

2 Kings 14:1-29

Chapter 14 takes us back down to the southern kingdom of Judah, again the common pattern as you travel through 1st and 2nd Kings is to hear a little bit about what's happening in Israel, then the transition is made to what's going on (for the most part) at the same time down south in Judah. So that we read of what took place for a number of years in one kingdom, then the tape rewinds so that we might be caught up to speed with what takes place in that same time period in the other. And sometimes you have to watch it because it can get tricky when some of these kings both in the North and the South are ruling simultaneously by the same name. Be that as it may chapter 14 takes us back down south to find out what was happening in Judah when Joash, the son of Jehoahaz was reigning in Israel.

Last time we discovered that it was during the reign of Joash there in Israel that the prophet Elisha whom God had given to Israel died. That was the focus *primarily* of chapter 13, you recall that Joash went to visit Elisha on his death bed, and was all, "What are we going to do with out you, you're the strength of Israel and with out you being around we don't stand a chance!" And Elisha redirected his focus, reminded him of the fact that *he* wasn't the strength of Israel, but rather the God that he served was Israel's strength, their protector and their provider.

And Elisha had him take an arrow and shoot it out the window, then he said, "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance and the arrow of deliverance from Syria; for you must strike the Syrians at Aphek until you have destroyed them." Then he said, "Take the arrows and strike the ground with them." And the king struck the ground 3x, and Elisha got mad. Said, "You should've struck 5 or 6 times, then you would've struck Syria until you destroyed them, but now you'll only strike them 3x." And the point was that God was looking for whole hearted, enthusiastic commitment. That if we'll commit whole heartedly *to* the Lord, being willing to go all the way *with* the Lord, that He'll give us victory over the oppressors of our lives, whatever those things may be. But if you only commit ½ heartedly, aren't willing to surrender to him enthusiastically, it totality, than you won't get complete victory. ½ hearted commitment reaps ½ hearted results, whole hearted commitment reaps the full fruition of God's will done God's way in your life. And as you read there in vs 25 of ch 13, Joash defeated Hazael the king of Syria 3x, just as the man of God had said who gave to him the Word of God. The point? God's Word is true, and not one jot, or one tittle will fall to the ground, as sure as it comes out of God's mouth, it's going to happen just like that. So that's what was happening up North, down South we read.

Vs1

So you see, you have to watch it here because all the sudden we're seeing the same name, different kingdoms, and in this case different times in which the kings by the same name served as king, yet they overlap with in the generation so they pop up together to make for a nice little bit of careful consideration lest we be confused. What we have here is that Joash; the king of Israel was the king of Israel at the same time that *the son* of the Joash who reigned in Judah became king. And the son of the Joash that reigned in Judah was named Amaziah.

Now the Joash that reigned in Judah was the Joash who was taken into the temple when he was a yr old lest he be destroyed by his grandma who was vying for the throne and killing all of the potential heirs. And he was tucked away in the Temple of the Lord for 6 yrs, than in the 7th yr Jehoiada brought him out, the wicked Queen mother was overthrown and Joash (the rightful heir to the throne) was established as the king.

He's the fella who (you recall) began well, and as long as Jehoiada the high priest was there to instruct him he did well. But in the end after Jehoiada died, he headed immediately down the slippery slopes of spiritual decay, fell into idolatry, had the prophet (who was in essence a brother to him) killed because he sought to bring him back to rightful thinking that he might serve the Lord, and because of that a couple of his servants conspired against him and killed him. Then we took a break, went up North to Israel, read of the death of Elisha, now we're returning to that scene in the south to find his son Amaziah being placed on the throne.

Vs2-4

Now when it mentions his "father David" you obviously realize that his father wasn't David directly. David was his "Several Greats" Grandfather from way back. But they didn't use phrases like "Grandfather" or "Forefather" if you were of *their* lineage, then *they* were your father. Even in Jesus' day they were still of this particular mindset in their culture. And they placed their stock in the fact that they were of the lineage of Ab and they thought that they were justified before God in that fact, because God made a covenant with Ab and his lineage after him. One day Jesus was sharing with them, and He said, "*I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father.*" *They answered and said to Him, 'Abraham is our father.'*" John 8:38-39 Of course Jesus was trying to point out to them that in reality they were of their father, the devil because they were trying to kill Him. But my point is that they were saying, "Abraham is our father" even though they were *well over* 1,000 yrs removed from Abraham. So it was a common thing for them to identify an ancestor as their father.

But the point here is that David set the standard for what God was looking for in a king. Why, because David was perfect? Far from it, it was because David had a true heart in the *sight* of God and maintained a position of humility *before* God. He didn't do what God wanted of him out of legal obligation but rather out of a love relationship that he had with God. And when he messed up, he didn't try to hide it from God, when it was brought to his attention he repented, confessed it, didn't make any excuses *for* it, or try to justify himself *in* it. Perhaps you remember King Asa who reigned in Judah? We read of him, "*Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did his father David.*" 1 Kings 15:11 Which is to say that *he* served God out of a true heart, so as to where Asa's comparison to David was *complimentary* Amaziah's was *critical*. You see Asa did was right in the sight of the Lord, as did his father David. Amaziah did was right in the eyes of the Lord as well, *yet not* like his father David. 2nd Chron records it like this, "*...he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a loyal heart.*" 2 Chron 25:2 Which is to say that he did the right thing *legally* but not out of the *loyalty* of his heart towards the Lord. He just wasn't sold out, with his whole heart, to the Lord.

And that's just a dangerous position to be in, because if we're not given over *totally* to the Lord, then were open giving other things a place, and priority in our hearts and in our lives that rightfully belongs to the Lord. Or to understand it another way, there's room for negotiation whenever I'm not fully committed. The other day I was in the music store looking to purchase a piece of equipment to use in our worship services. And as I was speaking to the manager about the price I said, "The sales associate said that this was already marked as low as it can go and that we really can't do anymore with the price, is that true?" and he said, "Pretty much." I said, "How much flex is there in 'pretty much.?" and he laughed and said, "Well, for you we'll take off 10 more dollars." You see because he wasn't fully committed I was able to negotiate with him, if he'd have said, "The price can't flex." That would've been the end of it, but because he didn't fully commit, I was able to negotiate a compromise however small it may've been.

That's what's going to happen in Amaziah's life, he's not fully committed to the Lord in his heart, and because of that he'll be brought into compromise. And that's exactly what the enemy is looking for in your life as well. You may be doing what's right in the eyes of the Lord for now, but is it out of a legal obligation, or a loyal and loving heart? Because if he can find in you a place that's not fully committed, than he knows there's room for negotiation and compromise however subtle and small it may be. And it's like a wedge, it just needs the slightest opening and then it'll split you right in two.

We read here that he did what was right, not like David, but like his father Joash. That should give you a bit of insight as to where he was at. Joash did the right thing under legal counsel, but then when that counsel was gone, it was idolatry, loosing battles, doing away with a prophet, being conspired against and killed. Guess what. Amaziah will do what's right at 1st, then it'll be idolatry, loosing a battle, doing away with a prophet, being conspired against, and killed. He did just like his father Joash, interesting isn't it?

Vs5-6

Couple of things that we want to lift out of these vs here, at this point Amaziah is in the beginning stages of his rule and he began well, did the right things. And here we're given an illustration of how he did what was right in that he had the guys that conspired against his father executed, but he didn't have their sons executed because of what the word of God says. And the reason that that's brought out in that context is because the common cultural thing to do when you executed a man was to kill his sons to, why? Because if you didn't when his sons grew old enough to take revenge on you killing their dad, that's exactly what would happen generally speaking. One particular Greek poet had said that the man who put to death the father and allowed the son to live was a fool. And what I want you to see in this is that he didn't *flow with the current* of the culture of his day but rather he *followed the commandment* of the Word of God. He trusted the fact that if he were obedient to the Word, that God would work out the ramifications accordingly. Now the transition into the practical application for you and me is obvious, there are going to be certain things that are common cultural status quo that don't necessarily line up with the word of God. And you have to make a choice to trust in the Lord and instead walking in the ways of the *world*, you'll choose to walk in the ways of the *Word*.

Because if you do that, God will honor it, for instance it's common in our culture to go out on the weekends and party. To go out drinking, or getting high, getting cranked, tanked and all the other words that are applied to being wasted in some form or another, having premarital relations and all the rest. And if you do those things, than the world doesn't think anything of it, it's common. But the bible says otherwise, speaks of the need for the believer to exercise self-control, how that we're to lead lives that are holy for the Lord our God is holy. Now if you choose to follow the *Word* rather than the *world*, believe me you're on the road less traveled. But such is the path that God will honor, commend you *in*, and reward you *for*. Lead your life according to "what is written" rather than the commonly held cultural position.

The 2nd thing I want you to see here is the *reason* that the sons weren't put to death along with their fathers. Why does the word say that the son is to be spared with regard to the sins of the father? Because (notice it there, end of vs 6) "a person shall be put to death for *his own* sin." The wages of sin is death, that much is for sure, but each person is individually responsible for their sin before God. I'm not condemned to live my life after a certain fashion because of the choices my dad made, or because of how I was raised. It's not my mom's fault that I am who I am, or any of those things. The bible holds each person individually accountable for their own sin.

I'm not going to justify my sin before God based upon the fact that my dad was an alcoholic (he wasn't), or that I was somehow neglected as a child. You see when it comes to my life, it's not my dad's sin that God is interested in, it's mine. I won't be held accountable for his sin, nor will he be held accountable for mine, but we're individually accountable for our lives before the Lord. So though these kid's dads committed murder, they didn't, so Amaziah won't hold them accountable for what their dads did. And those are the 2 things I want you to see here, going against the grain of the commonly held culturally acceptable practices in order to conform myself to the word of God, and individual accountability for sin.

Vs7-8

Sela is Petra, Joktheel means, "The blessedness of God." Now there's actually a whole little story that goes with this, vs7-8 are like parenthesis with an entire middle part left out. And rather than me taking the time to explain it, let's turn to 2nd Chronicles 25:5-17

So you see Amaziah had 300,000 men who were prepared to go to battle and he hired another 100,000 from Israel. The prophet comes, says, "Don't do it, the Lord isn't with them." He says, "What about all that cash?" "Hey, God can more than make up for any loss you incur because you've opted to trust in Him" (Which is a good thing to remember by the way. Perhaps you stand to take a loss if you do your books like they should be done, but if you do it because you trust the Lord and want to be right with the Lord, He can more than make up for it. Ex- live together couple?) So Amaziah discharges them (still doing good) but it made them mad, so on their way out of the country, they decide to go ahead and raid a few cities, kill a few thousand people and take a lot of spoil. Which no doubt served as the catalyst for Amaziah to turn his attention towards Joash up in Israel.

But somewhere between vs 7-8 Amaziah slid back and took in the gods of the Edomites whom he'd destroyed and began to worship them. You see he was set up for trouble because his heart wasn't completely loyal to the Lord; there was room for negotiation. I'm sure it didn't happen overnight, at 1st these idols were trophies, then maybe he began to a bit of research as to, "What was it they believed anyway?" And through a series of subtle compromises he fell away from the Lord and into full fledged idolatry. Now if he'd have been wholly committed to the Lord, he'd have never brought the idols home in the 1st place, they'd have been destroyed and that would've been the end of it, but he was open to it, perhaps entertained by it, gloried over his victory in it. But in the end it snared him. Well, because he forsook the Lord, the Lord's anger was aroused, and in vs 20 of ch 25 of 2nd Chron you find that the Lord had purposed to give them into the hands of Israel because they'd forsaken Him, and sought after the god's of Edom.

But Amaziah can't see it from God's perspective, he's just ticked off that Israel ravaged his land, and he's feeling pretty "froggy" because of this overwhelming victory against Edom, and he's ready to "jump" at Israel. There's a word for that, it's called "pride", "arrogance", "self-confidence." And because of Amaziah's proud heart, he begins to contend with Israel. The bible says, "*By pride comes nothing but strife,*" Prov 13:10 And again, "*A fool's lips enter into contention, And his mouth calls for blows. A fool's mouth is his destruction, And his lips are the snare of his soul.*" Prov 18:6-7 Pride gets people into trouble, makes for trouble in their lives, Prov 29:23 says "*A man's pride will bring him low,*" and that's exactly what's going to happen with Amaziah.

Vs9

Translation: "You're in over your head, now go away kid you bother me." Jehoash has been up there stomping around on Hazael, king of Syria for a while now. And granted that was the Lord's doing, but he's become quite the military force to be reckoned with, and he warns Amaziah that he's overly puffed up about this menial victory that he's had but he's playing with the big boys now. It's like a little thorn bush trying to run with the cedars of Lebanon. But the thorn was crushed in passing by wild beast; it was just defenseless in reality against any notable force at all.

Vs10-16

Vs10 shows us, "The root" of Amaziah's problem, "The warning," and "The ramifications" or "Results" that will take place, then vs11 is his "Refusal to repent" and vs 12-14 "Reveals" exactly how the ramifications of his refusal to repent played out.

What was the root of his problem? Vs 10, "Your heart has lifted you up." It's amazing what victory in a person's life can do to him. How a God given victory can turn to self inflated ego, but so often the greatest pitfalls follow hard on the heels of some of the greatest victories. Why? Because I have a tendency to let my guard down, take overconfidence in my flesh, "Now I can take on the world!" What's the bible say? "*...let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*"

1 Cor 10:12 Peter thought he'd never deny the Lord, was too strong for that, confident in his ability to endure. But his confidence in his flesh became his greatest area of weakness, why? He didn't depend on the Lord for that, and though the flesh might be willing, we need to realize its weakness.

He was overconfident, but he was out of his element, on his own, but even still God was faithful to send him a warning, see it there. "Why should you meddle with trouble so that you fall?" How often someone gets a little victory and now they're ready to take on the world, they look for battles they've never been called to enter into. "I can go to that party and leave before things get out of hand." "I can date that non-believer and convert them to Christ, it'll never go any farther than conversation." Why should you meddle with trouble so that you fall? Underline that, think it over, I can't think of a time that I meddled with trouble but that God didn't warn me 1st, place that check in my heart, or thought in my mind, but I wouldn't heed. The warning? "Why meddle with trouble? Taking on battles you were never directed to?"

The result, "You fall- you and Judah with you." In other words, it's not just you who gets to suffer the ramifications for your sin, yeah the sons weren't put to death for the sin of their dad, but they didn't have a dad anymore! And innocent flirtations turn to full fledged affairs, divorce, kids crying themselves to sleep because mommy and daddy will never live together again and they don't understand. It's not just you who takes the fall, it's you and Judah with you.

But Amaziah wouldn't heed, he wouldn't listen, he had a problem with his hearing. Wouldn't heed the warning, that's why over and over again Jesus said, "*He who has ears to hear, let him hear!*" Matt 11:15 The bible teaches us that it's honorable for a man to stop striving, since any fool can start a quarrel. But he wouldn't back off. And what was the result? 4 Things, you might jot them down. #1 It disgraced the nation, Judah was defeated and every man fled to his tent. Meddling in sin, in situations that the Lord hasn't directed you to be involved with will only bring disgrace both to your life, and those around you. #2 It damaged and decreased their defenses, some 200 yards of the wall around Jerusalem was destroyed. Once you've engaged in that sinful situation, it destroys your defenses, you were wracked with guilt the 1st time, but for some reason it wasn't as difficult the next...your defenses are down, and ultimately your conscience is seared completely. Once your defenses are down the enemy will just ransack you, that's why the 1st thing Nehemiah did when he came on the scene was rebuild the walls, re-establish those defenses. Don't let the guard down that surrounds your heart, build it up. You're to, "*Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.*" Prov 4:23 #3 It Diminished their worship, notice in vs 14 how the riches of worship were robbed, not only that the treasures were robbed from his house as well. The personal purity and virtue is ripped off because of a few minutes of pleasure, or a nights worth of partying. And #4 It destroyed their freedom, both Amaziah and an untold # of people in Jerusalem were taken into bondage. You just never know how far out the effects of your sin are going to ripple out and snare other people along with yourself.

So you find yourself in a place whereby, you've been disgraced, your defenses are at best damaged and decreased, the riches of your worship are diminished if not depleted altogether. And you become a slave to the sin that has overcome you as Peter said, by whom a person is overcome he's brought into bondage, like the true proverb, a dog returns to his vomit, and a sow having washed to her wallowing in the mire. And so here you are, bound in sin, robbed of blessing, and why? Because you were meddling with trouble and refused to heed the warning. Now we read in vs 17

Vs17-20

Evidently he was released upon the death of Joash or something, but after this whole situation he wasn't too popular. 2nd Chronicles tells us that after he turned away from following the Lord, they conspired against him, just like they did his dad. Royalty was risky business back then, because they didn't vote you *out*, they just did you *in*.

Vs21-22

Now we'll deal with Azariah more in ch 15, but another way to translate this name is "Uzziah" which begins to enlighten you as to who the prophet was in Judah around this time... Isaiah, remember Isaiah mentions Uzziah specifically as a point of reference to his call into the ministry there in Isaiah ch 6. So now when you read the book of Isaiah, you know where to place him in the record of the kings.

Vs23-25

Again this is the same Jonah that was swallowed in the belly of the great fish, and he was evidently a popular prophet in Israel because he prophesied that God would restore the territory of Israel. Also on the scene in Israel at this time (prophet wise) was Hosea, and Amos. So when you read those books, perhaps you'll have a bit of insight as to the condition of the nation at this time that they were being used of God to minister *to* the nation. But in essence you had, Isaiah in the south, and Jonah, Amos, and Hosea in the north. Of course Jonah going to Nineveh was to demonstrate how that God would forgive even the most ungodly of nations if they would repent, and even so He would forgive Israel, if they would just repent. We serve a God of compassion and grace, I mean what kind of Grace is it that restores Israel and relieves them of oppression even though Israel isn't walking in the ways of God? I would say, "Amazing."

Vs26-29

Prayer Points: God thank You for Your grace, that you look upon us in our affliction and have compassion. Help us to heed the warnings of Your word of Your Spirit, that we not meddle with trouble so that we fall, but that we walk in humility, as opposed to a proud and arrogant heart. Help us to walk in uprightness before You, not blaming our ways on our parents or any other person or situation but to be accountable individually before You. And to walk against the commonly held practices of our culture that are in conflict with Your Word and to hold true to Your Word. And may we follow you, not in a legal/mechanical way, but out of love, and loyalty of the heart...

