

June 5th 2005: 2 Kings—an overview including ELISHA
2 Kings 5:1-19

FOCUS	DIVIDED KINGDOM	SURVIVING KINGDOM
DIVISIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Elisha Reign of ten Kings of Israel and eight Kings of Judah Fall of Israel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reign of King Hezekiah and two evil Kings. 18:1-21:6 Reign of King Josiah and four evil Kings 22:1-24:16 Fall of Judah
TOPICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Israel and Judah King Ahaziah to King Hoshea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judah King Hezekiah to King Zedekiah
PLACE	Israel deported to Assyria	Judah deported to Babylonia
TIME	131 years (853-722 B.C.)	155 years (715-560 B.C.)

2 Kings would have 2b.....one of the most exciting books

It is full of stories.....Many connected with Elisha.....performed more miracles

While others revolve around the two kingdoms.....Judah...Israel---kings

AS far as stories about the 2 kingdoms.....first 18 chapters are harder...last 6

Because you are constantly going from one kingdom.....to the other.

But by the time you get to the 18th.....only the Nation of Judah remains.

So 2 Kings is also about the fall and destruction of the 2 sister Kingdoms of the Jews
 Israel in 722....to Assyria...Judah in 586 when Nebuchadnezzar destroys Jerus & Temple

2 Kings esp shows God's keeping of the line of David(Judah)...thro whom the Messiah

Whereas nation of Israel.....there are 9 different Kingly lines

...and all but one of those changes are brought about by murdering.....

With the Nation of Judah....there is only one.--→Line of King David

Whereas everyone of the 19 kings of Israel was evil

8 of the 20 kings of Judah.....do what is right in the sight of the Lord

...and include such greats as King Hezekiah.....King Josiah

At the end of 2 Kings we find the Kingdom of Judah also destroyed.....exile

But God has safeguarded the line of David.....and a king of that line sits in exile

....at the table of the conquering king.....and is given greater honour than any other of

IT IS THE PROPHET ELISHA.....that I want to set before you this morning
For in his ministry and many miracles.....he pre-empted the ministry of care &
compassion of Jesus Himself.

He is first mentioned in 2Kings in 2:1.....and last mentioned in chapter 13:21
He follows Elijah who stands as a type of John the Baptist

Elijah is generally pictured as living apart from the people
....and stresses law, judgment, and repentance

Elisha is more like Jesus.....living among the people and emphasizes grace, life, hope

ELISHA WAS TRULY HUMAN.....not perfect.....fallible like we are

In 2.....Elijah is about to be taken from this earth.....& Elisha sticks....glue
Finally Elijah asks Elisha.....what he wants----**Shows some ambition 4 Lord....**
A double portion of your spirit.....

After this Elisha showed that he had received that power.....by striking the Jordan
Then the band of prophets.....asked him if they could go to look

That's the human touch we see in Elisha

(another example ...end of chapter 2....You baldhead)

ELISHA CARED ABOUT PEOPLE

He noticed there needsand cared enough to act.....in God's power...their behalf

In chapter 2:19....he is approached by the men of one city.....problem they were having
Water supply.....He took salt...throws it into the spring....said the Lord has healed

In chapter 4 there is the story of the wife of one of Elisha's followers
He had suddenly died.....left her with 2 boys and heaps of debts

She approaches Elisha as though God and Elisha had let her family down
And Elisha told her to get a heap of empty pots.....

He brought the power and presence of God...into the lives of normal people
Isn't that something we all yearn to do ??

In chapter 4....you will read about a day when he got his servant.....pot of stew
And they cried out to him.....Man of God there is death.....Flour...No harm

Later in the same chapter.....a man came to Elisha with 20 loaves.....
Famine in the land.....Elisha had a hundred men....and the Lord enabled him....

In chapter six a group of workmen were cutting down trees.....The ax of one fell
...distressed because it was borrowed
And Elisha threw a stick.....

There are other stories about Elisha.....show him caring
And altho our caring may not result in miracles.....When done in Jesus name
it will show others Gods love *(Mum praying for her neighbour...Bread giving)*

ELISHA WAS A HUMBLE MAN.....Once the Kings of Israel and Judah.....
..looking for a prophet.....**Name of Elisha came up**
described as the one who used to pour water.....

Always a bit in ELIJAH'S shadow.....don't think he minded

In chapter 4 we read that when a very rich lady.....felt led to make a special room
This is what she said to her husband in 4:9-10.....

He treated rich and poor the same...Jew and Gentile
When Naaman came.....he didn't bow down and fawn before him.....He didn't even
He acted before kings and peasants in the same way.....**As a servant of God**

ELISHA LIVED OUT A SIMPLE TRUST IN THE POWER AND PRESENCE OF
GOD

There is this wonderful story in chapter six from verse 8

The Syrians are attacking the Kingdom of Israel.....but are having no success
For it seems that Elisha tells the King of Israel all their plans before ...

In 6:10-14 we read.....

The next morning when Elisha's servant got up and saw.....absolutely terrified
And expected Elisha to be terrified too

But Elisha was as calm as.....because he knew that God was with them
And because he cared for....he asked God to show in a physical sense
What Elisha knew in his heart....was definitely there...v17b.....

(Death of John Wilson.....*We do know that God is with us
let us seek to share that knowledge with others.....Radiate out from us this week*)

ELISHA WAS A MAN WHO FELT DEEPLY

He felt for the pain of others

In chapter 4:24ff we read of this woman who had cared for Elisha by...and he had
But now the son has died and she comes to find.....AND he sees her coming and knows
And its obvious that he feels her pain.....takes the rebuke she gives

And alone in the room with that boy....he cries out to God in prayer
And we sense his anguish....as he lays himself upon the boy..then walks
And God brings the boy back to life

He felt for those who faced God's judgment

In 8:7 we find a pagan King...sending his trusted Advisor to Elisha to see if he would die
As the man faced Elisha.....Elisha stared.....dropped his own eyes in shame
Then Elisha began to weep

And he said to the man....The reason I weep is because God has shown me that u will
And that God will use you to inflict terrible destruction.....because of their wickedness

That man went back to his king.....a thick cloth soaked in water

He felt for those who didn't trust the Lord completely

In chapter 13 Elisha is dying.....and Jehoash King of Israel comes to see him
Elisha asks the king to take a bow and shoot.....So you will have victory...Aram

Then he told the king to take the remaining arrows and strike.....Did so 3 times
And in 13:19 we read.....

We are in danger of becoming so passionless about our faith

We don't seem to feel for those outside of Jesus
How long is it since we wept over the lost.....Cared enough to pray with feeling
For someone we know.....who is outside of the love of Jesus??

LASTLY ELISHA MADE A DIFFERENCE

In chapter 13 we read that Elisha died and was buried
Then some years later some Israelites were burying a man when suddenly....
Moabite raiders----→ So they threw him into a nearby sepulchre....Happened to be..

In some sense that signified the difference Elisha made
He was part of a community....spiritually dead

They worshipped so many idols.....false gods.....And had turned away from...
They treated the things and the people of God with disdain

In many ways Elisha was a lone voice....battling the odds
And in the end little changed as far as the kingdom of Israel was concerned
The evil persisted and judgment came

But he influenced individual lives for God.....Like Naaman who took back earth

And that surely....is the main challenge for us...from Elisha's life
To make a difference for our God

We probably wont perform the miracles.....
We may not change the world.....our even our community greatly

But if we truly care.....If we fully trust.....And feel deeply about Kingdom matters
Then by being Christ.....we will make a difference

That's the promise of God