

2 Kings 6, Where Sin Abounds Grace Is More Abundant

Introduction: The theme for this section is: *Failure and Hope in the Divided Years*, (1 Kings 12:25 – 2 Kings 17:41). During this era, the writers show how God dealt with His people during times of divine judgment.

Original Audience: Jews returning from exile.

Date written: 560 – 550BC, about 32 to 18 years before their return to Jerusalem. The author's purpose:

- God was justified in sending His people into exile.
- These stories offered Hope in David's line.
- God called His people to repentance so that they might return from exile.

All good OT stories have Protagonists, Antagonists, and Flat Characters.

Protagonist Elisha, (*God is salvation*):

- Elijah's attendant who was blessed with a double portion of God's Spirit.
- Why is he more prominent in this chapter?
- How does God use Elisha in verse 1-7?
- How did Elisha know the king of Syria's secret mission in 8-14?
- Why was he so calm in the face of such a deadly threat?

Notice God answered Elisha's prayers to both close and open the eyes of others.

- Why did Elisha rebuke the king of Israel for wanting to kill the Syrian soldiers?
- Why did Elisha advise the king to show mercy and prepare a meal for those captives?

Notice that both kings made threats against Elisha's life.

Protagonists: Sons of the Prophet:

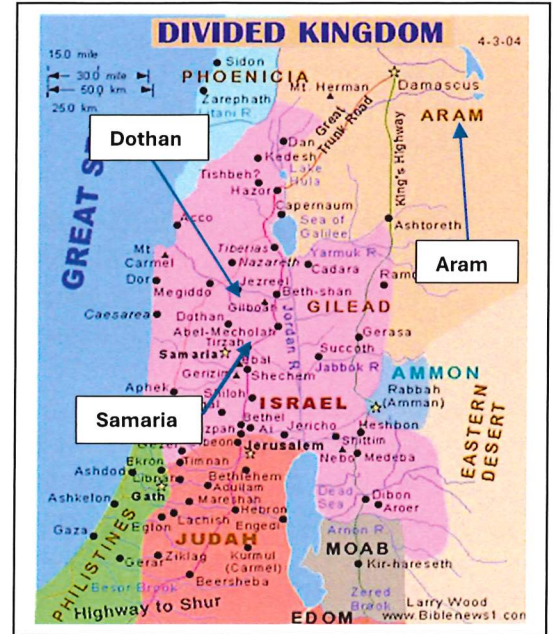
- Who are these men?
- Why did they expect much growth among their ranks?

Antagonists: King of Syria

- Why did he want to kill both the king of Israel and Elisha?
- Why was he so relentless in his plans to destroy the Northern Kingdom?

Antagonists: King of Israel

- Why did the authors not name who the king was?
- Why did the king of Israel want to slaughter those held captive by Elisha in verse 21?
- Why is he wearing sackcloth under his armor in verse 30?
- Why did he not wait on God for an answer?
- What motivated him to want to kill Elisha?



Flat Characters: Syrian Officers; Elisha's Servants; Syrian Army; a Woman; the Messenger

The Sovereign God in the Midst of His People, even under Judgment.

- Where do we see God blessing His people in these stories?
- Where do we see God daily leading His people?
- How do we know that God was present with His covenant people?
- Where do we see God's grace in these stories?
- What other characteristics of God do we see in these stories?
- Is God justified in judging His people in these stories, and why?

What Is God Saying To Us Today?

- a. God's judgment on the wicked is certain and justified.
- b. Jesus is the eternal Son of David. He offers eternal hope to all who trust Him for their salvation.
- c. All in Christ have the assurance of eternal forgiveness.

Some Questions to Consider:

- a. How is Elisha a type of Christ?
- b. How do the king and people of Israel point us to the finished work of Christ?
- c. The King of Syria was relentless in his plans to destroy the Northern Kingdom. How does this threat help us better understand our cold and ruthless enemy's plan to harm God's people?
- d. How does God's dealing with Elisha inform our understanding of how He often leads us?
- e. Why should we be calmer, and more confident than Elisha in the face of opposition and evil?
- f. Can we have hope, even when we know that we are under God's "judgment"?
- g. Why should we be ready to be gracious to others?
- h. How does the finished work of Christ help us to appreciate the rich blessings that only Christians enjoy? (see 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, and Hebrews 11:39-40).
- i. Read 1 John 1:9-10. How does this help us maintain a posture of repentance?
- j. What does this story convey to us about faithfulness in our walk with the Lord?
- k. How does this text help us to face difficulties in a manner that honors God?
- l. How does this passage inform our heart condition during times of great anxiety?
- m. Why is waiting on God so difficult for us?

2 Kings 6:1-7, Blessings In the Midst of Judgment

Even under God's covenant curse, God's people grew both spiritually and numerically. (Elisha lost Gehazi but gained many other students). They had hope that God would increase the number of prophets in Israel.

2 Kings 6:8-14, God Speaks Through Elisha

Notice, the unnamed king of Israel (Jehoram), found hope in Elisha.

2 Kings 6:15-17, God Is Ever Present Even In Times of Judgment

Why do you think the servant was unable to see what Elisha saw? What are these "chariots of fire" surrounding the mountain? As Christians, our bodies are the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

2 Kings 6:18-23, Grace Is Shown To Israel's Enemies

and Elisha led the blinded army from Dothan to Samaria. Notice that God opened the eyes of Elisha's servant, and now the eyes of the Syrian army. How can we describe this God of Israel from this text? How should this truth encourage our prayer life?

2 Kings 6:24-31, Famine after a Feast

God's people showed much grace to the Syrians at Samaria. Sometime later, the nation decided to invade the northern kingdom. Why did the King of Syria send a larger force to besiege Samaria? How does the horrible situation in Samaria reflect God's judgment upon the northern kingdom? Notice verse 30: Why is the king wearing sackcloth under his garments? Also notice his change in disposition. Where do you think the king of Israel placed his hope? Notice that Elisha has now faced two threats from two major players, even though he was obedient to God. Why do bad things often happen to God's people?

2 Kings 6:32-33, Israel Did Not Repent

Notice that God continues to inform Elisha about threats against him. How often do we consider that we are constantly wrestling against a host of spiritual forces of evil? The king recognized that the disaster the city faced was from the Lord. Yet, he refused to wait "on the Lord". Why do you think that he did not repent and beg God for mercy? How does his statement reflect the condition of his heart