

# I & II Kings



## Lesson 8 – 2 Kings 13:1–16:20

### A Parade of Weak Kings

The zeal with which Jehu carried out the elimination of Ahab's family and the prophets of Baal gives us pause. Two kings rode out to meet Jehu; neither came back. Jehu's own words trumpeted his mission: "What peace can there be, so long as the whorings and the sorceries of your mother Jezebel are so many?" (2 Kings 9:22). King Joram of Israel, Jezebel's son, fell first; an arrow pierced him between his shoulder blades. King Ahaziah, Jezebel's grandson, took arrows as well. Servants carried him back to Jerusalem, where he was buried (2 Kings 9:28).

Jehu rode into Jezreel. Here Jehu ordered eunuchs to throw Jezebel from a window, and horses stomped her to death (2 Kings 9:30–33). The beheading of Ahab's seventy sons follows (2 Kings 10:1–8). This slaughter precedes the murder of all the prophets of Baal and the remodeling of the house of Baal into a public toilet (2 Kings 10:18–27).

Sandwiched between the murder of Ahab's sons and the killing of the prophets of Baal is a single verse of explanation from Jehu. He said, "Know then that there shall fall to the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the Lord spoke concerning the house of Ahab, for the LORD has done what He said by His servant Elijah" (2 Kings 10:10). Jehu carried the sword of God's righteous anger against a man who "sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the LORD" (1 Kings 21:25). As Christians, we have not received such a vengeful assignment. Our enemy, Satan, was defeated on the cross.

### What Jehu and Joash Began

As God's agent, Jehu began a series of religious reforms. He eliminated one element of pagan worship with the removal of Baal worship. Unfortunately, Jehu was also a sinner. As such, he failed to eliminate the worship of the golden calves in Bethel and Dan, which had been initiated generations earlier by Jeroboam (2 Kings 10:29). Although Jehu's descendants sat on Israel's throne for four generations, King Hazael of Syria took captive territories "from the Jordan eastward" (2 Kings 10:33).

In the Southern Kingdom, reforms Joash began disintegrated at the death of his trusted advisor Jehoiada, the high priest (2 Chronicles 24:15). He gave treasures from the temple to appease King Hazael of Syria, and his servants assassinated him (2 Kings 12:20).

In this lesson, we look at several kings who followed Jehu in Israel and Joash in Judah. Many continued in the evil ways of their ancestors, while some returned to the ways of King David by following God's decrees and commands.

84. When Solomon dedicated the temple, his prayer emphasized the effects of sin and God's reaction to it. Relate 1 Kings 8:33–36 to events discussed in previous lessons.
85. God tied the promise of blessings to the confession of sins as seen in the 1 Kings passage above. What blessings are the Northern and Southern Kingdoms missing because of their unrepentance?

### **Jehoahaz and Jehoash in Israel**

Read 2 Kings 13:1–13. Jehoahaz means “Yahweh, my sustainer” and Jehoash means “Yahweh-given.” Jehoahaz followed his father Jehu to Israel's throne. Jehoash is Jehu's grandson. Again, we get the shorter version of Jehoash's name (Joash) mentioned in verse 9 of our text.

86. In your opinion, do the names given each of these two kings match the deeds ascribed to them in 2 Kings 13:2, 11?

### **Elisha Dies**

Read 2 Kings 13:14–25. Nearly eighty years old, the old prophet had one more God-given task to perform before he died. Although Jehoash proved unfaithful to God, God proved faithful to Jehoash. A bond existed between Elisha and Jehoash, as evidenced by weeping and the endearing names “my father” and “the chariots of Israel and its horsemen,” which Jehoash applied to Elisha (v. 14).

87. Nothing Jehoash did merited God's compassion for His people. With whom had God made a covenant that He continued to honor regardless of Israel's unfaithfulness (v. 23)?
88. Like Jehoash, we bring nothing of merit before God, yet we dare to call God “Abba! Father!” (Romans 8:15). How is this possible (see Romans 8:1–2)?

### **Amaziah and Jeroboam II**

Read 2 Kings 14:1–29. In Judah, Amaziah succeeded his father, Joash, while in Israel, Jeroboam II succeeded his father, Joash.

89. Characterize the reigns of Amaziah (vv. 3–6) and Jeroboam II (v. 24) and then find the verse demonstrating God's grace in the Northern Kingdom.

### **Good and Bad Kings**

Read 2 Kings 15:1–16:20. In Israel, six kings follow in rapid succession over a period of some nine years. Four kings came to power by assassination rather than succession.

90. King Shallum ruled only a month (v. 13). What do we know about the other four kings' faithfulness to God?
- Zechariah (v. 9)
  - Menahem (vv.16,18)
  - Pekahiah (v.24)
  - Pekah (v. 28)

We will discuss the deeds of a sixth king, Hoshea, in our next lesson. He came to power by killing Pekah (v. 30). Azariah and Jotham "did what was right in the eyes of the Lord" (vv. 6, 34) in Judah, but changes came under Ahaz (16:2).

91. What detestable acts did Ahaz commit (16:3, 10–18)?

### God's Word for Today

Christians may find it difficult to remain steadfast in God's Word. Societal influences, peer pressure, and in some cases even family pressures pull us away.

92. What "outside influences" sometimes cause us to doubt God's promises in Jesus Christ?
93. Read Hebrews 12:1–2. Discuss the benefits of running "with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith."

### In Closing

- † Learn more about the Assyrians by consulting a Bible dictionary or other reliable source.
- † Discuss why God might use a pagan nation as an instrument of His divine judgment.
- † Read **2 Kings 17:1–41** to prepare for the next session.