

The Word of the Lord

Lesson Thirteen

2 Kings; Jonah 1-4

2 Chronicles 30, 36

Jeremiah 34-39

The divided nation is on a path to destruction. Most of the kings of both the northern and southern kingdoms promote the worship of foreign gods. God brings forth prophets to warn the people of what will happen if they continue in their idolatry.

This period of time before the Israelites are carried off to Babylonia is also the time of the prophet Jonah. His is the story of a reluctant prophet who does not want to do as God tells him to do. Once he does get the job done, he is unhappy with the outcome.

Finally, this lesson will look at the fall of the city of Jerusalem. The inhabitants of the northern kingdom are carried off into captivity 136 years before the fall of Jerusalem which signaled the end of the southern kingdom. It takes 288 years from the time of Elijah and King Ahab until the fall of Jerusalem. The period in between is filled with mostly wicked kings and God's prophets warning the kings and the people.

The northern kingdom, Israel, existed for 208 years. It had twenty kings. The Assyrians destroyed Israel and carried its inhabitants off into exile about 722 years before Christ. Ten of the tribes were carried into captivity at this time. The northern kingdom of Israel was never restored.

The southern kingdom, Judah, existed for 344 years and had twenty kings. This kingdom was overthrown by Nebuchadnezzar, and its inhabitants were carried off to Babylonia. This period of exile lasted for seventy years, and then the people were allowed to go home.

ELIJAH AND ELISHA

2 Kings 2-5

The Lord revealed to Elijah that his work would be carried on by Elisha. Elisha spends time with Elijah before Elijah is taken to heaven. **Read about these events in 2 Kings 2: 1-7.**

To where is Elijah sent first? Bethel

Does Elisha go with him? Yes

What do the prophets in Bethel tell Elisha? Elijah will be taken to heaven that day

Is this news to Elisha? no

What other two places does the Lord send Elijah? 1.) Jericho

2.) The Jordan

Does Elisha go with Elijah to these places? yes

Can it be concluded that Elisha was committed to Elijah and to his ministry? yes

And Elijah took his mantle and wrapped it together and struck the waters, and they were divided so that the two went over on dry ground. Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for you before I am taken away from you." Elisha said, "I pray you, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me." Elijah said, "You have asked a hard thing; nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so to you. But if not, it shall not be so." As they still went on and talked, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire **1** and horses of fire that separated the two of them. Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha saw it and he cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." And he saw him no more. He took up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him and went back and stood by the bank of the Jordan. He took the mantle and struck the waters and said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" When he had struck the waters, they parted; and Elisha went over. When the company of prophets from Jericho who were watching saw him, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." They came to meet him and bowed themselves to the ground before him.



What request does Elisha make of Elijah? Double portion of his spirit

This request indicates a great desire by Elisha to carry on the ministry of Elijah.

Does Elijah die? no

Of what are chariots and horsemen symbolic? Power and strength (kings)

What does Elisha mean when he refers to Elijah as the chariots and horsemen of Israel?

Elijah is Israel's strength and power

Even though the prophets of Jericho accept Elisha as the replacement for Elijah, not all the other people of the land consider him in that way. In the next passage Elisha is called "baldhead." Baldness was uncommon in this part of the world. Remember that Samson had lots of hair and was powerful. Absalom had luxuriant hair and the people readily followed him. A baldheaded leader just did not fit the people's perception of a man of power and leadership.

Read 2 Kings 2:23-25 to see what happens to those who call Elisha "Baldhead."

What town is Elisha approaching? Bethel

Who teased Elisha? The youth

What happens to forty-two of the name callers? They are mauled by bears

And he went from there to Mount Carmel and from there he returned to Samaria. Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the company of the prophets to Elisha saying, "My husband is dead, and the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be slaves." Elisha said, "What do you have in the house?" She said, "Your handmaid has not anything in the house save a pot of oil."

Then he said, "Go, borrow vessels from all your neighbors – empty vessels. Borrow not a few and pour into all those vessels, and you shall set aside that which is full." She poured until the vessels were full. She said to her son, "Bring me yet a vessel." He said to her, "There are not any more vessels." And the oil stopped. Then she came and told the man of God. He said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debt and live, you and your children, off the rest."

NAAMAN AND ELISHA

2 Kings 5

Read 2 Kings 5:1-7.

Is Naaman an Israelite? no

What disease does Naaman have? leprosy

Where is Naaman's wife's servant from? Israel

What does the girl tell Naaman's wife? There is a prophet in Samaria who can cure

Naaman

Does Naaman receive permission to go to Samaria? yes

Why is the king of Israel upset? Thinks he is supposed to cure Naaman

When Elisha, the man of God, heard this, he sent to the king saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." So Naaman came with his horses and chariot and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. Elisha sent a messenger to him saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be clean." But Naaman was angry and went away and said, "Behold, I thought he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord, his God, and strike his hand over the place and restore the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?" His servants spoke to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much rather, then, when he said to you, 'Wash and be clean?'" Then he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, and he was clean. He returned to the man of God and said, "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel. Now, therefore, I pray you, take a present from your servant." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive none. Go in peace."

Three things about the encounter with Elisha bother Naaman. What are they?

1. Elisha uses a messenger

2. There is no big show of power

3. The Jordan River is not a great river

Who persuaded Naaman to do as he is instructed? His servants

What does Naaman try to do for Elisah to show his gratitude? Pay him; give him gifts

Will Elisha let him do this? No

Even though Elisha refuses to accept the treasures offered to him by Naaman, they prove to be too tempting for one of his servants. **Read 2 Kings 5:20-27.**

Who wants some of the treasure? Gehazi

Does Naaman believe the story he is told by Gehazi? yes

Is Elisha aware of what Gahazi has done? yes

What is the punishment? Leprosy for him and his family

THE PROPHET JONAH

Jonah 1-4

Read Jonah 1:1-14 to find out what it is that the Lord wants Jonah to do.

Where is Jonah to go?

Ninevah

What is he to do there?

Tell them of their

wickedness

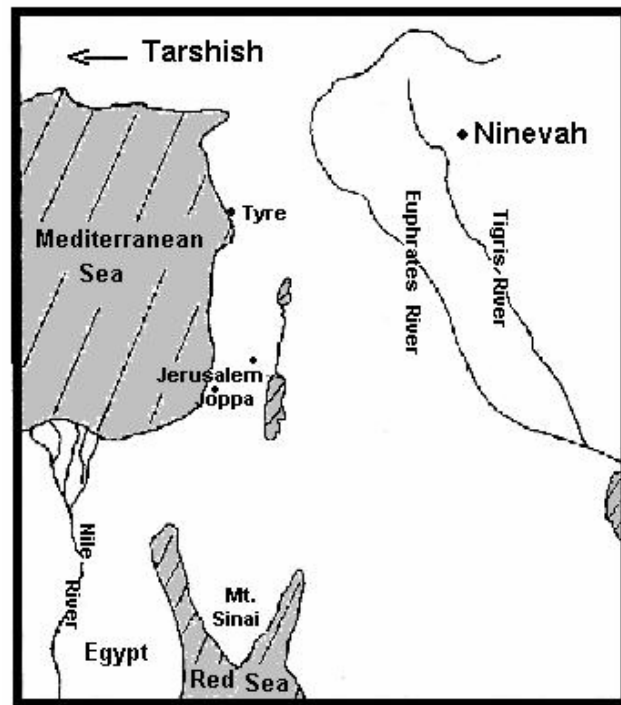
Where does Jonah head instead?

Tarshish

Refer to the map.

Is Tarshish anywhere near Ninevah?

No



In fact, it is believed that Tarshish was in what is now Spain. That would be located at the other end of the Mediterranean Sea. Jonah was running far away.

What happens to the ship? A great storm

Upon whom does the lot fall? Jonah

What does Jonah tell them to do in order to make the storm abate? Throw him

overboard

Do they want to do it? no

So they took up Jonah and cast him forth into the sea, and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the Lord and made vows. Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed to the Lord, his God, out of the fish's belly. And the Lord spoke to the fish and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

What happens once Jonah is thrown overboard? The storm calms

Who was dead and buried and then arose after three days? Jesus

In fact, Jesus uses the story of Jonah to help explain what is going to happen to him. In Matthew 12:40 and 41 Jesus says, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here."

Read Jonah chapter three to see if Jonah is a little more eager now to do as the Lord has instructed him to do.

Does Jonah go to Ninevah? Yes

What is the message Jonah delivers in Ninevah? Forty days and Ninevah will be

overturned

What is the response of the people? They repent

What three things does the king tell everyone to do? 1.) no eating or drinking (even animals)

2.) put on sack cloth 3.) call on God

How does God react to all of this? With compassion; does not destroy them

This sounds like the happy ending of a story. However, there is more to this story as it pertains to Jonah.

But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. He said to the Lord, "O Lord, was not this my saying when I was yet in my country? Therefore, I fled before to Tarshish; for I

knew that You are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness and You relent from sending calamity." Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city and there made a booth, so he might see what would become of the city.

Note that the city of Ninevah is not in Israel. Jonah is angry that the Lord has mercy on a people other than the Israelites. The residents of Ninevah were even enemies of the Israelites.

Read Jonah 4:6-11 for the end of the story.

What does God provide for Jonah? A vine

Is Jonah glad for the vine? Yes

What happens to the vine? It dies

Is Jonah angry? Yes

Does Jonah care more about the vine or the people of Ninevah? The vine

What is the Lord more concerned about? People

OVERTHROW OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

HEZEKIAH

2 Kings 17-20

2 Chronicles 30

The children of Israel sinned against the Lord, their God and walked in the statutes of the heathen and served idols of which the Lord had said to them, "You shall not do this thing." Yet the Lord testified against Israel by all the prophets and by all the seers saying, "Turn from your evil ways." Notwithstanding, they would not hear but left all the commandments of the Lord, their God, and made molten images even two calves and made an Asherah pole. They worshiped all the host of heaven and served Baal. They sacrificed their sons and their daughters in the fire, used divination and enchantments and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger.

Therefore, the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them out of His sight as He had said by all His servants, the prophets. For in the ninth year of Hoshea, Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, went up to Samaria and besieged it three years, took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria.

What happens to the northern kingdom, Israel? Carried into captivity

Who defeats them? Assyrians (Shalmaneser)

Most of the kings of Israel and Judah are wicked. The northern kingdom, Israel, has just been carried into captivity because of idol worship. The southern kingdom, Judah, survives for

another 134 years. Most of the kings of Judah are also wicked, but there are a few exceptions. Hezekiah is one of these exceptions. **Read about him in 2 Kings 18:1-12.**

How old is Hezekiah when he begins his reign? Twenty-five years old

For how long does he reign? Twenty-nine years

Does he do good or evil? Good

Against whom does he rebel? The king of Assyria

For how long had Hezekiah been king when Israel was taken captive? Six years

Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah did Sennacherib, king of Assyria, come up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them and sent Rabshakeh with a great host against Jerusalem. They went up and came to Jerusalem. Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice, "Let not Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord saying, 'The Lord will surely deliver us.' Have any of the gods of the nations delivered their lands out of the hand of the king of Assyria?" It came to pass, when King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth and went into the house of the Lord. He sent to Isaiah. Isaiah said, "Thus says the Lord, 'Be not afraid of the words which you have heard. Sennacherib shall not come into this city nor shoot an arrow there, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return and shall not come into this city. For I will defend this city.'"

What argument does Rabshakeh use to the people of Judah? Do not listen to Hezekiah; no other gods have been successful against them

Will Judah be delivered from Assyria? Yes

Read 2 Kings 19:35-37 to see how the Lord delivers Judah.

How many Assyrians die? 185,000

How do they die? An angel puts them to death

What happens to Sennacherib the king of Assyria? Killed by his sons

In those days Hezekiah was sick to the point of death. The prophet Isaiah came to him and said to him, "Thus says the Lord, 'Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live.'" Then he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord saying, "I beseech You, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before You in truth and with a perfect heart." And Hezekiah wept bitterly. It came to pass, before Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him saying, "Turn again and tell Hezekiah, the captain of My people, 'Thus says the Lord. I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears. Behold, I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord. I will add to your days fifteen years.'" Isaiah said, "Take a lump of figs." And they took it and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.

Does the Lord honor the prayer of Hezekiah? Yes

THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

2 Kings 23-25

2 Chronicles 36 Jeremiah 34-39

The kings after Hezekiah all did evil in the sight of the Lord. The predictions of the prophets are about to come true. **Read 2 Chronicles 36:1-14** to find out about these last kings of Judah.

How old is Jehoahaz when he becomes king? Twenty-three

For how long is he king? Three months

Who dethrones him? King of Egypt

How old is Jehoiakim when he becomes king? Twenty-five

For how long does he reign? Eleven years

Who defeats him? Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon

What does Nebuchadnezzar take? Articles from the temple

Who is the next king? Jehoiachin

How old is he? eighteen

How long does he reign? Three months, ten days

What happens to him? He is taken to Babylon

Who is the last king of Judah? Zedekiah

For how long is he king? Eleven years

What three things does he do? 1.) does evil before the Lord

2.) won't humble himself before Jeremiah

3.) rebels against Nebuchadnezzar

Do the people follow the Lord or the evil king? Evil king



The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, "Go and speak to Zedekiah, king of Judah, and tell him, 'Thus says the Lord. Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire. And you shall not escape out of his hand, but shall surely be taken and delivered into his hand.'"

Zedekiah does not listen to the warning of Jeremiah. **Read 2 Kings 25:1-12** to find out what happens to Zedekiah and the nation of Judah. (Slide 2, 3, 4)

For about how many years was Jerusalem under siege? About two years

Do the people of Jerusalem run out of food? yes

What do Zedekiah and his troops do? flee

Are they successful? no

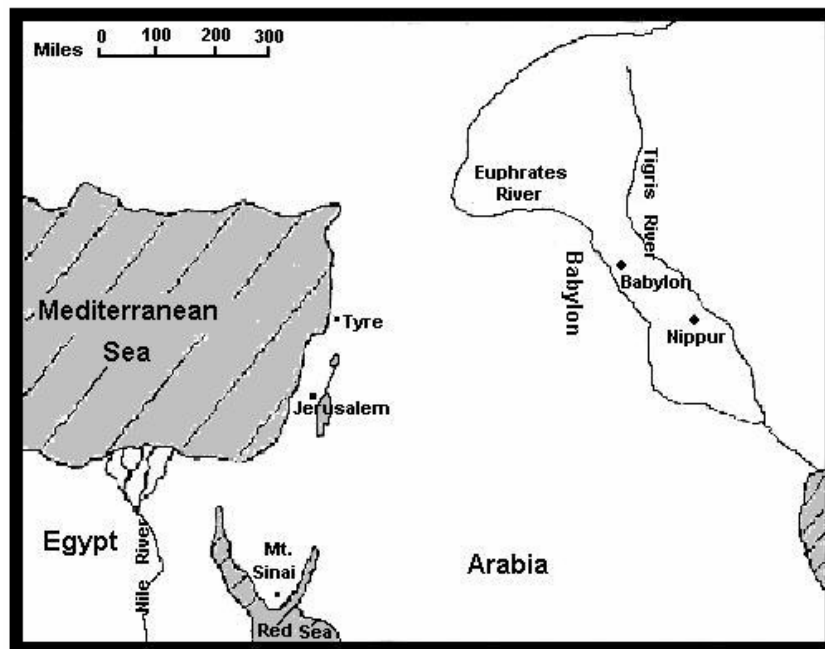
What is the punishment of Zedekiah? 1) sons are killed

2) he is blinded 3) taken to Babylon

What happens to the Lord's temple? It is burned

What happens to most of the people? Carried into exile

Who are left behind? The poorest people



The map shows where the people of Judah were taken. Notice that Babylon is almost six hundred miles away from Judah. This captivity will last for seventy years. All of this was foretold by the prophets.



Now the rest of the people along with the populace and those who had gone over to the king of Babylon, the captain of the guard carried away to fulfill the seventy years. But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to take care of the vineyards and to work the fields. The pillars of brass that were in the house of the Lord and the bases and the bronze sea that was in the house of the Lord, the Babylonians broke in pieces and carried the brass to Babylon. 5 The pots and the shovels and the snuffers and the spoons and all the vessels of brass that were used in the temple were taken away. The fire pans and the bowls and such things as were of gold and of silver, the captain of the guard took away. The two pillars and the one sea and the bases that Solomon had made for the house of the Lord, the brass in all these vessels was more than could be weighed.

What happens to all of the items in the temple of the Lord? Broken and/or taken

REVIEW

1. Which part of the divided kingdom falls first? Israel (northern)
2. Who carries on for Elijah? Elisha
3. How does Elijah die? He does not
4. What do the youth call Elisha? Bald head
5. What happens to them? bears maul them
6. What does Elisha tell the widow to do? Fill the jars with oil
7. What is miraculous about this? All the oil comes from one jar
8. What is wrong with Naaman? leprosy
9. To whom does he go to be cured? Elisha
10. What is he to do? Wash in the Jordan seven times
11. To where does Jonah try to run away? Tarshish
12. Why is he thrown overboard? To stop the storm (he is the guilty one)
13. What does God use to rescue Jonah? A large fish
14. Do the people of Ninevah repent? yes
15. Is Jonah happy with the outcome? no
16. Which king does good in the sight of the Lord? Hezekiah
17. Who is the last king of Judah? Zedekiah
18. Will he listen to the warnings of Jeremiah? no
19. To where are the people of Judah taken? Babylon
20. For how long will they remain captives? Seventy years

