

The Ministry of Elisha

The passing of Elijah's mantle and his ascent into heaven; Jehoram over Israel; the miracles of Elisha; wickedness in Judah—Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah; Elisha anoints Jehu, who overthrows the house of Omri; Jezebel and the worship of Baal overthrown; Jehoash repairs the temple and returns to righteousness; Elisha dies.

2 Kings 1–14:22; 2 Chronicles 23–24.

Overview of Second Kings

- **The Divided Kingdom (1:1–17:41)**
 - Reign of Ahaziah in Israel (1:1–18)
 - From Elijah to Elisha (2:1–25)
 - *Reign of Jehoram in Israel and the Elisha Cycle* (3:1–8:15)
 - Reign of Jehoram in Judah (8:16–24); cf 2 Chronicles 21:1–20
 - Reign Ahaziah in Judah (8:25–29)
 - Reign of Jehu in Israel (9:1–10:36)
 - Reign of Athaliah in Judah (11:1–16); cf 2 Chronicles 22:10–23:15
 - Reign of Joash (Jehoash) in Judah (11:21–12:21); cf 2 Chronicles 23:16–24:27
 - Assorted Kings of Israel and Judah (13:1–16:20)
 - Reign of Hosea in Israel and the End of the Northern Kingdom (17:1–41)
- **The Surviving Kingdom of Judah (18:1–25:30)**

Reign of Ahaziah in Israel (1:1–18)

- **Ahaziah** and **Elijah** (1:1–16)
 - Ahaziah falls and becomes sick; he inquires of Baal-zebub (“Lord of the flies,” Beelzebub of the NT) **earning a prophecy of death from Elijah!**
 - Three companies of men confront Elijah on a hill; **fire from heaven consumes the first two**
 - In the NT James and John take this seriously (see Luke 9:54)
- Death of Ahaziah (1:17–18)

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From Elijah to Elisha (2:1–25)

No reference to politics—one of the only sections of Kings not defined by a royal reign

- **Translation of Elijah (2:1–11)**
 - The witness of the “sons of the prophets”
 - Some sort of prophetic guild; perhaps groups of faithful, spirit-filled YHWH worshipers in otherwise apostate Israel
 - Parting of the Jordan
 - **Elisha’s request for a “double portion”** (birthright amount)
 - **The chariot of fire and the whirlwind into heaven**
- **Beginning of Elisha’s ministry (2:12–25)**
 - Elisha succeeds Elijah (2:1–18)
 - **Elisha = “God of salvation” or “God shall save”**
 - He repeats the miracle of the parting of the Jordan
 - **Elisha performs miracles (2:19–25)**
 - **Healing of the unhealthy waters (2:19–22)**
 - Cf. Moses and the waters of Marah (Exodus 15:23–25)
 - **The little children/youths and the she-bears at Bethel (2:23–25)**
 - They apparently did not want Elisha to come and criticize Jeroboam’s shrine there

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Reign of Jehoram in Israel and the Elisha Cycle (3:1–8:15)

- **Jehoram** (Joram) son of Ahab begins to reign, replacing his brother Ahaziah
 - Guilty of the usual Jeroboam sin (worshipping YHWH the wrong way), although he is not a proponent of Baalism
- **Jehoram's joint expedition against Moab** (3:4–27)
 - Moab had been a vassal of Israel, but its king rebelled against Jehoram
 - Jehoram and Jehoshaphat consult **Elisha, who prophesies of water and victory** (3:11–20)
 - Moab defeated (3:21–27)
 - Mesha's horrific sacrifice of his son on the wall of the Moabite capital causes the Israelites and their allies to withdraw in horror
- **Elisha's ministry** (4:1–8:15; more next slide)



This Moabite inscription, the "Mesha Stela" commemorates Mesha's revolt against Israel

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Miracles of Elisha Elisha's Ministry (4:1–8:15)

- Elisha and the widow's oil (4:1–7)
- **Elisha raises the Shunammite woman's son** (4:8–37)
- Elisha purifies the pot of stew (4:38–41)
- Elisha feeds one hundred men (4:42–44)
 - *Cf. Jesus' feeding of 4,000 and 5,000*
- **Elisha and Naaman the leper** (5:1–19)
 - *Cf. Jesus' frequent healing of lepers, the specific reference to this incident in Luke 4:27*
- **Gehazi's greed** (5:20–27)
- Elisha recovers the axe head (6:1–7)

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Elisha on the Political Stage

Elisha's Ministry (4:1–8:15)

- **Elisha thwarts Syria** (6:8–7:20)
 - Syrian attack thwarted (6:8–23): *“they that be with us are more than they that be with them”* (6:16)
 - his servant's eyes are opened to see the heavenly host
 - Ben-hadad's siege of Samaria and the ensuing famine (6:24–7:2)
 - The Syrians flee (7:3–20)
- The Shunammite woman's land restored (8:1–6)
- **Hazeel** murders Ben-hadad of Syria (8:7–15)
 - *Note Elisha's role in political events, even outside of Israel*



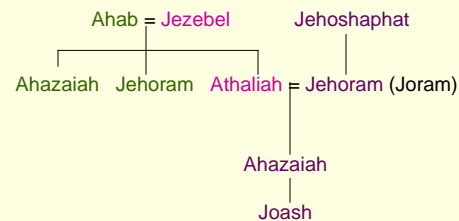
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Interlude in Judah

- Reign of **Jehoram** (Joram) son of Jehoshaphat in Judah (8:16–24); cf. 2 Chronicles 21:1–20
 - A bit confusing: brothers-in-law (one king of Israel, the other king of Judah) who have the same name
 - Married **Athaliah**, daughter of **Ahab**, who *introduced Baalism*
 - Edom revolted from Judah
- Reign Ahaziah in Judah (8:25–29)
 - *Also walks in the ways of the House of Ahab*



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Almost a Good King!

Reign of Jehu in Israel (9:1–10:36)

- **Elisha has Jehu anointed as new king** (9:1–13)
- Jehu defeats Jehoram of Israel (9:14–26)
- Ahaziah of Judah killed (9:27–29)
 - He was Jehoram's nephew and vassal
- **Jezebel's violent death** (9:30–37)
 - Her body being eaten by dogs rather than buried was a fulfillment of Elijah's prophecy against her
- **Massacre of Ahab's descendents** (10:1–17)
 - Once again, a fulfillment of prophecy
- **Jehu destroys Baal worshippers** (10:18–31)



This ivory carving depicts an Israelite woman of the period looking out a window. Jezebel looked out an upper window at Jehu before she was thrown to her death.

Kings' Selective Emphases

- Remember that **the Deuteronomic History is a sacred or religious record** more than a comprehensive history
 - Kings chooses to portray Jehu as an “almost good” king because of his zeal for YHWH (even if he worshipped him the wrong way)
 - Despite this attention, politically and militarily Jehu was not particularly successful
- **Hazael of Syria takes territory east of Jordan (10:32–33)**
- Death of Jehu (10:34–36)



Reign of Joash (Jehoash) in Judah (11:21–12:21); cf 2 Chronicles 23:16–24:27

- **The temple repaired** (12:1–16)
- **Hazael of Syria** threatens Jerusalem (12:17–18)
 - Joash forced to buy him off
- **Murder of Joash** (12:19–21)



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To the Death of Elisha

- Reign of Jehoahaz in Israel (13:1–9)
- Reign of Jehoash in Israel (13:10–25); cf 2 Chronicles 22:10–23:15)
 - **Death of Elisha** (13:14–21)
 - **The Lord favors Israel** "because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (13:23)
 - *One of the few times in Kings that the northern kingdom explicitly benefits from covenant protection (and here it is from the patriarchal covenant rather than the Deuteronomic or Davidic)*
 - Israel recaptures cities from Aram (13:22–25)
- Reign of Amaziah in Judah (14:1–22); cf. 2 Chronicles 25:1–28

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