

Promise and Deliverance Student Workbook

Volume 9
Level 4

Harvey De Groot

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Preface

When S.G. De Graaf wrote his four-volume series, *Promise and Deliverance*, he showed educators how to teach Bible stories from a redemptive-historical perspective. Rather than turning Bible stories into moralistic tales, De Graaf taught us how all the Bible shows God revealing himself as the God of the covenant, who is working out His redemptive plan for humanity and all of creation.

The 80 workbooks written by Harvey De Groot are meant to supplement De Graaf's work. They are divided by volume and level number: 20 volumes with four levels per volume. Workbook lessons are written at four levels so that families with students in various grades can study the same Bible stories during the week in preparation for their classes on Sunday. Prior to class, the Sunday School teacher should study the lesson in De Graaf's book. The teacher and students can go through the workbook during class.

The levels are divided according to the following grades:

- **Level One:** Grades K-1
- **Level Two:** Grades 2-3
- **Level Three:** Grades 4-6
- **Level Four:** Grades 7-8

Each volume contains 12 or 13 lessons, and each lesson has the following sections:

- **Reference:** The volume and lesson number in De Graaf's series.
- **Scripture:** The passage from Scripture on which the lesson is based.
- **Memory Verse:** A memory verse related to the lesson.
- **Lesson Truth:** A short statement to help the class focus on the main point of the lesson.
- **Lesson:** The lesson itself, which the teacher can read in class. For older grades, the teacher may opt to assign it as homework.
- **Questions:** Items to be discussed in class. For older grades, the teacher can assign these questions as homework but should also use them as a basis for class discussion. These are not the only questions that could or should be asked. Teachers should encourage students to come with their own questions as well.

This edition was written by Harvey De Groot and edited by his son Norlan De Groot.

Lesson 1

Accepted as a Gift

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 39

Scripture: II Kings 5:1–6:7

Memory Verse: II Kings 5:8 “So it was when Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, ‘Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.’”

Lesson Truth: What the Lord gives us can only be accepted as a gift.

Lesson

Through events in the life of Naaman, the commander of Syria’s army, we learn that the Lord’s grace extended beyond the borders of Israel. Naaman was a highly respected officer in the Syrian army. He was held in honor by the king and his servants, but he had the terminal disease of leprosy. This man of rank had to learn that when the Lord visits with His grace it must be accepted as a gift.

Naaman seemed to have everything, yet the honor he received was empty because he had an incurable disease. Think of the hope he must have felt when a little Jewish slave girl shared her testimony that there was a prophet in Israel who could surely heal him of his leprosy. Rather than going directly to the prophet in Israel, Naaman went through the chain of command and talked to the king of Syria about his desire to go to Israel for healing. The king of Syria sent an official communication to the king of Israel requesting healing for the commanding officer of his army. This request prompted great anxiety in Israel. The king of Israel thought it was a deliberate attempt to provoke a war. He knew he was not able to cure a Syrian commander of his leprosy.

When Elisha heard of the communication sent to the king of Israel, he requested that this commander be sent to him. He assured the king he would know what to do and the commander would learn that there was a prophet of the Lord in Israel. The king of Israel readily sent the Syrian commander to Elisha. Think of the commander’s chagrin when Elisha didn’t even come out to greet him and speak some incantation over him. Instead, Elisha sent a servant to tell the commander to go and wash in the Jordan River seven times. He was assured that if he did this he would be healed. Naaman left in a huff declaring that if all he had to do was wash himself, the rivers of Damascus were cleaner than the Jordan River. So why should he wash in the dirty Jordan?

The servants of Naaman saved the day when they urged him to respond with faith. They reminded him that if he had been asked to do some spectacular thing, he would have done it; then why not do a very simple thing? So Naaman went and washed in the Jordan seven times, and he was healed. When Naaman saw the results of responding to a command of the Lord’s prophet, he returned to Elisha and confessed that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel. He then offered to give Elisha some elaborate gifts. He wanted to pay the Lord through Elisha for the gift of healing. Elisha refused to accept anything because he wanted Naaman to know that the Lord’s grace is a gift that can never be repaid.

It is sad that Elisha’s servant, Gehazi, did not understand that Naaman had to know that the Lord’s grace is a free gift. He decided to follow Naaman and ask him for some of the gifts he offered to Elisha. When Naaman gave him the gifts he requested he went back to Elisha and pretended he had been there all along. Elisha then admonished Gehazi because he stood in the way of the work of God’s grace in Naaman. Gehazi made it appear to Naaman that God’s grace could be paid for. Therefore, Elisha told him that Naaman’s leprosy would cling to him. He left the presence of Elisha as white as snow.

An additional story in this lesson tells of the sons of the prophets building a place for them to dwell because the place where they lived was too small. Elisha approved of their desire to build this dwelling, however,

when they were cutting the trees for building, one man lost the head of his ax in the Jordan River. The loss of this ax caused the man some anxiety because it was either borrowed or it was a prize possession. Elisha then demonstrated the power of God over nature when he threw a stick in the water and the ax head floated to the surface. The man was then able to pick the ax head from the water.

The lesson today showed that the Lord's grace was extended as a free gift even to a Syrian commander. It also showed that the forces of nature are servants of the Lord's grace. We must know that God's grace in Christ Jesus governs all things. We can possess the miracle of that grace in Christ!

Questions

1. What health problem did Naaman, the commander of the Syrian army, have? (II Kings 5:1)
2. How did the little girl from Israel come to be in Naaman's house? (II Kings 5:2)
3. What was her testimony about what the prophet in Samaria could do for Naaman? (II Kings 5:3)
4. How did the king of Israel react to the letter he received from the king of Syria? (II Kings 5:7)
5. What did the king of Israel believe was the purpose of the letter from the King of Syria? (II Kings 5:7b)

Lesson 2

Unsolicited Grace

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 40

Scripture: II Kings 6:8–8: 6

Memory Verse: “Then Elisha said, ‘Hear the word of the Lord’. Thus says the Lord: ‘Tomorrow about this time a seah of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria.’” (II Kings 7:1)

Lesson Truth: The Lord shows His people unsolicited grace in order to bring them to repentance.

Lesson

The Lord showed His grace to His people by sending Elisha the prophet to bring His Word as they dealt with their enemies. This grace was demonstrated when the Lord caused the Syrian army to lose their sight and when He caused them to flee before a perceived enemy.

The Syrians had become the troublesome enemy of Israel. They would send bands of soldiers to make surprise attacks against Israel in a type of guerrilla warfare. Although the king and the people of Israel did not ask for the Lord’s protection against these attacks, the Lord in His grace sent protection anyway. He sent Elisha the prophet to tell the king of Israel exactly where the Syrian guerrillas would attack. Each time the soldiers of Israel would be there to intercept the Syrians. The king of Syria was certain that he had a traitor in his camp who was telling Israel where they were going to attack. However, one Syrian soldier knew where the information was coming from. He knew that the prophet Elisha was telling the king of Israel where the attacks would take place.

The Syrian king failed to understand the power of Almighty God. He thought he could capture Elisha, God’s prophet, and end the security leak. So he sent a large army of horses and chariots to take Elisha. Even Elisha’s servant was afraid when he saw the large army. He too had to learn that the Word of the Lord never fails. Then the Lord opened his eyes and he saw the fiery chariots and horses surrounding Elisha. The Syrians also learned that there isn’t any army large enough to capture someone whom the Lord protects. When the Syrian army surrounded the city where Elisha lived, he called on the name of the Lord to smite the soldiers with blindness. God answered Elisha’s request and he was able to lead the blinded Syrians to the city of Samaria the home of the king of Israel. Once again Elisha prayed that the eyes of the Syrians would be able to see. The Lord opened their eyes and they saw that the armies of Israel surrounded them. The king of Israel questioned Elisha by asking, “My father, shall I kill them?” Elisha knew that Israel and her king also had to learn the power of the Word of the Lord, so he told the king of Israel to feed the Syrians and send them home. The Word of the Lord’s grace had conquered the enemies of Israel.

Later king Ben-Hadad the king of Syria gathered a large army and besieged Samaria. The siege was so complete that the food supply was cut off. Starvation was everywhere in the city of Samaria. It was so severe that a donkey’s head sold for eighty shekels of silver. People bought manure for food and even went so far that they ate their own children. In spite of this severe judgment the king Israel still blamed the Lord and His prophet for the hardships they were suffering. He swore that he would remove Elisha’s head for all the troubles they endured. As the king complained to Elisha that he would no longer wait for the Lord, something amazing took place. Elisha spoke the Word of the Lord’s grace to His people! He prophesied that the very next day a measure of flour and two measures of barley would be sold in the gate of Samaria for a shekel. This sounded so incredible that an officer said it could never happen even if the Lord opened windows in heaven. Elisha then prophesied that this officer would see people selling flour and barley, but he would not eat any of it.

The Lord's grace to His people became evident when four lepers decided to surrender to the Syrians rather than starve. The amazing thing was that when the lepers went into the Syrian camp, they found the Syrian armies had fled from an unknown enemy. After the lepers took food and spoils for themselves, they went to tell the guards on the wall of Samaria. The guards told the king and the king sent horsemen to check if the Syrians were really gone. Then flour and barley were brought back to the city and were sold in the gate of Samaria just as Elisha had prophesied. The officer who said this could never happen saw the people buy flour and barley, but he did not eat any because he was trampled to death in the crowd. The prophecies of Elisha were fulfilled. The Lord delivered His people, not because they earned His deliverance, but because of His grace.

Then Elisha again encountered the woman from Shunem. This was the woman whose son he had brought back to life. She had lived in the land of the Philistines for seven years to escape the famine. Now as she returned from Philistia, she appealed to the king for help to get her land back. Just at that time Elisha's servant saw her and reminded the king that this was the woman whose son had returned from the dead. The king was deeply moved and restored the woman's possessions. The Lord brought this living witness to the king of Israel as the Word of His grace. It is sad that king Jehoram did not respond!

Questions

1. Who was making war with Israel when Elisha served as the Lord's prophet? (II Kings 6:8)
2. Who informed the king of Israel where the Syrians were going to attack? (II Kings 6:12)
3. How did the king of Syria intend to capture Elisha? (II Kings 6:13-14)
4. What happened to the Syrians when they came to capture Elisha? (II Kings 6:18)

Lesson 3

Divine Persecution

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 41

Scripture: II Kings 8:7-29; II Chronicles 21:1–22: 9

Memory Verse: “And a letter came to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord God of your father David: Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father . . . behold the Lord will strike your people with a serious affliction—your children, your wives, and all your possessions.’” (II Chronicles 21:12, 14-15)

Lesson Truth: The Lord persecutes the iniquity of His people in order to wipe out that iniquity.

Lesson

The striking thing about the succession of kings in both Israel and Judah is that God appointed these kings. God also sent enemy nations to persecute the kings and the people of Israel and Judah. The lesson today tells us that the Lord sent Hazael the king of Syria to persecute the house of the wicked king Ahab. The persecution of the house of Ahab took place in both Israel and Judah because Jehoram from Judah, the son of Jehoshaphat, married Athaliah from Israel, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. The Lord in His mercy sent an enemy to persecute the house of Ahab so He could put away their sin.

The prophet Elijah had already ascended into heaven. Therefore, Elisha was sent to Syria to anoint Hazael king of Syria to persecute Israel and the house of Ahab. Elisha told Hazael that Ben-Hadad would die and he would become king. When Elisha anointed Hazael for this destructive task, he wept. He wept because he knew the terrible destruction Hazael would carry out against Israel. He wept because he knew how it grieved the Lord to have to punish His people so severely. The Lord used an enemy of Israel to bring judgment against His people. Even though Hazael was anointed by the Lord to chastise His people, he was still responsible for the sin of rejoicing at seeing the misery of God’s people.

Jehoram had married Athaliah the daughter of king Ahab and his wicked wife Jezebel. Jehoram allowed himself to be led into sin by his wicked wife Athaliah. He became so merciless that he killed all six of his brothers and other princes in an attempt to secure the kingdom for himself. Jehoram was a direct descendant of David and should have walked in the ways of David. Instead, he brought shame to David’s house by becoming a curse rather than a blessing.

The Lord had to cleanse the house of David from this sin, yet He would not utterly destroy Jehoram as he did the house of Ahab. Because of His promise, the Lord would preserve a son of David to be king over Judah. Now the Lord used a letter sent from Elijah to king Jehoram. In this letter Jehoram was told that because he did not walk in the ways of Jehoshaphat or in the ways of David, the Lord would send His judgment. The people of Judah would come under serious affliction, and king Jehoram would suffer from a disease of the intestines until his intestines fell out and he died.

The judgment of the Lord came immediately when He caused the Edomites and later the Philistines and Arabians to invade Judah. Jehoram’s wives and children were carried away captives, and Jehoram was struck with a disease of his intestines that took his life. When he died no one mourned for him, and he was not buried in the tombs of the kings of Judah. Jehoram’s son Ahaziah became king, but reigned only one year before Jehu killed him in his destruction of the house of Ahab.

Ahaziah was given a respectable burial because he was also a son of Jehoshaphat the good king of Judah. Yes, the Lord sent enemies to persecute His people and to cleanse them from the sins of the house of Ahab. Still, He kept His promise to the house of David. A son of David would again sit on the throne of Judah in spite of the attempt of Athaliah to destroy David’s house.

Questions

1. What question did Ben-Hadad king of Syria want Hazael to ask Elisha? (II Kings 8:8)
2. Why did Elisha weep when he talked to Hazael? (II Kings 8:12-13)
3. What did Hazael do to king Ben-Hadad so he could become king? (II Kings 8:15)
4. How old was Jehoram king of Judah when he became king? (II Kings 8:16-17)
5. Whose daughter did Jehoram marry that led him to walk in the ways of the kings of Israel? (II Kings 8:18)
6. Why would the Lord not destroy the house of Judah? (II Kings 8:19)

Lesson 4

Flame and Stubble

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 42

Scripture: II Kings 9–10

Memory Verse: “Thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘I have anointed you king over the people of the Lord, over Israel. You shall strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel.’” (II Kings 9:6b-7)

Lesson Truth: God cleanses His people by consuming the godless like stubble.

Lesson

The story of Jehu is a story of bloodshed and intrigue. God chose Jehu to be the one to destroy the house of Ahab and Jezebel. He was used of the Lord to cleanse His people by consuming the godless like stubble. Jehu did destroy both Ahab’s house and Baal worship in Israel, but he did not remove the calf worship at Dan and at Bethel. This is the story of how Jehu was anointed to bring judgment on the house of Ahab. He carried out this judgment with his own willful vengeance.

Elisha the prophet followed the instructions the Lord had given to Elijah on Mount Horeb. He sent a son of the prophets to anoint Jehu to be king over Israel. This was a dangerous mission because Jehoram (Joram) was the king and he would have considered it treasonous to anoint another king. Yet the son of the prophets went to Ramoth where Israel’s generals were gathered and anointed Jehu. After he anointed Jehu, he fled, leaving Jehu to decide if he would wait for the Lord, or if he would carry out the judgments against Ahab’s house in his own way. Jehu chose his own way and therefore became an instrument of judgment in Israel but not a servant of God’s grace to His people. The Lord Jesus Christ will also come as the judge of all the earth, but He will do so in total submission to the Father so that grace will prevail.

First Jehu kept his anointing to himself but when the other generals pressed him, he told them he was anointed to be king of Israel. The generals endorsed him as king and paid him homage. Jehu did not take long to determine his plan of action. He would go to Jezreel and confront king Jehoram. Jehoram was at Jezreel recovering from wounds he received in battle. When Jehoram saw a chariot coming he sent two servants to find out who was coming. Each of his servants remained with Jehu instead of returning to report to Jehoram. Finally, Jehoram went out himself to meet Jehu. When he saw it was Jehu he asked if he came in peace. Jehu responded with a question of his own: “What peace, as long as the harlotries of your mother Jezebel and her witchcraft are so many?” (II Kings 9:22). When Jehoram heard this he and his companion Ahaziah turned to flee for their lives. Jehu then shot Jehoram with an arrow that pierced his heart. By the Word of the Lord the body of Jehoram was discarded on the plot of ground that Ahab had taken from Naboth. Ahaziah was also killed as he tried to escape to Jerusalem because he too had followed the ways of Ahab’s house.

The prophecy of the Lord concerning Jezebel would also be fulfilled. As Jehu returned to Jezreel, Queen Jezebel, decked out in her queenly apparel, called to him from a window asking if he came in peace. Jehu responded by asking who was on his side. Some eunuchs indicated they were with Jehu, so he told them to throw her out of the window. As her body hit the ground, the chariot horses trampled her. Dogs came to eat her flesh before arrangements were made for her burial. The prophecy of Elijah concerning this wicked woman came about just as he said.

Jehu then went on to Samaria and destroyed the house of Ahab. He had his generals indicate that they were his allies by having them send the heads of seventy of Ahab’s grandsons in baskets. Jehu also destroyed the family of Ahaziah king of Judah because they too were sons of Ahab through Ahab’s daughter Athaliah.

He also destroyed the priests of Baal. He urged all the priests of Baal to gather for a sacrifice he would make to Baal. When they were gathered, he had them all killed. Not only did he destroy the priests of Baal, he also destroyed the worship of Baal.

Jehu carried out the judgment of the Lord against the house of Ahab. It is sad that he did not also get rid of the calf worship that had been introduced by Jeroboam. Idol worship continued at Dan and Bethel. Because of this the Lord continued to punish His people through Hazael king of Syria. In contrast to Jehu the Lord Jesus will one day be a flame to consume the godless like stubble. He will bring judgment as God's grace because of His perfect obedience to the Father.

Questions

1. Who instructed one of the sons of the prophets to anoint Jehu as king of Israel? (II Kings 9:1)
2. By whose authority was Jehu anointed to be king of Israel? (II Kings 9:6)
3. What was one of the tasks that Jehu was anointed to do? (II Kings 9:7)
4. What prediction did the son of the prophet make about Jezebel? (II Kings 9:10)
5. What was Jehu's response to Jehoram when he asked if Jehu came in peace? (II Kings 9:22)

Lesson 5

The Struggle of the Spirit

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 43

Scripture: II Kings 11–12

Memory Verse: “In the seventh year Jehoiada sent and brought the captains of hundreds—of the bodyguards and escorts—and brought them in to the house of the Lord to him. And he made a covenant with them and took an oath from them in the house of the Lord, and showed them the king’s son.” (II Kings 11:4)

Lesson Truth: The Spirit struggles to bring forth the type of the Christ.

Lesson

The lesson from II Kings 11–12 tells us how intensely the children of evil hate the children of light. In this story the wicked queen Athaliah destroyed her own grandsons because they belonged to the house of David. She inherited from her mother, Jezebel, a hatred for the Word of the Lord and a hatred for the covenant the Lord made with the house of David.

When Athaliah learned that her son Ahaziah had been killed by Jehu, as he destroyed the house of Ahab, she saw a chance to get rid of the entire house of David. Even though the house of David included her very own grandsons, she had them killed. She thought she could destroy the covenant that God made with the house of David if she destroyed all his sons. She was no doubt a tool used by the Lord to bring judgment against the house of David because it had intermarried with the wicked house of Ahab and Jezebel. In spite of the need to bring judgment against the house of David, the Lord could not and would not break the covenant He made with David. How would David’s house be preserved?

Even when wickedness seemed to triumph, the Lord preserved a remnant of faithful people. When Athaliah thought she had killed all the sons of David, her own daughter, Jehosheba saved little Joash the son of king Ahaziah by hiding him from Athaliah. Jehosheba was married to Jehoiada the high priest, a man who served the Lord and believed the promises God made to David. Jehoiada knew that his wife saved Joash alive and that this child was royal seed, a son of David. When Joash was seven years old Jehoiada thought it was the right time to anoint him king and to do away with the wicked Athaliah.

Jehoiada enlisted the help of the captains of the military to anoint Joash as king. He also told them to be prepared to arrest Athaliah when she came to see what the noise and shouting were about as Joash was anointed. It happened just as Jehoiada expected it would. Athaliah came to see what the noise was about and saw seven-year-old Joash standing by a pillar in the temple as was the custom for the king. When Athaliah saw him standing at the place of the king she screamed, “Treason! Treason!” (II Kings 11:14). The captains and bodyguards then arrested her and brought her out of the temple to put her to death. Jehoiada then made a covenant between the Lord and the people of Judah. Together they would serve the Lord. As a sign of their intention to keep this covenant they destroyed the temple of Baal.

Would Joash, this one remaining son of the house of David, serve the Lord as king of Judah? Would he keep the covenant the Lord made with David? As long as the new king had the faithful Jehoiada as his advisor he walked in the ways of the Lord. He made work of restoring the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem by collecting money to be used for repairs. After 23 years the repairs still had not been made on the temple. Then Jehoiada made a large offering box with a hole in the top and set it beside the altar to receive the funds collected. When the people saw the box for offerings the Lord gave them generous spirits. Soon the house of the Lord was restored. The house of David now had a new king, and the temple of the Lord was restored. Things looked promising for Judah as long as Jehoiada was the advisor to king Joash. Would Joash keep David’s covenant after Jehoiada died?

Jehoiada died at the age of 130 years. He was buried with great honor in the city of David. How very sad that after Jehoiada died king Joash followed the advice of the princes of Judah and allowed idol worship in Judah. God then sent Zechariah the son of Jehoiada to warn Judah and their king that the Lord would depart from them if they worshiped idols. But the people would not listen to Zechariah, instead they stoned him to death in the outer court of the temple. The Lord then sent Hazael the king of Syria to punish Judah and king Joash. Then king Joash tried to purchase his freedom from Hazael by giving him all the temple treasures. When Joash died he was not buried in the tombs of the kings.

We must be very grateful that God was faithful to His covenant with David in spite of the unfaithfulness of Judah's kings. Christ the son of David did come and reconciled God's unfaithful people with their covenant God. All through the history of Judah the Lord looked for a king who would be a type of the Christ. Joash certainly was not the type of the Christ the Lord sought.

Questions

1. Who destroyed all the royal heirs to the throne of David? (II Kings 11:1)
2. Who saved Joash the young son of Ahaziah by hiding him? (II Kings 11:2)
3. How long was Joash hidden in the house of the Lord? (II Kings 11:3)
4. Whose weapons did Jehoiada give to the captains of hundreds to guard the king? (II Kings 11:10)
5. Where was the seven-year-old king standing when Athaliah came to the temple? (II Kings 11:14a)

Lesson 6

Extreme Long-suffering

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 44

Scripture: II Kings 13; 14:23-29

Memory Verse: “Elisha had become sick with the illness of which he would die. Then Joash the king of Israel came down to him, and wept over his face and said, ‘O my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen.’” (II Kings 13:14)

Lesson Truth: For the sake of His covenant, the Lord is extremely long-suffering with his people.

Lesson

We serve a God who is more long-suffering than we could ever imagine. The lesson today shows us our long-suffering God as He dealt with Jehoahaz and Jehoash (Joash) kings of the ten tribes of Israel. The ten tribes of Israel continued with the idol worship that had been introduced by Jeroboam. Despite this continuing sinfulness, God heard the prayers of these two kings and brought some limited deliverance. We may wonder why the Lord would respond to such sinful people with such long-suffering compassion. We understand the Lord’s compassion when we read in II Kings 13:23, “But the Lord was gracious to them, and had compassion on them, and regarded them, *because* of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them or cast them from His presence.” God never forgot His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Jehoahaz succeeded his father, Jehu, as king of Israel. He allowed the sin of idolatry to continue just as his fathers Jehu and Jeroboam had done. Jehoahaz kept the calves that Jeroboam had set up at Dan and Bethel. The children of Israel under the leadership of Jehoahaz, thought the Lord was the God of Israel just as each of the other nations had a god of its own. Because of these sins, God delivered the people of Israel into the hands of Hazael and his son Ben-Hadad kings of Syria. Because of the oppression of the Syrians, Jehoahaz pleaded with the Lord. The Lord heard his prayer and gave Israel a deliverer. The Lord heard the prayer of Jehoahaz because He remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Even after the Lord gave them a deliverer, the children of Israel did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. They continued to bow down to calves and Asherah poles.

Joash now became king of Israel following his father Jehoahaz. Tragically we are told that he did evil in the sight of the Lord and did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam. Still God did not completely reject His people. God allowed Joash to hear a prophetic word from Elisha as Elisha lay on his deathbed. Joash did recognize that Elisha was a prophet of the Lord. As Elisha lay dying Joash cried over him saying, “My father, my father! the chariots of Israel and their horsemen” (II Kings 13:14). He knew that in the Word of God, carried by Elisha, was the strength of Israel. He also worshipped idols but did not break with God’s Word completely. Because of this tie to His Word, the Lord showed mercy and did not completely reject His people.

From his deathbed Elisha instructed Joash to take a bow and arrow and with his guidance to shoot an arrow. After the king shot the arrow Elisha prophesied that this was the arrow of the Lord’s deliverance. The Lord would deliver Israel from Syria. Elisha then told Joash to take the arrows and to strike the ground. The king did as he was told and struck the ground three times. Elisha then shared his disappointment that he only struck the ground three times. He told the king that he would be given only three victories over Syria. Had he struck the ground five or six times he would have been given enough victories over Syria to destroy them. Joash should have seized the sign of the arrows as the certainty of God’s promise to defeat his enemies. In the same way we must seize the certainty of the signs of baptism and the Lord’s Supper that Christ Jesus has paid the penalty of our sins.

Elisha died, but the power of the Word of God did not die. When a dead man was hurriedly placed in the tomb of Elisha and touched the bones of Elisha, he immediately came back to life. Israel was to live by that power of the Word of the Lord. The Word of the Lord was going to be victorious, if not in the whole kingdom of Israel then in a remnant that would remain faithful. God looked upon Israel with compassion and mercy because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Would Israel learn from the compassion the Lord showed because of His covenant?

Questions

1. Who became king of Israel in the twenty-third year of Joash king of Judah? (II Kings 13:1)
2. How does the Bible characterize the reign of Jehoahaz king of Israel? (II Kings 13:2)
3. Because the Lord's anger was aroused into whose hands was Israel delivered? (II Kings 13:3)
4. What action did Jehoahaz take when the Syrians oppressed Israel? (II Kings 13:4)
5. To the sins of which king did the children of Israel cling? (II Kings 13:6)
6. Joash followed Jehoahaz as king of Israel. How is his reign characterized? (II Kings 13:11)

Lesson 7

Sanctified and Made a Blessing

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 45

Scripture: Jonah 1–4

Memory Verse: “Am I a God near at hand, says the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can anyone hide himself in secret places, so I shall not see him? says the Lord, Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord.” (Jeremiah 23:23-24)

Lesson Truth: The one who was sent became a blessing after he is sanctified.

Lesson

In our study of the kings of Israel, we have come to king Jeroboam II. Like many of the kings before him, he did evil in the sight of the Lord. Yet the long-suffering God of Israel allowed Jeroboam II to restore the ancient borders of Israel. The prophet Jonah prophesied that these ancient borders would be restored. Jonah was also the prophet that God sent to Nineveh. God demonstrated in the story of Jonah that He was not only long-suffering to Israel but also to Assyria. God commanded Jonah to go to the capital of Assyria, and warn them that they would be destroyed because of their great wickedness. Jonah refused to carry out the Lord’s command until after he was sanctified and made to be a blessing.

Jonah, the prophet of the Lord, had to learn that God was bound to the world He had created. Our creator God would not allow Nineveh to impoverish and destroy His world. So, He sent His prophet, Jonah to preach against the city. In a spirit of national pride and arrogance Jonah thought that God’s Word should only be brought to the chosen people, Israel. So, in disobedience to the command of the Lord, Jonah went to Joppa and boarded a ship bound for Tarshish. He actually thought he could hide from the Lord of all the earth. But the Lord could never allow a rebellious prophet to prevent His word from reaching the people He intended should hear it. The Lord miraculously controlled the forces of nature so He could sanctify His prophet and make him a blessing.

As Jonah lay sleeping in the hold of the ship bound for Tarshish, the Lord sent a great wind to create a mighty storm. The sailors struggled hard to control the ship, but the storm was more than they could handle. They also called on the names of their gods to deliver them from the wrath of the storm. The captain woke Jonah and asked him to call on the name of his God. Then the sailors cast lots to determine who was the cause of this vicious storm. The lot fell to Jonah who informed the sailors that he was a prophet of the Lord who made the sea and the dry land. This made the sailors even more afraid so they asked Jonah what they should do. He told them they should throw him overboard and the sea would become calm. Jonah knew the Lord sent the storm to confront him with the power and grace of God. The old Jonah had to die and a new Jonah who lived by the grace of God had to arise. The experience of Jonah was the model for the people of Israel who had to die to sin and become alive to the grace of God. Then they could be a blessing to the nations around them.

The sailors threw Jonah overboard. As Jonah went to the depths of the sea he cried out to God for grace. God then prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah and keep him alive in the belly of this fish for three days and three nights. From the belly of the fish Jonah asked the Lord in a prayer of contrition and acknowledgement to visit him with His grace. The Lord then had the fish spit Jonah out on dry ground. Once again, the Lord instructed Jonah to go to Nineveh to tell them they would be destroyed. This time Jonah did as the Lord commanded and went to Nineveh to preach. But he was a reluctant preacher. After he preached against the city for one day it seemed that he was hoping that they would not repent. Jonah wanted God to keep His grace only for Israel.

Yet God used Jonah's preaching to bring a change in the people of Nineveh. All the people including the king fasted before the Lord and put on sackcloth. The repentance of the people of Nineveh did not come from Jonah's preaching but rather from the grace of God through the Lord Jesus Christ. They came to a temporary repentance out of fear of being destroyed. Even this temporary repentance did not please Jonah and he asked that the Lord take his life. Again, God in His mercy instructed Jonah by causing a plant to grow overnight to give Jonah shade. Just when Jonah found some refuge in the shade of this plant, the Lord caused it to die. God then showed Jonah that he felt for a plant that came and went in a night. Why then shouldn't the Lord look with compassion on a city like Nineveh? God wanted to spare the Gentiles from Nineveh until the time when the Word of His grace was proclaimed to all people.

Questions:

1. Which prophet of the Lord prophesied that the territory of Israel would be restored? (II Kings 14:25)
2. What was the Lord's command to the prophet Jonah? (Jonah 1:2)
3. Where did Jonah go instead of going to Nineveh? (Jonah 1:3)
4. What did the Lord send to get the attention of Jonah and the sailors? (Jonah 1:4)
5. How did the sailors determine who was the cause of their difficulty on the sea? (Jonah 1:7)

6. What did Jonah advise the sailors to do so that the sea would become calm? (Jonah 1:12)

7. In what miraculous way did the Lord save Jonah? (Jonah 1:17)

8. When did Jonah remember the Lord? (Jonah 2:7)

Lesson 8

Self-complacency

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 46

Scripture: II Kings 14:1-22; 15: 1-7; II Chronicles 25–26

Memory Verse: “He sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God; and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him prosper.” (II Chronicles 26:5)

Lesson Truth: The Lord’s good pleasure for David’s sake overcomes the self-complacency of the kings of David’s house.

Lesson

Today we review the lives of Amaziah and Uzziah kings of Judah. We read that both these kings did what was right in the sight of the Lord, yet not like their ancestor David. As the title of this lesson suggests they became self-complacent. When they became so very pleased with themselves, they began to do things to exalt themselves. These kings forgot that they were blessed because they were sons of David. God in His grace humbled these proud kings, but His covenant with David remained secure.

Amaziah became king in Judah after his father Joash (Jehoash). He followed the law of the Lord when he executed the men who killed his father. He did not destroy their whole families but only his father’s assassins. Amaziah did serve the Lord but not with a heart like David’s.

We note that the Lord blessed Amaziah as he went out to war against the Edomites. Before he went to battle with Edom a prophet of the Lord told him he had to discharge the soldiers from Israel. They had to be discharged because the Lord would not bless Israel. Again, Amaziah did as the Lord commanded and sent the soldiers from Israel home. Now as he went to war with Edom the Lord gave him the victory. Following this victory Amaziah became proud. He forgot who gave him the victory. In his pride he took revenge and killed ten thousand Edomites by throwing them from a rock.

When Amaziah became proud his kingdom started to crumble. The soldiers from Israel that he had discharged raided some of the cities of Judah and killed many people. That should have been a warning to Amaziah but instead he showed even more arrogance by bringing idol gods back from Edom and set them up for worship. He seemed to think that the more gods he had the stronger he would be. This made the Lord angry with Amaziah. Still in His mercy He sent a prophet to warn the king about serving idols. The prophet asked the king why he would worship idols that did not save the Edomites.

In response to the prophet Amaziah showed how proud he had become. He asked the prophet if he was made the counselor. He even told the prophet to be quiet. At that the prophet said he would be quiet because he knew the Lord had determined to destroy this king. Amaziah ignored the prophet and challenged the king of Israel to face him in battle. Although the king of Israel warned Amaziah in a parable about the foolishness of fighting with Israel, he ignored this warning. In the battle with Israel Amaziah was defeated. Later they conspired against him in Jerusalem and finally put him to death. The Lord destroyed the complacent Amaziah, but He did not forget his covenant with David.

Uzziah a son of Amaziah now became king in Judah. Uzziah was king in Jerusalem for fifty-two years. We are told that he did what was right in the sight of the Lord. The Lord also blessed Uzziah and the kingdom of Judah so that the nation was once again prosperous. Uzziah knew that the Lord blessed him in special ways. He felt like he was the Lord’s favorite, and this made him begin to feel self-satisfied and proud. It was this pride in thinking that he could do no wrong, that led to his downfall.

The Lord had to deal with Uzziah in a very dramatic way when he went to the temple and thought he could do the work of the priest. Because he was proud of his favored position, he decided to offer incense at the

temple. This was a task that the Lord had specifically reserved for the priests. As Uzziah was about to burn incense on the altar Azariah and a cadre of additional priest tried to stop him. They reminded the king that the law of the Lord allowed only priests to offer incense. This warning made Uzziah angry and he threatened the priests with the censor that was in his hand. It was then that Lord caused the dreaded disease of leprosy to break out on his forehead. Uzziah fled from the temple when he saw the leprosy. He realized that the Lord could humble the proud. The Lord brought down two kings who became proud, but He did not break His covenant with David.

Questions

1. How is the reign of Amaziah king of Judah characterized? (II Chronicles 25:2)
2. According to the prophet sent to Amaziah, who has the power to help and to overthrow? (II Chronicles 25:8)
3. What did Amaziah do that caused the Lord to be angry with him? (II Chronicles 25:14-15)
4. From the words of the prophet who had determined to destroy Amaziah? (II Chronicles 25:16)
5. How old was Uzziah when he became king of Judah? (II Chronicles 26:1)

Lesson 9

Wayward Children

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 47

Scripture: II Kings 15:32–16:20; II Chronicles 27–28

Memory Verse: “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! For the Lord has spoken: ‘I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me; the ox knows its owner and the donkey its master’s crib; but Israel does not know, My people do not consider.’” (Isaiah 1:2-3)

Lesson Truth: Because of His covenant, the Lord calls His wayward children.

Lesson

In this lesson we will again review the lives of two kings of Judah. These kings were Jotham and Ahaz. Jotham led the people in the fear of the Lord and brought many reforms to Judah. Yet the people did not return to the Lord. The Lord then gave Judah the kind of king they really wanted. He gave them Ahaz a king who gladly followed in the idol worship of the people of Judah.

Uzziah had exalted himself and thought he could do the work of the priests by offering incense on the altar. He was stricken with leprosy, yet God still looked on His people in Judah with mercy. God allowed Uzziah’s son Jotham to reign as king in Judah. Jotham was a God-fearing king who tried to walk in the ways of the Lord. In spite of his godly efforts the people continued their idol worship in the high places. The prophet Isaiah tells us what the situation in Judah was like at that time when he said: “Hear O heavens, and give ear O earth! For the Lord has spoken: ‘I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me; the ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master’s crib; but Israel does not know, My people do not consider’” (Isaiah 1:2-3). Because the people of Judah had this calloused attitude toward idolatry the Lord punished them in different ways.

Even while Jotham was king, both Pekah, king of Israel, and Rezin, king of Syria began to invade Judah. The Lord also showed His displeasure with Judah by giving them Ahaz as king. He was in full agreement with their spirit of idolatry. Ahaz not only worshipped Baal, but he also sacrificed his sons to idols. Judah resembled Canaan at the time God’s people came from Egypt to the Promised Land. It seemed that no one feared the Lord. Yet God always kept a remnant that remained faithful. In spite of the wickedness of Judah, the Lord would not break His covenant with His people and with David.

We see the Lord’s mercy to His people in a most remarkable way when Ahaz was king. At the time both Syria and Israel were raiding Judah, the Lord spoke through Isaiah with a message of real comfort. The Lord challenged Ahaz to ask for a sign. God said he could ask for this sign either in the depths or in the heights above. But Ahaz arrogantly refused to ask for a sign because he said he would not test the Lord. Ahaz had no desire to hear the Word of the Lord. He refused to trust in the Lord in the war against Israel and Syria. Right at that moment, the Lord in His mercy showed that He was determined to keep His promise to David. He said He would give a sign anyway: a virgin would conceive and bear a Son, and would call His name Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14). Immanuel means God is with us. That is how certain the Lord was that He would keep His covenant with David.

Ahaz even rejected that promise. He robbed the temple and the palace to send a present to the king of Assyria to convince him to fight for Judah. The king of Assyria did fight Syria and Israel and gave Judah some relief in this devastating war. Then in an act of stubborn unbelief, Ahaz instructed Uriah the high priest to build an altar like the one he had seen in Damascus. When Uriah completed this replica of an altar to an idol, Ahaz burned sacrifices on it. The Lord’s altar was pushed aside.

Ahaz became so committed to the idol gods of Assyria that he hid everything that would point to the service of the Lord. He foolishly thought this would appease the king of Assyria when he threatened to

invade Jerusalem. Even when godless countries invaded Judah, Ahaz did not turn to the Lord. He finally locked the doors of the Lord's house. It seemed that Judah was finished with the Lord. Yet the Lord in His mercy sent Isaiah the prophet to remind Judah that Syria and Israel would be destroyed. God would also judge Assyria. Isaiah reminded Judah that God wanted His wayward children to return to Him. It was to these wayward people that God gave the sign of Immanuel, meaning, "God is with us."

Questions:

1. How was the reign of king Jotham of Judah characterized? (II Chronicles 27:2)
2. According to Scripture why did Jotham become mighty? (II Chronicles 27:6)
3. How was the reign of Ahaz king of Judah characterized? (II Chronicles 28:1-2)
4. What hideous sacrifice did Ahaz make in the valley of the Son of Hinnom? (II Chronicles 28:3)
5. In the time of Ahaz's distress, to whom was he increasingly unfaithful? (II Chronicles 28:22)
6. What did the Lord through Isaiah the prophet want Ahaz to request? (Isaiah 7:11)

7. Who in addition to men became weary when Ahaz was king in David's house? (Isaiah 7:13)

8. What was the sign that the Lord gave to the Ahaz and the house of David? (Isaiah 7:14)

Lesson 10

A Return to the Lord

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 48

Scripture: II Kings 18:1-8; II Chronicles 29–31

Memory Verse: “Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel, that His fierce wrath may turn away from us. My sons, do not be negligent now, for the Lord has chosen you to stand before Him, to serve Him, and that you should minister to Him and burn incense.” (II Chronicles 29:10-11)

Lesson Truth: The mediator leads the people to return to the Lord.

Lesson

Following the litany of evil recorded in Scripture about king Ahaz, it is a special blessing to learn about King Hezekiah. He was the son of Ahaz, and he did what was right in the sight of the Lord. The Lord showed His mercy to the kingdom of Judah by giving them Hezekiah as king. In II Kings 18:5-6 we read: “He trusted in the Lord God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him. For he held fast to the Lord, he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the Lord had commanded Moses.” Hezekiah was a type of the Mediator Christ Jesus.

There can be no doubt that the Lord turned His favor to His people when he made Hezekiah king of Judah. Hezekiah brought real reformation to Judah just as David had done. His father Ahaz had locked up the doors of the temple and led the people in forsaking the God of Israel. Now Hezekiah repaired these doors and opened them so the service of the Lord could be restored. With a faith that no other king of Judah had ever demonstrated, Hezekiah led the people back to the Lord.

One of the first things this godly king of Judah did was to gather the priests and Levites in the temple court. After he reminded the priests and Levites of the terrible sins the land of Judah had committed, he said he wanted to renew the covenant with the Lord on behalf of the people. The Levites were more ready to follow the leading of Hezekiah than the priests. The priests had become accustomed to idol worship and were not completely ready to live by faith. Still, some of the priests were ready to cleanse the temple as Hezekiah commanded.

After they cleansed the temple Hezekiah brought the officials from Jerusalem to the East Square and prepared to renew the covenant with the Lord. Would the Lord forgive the sins of the people of Judah and once again enter into a covenant with them? The priests and Levites sanctified themselves before the Lord and prepared burnt offerings by which the people could renew their devotion to the Lord. The people had to seek reconciliation with the Lord through the sin offerings. They had to bow before the Lord in confessing their sins to show that they wanted to accept the Lord’s grace. As evidence that the grace of the Lord had been renewed in their lives, they brought freewill offerings. In the joy of this renewal, they brought so many offerings that the priests could no longer keep up receiving them and needed the Levites to help them.

Hezekiah went on with his reforms. He made a proclamation throughout both Israel and Judah that the celebration of the Passover would be renewed. The Passover had not been celebrated for a long time. Even though the king of Israel allowed this message from Hezekiah to be spread through Israel, it was received with scorn and ridicule. The people from the Northern Kingdom had become so estranged from the Lord that only a few humbled themselves before the Lord and came to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. In Judah it was different. The power of grace was evident among the people as they came for the Passover as one man. The words of Hezekiah as he spoke as the mediator between God and the people found favor in

Judah. The Passover was even extended for an additional seven days. Such a feast had not been celebrated since the days of David and Solomon. God's favor rested on His people again.

The king followed the instructions laid down by David and regulated the service of the priests and the Levites. He had the people bring tithes and offerings to the Lord from their firstfruits. Hezekiah set the example so that the people were moved by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus to show their love for the service of the Lord. In this way the Lord's grace had gained the victory over the people of Judah. Under the leadership of Hezekiah who served as a type of the Mediator the people of Judah returned to the Lord.

Questions

1. Who was the son of Ahaz who began to reign in Judah in the third year of Hoshea? (II Kings 18:1)
2. How was the reign of this son of Ahaz characterized and what king did he model? (II Kings 18:3)
3. How was this son of Ahaz compared to the other kings of Israel and Judah? (II Kings 18:5)
4. Who was with this king of Judah that caused him to prosper? (II Kings 18:7)
5. What did Hezekiah do in the first month of the first year of his reign? (II Chronicles 29:3)

Lesson 11

No Longer a People

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 49

Scripture: II Kings 15:8-31; 17:1-41

Memory Verse: “For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets.” (II Kings 17:22-23a)

Lesson Truth: In His faithfulness to His covenant, the Lord rejects those who are His people in appearance only.

Lesson

God’s heart yearned with love for His wayward people Israel. Israel was His chosen people who were brought out of the land of Egypt by mighty acts. When the people of Israel sinned, God postponed punishment and sent powerful prophets to warn them. But the children of Israel did not listen to the warnings of these prophets. For two hundred years they persisted in following the sins of Jeroboam. It was Jeroboam who introduced calf worship at Dan and at Bethel. Every king of Israel who followed Jeroboam allowed calf worship to continue. Because Israel became hardened in her sins and refused to listen to the call for repentance, God finally withdrew his grace. There was anarchy in government and Israel was carried away into captivity. Because God was faithful to His covenant, Israel could no longer be His people. Only a remnant would remain faithful even in captivity.

The Bible tells us that each of the kings of the Northern Kingdom walked in the sins of Jeroboam who made Israel to sin. But it was after the death of the second Jeroboam that the Northern Kingdom fell apart. Four of the last six kings of Israel were assassinated and finally the people were carried away captive by the Assyrians. This happened when Hoshea was king of Israel. Although Hoshea was able to delay the complete captivity of Israel by paying tribute to Assyria the land was eventually taken. After the Assyrians laid siege against Samaria for three years, Israel surrendered and ceased to exist as a nation. The people of Israel were dispersed throughout the kingdom of Assyria and mixed with the people with whom they were living. A few remained faithful to the Lord even in captivity and returned to Israel along with faithful people from Judah. The Lord did not break His covenant with His people, but He did reject the Northern Kingdom. They were rejected because they forsook the Lord God of Israel. This reminds us that the Lord does reject those who forsake Him, yet He keeps his covenant.

Why did the Lord reject the kingdom of Israel who had been His chosen people? These were the people God had brought from the land of Egypt with mighty acts. God had made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Israel and had given them a country to live in. It was because His chosen people rejected the claims of the Lord’s covenant that the Lord rejected them. They also were rejected because they broke with David’s house. They did not want to live by the light of the promise that was given to David’s house. They rejected the promise that David would have a son who would reign forever. They rejected the Christ by whom grace could be received. Their father Jacob had wrestled for grace, but his children in the Northern Kingdom rejected this grace again and again.

It is true that the kingdom of Israel was no longer a people. But God did not completely forget the land of the ten tribes. The king of Assyria brought many people from his kingdom to occupy the land of Israel. For a time God sent a plague of lions to bring destruction on these people. In a superstitious act, the king of Assyria sent a priest to teach these people how to call on the name of the Lord. He believed that the lions came because the people did not know the god of the land. They were right to believe that the Lord had something to do with the lions. But they were wrong to think that the Lord was the God of only the

land of Israel. Still the Lord wanted them to continue to mention His name in Israel. The plague was removed as a sign that the Lord would again become known in the land of Israel.

The Lord's name did become known in Israel in the time Christ Jesus was on this earth. The people of Israel who stayed behind during the captivity married with people the king of Assyria brought into the land. These people became known as Samaritans. It was to these Samaritans that the Lord Jesus Christ appeared when he talked to the woman at the well and to the people of Sychar. Following the ascension of Christ, the apostles proclaimed the gospel there and many Samaritans accepted the grace which the people of Israel had rejected. We must remember that the Lord is also moved to anger today when people reject his grace!

Questions

1. How long did Zechariah reign over Israel in Samaria? (II Kings 15:8)
2. How long did Shallum reign over Israel in Samaria? (II Kings 15:13)
3. How does the Bible describe the reigns of a number of the last kings of Israel? (II Kings 15:9, 18, 24)
4. How long did the king of Assyria besiege Samaria? (II Kings 17:5)
5. List a number of reasons why the Lord allowed the people of Israel to be taken into captivity? (II Kings 17:7-12)

Lesson 12

The Intercession of the Mediator

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 50

Scripture: II Kings 18:9–19:37; II Chronicles 32:1-23

Memory Verse: “Then Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said: ‘O Lord God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the heaven and the earth. Incline your ear, O Lord, and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God.’” (II Kings 19:15-16)

Lesson Truth: The Lord hears the mediator when he intercedes for the deliverance of His people.

Lesson

The people of Israel had been carried away captive to the land of Assyria. Israel, the Northern Kingdom, no longer existed. Now Sennacherib the new king of Assyria decided to wage war against Judah and occupy her cities. Hezekiah was the king of Judah who feared the Lord and brought many reforms to the land. He now prepared for war with Assyria by having his men stop the wells and divert the water under ground to Jerusalem. Hezekiah also encouraged his army by assuring them that there were more with them than with the Assyrians. The Assyrians came with an arm of flesh, but Judah’s protection was the Lord God of all the earth.

Still the Assyrians came and captured most of the cities of Judah. Then Hezekiah wavered in his faith. He agreed to pay a tribute to the king of Assyria. Once this tribute was paid the king of Assyria broke his word and continued to wage war in Judah. He sent a large army to surround Jerusalem, and one of his military leaders spoke in the hearing of the people on the wall. He told them they could not trust in Egypt or in their own strength because Assyria could defeat both. Then the Assyrian leaders went too far when they told the people they could not trust in the Lord. The proud Assyrians thought they could even defeat the God of all the earth.

When Hezekiah was told the words of the Assyrians, he tore his clothes and went into the house of the Lord. The faith of king Hezekiah was on trial. Would God allow the godless Assyrians to conquer Judah or would He remember His covenant with David? Hezekiah brought the whole matter before the Lord in prayer. In his prayer he became a mediator between God and His people. In answer to his prayer God sent Hezekiah a message through Isaiah the prophet. Isaiah assured Hezekiah that he should not fear the words of the king of Assyria because these were words of blasphemy against the God of heaven.

Hezekiah stood before the Lord in the temple and appealed to the honor of the Lord’s name. He asked that God destroy the king of Assyria that the whole earth might know that the Lord alone is God. Again, the Lord’s answer came through Isaiah the prophet. This answer communicated to all people that it is the Lord alone who gives strength. He indicated that His favor was again directed toward Judah when He said, “The virgin, the daughter of Zion has despised you, laughed you to scorn; The daughter of Jerusalem has shaken her head behind your back” (II Kings 19:21).

The Lord then indicated that it was against the name of the creator of heaven and earth that the Assyrians had blasphemed. They would not be allowed to enter Jerusalem at this time. The Lord promised that he would defend Jerusalem for His own sake and for the sake of His servant David. The Lord promised Hezekiah that in the third year after the Assyrian invasion he would again be able sow and reap in peace just as if the enemy had never been there.

In an unmistakable answer to Hezekiah’s prayer, we read that on a certain night an angel of the Lord went out and killed one hundred eighty-five thousand men of Assyria. When the Assyrian leaders awoke and found one hundred eighty-five thousand soldiers dead, their spirit was broken. Sennacherib and his

Lesson 13

The Need for a True Mediator

Reference: De Graaf, *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume 2, Lesson 51

Scripture: II Kings 20; II Chronicles 32:24-33

Memory Verse: “Return and tell Hezekiah the leader of My people, ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord.’” (II Kings 20:5)

Lesson Truth: Hezekiah’s failure as a mediator cries out for the true Mediator.

Lesson

Hezekiah, king of Judah, stood between God and the people as a mediator when he prayed for deliverance from the king of Assyria. God showed His favor to Hezekiah in bringing deliverance from Assyria. He also showed His favor when He added years to Hezekiah’s life. Still some of the failures and pride in Hezekiah’s life pointed to the need of a true Mediator for God’s people.

Just at the time of the Assyrian invasions Hezekiah became deathly ill because of a serious growth on his body. In this dire situation, the Lord again sent Isaiah the prophet to Hezekiah. This time he came to tell him to arrange the affairs of his house because he was going to die. When Hezekiah heard this word from the Lord, he did what a man of God would do; he turned his face to the wall and prayed. He knew the situation of the kingdom of Judah. He knew that Judah was in danger from the hands of the Assyrians. He also knew that he had restored the worship of the Lord in Judah and he longed for the Lord to use him to deliver His people from their enemies. In his prayer Hezekiah showed that the Spirit of the Mediator Christ Jesus was in him. As he prayed, Hezekiah wept bitterly.

The Lord then showed His respect for Hezekiah’s prayer by sending Isaiah the prophet back to the king. This time he came to tell Hezekiah that the Lord heard his prayer and that he would recover from his illness. He told him that in three days he would go back to the temple and that the Lord would add fifteen years to his life. He was also given the assurance that the Assyrians would be defeated for the sake of the name of the Lord and for the sake of His covenant with David.

Hezekiah received this amazing answer to his prayer with a question. He asked Isaiah, “What is the sign that the Lord will heal me and that I will be able to go to the Lord’s house on the third day?” (II Kings 20:8). Isaiah then said that the Lord would give an unmistakable sign that He would do as He said, a sign Hezekiah could choose. Isaiah then asked if Hezekiah would like the shadow on the sundial to go forward ten degrees or to go backward ten degrees. In response Hezekiah said it would almost seem natural for the sundial to go forward ten degrees, but to have it go backward would surely indicate the power and presence of God. Isaiah then prayed that the sundial of Ahaz would go backward ten degrees, and it did! Now Hezekiah’s faith was confirmed that he would recover, and that God’s favor would rest on him. Although they applied figs to Hezekiah’s infectious growth, his recovery was from the Lord. Hezekiah clung to life because he valued life as a gift from God and because he wanted to serve the Lord.

The Lord did deliver the land of Judah from the Assyrians allowing Hezekiah to fulfill his calling as the deliverer. He had shown his utter dependence on the Lord in the contest with Assyria. Would he continue to live in dependence on the Lord? The truth is that Hezekiah was a mediator for the people, but he now showed that God’s people need a true Mediator, one much greater than Hezekiah! This good king demonstrated that his faith was not in God alone when he was willing to form an alliance with the emissaries from Babylon against Assyria. Hezekiah also tried to impress the officials from Babylon by showing them all the treasures of the king’s house.

Isaiah again went to Hezekiah and informed him that all the treasures he had shown to the emissaries would one day be carried into Babylon. Even more, the people of Judah, including sons of Hezekiah, would be carried away to Babylon. At the pronouncement of this judgment Hezekiah humbled himself and responded that, “The word of the Lord which you have spoken is good!” (II Kings 20:19). He was then given the assurance that this judgment would not come in his lifetime. Hezekiah believed that there would be deliverance for God’s people, through the Mediator that was to come. Hezekiah was a good king who stood as a mediator between God and the people, yet his failures pointed out the need for a true Mediator in the person of Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

Questions

1. What was the startling message that Isaiah brought to king Hezekiah? (II Kings 20:1)
2. What did Hezekiah do when he heard this message? (II Kings 20:2)
3. What emotion did Hezekiah show as he prayed to the Lord? (II Kings 20:3)
4. For whose sake would the Lord defend the city of Jerusalem from the king of Assyria? (II Kings 20:6)
5. What sign did the Lord give to Hezekiah that he would be healed? (II Kings 20:9-11)

