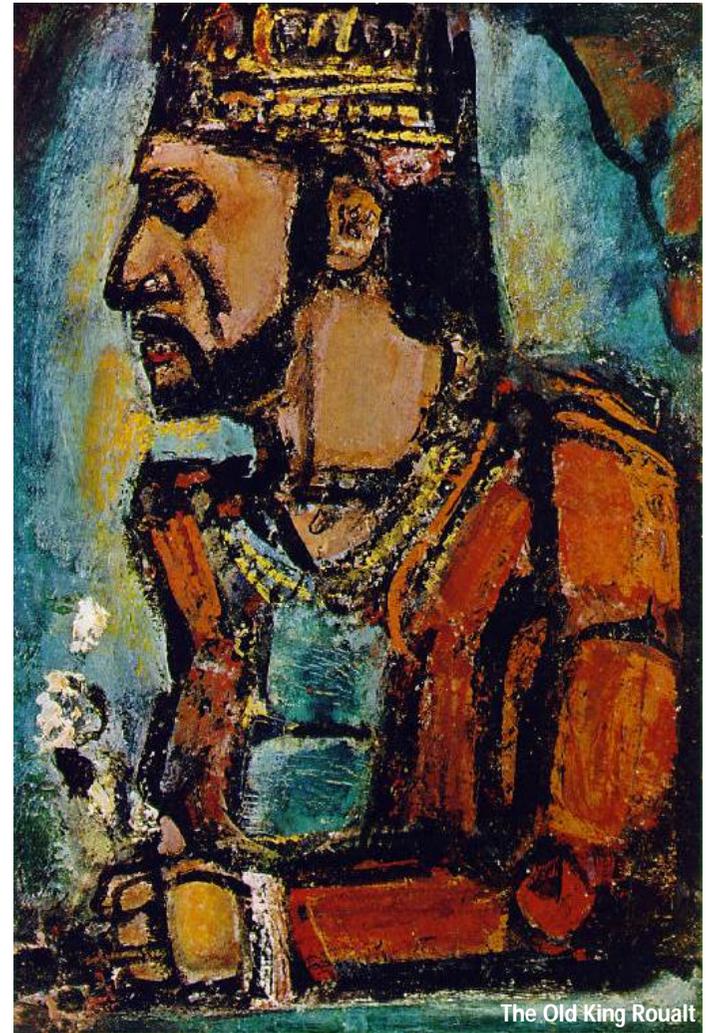


KINGS BEHAVING BADLY II



2 KINGS

Between Life and Death

Week 5

Contents

Study	Title	Page
1. 2 Kings 1	Royal Authority	4
2. 2 Kings 2	Succession Plans	8
3. 2 Kings 3	When You Assume	12
4. 2 Kings 4	An Impotent King and a Compassionate God	16
5. 2 Kings 5	Blessings Beyond Israel	20
6. 2 Kings 6-8.6	The Lord Saves	24
	Prayer Points	28
	Notes	31

Week 6

Study 1

2 Kings 1

Week 3

Royal Authority

READ

Love the LORD Your God with all your Mind



Big Idea

The world wants to convince us that it can deliver life to the full on its own terms without reference to God—this story shows us that God challenges that claim and the cross of Christ destroys it.

Baal-zebul: *Baal* is the title Lord and master. Baal supposedly sent the rain that made the land fruitful, he thus gave life and health. *Zebub*, god of Ekron (a Philistine city) is not mentioned anywhere else. Zebub means fly, so Baal-zebul is Lord of the flies. This is probably an intentional misspelling of *zebul* which means prince.

Read 2 Kings 1.1-8

1. If we read 'angel' as messenger in v3 we get two competing kingdoms sending messengers to give and get information in verses 16. Below draw a diagram of the relationships.

2. List the two opposing sides in this battle for hearts and minds. List them in order of role and significance. Discuss the web of relationships ie Where should the king be aligned?

gods

Representatives

Messenger

Disputed Territory

Week 4

Prayer Points

Week 1

3. Is this the first time there has been a showdown of this sort in Israel involving Elijah 1 Kings 18.16-46? What does this repetition demonstrate about Israel's Kings?

Read 2 Kings 1.9-15

4. How do we know that Elijah had a legitimate concern in giving himself up to the king's men?

5. Look at and describe the three confrontations between the commanders and Elijah. Take special notice of the 'coming up', coming down, and 'falling down'. Can we learn anything about our attitude to God in all of this?

Week 2

Read 2 Kings 1.17

6. How well did Baal-zebub come through for Ahaziah?

7. Outwardly who looked like they had all the power?

MEDITATE

Love the LORD Your God with all your Heart



This week spend some time meditating on 1 Corinthians 1.18

¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

PRAY

Love the LORD Your God with all your Soul



Below write a prayer to God asking forgiveness for the other places you look for life and fruitfulness besides Christ

LIVE

Love the LORD Your God with all your Strength



It is so easy to live by sight and not by faith. Is there are part in your life where you can nail your colour to the mast of faith, giving away something, not worrying etc?

MEDITATE

Love the LORD Your God with all your Heart



This week spend some time meditating on Luke 12.32

Luke 12:32 ³² "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.

PRAY

Love the LORD Your God with all your Soul



Below write a prayer for others in the church based on Ephesians 1:18-19 ¹⁸ I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

LIVE

Love the LORD Your God with all your Strength



Discuss with your home group where you recognise a power play between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of man and work out ways of dealing with it.

Study 2

2 Kings 2

Succession Plans

READ

Love the LORD Your God with all your Mind



Big Idea

The Lord insure continuity of the witness to his kingdom by providing a succession plan for Elijah his prophet—Elisha is given a double portion of Elijah's spirit. In the same way, in the New Testament, the departure of Jesus has a succession plan his Spirit is given to his people.

The king of Israel, Ahazia dies with no son to succeed him (2 Kings 1.17), but with the impending departure of the great prophet Elijah God ensures a suitable replacement—Elisha.

1. In 2 Kings 2.1 we are told from the beginning what will happen to Elisha. What is that?

2. In 1 Kings 19.16 We are told who will succeed Elijah. Who is that?

3. What is the pattern that occurs three times in 2 Kings 2.2-7?

Read 2 Kings 6.24-7.1-20

The capital of the Israel, Samaria, is under siege and the people are suffering great distress. The king is powerless to act and is devastated and in frustration turns on the prophet Elisha rather than looking at his own heart.

5. How is the story of the two women like and unlike the story of Solomon in 1 Kings 3.16-28?

6. What is ironic about 2 Kings 6.31?

7. Elisha prophesies about how the food shortage will be resolved. How does the officer 2 Kings 7.2 respond. What will happen to him?

8. How do the lepers show desperation, cunning and then become evangelists of the good news?

9. Read 2 Kings 8.1-6 how does it parallel 2 Kings 6.1-7?

Study 6 2 Kings 6-8.1-6

The Lord Saves

READ

Love the LORD Your God with all your Mind



Big Idea

In these series of stories we see the short-sightedness of unassisted human sight compared to the insight of trusting in the Lord and his word. God's people believe that God can save and has saved.

1. Read 2 Kings 6.1-7. The prophetic community gathered around Elisha make up the faithful few in Israel. How does the Lord show his concern for them?

2. Read 2 Kings 6.8-12. Even though the kingship of Israel is rotten how does the Lord continue to show patience and grace?

3. Read 2 Kings 6.13-18. There is in this section a play on the idea of seeing. How does it work?

4. Read 2 Kings 6.19-23. How does the Lord, for a period bring to an end the raiding on the territory of Israel by the Arameans?

4. What does Elijah do in 2 Kings 2.7-8 that reminds us of Moses (Exodus 14.15-18) and Joshua (Joshua 3.7-13)?

5. What does Elisha ask of Elijah 2 Kings 2.9-10.?

6. How do we know that Elisha inherited Elijah's spirit 2 Kings 2.13-14?

7. Read Acts 1.1-11;2. How is Jesus departure and the giving of the promised Holy Spirit at Pentecost similar to what we have read about Elijah and Elisha and what is its significance for us?

MEDITATE

Love the LORD Your God with all your Heart



This week spend some time meditating on Ephesians 5.18

Ephesians 5:18 ¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

PRAY

Love the LORD Your God with all your Soul



Below write a Prayer asking to be filled with the Spirit of Jesus.

LIVE

Love the LORD Your God with all your Strength



Who do you know who is an 'outcast' at work or in your circle of acquaintances? What can you do to show them that in Christ they may find forgiveness and acceptance with God?

MEDITATE

Love the LORD Your God with all your Heart



This week spend some time meditating on Ephesians 3.6

Ephesians 3:6 ⁶ This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

PRAY

Love the LORD Your God with all your Soul



Below write a prayer thanking Jesus for bringing you an outsider into the very heart of God's family.

LIVE

Love the LORD Your God with all your Strength



You are to live the life of Jesus in the power of the Spirit. Where are there areas in your life that need addressing?

Study 3

2 Kings 3

When You Assume ...

READ

Love the LORD Your God with all your Mind



Big Idea

Political leaders in the time of war nearly always assume that God is on their side, independent of how they behave. As God's people we too can all too easily assume God's blessing on what we do without seeking his guidance.

1. How is Joram better than his father, Ahab and his mother, Jezebel but still not a righteous king 2 Kings 3.1-13?

2. In the story is there any reference before Joram goes to war of a prophet calling the king of Israel to go to war with Moab?

Moab has rebelled against the northern kingdom of Israel and Joram calls on the king of Judah, Jehosaphat and the king of Edom to help him. They are probably in some alliance with the 'stronger' kingdom of Israel.

The kings set out with their supplies and attempt to launch a surprise attack through the Desert of Edom and 'surprisingly' they run out of water.

3. What is surprising about the king of Israel's question 2 Kings 3.10?

3. Read 2 Kings 5.8. How does Elisha respond to the king of Israel's response?

4. Read 2 Kings 5.9-12. What strikes you about the instructions Elisha gives for Naaman's cleansing and what struck Naaman?

5. Read 2 Kings 5.13 What do you think may have been Naaman's internal attitude?

6. Read 2 Kings 5.14-20. How does Naaman respond to being healed?

8. What is unusual about Elisha's response to Naaman's request for Israelite dirt?

9. Read 2 Kings 5.21-27. What motivated Gehazi and how did it possibly undermine the miracle?

10. Read Acts 10. What are the similarities and differences between the cleansing of Naaman and the 'cleansing' of Cornelius?

Study 5 2 Kings 5

Blessings Beyond Israel

READ

Love the LORD Your God with all your Mind



Big Idea

Israel's God given goal to bring the nations out of the darkness and death of idolatry and into the light and life of the true and living God—the LORD. Israel in worshipping lies has compromised her role but God still brings life through his representative.

Background

In worshipping Baal, the Asherah, and the golden calves set up at Bethel and Dan, Israel is no longer the holy nation or the kingdom of priests she was intended to be. She has become part of the problem ... But not completely there are still true worshippers of the true God who can guide others to life and the Lord works through them.

Read 2 Kings 5.1-3

1. What is the context of this story?

Leprosy

Leprosy, in the Bible is a catch-all term for all types of skin disease and not just what we know as leprosy (Hansen's disease) but would have included it. It was in effect, within Israelite society, social death.

Naaman acts on the information by going to the king of Aram and asking for permission to go to Israel. The king of Aram sends him to the king of Israel with a letter of introduction, 340 kg of silver, 70 kg of gold and 10 sets of clothing.

2. How did the king of Israel interpret the request?

In these difficult straits Jehosaphat, the godly king of Judah, asks if there is a prophet they can inquire about their disastrous situation.

4. How is Elisha described in 2 Kings 3.11b?

5. What is Elisha's response to Joram 2 Kings 3.12 and what might that say about Joram's pretence that God was in his plans?

6. Why will Elisha find out what the Lord's will is 2 Kings 3.14?

The Lord will save the kings and their armies –they are to dig ditches to gather the flood water that comes in a surprising way, then they will go on and destroy Moab

6. What would Moab be reduced to as the three kings carried out the Lord's command?

6. What is the conclusion of the battle 2 Kings 3.27?

MEDITATE

Love the LORD Your God with all your Heart



This week spend some time meditating on James 4.13-15

James 4:13-15 ¹³ Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." ¹⁴ Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. ¹⁵ Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."

PRAY

Love the LORD Your God with all your Soul



Below write a Prayer submitting your plans in life to the Lord Jesus.

LIVE

Love the LORD Your God with all your Strength



Your group is to be given a hundred dollars to invest somehow and to serve a need in the community? As a group how could you do this and what need could you fill?

MEDITATE

Love the LORD Your God with all your Heart



This week spend some time meditating on Galatians 6.10

Galatians 6:10 ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

PRAY

Love the LORD Your God with all your Soul



Below write a prayer asking the Lord to open your eyes to the needs within your community and how you might meet them in his strength.

LIVE

Love the LORD Your God with all your Strength



We have been given a plot of land at Petersham. How can we approach the use of the land in a godly way?

Study 4 2 Kings 4

An Impotent King & a Compassionate God

READ

Love the LORD Your God with all your Mind



Big Idea

The Lord's great purpose in the world is peace—shalom. Sin, death, debt and hunger undermine that peace. God's people should not wait for the politicians to come up with their solutions. God's people are called to bring 'peace' where they can and in their own situation.

The role of the Kings in Judah and Israel was to subdue unrighteousness and wickedness and fill the land with God's peaceful blessings. But the kings of Israel have become part of the problem not part of the solution. In the three stories of chapter four, God acts through his prophet to bring 'shalom' without the king and probably despite him. God's kingdom is not dependent upon the kingdom of man.

Read Kings 4.1-7

1. What is the full extent of the widows problem?

Significantly the woman goes to the man of God—Elisha.

2. How does the Lord use the little she has to solve her problems and who is involved in the solution?

3. What can this teach us about responding to needs within our own community?

Read 2 Kings 4.8-41

4. How did the woman of Shunem show her faith?

5. How was she rewarded? (Notice the similarities between her and Sarah Gen.18.10-15)

6. How does the Lord, through Elisha, overturn the great disaster of death?

Read 2 Kings 4.38-44

7. How does God's representative respond to the hunger of his people?

8. How does Jesus, in the same way, in his own ministry, display the compassionate kingdom of God?