

The Single Judaic Kingdom (2 Kings 18:13-25:30)
Discussion Qs

1. Who are the main characters of 2 Kings 18:13-25:30?

- 1B. Hezekiah 2 Kgs. 18:13-20:20
 - Interaction with Assyria 18:13-19:37
 - Extention of the king's life 20:1-11
 - Communication with Babylon 20:12-20
- 2B. Manasseh and great evil 21
- 3B. Josiah, an especially good king 22-23
 - Covenant Renewal 22-23:25
 - Egyptian Oppression 23:26-37
- 4B. Nebuchadnezzar 24-25

2. What is the reason Hezekiah is healed? It is "for my sake and for the sake of my servant David" (v. 6); again, the covenant principle is re-iterated.

3. Why did God give the sign of the reversed shadow to Hezekiah?

The Lord chose to give this particular sign to confirm his promise. This shows that He is Lord of heaven and earth, the Creator of Genesis 1-2, who formed man's body from the dust of the ground. Thus he that formed the eye, can he not see; he that formed the body, can he not heal? This tells us that the restoration promised from the effects of the fall with damage and death to the body includes the saving of the whole man, body and soul as part of God's restoration of all the effects of sin on the entire creation.

4. Isaiah prophesied that Jerusalem would not be conquered by the Assyrians (2 Kgs 19.20-28). How does this fact pointedly reveal the sovereignty of God? Isaiah indicates that the actions of the Assyrians was according to God's plan and brought His will to pass (v. 25). Thus, God put a hook into the nose of the Assyrian army to turn them back (v. 28; cf. the death of thousands of soldiers and of the king of Assyria, vs. 35-37).

5. What are the phases of the Babylonian captivity?

Thus the Babylonian captivity begins in 605 and has phases with rebellion in Judah until the out and out destruction of Jerusalem in 586. Daniel was taken in 605, other exiles in 597 (24:14) and 586 (25:1ff).

6. What is the theme of the Judaic Kingdom, 2 Kgs 18-25?

The evil under Manasseh outweighs the good under Hezekiah and Josiah bringing exile under Nebuchadnezzar yet a glimmer of hope shines in the release of Jehoiachin.

7. How does the book rescue faith even though the covenant people are cast out from the presence of the Lord in the exile?

1) There is no failure on God's part. Instead God has confirmed "his holiness by judging the nation for its transgressions" (Dillard 161).

The sins of the nation are documented against the backdrop of the requirements of God's law. The law of God is again elevated.

The key is that both kingdoms failed to worship exclusively at the temple in Jerusalem as God required (Deut. 12:1-14). The curses of a broken relationship with God came upon the disobedient nation as Moses had foretold (Deut. 28).

2) The Exile did not show a lack in God's power. Instead, the opposite was shown: the Exile "was proof that he was ruling over history and the the armies of Babylon were simply doing his bidding" (IOT 161). So, 2 Kings 21:12-15.

3) Muted Hope

Thus, the book ends with "muted hope" (2 Kings 25:27-30, IOT 165). Jehoiachin continues the Davidic dynasty; his treatment signals a subtle kindness from God in captivity.

Also, the reason for the captivity and its dynamic as a manifestation of the power and holiness of God reveal the God of the covenant as able to bring his purposes to pass in history through very unexpected ways and means.

Again, though disobedience brings judgment consequences, we note that God is keeping his word in these very curses. This informs us that he will do all that he plans regarding his fallen image bearers on the earth. For Moses also spoke of a return (Deut. 30:1-4 via repentance, v. 2 which is via God's work in their hearts v.5).

8. What is the message for us of 2 Kings 18:13-25:30?

1) We must acknowledge the sovereignty of God. Note God's free purposes with long life given to wicked Manasseh and short life given to good Josiah (LaSor 285). Young Josiah and old Manasseh testify to our inability to grasp the ways of God. He does what is right; he is good, yet the wicked often prosper. We can't explain. We must acknowledge it and submit ourselves to our Father knowing his love and wisdom and the freedom of His purposes that He is accomplishing in history.

2) We can take comfort in the Almighty Father

The lord of heaven and earth, of the dust and the human body, will bring us on finally to the end of history and to the realization of His glorious purpose. See the lilies, you will be clothed in more splendor than any King of Judah!