

This week's reading:

May 14: 2 Kings 12 – 14

May 15: 2 Kings 15 – 17

May 16: 2 Kings 18 – 20

May 17: 2 Kings 21 – 23

May 18: 2 Kings 24 – 25

May 19: Acts 1 – 3

May 20: Acts 4 – 7

May 21: Acts 8 – 10

Summary:

May 14: 2 Kings 12 – 14

2 Kings 12 gives us the Temple repairs made by Joash before his assassination.

(Note: Even the comparatively more faithful southern kingdom has need of reinstating proper worship and service to God. No good deed goes unpunished as the faithful king is murdered by His people.)

2 Kings 13 returns to the sin of Israel and culminates with the death of Elisha.

2 Kings 14 recounts the good reign of Amaziah, son of Joash, over Judah before he too is struck down.

May 15: 2 Kings 15 – 17

2 Kings 15 gives a rapid fire of kings of Israel and Judah at the reader, demonstrating the lack of stability in the sinful kingdoms (especially Israel).

2 Kings 16 gives more idolatry and trusting of foreign nations in Israel and finishes with the coronation of Hezekiah in Judah.

2 Kings 17 recounts the sin of Israel and why the nation fell to the Assyrians; as well as the fallout of this judgment. **(Note:** What had been seen coming since the reign of Rehoboam, the judgment of God comes down on Israel. This chapter lays out the case why and is a fitting post-mortem on a nation that will never rise in history again.)

May 16: 2 Kings 18 – 20

2 Kings 18 & 19 are a contrast to Israel as Judah is ruled by God-fearing Hezekiah and the fruit of that reign is born out in deliverance by God. **(Note:** The southern kingdom of Judah survives around 140 years longer than Israel. This only occurs because of the work of the “good” kings like Hezekiah.)

2 Kings 20 gives a falling away as Hezekiah, despite God's healing, caters to the Babylonians instead of God and the kingdom is judged. **(Note:** Even the good kings are not good enough to be the final deliverers of the people. This longing for the king to come will only be consummated in the Messiah.)

May 17: 2 Kings 21 – 23

2 Kings 21 begins the awful reign of Manasseh & Amon in Judah. **(Note:** No matter how good the previous king was, as Solomon reminds in Ecclesiastes; an heir is around the corner. The soul of the nation has been wicked since the Exodus, because people are wicked since the Garden.)

2 Kings 22 brings hope as Josiah (8 years old) ascends the throne and the book of the Law is discovered in the Temple. **(Note:** A picture of the mercy of God upon a repentant people as God; God will bring His just judgment; but not upon this king who

has a heart for God. Also; Israel has forsaken everything, including the very reading of the Law of God.)

2 Kings 23 brings Godly reform and covenant to the people of Judah as they begin to follow the Law once again. The chapter ends with Josiah's death in battle and the ascension to the throne of "puppet kings"

May 18: 2 Kings 24 – 25

2 Kings 24 sees Babylon directing the affairs of Judah and the deportation of exiles (most likely when Daniel was taken).

2 Kings 25 crushes Jerusalem finally as the Babylonians destroy the city and begin the final (of 3) deportations. **(Note:** Jeremiah warns the Israelites not to resist the Babylonians as they are instruments of God's judgment. Israel has forgotten and broken every bit of God's commands, and have since Sinai. This judgment has been hundreds of years in the making and is well deserved.)

May 19: Acts 1 – 3

Acts 1 sees the apostles watching the ascension of Jesus and meeting in the upper room. **(Note:** Acts is the sequel to Luke's Gospel and picks up with some overlap to ensure the entire story is included. Jesus' promise to return is reiterated by the angels, and the wait of the Christians begins.)

Acts 2 brings Pentecost and the Holy Spirit poured out, leading to the explosive growth of the early church. **(Note:** The crowd who repents includes many who demanded Jesus' death a few weeks ago. The early church was almost entirely Jewish and from the Diaspora (the dispersion) and the poor of Israel. The Holy Spirit's work of changing the hearts of people is on clear display.)

Acts 3 sees more miraculous work by the Apostles and a 2nd sermon from Peter that convicts the hearers. **(Note:** More evidence of the power of the Holy Spirit; the same Peter who denied Jesus is the same man who, in the public square of the Temple, stands and testifies to His work and salvation.)

May 20: Acts 4 – 7

Acts 4 has Peter and John arrested, yet faithful, and the work continuing to grow in the face of persecution.

Acts 5 sees the power of the Holy Spirit and the seriousness of fidelity in the early church. You also see again the working of God preserving His early evangelists.

(Note: This chapter is one of the clearest in establishing the third member of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is God, and some of that proof is in His wielding of power and authority as shown in this chapter. You also should note the purity that God demands for the early church as He tolerates no hidden sins as He did with Israel during the kingdom years; God's church will be a perfected, pure church.)

Acts 6 sees the first servants of the church handling administration.

Acts 7 has our first martyr, as Stephen is killed for his faith & testimony. **(Note:** Stephen's long recounting of the history of Israel is a recounting of the faithfulness of God culminating in the work of Christ in salvation.)