1 Kings 13-15 - Jeroboam's Disobedience

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We started off in 1 Kings dealing with the kingship of Solomon, who obviously took over after his father David passed from the scene. And Solomon, we saw, started out great and then walked away from the Lord at the end of his life. And he had a son named Rehoboam, who, when he was 40, took over the kingdom from his father Solomon and through his own foolishness and pride and really just stupidity, he split the kingdom right down the middle, size wise.

And half of the kingdom stayed north. They called it, they called that part of the kingdom Israel. And Rehoboam only retained that part of the kingdom that was called Judah. And God came to a man by the name of Jeroboam who really wasn't anybody. I mean, it was just a guy, and God spoke to Jeroboam and He said, listen, I'm going to, and He did this before he split the kingdom or Rehoboam split the kingdom.

But He said to Jeroboam, listen, I'm going to take the kingdom and I'm going to tear it out of the hands of the house of David, partially anyway, I'm going to, I'm going to leave him some, but I'm going to give 10 tribes to you. And if you'll be a good king, if you'll be a godly man, I will establish a dynasty in your name and you will be as great as David. Talk about having it just handed to you.

But Jeroboam got to thinking for a while and he thought, you know, Solomon built that amazing temple down there in Jerusalem and that wasn't part of his Northern kingdom. And he knew that the Jews, by command of the Law, were required to go to the temple at least once a year, if not more, if they were able, to celebrate one of the major feasts that went on.

And Jeroboam got to thinking to himself, you know what, when those people go down to Jerusalem to the temple to celebrate one of those feasts, they're going to look at all that Solomon made down there and they're going to think, this is the place to live and I'm going to lose everybody. Whatever kingdom I'm given at first is going to eventually just dwindle away and pretty soon I'm going to be king of nothing. So Jeroboam decided that in order to keep the people in the northern area of Israel, he would have to come up with his own religion. And so he did.

Jeroboam basically decided he was going to create a religion. And it all centered around a couple of golden calves, which he had fashioned and put in two different places in Israel. And he told the Israelites, here's your God, and he then established a priesthood. Anybody who wanted could be a priest. Probably just if you are a friend of the king, didn't matter what your birth was.

He established all this stuff just in order to keep people in his kingdom. Fear, fear, you guys will drive you to do some really, really dumb things. Fear is a great enemy of our lives. And we don't even know how much we fear. We are so fearful. We might not want to admit it, but we are, we're very fearful people.

And fear comes upon you like that, and it grabs you, and it demands of you how you're going to act or what you're going to do. And many times that fear surrounds what I might lose. And with Jeroboam, it was like, I think I'm probably going to lose the kingdom unless I act wisely to keep these people. And so he did. He created a pagan kingdom. Religion, essentially. Isn't that crazy? I mean, it's, it really is just craziness. And Jeroboam is in the midst of all of his weirdness at this point, as we get into chapter 13.

But the Lord is going to warn Jeroboam and give him signs repeatedly to get him to turn his back on this religion that he made and turn his face back to the Lord. Jeroboam isn't going to listen, but I want you to see this guys. It's very common for people to read through the Old Testament and just say, it's so harsh. I have a hard time reading and studying the Old Testament. It's just so harsh. God is always judging people and killing them and striking them with this plague and that war and everything.

I want you to see in this chapter, particularly, how merciful God is. I want you to see how many times God shows mercy to Jeroboam to try to get him to turn around and go the other way. You know God that's God, He's doing that in our lives, too. He might even be doing it in your life. Are you ready to turn around and go the other way? Are you ready to go God's way?

Chapter 13 verse 1, *"And behold, a man of God came out of Judah by the word of the Lord to Bethel. Jeroboam was standing by the altar to make offerings." (ESV)*

He's literally caught in the act of worshiping his pagan idols when this prophet from Judah comes to speak to him. Now, remember Judah is the southern kingdom Israel is the northern kingdom. Technically, they're all Jews and to us it's really all Israel, but this is what they're calling it now. The northern kingdom

of Israel the southern kingdom of Judah. So, A prophet comes up from Judah and that's going to play into this. And it says in verse 2 that

"And the man cried against the altar by the word of the LORD (So he's speaking literally to the altar. This has got to be kind of a strange sight) *and* (He) *said, "O altar, altar, thus says the Lord: 'Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name, and he shall sacrifice on you the priests of the high places who make offerings on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.'"*

First of all, what is the prophet saying here to Jeroboam? He's saying this altar that you've created here, and all these priests that you've picked of this pagan religion that you've created, God is going to raise up a man His name is going to be Josiah. And he's going to take the bones of your priests and burn them on this altar.

Now, human bones burned on an altar Is a sign of defilement. No human being was ever to be burned upon an altar. That would defile the altar. What God is saying to Jeroboam, in essence, is number 1, there's going to be judgment coming against the things you've done. But number 2, I'm going to show that this altar is already defiled by burning the bones of human beings. Those wicked pagan priests that you've raised up and so forth.

Now, this is warning number one, for Jeroboam. What would, you know if you're Jeroboam you're standing there and you're listening to this now David got some warnings back when he was king. Do you remember how David responded when warnings came to him? David broke. When he was in the wrong David broke and he said, you're right. You're right. I'm wrong.

I have done wrong, and he confessed it right there and he got it right with God. But this is a warning for Jeroboam. And Jeroboam has the opportunity to respond in that same way. He can say, you're right. God's judgment is just, this was never something God told me to do, and I need to get this right. We're going to see how he responds in just a moment but before we do, can I just say something very quickly about this prophecy?

This is an amazing prophecy, and I'll tell you why. First of all, it mentions in this prophecy by name, an individual who will not be born or come onto the scene for almost 300 years. 290 to be exact, when Josiah will come on the scene and actually do this sort of thing. He doesn't even say in here necessarily that this man will be king. He will be a king. He will be a king of Judah. He says he'll be a son of David, but he doesn't say he's going to be a king.

But Josiah was a godly man whom God raised up at a very ungodly period in Judah's history as well. Because Judah, as well as Israel, has been tumbling into paganism. And Josiah was a man whom God raised up to bring about a great return to the Lord and a cleansing of the land from the pagan idolatry that they had fallen into.

But you know what? Even Josiah's, zeal for the Lord wasn't enough to stay the hand of God's judgment that came upon Judah. Do you guys know that we're praying for a Josiah right now? Do you guys know that? I mean, right here in the United States of America, we're praying for a Josiah. God raise up a Josiah. Raise up a man to lead this country and to do what's right. But just like Josiah of old, I don't believe that anyone, no matter how good they may be and how godly they may be and what they may do, I don't believe that we're going to stay the hand of God's judgment that is coming upon this country.

We've fallen into our own pagan idolatry, and we've lived that life of idolatry, and we've lived it to our own convenient pleasures, and nothing is going to stop, nothing is going to stop God's hand of judgment. It may stay it for a while. It may delay it. And I pray that God would raise up such a man in this country. And who knows? Who knows? If the body of Christ will come together and pray and just really seek the Lord, say, God, we need somebody to change the course of the way that we're going.

Maybe the hand of God's judgment can be stayed, and more opportunity can be given for people to come to the Lord. But, anyway. So how is Jeroboam going to respond to this sign of the Lord?

And it goes on here in verse 3 to say that the prophet, it says, *"And he gave a sign the same day*, (in addition to the word that he gave) *saying, "This is the sign that the LORD has spoken:* (or that the Lord really has truly given you this message) *'Behold, the altar* (this very altar) *shall be torn down, and the ashes that are on it shall be poured out.'"*

Now let's see how Jeroboam responds. *"[4] And when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Seize him." And his hand, which he stretched out against him, dried up,* (Your Bible may say *shriveled up*, which is probably a better description of what it looked like. And it says that) *so that he could not draw it back to himself."*

In other words, his arm literally withered. so that he was unable to move it and even pull it back to his body. It was like, frozen or paralyzed. This is really

incredible because again, what has God done here in the course of just a few minutes? He sent a prophet with a message. He said, I'm going to give you a sign that this is actually a word from the Lord. And then without even fulfilling the first sign, he gives him another sign that he's in the wrong. And the very hand that he stretches out to point to that prophet to say, seize him, shrivels up while he stretched it out so that he can't retract it.

Good grief, Jeroboam, repent already! Tell God you're sorry! Come to Him in humility and brokenness. He will receive you. God will receive you. Why are you so stubborn? Why are you so stiff necked? Why are you so hard hearted? You just want to ask that question. You want to go up and slap him, don't you? Doesn't that feel good? Yeah. Well, God's doing the slapping here and guess what? It isn't helping. But God is being merciful to Jeroboam.

And then look at verse 5. The first sign comes to pass. We're not even told how. It says, *"The altar also was torn down, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign that the man of God had given by the word of the Lord"*

We don't even know, we don't know if it was just a supernatural thing where the altar just fell down, fell apart, kind of like the walls of Jericho. We don't know. We don't know if an angel came and did it. We don't know if some people heard the prophet saying this and said, yeah, that's right, and tore it down. We don't know. All we know is that it came to pass, and Jeroboam knew that it came to pass. So, look how many things the Lord has done for Jeroboam to get him to turn his attention away from his path of destruction. And now look what goes on.

Look at verse 6. *"And the king said to the man of God, "Entreat now the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me." And the man of God entreated the Lord,* (look at this) *and the king's hand was restored to him and became as it was before."*

Are you guys keeping count? So yet another miracle. A miracle. He sees his own arm, his own hand, shrivel up when he points to this prophet. He can't even retract it. He says to the prophet, pray for me, please, that my hand is restored. The prophet prays and God mercifully restores his arm. Why didn't God just say, forget you, buddy. I happen to know the beginning from the end and the end from the beginning, and I happen to know that you are never going to repent.

I happen to know that you're not only doing what you're doing here now for you and you're corrupting this generation, but I happen to know this corruption is

going to continue on and without any abatement. You are going to be responsible for the nation of Israel ultimately going into exile and being scattered to the four corners of the earth. You, Jeroboam, are going to be responsible. I happen to know that. Well, God doesn't say that. I would have said that. Probably, something even a little more harsh. But God doesn't do it. God heals the man.

You tell me that there isn't mercy in the Old Testament. And I'll tell you, look again. [7] *"And* (then) *the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me, and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward."*

That's interesting. It's like, dude, keep your reward. Just get down on your knees and repent. Notice that Jeroboam doesn't say, you're right. Would you pray with me right now, and let's ask God's forgiveness, and let's further entreat the Lord that he would stay his hand of judgment upon my house and upon this country. And let's get this thing. He doesn't say anything like that. He goes, hey man, now that everything's good again, why don't you come back to my place. We'll have a little something.

"And the man of God (verse 8) *said to the king,* (listen) *"If you give me half your house, I will not go in with you. And I will not eat bread or drink water in this place, [9] for so was it commanded me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'You shall neither eat bread nor drink water nor return by the way that you came.'"*

Verse 10 says, *" So he went another way and did not return by the way that he came to Bethel."*

The word of the Lord comes to Jeroboam. Now, beginning in verse 11 through the end of the chapter, we have kind of a weird story, and I'm just going to prep you for this. It's one of those stories in the Bible that it's like, okay, now tell me again why you put this here? Because I'm not really getting it, but we'll see. We'll see what goes on. We'll read pretty much the whole story, and then we'll comment.

Verse 11. *"Now an old prophet lived in Bethel."* Now, okay, I can't, I'll break my promise. Gotta comment for just a second Notice it says there was a prophet living in Bethel. Makes me wonder. Why didn't God call upon this guy to go talk to Jeroboam? There was a prophet right there in Bethel. They didn't have to go all the way to Judah to get a prophet. Why did he have to make a long-distance call to Judah, bring this guy to come up and tell Jeroboam dude, it's going down. Why didn't he just call on this guy who lives right there in the

neighborhood? Well, we're going to find out. I think we'll discover why as we read on.

And it says here that, *"And his sons came and told him all that the man of God had done that day in Bethel. They also told to their father the words that he had spoken to the king.*

12 And their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" And his sons showed him the way that the man of God who came from Judah had gone. 13 And he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey for him and he mounted it. 14 And he went after the man of God and found him sitting under an oak. And he said to him, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" And he said, "I am." 15 Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat bread." 16 And he said, "I may not return with you, or go in with you, neither will I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place,

17 for it was said to me by the word of the Lord, 'You shall neither eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by the way that you came.'" 18 And he said to him, "I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'Bring him back with you into your house that he may eat bread and drink water.'" (Look at this sentence, though, that ends chapter, verse 18) *But he lied to him."*

Yeah, so you know what's going on. He doesn't, you do. *"19 So he went back with him and ate bread in his house and drank water. 20 And as they sat at the table, the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back.* (This is the guy that lives in Bethel)

21 And he cried to the man of God who came from Judah, "Thus says the Lord, 'Because you have disobeyed the word of the LORD and have not kept the command that the LORD your God commanded you, 22 but have come back and have eaten bread and drunk water in the place of which he said to you, "Eat no bread and drink no water," your body shall not come to the tomb of your fathers.'" 23 And after he had eaten bread and drunk, he saddled the donkey for the prophet whom he had brought back.

24 And as he went away a lion met him on the road and killed him. And his body was thrown in the road, and the donkey stood beside it; the lion also stood beside the body. 25 And behold, men passed by and saw the body thrown in the road and the lion standing by the body. And they came and told it in the city where the old prophet lived. 26 And when the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard of it, he said, "It is the man of God who disobeyed the

word of the Lord; therefore, the LORD has given him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word that the LORD spoke to him."

[27] And he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." (Seems like that's what these guys do) *And they saddled it. [28] And he went and found his body thrown in the road, and the donkey* (look at this) *and the lion standing* (still standing) *beside the body*. (And it says) *The lion had not eaten the body or* (even attacked or) *torn the donkey."*

Do you get what's - the narrator here is telling you this so that you'll understand that there is something supernatural going on here? Lions don't just stand around when there's a donkey there, nor do donkeys just stand around when there's a lion there. The donkey will try to get away, the lion of course will catch them and have dinner. But that's not what's happening. The lion is just standing there. The donkey is just standing there. And this body is just lying there in the road, not being touched or anything like that. And there's something supernatural happening here. Yes, it's another sign.

[29] "And the prophet took up the body of the man of God and laid it on the donkey and brought it back to the city to mourn and to bury him. [30] And he laid the body in his own grave. And they mourned over him, saying, "Alas, my brother!" [31] And after he had buried him, he said to his sons, "When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones. [32] For the saying that he called out by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel and against all the houses of the high places that are in the cities of Samaria shall surely come to pass."

Okay, interesting story, huh? Interesting story. So, what do we learn from it? Well, number one, there's an important lesson here. Oh, in case you're wondering, psychologically speaking, why did the one prophet living in Bethel even go and talk to the guy and bring him back to his house and whatever? Who knows? Probably just wanted to be around him. You can tell that he was kind of awestruck to the point where even after he died, he instructed his sons to bury him in the same tomb with that prophet. So it sounds like he had stars in his eyes related to this guy enough to even lie about how the Lord had sent him to bring him back.

But anyway, there's an important thing to remember here from this passage, and the first lesson is that God doesn't change His mind. And God doesn't contradict Himself. It's really an important thing to remember. Let me show you a passage from Numbers chapter 23. It says,

Numbers 23:19 (ESV)

God is not Man that he should lie, or a son of man that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?

God is not Man that he should lie, or a son of man that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?

That's a great passage of Scripture, because it reminds you and I of this very truth. God doesn't change his mind, okay? So, If God said something is wrong in the Scripture and you're comforting yourself by the fact that, well it's been about 3000 years since that was said, or even 2000 years or whatever. It doesn't matter.

God doesn't change His mind. He doesn't ever come to a point of going, I guess that was hard on you guys so we're going to take the moratorium off adultery, okay, or just let you go at it. No, no, it's not going to happen. God isn't going to change his mind. And when He says something, you can be sure that He's going to follow exactly what He said.

But there's a larger issue here of why the prophet from Judah went with the prophet from Bethel. God had told him. Don't stay in the land. Don't eat bread or drink water at any place here in this land and go home by a different route. He was being obedient to that even when the king invited him to his home. No, I'm not going to do it. But then when this prophet comes along, he changes his mind, and he goes back with him and then suffers the consequences. So why? Well, frankly, we're not told specifically, but what does it say in the text?

Well, for starters, did you notice the prophet from Bethel claimed a spectacular experience? It was a lie, but he said to him, an angel of the Lord appeared to me and the Word of God came to me and said, go get this guy, bring him back, give him something to eat, give him a drink of water and then send him on his way. Now, again, this was nothing but a lie, but he told the prophet that he heard from God, and he cited this experience. Why do I bring that up? Because today that's all people need to do in order to get someone's attention.

And there are Christians today who will gullibly just follow after someone because they claim to have had a spectacular supernatural experience. All they've got to do is throw out just the right words and give some of the same kind of supernatural, phenomena and there's going to be people who are going to be willing to believe it, even if it contradicts the Word of God, even if it

contradicts, even if it goes against the Word of God, they'll still do it. And you're wondering, wow. But you know what? God isn't going to contradict Himself.

Now, lastly, the last thing I want to say about this story is again, why it appears in the narrative. I mean, what's the point? What's the point? I mean, well, we've brought out a couple of things from it, but, this story, this event would have surely gotten back to Jeroboam. And one more time, we see God's merciful hand reaching out to Jeroboam. And I'm sure that somebody came to him and said, king Jeroboam, the prophet who came and spoke against the altar. Yeah. The one whom you pointed at with that bony finger of yours and God struck you with a shriveling hand. Yeah. The one who prayed for you and God healed you.

Yeah. The one you invited home to refresh him with food and water, but who said, no, God told me I am not to do that. Yeah. Well, one of the prophets in your land convinced him to come home and God's judgment fell upon that prophet. He's dead now. Dead and buried. Wow. What does that say to Jeremiah? God's Word is true. God's Word is going to come to pass. This prophet lived the ultimate example to king Jeroboam that when God speaks, he will bring it to pass.

And again, Jeroboam should have responded by dropping to his knees and saying that's it, I'm giving my life to God, I'm repenting of this sin, and we're going to get this train back on track. But the last 2 verses of the chapter instead go like this.

Verse 33. *"After this thing Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but made priests for the high places again from among all the people.* (It says here) *Any who would, he ordained to be priests of the high places."* Notice that. Anybody who would be willing to be a priest, yeah, no problem. Come and be a priest.

And it says, *"[34] And this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam, so as to cut it off and to destroy it from the face of the earth."*

And that is exactly what is going to happen. But lest you look at that and think to yourself, boy, that's pretty harsh, isn't it God? I mean, cut off a man's house from the face of the earth. To cut it off? Isn't that harsh? Look how many times in that chapter God spoke to Jeroboam. How many times God reached out to Jeroboam and encouraged him to repent and to turn from his way and to get back on track. How many times?

And finally, this is the way things go, you guys. There's a point where God's done arguing. Where God's done trying. There's a point where someone has just given over to the place of disobedience. To the point where it's not going to happen. You've been given so many chances. Chapter 14.

“At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick. ² And Jeroboam said to his wife, “Arise, and disguise yourself, that it not be known that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh. Behold, Ahijah the prophet is there, who said of me that I should be king over this people. ³ Take with you ten loaves, some cakes, and a jar of honey, and go to him. He will tell you what shall happen to the child.”

What is Jeroboam doing? He is going, he's telling his wife, because their child becomes ill, and he's concerned for the child. And so, he tells his wife to disguise herself so it can't be seen that she is the wife of Jeroboam, and to go to this prophet who originally had told him that he would be king over Israel, and to inquire of the Lord on behalf of the child to see what the outcome will be.

Isn't this interesting? You wonder why Jeroboam's wife doesn't say, why don't you go ask one of your golden calves? Why don't you get some of your hand picked prophets to speak to you? Maybe they know what's going to happen. She doesn't say that. I would have said that.

I'm full of sass, aren't I sometimes. But, I mean, I just, you just want to say it. Hey, Jeroboam, you created this religion. Doesn't, isn't it working for you, buddy? No, he's going to go to a prophet of the Lord. What is it about people that we serve all these things that we want to serve in life and then when life falls apart, we turn to God. What is that? What is it about us that does that? But we don't really turn to God, do we? We turn to God for answers, but we don't turn to God.

We just celebrated 9/11. Well, celebrated observe, excuse me, nobody celebrated 9/11. We just observed the anniversary of 9/11. The horrible tragedy took place in New York when terrorists, well, you know the story. Do you guys remember?

Do you guys remember? Were you in Christ during 9/11? Do you remember what happened in churches? I do. They filled up. I remember because we were meeting over there in that other building at the time. We almost had to go to three services there for a while because people started coming to church. I mean, they were like, and people I hadn't seen before and people who were

shaken, right? They were shaken by this thing. Terrorists on our soil, this, nothing like 9/11 had ever happened in this country before. Nothing.

And people were shaken to the core and they started coming to church. And it lasted about four weeks. And then they stopped coming to church. So did people turn to the Lord? Not really. Just for a little while. Just for a little sense of security. I just need to feel better. They just wanted to feel better. That's all. They didn't want to give their hearts to God. I just want to know what's going on. I want some sense of stability.

I want to, that's what's going on with Jeroboam here. His son is sick. He realizes his son is very sick. Honey, disguise yourself and go talk to the prophet of the Lord. We need to find out what's going on here. But is he turning to God? Absolutely not. And there's an incredible blindness that comes over a man, by the way, who thinks he can fool God. I mean, file that one under stupid.

Anybody who thinks that he can tell his wife to put a veil over her face and God's not going to know who she is. I mean if he genuinely thinks this man is a real prophet of the Lord then he's got to know that the word that comes to him is from the Lord and the Lord knows and sees everything right? And yet, honey disguise yourself. It really is ridiculous, isn't it? Can we be ridiculous sometimes with God? Yeah.

"4 Jeroboam's wife did so. She arose and went to Shiloh and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were dim because of his age." Isn't that interesting? He wouldn't have recognized her anyway. I suppose he could have had a servant tell him.

"5 And the LORD said to Ahijah, (obviously before this time)*"Behold, the wife of Jeroboam is coming to inquire of you concerning her son, for he is sick. Thus and thus shall you say to her." When she came, she pretended to be another woman. 6 But when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, he said, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why do you pretend to be another? For I am charged with unbearable news for you.*

7 Go, tell Jeroboam, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: "Because I exalted you from among the people and made you leader over my people Israel 8 and tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you, and yet you have not been like my servant David, who kept my commandments and followed me with all his heart, doing only that which was right in my eyes, 9 but you have done evil above all who were before you and have gone and made for yourself other gods and metal images, provoking me to anger, and have cast

me behind your back, (That is an interesting terminology, isn't it? Casting God behind your back)

10 *therefore, behold, I will bring harm upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male, both bond and free in Israel, and will burn up the house of Jeroboam as a man burns up dung until it is all gone.* **11** *Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city the dogs shall eat, and anyone who dies in the open country the birds of the heavens shall eat, for the LORD has spoken it.”’*

12 *Arise therefore, go to your house. When your feet enter the city, the child shall die.* **13** *And all Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found something pleasing to the Lord, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam.* **14** *Moreover, the LORD will raise up for himself a king over Israel who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam.”*

A couple of interesting things here that we read in this passage. First of all, this judgment is not against this child. Did you catch that? The judgment is going to be on his house. And he tells the wife of Jeroboam that God is about to raise up a king who is going to completely annihilate the house of Jeroboam. And that king is going to be a man by the name of Baasha. And we'll read about it, actually, in the next chapter.

But when Baasha rises to power, which he does through intrigue and assassination, he's going to wipe out the whole house of Jeroboam. God is actually sparing this child, this baby, believe it or not.

And he's saying to the wife of Jeroboam, this child is going to die. But this is the only one of Jeroboam's family who will be given a proper burial because look what it said, *“in him there's found something pleasing to the Lord.”* In an infant. In an infant. God found something pleasing to the Lord. Isn't that fascinating?

Does God see a person's life in completion? Sure, absolutely. But this is an act of mercy on God's part. You say, wait a minute, pastor Paul. Taking a child and not allowing that child to live doesn't sound like an act of mercy to me.

But you have to remember something about the way you and I see life. We only see it on this side of the veil. That's all we see. All we see is life on this side of the veil. We don't see life on the other side of the veil. We have no idea, none whatsoever, what the life of that baby is like on the other side of the veil. We

have none. And we think that life on this earth is all there is and when life on this earth is cut off, we're like, that's it, it's over, It's hopeless. No, it's not. You think death is a limitation for God? Do you think He's really limited by death?

Do you think when someone dies God's like, oh lost another one. Do you really think that's what's going on? Do you not think and understand and believe that to God death is just a door through which individuals pass, and once they pass, they're there. They're with Him. And depending on their life, and how God has seen their life and whatever, that's all in God's hands. But the point is, life goes on, you guys. Life on this earth is not all there is. And this act toward this baby is more of an act of mercy than it is judgment. God is going to spare this baby. It's really amazing.

When you really look at it and stop, people look at passages like this and they find them difficult because they're judging God's actions from the perspective of the temporal here and now, rather than looking at them in the perspective of eternity. Which, granted, you and I don't have a whole lot of information on, but we know it's there.

The Bible says, God has put eternity in the hearts of man. We know that eternity exists. We know that God is in control of all eternity. We know that. And yet we still act like this life is all there is. And boy, if this life somehow comes to an end, that's it. Gone. That life is not gone. That life is in the hands of God. And the life of this little baby was and is in the hands of God. Securely, completely, perfectly.

And then the last statement here in verse 14, again, is that, God's going to *"raise up for himself a king over Israel…* (we'll get into that. in the next chapter) *And henceforth,* (it says, now verse 15) *the LORD will strike Israel as a reed is shaken in the water, and root up Israel out of this good land that he gave to their fathers and scatter them beyond the Euphrates, because they have made their Asherim,* (and that's referring to Asherah poles or the worship that goes along with that) *provoking the LORD to anger. [16] And he will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, which he sinned and made Israel to sin."*

So, the sin of Jeroboam, not only affected himself, it affected his family, ultimately it affected the entire nation of Israel. And he said, through Ahijah, that they would one day be rooted up. And by the way, that came to pass when the nation of Assyria conquered the northern area of Israel. Again, the Lord is going to give Jeroboam another sign.

Look at verse 17. *"Then Jeroboam's wife arose and departed and came to Tirzah. And as she came to the threshold of the house, the child died."*

Do you suppose she told Jeroboam what the prophet said? I would imagine she did. He told me that as soon as I stepped foot in the house, the baby would die. Jeroboam, all he had to do was ask. So when did the baby die? The moment your wife stepped on the threshold. And again, Jeroboam. You and I pray for signs like these. Do you get that?

We pray that God would give us sure signs. Just one. We got something big going on in our life. We're like, God, just, give me a sign. I just - I need to know your will. I need to know your direction. I need to know if I'm on course or if I'm off course. I just, pray Lord that you'd show me. How many signs has Jeroboam gotten? Boom, boom, boom, boom. And these are huge signs, and yet, still, he makes absolutely no effort to change his life.

Verse 18 says, *"And all Israel buried him and mourned for him, according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke by his servant Ahijah the prophet.* ***19*** *Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.* ***20*** *And the time that Jeroboam reigned was twenty-two* (rotten years. I just threw that in there because he was really the author of rotten for the Nation of Israel,) *years. And he slept with his fathers,* (which is a euphemism for dying) *and Nadab his son reigned in his place."*

Now we're told in verse 21 on the Judah side of the equation. *"Now Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city that the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite.* ***22*** *And Judah did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins that they committed, more than all that their fathers had done."*

Can you stop there for just a moment? It says that the sins of the people of Judah provoke the Lord to jealousy. I've had people ask me before, and maybe they've asked it of you, maybe you've asked the question before. Wait a minute, I thought jealousy was bad. Why does it say God is jealous? Isn't jealousy a bad thing?

We're told that jealousy is a bad thing. I've never seen jealousy be a good thing ever in my life. So how come God gets to be jealous and it's a bad thing for us?

Because He's God and you're not. Listen, everything that you and I feel is tainted by sin. And I mean everything.

Everything God feels comes out of the perfection and the purity of His character. When God is jealous, it's a Godly jealousy. You want to know the difference between Godly jealousy and what you and I feel? My jealousy is all about me. God's jealousy is all about others. His jealousy for other people means He wants the best for those other people.

My jealousy is all about me wanting the best for me and therein lies the difference and never the twain shall meet because of the fact that you and I possess a sinful nature and God does not.

That's why God can be angry, and He is perfectly righteous and perfectly pure. You and I become angry, and we lose it because we flesh out. Right? We say and do ridiculously dumb things. God is always completely and perfectly in control. Here's something else about God. I'll just throw this one in for free.

When God is exercising His judgment, He is at the very same moment exercising mercy and love and kindness. You and I have to suspend certain attributes in order to show certain attributes, right? If I'm angry about something, I mean really angry about something, I have to suspend certain attributes like patience and kindness so that I can show my anger.

And that's just the way we are. We're very kind of single tasking in that particular sense. God never suspends any aspect of His being. He is always perfectly who He is at all times. He is always perfectly in order, and perfectly complete. He's perfectly perfect. And that's something that you and I have a hard time laying a hold of from the standpoint of understanding or being able to relate to it because we don't act that way. But God is that way. Anyway, I just wanted to throw that in there. God's jealousy is always others oriented.

Verse 23 goes on and says, *"For they also built for themselves high places* (This is talking about the people of Judah) *and pillars and Asherim* (meaning Asherim poles) *on every high hill and under every green tree, [24] and there were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations that the LORD drove out before the people of Israel."*

Now it says, *"[25] In the fifth year…"* Note that. Hang on a second. My thing messed up on me here. Okay *" In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. [26] He took away the treasures of the house*

of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house. He took away everything. He also took away all the shields of gold that Solomon had made,

27 and King Rehoboam made in their place shields of bronze, and committed them to the hands of the officers of the guard, who kept the door of the king's house. 28 And as often as the king went into the house of the Lord, the guard carried them and brought them back to the guardroom. 29 Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? 30 And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. 31 And Rehoboam slept with his fathers (again, a euphemism for death) *and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite. And Abijam his son reigned in his place."*

Let's do this last chapter very quickly.

1 "Now in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam the son of Nebat, Abijam began to reign over Judah. 2 He reigned for three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom."

Or Absalom, okay, who is, of course, the son of David. And we're not positive, by the way, if Meacha here is a daughter or granddaughter of Absalom since the Jews would use the term son or daughter simply to refer to family member.

But it says, *"3 And he walked in all the sins that his father did before him, and his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father. 4 Nevertheless, for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, setting up his son after him, and establishing Jerusalem,*

5 because David did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and did not turn aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. 6 Now there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. 7 The rest of the acts of Abijam and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. 8 And Abijam slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David. And Asa his son reigned in his place." (I'm bringing you to Asa because Asa is, for the most part, a good king)

9 In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa began to reign over Judah, 10 and he reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. (and again, probably their granddaughter, whereas daughter would have been proper in the man before) *11 And Asa did*

what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as David his father had done. [12] He put away the male cult prostitutes out of the land and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.

[13] He also removed Maacah his mother (and we believe that's probably grandmother) *from being queen mother because she had made an abominable image for Asherah. And Asa cut down her image and burned it at the brook Kidron. [14] But the high places were not taken away.* (And that means all of the high places in all of Israel. Although in the 2 Chronicles passage where we do read about Asa and his reign, it says that most of the high places were removed) *Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was wholly true to the LORD all his days. [15] And he brought into the house of the LORD the sacred gifts of his father and his own sacred gifts, silver, and gold, and vessels.*

[16] And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. (Now, Beasha has now taken over as king, and you're going to learn how this basically happened) *[17] Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah,* (In other words, as a fortified city) *that he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. [18] Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house and gave them into the hands of his servants. And King Asa sent them to Ben-hadad the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, who lived in Damascus, saying,*

[19] "Let there be a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Behold, I am sending you a present of silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me." [20] And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel and conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah, and all Chinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali. [21] And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah, and he lived in Tirzah. [22] Then King Asa (from Judah) *made a proclamation to all Judah, none was exempt, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them King Asa built Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah."*

Stop there for just a moment. Let me just tell you what's going on very quickly. So Asa is a godly king, for the most part. But there's civil war going on in Israel, and Baasha, who is now king of Israel, comes down to attack Asa in the southern area of Judah.

Instead of turning to the Lord, Asa sends, he basically takes all that's valuable out of the temple, and he sends it to the king of Syria, basically to hire him and

his men as mercenaries. And he says, you go attack Israel. They're down here on my doorstep attacking me. You go attack them so that he'll leave me and go defend his own country. And the king of Syria is like, sure, will do.

This is quite a bit of money you've given me here. We will go take care of that for you. Now, in 2 Chronicles, and we're not going to turn there, obviously, it talks more about the fact that Asa was even sent a prophet who confronted him with going to this pagan king instead of turning to the Lord.

And the prophet came to Asa and said, what are you doing? Hasn't God always been faithful to you? Why did you send money to the king of Syria to bail you out of this situation? You didn't even come to God, you didn't even talk to God. And it was at that point in Asa's life where Asa had a falling out with the Lord and he never had a good relationship with God after that.

He got confronted, and again, we see how these various kings react when they're confronted with their waywardness. What do they do? Do they harden their heart? Do they stiffen their neck? Or do they get down on their knees and say, you're right. You're right. I did it wrong. I repent. And Asa did not repent.

In fact, it says that he got very angry at that prophet. It says that he, if you go on to read it in 2 Chronicles, says that he became cruel toward the end of his life. And then he was later inflicted with the disease of his feet. And Chronicles tells us he never once consulted the Lord about it, he only went to the doctors. He never ever prayed about it. He never asked the Lord to heal him. I

In fact, if we look at the rest here, verse 23, it says, *"Now the rest of all the acts of Asa, all his might, and all that he did, and the cities that he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? But in his old age he was diseased in his feet."*

And we're not told here, but we assume that this was a chastening thing of the Lord because he refused to respond to God. And it says, *"[24] And Asa slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place."*

Now, what we're going to see here is, in the last here bit, is how Baasha came into power very quickly. It says *"[25] Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years.*

[26] He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin which he made Israel to sin. (So, no change) *[27] Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him. And Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, for Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon."* In other words, while they were out at war, this Baasha killed the king. He murdered him. Okay?

"[28] So Baasha killed him in the third year of Asa king of Judah and reigned in his place. (He took over. He said, I'm going to be king now) *[29] And as soon as he was king, he killed all the house of Jeroboam. He left to the house of Jeroboam not one that breathed, until he had destroyed it, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite. [30] It was for the sins of Jeroboam that he sinned and that he made Israel to sin, and because of the anger to which he provoked the Lord, the God of Israel."*

Stop there. So God judged the house of Jeroboam. How did he do it? Through Baasha. Was Baasha a good guy? No, he was a creep. He was a murderer, he was treasonous, and he was a usurper. And yet God used him to judge the sins of Jeroboam and his house. Wiped out the entire house of Jeroboam just like the prophet said he would do. It's sort of interesting, isn't it, for us to realize God can use whom He will, can't he, to get His work done?

Verse 31 says, *"Now the rest of the acts of Nadab and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? [32] And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. [33] In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha the son of Ahijah began to reign over all Israel at Tirzah, and he reigned twenty-four years. [34] He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin which he made Israel to sin."*

So, the man who God used to judge Jeroboam was a man who lived the same way.