

A WALK THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT
TIME FRAME #6– THE DIVIDED KINGDOM TO THE DEFEAT OF ISRAEL
931 BC - 722 BC
SELECTED CHAPTERS IN 1 KINGS AND 2 KINGS

CLASS NOTES

SUMMARY

In judgement for Solomon's idolatry and drift from God the LORD rips most of the nation of Israel from his family. He uses the prideful foolishness of Solomon's son Rehoboam to fulfill this. Thus begins the era of the 'Divided Kingdom', Israel to the north and Judah to the south.

While Judah has a mixture of godly and idolatrous kings Israel has only idolatrous ones, leading the country further and further from God. However, there is always a remnant of faithful followers of God, often led by the LORD's prophets.

In the end, Israel is judged by God through the Assyrians and deported out of the Land, never to return. The mixed population brought into the Land become the Samaritans of Jesus' time. The nation of Judah will remain for another 180 years.

MAJOR EVENTS

EVENT #54 – ISRAEL DIDVIDES INTO TWO NATIONS (1 KINGS 12)

In his later years Solomon had become abusive to his people, taxing them heavily and forcing thousands into forced labor. As his son Rehoboam comes to the throne the Elders of the tribes gather and demand he reduce both. After ignoring the wise counsel of his father's advisors, his young friends convince him to play tough, threatening to increase the burden on the people. In response the northern 10 tribes all rebel, and making Jeroboam their king, form the northern nation of Israel. Judah and Benjamin form the nation of Judah.

EVENT #55 – THE KINGS FROM REHOBOAM TO AHAB (1 KINGS 14-16)

Both Rehoboam in Judah and Jeroboam in Israel lead their countries into idolatry. This pattern of leadership will continue through both nation's histories. In Israel, every king will practice idolatry. While in Judah there will be a few godly kings like Asa who lead the country to spiritual revivals. In Israel, the spiritual decline culminates in the rule of Ahab, whose wife Jezebel brings the worship of Baal to Israel while simultaneously seeking to wipe out the worship of the LORD all together.

EVENT #56 – THE MINISTRY OF ELIJAH (1 KINGS 17-19; 2 KINGS 2)

Elijah ministers in Israel during the reign of Ahab. He stands as one of the most powerful men of the Old Testament. He will be used to announce the coming of a three year drought which begins through his prayer. The drought will lift when he prays three years later. He takes on the 450 prophets of Baal at Mt. Carmel and sees God manifest Himself with fire. After the anticipated revival fails to occur and Jezebel threatens his life Elijah flees to the wilderness. There God ministers to him, appears to him and then gives him new assignments. These prepare Israel for the next generation of leaders and prophets. With those assignments completed, Elijah is taken to heaven on a chariot of fire.

EVENT #57 – THE MINISTRY OF ELISHA (2 KINGS 3-7; 13:14-25)

Elisha takes the mantle of Elijah and ministers in Israel. The stories mostly revolve around the miracles Elisha performs. These include helping a widow and her son, purifying stew and healing a Syrian general of Leprosy. Later, Syria invades Israel and lays siege to Samaria. God miraculously delivers the city and provides food that breaks a famine at the same time!

EVENT #58 – THE FALL OF ISRAEL (2 KINGS 17)

After 19 kings and 200 years of idolatry God brings final judgement on Israel through the Assyrians. As was their custom, most of the Jews are deported from the Land and resettled throughout their empire. These 10 tribes will never return to the Land. As the few remaining Jews inter-marry with the non-Jews resettled in Palestine the result are the Samaritans who will have a significant part in the ministry of Jesus.

KEY CHARACTER – ELIJAH SPIRITUAL LIFE LESSON – OVERCOMING DISCOURAGEMENT

ELIJAH HAD A UNIQUE ABILITY TO HEAR GOD’S VOICE AND THE COURAGE TO OBEY. 1 KINGS 17:1-6

As we meet Elijah, he is confronting King Ahab with a prediction of a three year drought. In this one verse we see his ear for God’s Word and his courage to do what he is told by God. **17:1**

NOTE: *Like every godly character we have studied, Elijah’s spiritual life was founded on a heart to know, hear and obey God.*

ELIJAH EXPERIENCED THE PROVISION AND PROTECTION OF GOD THROUGHOUT THE NEXT THREE YEARS. 1 KINGS 17:2-16

1. God provided Elijah’s needs in the wilderness using ravens. **17:2-7**

2. God protected Elijah as he lives in Zarephath, near where Jezebel was born and grew up. Her family still lived near there!

NOTE: *It is interesting to note that God proved He could provide Elijah’s needs in a barren wilderness and protect him in the backyard of his biggest enemy. While not usually the norm, God wants there to be seasons and experiences where He is the only explanation for our provision and protection.*

ELIJAH EXPERIENCED A GREAT VICTORY OVER THE PROPHETS OF BAAL. 1 KINGS 18:17-46

After three years of living in the shadows away from the public eye, Elijah confronts Ahab and the prophets of Baal. Once again his courage and trust in God are on full display.

1. Elijah reveals his purpose in this challenge – to see the hearts of the people turned fully to God. **18:20-21**

2. Elijah is not afraid to set the scene so God will receive all the focus and glory. **18:23-35**

3. Elijah keeps his words simple and God focused. **18:36-37**
4. God answers Elijah in a powerful way, leading to what looks like a revival. **18:38-40**

Note: *It is good to note how Elijah keeps the focus of the people on God through his words and actions. The result of doing that is the people respond with worship. Even though they do not enter into real revival, they do have their opportunity as they witness God work.*

ELIJAH IS STRUCK WITH DEEP DISAPPOINTMENT AND FEAR THAT SENDS HIM INTO DISCOURAGEMENT 1 KINGS 19:1-4

It is not surprising to see Elijah fall into discouragement. His race into the city of Samaria was to lead a great revival. Instead he finds himself fleeing the city for his life.

1. Elijah has had an exhausting three years! This has culminated with the deeply emotional and draining encounter on Mt. Carmel followed by the physically exhausting run to Samaria. This leaves him spiritually, emotionally and physically drained.
2. This drain leads to burnout. Elijah has nothing left in the tank. He flees from central Israel all the way to the wilderness near the Judean/Egyptian border. Throwing himself under a large bush he asks God to take his life.

Note: *Even the most godly men and women have a limited amount of physical, emotional and spiritual energy. When our tanks are low, something like a deep disappointment can tip us into burn-out. As we will see, the only option we really have is to stop and let God and time replenish us.*

ELIJAH IS RESTORED BY GOD FOR A NEW SEASON OF MINISTRY 1 KINGS 19:5-21

1. The first step in Elijah's restoration and refueling is physical – nourishment and rest. It is difficult to be spiritually and emotionally refueled if we are physically exhausted. **19:4-8**
2. The next step God takes is to speak to Elijah. The Lord allows Elijah to clear. This in turn leads to Elijah calming his thoughts and emotions. Then God uses a calming voice to give Elijah a different perspective. This starts the process of renewing Elijah emotionally and spiritually.
19:9-14

3. Then God gives Elijah a new season of ministry. Notice Elijah is not sent back to his public ministry. He will now anoint new governmental leaders and spiritual leaders. His new role is to transition to the next generation. **19:15-18**

4. Elijah embraces his new role, and once again we see him hear God's voice and then step out to obey. **19:19-21**

NOTE: *There is a progression to Elijah's restoration and renewal. It takes time, God's touch, accurate perspective and fresh purpose.*