

## April 12 – 18 2Kings 18 – 1Chron 29

### Review

Following Solomon's death, the prosperity and peace of the Israelite Nation become torn asunder as his son Rehoboam institutes harsh demands on labor and taxation. A revolt occurs and the Nation becomes split into two: the Northern Kingdom Israel led by Jeroboam (10 tribes) and the Southern Kingdom Judah led by Rehoboam (2 tribes – Judah & Benjamin) around 930 BC.

Jeroboam charts a godless course of idol worship in the Northern Kingdom that everyone of his successors imitates for the next 200 years. Asherah poles and Baal dominate worship. There is constant war with surrounding nations involving much bloodshed, plagues, famine and assassinations. Ultimately in 722BC, the Northern Kingdom is ransacked by Assyria and the people are taken into exile. God had finally had enough!

In the Southern Kingdom Judah, the picture is somewhat brighter as some godly Kings (such as Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah) introduce revivals that bring the Kingdom back to God. However, many other Southern Kingdom Kings adopt the idolatrous ways of the Northern Kingdom. Again, God's judgment for this "evil" living comes to bear and ultimately, the Southern Kingdom is also overrun ..... by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The city of Jerusalem and the temple built by Solomon are ransacked and burned down and the city walls are torn down. Worse, the people are taken into exile in 586 BC (136 years after the Northern Kingdom).

The ministries of three prominent prophets occur during these times: Elijah (King Ahab in the Northern Kingdom), Elisha (King Joram in the Northern Kingdom) and Isaiah (King Hezekiah in the Southern Kingdom). They constantly communicate God's dissatisfaction and wrath to the Kings and people of their time and the consequences... often to no avail. During the reign of King Ahab, Elijah victoriously challenges the prophets of Baal to a "battle of the gods" on Mount Carmel (a fiery display in which God consumes Elijah's sacrificial offering and the wood, stones, dirt, and water around it). Elijah is taken up to heaven in a whirlwind leaving his understudy Elisha to continue his prophetic work. Elisha (a bald person) performs numerous miracles...some reminiscent of those that Jesus would later perform (brings a boy back to life; feeding of the people with a few loaves of bread). The prophet Isaiah helps Hezekiah obtain God's support to defeat the Assyrians.

With the Book of 1 Chronicles, we return to the life of David from a priestly perspective.

### **Hezekiah a man of prayer with a solid relationship with God**

- Trusted God...successful in everything he did. 2 Kings 18:5-7, p.494

- A convincing prayer to seek God's help against the attacking Assyrians. 2Kings 19:15-19. Contains elements of adoration, subservience, conversational, raises arguments for God to grant the prayer's petition.
- Earnest prayer for healing. 2Kings 20:2-3, p. 498. But wanted a sign God had granted his wish. Shadow went backwards on the sun dial (God probably used clouds to refract the light, rather than reverse the spinning of the earth). God granted Hezekiah 15 more years of life.

### **What happened to the Ark?**

- Movie "Raiders of the Lost Ark" assumed that the Ark had been captured by the Egyptians and taken to Egypt. Some possible basis....see 1 Kings 14:25-26, p.453. King Shishak of Egypt ransacked the treasuries of the Temple (925 BC).
- But, see 2 Chron 35:3, p. 591. King Josiah (about 300 years later) ordered the Levites to put the Ark in the Temple rather than carry it back and forth.(625 BC). This is the last time the Ark is referred to in the Bible.
- About 40 years after Josiah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon totally destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple. Did he take it, did he destroy it, or did someone hide it! Maybe when Christ returns, the mystery will be solved.

### **Prayer of Jabez (book published a few years ago about this one verse prayer)**

- Read 1 Chron 4:9-10, p.513
- The prayer seems like a selfish prayer. Why did God grant it?
- Verse 9 state that he was more honorable than his brothers, and his birth had been painful
- Verse 10: phrases "Oh, that you would bless me" and "Please be with me in all that I do" come across like Jabez is earnestly seeking a relationship with God.

### **David's parting words to Solomon: seek an intimate relationship with God**

- Read 1 Chron 28:9, p. 543