

# INTERACTIVE TRAVEL GUIDE

DESTINATION: *2 Kings 1-25*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

872 B.C.

Jehoshaphat becomes king in Judah

865 B.C.

Elijah begins to prophesy against Ahab

850 B.C.

Elijah is taken to heaven in a chariot of fire; Elisha prophesies

755 B.C.

Isaiah begins to prophesy in Judah

736 B.C.

Ahaz begins to reign in Judah

722 B.C.

Israel is taken captive by the Assyrians

697 B.C.

Manasseh begins to reign in Judah

640 B.C.

Josiah's reign begins in Judah

624 B.C.

The Book of the Law is found in Jerusalem

612 B.C.

Assyria's capital Nineveh falls to the Babylonians

586 B.C.

Judah is taken captive by the Babylonians

## TRIP PLANNER:

2 Kings continues the history begun in 1 Kings. The books tell the story of a nation without leadership. It describes what happens when a nation passes from affluence and influence to poverty and paralysis. Kingdoms taken captive. Many scholars feel that the author may have been Jeremiah. The book of 2 Kings can be divided into 2 sections – section one ending in the captivity of Israel and section two ending in the captivity of Judah.

1. **The Divided Kingdom** – 2 Kings 1-17
  - a. The third dynasty in the Northern Kingdom – 2 Kings 1-9
  - b. The fourth dynasty in the Northern Kingdom – 2 Kings 10-15:12
  - c. Israel taken in captivity by Assyria – 2 Kings 15-17
2. **The Southern Kingdom** – 2 Kings 18-25
  - a. The reign of Hezekiah – 2 Kings 18-20
  - b. The reign of Manasseh & Amon – 2 Kings 21
  - c. The reign of Josiah – 2 Kings 22-23:30
  - d. Judah taken in captivity by Babylon – 2 Kings 23:31-chapter 25

## PLACES OF INTEREST:

**Abana and Pharpar Rivers** – Two great rivers in Syria. When Naaman was told to dip himself in the Jordan River, he referred to these great rivers in his home country. The Abana River flows through Damascus today and the Pharpar flows south of the city. (2 Kings 5:12)

**Assyria** – The name of an area derived from the city Asshur on the Tigris, the original capital of the country. Was originally a colony from Babylonia, and was ruled by viceroys from that kingdom. It was a mountainous region lying to the north of Babylonia, extending along the Tigris as far as the high mountain range of Armenia, the Gordiaean or Carduchian mountains. In 738 B.C., in the reign of Menahem, king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser III occupied Philistia and invaded Israel, imposing on it a heavy tribute (2 Kings 15:19). Ahaz, king of Judah, engaged in a war against Israel and Syria, and appealed for help to this Assyrian king by means of a present of gold and silver (2 Kings 16:8). He accordingly "marched against Damascus, defeated and put Rezin to death, and besieged the city itself."

**Damascus** – This was the name of the most ancient of Oriental cities. It was the capital of Syria (Isaiah 7:8, 17:3) located about 133 miles north of Jerusalem. There was a long string of wars, with varying success, between the Israelites and Syrians. Later they became allies of Israel against Judah (2 Kings 15:37). The Syrians were at length subdued by the Assyrians, the city of Damascus was taken and destroyed, and the inhabitants carried captive into Assyria (2 Kings 16:7-9; compare Isaiah 7:8). This city is memorable as the scene of Saul's conversion (Acts 9:1-25).

**Jezreel** – Located about 45 miles from Ramoth Gilead, this town was settled by the tribe of Issachar. The city of Jezreel is located near the southern edge of the Jezreel Valley. Under Kings Omri and Ahab, Jezreel was chosen to be the Northern Kingdom's second capital. It was also the site of a confrontation between the prophet Elijah and King Ahab. (2 Kings 9:15)

**Ramoth Gilead** – Although alternate sites for the location of Ramoth Gilead have been suggested, the strongest evidence points to the site of Tel er Ramith, which is on the border of modern Syria. The city was situated in the frontier territory allotted to the tribe of Gad, in northern Gilead, near the ancient border of Israel and Syria. Ramoth Gilead's strategic location on the Transjordan Highway made it the site of several battles between the Northern Kingdom and Syria in the ninth century B.C. (2 Kings 8:28)

**Samaria (the city and the region)** – To the north, Samaria is bounded by the Esdraelon Valley, to the east by the Jordan River, to the west by the Carmel Ridge (in the north) and the Sharon plain (in the south), to the south by Judea (the Jerusalem mountains). Samarian hills are not very high, seldom reaching the height of over 2700 feet. Samaria's climate is more hospitable than the climate of Judea. Omri, the king of Israel, purchased this hill from Shemer its owner for two talents of silver, and built on its broad summit the city to which he gave the name of Samaria, as the new capital of his kingdom instead of Tirzah (1 Kings 16:24). This location possessed many advantages. Omri resided here during the last six years of his reign. When the land was captured by the Assyrians, they repopulated the area with captured foreigners from other lands. Later, in the time of Jesus, the Jewish people looked down on these "Samaritans."

**Kir Hareseth** – The capital city of Moab. Located about 11 miles east of the Dead Sea and 15 miles south of the Arnon River. (2 Kings 3:25)

**Shunem** – This was a small town in the land of the tribe of Issachar. It was to the north of Jezreel and south of Mount Gilboa. In previous Israel history, it was where the Philistines encamped when they came against Saul (1 Sam 28:4). In 2 Kings, it is where Elisha was treated kindly and entertained by a rich woman of the city.

#### **PEOPLE OF INTEREST:**

**Amaziah ( Southern Kingdom)** – Son of Joash, he became king of Judah in 796 B.C., and ruled 29 years. He executed those who had killed his father Joash. He challenged the Northern Kingdom to battle and was badly beaten, and was also assassinated like his father. (2 Kings 14:1; 2 Chronicles 25:27)

**Ahaz (Southern Kingdom)** - He was the first king to hear Isaiah's prophecy about the virgin birth (see Isaiah 7:14). He began his rule in 735 B.C. at age 20 and was king in the south for 16 years. Even though he had Isaiah and Micah around as prophets, he was a wicked king who refused to hear their message. He worshipped false gods and sacrificed his own children. (2 Kings 16:1)

**Ahaziah (Southern Kingdom)** - Ruled the Southern Kingdom beginning in 841 B.C. upon the death of his father Jehoram. He reigned for only one year—the shortest of any king of Judah. He came from a bad family line. His grandmother was Jezebel and his mother was the equally wicked Athaliah. He was killed by Jehu. (2 Kings 8:25)

**Amon (Southern Kingdom)** - He began his reign in 642 B.C. and lasted only two years. Like his father Manasseh, he was wicked and his servants rose up and killed him. (2 Kings 21:19)

**Ashurbanipal** - One of the kings of Assyria who moved non-Israelite foreigners into the now de-populated Northern Kingdom. They would intermarry with the remaining Jews in the land. This was the beginning of the Samaritans. (2 Kings 17:24)

**Athaliah (Southern Kingdom)** - She was the only woman ruler of either the Northern or Southern Kingdoms. She began her six-year rule in 841 B.C. after the death of her son Ahaziah. When she assumed power, she had all of her grandchildren executed except Joash, because his mother Jehosheba, hid him. She was married to the high priest Jehoiada. Athaliah was eventually arrested and executed. (2 Kings 11:1)

**Ben-Hadad II** - Ruled in Damascus Syria around 801 B.C. He was the son of Hazael. He was defeated a couple of times by the Northern Kingdom. Jehoash recaptured the land from Ben-Hadad and Joash defeated him three times (2 Kings 13:24-25).

**Elisha** - After Elijah, Elisha was accepted as the leader of the sons of the prophets, and became noted in Israel. God granted Elisha's request for "a double portion" of Elijah's spirit (2 Kings 2:9), and for sixty years (892-832 B.C.) held the office of "prophet in Israel" (2 Kings 2:9 & 5:8).

**Huldah** - An unknown prophetess in the land. Her husband, Shallum, was the wardrobe keeper for King Josiah. She was the one who confirmed the genuineness of the Law of Moses when it was found by Hilkiah the priest. (2 Kings 22:14)

**Ishmael** - A prince of Judah, a rebel from the line of David who fled to the Ammonites when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Chaldeans. Soon after, he returned and assassinated Gedaliah the governor who had been selected by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:25).

**Jehoahaz (Southern Kingdom)** - The second son of Josiah, he ruled for only three months. He was taken out of power by Egypt's Pharaoh Necho and his older brother Jehoiakim was placed on the throne. He was carried off to Egypt where he later died. (2 Kings 23:31)

**Jehoahaz (Northern Kingdom)** - The son of Jehu, he ruled in Israel for 17 years, beginning in 814 B.C. He repented of the sins of his fathers, but his repentance did not last long. (2 Kings 13:1)

**Jehoash (Northern Kingdom)** - Son of Jehoahaz, he was rebuked by Elisha as he lay on his deathbed. He began his 16-year rule in 798 B.C. (2 Kings 13:10)

**Jehoiachin (Southern Kingdom)** - This son of Jehoiakim reigned only three months in 597 B.C. He was carried off to Babylon. A special curse was put on this king. (2 Kings 24:8)

**Jehoiakim (Southern Kingdom)** - Began his reign in 609 B.C. and ruled for 11 years. During this time, he became a vassal king for the invading Nebuchadnezzar. After three months in this position, he rebelled. (2 Kings 23:34)

**Jehoram (Northern Kingdom)** - He began his 12-year reign in 852 B.C. He was Ahab's youngest son and much took place under his reign. He was king when Naaman visited Elisha to be healed, and he was there when all of Samaria was saved through the work of four lepers. However, he was killed by Jehu, a former commander and chariot driver for Ahab. (2 Kings 3:1)

**Jehosheba** - She was the wife of the high priest Jehoiada. When Athaliah was killing all the heirs to the throne, she saved Joash and hid him from his power-grabbing grandmother. He would later become king due to the heroic action taken by Jehosheba. (2 Kings 11:2-3)

**Jehu (Northern Kingdom)** - Ruled for 28 years beginning in 841 B.C. He was the founder of the 5th and longest dynasty in the Northern Kingdom. Jehu became a very bloody leader. He executed Ahaziah while he was visiting from the Southern Kingdom, and he also killed Jehoram, Jezebel, the priest of Baal, and Ahab's 70 sons. (2 Kings 9:29)

**Jezebel** - The wicked wife of the wicked King Ahab, she was a Baal-worshipping princess from Phoenicia. 1 Kings 21:23 predicted her violent death and her remains being eaten by the dogs. (2 Kings 9:30-37)

**Zechariah (Northern Kingdom)** - He was the son of Jeroboam II and the last king to rule from the dynasty of Jehu. He reigned a short six months in 753 B.C. before being murdered by a man named Shallum. (2 Kings 14:29)

#### **FUN FACTS:**

**A man being lowered into his own grave** - There was a group of Israelites who were in the process of burying a man when they were interrupted by a band of raiders. They threw the man's body into Elisha's tomb and ran away. When the man's body came in contact with Elisha's bones the man became alive again and jumped to his feet. He is not mentioned again (2 Kings 13:21).

**The widow's oil** - Olive oil was an essential ingredient in just about every aspect of daily life at this time. In cooking, olive oil was poured into a pan to prevent the meat or bread from sticking. Oil was mixed with flour to make bread dough. The lamps of most houses burned with oil-soaked wicks. Minor injuries were rubbed with light oils to help the healing process. Wealthy people would bath with oil to heal aches and pains. Women rubbed oil onto their skin to replenish moisture in the dry, hot desert climate. The kings of both Judah and Israel were anointed with oil. (2 Kings 4:1-7)

**How oil was made** - The most common type of oil used in Palestine was olive oil. The ripe olives were at first partially squeezed to remove the seeds. After that, to remove the remaining oil, they were pressed with a heavy stone or trampled on by foot. One olive tree yielded about 10 gallons of oil per year. Since it was so expensive, the olives were sometimes squeezed three or four times. Each time it was pressed, the oil lost some of its purity. (2 Kings 4:1-7)

**A room for Elisha** - Elisha was a traveling prophet always moving throughout the land. At Shunem, a woman was concerned for Elisha and set up a room that he would be able to stay in while he was in that area. This room was built on the roof of their house. This would allow the room to be cool and bright. The location also allowed for privacy. (2 Kings 4:8-17)

**The life of a leper (Naaman)** - Until healed, a leper lived as an outcast in a society. Though not hated, he was greatly feared. Therefore he would often be driven from town and forced to live in caves. While this seems cruel, it was the only way to protect the healthy segment of the city. Naaman, since he was not an outcast, probably had a milder form of leprosy. Sometimes it took 10 to 20 years to heal from leprosy - but most would not live that long. (2 Kings 5:1-19)

**Cosmetics** - Before Jezebel was killed, she went in and put on her makeup. What did she do? Women of her day painted their faces with bright colors and drew heavy dark lines around their eyes. These colors came from iron or copper ore mixed with water. Ancient fingernail polish came from a dye made from the flower of the henna plant. It was actually a stain. (2 Kings 9:30)

Rimmon, a god of Syria – In the land of Syria, just north of Israel, the people worshiped a god named Rimmon. He was known as the god of storms and rain. It was in the temple of Rimmon that Naaman would worship (2 Kings 5:18).

MAPS:

Figure 1: The Divided Kingdom



# NOTES:



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