

Episode: Kings and Prophets Series No. 12

Narrator: Jehu, Elisha, slave girl

Primary Scriptures: 2 Kings 2-10

Story Summary: Northern Kingdom during time of Elisha

Location: Northern Kingdom

Time: 848-797 BC

Suggested Memory Scriptures: 2 Kings 2:9; 4:4, 43-44; 5:13; 10:31

The demise of the Northern Kingdom continued with the kings following Ahab. The next three were Ahaziah, Jehoram (also known as Joram), and Jehu.

Ahaziah was the son of King Ahab, and he reigned only two years. Elijah prophesied that his death would occur because of his worship of idolatry. This was one of the last known acts of Elijah, the most powerful of all the many prophets in Israel.

Upon Elijah's mysterious death, Elisha became the main prophet. Elisha's ministry occurred during the reigns of Jehoram and Jehu. Some of the most well-known stories about the prophets in the Hebrew Bible have to do with Elisha, such as the story of the widow and the olive oil, or the story of the healing of Naaman, the leper.

A story that is less well-known is the time Elisha fed a hundred prophets with twenty barley loaves and had bread left over.¹ Surely the people in the crowd hundreds of years later would have thought of that story when Jesus fed the five thousand.

It was during the reign of Ahaziah that Moab rebelled. Moab had been a vassal state of Israel ever since King David had conquered it. This rebellion was double trouble for Israel. Moab quit paying tribute to Israel and started becoming an enemy that was expensive to contend with. Moab quickly became a terrifying enemy.

Upon Ahaziah's death, another of Ahab's sons became king. That son was known as Jehoram or Joram, and he continued in the ways of his father's idolatry. He understood the problems associated with Moab's rebellion, so he decided to end the rebellion. He enlisted the help of the kings of Judah and Edom. God chose to bless the endeavor, and the Moabites were defeated. However, not long afterward, Edom successfully rebelled against Israel.

God raised up Jehu to replace Joram, and to wipe out the entire family of Ahab and Jezebel. God had high hopes for Jehu to eliminate idolatry in the Northern Kingdom. He did wipe out some of it, but did not eliminate it completely. Therefore, the Northern Kingdom stayed on course for its total destruction.

¹ 2 Kings 4:42-44

Discussion Questions:

1. 2 Kings 2:10-11 describes Elijah being taken alive into heaven. What is one possible ramification of this?
2. The healing of the water event in 2 Kings 2:19-22 seems a little odd. What might the story signify?
3. What is the significance of Moab rebelling against Israel in 2 Kings 3:5?
4. What is a possible significance of the story in 2 Kings 4:42-44?
5. 2 Kings 9:13 describes the army officers quickly changing loyalty. Why might they have done that so quickly?

1. Matthew 17:1-13 describes the Mount of Transfiguration where Moses and Elijah appeared. 2. It appears this water existed near the town of Jericho which had been placed under a curse by Joshua. When Elisha healed the waters, the curse may have been lifted. 3. Since David had conquered the countries around Israel, they had been forced to pay heavy tribute. From this time on, these countries would not only quit paying tribute, but would cause Israel great expense for national defense. 4. The people at the feeding of 5,000 would have likely thought of this story, and considered Jesus to be a great prophet. 5. They may have been tired of serving an evil king and queen, and pleased to have the chance to be with a ruler who was ordained by God.

Application Questions:

1. In 2 Kings 5:11, Naaman demonstrated great pride. This pride almost cost him a great healing. Has your pride ever cost you a lot? Might you have acted differently if you had had wise advisors in your life? Do you actively try to develop having wise advisors in your life?
2. In 2 Kings 5:17-18 made a radical change in his life, but he also was practical in how those changes were implemented. Do you ever over-promise and underperform? If so, how can you keep that from happening in the future?

Application Questions for Teens:

1. 2 Kings 2:23-25 is the story of Elisha calling down a curse on 42 boys which were then mauled by some bears. Why did Elisha do that? Do you ever disrespect people of God by what you say or do?
2. Read the story of 2 Kings 5:1-6. Describe the life of the slave girl prior to her being taken captive, and her life immediately after. What kind of risk was she taking when she advised her master to go see Elisha? What would have happened if her master had not been healed? Do you think her master gave her a great reward?
3. 2 Kings 10:28-31 describes Jehu getting close to being completely obedient to God, and reaping great rewards. But he did not complete his job. Have you ever lost rewards because you did not completely obey your parents or someone else in authority?