



2 KINGS

A HEART OF OBEDIENCE
TO A FAITHFUL GOD



KINGSTON
community church

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshiped other gods and followed the practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before them, as well as the practices that the kings of Israel had introduced.

2 KINGS 17:7-8

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2 KINGS: SMALL GROUP GUIDE is designed and written for the Kingston Community Church family and its associated small group ministry.

Developed by

KINGSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH

TO LOVE AND HONOUR **GOD** IN BEING
DISCIPLES
and helping make disciples of our
LORD JESUS CHRIST MATTHEW 28:18-20

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INTRODUCTION



A HEART OF OBEDIENCE TO A FAITHFUL GOD

The book of 2 Kings continues the record of the rulers of the divided kingdom. None of the northern kings followed God consistently, so Israel was finally destroyed by an invader from the north—Assyria. The southern kingdom, Judah, lasted much longer, but finally the Babylonians conquered Judah and deported many of its citizens.

The book of Deuteronomy establishes a context for which we can explore the book of 2 Kings as it sets the standard that God expects both the Kings and the Nation of Israel to live by. Deuteronomy puts forward key information required to understand and communicate the key themes of 2 Kings.

Deuteronomy outlines key information on the place of the temple, worship, the expectations for Kings of Israel.

The question which pre-empt the book of 2 Kings is: will this nation and its leadership fulfil what is expected of them? God has set them up beautifully for success, a land in which to live, the temple, laws and even sends prophets as an active of grace to direct the hearts of the people back to God.

The unfortunate reality of the book of 2 Kings is that this covenant community, the people of God, fall short of what God's community should be. There is a disparity between the hope and expectations of all they should be as God's people.

This book, then, is painted in the negative. It deals with the significance of sin, of ignoring God, the dire consequences of rejecting God and receiving judgment, which is both God giving them over to sin and fulfilled prophecy.

Responsibility is placed on both the Kings of Israel as leaders of the nation but also on the people and the nation of Israel who reject God, disobey him, and pursue idols.

God is not absent as these events unfold in the nation of Israel and his hand is shown through the sending of the prophets who are his mouthpiece. Despite Israel consistently rejecting and disobeying God, we see divine patience and intervention throughout the book of Kings.

We see the repeated theme of judgment emerge as the narrative progresses in the form of fulfilled prophecy with the trajectory of the story heading toward imminent exile. Judgement the real and unavoidable result of disobedience.

The language and reality of 2 Kings is like the language used in the letters to the churches in Revelation. God is judge and judges out of love and fairness.

The correlation between the reality of 2 Kings and us today is that we too are a covenant community, God's people who are called to be a people, who worship him, obey him, and live by his laws and standards. We are people who are called to be growing in faithfulness to who God calls us to be, to fear God and to follow Jesus.

An element of faithlessness is the tendency of human nature to drift away from God and from truth. We see this in the nation of Israel, in the church and our lives. So, 2 Kings is a warning against this drift, a warning of the consequences of not pursuing obedience and faithfulness to God.

The bible makes it clear that God is creator, he is Holy, and sin is not something we can mess around with. We can't downplay, minimize, or take God lightly.

We must be aware of the nature of the context of first Kings. It is Old Testament, and in one sense a barbaric culture where violence is prominent. These events unfold in a particular setting which is unique. Sometimes the author of 2 Kings provides insight/ethical opinion on the events as they unfold but often no comment is made – we must be careful not to interject our own opinion on events where none is offered.

Other themes that will show through is God's kingdom and values of obedience in this kingdom.

The role of the Kings in the 2 Kings context is as vice regents. God's rulers, leaders, and mouth pieces to the nation.

The role of the prophets are God's messengers who come to turn the hearts of people back to God.

It is necessary to consider obedience to the law not in a legalistic manner; the heart behind it is that we as God's people want to obey him out of love and understanding that the law is good and brings life.

A good question to ask is, did the people of Israel (and do we) find joy in God? Do we trust him and take him at His Word?

Another aspect to consider is that God is not vindictive in his judgment. God disciplines those he loves and even though Israel goes into exile; God remains faithful to put a King on the throne, to his covenant promises, and to his people. This faithfulness is also shown throughout the book of Kings with all his interventions and the sending of the prophets.

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To access the audio of the Sunday messages that go with this series, follow the QR code below to go to Spotify...



2 KINGS 2

A HEART OF OBEDIENCE TO A FAITHFUL GOD



The company of the prophets from Jericho, who were watching, said, “The spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha.” And they went to meet him and bowed to the ground before him.

2 KINGS 2:15

PERSONAL PREPARATION

READ SCRIPTURE

Read 2 KINGS 2

In preparation for the Sunday message, what is your first impression of 2 Kings?

MESSAGE NOTES

Listen and take notes from the Sunday morning message or listen online.
<https://www.kingstoncommunitychurch.com> or Spotify.

GROUP STUDY

OPEN IN PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

If you could choose one thing to receive double of, what would it be?

SETTING THE SCENE

With Elijah's ascension to heaven, the prophetic responsibility to hold Israel accountable for covenant faithfulness, is transferred to Elisha. This handing over, is the focal point of the final activities of Elijah, as he announces the death of Ahaziah and is then taken up to God's presence by the heavenly cavalry.

Elijah is to be removed as the leader "today" (2 KINGS 2:3, 5), and a new phase of prophetic activity is to continue. Elisha is to become the rightful heir to the office of Elijah (2 KINGS 2:15) on condition that he observes Elijah being taken from his presence.

The removal of Elijah and shift of divine authority to Elisha, is further confirmed by the search of the band of fifty prophets who are unable to locate him (2 KINGS 2:16-18). Elijah's succession is established by prophetic revelation and by God's power (2 KINGS 2:19-25).

READ SCRIPTURE

Have someone read 2 KINGS 2

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE

What were the main truths you heard from the message on Sunday?

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS



What do we know about the time, place, and context of the book of 2 Kings?



Was Elijah's instruction to Elisha a command from God or just a request? 2 KINGS 2:2, 4, 6



Why do you think Elisha refused?
2 KINGS 2:2, 4, 6



What did Elisha mean by a double portion?
2 KINGS 2:9



What do the miracles prove about Elisha or other prophets through whom miracles occurred? 2 KINGS 2:11-14



To modern readers, the mauling by bears (2 KINGS 2:23-25) can seem harsh. What does this event reveal about peoples heart towards God?



In what specific ways does God show His approval of the ministries of both Elijah and Elisha in 2 KINGS 2?



Where was God present in these passages? 2 KINGS 2

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH PARTICIPANT TO CONTRIBUTE PRAYER AND PRAISE POINTS AND AS A GROUP SHARE IN A TIME OF PRAYER

2 KINGS 3-4

A HEART OF OBEDIENCE TO A FAITHFUL GOD



This is an easy thing in the eyes of the LORD; he will also deliver
Moab into your hands.
2 KINGS 3:18

PERSONAL PREPARATION

READ SCRIPTURE

Read 2 KINGS 3-4

In preparation for the Sunday message, how do you understand God accomplishes His purposes in this world?

MESSAGE NOTES

Listen and take notes from the Sunday morning message or listen online.
<https://www.kingstoncommunitychurch.com> or Spotify.

GROUP STUDY

OPEN IN PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

What is your favourite drink on a hot summer afternoon?

SETTING THE SCENE

Judah joins King Joram in a campaign to put down a Moabite revolt against Israel (2 KINGS 3:1–7). After seven days the combined forces have exhausted their supply of water, and (at last) appeal to the Lord (2 KINGS 3:8–11). Elisha replies for the sake of Judah’s Jehoshaphat, and God not only supplies water but provides a military victory (2 KINGS 3:2–27).

Back in Israel, Elisha saves a widow and her family by causing an endless supply of olive oil to pour from her single jar (2 KINGS 4:1–7). There he also not only promises a son to a childless woman (2 KINGS 4:8–16), but later brings the child back to life when he suffers sunstroke (2 KINGS 4:17–37). Elisha also neutralizes poison that has spoiled a company of prophets’ stew (2 KINGS 4:38–41) and prefigures one of Jesus’ miracles by multiplying loaves of bread to feed a hungry multitude (2 KINGS 4:42–44).

Each of these miracles symbolizes God’s ability to provide for human beings in need: security, sustenance, family, health, food, and life itself.

READ SCRIPTURE

Have someone read 2 KINGS 3-4

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE

What were the main truths you heard from the message on Sunday?

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS



What factors prevent Joram from completely turning away from sin and sinful patterns? 2 KINGS 3:1-3



How would you describe Elisha in 2 KINGS 3:13-20?



How do you tend to respond to conflict with those who don't agree with your view or values?



How does God most clearly show His power and sovereignty in Israel's battle with Moab in 2 KINGS 3?



What does it look like for us to rely on God's guidance and provision in our daily lives?



What actions or attitudes of faith that you see in the Shunammite woman in 2 Kings 4 can you apply in your life, especially in regard to any stress or serious needs you face?



The miracle of multiplied bread in 2 KINGS 4:42-44, points forward to one of Jesus's famous miracles in Matthew 14:13-21. How are the two miracles similar and different?



How are we to approach God when we experience need or tragedy in our lives?

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH PARTICIPANT TO CONTRIBUTE PRAYER AND PRAISE POINTS AND AS A GROUP SHARE IN A TIME OF PRAYER

2 KINGS 5-6:23



A HEART OF OBEDIENCE TO A FAITHFUL GOD

Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, “Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant.” 2 KINGS 5:15

PERSONAL PREPARATION

READ SCRIPTURE

Read 2 KINGS 5-6:23

In preparation for the Sunday message, what are strong motivators for you when making decisions?

MESSAGE NOTES

Listen and take notes from the Sunday morning message or listen online.
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GROUP STUDY

OPEN IN PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

What is your favourite home remedy when it comes to curing hiccups?

SETTING THE SCENE

The familiar story of the healing of Naaman illustrates God's compassion not only for His chosen people but even for their enemies. Naaman, the commander of Syria's army, has leprosy (2 KINGS 5:1). When a captive Jewish girl speaks of a prophet in her homeland who can heal him, Naaman obtains permission to go to Israel (2 KINGS 5:2-6). The King of Israel sees the Syrian's request for healing as an excuse for renewed war, but Elisha invites the king to send Naaman to him (2 KINGS 5:7-8). Naaman's resentment at being told to dip seven times in the Jordan River dissolves when he does so and is healed (2 KINGS 5:9-14). Convinced now that Yahweh is God, Naaman promises to worship Him only, but obtains a dispensation for occasions when official duties require him to be present at religious ceremonies in his homeland (2 KINGS 5:15-19). Elisha rejects the rich gifts offered by Naaman, but his servant Gehazi runs after the Syrian and accepts clothing and about 150 pounds of silver, a fortune (2 KINGS 5:20-23). When Gehazi lies to Elisha, he is cursed with the leprosy of which Naaman was healed (2 KINGS 5:24-27).

Elisha causes a lost axe head to float, showing Israel God's compassion for the individual (2 KINGS 6:1-7). God also cares for the nation. Elisha continually advises the King of Israel of Syria's military plans (2 KINGS 6:8-12). The furious King of Syria sends an expedition to capture Elisha. Elisha is granted divine protection (2 KINGS 6:13-17) and leads the enemy corps into Israel's capital city itself. There the stunned Syrians are fed and sent home (2 KINGS 6:18-23).

READ SCRIPTURE

Have someone read 2 KINGS 5-6:23

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE

What were the main truths you heard from the message on Sunday?

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS



What's ironic (contrary) about the actions of the two kings in this story? 2 KINGS 5:1-9



What can we learn from the story of Naaman about obedience? 2 KINGS 5:9-15



Naaman asked in advance to be pardoned for bowing in the temple of a false god (2 KINGS 5:18-19). Where do you feel a tension between serving God and living as part of today's culture?



Why do we so often struggle to be content with what we have? 2 KINGS 5:19-24



What part of the story in 2 KINGS 6:8-23 is most unbelievable for you? Why?



What unseen realities do you think we would see if we were fully able to recognize all that's going on around us spiritually?

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH PARTICIPANT TO CONTRIBUTE PRAYER AND PRAISE POINTS AND AS A GROUP SHARE IN A TIME OF PRAYER

2 KINGS 6:24-8:29



A HEART OF OBEDIENCE TO A FAITHFUL GOD

Nevertheless, for the sake of his servant David, the LORD was not willing to destroy Judah. He had promised to maintain a lamp for David and his descendants forever. 2 KINGS 8:19

PERSONAL PREPARATION

READ SCRIPTURE

Read 2 KINGS 6:24-8:29

In preparation for the Sunday message, when was a time when God surprised you?

MESSAGE NOTES

Listen and take notes from the Sunday morning message or listen online.
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GROUP STUDY

OPEN IN PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

When were you the hungriest you have ever been?

SETTING THE SCENE

Hostilities resume, and Samaria is under siege. The population is reduced to eating scraps and even to cannibalism (2 KINGS 6:24–29). The despairing King of Israel decides to strike out at God by executing Elisha. Elisha pledges that despite the king’s lack of faith, the next day the finest of foods will be sold cheaply in the starving city (2 KINGS 6:30–7:2). The pledge is kept when the Syrians hear a non-existent army rushing down on them, panic, and abandon their camp with all its supplies (2 KINGS 7:3–20).

So, in private and in very public ways, Elisha continues to demonstrate to Israel that the Lord is God, and that faith in Him is not foolishness, but wisdom.

Gehazi, once Elisha’s servant, is telling the King of Israel about the boy Elisha raised from the dead (2 KINGS. 4) when living proof, the woman and the son himself, enter (2 KINGS 8:1–6). Clearly, tales of Elisha’s miracles have taken root: the content for faith-building is present in Israel. But Israel does not respond, and the future is grim. Elisha anoints Hazael, destined to devastate Israel, as the next King of Syria (2 KINGS 8:7–15). Even Judah suffers a spiritual and consequent national decline under Jehoram (2 KINGS 8:16–24) and Ahaziah (2 KINGS 8:25–29). The spectacular works of Elisha have not produced faith in either kingdom.

READ SCRIPTURE

Have someone read 2 KINGS 6:24–8:29

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE

What were the main truths you heard from the message on Sunday?

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS



Who is really to blame for the problems that Israel face?
2 KINGS 6:24-33



What have past or recent trials revealed about your character?



What does this passage reveal about “the word of the Lord.”
2 KINGS 7:1



How would you have handled this situation if you were one of the lepers? 2 KINGS 7:5-11



The officer doubted/questioned God’s word (2 KINGS 7:2, 17-20). What are some obstacles that hinder you from believing God’s promises?



What evidence shows that you trust God?



Elisha did nothing to prevent Hazael from seizing the throne of Aram. What are some possible reasons why God doesn’t prevent evil actions today?

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH PARTICIPANT TO CONTRIBUTE PRAYER AND PRAISE POINTS AND AS A GROUP SHARE IN A TIME OF PRAYER

2 KINGS 9-10

A HEART OF OBEDIENCE TO A FAITHFUL GOD



Know, then, that not a word the LORD has spoken against the house of Ahab will fail. The LORD has done what he announced through his servant Elijah. 2 KINGS 10:10

PERSONAL PREPARATION

READ SCRIPTURE

Read 2 KINGS 9-10

In preparation for the Sunday message, how would you describe peace?

MESSAGE NOTES

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GROUP STUDY

OPEN IN PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

How good are you at keeping secrets?

SETTING THE SCENE

Elisha sends a prophet to anoint Jehu as Israel's next king and commission him to destroy the house (family) of Ahab (2 KINGS 9:1–10). Jehu is acclaimed by his fellow army officers (2 KINGS 9:11–13) and hurries to Jezreel where Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah are recovering from wounds (2 KINGS 9:14–20).

When the two kings go out to meet Jehu, he kills Joram and mortally wounds Ahaziah (2 KINGS 9:21–29). Jehu then enters the city, where the aged Jezebel shouts out her defiance from an upstairs window (2 KINGS 9:30–31). Jehu orders her thrown down to the street below. As Jehu celebrates his successful coup inside, the body of Jezebel is devoured by a pack of dogs (2 KINGS 9:32–37). Elijah's prediction is thus literally fulfilled (cf. 1 KINGS 21:23).

Jehu then proceeds to wipe out the rest of the family (2 KINGS 10:1–11). He also assembles all officials of the Baal cult, supposedly to worship, but in fact to destroy them (2 KINGS 10:12–35). The massacre is a political expedient intended to wipe out a religion closely linked with the royal house. Because Jehu fails to turn to the Lord, his rule is marked by a series of military defeats and by the gradual reduction in size of the Northern Kingdom.

READ SCRIPTURE

Have someone read 2 KINGS 9-10

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE

What were the main truths you heard from the message on Sunday?

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS



Read about the moment David was anointed as the future king in 1 SAMUEL 16:1-13. What are the similarities and differences between David's anointing and Jehu's?
2 KINGS 9:1-10



What can we learn about the following people from 2 KINGS 9:11-20?

Jehu

Joram

Ahaziah



Do you think Jehu was justified in killing these two kings? (2 KINGS 9:21-29)?



How can we navigate the tension between the violence in this chapter and the inherent goodness of God? 2 KINGS 9



What other options did Jehu have for dealing with the situation he found himself in? 2 KINGS 10:4-11



How does 2 KINGS 10:28-30 contribute to your understanding of God?



What should 'zeal for the LORD' look like in our lives? 2 KING 10:16

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH PARTICIPANT TO CONTRIBUTE PRAYER AND PRAISE POINTS AND AS A GROUP SHARE IN A TIME OF PRAYER

2 KINGS 11-16



A HEART OF OBEDIENCE TO A FAITHFUL GOD

Jehoiada then made a covenant between the LORD and the king and people that they would be the LORD's people. He also made a covenant between the king and the people. 2 KINGS 11:17

PERSONAL PREPARATION

READ SCRIPTURE

Read 2 KINGS 11-16

In preparation for the Sunday message, what does idolatry look like in your life?

MESSAGE NOTES

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GROUP STUDY

OPEN IN PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

Do you find it easy or hard to stick at things?

SETTING THE SCENE

A new threat arises in Judah after Ahaziah's death, as Athaliah begins killing off the royal family. After her reign is overthrown by the high priest Jehoiada, the people renew their covenant with the Lord and with King Jehoash (2 KINGS 11:17–19), resulting in joy and peace in the land (2 KINGS 11:20).

2 KINGS 13–16 passes relatively quickly through the accessions of numerous kings of both Israel and Judah. The narrative begins by filling in the reigns of the two Israelite kings (Jehoahaz and Jehoash) who ruled during the reign of Jehoash in Judah; it is at this time that Elisha dies as well.

Following this, the narrative switches back and forth between Israel and Judah, describing a period of civil war, numerous evil kings in Israel, and several good but ineffective kings in Judah. This period of history is marked by further decline into sin and idolatry among God's people.

READ SCRIPTURE

Have someone read 2 KINGS 11-16

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE

What were the main truths you heard from the message on Sunday?

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS



How do the events in 2 KINGS 11 demonstrate God's sovereignty?



The people covenanted “that they would be the LORD’S people” (2 KINGS 11:17-18). How can we as God’s people express that same commitment in a way that pleases God?



What do you see in 2 KINGS 12 contributing to Joash’s slide downward into disappointment and tragedy?



What are the repeated patterns shown by the kings of Israel? 2 KINGS 13:1-2
What sinful patterns do we keep repeating as God’s people, the church?



How would you summarize the spiritual impact of Israel’s kings on the rest of Israel’s people? 2 KINGS 13:4-9



What are your impressions of Elisha’s object lessons in connection with the defeat of Aram? 2 KINGS 13:14-21



What does 2 KINGS 14:26-27 reveal about God’s character, especially in light of Israel’s persistent spiritual corruption?



What does 2 KINGS 14:26-27 reveal about God’s character, especially in light of Israel’s persistent spiritual corruption?



Ahaz, feeling threatened, reshaped worship to appease the king of Assyria. When have you been tempted to make changes in how you worship God based on your own preferences?

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH PARTICIPANT TO CONTRIBUTE PRAYER AND PRAISE POINTS AND AS A GROUP SHARE IN A TIME OF PRAYER

2 KINGS 17-20



A HEART OF OBEDIENCE TO A FAITHFUL GOD

The LORD warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: “Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your ancestors to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets.” 2 KINGS 17:13

PERSONAL PREPARATION

READ SCRIPTURE

Read 2 KINGS 17-20

In preparation for the Sunday message, what has/does captivity look like in your life?

MESSAGE NOTES

Listen and take notes from the Sunday morning message or listen online.
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GROUP STUDY

OPEN IN PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

How do you typically respond when you get bad news?

SETTING THE SCENE

God brings judgment upon his people because they have sinned against him by continually pursuing idols. Israel finds themselves in exile by the Assyrian army.

The rise of Assyria is a threat not only to the northern kingdom of Israel but to Judah as well. The focus now turns south as King Hezekiah responds to the threat of attack from Assyria under Sennacherib. Judah is delivered from Assyria through Hezekiah's prayer and God's intervention (2 KINGS 18-19), but Hezekiah's courtship of Babylon is an ominous warning (2 KINGS 20).

READ SCRIPTURE

Have someone read 2 KINGS 17-20

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE

What were the main truths you heard from the message on Sunday?

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS



What were the nature of Israel's sins? 2 KINGS 17:7-20
How do these descriptions of Israel compare and contrast with our culture today?



What can we learn about God's character from the rise and fall of Israel? 2 KINGS 17:21-23



In what specific ways in 2 KINGS 18:1–6 do you see Hezekiah surpassing even the other good kings of Judah in his obedience to the Lord?



How confident do you feel in God’s ability to care for you?
2 KINGS 18:17-37



Isaiah’s message to Hezekiah concerning the Assyrian king’s downfall comes in three sections (2 KINGS 19:20-34). What is the focus of each section?



God gave specific promises to his people (2 KINGS 19:29-34)
What specific promises has God made to us?



What do you think is Hezekiah’s motive for showing the Babylonian envoys all of his treasure (2 KINGS 20:12–13)?
What does his reaction reveal (2 KINGS 20:16-19)?



What in Hezekiah’s nature and actions can you identify with?

Take the time to pray for each other.

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH PARTICIPANT TO CONTRIBUTE PRAYER AND PRAISE POINTS AND AS A GROUP SHARE IN A TIME OF PRAYER

2 KINGS 21-23:30



A HEART OF OBEDIENCE TO A FAITHFUL GOD

Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I have spoken against this place and its people—that they would become a curse and be laid waste—and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I also have heard you, declares the LORD. Therefore I will gather you to your ancestors, and you will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place.”

2 KINGS 22:19–20

PERSONAL PREPARATION

READ SCRIPTURE

Read 2 KINGS 21-23:30

In preparation for the Sunday message, what do you understand humility to look like?

MESSAGE NOTES

Listen and take notes from the Sunday morning message or listen online.
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GROUP STUDY

OPEN IN PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

What is often your first reaction when you find out you're wrong?

SETTING THE SCENE

In 2 KINGS 21, the long reign of wicked king Manasseh reverses the policies of his father, Hezekiah, and God's irreversible judgment on Judah is declared. In 2 KINGS 21:1-9, the sins of Manasseh are recounted. Manasseh is the very worst of the Judean kings, and his 55-year reign leads Judah into greater sin than had been committed by the nations the people of Israel had driven out of the land in the first place. In 2 KINGS 21:10-15, God declares utter devastation upon Judah and Jerusalem because of their sin, promising to deliver them into the hands of their enemies.

In 2 KINGS 22-23:30, hope returns to the story of Judah under the righteous leadership of Josiah, who leads the nation toward renewal and reform. But his efforts are not enough to avert disaster. The people of Judah, corrupted for generations by idolatry, must face the fierce anger of God (2 KINGS 23:25-28).

READ SCRIPTURE

Have someone read 2 KINGS 21-23:30

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE

What were the main truths you heard from the message on Sunday?

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS



Manasseh's did some very evil acts, many that we can't even contimpate. What are some possible reasons why different generations often have very different views on morality?



What was God communicating through the imagery in 2 KINGS 21:7-16?



What are some possible reasons why God punished the entire nation for the sins of its leaders? 2 KINGS 21:10-16



In 2 KINGS 21:19-26 hear more about Judah's decline. What can righteous people do when the culture turns evil?



Josiah did right in the eyes of the LORD. What does it mean to do right in God's sight today?



In 2 KINGS 22:14-20, were Huldah's words good news or bad news? Explain.



Which of Josiah's reforms would have had the biggest impact on everyday life for the people of Judah? 2 KINGS 23:4-20



Do you need to renew or refresh your commitment to God?

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH PARTICIPANT TO CONTRIBUTE PRAYER AND PRAISE POINTS AND AS A GROUP SHARE IN A TIME OF PRAYER

2 KINGS 23:31-25:30



A HEART OF OBEDIENCE TO A FAITHFUL GOD

Surely these things happened to Judah according to the LORD's command, in order to remove them from his presence because of the sins of Manasseh and all he had done, including the shedding of innocent blood. For he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD was not willing to forgive. 2 KINGS 24:3-4

PERSONAL PREPARATION

READ SCRIPTURE

Read 2 KINGS 23:31-25:30

In preparation for the Sunday message, consider what gives God the right to judge?

MESSAGE NOTES

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GROUP STUDY

OPEN IN PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

What's the worst loss you have every faced?

SETTING THE SCENE

Josiah is killed by Pharaoh Neco of Egypt, and Judah is left to face the future without the guiding faith of her most pious king. (2 KINGS 23:29-37)

The Babylonians now invade Syria/Palestine. Jehoiakim, though placed on the throne by Pharaoh Neco of Egypt, is forced to submit, but then rebels (2 KINGS 24:1-7). After his death Jehoiachin becomes king, and Nebuchadnezzar himself leads an army to Judah. He takes Jehoiachin to Babylon, and places a puppet, Zedekiah, on Judah's throne (2 KINGS 24:8-20).

But Zedekiah too rebels, and Nebuchadnezzar returns (2 KINGS 25:1-2). After a two-year siege, marked by famine inside the walled city, Jerusalem falls (2 KINGS 25:3-4). Zedekiah's sons are butchered, and he is blinded (2 KINGS 25:5-7). The city walls are broken down, its temple is destroyed, and all the temple treasures are taken to Babylon, along with Judah's citizens (2 KINGS 25:8-21). Gedaliah is appointed governor, but is assassinated, and the remaining population flees to Egypt (2 KINGS 25:22-26).

Judah too has been torn from the Promised Land and carried into Exile as punishment for her sins. But there, 37 years later, Jehoiachin is released from his imprisonment, foreshadowing the restoration of Judah and Israel to the Promised Land (2 KINGS 25:27-30).

READ SCRIPTURE

Have someone read 2 KINGS 23:31-25:30

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE

What were the main truths you heard from the message on Sunday?

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS



Despite all of Josiah's reforms, God declares that exile is still the consequence for Judah (2 KINGS 23:26-27). According to these verses, why are Josiah's reforms insufficient to avert this disaster?



Look at the summary statements about Judah given in 2 KINGS 24:3-4 and 2 KINGS 24:20. What do they reveal about God?



Discuss the role of God's wrath in 2 KINGS 24. Is it an expression of His justice, His mercy, both, or something else?



What does 2 KINGS 25 reveal about God's relationship with His people, even in times of judgement?



What hope does it give the reader that 2 KINGS ends with Jehoiachin's release from prison (2 KINGS 25:27-30)? What is the significance of the book's ending in this way?



In your understanding what does 2 KINGS point to most clearly regarding the humanity's nature and purposes?



In your understanding what does 2 KINGS point to most clearly regarding the God's nature and purposes?

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH PARTICIPANT TO CONTRIBUTE PRAYER AND PRAISE POINTS AND AS A GROUP SHARE IN A TIME OF PRAYER

