

Commentary Notes - II Kings

by Walter Beuttler

Walter Beuttler's sermon on II Kings explores the themes of divine sovereignty, the failures of human leadership, and the enduring power of God's prophets.

Scripture: Deuteronomy 28:53, 2 Kings 2:12, 2 Kings 4:6, 2 Kings 6:16, 2 Kings 10:31, 2 Kings 13:21, 2 Kings 17:41, 2 Kings 18:5, 2 Kings 22:19, 2 Kings 25:1

Topics: "God's Sovereignty", "Prophetic Ministry"

Description

Walter Beuttler delves into the Book of 2 Kings, highlighting the division of the book into two parts and the continuous history it provides of God's people. The message of the book emphasizes the consequences of shutting God out from human government, leading to the failure of man on the throne of earth due to a lost consciousness of God. The ministry of Elijah and Elisha is explored, showcasing God's sovereignty, power, and judgment through various miracles and interactions with kings and prophets.

Transcript

A. THE BOOK OF II KINGS

1. The first and second books of Kings were originally but one book
2. The division into two books was first made in the Greek version of the Septuagint
3. As far as subject matter is concerned, there is no break between these books
4. The two thrones of the first book are still in view in the second book
5. These books give us a continuous history of the kings and the kingdoms of God's people
6. Whereas the first book of Kings covered about a century and a half, the events of the second book occupy about three centuries

B. THE MESSAGE OF THE BOOK

1. The increasingly failing throne of man is seen finally abolished - the ultimate result of shutting God out from the government of man

2. With this result we also see the underlying cause of the failure of human government, namely, a lost consciousness of God

3. This fact is evidenced from the idolatries which are actually attempts to substitute God

4. The failure of man upon the throne of earth is assured when he loses his vision of a throne in heaven

(With due acknowledgment to G. Campbell Morgan - Living Messages
of the Books of the Bible)

MINISTRY OF ELIJAH ANI) ELISHA, 1:1-13:21

A. CLOSE OF ELIJAH'S MINISTRY. 1:1-2:13

1. Who was Ahaziah. 1:1? King of Israel who provoked the anger of the Lord, I Kings 22:51-53

2. How did God bring into manifestation the evil which was in Ahaziah's heart, 1:2-17? Through an accident brought about by God's sovereignty

3. How is Ahaziah's hardness of heart demonstrated in 1:9-13? In his refusal to recognize the sign of God's interposition in behalf of Elijah

4. To what did God particularly object in 1:16? To being ignored by Ahaziah in favour of Baal-zebub, the God of Ekron

5. Elijah's repeated request to Elisha to tarry had what purpose, 2:1-6? To test the faith and determination of Elisha

6. Who were the "sons of the prophets," 2:7? Pupils of prophets who belonged to one of the theological schools probably begun by Samuel

7. In choosing Elisha, I Kings 19:19-21, what did God do in the light of II Kings 2:1-15? He chose a man from behind the plow, not one from a theological school

8. Comment on the symbolism of 2:12-13: The wearing of the mantle of power involves the tearing of our own clothing--the laying aside of that which is our own effort and equipment

B. MINISTRY OF ELISHA, 2:14-13:21

1. Note the significant point of:

(1) 2:14 - The mantle of power is not for adornment, but for employment

(2) 2:15 - Recognition of one's ministry will spontaneously follow its demonstration

2. Comment on the sons of the prophets from 2:16:

(1) They were naturally strong but weak in faith

(2) They were rationalistic, yet utterly ignorant

3. Determine the purpose of the following miracles in view of the fact that they all relate to the sons (pupils) of the prophets:

(1) 2:14-15 - To teach them the fact and secret of divine accreditation

(2) 2:19-22 - To teach them by demonstration the secret of performing miracles

(3) 2:23-24 - To teach them the fear of God and respect for his prophets

(4) 4:38-41 - To teach them the power of God in its supremacy over the power of poison

(5) 6:1-7 - To teach them the fact of God's supremacy over the laws of nature

C. MINISTRY OF ELISHA, 2:13-13:21 (cont'd.)

1. Who was king of Israel during the events in 3:1-9:26? Jehoram, who, though better than his father, "cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam"

2. What, on the whole, did God do during his reign? God revealed himself as sovereign in every realm

3. Specifically, how is God revealed in:

(1) 4:1-7? As provider in need

(2) 4:8-17? As rewarder for acts of kindness

(3) 4:18-37? As having power over death

(4) 5:1-19? As sanctifier and healer

(5) 5:20-27? As the omniscient one

(6) 6:8-23? As the Lord of hosts

(7) 6:24-31? As a God of judgment (Deut. 28:53)

4. Comment on 4:6: The oil of God stops for want of capacity, not for want of oil

5. Point out Naaman's mistakes from:

(1) 5:5-7 - He sought help from a man of position instead of from a man of power, from a king instead of from a prophet

(2) 5:9-12 - He expected healing by his own pre-conceived method and instrumentality

6. Point out God's method in 5:10-15: God dealt first with Naaman's pride in sanctification and then with his physical need in healing by means of humiliation and obedience in a manner that would bring all the glory to God

7. Comment on:

(1) 5:20-27 - Gehazi's fate should be a warning against commercializing the ministry

(2) 6:16 - The servant was inside the circle of the protecting host because of the faith of someone else

(3) 6:16-17 - Elisha saw by faith what the servant could only see by sight

(4) 6:32-33 - Faith does not only accomplish divine activity, but also divine rest

D. MINISTRY OF ELISHA, 2:13-13:21 (cont'd.)

1. How is Jehoram revealed in 6:31? As blaming the messenger for the judgment incurred by himself

2. How does God seek to reveal himself in 7 :1-20? As a mighty deliverer in order to bring Jehoram and the nation back to God

3. The incident in 8:1-2 shows what? God's care for the godly during a time of national judgment

4. How does God reveal himself in 8:3-6? In the greatness of his providence in order to impress Jehoram with the might of God

5. What does 8:7-15 show? That Elisha's miracles did not bring Israel back to God

6. How is God revealed in 9:1-14? As a revenger of evil in a brilliant demonstration of the power of God to fulfill his word, 9:14-26 and I Kings 21:24-29; 9:30-37 and I Kings 21:23

7. Point out the principal truth of:

(1) 10:30 - God rewards for faithful service

(2) 10:31 - It is possible to please God and displease him at the same time

8. What angered Elisha in 13:14-19? Joash's lack of sufficient zeal and perseverance for obtaining the full promise of God

9. Note the contrast between the death of Elisha, 13:14, and that of Elijah, 2:11

(1) Elisha, the prophet with a double portion, dies through disease

(2) Elijah, the prophet with a lesser portion, is translated and taken up without dying

10. Suggest the purpose of the miracle of Elisha's tomb, 13:20-21

(1) To honor and vindicate Elisha in view of the manner of his death

(2) To demonstrate to the nation that the power of God does not terminate with the death of the man of God

DECLINE AND FALL OF KINGDOM. 10:32-25:30

A. FALL OF ISRAEL. 10:32-17:41

1. Wherein does the significance of 10:32 lie? In that it marks the beginning of Israel's national decline and influence

2. What does this deterioration demonstrate in the light of I Kings 22:19? That God in sovereignty exercises the power of his throne for evil as well as for good
3. How did the kings of Israel from Jehoahaz to Hoshea stand in their relation to God. 13:1-17:41? They all did evil in the sight of the Lord
4. How does the political turbulence associated with their reigns relate to God? God used the very consequences of their evil deeds as instruments of judgment
5. What was the nature of the climax reached by Israel under Hoshea, 17:1-23? Israel has now reached the inevitable culmination of her sins in asking for a king while rejecting God

B. FALL OF JUDAH, 11:1-25:30

1. How did the character of the kings of Judah differ from those of Israel? While those of Israel were all evil, Judah had some who were not
2. For what were the following kings of Judah conspicuous?
 - (1) Joash, 12:1-21? For doing that which was right, but only as long as he was under the influence of a godly priest, 12:2
 - (2) Hezekiah, 18:1-20:21? For trust in God which excelled that of any other king of Judah, "for he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him," 18:5-6
 - (3) Josiah, 22:1-23:30? For repairing the temple of the Lord from whom he "turned not aside to the right hand or to the left," 22:2, having "made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord," 23:3
3. Why did God defer the judgment of Judah, 22:19-20? Because Josiah had a tender heart, humbled himself, and wept before the Lord
4. What takes place in 24:11-16? Judah's defeat by Nebuchadnezzar about 606 B.C. and the deportation of the first captives under Jehoiakin
5. What takes place in 25:1-21? The final deportation of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, about 588 B. C., under Zedekiah
6. What truth does the final failure of the nation demonstrate? That every form of government which leaves God out of account is doomed to failure.

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