



2 Kings

2 Kings feels like a whirlwind of emotions. One great Prophet turns into another. It is like God challenged the people. This prophet will have a double portion of power. Maybe he can steer the people to a good path. Yet, we see the people double down and walk away from the Lord. There are amazing miracles. Prophecy is evident in this book. Ahab's demise is foreshadowed. In chapter 13 God reaffirms his commitment to His people. God goes deeper in chapter 14 by stating that people will be accountable for their own sin. God says there will remain a remnant that will prevail. The book of the Law was hidden and rediscovered. Within all that the nation seems lost when Babylon rolls. Did God finally give up?

Narrative

There can be confusion between prophets. We have Elijah, Elisha, and Isaiah. Who is the most influential or greatest? Is 2 Kings about the Kings or the Prophets? This book opens with the long running prophet Elijah passing his mantle over to the understudy Elisha. It's interesting that the understudy asked for a double portion of Spirit. That is exactly what happened. Elisha did fantastic miracles. Even the dead rose when they touched his bones. The rest of this book is the swift decline of the empire. Isaiah arrives on the scene as the next prophet yet, the Kings are changing hand at a fast pace. By the end of the book the nation has been taken into captivity and all seems lost.

Intent

It is like God sent a few good men to show the ways of God. In a way, I feel like God then stood back and watched from afar. King after king made a mess of their reign. The grace of God was on full display. Good kings and bad alike reigned for long and short periods of time. Grace showed no partiality towards behavior. There is a theme throughout this book of walking in the ways of God and walking in the ways of the heathen. Captivity is an after thought because the children of Israel walked straight into the hands of foreign powers and culture.

The role of the prophets can not be understated. They were the ones crying out from the wilderness the ways of the Lord. I don't think they were trying to get the nation to repent. Instead, I get the feeling that God used these men to guide the remnant through the captivity. Someone stayed true to God. Someone continued to walk in the ways of the Lord like Daniel. These prophets reflected what the Messiah (Jesus) ministry on earth would look like. They healed the sick and fed the poor. They spoke the word of God. These prophets and Jesus kept the Lord alive in their manner and words. 2 Kings is a sad tale. Yet, there is hope and redemption for a fallen nation. The full message from the Lord is your never too evil or lost. God will always provide a way back to Him.

Characters

Elijah, Elisha, Jezebel, Isaiah, other kings

Who wrote this book?

By tradition Jeremiah wrote the book.

Famous verses

1. 2 Kings 2:9-11 Elisha asks for a double portion
2. 2 Kings 9:10, 35 prophesy of Jezebels demise come to fruition
3. 2 Kings 13:23 God still upheld His promise to let Israel survive even though they were not following Him.
4. 2 Kings 14:6 each person is responsible for their own sin
5. 2 Kings 19:31-32 the remnant and prophesy fulfilled
6. 2 Kings 22:8 Even the book of the law was hidden and protected

Controversies, issues, and Questions

- i.** In history, there is a tradition from the Catholic faithful that relics and bones of the Saints hold the power of God. 2 Kings 13:21 is one of these places where the bones of Elisha raised someone from the dead. We also see this with the cloak of Elijah parting water. Many of the great cathedrals in Europe have the bones of the saints buried under the foundation for protection.
- ii.** The double portion of spirit from Elijah. Did he give it to Elisha? I think that we see some of these references in the Gospels with the Zebedee brothers asking to sit at Jesus right and left side in heaven. Jesus also told them it was not his right to offer. Only God can give it. Elisha did great things in the power of the Holy Spirit rather than the spirit of Elijah.
- iii.** There is one more controversy (if any). Elijah appeared to be taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire. Did he die or did he not die, but ascended into heaven? Some rumours held that he was transported to other places to spread the word of God. Tradition has it that Elijah and Enoch did not die and will be the two witnesses mentioned in revelation 11.

Connections

2 Kings 22:8 (Matthew 24:35) the word or the Lord will not perish

2 Kings 2:11 (John 1:21) and Revelation 11 there are questions about Elijah not dying