

READING 2 KINGS TOGETHER

SEPTEMBER 2025

In 2 Kings, we see the decline and fall of both the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. The reason in both cases is the same: disobedient kings leading disobedient kingdoms.

Chapters 1–8 recount Elisha's prophetic ministry, following in the steps of Elijah. Both prophets confronted Israel's kings for their idolatry, but there was no repentance.

Chapters 9–17 describe the spiralling unfaithfulness of Israel under the rule of unfaithful kings. God eventually judged them for their sin, giving them into the hands of the Assyrians who conquered them and took them into exile.

Chapters 18–25 cover the fate of the kingdom of Judah. There were two good kings, Hezekiah and Josiah, who trusted the Lord and attempted reforms. But idolatry again led to judgement, this time at the hands of the Babylonians.

Yet, God had not abandoned his promises or his commitment to send a greater king, the Messiah. 2 Kings ends on a note of hope, with exiled king Jehoiachin freed from prison to dine with the king of Babylon.

FIVE KEY THEMES

2 Kings continues the themes we saw in 1 Kings:

- **The promise-keeping God** – Throughout, we see God's commitment to his promises to Abraham and David. He is faithful, even when his people are not.
- **The authority of God's words** – God's instructions, promises and warnings should all be taken very seriously. This is demonstrated in the downfall of various kings and in the ministry of Elisha.
- **The tragedy of idolatry** – The events of 2 Kings lead to the judgement of exile. When we see the idolatry and compromise in 2 Kings, it's clear this judgement was deserved. This is a warning for us.
- **The Lord's patience** – Despite persistent rebellion, the Lord continues to show grace to his people. He does not abandon them, but keeps lovingly warning, correcting and calling them to repentance.
- **Our need for King Jesus** – At the end of the book, we are left longing for a greater King. Where Israel's kings kept leading their people into sin, we rejoice in King Jesus who leads his people out of sin.

FIVE KEY QUESTIONS

1) **What is God teaching me about himself?**

There is so much to learn in 2 Kings about the character and ways of our God, including his love, power, justice, holiness, faithfulness and grace.

2) **How does 2 Kings help me to see the greatness of King Jesus?**

The whole Old Testament points us to Jesus, who fulfils God's promises, with a ministry greater than Elisha's and a reign greater than Josiah's.

3) **What am I learning about the authority of God's word?**

2 Kings shows us the power of God's word in salvation and judgement. Different examples, good and bad, teach us about our response to God's word.

4) **How is God exposing the idolatry of my heart?**

Like the kings of Israel and Judah, we can be guilty of faithlessness and compromise in our worship. God wants to show us our sin, and lead us to repentance.

5) **What am I learning that I can use to encourage or pray for someone else?** This is a good question to ask regularly through the month. God wants to equip us to serve others, in encouragement and prayer.

ADVICE FOR READING 2 KINGS

2 Kings has 25 chapters, so you can read it across September with one chapter per day. You might like to split the longest six chapters in half (4, 9, 15, 17, 18, 19).

There are some extra resources you might find helpful on our website, including book overviews, maps, online resources and book suggestions: litchardmission.co.uk/rbt

One of the best things you can do is talk with someone else about what you're reading. Who can you meet with to chat?

If you're struggling with a passage, here are five top tips:

- 1. Remember God is the hero.** The key question is always: What does this teach me about God? Even if he's not mentioned by name, he's always at work!
- 2. Keep the context in mind.** No passage is meant to be read in isolation, but as part of a bigger story. Ask: How does this connect with what I've read before?
- 3. Try summarising.** With complicated narratives, it may help to list the main events using bullet points, and then try to summarise the passage in one sentence.
- 4. Don't worry if you don't understand everything.** Some of the details may be difficult to understand, but the Lord still has something to say to you.
- 5. Don't forget to pray!**