

2 Kings 14:15-29

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Preacher: Billy Joe Calvert

[0 : 00] We are in 2 Kings 14, starting verse 15, and let's go to the end of the chapter. Let's go ahead and tell you, we are in this succession of kings, in particular in the northern portion of the kingdom of Israel, that immediately precedes the fall of the northern kingdom to the Assyrian Empire, which we find in the very beginning verses of chapter 17.

So we are really nearing the end, if you will. But it tells us here, I know we're picking up a little bit midstream, but we will not go back to read it in context. We're going to pick up in verse 15, because hopefully the context is telling enough.

Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash, which he did in his might, and how he fought with Amaziah, king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Jehoash slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

And Jeroboam, his son, became king in his place. Amaziah, the son of Jehoash, king of Judah, lived 15 years after the death of Jehoash, son of Jehoaz, king of Israel.

Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? They conspired against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. But they sent after him in Lachish and killed him there.

[1 : 21] Then they brought him on horses, and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David. All the people of Judah took Azariah, who was 16 years old, and made him king in the place of his father, Amaziah.

He built Elath and restored it to Judah after the king slept with his fathers. In the fifteenth year of Amaziah, the son of Jehoash, king of Judah, Jeroboam, the son of Jehoash, king of Israel, became king in Samaria and reigned 41 years.

He did evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Naboth, which he made Israel sin. He restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath, as far as the Sea of Arabah, according to the word of the Lord, the God of Israel, which he spoke through his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet who was of Gath-Hepper.

For the Lord saw the affliction of Israel, which was very bitter, for there was neither bond nor free, nor was there any helper for Israel. The Lord did not say that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam, the son of Jehoash.

Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam and all that he did in his might, how he fought and how he recovered for Israel, Damascus and Hamath, which had belonged to Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

[2 : 40] And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, even with the kings of Israel. And Zechariah, his son, became king in his place. 2 Kings 14, verses 15 through 29.

Let's put it in context really quick. Amaziah was the king of Judah, which had a good beginning, much like his father, and had a tragic ending. If you remember in the verses that precede this in the 14th chapter, it is due to his pride.

It is to the reality that even though he started well, it is after the Lord had granted him a little bit of victories that he thought he would fight with the king of Israel. And in that fighting with the king of Israel, Jehoash, he was defeated.

Jehoash went to Jerusalem, tore down about 600 feet or 400 cubits of the wall of Jerusalem, drove his chariots through it, and therefore claimed the city. It is after the claiming of the city that he went back, and Amaziah continued to reign.

So what we see here is just this progression of kings. We are met very quickly with the death of Jehoash, the continuing reign of Amaziah, the death there. And then Azariah, side note, same man as Uzziah.

[3 : 44] This is in the year of King Uzziah's death. Remember Isaiah, right? So Azariah, Uzziah, same man. We see here also the only other mentioning of the prophet of Jonah other than the book that bears his name when he went to Nineveh to prophesy.

So we can date the prophecies of Jonah based upon this portion of the word. Nineveh, by the way, a part of the Assyrian Empire. The Assyrians are the ones that end up leading to the captivity of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Same prophet that prophesied to the city of Nineveh of the Assyrians was also the prophet who prophesied concerning the northern kingdom of Israel. It's pretty amazing. But anyway, that's the only other biblical mentioning of this individual.

You need to know, just for biblical context and history, that the corresponding prophets for this date are the prophets of Hosea and Amos.

So when you open up your minor prophets of Hosea and Amos, you will see that they prophesied during the years of Uzziah and Jeroboam II, which is the Jeroboam we have here.

[4 : 55] So if we want contextual background, we go to those two prophecies. It is there also that we see that the Lord is dealing retribution or judgment upon the people of Damascus.

We see that. And, you know, Hosea, him living out based upon the unfaithfulness of his wife, taking a bride from harlotry, and she's unfaithful and names his children, all these things.

We see a lived out example of the unfaithfulness of Israel. Amos declares how God brings judgment, and we see this expansion. All these things we'll get into in just a moment. So there's a lot of context for this time.

But this is very briefly before the fall of the northern kingdom. Now it falls almost 200 years before the fall of the southern kingdom. So we have some time that overlaps between the fall to the Assyrians and the fall to the Babylonians.

But I just want you to see this evening. We won't take a lot of time because we read this and we say, well, how can we interpret this? How can we divide this? And I think there are portions of Scripture that we need to do this. I want you to see some observations from the rise and fall of a nation.

[6 : 01] Just some observations that we see very quickly here as we meet king after king after king from the rise and fall of a nation. It is observations that we can say exist beyond even the people of Israel, but are really clearly displayed in the people of Israel.

It is something that transcends time, but yet really is confined very much to this time. It is something that is fleshed out in living color for us with the people of Israel, but something that has application to us as well.

Number one, we are very aware here of the fleeting days of man. The fleeting days of man. When we read these texts, we cannot help but notice the grand succession of individual after individual after individual after individual.

We meet this king who reigns this many years and then he dies, and this king who reigns this many years and then he dies, this king who reigns this many years and then he dies. We are reminded here of the fleeting days of man.

We know that some of these people had long reigns. Jeroboam who reigns 41 years. Azariah will or Uzziah will reign a number of years.

[7 : 14] We see that Amaziah reigned for 27 years, I believe it is. So there are some extended periods, but it is really amazing how we lose track of time past because it is confined in scripture to he lived, he reigned, he died.

A lot of days surely pass by in the living, reigning, and dying, but one thing that is made really clear to us throughout this is the fleeting days of man.

It matters little according to the world's standards, so stay with me. It matters little according to the world's standards of the fact that an individual does what is right in the sight of the Lord or does what is wrong in the sight of the Lord because in the end they all die and they sleep with their fathers and they're buried.

From the world's perspective, it matters little. As a matter of fact, we see clearly in this passage that a number of those who did what was wicked in the sight of the Lord from all standards of world judgment were successful.

They accomplished much. We tend to overlook that because we get caught up on the spiritual side of it, but they accomplish grand and great things. We'll see this in just a moment.

[8 : 30] They are even used of the Lord for some of these accomplishments, but in the end what we find is and then they slept with their fathers or he slept with his fathers and was buried in the land or he slept with his fathers and was buried in the land and he too slept with his fathers.

You know, everybody we meet in scripture dies. Save two. Everybody we meet in scripture dies. Why? Because we're reminded of this reality that if we place all of our hope and expectation and anticipation upon man, then it is fleeting.

Hope found in man alone is a hope that will fail for sure. Scripture very clearly teaches us that deliverance by man is in vain.

We need someone greater than just man. We even need someone greater than the greatest of the kings of man, not the king of kings, but the greatest of the kings.

This is why we always allude to this. Isaiah opens the greatest chapter that he has. Chapter 6. Isaiah chapter 6.

[9 : 43] The vision of the Lord, right? This chapter opens with this reality. In the year that King Uzziah died, I was caught into the presence of the Lord.

The reason that's important is because we need to understand Isaiah. Isaiah is a prophet of the high courts. There were prophets like Jeremiah who were the weeping prophets.

There were prophets like Amos who was from the sheep herders of this region. There were prophets like Jonah who went the wrong direction and ended up in the belly of a great sea monster.

Then there were prophets like Isaiah, the ones who hung out with the kings, the one who were welcomed into the royal courts, the one who gave the prophecies of a coming king. But in the year that King Uzziah died, he saw the Lord high and lifted up.

Why? Because his hope had been found in this great king of Uzziah and all of his help was found in Uzziah and all of a sudden everything had been pulled out from under him because now this king who had done so much good was dead.

[10 : 49] And it was at that time that the king of kings and lord of lords showed him, Isaiah, that he was indeed still on the throne. It is because when we put all of our confidence, all of our hope, all of our expectation found in man, then we are stunned at how quickly their days pass.

It is even with that and this reality that we are in the election year of our own nation, too many people, even too many Christians, put too much expectation and too much hope in mankind.

Now it absolutely matters how we vote, sure. It absolutely matters that we vote, sure. But we know that we vote with one who has a greater hope and greater help than no matter what the polls state. Because deliverance by man is in vain. No matter who it is, they will sleep with their fathers and be buried in the land of their fathers. It doesn't matter politically, economically, from the world's standards, where they stand with the Lord.

Now, it absolutely matters in the economy of God if one does what is right and one does what is wrong. Yet, we notice very clearly here the fleeting days of man.

[12 : 10] Number two, we notice the failures of temporary success. So they were successful for a season. By the way, brother, that's a complete sign.

Sometimes I don't like the fact that I'm so squirrel-brained every now and then. Brother Jerry shared with me this morning, he said, you've begun to stand a lot more still. You don't move as much as you used to.

I said, you're right, brother. I don't know. I said, maybe, I said, I think preaching on Sunday nights and Wednesday nights behind the pulpit has calmed me down a little bit. I notice more and more I don't move. So now, thank you, brother.

I'm very aware of that. He said, did someone nail your feet? I said, no, maybe I'm just getting old. And I don't move around as much as I used to. But it's okay. It's because my Bible's here and my glasses are here. So if I need them, I can pick them up.

That's why, brother. So just a complete side note. So sorry for that. Anyway, let's get away from this. We see the failures of temporary success. We meet in this passage people that were successful.

[13 : 10] We meet the first one is Jehoash. In his battle with Amaziah, he was successful. He wins the victory when Amaziah, and the word of God tells us in 2 Chronicles chapter 25, that the reason Jehoash defeats Amaziah is because Jehoash is used of the Lord as a discipline tool for the pride of Amaziah and his rejection of the Lord God and bringing in the foreign gods of the Edomites.

We can read that in context, right? So it's not just like he was stronger, but God was using him to win the victory. So he wins the victory. He goes into Jerusalem. He plunders the temple. He carries away the gold and the silver and the utensils, and he also takes some captives with him.

But yet what we find next is very striking. He dies 15 years before Amaziah dies. So in this context, he who was victorious died 15 years before his counterpart that he defeated.

Amaziah sits upon a throne 15 years longer in Judah than Jehoash does in Israel. So that victory for the moment that the Lord used him in a mighty way is really not lasting because from all accounts, we see even when we read the corresponding passages in 2 Chronicles that just because Amaziah lost that battle, he did not suffer extensively for him.

We know that the city of Jerusalem was humiliated. The people of Judah was humiliated, but it wasn't like it was anything they never came back from. Their kingdom outlasted the northern kingdom nearly 200 years.

[14:48] There was a moment of victory, but it is a temporary success that in the end is one of great failure because he too dies.

We see Amaziah here does a lot of good things. He wins against the Edomites. He is there doing some wonderful things. But again, that success is very temporary, and it fails in the end.

Amaziah does some wonderful things. He's also known as Uzziah. His name literally means, in either interpretation, either Azariah or Uzziah, his name means it is the strength and the help of the Lord.

So the Lord strengthens him and helps him. He expands the southern kingdom. Really does an astounding job. It tells us that in verse 20, after they brought Amaziah back on horses, by the way, just a side note, Amaziah dies just like his father dies.

He flees. The conspirators go and get him, and they kill him. It's an astounding thing, though, that the conspirators go against him and kill him, but then they bring his body back in a chariot and horses.

[15:53] Why? Because even though they may have great disdain for the ruling king, they always had respect for the bodies of the individuals. And they would bring him back.

That's why if you read Jewish culture, and even one of the greatest, and understand this in the prophecies, dishonors that you could ever do was to allow the body to remain unburied and for the birds of the air and the dogs of the field to consume that body.

That's one of the greatest dishonors that you could ever extend to an individual. So after they bring him back, it says the people of Judah, which tells us, it says all the people of Judah, actually.

It says this conspiracy was probably a very small number of people. All the people of Judah took Azariah, who was 16, and made him king. And it tells us in verse 22, he built Elath and restored it to Judah after the king slept with his fathers.

This is a very important seaport on the Red Sea. So economically, he is expanding the southern kingdom of Judah.

[16:57] But we go on. Again, we're looking at the failures of temporary success. It's not that that one is a failure immediately. It is an economic benefit. He expands it.

We move on. And then we see what we refer to as Jeroboam II. So he's the only king that we have that is the same name, ruling in the same land. I know we have two Joashes, but they were one in Judah, one in Israel.

This is Jeroboam who is ruling just like the first Jeroboam in Israel. It tells us in verse 25, he restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord.

So he geographically expands the nation. Now, what does this mean to us? For the first time since Solomon's reign, the nation of Israel, if you look at its entirety, both northern kingdom and southern kingdom, are possessing almost the same amount of land they had during the reign of Solomon. Land is power, right? Solomon is the height of Israel's dynasty rule. He had more land and possession of more land than any other king who went before him or after him.

[18:10] God in the covenant, the Abrahamic covenant, had promised the descendants of Abraham the land. That's part of it. What we see during the reign of Azariah and Jeroboam is they are almost back up to that point.

Both of them expand the borders of their corresponding territories. Now, I share this with you because from all accounts and purposes, there's a very successful time among the people of God.

Other than the fact that he's doing what is wicked in the sight of the Lord his God. But even with this expansion, stay with me, the kingdom still falls.

And the reason why, the reason they were able to expand is because the local tribes around them were being weakened.

Go read Hosea and Amos. God was judging those people of Damascus. He was judging these people. They are being weakened. But all the while, the Assyrians are in waiting.

[19 : 24] So they're caught up in the success that is before them. And they're not really so concerned about what's going on internally. Are they walking in faithful obedience to the Lord God? Are they living lives of repentance?

No. From the outside, it looks like they're doing things well. We're growing. We're expanding economically, geographically. Everything is going great. We're almost at the height of the empire of the Davidic lineage again.

We almost have all of our land back. But yet God is still going to discipline them with the Assyrians who are a little bit farther away and the Babylonians who are even then a little bit farther away.

Why?

Because they're not dealing with the internal matters of the heart. Temporary success often blinds the people of God to the realities of the sins in their life.

Let things go well in church for a little while and we forget about repentance, confession, falling on our faces before the Lord. Mark it in church history, my friend.

[20 : 24] When the church seems to be doing everything right, the first thing that falls by the wayside is an utter commitment to devotion and holiness. It becomes easier.

It becomes lax and before you know it, you've went further than you ever wanted to go. This is why our brothers and sisters around the world who are a part of the persecuted church do not pray that the persecution will stop because they know that the persecution is the very thing that holds them in check.

They pray that they would be emboldened in the midst of it. We see here the failures of temporary success. It is not that we ought not to be successful. It is not that we should not strive to do things well.

It is that we should keep this success in its right proportion, understanding that the third reality is there and this is our final one. We see the fleeting days of man.

We see the failures of temporary success. Number three, one thing that we observe from the rise and fall of a nation is the faithfulness of God's character. It is the faithfulness of God's character.

[21 : 34] God is faithful. The great theme that continues to show itself as we look at the nation of Israel is that God is faithful to his word.

There is nothing, make no mistake about it, there is nothing within the people that requires and mandates God's blessings upon them.

Okay? At any given moment, historically, God would be without excuse for removing his hand from any of these people.

The moment that Amaziah brought false gods from Edom into the land and set them up, the moment that his grandfather built a temple to Baal and ransacked the temple of the Lord God Almighty to build the temple of Baal in Jerusalem, would have been moment enough for God to withdraw his hand.

The moment that the golden calves and the Baals and the Asher's are set up in the northern kingdom would have been more than enough for God to pull back his hand. But what we find is that God is so faithful.

[22 : 42] Look at what it says. He's even faithful to use people who do what is wrong in the sight of the Lord. Verse 24 tells us that when Jeroboam became king he did evil on the side of the Lord.

He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Naboth which he made Israel to sin. So he's doing wickedly. But then we continue reading on we see that he has a little bit of success but we notice why he has success.

The reason he has success is because he expands their territory verse 25 according to the word of the Lord the God of Israel which he spoke through his servant Jonah the son of Amittai.

Evidently Jonah had declared that God was going to bless the land and he would expand the land and that he would go into this and he did it. Why did he do it? Look at verse 26. For the Lord saw the affliction of Israel which was very bitter for there was neither bond nor free nor there was any

helper of Israel.

God took notice of the suffering and the depravity and the disparity of his people. Now God could have very easily said you get what you deserve. Right? By this point historically they had been walking in unfaithfulness time and time and time again.

[23 : 50] By this point historically God had given his word. Not only do we have the prophets that we know of we have now here Jonah, Hosea, Amos there are other prophets that are unnamed.

There are people of God who declare the word of God over and over and over again but yet the people are walking in rebellion but God notices the depravity of the people and takes notice.

Why does he take notice? Verse 27 the Lord did not say that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash. He saved them by the hand of a king who did what was evil in his sight.

Why? To be a blessing to Jeroboam? No. Because God's faithful. It is the faithfulness of God's character.

God did not say that he would blot them out. Now judgment is coming. We know the nation will fall. Absolutely. We will see it. But even in his discipline God is faithful.

[24 : 56] Right? We read the rest of the story. We read all of the Old Testament and what we read in the Old Testament is this repeated refrain that's said very clearly in the book of Lamentations that God strikes to heal.

Striking yet healing. He's going to wound them. Yes. He's going to cast them out. Yes. But then he says later he says in all the major prophets he said but I will call you back.

What does he say in Ezekiel? For the sake of my name I will call you back so that my name may be glorified I will call you back. What does he say in Jeremiah? I will put a heart of flesh in you. I will take out the heart of stone. I will do this so that my name will be glorified.

What does he say in the book of Isaiah? You will be restored. Why? So that my name may be glorified. Right? What we see is that God is so faithful. There is nothing in man that compels God or mandates God that he has to bless them but it is the faithfulness of God to his own covenants and his own promises that maintains that character.

Right? That God will do what he says he's going to do. Now that's important. That's important because what we find in scripture is that the character of God can be trusted at all times.

[26 : 21] The character of God can be trusted. There are moments in each of our lives where we absolutely fail him. There are moments in our lives where we mess up.

There are moments in our lives where we do that which we should not do and we don't do that which we ought to do. There are moments in our lives where we stumble and where we fall and the enemy of our soul likes to try to convince us that we are beyond all hope.

But the reality is is that we have if we have entered into a covenantal relationship with the holy God through the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior that we are in the covenant of his blood then we can remind our enemy that we were beyond hope when God called us we will be beyond hope of all days according to the world's hope but that it is the faithfulness of God to his own character that maintains our expectation of hope.

That we do not rely upon our own faithfulness that does not excuse the reality that we can go do whatever we want to do because then we're not living in a covenantal relationship, right? We're using it as an excuse but that is the assurance that when we stumble that when we fall that when we must repent and confess of those mistakes that God has not said he would wipe us off the face of the land because he maintains his covenant promises.

The character of God can be absolutely trusted. What we find is that he is faithful and it's astounding because this nation is going to rise and fall it's going to be absolutely wiped off but God will restore them.

[27 : 59] Why? Because he's faithful to himself. Friend, if salvation is based upon who we are and what we have done and all we have accomplished then it is a very very frail salvation indeed because we are trusting in the fleeting days of man but when it rests upon the realities of who God is what he has declared and what he has promised then we're staking all of our hope and all of our claim upon the character of God and it cannot and will not fail us.

it is here that we find confidence and the assurance that leads us to press forward each and every day for his glory and honor. Let's pray and then we'll be through.

Oh God we thank you again so much for this day. We're thankful for these Old Testament passages which revealed to us the character of God because we know that we need the God of the Old Testament for he is the God of the New Testament and he is the God of today.

Father we stand before you as a humble people reminded that it is your faithfulness that sustains us. We long to walk in daily obedience we long to walk in faithfulness so Father may we see your faithfulness and may it be the very thing that maintains us in our walk for your glory.

Lord as we prepare to leave here tonight Lord Jesus we ask that our lives would be a reflection of who you are to the world that watches us and is waiting to know. Help us to be those who proclaim Christ not only through our words but through our actions and may you be known by those who know us.

[29 : 39] Be glorified and honored and we ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. Thank you guys I'd like to thank you so I'd like to thank you so I'd like to thank you so I'd like to thank you so I'd like to thank you so I'd like to thank you so I'd like to thank you so I'd like to thank you so I'd like to thank you so I'd like to thank you so I'd like to thank you so I'd like to thank you so I'd like to thank you!

Thank you.

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Thank you.

[32 : 12] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[34 : 42] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.