

2 Kings 14-15

It is a joy to be here with you tonight.

Church is such a place of civility and really a refuge from all the craziness in this world.

It seems every day things just seem to spiral even more into chaos.

It is getting more and more difficult to even find or hear truth about anything anymore.

We live in a day where truth is concealed, and the only information we get is controlled by evil politicians, social media platforms that have taken it upon themselves to determine what information is okay to post, and corrupt corporations.

I saw this week doctors were silenced who suggested that the Covid-19 narrative is misleading, their message hidden from the public.

Also, I heard corrupt politicians and media giants calling the destruction of our American cities and the destruction of our heritage and history, peaceful protests, and anything said otherwise was simply a myth.

To see the pride and arrogance of such blatant liars is maddening.

And too see so many people falling for the ruse and becoming puppets in the hands of these with wicked men and women is devastating.

The ruse is everywhere, just yesterday, before I left for work, I was sitting on the couch with my daughters, they were watching one of their shows, and a little girl about their age in the show, is an activist, she has a poster of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a grotesquely liberal judge that sits on the Supreme Court, then the little girl who is portrayed as the one with common sense in her family, mocks her father for not knowing who AOC is, who she avidly supports.

This is indoctrination, and it is deeply worrying.

And these things are placed in little kids shows to steal their hearts and minds, they are subtleties, but they are inundated with this stuff.

I was so mad, I told them, that woman on her wall stands for everything our family is against.

She stands against the traditional family and is for killing babies in their mother's wombs.

And I told them Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez also stands against our Christian values, she is not just some cool young politician, she is a staunch advocate for abortion, under the guise of women's rights.

She too is against the traditional family, the Biblical Family, and against Biblical Values.

Of course, my girls 8 and 9 did not seem to understand a word of what I was saying.

But when I got home last night, they both made me aware that if daddy did not like that show, they would never watch it again.

I hope you are talking to your kids about what they are watching, or what things are influencing them.

We don't watch a movie or show in our home together without them getting a lecture from good ol' dad.

Do you know the Obama's made a deal with Netflix, they influence the content greatly of the shows they put out, and I just cannot believe how blatant the shows are now against our faith and values, and pushing their agenda.

It infuriates me that the politicians, tech oligarchs, and this country's academia are after our children's hearts and minds, and they believe they have the right to their hearts over their own parents.

And they are prevailing in their agenda, as the young hearts under their influence rebel throughout the streets of America today.

We live in such a blatantly wicked time, the prophet Isaiah said...

Isa 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

We live in a day where evil is called good, and good is looked at as repulsive and abusive.

Darkness is covering our land, bitter realities are becoming the norm.

The Light of the church's witness is seemingly growing dimmer and dimmer as infighting and prideful arguments distract it from its calling to make disciples of the Nations.

Fear is gripping people, and fear has always been a way for the wicked to gain control.

We live in interesting times to say the least, yet, as we will see tonight, this battle between truth and lies, between darkness and light has been going on throughout the ages.

In the reading tonight, we will see the means for hope, and the means to failure.

When the people of God sought to follow Him and His ways, they prospered and thrived, yet when they turned from Him, and followed this world's fallen ways, they paid dearly for their choices.

And the same resolutions are before us today, when God's People Humble themselves, and reject this world, and repent of their sins, and turn back to their God, God will heal their lands, and restore them from the wayward path.

Tonight we will continue the back and forth from Israel's Kingdom to Judah's Kingdom, as we look at a few more kings.

Remember the reason we read through the Old Testament, and why we look to these stories.

Rom 15:4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

We are to learn from their examples and to understand where our hope comes from among all the uncertainty.

So let's pray before we get into the text...

Let's read now 2 Kings Chapter 14 starting in verse 1... We will start in Judah this evening...

Amaziah Reigns in Judah (2 Chron. 25:1-26:2)

14:1 In the second year of Joash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel, Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, became king. 2 He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. 3 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, yet not like his father David; he did everything as his father Joash had done. 4 However the high places were not taken away, and the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

So in keeping with the rotation pattern, the writer now switches from Israel to Judah to the son of Jehoash, Amaziah.

Remember Jehoash was the boy king that Jehoiada raised and had hidden from the wicked Queen Athaliah.

He walked with the Lord as long as the priest Jehoiada was alive, but after his death he ended poorly, by killing a prophet of God, and was eventually assassinated, by his own servants.

Amaziah's reign will also start very well, but he too will later abandon the Lord.

We see the historian states he did well, but he did not live up to the standard of kings laid forth by King David, he fell well short.

Like his father he allowed the worship of Yahweh to take place on the high places which were former pagan worship sites.

This was compromised convenient religion.

Because it was costly and time consuming to go all the way to the Temple to worship Yahweh, they settled for doing so at these high places.

Convenient religion has always been a snare to God's People.

The live stream of our church services presents some challenges for those drawn to convenient religion.

Before the Covid-19 crisis hit it was a challenge for people to get to church, knowing they can just catch the video service.

It will be interesting to see after the crisis how many never return to a church service.

The high places were convenient, but they were sinful and created this slothful worship atmosphere, where it was about the worshipper, and not the Object of Our Worship.

This practice will not be completely done away with until King Josiah's rule, and Revival hits the land years after this.

So, Amaziah is commended for his long rule, and the historian will now list some of his achievements starting in verse 5...

5 Now it happened, as soon as the kingdom was established in his hand, that he executed his servants who had murdered his father the king. 6 But the children of the murderers he did not execute, according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, in which the Lord commanded, saying, "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; but a person shall be put to death for his own sin."

The king established himself, and strengthen his kingdom by dealing with the assassins that killed his father.

And he adhered to the Law in not killing anyone else for the sins of the assassins.

Deut. 24:16 "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin.

Now, if he had continued to obey God's Word throughout his entire reign, he could have ended with a better testimony.

And in the end he will be assassinated, and some commentators suggest that his assassins may have even been the very children that he spared here, and they enacted vengeance for their own father.

Now, many of the enemies of Judah came and went, people groups like the Moabites, Syrians, Assyrians, even Egyptians.

But there was one continuous foe for the Nation of Judah, that just never went away, the Edomites, who were the decedents of Jacob's brother Esau.

Remember even in the womb these twins were competitors with one another.

This troubled Rebekah so much, she inquired of the Lord in...

Gen 25:22-23 But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If all is well, why am I like this?" So she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said to her:

"Two nations are in your womb,

Two peoples shall be separated from your body;

One people shall be stronger than the other,
And the older shall serve the younger."

And as the two nations grew, and time went on, the feuds never ceased.

The land of Edom was south of the Dead Sea, and the capital was Petra, the great rock fortress.

And next we will see a battle between these two rivals...

7 He killed ten thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt, and took Sela by war, and called its name Joktheel to this day.

The battle took place in the Valley of Salt, and they took Sela which means Rock, and most likely stands for Petra the Edomite capital.

Amaziah changed its name to Joktheel, which means "God Destroys."

Amaziah now, unfortunately, instead of giving Glory to His God, and finding contentment with this victory, he will become filled with the pride of life, and become overconfident, and as quickly as he rose, he will fall.

Look now starting in verse 8...

8 Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us face one another in battle." 9 And Jehoash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, "The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the

cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son as wife'; and a wild beast that was in Lebanon passed by and trampled the thistle. 10 You have indeed defeated Edom, and your heart has lifted you up. Glory in that, and stay at home; for why should you meddle with trouble so that you fall — you and Judah with you?"

11 But Amaziah would not heed. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went out; so he and Amaziah king of Judah faced one another at Beth Shemesh, which belongs to Judah. 12 And Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled to his tent. 13 Then Jehoash king of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, at Beth Shemesh; and he went to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Gate of Ephraim to the Corner Gate — four hundred cubits. 14 And he took all the gold and silver, all the articles that were found in the house of the Lord and in the treasuries of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

15 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did — 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? 16 So Jehoash rested with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. Then Jeroboam his son reigned in his place.

17 Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. 18 Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 19 And they formed a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish and killed him there. 20 Then they brought him on horses, and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the City of David.

21 And all the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. 22 He built Elath and restored it to Judah, after the king rested with his fathers.

The Scottish minister Andrew Bonar said, “Let us be as watchful after the victory as before the battle.”

This was council that Amaziah needed to hear.

He was granted a great victory over the Edomites, a very strong and formidable foe.

And in Chronicles we see what transpired after that victory...

2 Chron. 25:14 Now it was so, after Amaziah came from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the people of Seir, set them up to be his gods, and bowed down before them and burned incense to them.

He rejected Yahweh, and turned to the idols of Edom.

It is amazing that he could not reason within himself to understand that they were powerless to save Edom, how could they be of any value to Judah?

It was sin, and this compromise led to ungodly motives and pride.

With his ego now inflated he looked to other worlds to conquer.

He overestimated his power, and as he flexed against the Northern Kingdom of Israel, the king there Jehoash sends him a parable warning him of this overestimation.

He describes Amaziah as a thistle, imagining himself to be equal with a cedar, presenting a vast difference between the two.

Yet this did not hinder the overconfident king in the South, and they went to battle, and just like the king of the North had warned, Judah was crushed and humiliated.

Their king was captured, and their capital and Holy Temple were pillaged.

Approximately 200 feet of the protective wall around the city was destroyed leaving the city vulnerable to future attacks and raids.

The Northern Kingdom even took hostages from the Judeans.

The king himself was taken hostage and will remain in exile for 15 years, then he would return to Judah as coregent with his son.

He was eventually assassinated as well.

Amaziah is a tragic figure, he was presented with incredible opportunities and experienced the Lord's favor and help in battle.

But he was a double-minded king, who wanted to serve the Lord, but also himself.

The verse that sums up his career is **Prov. 16:18**

Pride goes before destruction,

And a haughty spirit before a fall.

Beware of trusting in your own flesh and your own abilities, this is how we get ahead of God's Will for our lives.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

Make sure even after God uses you for something, to keep this humility, understanding that it is only by God's Power and Spirit does anything good happen from our lives.

1 Cor. 10:12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

Don't believe the press clippings, when people pat you on the back and sing your praises, make sure you turn it all upward to your God.

These are the lessons Amaziah's life speaks to us today.

So next the historian takes us North again, and we will be back in Israel, looking now at Jeroboam II who will have the longest reign out of the kings of the north.

Jeroboam II Reigns in Israel

23 In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, became king in Samaria, and reigned forty-one years. 24 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. 25 He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hepher. 26 For the Lord saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter; and whether bond or free, there was no helper for Israel. 27 And 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.

28 Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did — his might, how he made war, and how he

recaptured for Israel, from Damascus and Hamath, what had belonged to Judah — are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 29 So Jeroboam rested with his fathers, the kings of Israel. Then Zechariah his son reigned in his place.

Jeroboam is recorded as all the other kings in Israel, as doing that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.

He followed the first king of Israel's compromise, in the idolatrous form of Yahweh worship, with the two golden calves.

We see although he was wicked, he did bring a measure of prosperity to the Northern Kingdom.

He was used to deliver them from their enemies.

And much like today, the average person does not really care about the character of their nation's leader as long as there is food on the table, and money in their bank accounts, and living in safety.

The people never questioned their king as long as they were comfortable.

We see a famous prophet mentioned here during the reign of Jeroboam II.

Jonah, who the Book of Jonah will be about, here prophesies on behalf of the king.

It is during this time, that other famous prophets lived as well, Amos and Hosea, and we will soon be in the time of Isaiah...

If you want extra credit you can read through those prophets to kind of get the idea of the climate of Israel at this time.

Here Jonah prophesied that Israel would expand.

We see God's Merciful and Tender heart here toward His people.

He is very patient, and longsuffering.

Even with a wicked king like Jeroboam God looked upon the nation of Israel.

Although they had forsaken God, He had not forsaken them.

And this is a wonderful truth about our God, He is slow to forsake us.

Even when we find ourselves in the most pitiful circumstances brought about by our own sins.

God looked at Israel, in their rebellion, and they were pitiful, no one would help them, they had no friends or allies, everyone was against them.

But God was for them, and God helped them.

Understand how patient our God is, how loving He is, how forgiving He is, He is so slow to act in judgement.

And the Lord saw their affliction and He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam.

And under Jeroboam the kingdom of Israel's borders reached as far as they did in the days of Solomon.

Yet their prosperity was a veneer that covered their treachery.

The prophet Amos would bring their sins to light.

Amos 2:6-8

Thus says the Lord:

"For three transgressions of Israel, and for four,

I will not turn away its punishment,

Because they sell the righteous for silver,

And the poor for a pair of sandals.

7 They pant after the dust of the earth which is on the head of the poor,

And pervert the way of the humble.

A man and his father go in to the same girl,

To defile My holy name.

8 They lie down by every altar on clothes taken in pledge,

And drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their god.

The rich kept getting richer at the expense of the poor.

The poor were exploited and abused.

Israel was given over to idolatry and false perverted worship.

And because they failed to see God's goodness in their prosperity, and they failed to live justly, and to walk

humbly with their God, the judgement will come to them first, many years before Judah.

So next, we will take the bible bus South again to Judah's kingdom, where Azariah will take the throne.

Azariah Reigns in Judah (2 Chron. 26:3-23)

15:1 In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah the son of Amaziah, king of Judah, became king. 2 He was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jecholiah of Jerusalem. 3 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah had done, 4 except that the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. 5 Then the Lord struck the king, so that he was a leper until the day of his death; so he dwelt in an isolated house. And Jotham the king's son was over the royal house, judging the people of the land.

6 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? 7 So Azariah rested with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the City of David. Then Jotham his son reigned in his place.

The historian in 2 Kings give only a brief mention to Azariah here.

But this was a pretty famous king in Judah as we will see in 2 Chronicles.

Here his name was Azariah, which means “Jehovah has helped,” but he will be given a more famous name, Uzziah which means “Jehovah is Strength.”

The people made him king when his father was in exile in Samaria.

Uzziah, did well in the beginning of his reign.

But as we will see in Chronicles the reason why the Lord struck him was because he foolishly attempted to become a priest as well as king.

His popularity soured, as his kingdom prospered, he too was a successful warrior king, and an incredible builder.

But all of his successes caused him to grow prideful, and he had presumed that he could burn incense before the Lord.

The priest stood boldly against their king, and then the Lord struck him, and he was from that point driven in haste to an isolated house, and once again, we see pride came before the fall.

It is important to know what God has called you to be, and it is important to minister as God called you.

So much heartache and turmoil comes when you try to serve and be in a place you do not belong.

It has taken me many years to settle in my own heart, that God has called me to be a Bible Teacher.

I am not a Crusade speaker, I am not the most effective evangelist, and I am not many things that I have endeavored to be.

And it wasn't until I embraced the simplicity of my calling, to be a Bible Teacher, that I begin to see fruit and growth in life and ministry.

It is wonderfully liberating to know where your place is, and to stay in that lane, and to let God use you there.

Uzziah was a successful king, not a priest, and he should have killed his ambition as soon as it arose.

His ambition ended his incredibly successful career.

And as he co-ruled with his father, he too would share the throne with his son until he died about 10 years later.

His death was very significant, because of his popularity and success, it was a landmark time in Israel.

Isaiah had his incredible vision of heaven during this tumultuous time...

Isa 6:1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.

Isaiah was then called to minister as God's Messenger among God's people at that time.

So, now back to the North, as we look at another wicked king there, the last of Jehu's dynasty, then the kings will start falling in rapid succession as Israel starts its fall that it never recovers from...

I like how Russel Dilday puts it here, "Having stepped on the slippery slope of apostasy and disobedience, Israel was careening with accelerating speed toward and inevitable destiny of destruction and captivity." Dilday p.401

6 different kings will take the throne in the next 43 years in the record, murdering each other, and continually bringing the nation on the brink of disaster.

Zechariah Reigns in Israel

8 In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah the son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria six months. 9 And 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 Nebat, who had made Israel sin. 10 Then Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and struck and killed him in front of the people; and he reigned in his place.

11 Now the rest of the acts of Zechariah, indeed they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

12 This was the word of the Lord which He spoke to Jehu, saying, "Your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." And so it was.

The good and prosperous days of Jeroboam II came to a swift end when his son Zechariah came to the throne.

His reign only lasting 6 months, and the assessment of his brief rule was that he did evil in the sight of the Lord.

It is interesting, because his name means, “Yahweh Remembers.”

That should have encouraged him to turn to the Lord, and His wonderful promises.

But he instead made Israel sin.

And a usurper arises, with not much information given about him, according to verse 10 he had enough of a following and support for his rebellion, that he did not have to do it in secret, but publically in front of the people.

Zechariah being the fourth generation of the sons of Jehu, the prophetic Word being spoken to Jehu was complete.

Jehu did not follow the Lord wholeheartedly, and ended his own career a wicked king, but God did use him to wipe out Baal worship and the family of Ahab, so God promised him in...

2 Kings 10:30 "Because you have done well in doing what is right in My sight, and have done to the house

of Ahab all that was in My heart, your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation."

Zechariah's brief reign allowed God's Promise to be fulfilled, and it was now Shallum's turn to be king, look now starting in verse 13...

Shallum Reigns in Israel

13 Shallum the son of Jabesh became king in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria. 14 For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, came to Samaria, and struck Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria and killed him; and he reigned in his place.

15 Now the rest of the acts of Shallum, and the conspiracy which he led, indeed they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. 16 Then from Tirzah, Menahem attacked Tiphseh, all who were there, and its territory. Because they did not surrender, therefore he attacked it. All the women there who were with child he ripped open.

Now, if you thought Zechariah's reign was scandalously brief, Shallum his usurper was even worse, a full month.

Then Menahem launched a military coup killing the king, and assumed the throne himself.

Because the people of Tiphseh supported Shallum, Menahem killed them, and even committed such atrocities that were characteristic of pagan invaders.

This act of ripping the women open and killing their children were never committed by soldiers in Israel, only here is this seen.

Shallum's career is cut short, and the ruthless Menahem will have a lengthy 10 year rule, and he will be the only one of these last kings in Israel to die naturally.

Perhaps because of his military strength, he was able to have some kind of stability in the region.

So we read now starting in verse 17...

Menahem Reigns in Israel

17 In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem the son of Gadi became king over Israel, and reigned ten years in Samaria. 18 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. 19 Pul king of Assyria came against the land; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to strengthen the kingdom under his control. 20 And Menahem exacted the money from Israel, from all the very wealthy, from each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and did not stay there in the land.

21 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? 22 So Menahem

rested with his fathers. Then Pekahiah his son reigned in his place.

He like the other kings of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord.

In order to strengthen his throne he willingly paid tribute to the Assyrian king, and they become a vassal state here.

Menahem of course had to tax the people to pull this off, and that is what he is known for, cowardly paying tribute to another kingdom, and taxing his own people to do so.

Understand this unholy alliance will eventually be the undoing of the northern kingdom, the Assyrians will carry them away into captivity eventually.

Menahem died a natural death, but he does not have much to show for his rule.

Next, his son will assume the throne, but only briefly...

Pekahiah Reigns in Israel

23 In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned two years. 24 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. 25 Then Pekah the son of Remaliah, an officer of his, conspired against him and killed him in Samaria, in the citadel of the king's house, along with Argob and Arieah;

and with him were fifty men of Gilead. He killed him and reigned in his place.

26 Now the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, indeed they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

The historian can find nothing noteworthy about Pekahiah's two year reign, except his assassination. His military commander takes his place.

And because Pekah was a military commander we will see that he had the protection of the warriors in Israel and he makes it 20 years.

Pekah Reigns in Israel

27 In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah the son of Remaliah became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years. 28 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. 29 In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria came and took Ijon, Abel Beth Maachah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he carried them captive to Assyria. 30 Then Hoshea the son of Elah led a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and struck and killed him; so he reigned in his place in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.

31 Now the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, indeed they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

We see in spite of Menahem's appeasement the Assyrians eventually they invaded the land, and started taking key cities.

The Assyrians were brutal overlords. They would carry the people off from their home lands, and install them into a foreign land, to completely demoralize them.

They wanted to wipe out their national identity, because you see when people forget who they are, and they forget their heritage and history, they are more easily controlled and manipulated.

Beware when those come and try to erase history, this is dangerous every time.

Our history, the bad and the good is what makes us who we are today, the bad reminders are warnings not to return to those same mistakes, the good reminds us of the path that we need to stay on.

The Assyrians erased in order to control.

They would also brutalize their captives, they would mutilate their bodies, cutting off noses, or gauging out eyes, or even cutting off their tongues.

They used violence and fear tactics to coerce the people into subjection.

Remember Jonah was sent to Assyria's capital Nineveh, and it is no wonder he did not want to go to these wicked people.

His fear was, that he knew God was gracious and abounding in mercy, and if he went there and prophesied and preached, and the people listened, he knew God would forgive them, and God would not wipe them out for their cruelty.

Jonah wanted them to know God's judgement and justice, so he ran away with the message that God had given him.

And we all know the story, God got him there using a giant fish, he preached and the wicked Ninevites repented.

Jonah after it all went under a tree to pout, and got upset with God, and told him, "Why didn't you just kill them."

He should have rejoiced in their repentance but instead, he was upset.

I wonder tonight what your heart might be toward the wicked in our generation, are you hoping God smites them in Judgement, or are you trying to reach them with the Gospel message?

If we are to expect revival today, we cannot let anger take root in our hearts, no matter how hostile things become toward the church, our hope needs to remain,

that our countrymen encounter God's Life Changing Grace.

We do not want to be pouting Jonahs but rejoicing when our neighbors come to our Lord.

So the Assyrians come on the scene here, and they will press Israel until they are completely under their control.

So next, we will end in the Southern Kingdom of Judah, and I want to commend you all here, you are doing very well with this back and forth, I know it is difficult, but you are doing so wonderful.

Jotham Reigns in Judah (2 Chron. 27)

32 In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, Jotham the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, began to reign. 33 He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerusha the daughter of Zadok. 34 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord; he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done. 35 However the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. He built the Upper Gate of the house of the Lord.

36 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? 37 In those days the Lord began to send Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of

Remaliah against Judah. 38 So Jotham rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David his father. Then Ahaz his son reigned in his place.

Jotham was a virtuous king, and remember he was a coregent with his leprous father for a few years.

He was considered a good king, but sadly his son will be a terrible king, and we will get to Ahaz's rule next week.

But understand as we look at the corruption in our own government, and the chaos in our own streets, and the uncertainty of our day, please know that this has been the story of mankind from the beginning.

There will be no true peace until the King of kings comes back to this earth.

And as we look out at our world, we see the signs, we know that day is coming quickly.

Please, understand that over all the uncertainty that man creates in this world, our God is sovereign over it all, and He controls the destiny of any nation, He is the one who determines the rise and fall of a nation.

He is the only One who can heal a nation.

Our hope today, is that our nation would humble themselves under our God, repent and turn back to the way set forth in His Word.

There is hope that as we look at the record of man in 2 Kings, God's plans and purposes happen no matter

how badly things got, and no matter what chaos man created.

Church keep your eyes on Jesus, may He be your strength through all of this, may you seek His wisdom to guide you through it all, and may His joy fill your heart in spite of what is happening all around us.

Phil 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Rest in Him tonight...

Let's pray...