

Battling for the Soul of a Nation! ***2 Kings 15***

Truth...

The main Battle in America is not POLITICAL nor MORAL, but SPIRITUAL

The Church in America is the Spiritual BAROMETER of BLESSING for the nation

The Church in America will either BLESS or BREAK the nation

We are going to be looking at FOUR different Kings of Judah...

RULER	RULE	SPIRITUALITY	EFFECTS

RULER	RULE	SPIRITUALITY	EFFECTS
AZARIAH			
JOTHAM			
AHAZ			
HEZEKIAH			

1. The DEBILITATING effects of POWERLESS RELIGION

King Azariah

2 Kings 15:1 (ESV) — ... Azariah the son of Amaziah, king of Judah, began to reign.

2 Kings 15:2 (ESV) — He was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem...

2 Kings 15:3a, 4 (ESV) — And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD ... Nevertheless, the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places.

Another name for Azariah is Uzziah...

Isaiah 6:1–5 (ESV) — In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy

is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” 4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”

But listen to what Scripture tells us ...

2 Kings 15:5 (ESV) — And the LORD touched the king, so that he was a leper to the day of his death, and he lived in a separate house. And Jotham the king’s son was over the household, governing the people of the land.

RULER	RULE	SPIRITUALITY	EFFECTS
AZARIAH	GOOD	RELIGIOUS	POWERLESS
JOTHAM			
AHAZ			
HEZEKIAH			

King Jotham

2 Kings 15:32–33 (ESV) — ... Jotham the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, began to reign. He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem...

2 Kings 15:34–35 (ESV) — And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that his father Uzziah had done. Nevertheless, the high places were not removed. The people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places. He built the upper gate of the house of the LORD.

2 Kings 15:37 (ESV) — In those days the LORD began to send Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah against Judah.

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1. The DEBILITATING effects of POWERLESS RELIGION

2. The DEFILING effects of PAGAN RITUALS

King Ahaz

2 Kings 16:1–4 (ESV) — ... Ahaz the son of Jotham, king of Judah, began to reign. Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And he did not do what was right in the eyes of the LORD his God, as his father David had done, but he walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He even burned his son as an offering, according to the despicable practices of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel. And he sacrificed and made offerings on the high places and on the hills and under every green tree.

When King Ahaz came under attack by other kings rather than relying on the Lord to rescue him he turned to Assyria...

In doing that he was saying that the god/gods of the Assyrians had the power to defeat these attacking enemies.

Listen to what King Ahaz saw... and did...

2 Kings 16:10 (ESV) — When King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, he saw the altar that was at Damascus. And King Ahaz sent to Uriah the priest a model of the altar, and its pattern, exact in all its details.

He then replaced the worship of Yahweh with the worship of the gods of the Assyrians...

2 Kings 16:14 (ESV) — And the bronze altar that was before the LORD he removed from the front of the house, from the place between his altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of his altar.

RULER	RULE	SPIRITUALITY	EFFECTS
AZARIAH	GOOD	RELIGIOUS	POWERLESS
JOTHAM	GOOD	RELIGIOUS	POWERLESS
AHAZ	EVIL	RITUALS	PAGAN
HEZEKIAH			

Why???

What had he seen in his father's and grandfather's worship of Yahweh?

→ Disease & Defeat

NOTE:

Powerless religion will always lead to pagan rituals!

1. The DEBILITATING effects of POWERLESS RELIGION

2. The DEFILING effects of PAGAN RITUALS

3. The DELIVERING effects of POWERFUL RELATIONSHIP

Israel had fallen to the Assyrians...

Judah was next in line to fall...

King Hezekiah

2 Kings 18:1–7 (ESV) — 1 In the third year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. 2 He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah. 3 And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done. 4 He removed the high places and broke the pillars and cut down the Asherah. And he broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it (it was called Nehushtan). 5 He trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel, so that there was none like him among all the kings of Judah after him, nor among those who were before him. 6 For he held fast to the LORD. He did not depart from following him, but kept the commandments that the LORD commanded Moses. 7 And the LORD was with him; wherever he went out,

he prospered. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and would not serve him.

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AZARIAH	GOOD	RELIGIOUS	POWERLESS
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HEZEKIAH	GOOD	RELATIONSHIP	POWERFUL

➤ ***It won't be EASY!***

2 Kings 18:13 (ESV) — In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them.

2 Kings 19:1 (ESV) — As soon as King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth and went into the house of the LORD.

2 Kings 19:3 (ESV) — They said to him, “Thus says Hezekiah, This day is a day of distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace; children have come to the point of birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth.

➤ ***The Lord will be your GUIDE!***

2 Kings 19:5–6 (ESV) — When the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, Isaiah said to them, “Say to your master, ‘Thus says the LORD: Do not be afraid because of

the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have reviled me.

➤ ***You will be CHALLENGED!***

2 Kings 19:10–12 (ESV) — Thus shall you speak to Hezekiah king of Judah: ‘Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, devoting them to destruction. And shall you be delivered? Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my fathers destroyed...?’

2 Kings 19:14–19 (ESV) — 14 Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD and spread it before the LORD. 15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD and said: “O LORD, the God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. 16 Incline your ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. 17 Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands 18 and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods, but the work of men’s hands, wood and stone. Therefore they were destroyed. 19 So now, O LORD our God, save us, please, from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, O LORD, are God alone.”

➤ ***You will see MIRACLES!***

2 Kings 19:32–35 (ESV) — 32 “Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there, or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. 33 By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, declares the LORD. 34 For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.” 35 And that night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies.

There is always a battle between powerless religion and powerful relationship!

Powerless Religion focuses on Morals

Pagan Rituals focus on Liberalism

Powerful Relationship focuses on the Spiritual

You remember how Isaiah saw the Lord at the death of Uzziah?...

Isaiah, in that encounter, also heard the voice of the Lord

Isaiah 6:8–10 (ESV) — 8 And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.” 9 And he said, “Go, and say to this people: “ ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’ 10 Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”

Jesus used this passage about the hardness of religious people against His powerful work...

John 12:37–40 (ESV) — 37 Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, 38 so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” 39 Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, 40 “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.”

When Jesus told the story of the Sower (Matthew 13), the people wanted to know why He spoke in parables...

His response was in quoting Isaiah 6!

Matthew 13:13–15 (ESV) — 13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: “ ‘You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive.’ 15 For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.’

**Battling for the Soul of a Nation!
2 Kings 15-19**

Truths:

**The main Battle in America is not _____ nor _____,
but _____**

**The Church in America is the Spiritual _____ of
_____ for the nation**

The Church in America will either _____ or _____ the nation

**1. The _____ effects of _____
_____**

**2. The _____ effects of _____
_____**

**3. The _____ effects of _____
_____**

➤ **It won't be _____!**

➤ **The Lord will be your _____!**

➤ **You will be _____!**

➤ **You will see _____!**