**2 Kings 1:1 – 12:21**

**November 10, 2016**

**Chapter 1 – Summary:** Ahaziah son of Ahab (Northern Kingdom) is the new king. One day he falls and is injured. Ahaziah sends messengers to ask a foreign deity “Baal-zebub” whether he will survive his injuries. Elijah intercepts these messengers and gives them the message that Ahaziah will die. When Ahaziah hears this message, he sends 50 armed men to bring Elijah to justice. Elijah calls for fire from heaven to consume the men. This happens twice before Elijah agrees to meet Ahaziah and pronounces the same judgment as before. Ahaziah dies and is succeeded by his brother Jehoram.

See also: Luke 9:51-55 – At issue in these passages is the question: “Who is the Lord of Life?” God or Baal?

**Read Chapter 2** – Elijah ascends to heaven and Elisha continues the ministry.

Notice that the emphasis on this story is less about how Elijah leaves but more on the power of Elisha in carrying on the prophetic task. (Also the concern following Jesus’ ascension in Acts).

**Chapter 3 – Summary:** The kings of Israel (north), Judah (south), and Edom (further South) form an alliance and march to attack the kingdom of Moab for not paying tribute. When they get into the middle of the dessert they realize there is no water. In despair the three kings consult Elisha who receives a message from God that God will create a stream full of pools for the armies to drink and God will help them defeat the Moabites. God creates the pools, the armies are refreshed and begin their attack. The Moabites are easily defeated at multiple cities but at the last city the King of Moab offers his first-born son as a burnt offering on the wall of the city and the text says: “great wrath came upon Israel, so they withdrew…”

Deuteronomy 20 generally prohibited a total annihilation of other peoples and their cities. Yet, the Israelites practice a scorched earth campaign.

**Chapters 4:1 – 6:7 Summary:** This section shows that Elisha is a miracle worker also by telling six different Miracle stories.

1. A prophet’s widow is in debt. Elisha tells her to borrow pots and pans from the neighbors and to pour oil from her flask into the vessels – the oil does not run out until all of the vessels in town are full then Elisha tells the widow to sell the oil, pay her debts, and live off the proceeds
2. A husband and wife see Elisha traveling to and fro all the time. They welcome Elisha and build a little room for him. The woman is barren so Elisha grants her the ability to have a son.
3. The woman has a son but the child dies. The woman runs to Elisha who comes to her house and lays on the boy twice before the boy revives.
4. Elisha feeds 100 men from 20 loves of bread and some fresh ears of grain (corn) in sack.
5. Elisha heals Naaman (general of the Aram armies) from the disease of leprosy by having him wash in the Jordan river seven times. Elisha refuses payment for his services. Elisha’s servant later runs after Naaman and collects a large payment which he hides from Elisha. Elisha then passes Naaman’s leprosy to his dishonest servant.
6. The company of prophets is building a new house. As they chop logs an iron axe head falls in the river. Elisha throws a stick in the river and makes the axe head float.

**Read 2 Kings 6:8-23**

What surprises does this politically charged story give us?

**Read 2 Kings 6:24 – 7:20**

When Elisha announces hope to the king (7:1) how do you think he responded? Who are the heroes of this story?

**Chapter 8 – Summary:** King Ben-hadad of Aram (Syria) becomes sick. Elisha anoints Hazael (the king’s servant) as the next king of Aram completing the 2nd command to Elijah from 1 Kings 19. Hazael then assassinates the king by suffocating him with a wet blanket.

We also learn that Joram is king over Israel (North) and Jehoram is king over Judah. Jehoram is succeeded his son Ahaziah. Ahaziah combines forces with Joram of Israel to attack Hazael of Aram. Joram is wounded in the battel and both Joram and Ahaziah retreat to a royal palace in Jezreel.

**Read 2 Kings 9:1-13** - Elisha completes the 3rd command to Elijah from 1 Kings 19.

**Chapter 9: 14-29 – Summary:** Jehu travels by chariot to Jezreel and kills Joram, King of Israel. Ahaziah of Judah flees the scene and is also killed by Jehu.

**Read 2 Kings 9:30-37** – this is the fulfilment of the prophesy concerning Jezebel. (notice she calls him Zimri who reigned for only 7 days.)

**Chapter 10 – Summary:** Jehu persuades the servants of all of Ahab’s sons to kill their masters and bring their decapitated heads to Jezreel. All 70 of Ahab’s sons were killed. Jehu then proceeds to ride his chariot all around Israel and kill the remaining relatives of Ahab.

Jehu then sent a letter announcing a special worship service for Baal. All of the prophets of Baal came to attend this service. Jehu and 80 men then killed all the prophets of Baal and destroyed the temples of Baal, removing Baal from all of Israel. Finally we learn that Hazael of Aram grew in strength and began to take over large segments of the kingdom of Israel.

*Jehu, or Jehu's ambassador, bows before Shalmaneser III.*

*Part of the scene on the****Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III****found in the British History Museum is a black limestone Neo- Assyrian baselief sculpture from Nimrud (ancient Kalhu), in northern Iraq, commemorating the deeds of King Shalmaneser III (reigned 858-824 BC).*

**Chapter 11 – Summary:** Athaliah, mother of Ahaziah (Judah) learns of her son’s death and attempts to kill everyone else in the royal family so that she can remain the monarch. Ahaziah’s sister hid the child Joash (son of Ahaziah also spelled Jehoash) from the Queen for six years. In the 7th year the priest Jehoida incites a military rebellion placing Joash on the throne and killing Queen Athaliah. The people then destroy all the altars of Baal.

**Chapter 12 – Summary:** Jehoash orders that all of the offerings given in the temple should be used for paying the priests and repairing the temple. But for over 20 years no repairs were made to the temple (the priests kept all the money). So they started dividing the money so that repairs could be made to the temple. Once repairs had been made Hazael of Aram threatened Jerusalem so Joash took treasures from the temple and from the palace and gave them to Hazael in tribute. Jehoash is eventually killed by a servant revolt. His son Amaziah succeeded him.