**Survey Old Testament**

**2 Kings 1 Elijah Confronts King Ahaziah**

1. The last three verses in 1 Kings 22 inform us that King Ahaziah was a wicked man whose heart had been unmoved by the recent judgments of God. We see now that neither the rebellion of Moab nor the injuries from his fall brought Ahaziah to repentance. In fact, he even sent to the heathen gods to find out whether or not he would survive. The Lord instructed Elijah to send the messengers back with a true message from the Lord: the king would die. Then Elijah departed; see John 12:35–36 for a NT parallel. Rather than submit to Elijah’s God, the king sought to slay the prophet, but fire from heaven destroyed his men. The prophet’s motive was to glorify the Lord; see Luke 9:51–56 for the disciples’ misuse of this event. The third company of soldiers humbled themselves (through fear, not faith), and God accepted them. Fearlessly, Elijah gave the king his message of doom—and the king died.

**2 Kings 2:1 Elijah Taken into Heaven**

1. In 1 Kings 19:20, Elisha had promised to follow Elijah faithfully. He had served his master about ten years when he was told that Elijah was going to leave him. Years before, Elijah had wanted to die in the wilderness. How wonderful that God did not honor that request. Instead, the prophet was carried to heaven in a whirlwind. God always gives His best to those who leave the choice with Him. Because Elisha saw his risen, he received the double portion of the Spirit. In v. 12, Elisha compares Elijah to the armies of Israel: he was more important to the nation’s safety than the horses and chariots.
2. Verses 23–25 have puzzled some people. Keep in mind that these were young men, not children, and therefore responsible for their deeds. Bethel was a headquarters for idolatry (1 Kings 12:28–33); this sacred place had been desecrated and the young men were actually ridiculing God’s Word and God’s servants. The fact that forty-two of them met together suggests an organized plan. Calling the prophet “baldhead” was one of the lowest forms of insults, and the words “go up” point to their ridicule of Elijah’s rapture to heaven. The two she bears mauled them, it was a divine rebuke to the wicked men.

**2 Kings 3 Elisha Saves the Nation**

1. It was a sin for Jehoshaphat of Judah to ally himself with Ahab’s wicked son, but he did it. The two of them lined up with Edom to fight the Moabites. Alas, their journey was a failure and they ran out of water. Jehoshaphat turned to Elisha and the Lord, and the prophet recognized David’s descendant, but refused to recognize Ahab’s godless heir. God miraculously provided the water, and also routed the enemy before them. The helpless king of Moab offered his own son as a burnt offering, and Judah and Edom became so indignant against Israel (Jehoram) that they withdrew from the battle and went home.

**2 Kings 4 Elisha Serves the People**

1. The Jews were not showing mercy to one another or obeying the OT laws concerning debt. The widow was about to lose her two sons to slavery. God takes what we have and uses it to meet the need, if we trust him. “Shut the door” reminds us of Matt. 6:6; note that Elisha often “shut the door” when asking for God’s help. God filled as many vessels as the widow had faith to bring.
2. Two miracles are recorded here concerning the wealthy woman who God used to provide for Elisha. God gave the woman a son when her husband was old, and God raised the boy back to life when he died.
3. This school of the prophets may have been started by Samuel (1 Sam. 10:10) and continued by Elijah (1 Kings 20:35). The famine in the land meant a lack of food, so the young preachers were making some stew. One of the students was dissatisfied with the menu, so he went to find some vegetables to improve it. The taste warned them of the danger, and their prayer brought action from Elisha: he added to the meal and healed the stew.  We find another problem: there was good food on hand, but not enough to go around. Elisha multiplied the food to meet the needs of all the men.

**2 Kings 5 Naaman’s Cure**

1. We have in this miracle a beautiful picture of salvation through faith in God’s Word. Every lost sinner can see himself in Naaman; he can also see the power of saving faith.
2. Naaman had a Jewish maid serving in his home, a girl kidnapped during a raid. Even though she was far from home, she did not forget her God and she was quick to witness of His great power.
3. Elisha heard about Naaman and sent for him. No sinner deserves to be saved; it is only through the gracious calling of the Spirit that anyone comes to Christ; see John 6:37. He resisted God’s simple way of salvation.
4. Elisha does not go outside to meet Naman but sends the message of God to him by the servant. “Doesn’t he know who I am?” Naaman asked. He would not humble himself to go into the Jordan at first. When Naaman obeyed in faith, he was “born again” and came out of the waters with flesh as clean as that of a little child. Naaman’s faith was proved by his works; he trusted the Word and acted upon it.
5. He gave public testimony to the reality of God’s power and the fact that Jehovah alone was the true God. So grateful was he that he offered wealth to Elisha, who, of course, refused to accept the gift.
6. Gehazi disagreed with God’s Word; this was the beginning of his troubles and sins. Had he submitted to God’s Word and judged the covetousness in his heart, he would never have become a leper. “I will” was the attitude Gehazi had, not “Your will.”

**2 Kings 6:1–7 Elisha Restores the Axe Head**

1. It rejoices us to see that one of the schools of the prophets was growing and needed more space. Elisha was not too busy or too proud to share in the building activities. Certainly his presence encouraged the young men. The students were poor, and at least one of them had to borrow tools. When the axe head flew off into the water, the student was terrified; but Elisha restored it to him. God is certainly interested in the personal needs of his people, even those “little matters” that often burden our hearts.

**2 Kings 6:8-23 Elisha Captures the Syrian Invaders**

1. The Syrian king was sending in bands of soldiers to raid Israel, but God kept revealing to Elisha every movement the enemy made. Though Elisha did not honor wicked King Jehoram, the prophet did have a heart for the people of Israel and wanted to protect them. The king was wise enough to listen to the man of God, and God protected Israel. When the king of Syria was told that Elisha was the “hidden spy,” he sent a band of soldiers to capture the prophet. Elisha’s servant (who apparently had replaced Gehazi) saw the army about their city and thought the end had come, but God opened the servant’s eyes to see the hosts of angels ready to deliver Elisha. Elisha performed a dual miracle; he opened the eyes of his servant, but he blinded the eyes of the invaders. Elisha prohibited the King of Israel from slaying the soldiers: God had captured them and God alone was to get the glory. Elisha defeated them with kindness. From that time on, Syria sent no more bands to raid the villages of Israel.

**2 Kings 6:24–7:20 Elisha Delivers the City**

1. We do not know how many years passed between verse 23 and verse 24. When Ben-hadad did decide to fight Israel, it was with a complete army and not with small bands of invaders. The capital city was besieged until there was very little food. Some of the people were resorting to cannibalism. Wicked King Jehoram echoed his father Ahab’s words when he blamed the famine on Elisha. The king sent a messenger (whom Elisha knew was coming) to receive a strange prediction from the man of God: by the next day, Samaria would be delivered, and there would be plenty to eat. In 7:1, One of the king’s lords revealed his unbelief, and Elisha promised him judgment.
2. What weapons did God use to defeat the Syrian army? A noise and four lepers! Thinking that a hired army was coming upon them, the Syrians fled, leaving wealth and food in the camp. With good reasoning, the four lepers decided it was better to eat as prisoners (or die quickly) than to starve in freedom. God used them to find what He had done and reveal it to Samaria.

**2 Kings 8:1-6 Elisha Protects the Shunammite Woman**

1. Elijah the man of God had warned the Shunammite woman about an approaching famine over the whole land; see 4:38. This is not the local famine in the city of Samaria described in chapter 6. The fact that Gehazi is talking to the king indicates that this event occurred before the healing of Naaman (chap. 5). The woman had obeyed Elisha and forsaken her property, finding temporary help in the land of the Philistines. Imagine her surprise to discover Gehazi talking to the king at the very moment she came to press her case. The king restored her land and losses.

**2 Kings 8:7–29 Elisha Judges the King**

1. Ben-hadad had been an enemy of Israel, yet when a crisis came, he turned to the man of God for help. Note the reply Elisha gave to Hazael: (1) Say to him, “You shall certainly recover”; (2) However, the Lord has shown me (Elisha) that he will really die. The first statement Hazael quoted to his king. The second statement Hazael fulfilled by murdering the king. After Elisha gave his strange answer to Hazael, the man of God stared at his visitor for a long time. Elisha saw that his visitor was planning to murder the king. Hazael was so embarrassed by this peculiar behavior that he became ashamed; in return, Elisha wept. Elisha knew too much. “I know the evil you will do in Israel.” Elisha’s parting words were, “You will become king over Syria.”
2. The remaining verses of this chapter bring us up to date on Israel and Judah. During those days of political decay and national sin, God was using Elisha to call out a believing remnant of people to obey God.

**2 Kings 9–10 The Lord executing His wrath.**

1. These two chapters are filled with violence, for in them we see the Lord executing His wrath on those who had long despised Him and disobeyed His Word. King Jehu was an instrument of vengeance in the hands of the Lord (9:7). In Hosea 1:4 God announced that He would judge the house of Jehu because of his deeds of ruthless murder. Jehu called his activities “zeal for the Lord,” but we can see in his slaughters a carnal and sinful motive that did not honor the Lord.
2. 2 Kings 9:14–26 The slaying of King Joram. He had been wounded from the battle and Jehu went to see him and killed him
3. 2 Kings 9:27-29 The slaying of King Ahaziah (9:27–29). He too tried to run away, but Jehu’s men followed him to the kingdom of Samaria (not the city) where he was slain. Ahaziah was Joram’s brother-in-law (8:18) and was thus included in the judgment against Ahab’s house.
4. The slaying of Jezebel (9:30–37). The Queen Mother still exercised a great deal of power in Israel, but her hour of judgment had arrived and nothing could protect her. Several servants in the palace assisted Jehu by throwing the queen down from the upper window, and Jehu finished the job by riding over her body with his chariot. He then took over the palace and enjoyed a hearty meal. He instructed the men to bury the dead queen, but the dogs had already gone to work and eaten her body.
5. 2 Kings 10:1-17 The slaying of Ahab’s descendants. Ahab had seventy sons living in Samaria, and Jehu turned his attention toward them. Jehu got the elders of Samaria to kill them. That evening the men arrived with the heads of Ahab’s seventy sons. Jehu destroyed the rest of Ahab’s family in Samaria, the capital city. Indeed, he had a “zeal for the Lord” but his heart was not fully right with the Lord.
6. 2 Kings 10:18-28 The slaying of the Baal worshipers. Having arrived in Samaria, Jehu announced his intention of establishing Baal worship, and the people believed him. Once he had the faithful followers of Baal gathered in the house of Baal, he set his soldiers outside and carefully examined the crowd to be sure no faithful follower of the Lord had mistakenly entered the heathen temple. Once the service was ended, the guards killed the followers of Baal and destroyed the images and the temple.

**2 Kings 10:29–36 The Abandoning**

1. God commended Jehu for his obedience and promised him a secure throne for four generations (15:1–12). However, Jehu took no heed to obey the Word of the Lord, but went back into idolatry, worshiping the golden calves. How prone we are to judge sins in the lives of other people while failing to see these same sins in our own lives. God had to chasten Jehu by allowing Hazael of Syria to capture territory from Israel. Jehu reigned twenty-eight years. The prophet Hosea (1:4) announced that God would avenge the blood of Jezreel upon Jehu’s house, and this He did. Jehu had abandoned the Lord, and now the Lord would have to abandon him and his seed after only four generations.