

2 Kings 15

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[0:00] 2 Kings chapter 15. I know we've been going back and forth between Southern Kingdom, Northern Kingdom, Southern Kingdom, Northern Kingdom. We'll continue that on.

I will let you know though by the time we get to the end of the 15th chapter, the last king of the Northern Kingdom is in place. So then we get into the 16th chapter which is primarily a focus on the Southern Kingdom and then we get into the 17th chapter which is the complete fall. And I say complete fall because you'll see here in just a moment that it is a partial fall that starts in the 15th chapter. The 17th chapter shows us the fall of the Northern Kingdom. You say, why does all that matter? Well, we're covering a lot of ground and we're covering it quickly because the author of the book of 1 and 2 Kings covers a lot of ground, covers it quickly. There are some matters in which really have direct application to the kings of the Southern Kingdom or Judah that find a lot more information in the book of 1 and 2 Chronicles.

2 Chronicles in particular, one of those would be the object of our attention that is first given to us in the 15th chapter, Azariah or Uzziah, same person. And we see a lot more information regarding him. But as we said, we want to make sure, and I know this is a lot of information to give you in context, but it's okay because we have to ask ourselves, why are these things here? As we've said, when we started studying 1 and 2 Kings, these things are written so that we may know why the nation of Israel went into captivity. That is, this is what led them into captivity. This is why God disciplined them the way they did. So we read it with that in mind. The fact that Israel or the Northern Kingdom is carried away into captivity some nearly 200 years before Judah, the Southern Kingdom, ought to stand out to us. So there are some differences between the Northern and the Southern

Kingdoms, and those differences get very stark as we progress later in time. 1 and 2 Chronicles, rather than telling us why they went into captivity, are an encouragement to the nation coming out of captivity, and are written to assure the people that God has remained faithful. It had been 70 plus years in your reckoning. If you read it, 70 to 74 years since the nation had been back in their own promised land. And the chronicler is showing us that God was faithful even through their disobedience.

God preserved the lineage of David because, remember, there are those covenants that really are applicable to the nation of Israel and even to us. And it is an assurance to the nation that God is in control, and here's how they move forward. This is what was being done that was right. This is what was being done that was wrong. So big differences as to this is why we got in trouble, and this is how God has preserved us out of the fact that we got in trouble. So we ought to praise God that we have 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles because we don't need anyone to tell us that man in his own is going to get in trouble. We have that highlighted for us in Scripture, but what we praise God for is that he shows us his faithfulness in spite of the reality that we get in trouble, right? That we see the faithfulness of God that is recorded for us. Now, a lot of that to say, these last few portions that we've been looking at, I know that we haven't really been looking at them kind of verse by verse.

[3:47] If you were here Sunday night, you saw this reality, you'll see it again tonight. And that is, we're looking kind of at an overview in this contrast between what's going on in one place versus what's going on in another and why God is moving in those ways in particular. So we're going to see 1 Kings, or 2 Kings chapter 15. We'll read it in its entirety, but I want you to keep in mind here as we read this, the blessing of faithfulness. Some of the blessings of faithfulness. It says in the 27th year of Jeroboam, who is Jeroboam II, by the way, if you need, if you're reading through the minor prophets of Scripture, you need to know that the minor prophet Amos, we say minor because it's a smaller book. It's not that he's even less of an individual. Amos is a man who said, I'm neither

a prophet nor the son of a prophet, right? I'm a grower of sycamore trees and a tender of sheep. But God called me to prophesy.

So you read the book of Amos. He speaks of the household of Jeroboam. It's this Jeroboam, okay? Because there's two Jeroboams in the northern kingdom. Amos is speaking at this time.

That's applicable. You'll see why in just a moment, okay? Anyway, in the 27th year of Jeroboam, king of Israel, Azariah, son of Amaziah, king of Judah, became king. He was 16 years old when he became king, and he reigned 52 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jekeliah of Jerusalem. He did right in the sight of the Lord, according to all his father Amaziah had done. Only the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. The Lord struck the king so that he was a leper to the day of his death.

He lived in a separate house, while Jotham, the king's son, was over the household, judging the people of the land. Now the rest of the acts of Azariah and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And Azariah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David, and Jotham, his son, became king in his place.

[5 : 44] Now, in the 38th year of Azariah, king of Judah, Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam, became king over Israel in Samaria for six months. He did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Naboth, which he made Israel sin. Then Shalom, son of Jebesh, conspired against him and struck him before the people and killed him, and he reigned in his place. Now the rest of the acts of Zechariah, behold, are they a written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? This is the word of the Lord, which he spoke to Jehu, saying, Your sons to the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.

And so it was. Shalom, son of Jebesh, became king in the 39th year of Uzziah. By the way, Uzziah and Azariah, same man. Okay, so we're not, this is not a contrast, same man. So we need to understand here. Let's go in the same, in the 39th year of Uzziah, king of Judah. And he reigned one month in Samaria. Then Menahem, son of Gadi, went up from Tirzah and came to Samaria and struck Shalom, son of Jebesh, in Samaria and killed him and became king in his place. Now the rest of the acts of Shalom and his conspiracy, which he made, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. Then Menahem struck Tifshah and all who were in it, its borders from Tirzah, because they did not open to him. Therefore he struck it and ripped up all its women who were with child. In the 39th year of Azariah, king of Judah, Menahem, son of Gadi, became king over Israel and reigned 10 years in Samaria. He did evil in the sight of the Lord and he did not depart all his days from the sins of

Jeroboam, the son of Naboth, which he made Israel sin. Pul, king of Assyria, came against the land and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver so that his hand might be with him to strengthen the kingdom under his rule. Then Menahem exacted the money from Israel, even from all the mighty men of wealth, from each man 50 shekels of silver to pay the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria returned and did not remain there in the land. Now the rest of the acts of Menahem and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Menahem slept with his fathers and Pekahiah, his son, became king in his place. In the 50th year of Azariah, king of Judah, Pekahiah, son of Menahem, became king over Israel in Samaria and he reigned two years.

He did evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, son of Naboth, which he made Israel sin. Then Pekah, son of Remaliah, his officer, conspired against him and struck him in Samaria in the castle of the king's house with Argob and Aria. And with him were 50 men of the Galadites and he killed him and became king in his place. Now the rest of the acts of Pekahiah and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

In the 52nd year of Azariah, king of Judah, Pekah, son of Remaliah, became king over Israel. In Samaria, he reigned 20 years. He did evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, son of Naboth, which he made Israel sin. In the days of Pekah, king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, came and captured Ajan and Abelath-Machah and Genoa and Kadesh and Hazor and Galid and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali. And he carried them captive to Assyria.

[9 : 20] And Hosea, the son of Elah, made a conspiracy against Pekah, the son of Remaliah, and struck him and put him to death and became king in his place in the 20th year of Jotham, the son of Uzziah.

Now the rest of the acts of Pekah and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. In the 2nd year of Pekah, the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, became king. He was 25 years old when he became king, and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem, and his mother's name was Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok.

He did what was right in the sight of the Lord. He did according to all that his father Uzziah had done. Only the high places were not taken away, and the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. He built the upper gate of the house of the Lord. Now the rest of the acts of Jotham and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? In those days the Lord began to send Rezan, king of Aram, and Pekah, the son of Remaliah, against Judah. And Jotham slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, his father. And Ahab, his son, became king in his place. Clear, right? Makes it really clear when they go back and forth between Azariah and Uzziah, even though you're dealing with the same man. So let's put it in context so we understand. We're introducing this chapter to the beginning of the reign of Azariah slash Uzziah. He reigns 52 years. During that 52 years of reign there is this great succession of kings that goes on. That's what follows after this, right? This number of kings that are going back and forth in the northern kingdom. So we are contrasting here kind of this longevity of Azariah slash Uzziah, and we are seeing it in contrast with the turmoil that is going on in the northern kingdom in this short reign of kings. I mean, 52 years is a long reign. He was not that old, by the way, when he died. Since he began to reign at 62, he reigned 52 years. You can do the math, right? He was 68 years old. We get more of his story in 2 Chronicles, and we'll get to that in just a minute. And he has succeeded, though he was co-regent for a little while with his son,

Jotham. And even during the reign of Jotham, who reigned for a number of years, there is still this turmoil. We finally get to Hosea, who is the last king of the northern kingdom of Israel before they go into full captivity of Assyria, okay? So really, what you're essentially seeing are the reign of Uzziah and his son Jotham during the final years of existence for the northern kingdom, okay? And you're seeing a contrast here. Very little is said, admittedly, in 2 Kings of what is going on in Judah. We get a greater context when we turn the pages and we go to 2 Chronicles in time. If the Lord allows us to tarry, we will eventually make our way there. Really quick, brief note, Uzziah is one of the good kings. He is one of the great kings. He does an amazing job of calling the people back.

[12:22] As a matter of fact, it says that he serves the Lord while he is strong and strengthened. Until he becomes so strong through his accomplishments, pride begins to creep in.

And his great sin, the sin which led to the leprosy breaking out upon him, and therefore him being confined to the house of a leper and his son being co-regent with him, was that he chose that he himself could go into the temple and burn his own incense and make his own offering on the altar. He overstepped his boundaries, right? That was the reality. When the priest came in, they said, it's not for you to do that. He said, oh, but who are you to say that's not for me to do that? And the Lord struck him with leprosy while in the temple complex. They brought him out, and he was confined to the rest of his days to his house. But in spite of that, he did a number of things that were pleasing to the Lord. We get more context. His son did the same thing, reconstructing the walls, re-fortifying a number of things. Uzziah, I love the fact that the Bible tells us Uzziah loved the soil. So he planted a lot of vegetation, had a lot of cattle, had all these things. He was a man of the ground, right? He was really one who saw a creation for what it was until he became so strong and so secure. That shouldn't surprise us, by the way, because we do see this one caveat between those kings who did what was right. Only they did not destroy the high places where each man burned his own incense and offered his own offerings. Do you know what that means? That means this is the high places, not where they were worshiping to Baal, but where each individual of those high places were setting up their own altar unto God. You remember when they came into the promised land, God said, you cannot worship me however you want to, wherever you want to. There will be a central place of worship. There will be a place where I will cause my name to dwell. You should go there. He said, no longer shall you worship on your high places. The people didn't necessarily embrace that. No king demolished that. David would have been the closest Solomon began to set up these high places that were originally for false gods and those who followed David allowed them to exist. What happened there?

Because now we have the freedom to congregate and to come together, but we need to also understand the danger of these high places, right? Because it is a danger. This is completely not in my message. Tonight, this is just something you need to see because it's in the text. What's the danger in every man being able to offer his own sacrifices and is burning his own incense on his own high place?

Well, the danger is this. God has always called a people to be a corporate people. He's called them to worship together. He never called anyone to him in an isolated manner. You need to understand that.

If your faith was just such a personal faith that it was all about how you wanted to worship the Lord, your God, then it would have never been wrong to worship on a high place that you had built for yourself to burn your own incense and offer your own offering. But God had so ordained that the temple would be centrally located that people would be able to come together, worship with one another, celebrate with one another, sing the Psalms and the hymns with one another, to go before the Lord with thanksgiving with one another. Why? Because God has called his people to be a corporate people.

[15:30] That's why it tells us this whole idea about the high places. It's repeated in the book of Hebrews, right? Do not forsake the assembling together of one another. That's why God is consistent. So anyway, with that context, Uzziah said, well, if they can burn incense up there, I'm the king. I can burn incense wherever I want to, right? Wrong. How we worship absolutely matters. That's 2 Chronicles.

So what I want you to see this evening though, is the blessing of faithfulness. The blessing of faithfulness. We see Uzziah, Jotham, and then finally Jotham sleeps with his fathers and Ahaz, his son becomes king in his place. But in the midst of that extended period of faithfulness in Judah, there is uttermost turmoil going on in Israel or the Northern Kingdom. And it is a turmoil that essentially and eventually leads to their captivity of the Assyrians. We see a partial captivity here in the chapter before us. We will see a full captivity and their full falling to the Assyrians in the 17th chapter. So we need to be reminded of this. The book of Judges says this, in those days, there was no king in Israel and every man did what was right in his own eyes. Remember that? That's the theme of the book of Judges. In those days, there was no king in Israel and every man did what was right in his own eyes. But what is another theme of Judges with that in mind? That when man does what is right in his own eyes, he does not progress. Rather, he digresses. When we read Judges, we are going downward in society.

We are not getting better. The longer that man does what is right in his own eyes, the further they get away from the Lord their God and they are in a constant state of digression, not progression. Now we say that because the northern kingdom reflects the same thing. They are doing what is right in their own eyes. They are digressing. They're not progressing. The nations around them are progressing. The Assyrians, this chapter is the first time, other than if we take it in context, the fact that Jonah was sent to Nineveh of the Assyrians and probably that happened chronologically before the 15th chapter. More than likely it did because we see Jonah mentioned in the 14th chapter. It's a Wednesday night. I'm thankful you had a meal and I'm thankful you were ready to pay attention. I'm giving a lot of information. Other than that fact, this is the first time the Assyrians are even mentioned in scripture. Where did they come from? Well, they've been progressing, right? While the people of God over here, quote unquote, the nation of Israel who is doing what is right in their own eyes are digressing. Friend, make no mistake about it. When man does what is right in his own eyes, you're always going down. You're in a state of digression, not progression.

[18:19] And we are in a time where man wants to be his own God, man wants to set his own course, and man wants to do his own thing. You can do that, but you're going on a downward spiral.

And the nation will go with you, unfortunately. So I want you to see here the blessing of faithfulness. Number one, this blessing, again, we won't break it into context. That's why I give you all that kind of background information first. Number one, faithfulness allows us to have a standard to which one can return to. Faithfulness provides a standard to which one can return to. Admittedly, there were some bad kings in Judah, the southern kingdom. We saw some of them, right? The conspiracies that came against them, we saw that they were soon, I mean, Uzziah slash Azariah's father was one of them, right? He was killed.

But what we find is that even though there are some bad kings, there are those who do what is wicked, those who start out good and then those who end up bad. Really, the ones that were the

worst were the ones who had their connection to Ahaz or Ahab and Jezebel. But what we find is that in Judah, there is always this refrain, they're always going back to the standard which was set, which is King David.

Now, they all do what their father did, what was right, as their father had done. What we do not find is any ever returning back to the level of that standard. No one does as David did. We'll find that though they were not as faithful as David, though they were not as faithful as David, right? So, we see that they can never make it back. But even with their rebellion, even with their stumbling, even with their failures and their falling, what we find is that faithfulness allows there to be a standard to which one can return to. There is no faithfulness in the northern kingdom, but what we find is the standard that was originally set is the standard that every other king goes back to.

In the southern kingdom, we should not be surprised that David is the standard because they are all descendants of David. In the northern kingdom, in contrast, they are not descendants of one individual, but everyone does as Jeroboam the first did. They did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the first. Everyone is doing the same thing. Every king, we find it as Jeroboam made Israel to sin. As Jeroboam made Israel to sin. What we have is this repeated refrain, as A.W. Tozer used to say, water never rises above its source. And what your source is, is absolutely essential.

[20 : 59] David was the source of faithfulness to the southern kingdom. Jeroboam was the source to the northern kingdom. And we never find them rising above that source. One of the astounding things that we find in the northern kingdom is we never find a king breaking the cycle. We never find one going and doing what is right in the sight of the Lord. They are just maybe not as bad as the guy before them, but they're neither as good as they ought to be. Right? Hosea would not be as bad as the kings who went before him, but he also will not walk in faithfulness. He will also do that which is wicked.

He will also do that which is wrong. Why? Because he will lead the nation to sin as Jeroboam made Israel to sin. What our source is, is absolutely essential because it will dictate and determine where we return to naturally. This is why God calls us to walk in a relationship with him, a covenant relationship, because we see that though man wants to claim independence, though man especially think about this in the northern kingdom, every man, they're not familial connected to one another. They're not one great dynasty and every king is trying to do it his way. Right? He's trying to do it his own way, but he always reverts back to the same standard. But faithfulness is attached. It gives a standard to which one can return to.

And it is absolutely essential that we do that. We need to surround ourselves with people who are walking faithfully before the Lord our God. We need to be those people who exhibit it for our children, our grandchildren, and those around us. We ought to be that for someone else so that we can be the water level, if you will, that would raise others up. It is an absolutely essential matter. Now, when Tozer made that statement, admittedly, he was directing that statement at pastors. So he was telling pastors, water never rises above its source. So what he was doing was laying the blame of congregational problems at the pastor's feet. And I think that's a great place to lay it. That's why I have always tried to make it my ambition to raise the water level a little bit in my own life so that hopefully and prayerfully we can raise the water level a little bit in each other's lives. And we ought to understand that every weakness and every stumbling and every matter really has a source. But the blessing of faithfulness is that it gives us a standard to which one can return to.

[23 : 39] Man will fall. Man will stumble. But we see here that it is absolutely essential that we have a standard. Number two, faithfulness provides a stability that is a result of endurance.

It provides a stability that is a result of endurance. Notice how stable the kingdom of Judah is in contrast to the instability of the kingdom of Israel.

And that stability, really, we don't see it as clear here. We have to read the fullness of Scripture. We have to read all of the Old Testament. We have to go into Chronicles. We have to go into the prophetic word. But we see here this ongoing reliance that the southern kingdom, while not perfect, right? But the temple may be destroyed, but it gets repaired. The walls fall down, but they get repaired, right? There's a stability there. We don't find revolts among the people.

We don't find anybody getting real upset. We don't find a bunch of conspiracies, right? We don't find any of these matters. Why? Because of the faithfulness of doing what is right in the sight of the Lord their God. And it provides a stability in a very unstable world.

We see, of course, clearly that the grand stability that was for the southern kingdom was the covenantal promises of God. That is, it was more dependent upon the faithfulness of the Lord than

it was the faithfulness of man. But that stability, because God's word was sure and God's word could not be broken, at least provided a security for them. And it was the stability that God was ensuring because even when the kingdom was divided, if you remember, the Lord said that he would not divide all of it, but he would preserve two for David's sake. When you read the Old Testament and you read, you get into the prophetic words and you get into God's judgment. I love reading the prophecies. I used to not just, just full confession. I used to stumble through the books of prophecy and I used to kind of get like, okay, here we go. And they don't always make you feel warm and fuzzy. You know, some of them are really kind of down and out. Jeremiah would be a good one. Lamentations is another one.

[26 : 02] You know, they're not really, not really warm fuzzies. Don't really read them to feel good. But what we find is that in the midst of all these prophecies, we also see some of the greatest promises of scripture. If you read any of the prophetic books, it seems as if at the darkest moments, God lets a ray of light shine through. But then God reminds you that he's going to do a great work.

And he's going to do an amazing work. He's going to restore you. He's going to, he's going to renew you. He's going to call you back to himself. And he says this to the nation. He said, for my namesake, for my namesake. See, the stability really was the character of God. And it was the worship of God among the nations that they were reliant upon who God was. But it provides a stability that is really one that must endure. Friend, if you're going to walk in stability and certainty, then you will admittedly have to endure failures, struggles, and shortcomings. Number three, not only is it a standard to which one can return to, it's a stability that's a result of endurance. Number three, it is a safeguard against open rebellion. Faithfulness is a safeguard against open rebellion. Rebellion. It's amazing to me when we read the northern kingdom. Seems like there's always a friend. You notice that all the rebellion, none of them are enemies. As a matter of fact, the greatest battles that the kingdom of Israel fights are internal battles. It is usually a friend or a captain of their army or a leader that makes a conspiracy and goes and kills the king.

It is internal fighting because it's open rebellion among the people. Now, earlier, I alluded to Amos, the prophetic book of Amos. And it really shows when Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam, becomes king and reigns six months. Has a very short reign. After six months, it tells us that he is killed, right? He said he did what was evil. And then Shalom, the son of Jebash, conspired against him and struck him before the people and killed him. Again, an extra biblical account. Josephus will tell us that Shalom was one of his friends. It was not an enemy. It was a friend who conspired against him and killed him. And we say, well, why did that happen? When the book of Amos, when you read the prophecy of Amos concerning the household of Jeroboam, Amos declares that the Lord will bring a sword against the household of Jeroboam. As a matter of fact, it is in that chapter that the people tell Amos he needs to quit prophesying that he doesn't need to be a prophet. And it is then that he says, I'm neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet. I'm just telling you what God says. And God says he's bringing a sword against the household of Jeroboam. Now there's one issue there. Jeroboam is of the household of Jehu.

Jehu was not a faithful king. He did what was wicked in the sight of the Lord, but he was used of the Lord to cleanse the northern kingdom of Israel of the bell worship of Jezebel. You remember that, right? All this stuff's coming together. And then God made a promise to Jehu. God's promise to Jehu, because he was used of the Lord, he said, you will have a descendant set upon the throne to the fourth generation.

[29 : 28] Jeroboam is the third generation. So when Amos gives the prophetic word that God will bring a sword against the household of Jeroboam, surely it will not be Jeroboam because then the word of God would be contrasting one another. He would not tell Jehu to the fourth generation and then have Amos say that a sword's coming.

But a sword does come. It just comes to his son six months after he steps on the throne. And that's why it tells us in this chapter, this was according to the word of the Lord given to Jehu, that he would have a son set upon the throne to the fourth generation. God kept his word.

But a friend of that fourth generation conspired against him, struck him and killed him and took the throne. And then it rained another brief time because someone struck him and killed him. Someone struck him and killed him because as soon as Shalom kills him, then we meet this great man named Manahem, great, you know, tongue in cheek. He's not really a great man who says he's a captain of the army.

He says he's killed the king. So I'm going to go kill him. And he kills him. And now all of a sudden he says, well, I went over here to Terza. They went open the city up for me. So I'm going to burn the gates down. And he literally killed everyone in Terza. You need to understand that Terza is in the land of Israel. He's killing his own people. Now you need to know that because this big mighty man who took over the throne, killed his own people. You think he would be a warrior. The Assyrians show up and he doesn't want to fight the Assyrians. He gives them money, has no hesitation in killing his own people, but he doesn't want to kill the Assyrians, but he gets the money from the wealthy people of Israel.

This is why in the book of Ezekiel, Ezekiel tells us the end of the book of Ezekiel, no king should ever collect a tax from his own people to pay off other kingdoms. See, I'm saying this because these matters don't happen in Judah. Why? Because of the safeguard of faithfulness. When man is doing what is right in his own eyes, man would do whatever he can, whenever he can, in its open rebellion. Faithfulness to the Lord is a safeguard against rebellion. It absolutely is.

[31 : 45] When the word of God and the existence of God are denied, it is denied for the sake of rebellion.

And we see that happening here in the Northern Kingdom. The blessing of faithfulness, it's a standard to which we can return to. It's a stability that is a result of endurance. It's a safeguard against open rebellion. I've got one more for you that doesn't sound like a blessing, but it's a blessing nonetheless.

The blessing of man's faithfulness is that it is a sure sign of man's need for a savior. It is a sign of man's need for a savior. Probably one of the most faithful kings after David was Uzziah.

Uzziah. But Uzziah still fell woefully short of the holiness of God. Uzziah was confined to a leper's house for the end of his reign.

For all of the right that he did, all of the good that he did, all of the building up of the army, all of the outposts around Israel. As a matter of fact, he even built seaports there and expanded the trade. He went to the Red Sea and built a seaport there. He had aqueducts going everywhere, pulling water in. For all of the many advances that he did for the nation of Judah and for the people of God's people, for the restoration of worship, for the fact that he walked faithfully for a number of his days. Yet still, there's this grand blemish that pride crept in when he was strong and thought he could approach God however he wanted to.

[33 : 33] Then Jotham, his son, comes and does what is right. But then he sleeps with his fathers and is buried with his father. Ahaz comes and will do what is right. But we're reminded that while there are blessings with faithfulness, friend, we don't want to get ahead of ourselves, but the Assyrians are already present, leading partially some of the nation of Israel away in the 15th chapter.

When we get to the 17th chapter very quickly, they'll take the rest of them away. Though Judah remains, the Babylonians come and take Judah away. Because in spite of man's faithfulness, with the best of his efforts, even with the greatest standard to go to, David, with all of the privileges of the priesthood, with the presence of the temple, with all of the worship they could do, man still can't do it without a Savior.

And what we find is that we don't need a Uzziah, we don't need a Jotham, we don't even need a David. We need a King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and we need Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, to come to be able to bridge the gap, to set up on the throne with the scepter of righteousness, never parts from his hand, but also to be able to offer himself as a holy sacrifice.

I'm thankful for the faithfulness of these people, because the faithfulness of these people show us that the grand faithfulness of man is not enough.

That is an easy way of saying, the best you can do will never be good enough. If when we read the Old Testament, what we found was Uzziah did what was right and he entered into glory.

[35 : 22] Jotham did what was right and he entered into glory. If what we found was people who were doing what was right and all of a sudden they were in glory, then we would say that man can make his own way. But what we find when we open up scripture is that even the ones we think they haven't, David messes up and stumbles.

Uzziah messes up and pride creeps in. Even when we think they've got it all figured out, and man, here's what we need. We need to emulate and copy that man.

There is not one man in scripture that we need to be like. Not one physical man. Paul said, you say, some of you say, wait a minute, Paul says to imitate him.

Right. Finish the rest of the verse. Imitate me as I imitate Christ. Paul doesn't say be like me. Paul's not telling you to go get mad at John Mark because he abandoned you. Paul doesn't want you to have righteous anger towards an individual because he left mid-mission trip.

Right. Paul says imitate me as I imitate Christ. He said, the way I imitate Christ, I want you to imitate me. There's not one physical man in scripture that we need to be like. Because each one of them shows us that we stand in a great desperate need of a savior.

[36 : 39] And until we meet Jesus Christ in the New Testament, we continue to see there are blessings for faithfulness, but that blessing is not an eternal blessing. Because the only eternal blessing is found in Jesus Christ.

And I'm thankful for it. I read the Old Testament and I study it. And I'm so thankful that several years ago I made it my conviction that I would preach through scripture and that I would balance my love for the New Testament with at least a study of the Old Testament and that I would preach through it. And I'm so thankful because the Old Testament leaves me wanting to get back to the New Testament, right? The law pushes me to grace. I want to see grace every time. But I'm thankful because without the law, without the failures of man, without the stumbling, without all of the rebellion, without all of this ugliness here, we wouldn't see how sweet Jesus is.

We don't need a good king. We don't need a better king. We don't need one who is doing right in the sight of the Lord. We need the Lord God himself to come and set us free from who we are.

And this is a sign of man's need for a savior. May we never miss it. The Babylonians will still come in. Judah will fall.

[37 : 59] 728 B.C., I think it is, or 725, somewhere in there. Daniel will get carried away. He'll eat lettuce for three years, right?

He'll tell visions and dreams and everything else. But it's all pointing to what we need, and we find that in the New Testament. Here's the blessing of faithfulness.

It's a standard to which one can return to. Walk faithful so the people around you have something to go back to. Be the water source that rises the water level around you. So walk faithfully so that people attached to you and near you have a standard that they can go back to when they mess up. It provides stability. Endure so that you can create a stable environment, right? Longevity and stability go hand in hand. How do you walk in longevity and stability? You walk in faithfulness. It is a safeguard against open rebellion.

We want to quench rebellion, then walk in faithfulness to the Lord. But, friend, all of that may create a better society temporarily, but it also is a reminder that everyone around us needs a savior.

[39 : 05] And may we be those people who live that out admittedly and say that as good as I am, I still fall woefully short. And may we be a sign of man's grand need for a savior. Don't ever get over your salvation.

Don't ever get over redemption. Don't ever get over grace and mercy. And constantly be pointing to others and saying, you need what I have. You don't need to be who I am, but you need to have who I have.

2 Kings 15. Thank you, brother. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[42 : 16] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[45 : 46] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.