. (Recall 1 Kings 8:22-53). However, in verses 17-18, when Hazael, king of Syria threatens Jerusalem, Joash plunders the temple instead of leading Judah in prayer to Yaweh towards it. All of the sacred articles and all of the gold gathered by Joash’s predecessors are removed from the temple, leaving Yaweh’s house barren.

These all point to the fact that the heart of Joash and the people of Judah was not really turned towards Yaweh as their ultimate rest and hope. Instead they were treating the temple as just another idol to be used as a tool to get what they want.

Verses 19-21 gives us a brief account of the conspiracy against Joash and his subsequent murder. 2 Chronicles 24 tells us that Joash had become a lot like Ahab. He allowed Judah to revert back to idol worship and even had the prophet Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, killed when he tried to rebuke Joash for his wickedness. This evil on Joash’s part is what results in the conspiracy against him. We saw many conspiracies and murders in the early days of the northern kingdom of Israel (Recall 1 Kings 15:27, 16:9, 16) but Joash is the first king of Judah to fall victim to a conspiracy. This tells us that Judah is becoming more like the northern kingdom of Israel in her idolatry and other wickedness.

Amaziah, the son of Joash will rule Judah after his father

2 Kings 13 – Wicked Kings of Israel and the Death of Elisha

In chapter 13, we return to the history of the kings of Israel.

Verses 1-9 give us the account of the reign of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, who rules Israel for seventeen years during the reign of Joash in Judah. **Have a student read verse 3 and summarize Jehoahaz's reign.** As has been the pattern of the kings of Israel, Jehoahaz “did evil in the sight of the Lord and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. He did not depart from them.”

If you will recall, the book of Judges is marked by a repeating pattern:

- 1) Israel sins, usually by way of idolatry
- 2) God sends an oppressor, usually in the form of a foreign power, who harasses Israel
- 3) Israel cries out to Yaweh for help
- 4) God sends a deliverer to rescue his people from their oppressor

We see this pattern repeated in 2 Kings 13:

- 1) Jehoahaz leads Israel into idolatry and other evil (verse 2)
- 2) The Lord delivers Israel into the hand of Hazael and (later) Beb-Hadad, kings of Syria (verse 3)
- 3) Jehoahaz prays to the Lord and He heard Jehoahaz' prayer (verse 4)
- 4) The Lord hears Jehoahaz' prayer and sends an (unknown) deliverer such that “they escaped from under the hands of the Syrians” (verse 5)

Just as in the days of the Judges, Israel does not really repent of her sin, but continues in her idolatry and wickedness (verse 6). As a result, the Lord depletes the army of Israel. **Have a student read verse 7.** Jehoahaz dies having done nothing to reverse the destructive path that Israel is on and his son, Joash comes to the throne in his place. Notice how the names of the kings of Israel are often the same - Ahaziah, Joram (Jehoram), Joash (Jehoash). Israel and Judah have become much like each other in their idolatry and wickedness and this is pictured in the reader having to look carefully to even know which kingdom the author is talking about!

Verses 10-13 is a very brief account of the reign of Joash, king of Israel. **Have a student read verse 11.** Joash's reign can be summarized like this: He ruled → He sinned → He died.

Verses 14-21 tell us of the last days of the great prophet, Elisha. The ministry and miracles of Elisha have brought continued hope to Israel of life in covenant with Yaweh despite the wickedness of her kings. Even at the end of his life, Elisha continues to minister a message of hope to Joash, king of Israel. **Have a student read verses 14-19.** Notice that the writer of 2 Kings gives this account in the life of Joash after he has previously told us of his death in verse 13. This literary oddity is a picture of the resurrection hope that even now is held out to Israel if her king will lead her in true covenant worship of Yaweh.

In verse 14, Joash weeps over the knowledge of Elisha's impending death. He says to Elisha, "O my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!" This reminds us of the end of Elijah's earthly life when the fiery chariot and horses appeared to take him to heaven. In his statement, Joash acknowledges Elisha as the true prophet, standing in Yaweh's place as the true protector and warrior for Israel. As verses 15-19, it is under the hand of Yaweh and his prophet that Israel will defeat her enemies, including the king of Syria. Yet Elisha's rebuke in verse 19 tells us that Israel's victory will be short lived once he is gone.

Have a student read verses 20-21. Even when he is departed, Elisha brings resurrection life from death and this will be seen as the Lord graciously delivers Israel from the king of Syria. However, the tragic truth is that, despite his miracles and his exhortations, the ministry of Elisha has no lasting effects in keeping Israel from her path towards destruction and exile. At the end of chapter 13, we see Yaweh's final act of mercy towards Israel, before she begins her final rapid slide into judgment.

We have seen Yaweh show mercy to Judah for the sake of David with whom He had made covenant in 2 Samuel 7. Israel and her kings have long forsaken any ties with David, yet Yaweh still rescues her by hearkening back to His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (verse 23). The Lord delivers her from Hazael, king of Syria and gives Joash victory three times allowing Joash to recapture some of the cities that Syria had previously taken.

We ought to see by now that Israel's hope is not in wisdom, nor in Torah (the Law), nor in the temple, nor even in her prophets. Israel's hope ought to have been in Yaweh Himself who had shown her such mercy. He is our hope as well.

❖ **Homework** – Read 2 Kings 14-17; Quiz on 2 Kings 6:16; Work on other memory material

❖ **Prayer / Prep for Worship**

1 and 2 Kings

Lesson 12 – 2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls

Objective – To help the students learn that that Israel (and now, the Church) was called to be the priestly nation to the world and that God’s judgments came to her as she remained unrepentant.

- ❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.
- ❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 2 Kings 14-17, and work on your memory materials?”
- ❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.
- ❖ **Scripture Memorization : 2 Kings 17:22-23** – **For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all his servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.**
- ❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review
 - A. **1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built**
 - B. **1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established**
 - C. **1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri**
 - D. **2 Kings 2:1–8:6 – Elisha and His Miracles**
 - C’ **2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu**
 - B’ **2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls**
 - A’ **2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed**

Review/Introduction – The northern kingdom of Israel has seen an uninterrupted line of wicked kings, beginning with Jeroboam, who have led her into idolatry and all sorts of wickedness. The Lord has been extremely longsuffering with Israel and has not abandoned her, nor brought His full judgments to bear on her. However, as the Scripture says, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” Galatians 6:7 In this lesson we will see the Lord bring the sin of Israel to justice.

❖ **Lesson – 2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls**

2 Kings 14 – “Rehoboam II” and Jeroboam II

Verses 1-22 – Amaziah - “Rehoboam II”

During his reign as king of Judah, Joash had repaired the temple and by and large “did what was right in the sight of the Lord”. On the other hand he plundered the temple when Hazael of Syria threatened Judah. Additionally, Joash tolerated worship at the high places and 2 Chronicles 24 tells us that he also allowed Judah to revert back to idol worship and even had

the prophet Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, killed when he tried to rebuke Joash for his wickedness. This evil on Joash's part results in a conspiracy against him and his murder. As we come to 2 Kings 14, Amaziah, his son, comes to the throne and proceeds to execute those responsible for the murder of his father (see verses 5-6). Verse 3 tells us that Amaziah, "...did what was right in the sight of the Lord..." and he demonstrates this in verse 6 by not having the children the murderers executed, in obedience to Deuteronomy 24:16. However, verse 3 also tells us that the righteousness of Amaziah the somewhat compromised version of his father Joash's, and "not like his father David". We will soon see how true this is.

In 1 Kings 12, Rehoboam lost control of the ten northern tribes of Israel into the hands of Jeroboam. In response to this, he assembled the army of Judah and Benjamin to go to war against Jeroboam in an attempt to reunite the kingdom by force of arms. However in obedience to the word of the Lord as spoken through the prophet Shemaiah, Rehoboam turned back from attacking Israel. **Have a student read 1 Kings 12:22-23.** As we come to 2 Kings 14:7ff, we see a similar series of events in the life of Amaziah. Though the Lord gives him initial victories over the Edomites (verse 7), Amaziah seems to become proud and, like Rehoboam before him, makes a similar attempt to consolidate his reign over all Israel. He sends word to Jehoash (Joash), king of Israel, saying "Come, let us face one another" (perhaps on the battlefield).

Jehoash, sends his reply in the form of a parable. **Have a student read verses 9-10 and ask the class, "Who is the thistle (Amaziah/Judah), who is the cedar (Jehoash/Israel)?"** While Amaziah, through his challenge, places himself on equal ground with Jehoash, Jehoash mocks Amaziah, comparing him and Judah to a thistle; a prickly, irritating weed that can easily be crushed. He also shows disdain for Amaziah's attempt at uniting their kingdoms ("Give your daughter to my son as wife") and says that a "wild beast" will trample him. Wild beasts often refer to Gentile rulers and Jehoash may be telling Amaziah that he ought to be more worried about these enemies and to leave Israel alone.

Unlike Rehoboam, Amaziah refuses to listen to the rebuke of Jehoash and presses his attack against Israel anyway. What happens in this battle (verses 12ff) can be seen as a sort of early hint of the defeat and exile that will soon to happen to Judah later in her history (see 2 Kings 24-25).

2 Kings 14	2 Kings 24-25
Judah defeated by Israel	Judah defeated by Babylon
Amaziah captured by Jehoash	Jehoiachin captured by Nebuchadnezzar
Jehoash attacks Jerusalem and breaks down part of the city wall	Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem and breaks through the city wall
Jehoash took all of the riches from the house of the Lord and from the king's treasuries	Nebuchadnezzar takes all of the riches from the house of the Lord and the from king's treasuries

After Jehoash dies, Amaziah reigns over Judah another fifteen years. From the text, it seems as though Amaziah is eventually allowed to go back to Jerusalem (see verse 19) and yet it is likely that he is a mere servant of the kings of Israel during the rest of his reign. Amaziah, like his father before him, falls victim to conspiracy and murder, perhaps by members of his own family. Azariah, his sixteen year-old son comes to the throne in his place.

Verses 23-29 – Jeroboam II

After the death of Jehoash (Joash), king of Israel, Jeroboam his son comes to the throne and reigns forty-one years. As is usual, “he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin” (verse 24). In spite of this, the Lord actually causes Jeroboam II to prosper in that he allowed him to recapture lost territory, some of which even extended into Judah! (see verses 25, 28). Though the Lord did not allow the relatively righteous king Amaziah to bring about a reuniting of all Israel under his reign, in a small sense he does allow wicked Jeroboam II to do so in the form of these military victories and the capturing of some of the territory of Judah. Jonah the prophet is mentioned in verse 25 and this brings to mind the entire book of Jonah in which God is merciful to sinful Nineveh. The Lord shows this same mercy to Israel, not because of the righteousness of her king or her people, but out of the abundance of His own love. **(Have a student read verses 26-27)**. However, the wrath of God still abides over Israel because of her wicked kings and her hard-heartedness.

2 Kings 15 – Conspiracies II

In verses 1-7 we learn of the reign of Azariah (also called Uzziah), the son of Amaziah, over Judah. Notable facts about his reign include:

- 1) He was only 16 when he became king. The people of Judah installed Azariah as king after his father, Amaziah, was murdered.
- 2) He had the second longest reign of any of the kings of Israel or Judah – 52 years. Only the reign of Manasseh will be longer (55 years)
- 3) He was a fairly righteous king for most of his reign except for not removing high-place worship.
- 4) The Lord struck him with leprosy. Though not explained in 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles 26 tells us that this happened because Asariah (Uzziah) tried to take over the role of the priests by burning incense in the temple. As a result of his leprosy, Azariah is cut off from the worship of the people of God in that he is unclean and cannot attend any of the feasts such as Passover. This gives us a hint of the path that all of Judah will take in the future as they will be cut off from the worship of God through their exile.

As you will recall from 1 Kings 15-16, after the reign of Jeroboam I, Israel went through a series of rulers (Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri) who ruled only for brief periods of time. Most of these rulers came to power through coups and the assassination of their predecessor. This pattern is broken only when Ahab comes to power ushering a time of drought, famine, idolatry, and wickedness in Israel. Here in 2 Kings 15, we see a near repeat of this pattern.

From verse 8-31 we see the rise and fall of five kings in Israel, each of whom “did evil in the sight of the Lord”:

Zechariah (verses 8-12) – reigned six months - murdered in a conspiracy

Shallum (verses 13-16) – reigned 1 month – murdered by Menahem

Menahem (verses 17-22) – reigned ten years – died

Pekahiah (verses 23-26) – reigned two years – murdered by Pekah

Pekah (verses 27-31) – reigned twenty years – murdered in a conspiracy led by Hoshea

Just as Israel spiraled downward during the reign of wicked Ahab, so now their spiral takes them even deeper into God’s judgment. This series of short, tumultuous reigns ends in Hoshea coming to the throne, ushering in the time of Israel’s exile, a time of drought and famine for the Word and the worship of Yaweh in the midst of the idolatrous, wicked Assyrians.

The Assyrians and Pul, their king, are brought abruptly to the forefront of the narrative in verse 19 when he comes against king Menahem of Israel. He turns back only when Menahem bribes him with a thousand talents of silver extracted from the wealthy Israelites. The Assyrians displace the Arameans (Syrians) as Israel’s most formidable enemy and will be mentioned 47 more times before the end of 2 Kings.

Chapter 15 ends with the account of reign of Jotham, king of Judah who came to the throne after Azariah (Uzziah). Few details of his reign are given in 2 Kings. He is said to have done “what was right in the sight of the Lord” but the comparisons to David are absent (as they were with Amaziah and Azariah). The Kings of Judah continue steadfastly to allow high place worship and this will lead to more gross idolatry later in her history. We get a hint of God’s increasing displeasure with Judah in verses 37 (**Have a student read**). The warning shots of God’s judgement on Judah are being launched against her in the form of foreign enemies and more still will be heaped up during the reign of Ahaz.

2 Kings 16 – Ahaz (Jeroboam III?)

In this chapter we will see a king of Judah (not related to Ahab) begin to lead Judah into gross idolatry for the first time in her history. (**Have a student read verses 1-3**). Not only does Ahaz walk “in the way of the kings of Israel”, he takes idolatry a step further by dedicating (some say sacrificing) his own son to the pagan gods, something we have not ever seen in the history of the people of God to this point. Indeed this practice is one of the things that characterized the wicked nations whom the Lord drove out through Joshua, and the judges that followed him. Ahaz has begun to turn the Promised Land back into pagan Canaan once again!

In verses 5 and 6 we see that the Lord immediately brings judgments to bear on Ahaz and Judah in the form of Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel. Rezin captures the city of Elath and allows the Edomites to occupy it. Unfortunately, as we saw in the case of Joash in 2 Kings 12, Ahaz responds to this defeat not by praying to the Lord, but by offering his service and the treasures of the temple and the palace to Tilgath-Pileser, king of Assyria (see

verses 7-8) . When Tilgath-Pileser captures Damascus, the capital of Syria, Ahaz joins him there.

While in Damascus, Ahaz sees an pagan altar that impresses him to the point that he sends “the design of the altar and its pattern” to Urijah the priest, instructing him to construct one that is identical to it. The word “pattern” in verse 10 is the same word that was used in Exodus 25:9,40 of the Lord giving Moses a “pattern” or model by which he was to construct the tabernacle! Thus Ahaz has foolishly put himself in the place of Yaweh, designing furniture to go into God’s temple! This pagan altar is constructed by Urijah and placed in the temple before Ahaz returns to Jerusalem from Damascus. This reminds us of Jeroboam who set up pagan altars in Bethel and Dan.

Like a false Solomon, Ahaz dedicates this new altar by offering sacrifices on it (verses 12-13). He then instructs the priests to remove the original bronze altar from its place in the temple (verse 14) and to offer all of the regular sacrifices on the pagan altar instead (verse 15)! In a final show of contempt in verse 15b, Ahaz says that he will continue to use the bronze altar “to inquire by”, as if the Lord will allow Himself to be manipulated by Ahaz in this fashion! Ahaz has taken the worship of pagan gods in Judah from the “secret” high places, fields and forests, right into the very house of Yaweh. This marks the beginning of the end for the southern kingdom of Judah!

In order to keep on friendly terms with Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, Ahaz sends him a regular flow of tribute. However, once again he plunders Yaweh’s house and his own house to do so. **Have a student read verses 17-18):**

- 1) Verse 17 - He takes down the bronze Sea that was on the 12 oxen and puts it on a pavement of stones. The nation of Israel (the 12 oxen) was to be God’s priestly nation, holding up the rest of the world, and causing the worship and blessings of Yaweh to flow to the Gentile nations (the Sea people). By adapting the worship of the pagan nations around her, Israel has become useless to these nations and is being torn down
- 2) Verse 18 - He plunders his own palace, a picture of the rule of Israel/Judah coming to an end.

God’s mercy to Judah has not reached its limit however, as we shall see in the reign of Ahaz’ son Hezekiah.

2 Kings 17 – The Fall of Israel

Yaweh has been extremely longsuffering in His dealings with the northern kingdom of Israel, despite her idolatry and other wickedness. However, she has come to the end of God’s mercy on her behalf. **(Have a student read verses 1-2)** Note first that Hoshea, the last king of Israel was not as evil as the kings that came before him. However, Israel’s judgment has already been declared by God, and there is no going back now.

The Lord sends Shalmaneser, king of Assyria against Israel and verse 3 tells us that “Hoshea became his vassal and paid him tribute money.” However, later Hoshea conspires to escape

the control of Assyria by withholding tribute and by enlisting the aid of So, king of Egypt. It is ironic that Hoshea would turn to Egypt at the end of Israel's history, the very nation that had enslaved God's people in the first place! Additionally, the Lord has raised up wicked Assyria as his tool of judgment against Israel and to resist Assyria at this time is to resist God himself. As a result, Hoshea is captured by the king of Assyria and bound in prison.

The king of Assyria then launches a full-scale invasion of Israel and lays siege to the capital city of Samaria. In those days a siege consisted of an invading army surrounding a city and simply waiting for its inhabitants to run out of food and other necessities. Any who tried to escape were killed. While the army waited, they built "siege works" against the city walls, which usually consisted of earthen or wooden ramps that reached to the top of the city walls. Once the people inside of the city were weakened with hunger, or had (literally) consumed many of their own, the army simply traveled up and over the siege works and took the city. This whole process often took a long time and involved extreme suffering on the part of the people of the city. In the case of the Assyrian siege of Samaria, the process took three years. Once they took Samaria, Shalmaneser "carried Israel away to Assyria". In the end, Hoshea's seeking Egypt's aid results in a tragic reversal of the Exodus, and a return to slavery for Israel at the hands of the Assyrians!

Verses 7-23 of chapter 17 are a review of the reasons for Israel's defeat and exile. It is amazing that the Lord would be willing to give an accounting of His actions, as if He really needed to explain Himself! These reasons are:

- 1) They sinned against the Lord who had brought them out of Egypt – verse 7a
- 2) They feared other gods – verse 7b
- 3) They walked according to the statutes (laws) of the pagan nations around them - verse 8
- 4) They worshipped the gods of these nations – verses 9 –12
- 5) They failed to listen to the rebuke and instruction of Yaweh as He spoke to them through His prophets – verses 13-14

Israel's sin against Yaweh is summarized in a ten-fold (Full-Law) manner verses 15-17:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) They rejected His statutes | 6) They left His commandments |
| 2) They rejected His covenant | 7) They made pagan images |
| 3) They rejected His testimonies | 8) They dedicated/sacrificed their children to these gods |
| 4) They followed idols and became idolators | 9) They practiced witchcraft and soothsaying |
| 5) They went after the pagan nations | 10) They sold themselves to do evil |

Verse 18 tells us God's response to this ten-fold sin on Israel's part. **Have a student read verse 18.**

In verses 19-20 we see that Judah too is walking the same path as Israel and will reap the same judgments as she has.

In summary, because Israel failed for nearly 200 years to depart from the sins of Jeroboam (verses 21-23) that they are rejected by the Lord and taken into captivity (verses 20, 23).

The year of Israel's captivity is generally set at 722 B.C

Unfortunately, once Israel is in captivity, things do not seem to improve.

Verses 24-28 – The king of Assyria repopulates the cities in Israel with Assyrian citizens from many “nations”. Because they do not fear the Lord, Yaweh sends lions among them to devour them. **Ask the students, “Where have we seen lions devouring people in 1 and 2 Kings before?”**

Answer: 1) The lion who slew (but did not eat) the man of God in 1 Kings 13

2) The lion who slew the man in 1 Kings 20:35-36 who would not strike the son of the prophets

Unlike the Israelites in the two instances above, the pagan Assyrians at least have the sensitivity to know that the coming of the lions is a sign of a spiritual problem in the land. **(Have someone read verse 26).**

The king responds by having an Israelite priest sent back to the Promised Land to teach the Assyrians “the rituals of the God of the land” (Verses 27-28). Verses 29-41 tell us that this priest did indeed teach the Assyrians how to worship Yaweh, but according to the way Jeroboam had done it and not according to the Word of the Lord:

A list of the sins of the Assyrians looks a lot like the list of the sins of Israel which caused them to go into captivity in the first place:

v. 29-30 - Shrines are established in the high places – c.f. v. 11

v. 31 – They burned their children to false gods – c.f. v. 17

Verses 32-33 say that they feared the Lord yet they served their own gods

Like Israel before them, the Assyrian occupiers are looking to appease Yaweh, **not submit to him, love Him, or serve Him.** Notice too that, though it is the nations who are disobedient, yet the writer of 2 Kings places the blame for this squarely on the shoulders of Israel

Have a student read v. 34-39

It was Israel who was first and foremost responsible to:

1) Fear the Lord – v. 34, 39

2) Follow the statutes, ordinances, law and commandments of the Lord – v. 34, 37

3) Keep covenant with the Lord – v. 35, 38a

3) Refrain from following other gods, not bowing down to them, serving them, nor sacrificing to them – v. 35, 38b

Because Israel “feared the Lord, yet served their own gods”, the nations who settle in the land after Israel’s exile do the same thing! Israel has failed to be a priest to the nations round about her and as a result, the whole world is a mess! The Christian church as a whole and Christians as individuals are now the priests to the nations. How well we worship the Lord in Spirit and in Truth and how well we walk in obedience to His commands will to a large degree determine whether or not the blessings of Jesus and his Kingdom flow to the rest of the world. Let us commit ourselves to be good stewards of this trust!

❖ **Homework** – Read 2 Kings 18-20; work on memory material

❖ **Pray / Prep for Worship**

1 and 2 Kings

**Lesson 13 – 2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed
Part 1 – 2 Kings 18-20 – The Reign of Hezekiah**

Objective – To help the students understand that the Lord will defend the honor of His name and, in the end, will not allow individuals or nations to mock Him.

❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.

❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 2 Kings 18-20, and work on your memory materials?”

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.

❖ **Scripture Memorization : 2 Kings 17:22-23** – **For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all his servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.**

❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review

A. 1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built

B. 1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established

C. 1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri

D. 2 Kings 2:1–8:6 – Elisha and His Miracles

C’ 2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu

B’ 2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls

A’ 2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed

❖ **Review/Introduction** – The final judgment of God has fallen on the northern kingdom of Israel and they have been taken captive to **where? (Assyria)**. As we saw in 2 Kings 17:19, Judah too “did not keep the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.” However, God will delay His judgment on Judah for nearly 150 years, and she will still be blessed with the reigns of several godly kings. We will meet one of these kings, Hezekiah, in this lesson.

❖ **Lesson – 2 Kings 18-20 – The Reign of Hezekiah**

2 Kings 18

Verses 1-8 – Hezekiah’s Reign Begins

Regarding fathers and their sons, it has been said, “Like father, like son” and “The apple doesn’t fall very far from the tree”. Both of these sayings correctly indicate that sons often grow up to look, think, and act a lot like their fathers. However, this couldn’t be any less true

in the case of Ahaz, king of Judah, and his son, Hezekiah, who followed him on the throne. As you will recall, Ahaz “walked in the way of the kings of Israel; indeed he made his sons pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord has cast out from before the children of Israel. And he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills and under every green tree” (2 Kings 16:4). Chapter 18 begins by telling us that Hezekiah was a man of a completely different sort. **Have a student read 2 Kings 18:1-6 and then ask for a list of the positive attributes of Hezekiah:**

- 1) He did what was right in the sight of the Lord**
- 2) He was like David, the man after God’s own heart**
- 3) He removed the high places**
- 4) He broke the sacred pillars**
- 5) He cut down the wooden images**
- 6) He destroyed the bronze serpent that Moses had made which was being used as an idol**
- 7) He trusted in the Lord God of Israel**
- 8) None of the kings of Judah, before or after him, were like Hezekiah**
- 9) He held fast to the Lord**
- 10) He did not depart from following the Lord, but kept His commandments**

This ten-fold praise of Hezekiah is greater than that given to any of the rulers of the southern kingdom of Judah. Scripture doesn’t tell us the secondary means used by the Lord to account for Hezekiah’s godliness, though one might suspect that his mother (mentioned in verse 2) had a lot to do with it. Regardless, verse 7 tells us that, “The Lord was with him; he prospered wherever he went.”

Hezekiah is:

- 1) A new Moses - Removing idol worship from Judah (as Moses had done in the case of the golden calf) and keeping the Law which the Lord had commanded Moses
- 2) A new David – subduing the Philistines (verse 8)
- 3) A new Adam / Jesus – “crushing the head” of serpent worship in Judah (verse 4b)

Though Yaweh used the Assyrians as His instrument of judgment against the northern kingdom of Israel, He has no such intentions with Judah. Verse 7 tells us that one of Hezekiah’s praiseworthy actions is that “he rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him”. Yet it is these very Assyrians that will boldly challenge not only Hezekiah’s reign over Judah, but Yaweh’s as well

Verses 9-16 – Verses 9-12 recounts the defeat of the northern kingdom by Shalmanesar, the king of Assyria and her exile to Assyria.

Seven years later, Sennacherib, king of Assyria after Shalmanesar invades the southern kingdom of Judah and conquers many of her fortified cities and (apparently) surrounds Jerusalem.

Leithart points out that “the story of the Assyrian siege of Jerusalem is told in a parallel structure”:

- A Assyrians arrive at Jerusalem (18:13-16)
- B Messengers from Assyria speak to the people (18:17-37)
- C Hezekiah seeks the prophet and prays (19:1-5)
- D Isaiah prophesies (19:6-7)
- A’ Assyrians leave (19:809a)
- B’ Assyrian letter to Jerusalem (19:9b-13)
- C’ Hezekiah responds by entering temple to pray (19:14-19)
- D’ Isaiah prophesies (19:20-34)
- A” Assyrians leave for good (19:35-37)

In verses 14-16, Hezekiah seems to follow the pattern of many of the kings of Israel before him by giving himself and the people of Judah over as servants to Sennacherib and even plunders the treasuries of the Temple in order to pay Sennacherib his tribute. (see verses 14-16). Thus far it seems as though the writer of 2 Kings 18 may have exaggerated regarding the godliness of Hezekiah! However, Hezekiah will soon make a full recovery from this misstep!

Verses 17-35 – Sennacherib sends a delegation to Jerusalem which includes:

- 1) The Tartan – probably the Commander in Chief of the army
- 2) The Rabsaris – probably the Chief Officer (literally, the “chief eunuch”)
- 3) The Rabshakeh – probably the Chief of Staff (literally, the “chief cupbearer”)

This Rabshakeh (cupbearer) reminds us of the cupbearer in Genesis 40 who did not speak to Pharaoh about Joseph’s dreams

The Rabshakeh takes the lead role in this delegation and gives a speech from the ground outside the walls of Jerusalem to the citizens who are suffering under siege within. As Leithart has pointed out, his two speeches (verses 19-25 and 27-35) are meant to convince the citizens of Jerusalem that that neither Egypt nor Hezekiah nor Yaweh can save them, nor can they provide them with a good life. Only the king of Assyria can do all these things for them. **Summarize these verses for the students:**

- A Don’t trust Egypt (18:19-21)
- B Don’t trust Yaweh or Hezekiah (18:22)
- A’ King of Assyria, not Egypt, will give chariots and horses (18:23-25)
- B’ Don’t trust Hezekiah or Yaweh (18:29-30)
- A” King of Assyria will take you to a promised land (18:31-32)
- B” Yaweh cannot protect, any more than other gods (18:33-35)

The Rabshakeh is using propaganda to convince the citizens of Judah that trust in weaker armies (Egypt’s or their own) or in religion (Yaweh) is foolish. His speeches say that the great human king (Sennacherib) and his empire (Assyria) represent the only real power on

earth and that resistance is futile. He is shrewd enough to know the audience he is speaking to and phrases his speech much like a prophet of Judah would:

- 1) He accuses the people of Judah of trusting in Egypt (verses 19-21)
- 2) He accuses Hezekiah of plundering the temple of Yaweh and so offending the very God they claim to be trusting in (verse 22)
- 3) He promises them horses and chariots, which we have seen refer to the prophets themselves, the chariots and horsemen of Israel – remember 2 Kings 2:12, and 13:14 (verses 23-24)
- 4) He claims to be doing the will of Yaweh (verse 25)
- 5) He says that, if they will now put their trust in Sennacherib, that he will take them to a Promised Land (verses 31-32)

As if this were not enough to provoke the Lord to action, the Rebshakeh brings a direct challenge to Yaweh. **Have a student read verses 33-35. They can be summarized as follows:**

- A Will Yaweh deliver?
 - B Has any god delivered?
 - C gods of Hamath and Arpad, etc.
 - B' What gods have delivered?
- A' Can Yaweh deliver?

Yaweh will not allow this last blasphemy to go unchallenged!

2 Kings 19 – Yaweh Triumphs over Sennacherib

Verses 1-19 – Sennacherib's Challenge to Yaweh

Have a student read 2 Kings 19:1-5 - Solomon, in his prayer of dedication of the temple in 1 Kings 8 had laid out a pattern for future kings of Israel and the people to follow: Whenever difficult times come upon you, humble yourself and pray to Yaweh (towards the temple). We have seen previous kings of Israel fail to do this (Remember Ahaziah (2 Kings 1), Jehoram (2 Kings 3), and even Joash (2 Kings 12)). To his credit, in the face of Sennacherib's continued siege and the railings of the Rebshakeh Hezekiah follows Solomon's path by humbling himself and praying to the Lord in the temple. He also sends a delegation to Isaiah, the prophet of God, to see how Yaweh would answer his prayer.

Isaiah sends words of encouragement to Hezekiah. **Have a student read verses 6-7**

The Rebshakeh returns to Assyria and finds that Sennacherib has left Lachish (a city in Judah). He is occupied in other battles and will not be completing the siege of Jerusalem immediately. Lest Hezekiah become confident and think that Jerusalem will be spared, the Rebshakeh sends him a letter that is similar to his second speech:

- 1) Do not let Yaweh deceive you by telling you (through Isaiah) that Jerusalem will not be given into the hands of the Assyrians (verse 10)
- 2) No other god has been able to stand against Sennacherib and the Assyrian army (verses 11-12), a second direct challenge to Yaweh's power.
- 3) No other king has been able to stand against Sennacherib and the Assyrian army (verse 13)

To his credit, Hezekiah takes this letter, spreads it on the floor of the temple, and once again prays to the Lord. **Have a student read verses 15-19.** In his prayer Hezekiah:

- A Declares that Yaweh is the one and only God and that His authority extends to every nation on earth (“You are God, You alone”) (verse 15)
- B Asks that the Lord would see and hear the words of Sennacherib’s letter which are reproachful to Yaweh. (verse 16)
 - C Acknowledges that the other nations conquered by Sennacherib (including the northern kingdom of Israel?) were idolatrous nations who deserved what they got because they worshipped the works of men’s hands. (verses 17-18)
- B’ Asks that the Lord would save Judah from Sennacherib (verse 19a)
- A’ so that “all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the Lord God, You alone” (verse 19b)

Notice that the idol worship of the Assyrians is not mentioned (though they certainly had their own false gods (see verse 37). Rather, Sennacherib has set himself up as the chief god among the Assyrians and as a direct challenge to Yaweh, the one true God!

Notice too that, in the center of his prayer, Hezekiah declares that the only reason for Sennacherib’s success is that the Lord is using him to accomplish His purposes and these purposes include the destruction of idolatrous nations. This fact will be repeated in Yaweh’s reply to Sennacherib. It is also ironic that, because of her idolatry, Judah too will later suffer the wrath of the Lord at the hands of the Babylonians!

Verses 20-34 – Yaweh’s Answer

Verses 20-34 are Yaweh’s “letter” of reply to Sennacherib, as spoken through the prophet Isaiah. **Have the students “talk” through this letter, naming the points which God makes throughout its content.**

- Yaweh (and Judah) are laughing at and mocking Sennacherib (verse 21)
- Sennacherib’s reproachful, blasphemous letter is ultimately against Yaweh, not Hezekiah or Judah (verses 22-23a)
- Sennacherib and his army are taking credit for their military victories, but these have only come about because of the Lord. (verses 23b-26)
- And so, because of his pride and blasphemy, Sennacherib and his army will be defeated by Yaweh Himself (verses 27-34)

Verses 35-37 – Yaweh Defeats Sennacherib

Verses 35-37 tell us how Yaweh defended His own name and defeated Sennacherib and his army without using Hezekiah or the army of Judah at all!

- He causes another Passover-like event to take place in which an angel comes into the camp of the Assyrian army and kills 185,000 soldiers. Yaweh proves himself to be superior to Sennacherib the “emperor god” of the Assyrians just as he proved Himself superior to the gods of Egypt, including Pharaoh himself!
- Sennacherib escapes back to Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria
- Sennacherib is murdered by his own sons as he worships Nisroch, a false god of the

Assyrians

The Lord in his mercy has, for the time being, spared Judah from the same fate as Israel.

2 Kings 20 – Hezekiah’s Life is Extended

So far in 1 and 2 Kings we have encountered at least four kings or princes on their deathbeds

1) David – 1 Kings 1

2) Abijah (heir apparent to the throne) – 1 Kings 14

3) Ahaziah – 2 Kings 1

4) Ben Hadad, king of Syria – 2 Kings 8

- In all four of these instances, the kings/prince never recovered from their sick beds.
- In the case of Abijah, Ahaziah, and Ben Hadad, the family line of the king is also ended at the time of, or soon after their deaths.
- In each case, a prophet is involved in the deathbed scene, often bringing news to the king/prince that he will not recover. In David’s case, Nathan the prophet comes to exhort him to continue his dynasty through Solomon. Thus, prophets come to announce to the king Yaweh’s intentions to curse or to bless.

In 2 Kings 20, we find that Hezekiah is on his deathbed as well. Bible commentators place the time of this illness sometime just **before** the siege of Jerusalem described in 2 Kings 18-19. His case is similar to the four mentioned above in that the Lord sends a prophet (Isaiah) to announce to Hezekiah that he will not recover from his sickness. However, Hezekiah once again proves that he is a righteous king by praying to the Lord instead of consulting with a pagan god in the case of Ahaziah, or using deceit as Jeroboam’s wife had done.

(Have a student read verses 2-3) Hezekiah’s prayer is similar in content to many of David’s prayers in the Psalms, reminding us that Hezekiah is a king who is more like David than any king in Judah who came before him. Notice too that in verse 5, when the Lord, through Isaiah, answers Hezekiah’s prayer, He addresses Himself as “the God of David your father”, further highlighting the connection between Hezekiah and David. The Lord sends word to Hezekiah that He has heard his prayer and seen his tears and that He will indeed heal him.

Hezekiah is suffering from a boil, a reminder of the plagues of Egypt, perhaps a warning that Judah has begun to act like pagan Egypt in the days of Moses (Exodus 9:8-12) and is threatened with the same judgment as she was (see also Deuteronomy 28:27). Hezekiah covers his boil with a “lump of figs” as the Lord, through Isaiah, instructed him to do and he is cured. As Leithart has said, “...for instead of pestilence and boils the land will be filled with vineyards and fig trees.”

However, according to the Law, Hezekiah will still remain unclean for a total of eight days (see Leviticus 14). In verse 5, the Lord had assured Hezekiah that, not only would He heal him, but that he would shorten his uncleanness as well such that Hezekiah will be able to worship the Lord in His temple “on the third day”. He will add fifteen years to Hezekiah’s life and deliver Judah from the hand of the Assyrians, who are besieging Jerusalem, as well.

In verse 8, Hezekiah asks for a sign that the Lord has truly done this miracle such that Hezekiah will be able to go to the temple to worship Yaweh “on the third day”. The sign he requests is quite a remarkable one (**Have a student read verses 9-11**); that the rotation of the earth would be reversed for an instant! The Lord complies with Hezekiah’s request demonstrating His willingness to delay His judgment on Judah for a season. The shadow is said to go backwards ten degrees on the “sundial of Ahaz”. The Lord is causing a temporary movement in Hezekiah’s (and Judah’s) life from darkness (lengthening shadows) to light... from judgment to blessing... from death to life. The third day “resurrection” of Hezekiah also reminds us of Jesus, who was also raised on the third day. Yaweh is not just the God who defeats all other gods (whether idols or emperors such as Sennacherib). He is the God who has the power over life and death itself!

Verses 12-19 gives us the account of the visit to Jerusalem of Berodach-Baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon and his entourage. Babylon was a city in Assyria which eventually became powerful enough to defeat the Assyrians and to become the dominant world empire. It appears that, at this time in history, Babylon is already on the rise. While these Babylonian ambassadors are in Jerusalem, Hezekiah foolishly shows them all of the treasures of the city and her armaments as well. Matthew Henry says that Hezekiah did this both out of pride at his own accomplishments and to win their admiration and favor. He goes on to say that, instead, Hezekiah should have shown them the temple, and discussed with them the worship of Yaweh, the one true God. This visit seems to be a reversal of the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon. She came to Israel to “hear” Solomon, whereas it is Hezekiah who “hears” (“is attentive to”) the Babylonians. The Queen of Sheba’s visit demonstrated Israel’s role as the ruling empire of the world in Solomon’s time. This visit by the Babylonian ambassadors seems to indicate Judah’s weakening position in favor of the rising Babylonian empire.

Isaiah is sent to Hezekiah to inquire about this matter and then reminds Hezekiah that Judah sits under the rod of Yaweh’s judgment. The very ambassadors whom Hezekiah has shown such kindness to will be used of God to bring His wrath upon Judah after she resumes her idolatry when Hezekiah is gone. Hezekiah responds to this prophecy in humility and in resignation to the will of the Lord. (**Have a student read verse 19**). Though he cannot control how future kings may lead Judah, she will have peace in Hezekiah’s days because he did follow Yaweh with all his heart, as David had done.

Verses 20-21 record that Hezekiah’s reign brought prosperity to Judah (including life-giving water) for a season and he dies in peace and is buried in Jerusalem. This chapter ends ominously though, as we see the rise of Hezekiah’s son, Mannasseh, to the throne of Judah. Manasseh will undo all of the good that Hezekiah has done and will prove himself to be one of the most wicked rulers that either Israel or Judah has ever known!

❖ **Homework** – Read 2 Kings 21-23; Work on memory material

❖ **Pray / Prep for Worship**

1 and 2 Kings

Lesson 14 – 2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed Part 2 – 2 Kings 21-23 – Manasseh and Josiah

Objective – To demonstrate that the opportunity for repentance for sin does not last forever and that God’s judgments will rightly fall on people or nations who remain stubborn in their rebellion.

- ❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.
- ❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 2 Kings 21-23, and work on your memory materials?”
- ❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.
- ❖ **Scripture Memorization : 2 Kings 17:22-23** – **For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all his servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.**
- ❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review
 - A. **1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built**
 - B. **1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established**
 - C. **1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri**
 - D. **2 Kings 2:1–8:6 – Elisha and His Miracles**
 - C’ **2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu**
 - B’ **2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls**
 - A’ **2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed**
- ❖ **Review/Introduction** – Hezekiah was a righteous king unlike wicked Ahaz, his father, and was able to undo much of the harm his father had done (**Have the students give a list of what good things Hezekiah had done - Recall 2 Kings 18:1-6**):
 - 1) **He did what was right in the sight of the Lord**
 - 2) **He was like David, the man after God’s own heart**
 - 3) **He removed the high places**
 - 4) **He broke the sacred pillars**
 - 5) **He cut down the wooden images**
 - 6) **He destroyed the bronze serpent made by Moses which was being used as an idol**
 - 7) **He trusted in the Lord God of Israel**
 - 8) **None of the kings of Judah, before or after him, were like Hezekiah**
 - 9) **He held fast to the Lord**
 - 10) **He did not depart from following the Lord, but kept His commandments**

However, Hezekiah’s reforms last only as long as he does. His son, Manasseh, will be one of the most wicked kings ever to reign over Judah (or over Israel for that matter!). He will reverse all of the reforms of his godly father. As she approaches the time of her exile, the southern kingdom of Judah will enter on what seems like a “roller-coaster ride of rulers”, yet all of them in the family line of David:

Hezekiah – righteous
Josiah – righteous

Ahaz – wicked
Manasseh – wicked
Amon - wicked
Jehoahaz → Zedekiah - wicked

This sequence proves that the people of Judah never really recommit themselves to loving and trusting Yaweh nor to obeying His commandments during the reigns of their godly kings, for they are easily led back into their idolatry by the wicked ones that follow.

❖ **Lesson – 2 Kings 21-23 – Manasseh and Josiah**

2 Kings 21 - Manasseh

Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, follows him to the throne at the tender age of twelve. Besides his young age, several other interesting facts about Manasseh are found in verse 1:

- 1) He reigned 55 years in Jerusalem – Manasseh’s reign is the longest of any of the kings in Israel’s history! When we find out how wicked he was, it seems remarkable that the people of Judah would have tolerated such a king for so long!
- 2) Manasseh means “causing to forget”. In Genesis, Joseph had named his firstborn Manasseh saying, “For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father’s house.” God had prospered Joseph in Egypt after his enslavement and imprisonment and his naming of Manasseh is in thankfulness to God for this. However, as we shall see, King Manasseh will do all he can to make Judah **forget Yaweh Himself** (see verse 9, for example) and, as a result, Yaweh will forget (“forsake”) Judah as well (see verse 14)!

Hezekiah had reestablished godly worship in Judah and, according to 2 Chronicles 30:5-6, he had even called for a celebration of Passover in all of Israel, “from Dan to Beersheba”. Manasseh on the other hand, leads Judah into the most widespread and wicked idolatry since the darkest days of the reign of Solomon.

Verses 2-11 give us the details of just how much of Hezekiah’s good work Manasseh destroyed. **(Have a student read verses 2-11).**

Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:3-6)	Manasseh (2 Kings 2-16)
1) He did what was right in the sight of the Lord	1) He did evil in the sight of the Lord... v. 2
2) He was like David, the man after God’s own heart	2) ... according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel - v. 2
3) He removed the high places	3) He rebuilt the high places – v. 3
4) He broke the sacred pillars	4) He built altars in the house of the Lord and for all the host of heaven – v. 4-5
5) He cut down the wooden images	5) He made a wooden image... - v. 3

6) He destroyed the bronze serpent that Moses had made which was being used as an idol	6) He built an Asherah pole and put it in the temple to be worshipped. – v. 7
7) He trusted in the Lord God of Israel	7) He practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft, consulted spiritists and mediums – v. 6
8) None of the kings of Judah, before or after him, were like Hezekiah	8) He acted more wickedly than all the Amorites who were before him. – v. 11
9) He held fast to the Lord	9) He seduced Judah to forsake the Lord – v. 9
10) He did not depart from following the Lord, but kept His commandments	10) Under Manasseh, Judah did more evil than the nations whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel – v. 9

Hezekiah was a “new David” who essentially ruled over a united kingdom (now that Israel is in exile) and who saw the worship of Israel reach a wonderful high point.

However, Manasseh is a second idolatrous Solomon who plunges Judah to her depth of idolatry and depravity. (See the reference to David and Solomon in verse 7). When Solomon lead Israel into idolatry and other sin, Yaweh tore Israel in two.

However, Manasseh’s idolatries are called “abominations” (verses 2 and 11) and will result in the desolation (exile from the land) of Judah. Yaweh’s response is swift and final (**Have a student read verses 12-15**).

Verse 16 tells us that Manasseh compounds his wickedness with the shedding of innocent blood, the details of which are not given. This blood, which “had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, is like the blood of Abel, and is crying out to the Lord for vengeance. Yaweh will soon send an “avenger of blood” in the form of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian army!

The northern kingdom of Israel seemed to be set on a path of judgment from the time of its very first king, Jeroboam I and the golden calf worship that he initiated. From that point forward, Israel’s march towards exile was unswerving, as king after king was said to have “walked in the ways of Jeroboam” and “made Israel sin”. (see 1 Kings 14:16, 15:26, 16:2,19, 25,30, 22:52, 2 Kings 3:3, 10:29,31, 13:2,6,11, 14:24, 15:9,18,24,28). These were all summed up in 2 Kings 17:22-23 For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them,²³ until the LORD removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, *as it is* to this day.

By contrast, up until now, no king of Judah had been so wicked, nor had he led her into such idolatry that he had “made Judah sin” as Jeroboam his successors had done in Israel.

However, twice in this chapter, Manasseh is said to have “made Judah sin” (verses 11, 16). As Leithart said, “When a David King, called to shepherd Yaweh’s people, turns into an enemy of the people of God, then the dynasty has to end”.

There comes a time in the life of an individual or a nation where the opportunity for repentance is gone (remember Esau, and Judah Iscariot). Though 2 Chronicles 33 tells us that Manasseh repented of the evil he had done, from this time forward the Lord will not relent from bringing Judah to destruction and exile. Manasseh had made Judah sin by acting “more wickedly than all the Amorites who were before him” and, like the Amorites in the days of Joshua, Judah’s iniquity has become full. Her time of grace has reached its end.

Verses 17-18 record the death of Manasseh and the rise of his son, Amon, to the throne. Amon’s brief two-year reign is summarized in verses 20-22 (**Have a student read**). It could be said that Amon was worse than his father Manasseh in that he never repented of his sin. He was assassinated by his own servants, an end more typical of some of Israel’s kings. However, his murderers are brought to justice and Josiah his son is made king in his place.

2 Kings 22 - Josiah Restores the Law to Judah

It seems rather tragic that, after the “death sentence” has been pronounced on Judah because Manasseh (and Amon) led her into idolatry and wickedness, there comes a king after them like Josiah. Verse 2 tells us that Josiah “did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.” His coming to the throne at the tender age of eight seems significant, since the number eight in the Scripture is often associated with new birth or new creation. Judah experiences a thirty-one year period of revival (new life) and blessing during the reign of this righteous king.

Like Joash before him, Josiah undertakes the repair of the temple when he is **eighteen (8+10) years old**, perhaps a picture of **new creation (8) and a return to the Law (10)**. He sends word to Hilkiyah the priest to count the money collected for the repairs and to give it to the workers. Unlike the days of Joash, the priests have been faithful in collecting the money but, like the days of Joash, the workers are faithful in using it to do the work on the temple as they had promised (see verses 3-7).

The reign of Josiah takes a very important turn when Hilkiyah the priest sends word to him that he has found the Book of the Law.

Have a student read Deuteronomy 17:14-20. Moses had instructed the people that the Lord would one day set a king over them and that the king was to:

- 1) Be an Israelite
- 2) Not multiply horses to himself nor cause the people to return to Egypt to get horses for him
- 3) Not multiply wives to himself lest his heart turn away (from Yaweh)
- 4) Not multiply silver and gold to himself
- 5) Write his own copy of the law book, keep it with him, read it all the days of his life, and be careful to obey it, to that he will not become proud and think himself better than the people he ruled, and so that he may rule a long time

No king, whether in Josiah’s day or in our own, should rule a nation if he does not thoroughly know and keep the Word of God. **Have a student read verse 11. What was**

Josiah's reaction to hearing the Book of the Law read to him? It seems obvious that it had been a long time since any king had obeyed 5) above because when Josiah hears the words of the Book of the Law, he tears his clothes (in grief). He knows that he and the kings who have come before him have not kept the Word of the Lord that he has just heard. However, like a wise young ruler, he instructs the priests to inquire of the Lord as to what the implications of all of this are (verses 12-13).

The priests go to Huldah, the prophetess and she gives them the Word of the Lord concerning what Josiah has heard from the Book of the Law. It can be summarized:

1) Verses 15-17 – Because of her sin, Judah is doomed and nothing Josiah can do will change that.

2) Verses 18-20 – Because Josiah's heart was "tender" and because he humbled himself before the Lord when he heard words of the Book of the Law, the judgment on Judah will not be executed in Josiah's lifetime.

In the face of certain failure, what Josiah undertakes in chapter 23 is remarkable indeed!

2 Kings 23 – Josiah Restores True Worship to Judah

Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." All Christians are created to do work in the Kingdom of God. Our duty is to be faithful to the calling that God has on each of our lives and to the calling of the specific church He has placed us in. However, the results of our efforts are not ultimately up to us. They are up the Lord. Josiah knows that the reforms he undertakes in Judah will not stave off the judgment of God which has been decreed for her. However, Josiah's focus is on being faithful to the calling of God on his life, not on being "successful" as men measure it. And faithful he is!

If Hezekiah was a new David and Manasseh was like idolatrous Solomon, then Josiah can be seen as an "anti-Jeroboam", one who tears down all the idolatry that sprang from the golden calf worship begun by Jeroboam.

Verses 1-3 – Before Josiah begins his reforms, he gathers all of Judah together and

1) Reads the Book of the Covenant to them –verse 2

2) Renews covenant with Yaweh on behalf of all the people – verse 3

Note the fervency with which Josiah commits himself and (by implication) the people of God to the Lord.

...to follow the Lord

...and to keep His commandments

...and His statutes

...with all his heart and all his soul

...to perform the words of this covenant that were written in the book

Josiah "stands" by a pillar to renew covenant, and all the people "took a stand for the covenant."

Verses 4-20 - Once they have renewed covenant, Josiah undertakes **twelve separate acts** to tear down the pagan worship system that had replaced Yaweh worship, both in Judah and throughout all Israel. **Note: The text depicts all of these acts of judgment on the pagan worship system as if they are carried out only by Josiah himself. This shows us that it is actually Yaweh, working through Josiah (and those who aided him), who is bringing these things to pass**

- 1) Articles for Baal, for Asherah, and for the host of heaven are brought out and burned – verse 4
- 2) Idolatrous priests are removed from the high places – verse 5
- 3) Wooden image, probably of Asherah the Caananite goddess placed in the Temple by Manasseh is taken out and burned – verse 6
- 4) Temple prostitutes are put out – verse 7
- 5) Priests of the high places are to Jerusalem; High places destroyed – verses 8-9
- 6) Topheth, where children were dedicated/sacrificed to Molech, is defiled - verse 10
- 7) Horses and chariots dedicated to the sun are destroyed – verse 11
- 8) Shrines of the kings of Judah are torn down – verse 12
- 9) Solomon’s idols are destroyed – verses 13-14
- 10) Altar and high place at Bethel is destroyed– It is here that Josiah fulfills the prophecy spoken by the man of God as he cried out against the pagan altar of incense built by Jeroboam I – verses 15-18 - **Have a student read 1 Kings 13:1-2 then 2 Kings 23:15-18.**
- 11) High places in Samaria are destroyed - verse 19
- 12) Priests of the high places are executed – verse 20

These twelve acts of judgment on the pagan worship system are a picture of Josiah purging this idolatry from all of Israel...all twelve tribes!

Two other features of Josiah’s reforms are remarkable:

- 1) There is a lot of **burning** going on!
 - The pagan priests burned incense to the idols (verses 5,8) and children were dedicated (some say sacrificed) to Molech by passing through fire (verse 10)
 - Josiah burns idols (verses 4,6), chariots (verse 11), altars and high places (verse 10) and bones (verses 16,20), a picture of the consuming fire of God’s judgment of the pagan worship system of Israel and Judah. There are a total of **six** of these burnings by Josiah, which may point to a **seventh** and final burning which will occur when Yaweh sends Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians to execute His final judgment on Judah.
- 2) There are a lot of **human bones** being put to use!
 - Bones, being a symbol of death/sin are used by Josiah to defile pagan worship sights - verses 14,16,20
 - In verses 17-18, the bones of the man of God are left alone, much as Joseph’s were in Egypt, perhaps an image of hope for the restoration of the people of God to the land.

Verses 21-25 – Jeroboam had wickedly attempted to unite the worship of the northern kingdom of Israel around the golden calves in Bethel and Dan. Josiah, the “anti-Jeroboam” unites the worship of Israel around the feasts as found in the Book of the Covenant (Torah).

He first does this by ordering the keeping of the feast of Passover. This is the only mention of the people of God keeping Passover in the entire books of 1 and 2 Kings (see verse 22). This occurs in the **eighteenth** (8+10) year of Josiah's reign again perhaps significant in that **eight** is the number of **new creation** and **ten** is the number of the **Law**.

Verse 24 is a summary verse of all of Josiah's reforms

Verse 25 is a summary verse of Josiah as a righteous king – He kept the first and greatest commandment (see Deuteronomy 6:5) according to the Law of Moses. Josiah is the great law-keeping king of Judah, especially in the area of the worship of Yaweh

Verses 26-30 – However, recall what we said at the beginning of this study in 1 and 2 Kings: **Wisdom** – Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived, yet his wisdom did not keep him from marrying pagan wives who led him into gross idolatry. Wisdom alone will not save Israel, nor will it save us.

Law – Deuteronomy 17:18-20 requires that all kings of Israel must keep the Law of God before him “all the days of his life”, and Josiah did this. (**Have a student read verses 26-27**) Even when there is repentance, as in the days of Josiah, “The Lord did not turn from the fierceness of his great wrath with which his anger burned against Judah.” Wisdom cannot save Israel, and neither can an outward return to obedience to the Law. Israel is still dead! And so, we see in verses 28-30 that Josiah too dies in battle with the kings of Egypt and Assyria, a foretaste of things to come! Within about two decades of Josiah's death, Judah too will go into exile.

Temple – As we shall see in the last chapters of 2 Kings, because of Manasseh's idolatry and bloodshed, not even Josiah's reformation of temple worship can hold back the judgment of Yaweh.

Verses 31-37 – The “roller-coaster ride of rulers” in Judah ends as righteous king Josiah is replaced on the throne by his wicked son Jehoahaz who “did evil in the sight of the Lord...” and reigns only three months. He is imprisoned by Pharaoh Necho of Egypt much as Shalmaneser had imprisoned Hoshea, the last king of Israel, and Pharaoh imposes tribute on the land of Judah as well. In yet another foretaste of the exile to come, Pharaoh Necho dethrones Jehoaz, places Eliakim (another son of Josiah) on the throne in his place, changes Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim, and takes him to Egypt. Verses 35-37 tell us that Jehoiakim too “did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done”. He too is “plundered by the Egyptians” (verse 35), a complete reversal of what Israel did to the Egyptians as they came out of slavery under Moses (recall Exodus 12:35-36). The great exodus of Israel to the Promised Land is being completely undone by Yaweh as He brings His just judgments to bear on unfaithful Judah!

May we all keep a short account of our sins against God and one another so that we may never come to a point in our lives where there is no longer an opportunity for repentance!

❖ **Homework** – Read 2 Kings 24-25, work on memory materials

❖ **Pray / Prep for Worship**

1 and 2 Kings

**Lesson 15 – 2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed
Part 3 – 2 Kings 24-25 – The Final Fall of Judah / Review**

Objective – To help the students see that, for the people of God, even severe chastisement, loss, or even death bring with them the hope of resurrection and recreation

❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.

❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, Read 2 Kings 24-25, and work on your memory materials?”

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.

❖ **Scripture Memorization : TEST NEXT WEEK! - 2 Kings 17:22-23** – **For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all his servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.**

❖ **Outline of 1 and 2 Kings** – Briefly review – **TEST NEXT WEEK!**

A. 1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built

B. 1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established

C. 1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri

D. 2 Kings 2:1–8:6 – Elisha and His Miracles

C’ 2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu

B’ 2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls

A’ 2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed

❖ **Review/Introduction** – As we saw in our last lesson, the time for repentance and reformation for the southern kingdom of Judah had run out. 2 Kings 24:3-4 give us the reason for this: 2 Kings 24:3-4 Surely at the commandment of the LORD *this* came upon Judah, to remove *them* from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done,⁴ and also because of the innocent blood that he had shed; for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the LORD would not pardon. The sins of Manasseh (idolatry and bloodshed) had resulted in Yaweh turning away from Judah and setting her on a course towards exile. Not even righteous, law-keeping Josiah and his zealous acts of idol destruction could stave off judgment. In this last lesson in 1 and 2 Kings, Judah endures a series of wicked kings on her throne, her defeat by Egypt and the Babylonians, the destruction of the temple, and her removal from the land.

However, these books will miraculously end on a hopeful note. This will prove once again that the hope of God’s people is not in **wisdom**, nor in the **Law**, nor in the **temple** itself. Israel is dead in her idolatry and other sin. Her hope is in Yaweh Himself, who raises the dead!

❖ **Lesson – 1 Kings 24-25 – The Final Fall of Judah**

The events of these 2 Kings 24-25 can be summarized as follows:

- 24:1 – Jehoiakim becomes a vassal of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon for 3 years, then rebels
- 24:2-4 – The Lord sends the Babylonians, Syrians, Moabites and Ammonites against Judah
- 24:5-7 – Jehoiakim dies
- 24:8-9 – Jehoiachin, son of Jehoikim, reigns 3 months; evil
- 24:10-16 – First Babylonian seige of Jerusalem – Plunder and people (including Jehoiachin) taken to Babylon
- 24:17-20 – Nebuchadnezzar makes Mattaniah king in place of Jehoichin; changes name to Zedekiah; reigns 11 years; evil; rebels against Nebuchadnezzar
- 25:1-21 – Second Babylonian seige of Jerusalem – temple and palace burned, plunder and people taken to Babylon
- 25:22-26 – Gedaliah made governor of Judah; assassinated
- 25:27-30 – Jehoiachin released from prison and served food from the king of Babylon’s table

The fall of the southern kingdom of Judah is generally set at 586 B.C.

The fall of Jerusalem reminds us of the previous fall of Samaria:

Fall of Samaria	Fall of Jerusalem
Three sieges after rebellion against Gentile rulers (1 Kgs 20:1, 2 Kgs 6:24, 17:5)	Three sieges after rebellion against Gentile rulers (2 Kgs 18-19, 24:10, 25:1)
Two enemies besiege – Aram (twice) and Assyria (once)	Two enemies besiege – Assyria (once) and Babylon (twice)
Twice delivered; Falls under third siege	Twice delivered; Falls under third siege

The Garden of Eden Revisited - The whole of the events of 1 and 2 Kings remind us of the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Under Solomon Israel was in an “Eden-like” state, prosperous and joyful in the worship and blessings of Yaweh: 1 Kings 4:20-21 Judah and Israel *were* as numerous as the sand by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and rejoicing.²¹ So Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the River *to* the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. *They* brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.

After Solomon’s idolatries, the northen kingdom of Israel in a sense “listened to the serpent-nations” and went after other gods. Judah too failed to trust in Yaweh and ate the “forbidden fruit” of idolatry until both kingdoms were sent out of the “garden” to the east and not allowed back in, at least for a season.

- Solomon's Glory Lost

By the time we get to the end of 2 Kings, all that the Lord had accomplished under David and Solomon is being destroyed because of Judah's sin:

Israel Under Solomon	The End of Judah
Marriage alliance with Egypt – 1 Kings 3:1	Egypt conquers Judah – 2 Kings 23:31-37
Israel controls all of the Promised Land – 1 Kings 4:1-21a	Judah is exiled from the Promised Land – 2 Kings 24:14-16, 25:11-12
Tribute received from the nations – 1 Kings 4:21b-34, 10:1-29	The nations plunder Judah – 2 Kings 23:33, 24:13, 25:13-17
Temple and palace constructed – 1 Kings 5-8	Temple and palace destroyed – 2 Kings 25:9

Not only is the gold of the palace and temple removed by Nebuchadnezzar, but the bronze as well. The most skilled (the gold and the bronze) people of the land are also taken out, leaving only the poor behind. Thus the glory of the Lord and of his people are removed from the Promised Land that has become like pagan Caanan again. It is only right that it is the pagan nations of Babylon, Amon, Moab, and Syria that inhabit her

Along with Jehoiachin earlier, King Zedekiah, the last ruler of Judah is taken to Babylon. There he is made to witness the execution of his sons before his own eyes are put out and he disappears from history. This along with the ransacked temple reminds us of Jesus, the temple of the Holy Spirit who also was tortured and crucified in front of His heavenly Father, and remained exiled from life in the tomb for three days, only to be resurrected to greater glory by the Father.

- Times of the Gentiles

It is also interesting that, in the last days of Judah, the wicked kings who inherit the throne from their fathers rule only a short time, while those equally wicked kings who are appointed by Gentile rulers reign for longer periods of time:

Jehoahaz, son of Josiah – reigns 3 months

Eliakim, appointed by Pharaoh Necho, name changed to Jehoiakim – reigns 11 years
 Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim – reigns 3 months

Mattaniah, appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, name changed to Zedekiah – reigns 11 years

The times of the Lord dealing exclusively with Israel have come to an end. From now on, history will record the fulfillment of Daniel 7 in which four Gentile empires (Babylon, Media/Persia, Greece, and Rome) will rise and fall before the coming of Jesus, who will ascend to the throne of heaven as great King of Kings and Lord of Lords ascend, where he will rest until every nation on earth is made to bow the knee to him.

1 and 2 Kings ends with Jehoiachin being released from prison in Babylon and being fed from the king of Babylon's table, a picture of the nations again bringing tribute the people of God as they did in Solomon's time, and a picture of the nations bringing tribute to Jesus. It is not the wisdom of Solomon, nor the self-reliance on imperfect law-keeping, nor a rebuilt temple that will accomplish this, but Yaweh Himself, as He, through the work of Jesus, keeps

His promise to David in 2 Samuel 7: “He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” 2 Samuel 7:13

Use the remainder of the class time for review in preparation for the Student Evaluation next week.

❖ **Final Student Evaluation Review**

For the final student evaluation next week, your students should know the following:

1. Outline of 1 and 2 Kings – They should be able to write this from memory

A. 1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built

B. 1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established

C. 1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri

D. 2 Kings 2:1–8:6 – Elisha and His Miracles

C’ 2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu

B’ 2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls

A’ 2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed

2. Scripture memory verses – They should **know the Scripture addresses** and be able **to fill in blanks** for the following verses:

1 Kings 3:9 Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

1 Kings 18:37 – Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.

2 Kings 6:16 – So he answered, “Do not fear, for those who *are* with us *are* more than those who *are* with them.”

2 Kings 17:22-23 – For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all his servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.

3. Historical Events of 1 and 2 Kings – They should be able to answer the following questions:

1) Who wrote the books of 1 and 2 Kings? (Unknown)

2) Name the first three kings of Israel (Saul → David → Solomon)

3) What did Solomon ask for when God told him to ask for anything he wanted? (Wisdom)

4) What was Solomon’s greatest achievement? (The building of the temple)

5) What sin(s) did Solomon fall into? (marrying foreign women who led him into idolatry)

6) Under which ruler was Israel divided into two kingdoms? (Rehoboam)

- 7) What were the names of the two kingdoms and which tribes were in each?
(Southern kingdom of Judah – Judah and Benjamin; Northern kingdom of Israel – the other 10 tribes)
- 8) Who was the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel? (Jeroboam)
- 9) What was his sin (calf worship/idolatry)
- 10) Who was the most wicked king of Israel in the family line of Omri? (Ahab)
- 11) What was his equally wicked wife's name? (Jezebel)
- 12) What was the name of the prophet who confronted Ahab with his sin and whom God used to defeat Baal worship in Israel? (Elijah)
- 13) What wicked thing did Ahab and Jezebel do that resulted in their final condemnation by God? (Murdered Naboth and stole his vineyard)
- 14) What is the name of the prophet who asked for a double portion of the Holy Spirit and who worked more miracles than any other? (Elisha)
- 15) Name at least **two** of Elisha's miracles (Not required to know Scripture references)
- Healing of the water - 2 Kings 2:19-22
 - The widow's oil – 2 Kings 4:1-7
 - The birth and resurrection of the Shunammite woman's son – 2 Kings 4:8-37
 - The healing of the pot of stew – 2 Kings 4:38-41
 - The feeding of the 100 – 2 Kings 4:42-44
 - Naaman's leprosy healed – 2 Kings 5:1-19
 - The ax head restored – 2 Kings 6:1-7
 - The Syrian soldiers blinded and restored – 2 Kings 6:8-23
- 16) Who did God raise up to bring His vengeance on wicked Jezebel and the rest of the family of Ahab? (Jehu)
- 17) Who was the wicked queen mother of Judah who tried to murder all of her grandsons? (Athaliah)
- 18) What is the name of the grandson who was saved from the queen mother's wrath, became king over Judah and repaired the temple? (Joash)
- 19) Which nation did God use to defeat the northern kingdom of Israel and take her into exile? (Assyria)
- 20) In what year did the northern kingdom of Israel fall? (722 B.C.)
- 21) Which king of Judah built a pagan altar and placed it in the temple? (Ahaz)
- 22) Which godly king of Judah was given an extension of life? (Hezekiah)
- 23) Which wicked king of Judah led her into gross idolatry and bloodshed which ultimately led to Judah's defeat and exile? (Manasseh)
- 24) Which godly king of Judah repaired the temple, tore down idol worship, and led Judah in covenant renewal and godly worship? (Josiah)
- 25) Which nation did the Lord use to defeat Judah and take her into exile and what was the name of her king? (Babylon / Nebuchadnezzar)
- 26) What year did the defeat and exile of Judah take place? (586 B.C.)
- 27) 1 and 2 Kings teaches us that Israel (and all Christians) are not to trust in _____, _____, or _____ but in God Himself.
(wisdom, the law, the temple)

28) What event at the end of 2 Kings gives us hope for the future of God's people? (the release of king Jehoiachin from prison in Babylon and his being fed by his captors)

❖ **Homework** – Study for Student Evaluation

❖ **Pray / Prep for worship**

1 and 2 Kings

Lesson 16 – Review / Student Evaluation

Objective – To help the students demonstrate how much they have learned through this study in 1 and 2 Kings

- ❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class.
- ❖ **Attendance and Accountability** – Ask the students, “Did you get a good night’s sleep, bring your Bible, bring a writing instrument, study for your Student Evaluation on 1 and 2 Kings?”
- ❖ **Final Student Evaluation Review** – Prior to passing out the Student Evaluation forms, you can answer any questions and review any portion of 1 and 2 Kings that the students are not sure of. Then have each student fill out a Student Evaluation Form and pass it in. Use the answer key to correct the papers and hand them back next week

Student Evaluation – 1 and 2 Kings (Answer Key)

1-7. Write out the entire outline of 1 and 2 Kings

A. 1 Kings 1-11 – United Kingdom / Temple Built

B. 1 Kings 12-16 – Northern Kingdom Established

C. 1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 1 – Elijah and the Dynasty of Omri

D. 2 Kings 2:1–8:6 – Elisha and His Miracles

C' 2 Kings 8:7-13:25 – Elisha and the Dynasty of Jehu

B' 2 Kings 14-17 – Northern Kingdom Falls

A' 2 Kings 18-25 – Southern Kingdom Falls / Temple Destroyed

8-22. Fill in the blanks for the following verses:

1 Kings 3:9 Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

1 Kings 18:37 – Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.

2 Kings 6:16 – So he answered, “Do not fear, for those who *are* with us *are* more than those who *are* with them.”

2 Kings 17:22-23 – For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all his servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.

23) Who wrote the books of 1 and 2 Kings? (Unknown)

24) Name the first three kings of Israel (Saul → David → Solomon)

25) What did Solomon ask for when God told him to ask for anything he wanted? (Wisdom)

26) What was Solomon’s greatest achievement? (The building of the temple)

- 27) What sin(s) did Solomon fall into? (marrying foreign women who led him into idolatry)
- 28) Under which ruler was Israel divided into two kingdoms? (Rehoboam)
- 29) What were the names of the two kingdoms and which tribes were in each?
(Southern kingdom of Judah – Judah and Benjamin; Northern kingdom of Israel – the other 10 tribes)
- 30) Who was the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel? (Jeroboam)
- 31) What was his sin (calf worship/idolatry)
- 32) Who was the most wicked king of Israel in the family line of Omri? (Ahab)
- 33) What was his equally wicked wife's name? (Jezebel)
- 34) What was the name of the prophet who confronted Ahab with his sin and whom God used to defeat Baal worship in Israel? (Elijah)
- 35) What wicked thing did Ahab and Jezebel do that resulted in their final condemnation by God? (Murdered Naboth and stole his vineyard)
- 36) What is the name of the prophet who asked for a double portion of the Holy Spirit and who worked more miracles than any other? (Elisha)
- 37) Name at least **two** of Elisha's miracles (Scripture references not required)
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 - The healing of the pot of stew – 2 Kings 4:38-41
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(Athaliah)

- 40) What is the name of the grandson who was saved from the queen mother's wrath, became king over Judah and repaired the temple? (Joash)
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- 48) What year did the defeat and exile of Judah take place? (586 B.C.)
- 49) 1 and 2 Kings teaches us that Israel was not to trust in _____, _____, or _____ but in God Himself. (wisdom, the law, the temple)
- 50) What event at the end of 2 Kings gives us hope for the future of God's people? (the release of king Jehoiachin from prison in Babylon and his being fed by his captors)