**2 KINGS**

**The Fall of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms**

**Did you KNOW?**

Like 1st and 2nd Samuel, 1st and 2nd Kings were originally one document. As such, the book of 2 Kings is simply the continuation of the first book.

**What you need to REMEMBER:**

God is in the business of restoring His creation to its original pristine state. Much of the early portions of the Older Testament are focused on the ways in which The Lord established the nation and specific family lineage to whom the expected Savior would be born to accomplish His work of redemption.

The books of Samuel detailed the transition of the nation into a unified monarchy. The united-kingdom that began with King Saul and flourished under David and Solomon lasted for 120 years.

The first book of Kings showed that Solomon didn’t finish well and that the trajectory of the nation was headed downward into division and faithlessness toward God.

After Solomon’s death, the nation divided along tribal lines into Northern and Southern Kingdoms. The Southern Kingdom, “Judah,” was made up of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The Northern Kingdom, “Israel,” was formed by an alliance of the 10 remaining tribes. They would both eventually succumb to utter faithlessness and apostacy. But, of the two, it was Israel that was the most wretched in the eyes of God.

We saw in 1 Kings that this period of Israel’s history was dominated by a pathetic series of wicked kings and influencers. The Lord attempted to turn the situation around by raising up the Prophet Elijah. While Elijah’s efforts spared a few, the general trend toward destruction went unabated.

**What you need to KNOW:**

2 Kings continues the story of self-destruction. Early in the book, Elijah ‘taps out’ as the voice of God to the nation. Don’t miss the remarkable way Elijah is rewarded for his faithful, but difficult service – a ride to heaven that by-passed physical death!

The Prophet Elisha continued Elijah’s work by faithfully speaking God’s word and backing his authority with many miracles. However, people were generally unresponsive and the momentum toward destruction continued.

In the end, God destroyed both nations for their disobedience. The Northern Kingdom was the first to go. In 722 B.C., the Lord allowed the Assyrians to take the 10 northern tribes into captivity. Later, in 586 B.C., the remaining southern tribes were removed by the Babylonians.

These developments added another layer of complexity and suspense to the overall story of redemption. God had gone to so much time and trouble to establish the people in the Promised Land in which the coming Savior was to be born, live and die. The destruction of the nation raised two important questions. Would God remain faithful to His promises and His intention? If so, how would the plan of redemption recover from such a major setback?

**GET GOING!**

**Continue your personal Walk Through the Bible by reading, or listening to, 2 Kings.**