

2 KINGS:



TREACHERY

EXILE



AND SECOND CHANCES



ontrack devotions

AUGUST

2022

2 KINGS

MONTHLY PRAYER SHEET

“...The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” James 5:16

Who I Will Reach	How I Will Do It	How It Went

Other Requests	Date Answered	How It Was Answered

MONTHLY COMMITMENT SHEET

Name: _____

This sheet is designed to help you make personal commitments each month that will **help you grow in your walk with God**. Fill it out by determining

1. What will push you
2. What you think you can achieve

If you need help filling out your commitments, seek out someone you trust who can help you. Share your commitments with those who will help keep you accountable.

Personal Devotions:

How did I do with my commitment last month? _____

I will commit to read the OnTrack Bible passage and devotional thought _____ day(s) each week this month.

Church Attendance:

How did I do last month with my attendance? _____

I will attend church _____ time(s) this month.

I will attend small group _____ time(s) this month.

I will attend _____ time(s) this month.

(List any other activities you will participate in this month—Bible study, church events, etc.)

Bible Memory:

How did I do with Bible memory last month? _____

I will memorize _____ verse(s) this month.

Outreach:

How did I do last month with sharing Jesus? _____

I will share Jesus with _____ this month.

I will serve my local church this month by _____

What do you want people to say about you after you have died? What kind of legacy will you leave? Did you notice what was said about two of the kings listed in this chapter? First, it was said that Omri did evil in the eyes of the Lord and sinned more than any other king before him. Can you imagine that being said of you? Then, Ahab, Omri's son, took over as king. He was just like his father with one exception. According to verse 33, Ahab aroused the anger of God even more than his father had. The sins he committed were worse than his father's. It is one thing to be someone who lives a life of sin, but it is another thing to lead others into sin. Often, those who follow our example get more deeply involved in sin than we did. It is irresponsible to neglect your relationship with God, but it is tragic when your sinful life leads those around you away from God. How will your life impact those that follow you? Are you leading them to God or into sin?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
1 KINGS 16

1 KINGS 17:7-24

BEING BELIEVABLE

SAY WHAT?

What character qualities do those who observe your life see?

SO WHAT?

What kinds of actions hurt someone's ability to be credible?

NOW WHAT?

How can you make sure you are someone who can be believed?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

Why was the widow at Zarephath certain that what Elijah said was really the word of the Lord? How did she know that what he said was true? According to verse 24, it was because his behavior demonstrated that he was a man of God. In other words, she believed what he said not because the content was believable, but because his character was believable. She knew he was a man of God, therefore she could believe what he said to be truth. Elijah had demonstrated to everyone that he was a man of integrity. The widow observed his life and saw that his words lived up to his actions, which resulted in her complete trust in what he said. There are two important principles here. One, we must examine the character of a person before we evaluate the content of his message in order to determine his credibility. Second, in order for people to believe our message, we must demonstrate to them that we can be believed. We must always remember that those who watch our lives often judge who Jesus is based on what they see in us. As people watch you, does your life measure up? Are you believable?

EXTRA READING

1 KINGS 17

Today, we read the story of Elijah challenging the 450 prophets of Baal. It is a classic showdown between a man of God and the false prophets of Baal. Elijah had to stand alone. He demonstrated remarkable courage. He asked the people of Israel to choose between God and Baal on that mountaintop. But according to verse 21, they didn't commit to either. They could not choose because they weren't sure who would win the contest. Elijah had enough faith in God that he willingly stood alone against the prophets of Baal. In the end, God gave him a great victory and Israel was unified under God. We frequently find ourselves in similar situations. We are faced with the choice to take a stand for what is right, or go along with the crowd and say nothing. Are you lacking the courage that Elijah had to stand alone for what is right? It can be frightening to take a stand, but it will please God and He will bless our lives for it. Like Elijah, our stand for what is right could change everything. What might your stand accomplish?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
1 KINGS 18



1 KINGS 19:1-18

NEVER REALLY ALONE

SAY WHAT?

In what ways could you possibly experience discouragement like Elijah in today's reading?

SO WHAT?

Why is it so easy for us to let our guard down after a great accomplishment?

NOW WHAT?

How can you avoid making the same mistake that Elijah made?

Have you ever accomplished something really significant only to find yourself discouraged soon after? That was where Elijah found himself in this chapter. This man had courageously stood for the one true God and saw Him perform miracles. After this great victory, he learned that Jezebel, the queen, was determined to kill him and he ran in fear. He was so caught up in his personal woes that he did not realize how significant it was that an angel made him breakfast. He felt like he was fighting the battle alone and was ready to quit. After we accomplish something great, we can easily slide into discouragement or even despair. We need to keep focused on what is true and remind ourselves that God is in total control. When you feel as if you're alone, remember Elijah, who did not know there were 7000 other prophets still faithfully serving God. God has an army of faithful followers in the world. You are never alone!

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

EXTRA READING

1 KINGS 19

REPENTANCE

1 KINGS 20:13-43

Can we ever commit a sin so horrible that God will not forgive us? The answer is no. This passage gives us a wonderful illustration that God is always willing to forgive. We read that Ahab was the most wicked king that had ever lived. No king before him had provoked God to the point that Ahab had. Yet, God gave him another opportunity to repent and make his life right. Ben-Hadad was planning to attack and destroy Ahab. But God sent word to him through a prophet that He would deliver Ahab from Ben-Hadad. God did this, according to verse 28, so that both Ben-Hadad and Ahab would know that He was God. Ahab responded to God's gracious prompting to obey, but ignored his need to repent of his sin. He continued in his disobedience. In spite of Ahab's willful wickedness, God still loved him and repeatedly gave him opportunities to repent. Could there be sin in your life that you have refused to repent of? He continues to work in your life, giving you the opportunity to repent and seek Him. What is keeping you from responding to His gracious offer?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
1 KINGS 20

1 KINGS 21:11-29

FORGIVENESS

SAY WHAT?

List some sins that people think are unforgivable to God.

SO WHAT?

Why do we feel that God could not forgive these sins?

NOW WHAT?

How can you use this chapter in your life or to help other people?

THEN WHAT?

What commitment should you make in light of this passage?

Do you remember the question from yesterday's reading? Think about it as you read through this chapter. The question was, "Can a person ever commit a sin so great that God could not forgive them?" Today, we see just how wicked Ahab and Jezebel were. Ahab wanted a piece of land. Naboth, in obedience to God, would not sell his inheritance, even to the king. In the face of this man's courage, Ahab left and pouted like a big baby. His wife found him sulking and came up with a plan. If Naboth was dead, Ahab could have his field. Ahab and Jezebel's consciences were so hardened and they cared so little for people that when their request was refused, they were willing to murder in order to get what they wanted. God responded by telling Ahab that he would be punished. For the first time, Ahab was repentant. As a result, God showed him mercy. Regardless of the type of sin, God wants us to humbly repent. When we do, He will show mercy and forgive us. No one is too wicked and no sin is too great for God to forgive. No matter what you or someone else has done, God is waiting to show great mercy when we seek His forgiveness.

EXTRA READING

1 KINGS 21

When you need some advice or counsel, who do you go to? Like so many people, Ahab went to people who would give him the advice that he wanted to hear. Ahab was advised by Jehoshaphat to seek the counsel of the Lord before doing anything. He did seek counsel, but only from those who told him what he wanted to hear. He did not want the advice of the prophet of God because he only spoke negatively about Ahab. Ahab was not interested in the truth or choosing what was best. When Micaiah told Ahab the truth, he was put into jail. We are often like Ahab. There are people in our lives we avoid talking to because we are convinced that they will tell us what we don't want to hear. It may seem as if every time we ask the advice of our parents, a teacher, a friend or a pastor, the advice is not what we wanted to hear. One reason we don't always appreciate their advice is because it is the truth. We often do not want the truth, but want them to tell us that what we think is right and support what we want. Do you act like Ahab? Today would be a good day to begin changing. Do you need to talk to someone about it?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
1 KINGS 22

2 KINGS 1:1-8

RESPECT

SAY WHAT?

In what situations do people usually turn to friends for advice before asking God?

SO WHAT?

Why is it that God always seems to be the last one we turn to when we have problems?

NOW WHAT?

How can you make sure that God is who you turn to first with your problems?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

Imagine how God must have felt when a king that He had placed to rule over the nation of Israel did not seek His counsel but sent messengers to a foreign land to consult an idol? Imagine the arrogance of Ahaziah who, like his father, worshiped at the feet of other gods. Not only did Ahaziah treat God with disrespect, but his men treated God's servant Elijah with disrespect. The third captain that was sent understood who Elijah was and humbly asked him to comply with the king's orders. This captain's attitude saved his own life and the lives of his men. Ahaziah and the first two captains died because of their disrespect towards God and Elijah. We read this account and wonder how one could be so defiant, but could you be doing the same thing? Do you ask your friends' opinions before you talk to God? If you face a difficult problem, who do you turn to, God or someone else? Maybe you are more like Ahaziah than you thought? It can be as simple as treating God with disrespect by considering other's opinions more valuable than His. His counsel ought to be what we seek first. Our primary consideration should always be what God would want us to do. Is it yours?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 1

Was the request Elisha made an indication that he was arrogant? Was he seeking to have more power than Elijah because he wanted his ministry to be twice the size of Elijah's? At first glance, it may appear as though Elisha was, in fact, being arrogant. However, that was not the case. In Israel, the firstborn son inherited a double share of his father's possessions and with it the right of succession. God had already promised that Elisha would take over Elijah's ministry when he died. Since Elisha had already been chosen to succeed Elijah, he wanted to be sure he had whatever was necessary to continue the mission. He understood that wisdom and power beyond his own ability was necessary if he were to carry out the task left to him. His request was that Elijah's power might continue to live through him. It was a request made in humility, with no hint of pride. If you are ever given a position of leadership, it is essential that you understand that you must have God's help in order to be effective. Just like Elisha, we must ask God to give us supernatural wisdom and the power to do the job He has given us to do. Not so others think highly of us, but to accomplish what God desires!

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 2

2 KINGS 3:9-27

TRUSTING GOD

SAY WHAT?

Write down some examples of what God asks people to do that does not make sense?

SO WHAT?

Why is it so hard for us to trust God's Word and do what it says?

NOW WHAT?

How can you strengthen your trust in God and your willingness to obey what He asks?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

Have you ever had someone ask you to do something that made no sense at all? If so, you can imagine how the kings in this chapter felt about Elisha's plan, especially since as kings, they did not seek God's help in the first place. They found themselves in a remote location with no water for themselves or their animals. God's solution was to dig ditches in the valley. He would send a flash flood that not only provided more water than they needed, but would be used by God to help defeat the Moabites. When the Moabites looked across at the Israelites, they thought the water was blood and Israel was defeated. Because Moab was fooled, Israel was able to win a great victory. The Moabites were defeated and every element of Elisha's prophecy was fulfilled. The lesson for us is to remember that God's ways are not our ways. We must learn to trust Him and always do what He asks of us. In time, we will be able to look back and see how God used circumstances to accomplish far more than we ever imagined. Obedience is always the best choice even if it does not make sense.

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 3

What can we learn about God from this chapter? One of the first attributes is that God's ability to supply is only limited by our faith and our need. Elisha told the woman to go to her neighbors and get jars. According to verse 3, he told her to ask for many, not just a few. The oil stopped flowing only when there were no more jars to fill. If she had gotten more jars, God would have supplied more oil. A second attribute we see is that God cares for those who are hurting. They are the ones we would call "less fortunate." God provided for the woman's needs by filling the oil jars. She could sell them and make enough money to not only pay off her debt, but also live off what remained. A third attribute we observe is that God is not a respecter of persons. He showed tenderness and compassion to the poor, but also to the well-to-do. These people helped Elisha in his ministry and God graciously restored their son. No matter where you are in life, rich or poor, well known or a nobody, God sees you and wants to demonstrate His mercy towards you. Why not let Him demonstrate it in your life today? What need can God fill in your life?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 4

2 KINGS 5:1-14

BITTERNESS

SAY WHAT?

What circumstances can lead to bitterness in a person's life?

SO WHAT?

What possible reasons might God have for allowing circumstances like those to come into someone's life?

NOW WHAT?

What can you do to avoid bitterness or help someone who is bitter?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

If you were to list the top five issues that people today struggle with, what would they be? Would you have placed bitterness on your list? It seems that many people today are struggling with the circumstances of their lives and are developing a real spirit of bitterness. Their lives are filled with anger and hostility over something negative that has happened. While these kinds of circumstances are difficult to accept, we must learn to respond like the young girl in today's reading so we can be used of God and avoid bitterness taking over our lives. This young girl was kidnaped from her home and taken to a foreign land to be a servant. She did not lose her faith or become angry and bitter. Instead, she trusted God. She wanted her master, the man who had taken her captive, to be healed and know her God. God is in complete control of our lives. The circumstances that enter your life are not designed to make you bitter, but to make you stronger and better able to influence your world. Bitterness will rob you of joy and prohibit you from being used by God. Don't allow bitterness to rule your life. If it does, ask God for forgiveness and seek help to overcome it.

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 5

Why wasn't Elisha afraid when he saw the army of Aram surrounding his city? The answer to that question holds the key to finding comfort today. Beginning with verse 8, we read that Elisha was helping the king of Israel in his ongoing battle with the king of Aram. God kept Elisha informed of the plans of the king of Aram and Israel avoided any confrontation with them. This frustrated the king so badly that he sent his army to capture Elisha. Elisha's servant saw the army that surrounded the city and was terrified, but Elisha remained calm. He was not afraid because he could see what human eyes could not. Elisha saw the army of heaven that he knew outnumbered the pitiful army of Aram. When God opened the eyes of the servant, he was no longer afraid. Like wise, we need to keep in mind that there is another world that we cannot see. When it seems as if we are outnumbered, remember that the forces of heaven surrounds us. Even though we can't see them, they are always there to protect and defend us. What circumstance are you facing that requires faith in what you cannot see?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 6

2 KINGS 7:3-20

NEEDING A MIRACLE

SAY WHAT?

What difficult situations do people face that require God to do the miraculous?

SO WHAT?

What steps might someone take on his own to try to change it?

NOW WHAT?

How can you remind yourself to take your problems to God?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

How did God deliver the Nation of Israel in today's reading? Can God do the same thing for you today? Think about it for a moment. The famine was so severe people were willing to eat their own children. An army was camped outside the gates waiting for them to starve to death. And then Elisha proclaimed that God would deliver them and provide an abundance of food. God's plan was to have the army of Aram believe that the Israelites had hired another army to fight for them, so they fled in terror. God only had to get the enemy to fear an imaginary army. God's deliverance did not require any fighting. God is able to move in the hearts and minds of people. He can change their minds and compel them to make decisions we think they would never make. We often fret and fume about the circumstances in our lives and forget to ask God to change the hearts of people so His will can be done. We hear about those kinds of miracles happening in the lives of others, but fail to ask God for one. Is there a situation in your life that needs a miracle? Ask God to do the miraculous in your life or in another's life.

EXTRA READING

2 KINGS 7

Is there such a thing as luck or coincidence? This passage can help us answer that question. God used Elisha to warn the Shunammite woman that there was going to be a famine in the land. She left for the land of the Philistines. Seven years passed and she came home to find that her land had been sold while she was away. She went to the king to find help to get her land back. "Just per chance", the king was speaking with Gehazi, Elisha's servant. The king wanted to hear all the great things Elisha had done. As Gehazi was recounting the story about bringing the boy back from the dead, this very woman came to beg for her land. Coincidence? Luck? No way. This story illustrates that God is at work, arranging the events of our lives and the lives of others so that His will is accomplished. Luck does not rule our lives, but a sovereign God does. We need to thank Him for His daily provision and learn to always observe God's work in our lives.

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 8

2 KINGS 9:30-37

PAYDAY SOMEDAY

SAY WHAT?

What can you do to prevent your life from ending like Jezebel's?

SO WHAT?

In what ways can you influence someone who is living in rebellion and help them realize the damage they are doing?

NOW WHAT?

What steps can you take today to begin to apply the lessons you have learned?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

What lessons can we learn from the life of Jezebel? While there certainly are many, one in particular does not usually come to the mind. We can be sure that it was never Jezebel's dream to have her life end like it did in today's reading. Her sin was so wicked that her death occurred in a horrifying way. She lived in direct opposition to God and her actions resulted in her untimely demise. She left this earth with no dignity, no legacy, and no family to carry on her name. She died without having anything she must have wanted and dreamed of having. Why? Jezebel refused to submit to God. It is so hard for people to realize that their actions today impact what their life will be like in the future. Most people only see tomorrow or next week. They find it hard to look to the future. If you or someone you know is living a life of rebellion against God, unless there is repentance, the future will eventually be disastrous. The joy life can give is not found in the future of the rebellious. If you are not following Jesus, repent now. If someone you know is living in rebellion, do not sit by and watch them destroy their life. Voice your concerns and pray!

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 9

On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate Jehu and his commitment to God? Our initial impression of him could cause us to see him as a 10. He seemed to have great zeal for God and a desire to carry out His will. We find, however, that his zeal was not based on his love for God, but on his own desire to establish his kingdom. He did want to please God, but he was smart enough to realize that the worship of Baal was associated with Ahab and if he destroyed it, he would also be wiping out all that remained of Ahab's kingdom. According to verse 31, Jehu was not careful to guard his heart and follow the laws of God. His halfheartedness resulted in idol worship and the judgement of God. God responded by reducing the size of Jehu's kingdom and allowing Hazael to take some of Israel's land. Unlike Jehu, we must always guard our hearts. While we may be doing good things, we must be careful to do them for the right reasons. If we serve less than whole-heartedly, we provide an opportunity for sin to enter our heart, resulting in the judgement of God. Are you serving with a whole heart or is there a need for change?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 10

2 KINGS 11:1-12

AGE

SAY WHAT?

Identify some opportunities that someone your age might have.

SO WHAT?

What might God want you to accomplish?

NOW WHAT?

What do you need to do to be able to begin serving God in those areas?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

In this chapter, the author shifts back to the record of events concerning the southern kingdom of Judah. The previous chapter was a record of Jehu, the king of the northern tribes, Israel. Ahaziah was the king of Judah and when he died, his mother killed all other family members so that she could rule. However, God had other plans. He used a man by the name of Jehoiada to save one of Ahaziah's sons. He hid Joash for six years. It is unbelievable that Joash was only seven years old when he became king. Can you imagine what it must have been like to rule the nation as a 7 year old king? This clearly illustrates that God does not only use adults. Regardless of your age, God can and will position you to accomplish something significant for His kingdom. God protected Joash so he could rule the nation. Could there be a role that God wants you to play this next year? Instead of letting your age keep you from serving, ask God to show you the role He desires for you to play. Begin serving where He puts you no matter what your age! You might be surprised at what He has for you.

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 11

There is an important phrase in verse 2 that gives us some insight into Joash. Did you notice it? What significance does it have for us? God makes it clear that Joash did what was right, "all the years Jehoiada instructed him." Although it does not tell us here, we learn in 2 Chronicles 24 that after Jehoiada died, Joash permitted idol worship to return to Judah. This shows us that Joash was committed to following the godly counsel of Jehoiada, but it was not something he was committed to personally. When the godly influence of his life was gone, his heart turned away and he gave in to ungodly influences. This often happens in the lives of teens as they grow up. While living at home, under the influence of parents or church, they walk with God. Once on their own, however, we see that following God was not something that they were personally committed to. Allowing godly people to influence you is helpful and important, but at some point, you must make it something you personally commit to, regardless of the personal beliefs of those you respect. Are you committed to God? How can you make sure you always surround yourself with godly influences?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 12

2 KINGS 13:1-9

CONTINUING SIN

SAY WHAT?

What kinds of sins do people confess but keep going back to?

SO WHAT?

Why do we so often return to our sinful behavior?

NOW WHAT?

How can you avoid this pattern in your own life?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

Today, we see a pattern that plagued Israel all during the period of the judges and still haunts followers of Jesus today. First, Jehoahaz did evil in the sight of God. He continued in the sin of his father and encouraged Israel to do the same. Second, God became angry and sent oppression to force them to deal with their sin. He allowed the nation of Syria to overpower them. Third, they cried out to God for His deliverance. God showed mercy and delivered them. Fourth, immediately after being delivered, they returned to their sin and ultimately faced greater judgement from God. It seems that we are no different today. We sin and God disciplines us. We cry out to Him in repentance and seek His forgiveness. But, as soon as the road is smooth again, we return to our sin. Is there evidence of this same pattern in your life? Do you find yourself continually confessing and then returning to the same sin? If so, why not decide to do something about it today. If you don't know how, ask someone to help you! You can't continue to live like that and you won't like the consequences if you do.

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 13

There are some who teach that God desires all believers to be healthy and financially well off. They feel that it could not be the will of God to be sick or poor. If that were the case, then wealth would be the sign of God's blessing in someone's life. Today's reading reveals that wealth is by no means a sign of God's blessing or approval. It is true that Jeroboam, through his own might and clever leadership, brought to Israel more prosperity than was known since the days of Solomon. But, he led his people into wickedness and couldn't have cared less about obedience to God. The security of the Israelites rested in their prosperity and not in God's power. God was not pleased and the resulting judgement was soon to come. Likewise, a life that seems to be going well is not an indication that God is pleased with you or that He approves of what you are doing. He may be patiently waiting for you to repent while He demonstrates His love for you. We must continually examine our lives to be certain that we are right before God. We must always remember that the absence of trials does not necessarily indicate that someone is righteous before God.

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 14

2 KINGS 15:1-7

SUCCESS

SAY WHAT?

When does pride begin creeping into our lives?

SO WHAT?

Why do we allow our priorities to slide when things are going well?

NOW WHAT?

How can you avoid the pride that often slips into your life?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

Why did God give King Azariah, or Uzziah as he is sometimes called, leprosy? The answer to this question reveals an important principle. The complete story is not told here in 2 Kings, but is found in 2 Chronicles 26. According to Scripture, after Uzziah became powerful, his heart grew proud. He lost sight of who made him king and who was responsible for the might of his kingdom. In a particularly proud moment, he rationalized violating the law and made a sacrifice himself. In spite of the warnings of the priests, he went ahead with the sacrifice, willfully disobeying God's law. As a consequence for disobedience, God struck him with leprosy for the remainder of his life. He was removed from his house and exiled to live alone for the rest of his days. When things are going well for us, it is easy to allow pride to creep in and then conclude that our personal greatness is responsible. When things are going well, our time with God often decreases, our prayer life is neglected, and we begin excusing our sin. Is this the direction your life is going? When things are going well, we must guard our hearts and not let pride rule.

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 15

How could a man get to the point that he could actually offer his own son as a sacrifice to a pagan god? The answer is that sin will always lead you to do things that you never imagined would be possible. Keep in mind that Ahaz was the grandson of Uzziah. Uzziah was a godly king. Sin spread rampantly through this family. Ahaz commissioned a new altar to be built, like the one he saw in Damascus. He moved the altar Solomon built to another location in deference to the King of Assyria, illustrating how far they had fallen in the eyes of God. As we read this account, we must not miss the valuable lessons to be learned from this chapter. First, sin can lead you to make decisions you might now think impossible. You can't control how far your sin will take you when you refuse to confess it and forsake it. Second, you can't control how fast you move down the road toward total rebellion. You may think you can control how fast you decline, but you can't. In light of these truths, we must make sure that ALL sin is dealt with, immediately. If we tolerate any hint of sin, we may find ourselves in a place we never thought we could be. Don't allow this to happen to you.

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 16

2 KINGS 17:24-41

BUT...

SAY WHAT?

What areas of sin do people continue to hold on to while trying to still follow God?

SO WHAT?

What areas in your life do you find hard to completely release to God?

NOW WHAT?

How can you prevent yourself from withholding parts of your life from God?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

Today, we read of God's final judgement on the nation of Israel. God had allowed the northern kingdom to be besieged by the King of Assyria. Israel's rebellion had finally gone too far. Notice the word "but" use once in verse 32 and once in verse 33. The people worshiped the Lord, "but." They felt God's wrath when they first arrived in the land, so they adjusted their lifestyles to accommodate God's demands. They attempted to worship Him, but not wholeheartedly. They kept part of their lives for themselves. They wanted to please God, but only to prevent His anger. People do the very same today. They go to church, but consistently engage in sinful behavior. Does God have all of your life? What area are you keeping to yourself? Is there any sin you need to confess? Use the questions to help you follow God completely.

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 17

Is your destiny determined by who your parents are? People today certainly think so, but God's Word tells us otherwise. This chapter is a perfect example. On Monday, we read about King Ahaz of Judah and his wicked practices. Today, we read about his son who lived totally committed to God. Hezekiah grew up surrounded by evil, but became one of the most godly kings in the history of the nation. He removed the high places where people practiced their false religions. He broke the bronze serpent Moses made because his people were burning incense to it. According to verse 5, he trusted in God more than any other king who had ever ruled over the Kingdom of Judah. He did all this after growing up in the home of an evil man. God has put you in your home to best prepare you for the future He designed for you. Never let your home life deter you from being all God desires. Don't allow anyone else to do it either.

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 18

2 KINGS 19:20-37

PRIDE

SAY WHAT?

In what areas do people struggle with pride?

SO WHAT?

How can you tell if pride is beginning to grow in your heart?

NOW WHAT?

How can you prevent pride from growing in your life?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

Why did God respond to Sennacherib the way He did? Why was his sin so terrible? Can we commit the same kind of sin today? Sennacherib's sin was that he allowed pride to enter his heart. He came to believe that his own strength and might gave him his power. In reality, his kingdom grew only because that is what God allowed. The reason pride is so horrible is because it elevates us above God. Pride does not acknowledge God's role in our lives. Hezekiah realized that although the safety of Jerusalem was at stake, the Name of God was more important. Sennacherib overstepped his boundary and frankly had no idea who he was dealing with. God demonstrated to him that He is over all and that He alone is God. We can anger God in the same way today when we take credit for the things that He has done in our lives. We can feel as though we are in control of our lives and begin to think we do not need God. We must never forget that everything we have is from God. We must guard our hearts from pride. Could the seeds of pride be growing in your heart? It requires a close and possibly painful look to see.

EXTRA READING

2 KINGS 19

Why was it such a problem for Hezekiah to show the envoy from Babylon his wealth? While it is not clear in this passage, the account in 2 Chronicles 32 indicates that his motivation was the problem. It could have been an opportunity for Hezekiah to show them that God had provided for him. He could have used it to point them to God. But he used it as an opportunity to show off his wealth and impress them with his greatness. He took credit for all God had done in his life. Hezekiah was a man who walked with God, and in spite of his shortcomings, God restored his health and gave him 15 more years of life. He failed to see the blessings of God as a gift, and they became the source of vanity. We also must not lose sight of what God has given to us. Do not allow the gifts and talents He has given you to become something you use to bring attention to yourself. Be certain that you give the glory to God and be thankful for all you have. God does not bless us in order to promote our pride, but so that others can see how great He is. Is that how you view the blessings in your life? Have you used them to promote Him or you?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 20

2 KINGS 21:1-18

GODLY HERITAGE

SAY WHAT?

Why do some people, who have parents who follow Jesus, reject Him?

SO WHAT?

What signs can you look for that demonstrate you could be walking away from the godly example of your parents?

NOW WHAT?

How can you prevent this tragedy from happening to you?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

A few days ago, we investigated whether or not your parents determined your future as it relates to character. Today, let's look at that issue from a different viewpoint. Will you grow up to be a godly individual if your parents are? Not according to what we read today. Manasseh's father was the most godly king of Judah. In order to help prepare his son to lead, Hezekiah had his son rule as his co-regent. While Hezekiah was king, Manasseh ruled alongside. In spite of his father's training and example in life, Manasseh turned out to be the most evil king that Judah had. He rebuilt the high places of pagan worship that his father had torn down. He even went so far as to put pagan altars and idols in the Temple of the Lord. He led an entire nation into such wickedness that God set into motion the plans to send them into exile. He was given much to guide him in his life, but rejected it all to follow his own wicked way. You must be careful that you do not depend on your parent's spiritual condition to make you righteous before God. Having a parent with an intimate relationship with God is no guarantee that you will.

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 21

Today's reading reveals why the nation of Judah slid so far spiritually. Did you see it? It is the phrase found in verse 8, "I have found the Book of the Law." The implication is that the Book of the Law had not been around for some time. Was it lost or neglected? It was not being read and therefore, was not being followed. In fact, according to verse 10, when the people heard what was written in the Law they were astonished. They realized how much they had grieved God by their actions. Josiah wanted to know if there was some way he could make things right. Their wickedness was so great that serious consequences were inevitable, but not during Josiah's lifetime. Likewise today, any society, individual, or family that tries to live without the Word of God is going to fail. Do you read the Bible every day? Do you know what it says and what God expects of you? Do you obey what you know? Neglecting it will bring disaster.

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 22

2 KINGS 23:1-30

TOTAL COMMITMENT

SAY WHAT?

Why are there so few people like Josiah in the world today?

SO WHAT?

What would need to change in your life in order for you to become this kind of person?

NOW WHAT?

What will it cost you if you take a stand in your community like Josiah did in his country?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

What will people say about you after you die? How would you like to be remembered? In verse 25 of this chapter, God says some great things about Josiah. Imagine if God could say that you followed Him with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. Josiah was totally devoted to God and did not tolerate half-heartedness in his life or the life of his people. Unlike other kings before him, he demanded total purity. There was no room for compromise in his kingdom. He destroyed anything that hindered or tempted his people to reject total commitment to God. Every nation needs men and women who are willing to be this kind of person. We need individuals who will sell out completely to God—people who will not tolerate any area of compromise in their lives. We need people who will do whatever it takes to rid their lives of sin, and who will serve God with all their heart, soul and strength, regardless of the cost. We need people who care about where others stand before God. Are you one of those people? Why not start today!

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 23

We have just completed our walk through the period of the Kings. Before we begin the New Testament, take some time to reflect on the lessons you learned from your reading this summer. Use today's questions to help you think through what God has taught you. Take the time to think about what needs to change in your life, and what steps you can take to see those changes take place. Close with a time of prayer, asking God to change you as a result of what He has taught you. Determine to change and commit to influence others.

SAY WHAT?

What are some of the lessons you learned from the period of the kings?

SO WHAT?

How can those lessons apply to your life right now?

NOW WHAT?

What changes do you need to make in order to apply what you have learned?

THEN WHAT?

In light of these lessons, what personal commitment can you make?

EXTRA READING
2 KINGS 24, 25





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