

# Summary of Readings

## Day One: II Kings 2

Elijah and Elisha are traveling together and along the way, Elisha is warned by the prophets that Elijah is about to be “taken” from him. At each stop, Elijah encourages Elisha to stay behind and at each stop, Elisha refuses. After Elijah parts the Jordan river with his cloak, he asks Elisha if there is anything he can do for him before he is “taken away.” Elisha requests a double portion of Elijah’s spirit. Elijah’s responds that if Elisha is present when he is taken away, he will indeed receive his request. Elijah is taken up by a chariot and horses of fire before Elisha. Elisha takes the cloak that Elijah leaves behind and again parts the waters of the Jordan with the cloak. The prophets who were watching declare that, “the spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha.” The prophets request to search for Elijah and Elisha eventually relents and grants their request though Elijah is never found. Elisha heals the water in the town he is in by putting salt into the water. Elisha continues his journey to return to Samaria and is jeered by two youths. Elisha calls down a curse on them and they are mauled by two bears.

## Day Two: II Kings 4; Mark 6:35-44

A widow of one of the Prophets comes to Elisha because a creditor is coming to take her two boys as slaves. When she tells Elisha that all she has is, “a little oil,” he instructs her to collect empty jars from her neighbors and to pour the oil that she has into all the jars she collects. The oil is multiplied which the widow sells to pay off her debts. Elisha finds shelter with an older woman who provides a room for him. When he inquires as to how he can repay her, Gehazi his servant informs him that the woman does not have a son. Elisha tells the Shunammite woman she will have a son. Later, this son dies. The woman goes to Elisha in her distress and mourning. Elisha instructs Gehazi to take his staff and lay it on top of the boy’s face. Gehazi later returns with the news that the boy has not awakened. Elisha goes to the boy, stretches himself over the him, and brings the son back to life.

Elisha returns to Gilgal where he removes the “death” from a pot of stew that the prophets were eating. He later sets twenty loaves of bread before a hundred men which they eat. They are satisfied by the small amount of bread and there are leftovers from the feast as well.

The Mark 6 text is the telling of Jesus’ feeding the five thousand.

## Day Three: II Kings 5

Chapter five introduces us to Namaan, an accomplished commander in the army of the King of Aram who has leprosy. An Israelite servant tells Namaan of a prophet in Israel who could heal him of his leprosy. The King of Aram sends a letter to the King of Israel requesting the services of this prophet. During this exchange, Elisha hears of this and tells the King of Israel to send Namaan to him. Before Namaan arrives, Elisha sends a messenger to instruct Namaan to wash seven times in the Jordan river to receive his healing. Namaan is upset because he expected to be healed directly by the prophet in a different way. Namaan leaves in a rage, but his servants talk him out of abandoning Elisha’s plan. Namaan does wash in the Jordan and is healed. Namaan goes to Elisha to thank him for his healing, but Elisha refuses to receive any gift. On his way home, Gehazi, the servant of Elisha stops Namaan in order to receive his own gift from Namaan. Namaan gladly gives to Gehazi. Elisha discovers Gehazi’s sin and declares that Namaan’s leprosy which had been healed would now “cling to” Gehazi and his descendants forever.

## Day Four: II Kings 6:5-7:20

Israel and Aram are at war. The King of Aram discovers that Elisha is warning the King of Israel in advance of all of Aram's moves, and seeks to capture Elisha. Elisha wakes up the following day with his town surrounded, but tells his servant not to fear because, "those who are with us are more than those who are with them." Elisha prays for God to strike the Arameans with blindness. Elisha then leads the forces to Samaria. When their eyes are opened, the King of Israel spares their lives, feeds them and provides them drink and then sends them back to Aram.

Later, the King of Aram lays siege to Samaria, and the conditions within Samaria reach total desperation. The King of Israel blames Elisha for their distress and sends messengers to kill Elisha. Elisha prophesies that the siege will end. Four lepers who are guarding the gate of Samaria decide to surrender to the Arameans, but when they enter their camp, they find it deserted. They find food and other items and rush back to Samaria to report this to the King. The King suspects a trap. Five horsemen are sent to track the retreating Aramean army. They find their possessions littered all the way to the Jordan River. The people go out to plunder the camp of the Arameans.

### **Day Five: II Kings 11:21-12:16**

A seven year old named Joash ascends to the throne of Judah. Joash "did what was right in the eyes of the Lord," and instructs the priest to use money from the treasury to make repairs to the Temple. Many years later, those improvements had still not been made. Joash decides that all the money would go directly to the repairs of the Temple and he would bypass the priests in making those repairs. A large chest was placed on the right side as one entered the Temple and all the gifts were placed into this chest for the Temple upkeep. The Royal Secretary provided oversight for these funds and paid them directly to the workmen who provided services for the restoration of the Temple.

### **Day Six: II Kings 20-21**

King Hezekiah became gravely ill, and prays for healing. The prophet Isaiah responds by saying that Hezekiah will be given 15 more years to live. An envoy comes from the King of Babylon upon hearing of Hezekiah's illness. Hezekiah shows them the entire palace. When Hezekiah shares with Isaiah what he has done, Isaiah tells Hezekiah that the day will come when everything in his palace will be carried off to Babylon. Manasseh, the 12 year old son of Hezekiah, succeeds his father.

Manasseh rebuilt the High places that his father had destroyed and re-instituted other pagan practices. He did "much evil in the eyes of the Lord, provoking him to anger." The Lord sends word through the prophets that he is going to judge Jerusalem in the same way that Samaria had been judged and, "wipe out Jerusalem as one wipes out a dish." Israel will be turned over to its enemies. Amon follows his father Manasseh and continues in his wicked ways. Amon is assassinated by his own officials. He is succeeded by his son Josiah.

### **Day Seven: II Kings 22:1-23:3**

Josiah becomes King at eight years old and does "right in the eyes of the Lord." In his eighteenth year, he turns his attention to the upkeep of the Temple as Joash had done before him. During this period, the, "Book of the Law" is found in the Temple. When the King heard the words from the Book of the Law, he tore his robes in mourning. He instructs the High Priest to inquire of the Lord about what has been discovered. God responds through the prophetess Huldah that God will indeed bring destruction because of Israel's sin, but because of Josiah's faithfulness, he will die in peace and be spared the sight of the coming destruction. Josiah takes the Book of the Law, shares it with all of Israel and renews their covenantal relationship with God.

# **I & II Kings**

## **The Exile**

## **The Wilderness**

## **Structure of Kings**

**I Kings 1 - 11**

**I Kings 12 - II Kings 17**

**II Kings 18 - 25**

## **II Kings 2:9-14**

## Observations & Questions

Who is your Elijah?

Who is your Elisha?

What is your next step?

What are some of the distractions that might keep you from taking that next step?

## What do you see?

*Whenever we experience a defining moment in our life, the temptation is to retreat back to what we know... But if we have the courage to just stand there and in faith, wrestle with the idea, our lives can be forever changed.*

*Andy Stanley*

## Questions

Quickly list three defining moments in your life.

What changed?

In what ways might God be calling for change right now?

## Other Themes