

2 Kings 15-17

Good morning and thank you for joining us. Would you please turn in your bibles to 2 Kings 15? We're gonna study both chapters 15 and 16, which means after this morning we only have 9 more chapters left in this book, and then we'll move on to the book of Ephesians.

This morning we're going to take communion together...

We're continuing to look at the sordid and scandalous history of the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah, and we'll see how this all ties into the prophecy of the birth of Christ.

The title of this mornings message is ESCAPING THE JUDGMENT

Let's pray

[Chart-of-Israel-KingsUpdated2020-1.jpg \(846x1832\) \(bg3-blog.s3.amazonaws.com\)](http://blog.s3.amazonaws.com/Chart-of-Israel-KingsUpdated2020-1.jpg)

Why go through all of this? **SHOW PIC** We'll we're covering several hundred years of Israel's history, and during this time God sent many prophets to warn the nation and call them to repentance. Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Jonah, Micah, Joel, Obediah have all taken place during this time. In the coming weeks we'll see Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Haggai, Ezekiel and Malachi.

Israel captured by Assyria in 722, and Judah captured in 586.

CLOSE PIC

1 In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah the son of Amaziah, king of Judah, became king. Now it's important to know that Azariah here, just like so many people of that day did, had 2 names. Azariah, and Uzziah.

2-4

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. We see this time and again. These high places not only invited idol worship, but also compromised worship. Instead of having to follow all of God's carefully laid out instructions, they could cut corners.

5-7 reveals something shocking

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. So we wonder. If Azariah loved the Lord, why is he smitten with leprosy? He was ruling so well, 52 years, but he made a tragic, fatal error. We'll learn in Chronicles that king Azariah went into the temple and offered sacrifices. The priests warned him, saying, 'don't do it', but he thought God would bless him. Azariah

overstepped his boundaries and he found out God is not a respecter of persons.

Why was this such a big deal? Because he distorted the picture of Jesus. See there is only One who is qualified to be both priest and king—Jesus Christ.

This is the same thing that Moses did isn't it? When the children of Israel thirsted in the wilderness, God told Moses to speak to the rock and water would gush forth from it to bring refreshing water to the Hebrews.

But Moses was frustrated with the people, he was angry, so instead of speaking to the rock Moses struck the rock 2x. What's the big deal we might say? Well we have to remember what the rock represented

1 Corinthians 10:4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

By striking the rock 2x Moses distorted the picture God was painting because Jesus would be smitten only once through His death on the Cross for our sins. This picture was so important to God that Moses was unable to enter the Promised Land because, like Azariah, he altered the picture.

We'll spend much more time speaking of Azariah when we get to the book of Isaiah.

As we move to verse 8, the rest of chapter 15 gives us an overview of 5 different, yet wicked kings over the northern kingdom of Israel. And this foreshadows the corruption and disorganization that made them the easy prey of Assyria.

8-10

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. The reign of Zechariah was both short and wicked, and he continued in the state-sponsored idolatry begun by Jeroboam. He gets assassinated in front of the people

11-12

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." [fn] And so it was." The death of king Zechariah was the last king of the dynasty of Jehu that God promised Jehu. And now we're about to see how assassination and bloodshed marked future kings.

13-16

13 Shallum the son of Jabesh became king in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah [fn] 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. Hearing of Zechariah's death, Menahem killed Zachariah's murderer and proclaimed himself king. When the people of the city of Tiphseh refused to open their gates to him, he stormed in and committed these horrific and barbarous acts of murder

Here's what's shocking that we can sometimes miss. This is Jewish people slaughtering Jewish people.

17-18

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. This is speaking of the widespread idolatry.

19-20 describe some of those back door deals that take place in government

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. Menahem purchased the backing of the Assyrian King with a large amount of money raised from the wealthy in his kingdom. And now the king of Israel ruled with the strength of Assyria supporting him.

23-28

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.

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.

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. The kings, families, and dynasties ruling Israel changed quickly during this period. Yet there was a common

thread of wickedness through these dynasties. Each of them were evil, and each continued the state-sponsored idolatry in Israel.

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. This is the first of two Jewish deportations to Assyria. Tiglath-pileser, the powerful ruler of Assyria, comes down and begins to carry the Jews to Assyria for the purpose of assimilating them into the Assyrian culture, taking away the Jews national identity. By doing this the Hebrews would no longer be an enemy or a threat

From 1 Chronicles 5 we learn that the two tribes of Reuben, and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh; all that belonged to Israel on the other side of the Jordan were taken to Assyria, and they were never restored to Israel.

Make no mistake-these are horrifically dark days for Israel, her territory now reduced to a tiny kingdom only thirty miles wide by forty miles long.

30-31

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.

Now we move from the northern kingdom of Israel, which never had a single Godly king, to the southern kingdom of Judah.

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[fn] 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. Both biblical history and secular history show us that oftentimes, not always, but oftentimes children follow in their fathers footsteps.

Dad's-you have a great and mighty responsibility. It doesn't matter how old your kids may be, if you desire them to walk after the ways of the Lord, they will learn how to do it most effectively by watching you!! Never underestimate the tremendous influence that a father has on his kids.

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. Jotham was a good king who again failed to follow through on all of God's word.

36-37

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. This was the beginning of God's chastisement. If Judah and her kings responded to God's discipline the right way, God would relent. If they hardened their hearts and rejected the correction of God, He would take note of that as well.

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.

Chapter 16 begins and we're still focused on the southern kingdom of Judah and we'll spend significant time talking about King Ahaz

1-2

1 In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of Jotham, king of Judah, began to reign. 2 Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do what was right in the sight of the LORD his God, as his father David had done. This man named Ahaz was perhaps the worst king of Judah. But what made Ahaz so wicked?

3 But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel; indeed he made his son pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out from before the children of Israel. Remember, the Southern Kingdom of Judah had a mixture of godly and ungodly kings; the Northern Kingdom of Israel had only ungodly kings, and Ahaz followed their pattern. And one of the patterns Ahaz followed was participating in the worship of Molech.

SHOW PIC The pagan god (or demon, more accurately) Molech was worshiped by heating a metal statue representing the god until it was white hot, then placing a living infant on the

outstretched hands of the statue, while beating drums drowned out the screams of the child until it burned to death. **CLOSE PIC**

King Ahaz did this with his own child!

God pronounced the death sentence against all who worshiped Molech.

Leviticus 20:1-5, 1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Again, you shall say to the children of Israel: 'Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives any of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones. 3 I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people, because he has given some of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name. 4 And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man, when he gives some of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him, 5 then I will set My face against that man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech. The king killed his child, and nobody in the kingdom did a thing about it.

It might surprise you to know that today, people still gather around Molech! **SHOW PIC 2**

4-6

4 And he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

5 Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to make war; and they besieged Ahaz but could not overcome him. 6 At that time Rezin king of

Syria captured Elath for Syria, and drove the men of Judah from Elath. Then the Edomites^[fn] went to Elath, and dwell there to this day. Now this is just a quick blurb, but we learn in 2 Chronicles 28 that Judah suffered terrible losses from this attack. King Ahaz lost 120,000 soldiers and 200,000 civilian hostages in these battles with Israel and Syria. It was a dark time for the southern kingdom of Judah, and it looked as if the dynasty of David would soon be extinguished

The prophecy of Isaiah 7 came from Isaiah to King Ahaz during this joint Israel-Syrian invasion. **Isaiah 7:1 Now it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to make war against it, but could not prevail against it.**

And what was the prophecy of Isaiah 7?

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.^[fn]

But king Ahaz refused to trust in the LORD and instead, as we're about to read, he puts his trust in the king of Assyria to be an ally. **7 So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son. Come up and save me from the hand of the king of Syria and from the hand of the king of Israel, who rise up against me."** When you read all of Isaiah 7 you'll see Isaiah offered King Ahaz a sign of assurance that God wouldn't allow Judah to be defeated. But Ahaz refused under the

excuse of not wanting to test God, when instead he really wanted to trust in the king of Assyria.

8-9

8 And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasuries of the king's house, and sent it as a present to the king of Assyria. 9 So the king of Assyria heeded him; for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus and took it, carried its people captive to Kir, and killed Rezin.

Short term-it worked. But long term it proved disastrous. Hey we can wiggle our way out of circumstances God has us in, but it can be detrimental, even disastrous for our walk with God.

And even though God gave chance after chance for Ahaz to get right, now look what he does...

10 Now King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, and saw an altar that was at Damascus; and King Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the design of the altar and its pattern, according to all its workmanship. He's on his way to see the king of Assyria, and loves the way a pagan altar looks. 2

Chronicles 28:23 For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, saying, "Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, I will sacrifice to them that they may help me." But they were the ruin of him and of all Israel.

11-13

11 Then Urijah the priest built an altar according to all that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus. So Urijah the priest made it before King Ahaz came back from Damascus. 12 And when the king came back from Damascus, the king saw the altar; and the king approached the altar and made offerings on it. 13 So he

burned his burnt offering and his grain offering; and he poured his drink offering and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings on the altar. Ahaz served as a priest at the altar of his own design. Since he created his own place of worship, it also made sense that he would disregard God's command that a king must not serve as a priest
14-16

14 He also brought the bronze altar which was before the LORD, from the front of the temple—from between the new altar and the house of the LORD—and put it on the north side of the new altar. 15 Then King Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, "On the great new altar burn the morning burnt offering, the evening grain offering, the king's burnt sacrifice, and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, their grain offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle on it all the blood of the burnt offering and all the blood of the sacrifice. And the bronze altar shall be for me to inquire by." 16 Thus did Urijah the priest, according to all that King Ahaz commanded. Now here's the shocker—all this is taking place inside the temple that Solomon had built. And now they begin to dismantle part of the temple for Ahaz's idol worship.

17-18

17 And King Ahaz cut off the panels of the carts, and removed the lavers from them; and he took down the Sea from the bronze oxen that were under it, and put it on a pavement of stones. 18 Also he removed the Sabbath pavilion which they had built in the temple, and he removed the king's outer entrance from the house of the LORD, on account of the king of Assyria. History tells us during these changes, Ahaz shut down the operation of the

temple and established small pagan altars all around Judah. And notice it's the king of Assyria that also is calling the shots on the temple!

19 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 20 So Ahaz rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.

This reminds us that the war against the Canaanites in the Book of Joshua — as terrible and complete as it was — was not a racial war. God's judgment did not come upon the Canaanites through the armies of Israel because of their race, but because of their sin. If Israel insisted on walking in the same sins, God would bring similar judgment upon them.

There is judgment from God for sin.

But for every follower of Christ, we know that Jesus has paid the judgment for our sin.

Luke 22:19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

Luke 22:20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."