

- Today we begin a new verse-by-verse study through the book of 1 Kings.
 - To some this study may be new territory of biblical narrative, however, if you have studied 2 Samuel with us, this book is simply a continuation.
 - The book of Kings (1 and 2 Kings) is what scholars consider a continuing narrative of 2 Samuel following the Davidic lineage to Solomon.
 - Within this study, we will be covering 1 Kings and will tackle 2 Kings later.
 - However, as we use today's lesson to establish background and context, you will see that the story line of Israel's King and kingdom thickens.
 - Old Testament books are oftentimes overlooked or avoided due to the breath of history that it entails.
 - Some overlook the Old Testament in its entirety as if the Hebrew Bible is not a part of scripture.
 - As I often say, the New Testament writers depended heavily upon the Old Testament to express the theological realities of our faith in Christ.
 - Therefore, the Old Testament, in its fullness, is necessary to understand and grow in our faith and maturity in Christ.
 - Therefore, we should desire to lean into narratives such as 1 and 2 Kings which provides biblical principles by which we can apply to our life.
 - As a matter of fact, this is what Paul says about the necessity of the entirety of scripture, which includes the Old Testament.
 - He says in 2 Timothy 3:16-17:

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 2 Timothy 3:17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

- So, although, Old Testament texts such as 1/2 Kings deal heavily with Jewish history and tradition regarding Israel as a whole, understand that our Christian faith centers upon a Jewish Messiah – Jesus Christ.
 - Therefore, it would behoove us to grow in our understanding of Jewish history and God's storyline so that we see how He faithfully deals in human history.
 - And what we will come to find in our time through this book is that God's ways and word does not change.
 - Most importantly there is blessing and satisfaction that comes from God.
 - To begin, we need to know where we are in the overarching narrative of scripture. So here is an overview of Old Testament history in graphic form. (See slides)
 - The star is going to indicate where we pick up in the storyline of scripture.
 - I mentioned at the start of the lesson that the book of Kings is considered a continuation of 2 Samuel.

- 2 Samuel, if you remember ended with King David building an alter after having repented for taking a census.
- The issue was not that a census was taken, but rather pride arose in David's heart.
 - David saw the prosperity in which Israel had attained over the years.
- Israel was a nation that was becoming known for who they were, but most importantly, who's they were.
 - This was the Nation in which served the Living God – Yahweh.
- It was Yahweh who had provided victory after victory for the King and the Nation.
 - But the moment that David got beside himself and looked to the number of his army for strength and security it caused the anger of the Lord to rise.
- This pattern of disobedience and lack of loyalty and faithfulness to the Lord is an ongoing pattern that Israel faced time and again. (Exodus, Deut., Joshua, Judges...)
 - As a matter of fact, one of the stipulations that was in the Torah for the Kings of Israel was a commitment to covenant faithfulness.
- In Deuteronomy 17:14-20, Moses is given instruction by the Lord to outline a second time for the next generation, terms in which they were to abide by.
 - So as the new generation was preparing to go into the Land in which the Lord was giving them, their success was determined by their obedience.
 - And in the same way, the first generation's failure to enter the land and discipline overall was indicative of their lack of obedience and trust.
- As the saying goes, "As the King goes, so goes the people".
 - Therefore, if the King does not obey, the Nation will suffer.
 - Here is what God required from His King according to Torah, which was different from other surrounding secular nations:

Deut.17:14 “When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, ‘I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,’

Deut.17:15 you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman.

Deut.17:16 “Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the Lord has said to you, ‘You shall never again return that way.’

Deut.17:17 “He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself.

Deut.17:18 “Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests.

Deut.17:19 “It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he

may learn to fear the Lord his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes,

Deut.17:20 that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel.

- The Lord makes clear here the terms and conditions for Israel's King in Moses' second giving of the Law (Deuteronomy).
 - And one of the conditions is that when the people enter the Land that it would be the Lord who would set the King – not the people.
 - Here is a quick summary list of the Laws concerning Israel's King according to Deuteronomy: (Refer to slides)
 - We know that it was in 1 Samuel 8:5 that Israel demanded a king for themselves.
 - So instead of the Lord ruling over them (theocracy), they wanted a human agent that mimicked the surrounding nations. (Monarchy)
 - However, what becomes evident in the storyline of scripture is that God already had in mind who this human king would be and through what lineage.
 - For it was in Genesis 49:10 that Jacob (Israel), by God's election, establishes the tribe of Judah by which Israel's future King comes from.

Gen. 49:10 “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

- Following the timeline of scripture, it leads us from Joshua (dealing with the conquest of Israel) to Judges (the cycles of sin in the land) due to rebellion against God. (Story of Ruth sets up the lineage from which David comes)
 - So, because of the people's insistence and rejection of the Lord's command and rule over time, up to the point of choosing a King, God gives them a King from the tribe of Benjamin. (1 Samuel)
 - This theme of Israel's disobedience towards God's word and their personal pride becomes a common thread throughout the book of Kings and human history.
 - That where there is a lack of obedience to God's word and covenant faithfulness, it only leads to great demise and judgement.
 - However, despite the failures of men, because of God's covenant with Israel, He remains faithful to Himself and His promises.
 - The two covenants which become of great importance especially within the Kings' narrative is the Abrahamic Covenant and the Davidic Covenant.
 - The Abrahamic covenant, given in Genesis 12:1-13, speaks to three things: Land, Seed, and blessing.
 - And the Davidic covenant speaks to God's promise to His elected King over

Israel and His promise regarding David's eternal descendant.

- And the promise of the Davidic covenant dealt with an eternal house, an eternal kingdom, and an eternal throne.
- And where these two covenants intertwine is dealing with "the seed promise".
 - The seed promise dealt specifically with how God's restorative and redemptive purposes would be accomplished in creation.
 - And this restorative/redemptive purpose required a Jewish seed, from the Tribe of Judah and from the line of David.
- So isn't it quite a powerful reality that in Matthew's gospel as he goes through Jesus' lineage, that he mentions this detail in Matthew 1:1-2.

Matthew 1:1 The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Matthew 1:2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.

- Furthermore, a complete read from Matthew 1:1-17 helps one see how God's Messiah through lineage, links to Jesus Christ.
 - Therefore, when one considers the history of Israel, more specifically the Southern Kingdom of Judah, one must consider God's Covenant promises.
 - And what we will see through the narrative of 1 and 2 Kings is how despite the failures and downfall of the Kings, God remains faithful.
 - But before we get to that, let's begin with a bit of background on the book itself, starting with the author.
- Although the writer of Kings is unknown, there is some evidence supported by the Talmudic tradition suggesting it was written by the prophet Jeremiah.
 - Other scholars suggest Ezra or Ezekiel wrote the Kings because of the date of composition.
 - Being that both these men were inspired writers that lived after the Babylonian exile, they are considered potential candidates.
 - But whatever the case, whoever wrote 1 and 2 Kings had a historical and covenantal understanding of the nation as a whole.
 - It is suggested that the Kings was composed somewhere between 560 and 538 BC.
 - Whoever wrote The Kings understood that this was a record of Israel's disobedience, idolatry, and ungodliness towards Yahweh.
 - I find it quite interesting that where 2 Samuel ends is where 1 Kings begins.
 - Because the ending of 2 Samuel focuses on repentance and dependence on the Lord.
 - And 1 Kings begins with David still in power but at the very end of his life.

- As we work through 1 and 2 Kings, we will discover that the success and prosperity of the Nation of Israel hinges on the King's faithfulness to the Torah.
 - God is serious about His word, and He expects His King and Nation to uphold the covenant accordingly.
 - Because the moment they allow their hearts to rule them instead of God's word, it leads to devastation.
- Unfortunately, this reality will be seen in Solomon's ruling. He begins with great wisdom and strength.
 - Yet, as time goes along, Solomon's heart becomes divided because of the influence of his foreign wives – something the Law forbid.
- The rise and fall of David's son, Solomon, sets the book divide in which we will see a united kingdom in part 1 and a divided kingdom in part 2.
 - And what becomes quite comical is that the behavior of the human heart is quite consistent.
 - This is something that King David, in his old age tries to warn his son about.
 - Check out how David instructs Solomon before he dies in 1 Kings 2:1-4.

1 Kings 2:1 As David's time to die drew near, he charged Solomon his son, saying,

1 Kings 2:2 “I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man.

1 Kings 2:3 “Keep the charge of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and His testimonies, according to what is written in the Law of Moses, that you may succeed in all that you do and wherever you turn,

1 Kings 2:4 so that the Lord may carry out His promise which He spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons are careful of their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’

- Understand, David had walked with the Lord as King for 40 years and during that time would have understood the significance of obedience.
 - David had made his fair share of mistakes and faults as King, but one thing that remained steady was David's heart of repentance.
 - The very words of endearment that David shares with Solomon are quite similar to the instructions Moses and Joshua received.
 - The point being that obedience and success comes from the Lord.
 - And as we read earlier in Deuteronomy 17, there were certain terms and conditions that were to be met for the success of the King and the Nation.
 - And as our study continues to unfold, we will see that Solomon begins with the Lord at the forefront of his focus.

- Yet over time, (Chapter 11), we find that Solomon's attention gets "pulled away".
- Observe in 1 Kings 11:1-4, what the cause of this "pulling away" was:

1 Kings 11:1 Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women,

1 Kings 11:2 from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the sons of Israel, "You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods." Solomon held fast to these in love.

1 Kings 11:3 He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away.

1 Kings 11:4 For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been.

- What we will find in our study is that God desires his King and people to obey His command.
 - As we work through the entirety of the Kings, I want you to keep 4 things in the back of your mind regarding biblical principles to be applied:
 - 1. Man cannot properly rule himself without proper reliance and dependence on God.
 - 2. We cannot forge a society or culture of peace apart from the submission of a Holy God and our God has established a rightful ruler who will come again and reign in true justice, power, and peace.
 - 3. The kings of Israel shed light into the very people as a whole. Just as the kings reject the prophecy of the prophets, so the people reject the instructions of God. (God-less society)
 - 4. We await Jesus Christ in His Second Coming where He will rule and reign on David's throne in Jerusalem over all nations.
 - With that being said, let's begin our study tonight and pick up on King David who is now old in age in the last days of life.
 - Pick me up in 1 Kings 1:1-4.

1 Kings 1:1 Now King David was old, advanced in age; and they covered him with clothes, but he could not keep warm.

1 Kings 1:2 So his servants said to him, "Let them seek a young virgin for my lord the king, and let her attend the king and become his nurse; and let her lie in your bosom, that my lord the king may keep warm."

1 Kings 1:3 So they searched for a beautiful girl throughout all the territory of

Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king.

1 Kings 1:4 The girl was very beautiful; and she became the king's nurse and served him, but the king did not cohabit with her.

- David is now 70 years of age at this point in the narrative.
 - We know he was 70 years old because 2 Samuel 5:4 tells us that David began ruling over a united Israel at 30 years old.
 - And being that he ruled as king for forty years, simple math brings us to the number 70.
 - The text reveals that David is no longer able to maintain his own body heat even with additional clothing.
 - So, to remedy the issue, David's servants seek out a young woman who could lay next to the king to keep him warm.
 - The text mentions a beautiful young Shunamite woman named Abishag who will serve as a nurse to David.
 - Now, at first read, the tendency is to run to the assumption that David did more than simply 'seek warmth'.
 - However, 1 Kings 1:4b tells us that David "did not cohabit with her."
 - Literally, the text reads, "the king did not know her" simply meaning David did not have sexual relations with her.
 - Although this method of care is unusual to those in the west, this type of medical practice was familiar in the east.
 - Josephus confirms the medical practice of young virgin women caring for royalty.
 - For it was typical in that day for unmarried women, free from household responsibilities and children, to meet the needs of the King.
 - So, knowing that David did not make a move on Abishag further affirms his physical weakness which unveils the vulnerability of the throne.
 - And right when you think that David would be able to rest in peace to pass on the crown, in comes the drama.
 - Check out verses 5-8.

1 Kings 1:5 Now Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king." So he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen with fifty men to run before him.

1 Kings 1:6 His father had never crossed him at any time by asking, "Why have you done so?" And he was also a very handsome man, and he was born after Absalom.

1 Kings 1:7 He had conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest; and following Adonijah they helped him.

1 Kings 1:8 But Zadok the priest, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and the mighty men who belonged to David, were not with Adonijah.

- Knowing that David was coming to the end of his life and that the throne was vulnerable, David's fourth son (eldest of the brothers at this point), Adonijah decides that he was next in line to be king.
 - Here is a vulnerable moment now being seized by an opportunistic child.
 - This situation sounds a bit familiar, because it was in 2 Samuel 15-17 that another one of David's sons tried to take a grab at the throne.
 - Absalom started a coup to usurp the throne while his father was strong and able-bodied and now here is Adonijah doing the same while his father is feeble.
 - It doesn't make it any better when you understand what Adonijah's name means. It means "my Lord is Yahweh".
 - So, it becomes clear that the driving factor of Adonijah's decision making is not God's but rather his own.
 - As we read in Deuteronomy, the choice of king was not a matter of self-appointment but of divine election.
 - Yet, verse 5a makes known that Adonijah "exalted himself".
 - He didn't seek the counsel of the Lord nor was he sought after by the prophet of the Lord.
 - And what a danger that becomes, even today.
 - That rather than seeking the timing of God for certain matters, we acquiesce to our own plans.
 - So Adonijah, filled with pride, says that he will be king and in doing so prepares for himself chariots and horsemen with an entourage.
 - Normally, a king would ride upon a donkey for formal inaugurations because riding upon a horse signified war not peace.
 - So, this moment becomes yet another indication of the heart gone awry – and a play out of Absalom's playbook.
 - What should grab our attention at this point in the text is verse 6 because clearly the Holy Spirit has something to say about David in this matter as well.
 - Notice verse 6 says, "His father (David) had never "crossed" him at any time".
 - That word "crossed" in Hebrew means to rebuke, to pain.
 - The type of rebuke or pain here is dealing with discipline or training in behavior as in the raising of children.
 - In other words, David's lack of discipline of his children and withholding certain things from them becomes a painful yet revealing point in this coup.
 - It is to suggest that this child was entitled and got what he wanted and in turn, now with dad being down, "I get things my way".

- So, because of David's lack of discipline toward child number four, Adonijah has not only gone against David's will, but he has gone against God.
 - Therefore this will be addressed – and we will see that further down the line.
 - Where did the pride settle in for Adonijah, becomes a question to be asked.
- Adonijah, although handsome and born after Absalom, assumed that he would be next in line.
 - However, as we have seen the Lord work throughout scripture time and again, the Lord examines the heart not the exterior.
 - Verses 7-8 provide some contrasting reactions as it relates to those who will either side with Adonijah or stand opposed to this rebellion.
- Notice who is first mentioned in siding with Adonijah and his coup – none other than Joab.
 - This shouldn't surprise us in the least bit because as we witnessed in 2 Samuel, Joab is quite impulsive.
 - Abiathar the priest is also caught in the web of deceit, because as one could imagine, with Adonijah setting himself as king, some would assume David confirmed this.
- However, nowhere does the text mention that Joab or Abiathar confirmed this "alleged" selection of Adonijah as king.
 - One could infer that those in whom Adonijah were gathering were like minded in motive or self-preserving.
- For Joab, it would allow him to retain control militarily, therefore staying in power.
 - And for Abiather, he would retain his position as priest – something that was potentially at risk of being removed if Solomon took reign.
 - And we will see why this detail is significant later.
- Notice, in verse 8 the other group of men who demonstrate faithfulness to David.
 - These men were Zadok the priest, Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and the mighty men who belonged to David.
- Zadok the priest joined David at Hebron following the death of Saul which is documented in 1 Chronicles 12:28.
 - Zadok served David loyally and became quite favored in David's Royal Administration.
 - Benaiah was one of the men listed in David's list of mighty men towards the end of 2 Samuel (2 Samuel 23:20-23).
- Nathan the prophet is included in the loyalist group and his appearing is quite significant.
 - On one hand, he served David faithfully and communicated God's word to David – especially on two particular occasions.
 - The first message that Nathan gave David was the promise of what we know as the Davidic covenant.

- This is where the Lord promised David an eternal throne, eternal house, and eternal Kingdom.
- The second most important word from the Lord was Nathan's rebuke of David.
- This rebuke was in response to David having Uriah the Hittite, Bathsheba's husband killed.
 - David is given a peculiar story by Nathan describing an evil done against a man due to the lust of his flesh.
 - In David hearing this story, he becomes enraged at the injustice done and demands that restitution be made.
 - However, it was in the midst of David's outrage at what was done that Nathan tells David, the man I'm describing is you (David).
 - Check out the dialogue between Nathan and David in 2 Samuel 12:7-15.

2 Samuel 12:7 **Nathan then said to David, “You are the man! Thus says the Lord God of Israel, ‘It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul.**

2 Samuel 12:8 **‘I also gave you your master’s house and your master’s wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these!**

2 Samuel 12:9 **‘Why have you despised the word of the Lord by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon.**

2 Samuel 12:10 **‘Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.’**

2 Samuel 12:11 **“Thus says the Lord, ‘Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight.**

2 Samuel 12:12 **‘Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.’ ”**

2 Samuel 12:13 **Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.” And Nathan said to David, “The Lord also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.**

2 Samuel 12:14 **“However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die.”**

2 Samuel 12:15 **So Nathan went to his house. Then the Lord struck the child that Uriah’s widow bore to David, so that he was very sick.**

- The very statement in verse 11 comes to fruition by means of Absalom's rebellion and him raping his father's concubine for all to hear about.

- So, if there was one who knew David and cared for his best interest especially that of the throne, it would be Nathan.
- Lastly, we see Shimei, Rei, and the mighty men. Shimei becomes another interesting yet loyal ally.
 - This Shimei is the same man who in 2 Sam.16:5-13 cursed David to his face.
 - In few short words, Shimei told David, *“You got what you deserved having Absalom usurp the throne.”*
 - This was a spit in the face!
 - However, this was the same man who after Absalom was killed by Joab, in embarrassment and humility, seeks the kings forgiveness and grace. (2 Sam.19:16-23)
 - We will see in Chapter 2 that Shimei's loyalty to David at this point was simply “a means to get by”.
 - And what an interesting piece of information that is because what it reveals is that true intentions in the end will always come to light.
- We often think that those with ill-intention or impure motives get away with everything.
 - Yet what we find to be true in scripture is that the wicked always ends in devastation.
 - The Psalters record it this way: Psalm 1:6

Psalm 1:6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the wicked will perish.

- So, although it may not happen in our desired timing, rest assured that the Lord is Sovereign and knows their end.
 - The plans of the wicked always are concocted in the dark or in concealed places.
 - And indeed, this is what is unfolding with Adonijah. Check out our last 2 verses for the night, verses 9-10.

1 Kings 1:9 Adonijah sacrificed sheep and oxen and fatlings by the stone of Zoheleth, which is beside En-rogel; and he invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah, the king's servants.

1 Kings 1:10 But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, and Solomon his brother.

- So, in full pursuit of this coup, Adonijah prepares a celebration of sorts south of the city and invites his brothers, the men of Judah and the kings' servants.
 - These would have been men who weren't firm allies to David and Solomon.
 - This feast served as a pledge of their loyal allegiance to Adonijah, not the King.

- This meal was binding, meaning that the breaking of bread was conspiring and therefore deemed treasonous.
- Notice in verse 10 who was not invited – Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, and Solomon, his brother.
 - Clearly, something fishy was going on and the key men that Adonijah suspected would cause trouble were not invited.
 - And this reality serves as a warning of sorts – that what goes on in the dark has to eventually come to light!
- It's like the party that you don't get invited to yet you hear all about it and in the end you're thankful you didn't get invited after all – It wasn't what you expected!
 - And it wouldn't be long before these men got whiff of what was transpiring behind David's back.
 - Next week, we will finish chapter one as we move towards this uprising of rebellion that is once again plaguing a United Israel.
 - Let's Pray.

- Last week, we began our study with introductory matters and established some necessary background for the book of 1 Kings.
 - And in the background content, we came to understand the importance of the Torah (Law of Moses) and its impact on Israel.
 - Understanding Torah helps to establish the expectations and behaviors of the people (Israel).
 - That where the children of Israel obeyed came blessing, and where they disobeyed followed discipline and judgement.
 - And being that the King was to be selected by God Himself, it was of utmost importance that the King kept the law of the Lord on his heart.
 - From there, we covered verses 1-10 where David, now 70 years old, is declining in health.
 - And in this moment of great vulnerability, his son Adonijah has concocted a coup that has garnered a following of men to help him take the throne.
 - Yet all the while, having no approval from David as being his successor.
 - Finally, it was in verses 9-10 that the scene shifted to a city called En-rogel, where Adonijah and his comrades prepared a feast.
 - And this feast served as a fellowship of agreement for Adonijah as the future king of Israel.
 - However, as we discovered, all things that transpire in the dark are eventually revealed in the end.
 - And so is the case for Adonijah and his rebellion to overtake the throne.
 - Tonight, we will see that the individuals that Adonijah did not invite, will become the very ones who will overturn this messy situation.
 - If I were to outline our time tonight, we will see the following:
 - 1. Nathan's Plan (vv.11-27)
 - 2. David's Response (vv.28-40)
 - 3. Jonathan's News and Adonijah's Response (vv.41-50)
 - 4. Solomon's Response (vv.51-53)
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 1:11-14 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 1:11 Then Nathan spoke to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, “Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king, and David our lord does not know it?

1 Kings 1:12 “So now come, please let me give you counsel and save your life and the life of your son Solomon.

1 Kings 1:13 “Go at once to King David and say to him, ‘Have you not, my lord, O king, sworn to your maidservant, saying, “Surely Solomon your son shall be

king after me, and he shall sit on my throne”? Why then has Adonijah become king?’

1 Kings 1:14 “Behold, while you are still there speaking with the king, I will come in after you and confirm your words.”

- Apparently, Nathan has caught wind of Adonijah’s coup for the throne over Israel and is moved to act against this plan.
 - So, in response to Adonijah’s actions, Nathan goes to Bathsheba in an effort to grab the attention of the King to make him aware of the situation at hand.
 - And the way in which Nathan approaches the situation is by setting up the reality of what this coup means for Bathsheba and Solomon.
 - The reality was if Adonijah became successful in this coup where Absalom failed, it would put Bathsheba and Solomon in line to be exiled or worse, killed.
 - So, by framing the matter in a way of a ‘shock factor’, Nathan is able to gain Bathsheba’s attention and in turn, the King’s urgent response.
 - So, Nathan prepares Bathsheba as to how to approach the King and to peak his interest in the matter.
 - And most assuredly, alerting the king to such news would be a painful and sobering reminder of what Absalom attempted years prior.
 - But what becomes such a profound moment in this narrative is that Nathan tells Bathsheba of who the rightful king is – none other than her son, Solomon.
 - However, the way in which Nathan phrases it suggests that this information has been made known prior.
 - The information being that David told someone that Solomon would be king after him.
 - And being that Nathan is God’s prophet and is repeating this information to Bathsheba confirms that David had made such a promise.
 - However, this conversation between David and others is not recorded within the narrative of 2 Samuel.
 - Therefore, this begs the question: “Where in scripture was Solomon becoming king after David made known, first?”
- We find David’s affirmation of Solomon as Israel’s future King documented in 1 Chronicles 22:8-10 and later before the officials of Israel in 1 Chronicles 28:2-8.
 - As a general note: 1 Chronicles covers similar content to that of 2 Samuel but from a different vantage point.
 - Check out David’s conversation with his son Solomon regarding the future Temple and rule of Israel.

1 Chronicles 22:8 “But the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ‘You have shed much blood and have waged great wars; you shall not build a house to My name, because you have shed so much blood on the earth before Me.

1 Chronicles 22:9 ‘Behold, a son will be born to you, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side; for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel in his days.

1 Chronicles 22:10 ‘He shall build a house for My name, and he shall be My son and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.’

- What makes Nathan’s information to Bathsheba so unique is that according to 1 Chronicles 22:8-10, this conversation is only between David and Solomon. (1 Chronicles 22:6)
 - Yet, Nathan is providing this information to Bathsheba as if he were in the conversation himself.
 - Furthermore, according to 1 Chronicles 28:1-8, David announced Solomon as his successor to his officials, mighty men, and commanders!
 - This simply shows God’s sovereignty in how despite the plans and schemes of man, God is in control.
 - And God uses those in whom He calls to accomplish His work and purposes.
 - So once Nathan gives Bathsheba the plan, he informs her on how he will come to confirm, as a witness, what David is hearing.
 - And this method of communication regarding a capital offence, such as the potential murder of someone, needed the corroboration of a witness. (Numbers 35:30)

Numbers 35:30 ‘If anyone kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death at the evidence of witnesses, but no person shall be put to death on the testimony of one witness.

- This is why Nathan stresses the safety of the life of Bathsheba and Solomon.
 - And in obedience to the word of the prophet Nathan, Bathsheba goes to the king and follows Nathan’s instructions.

1 Kings 1:15 So Bathsheba went in to the king in the bedroom. Now the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was ministering to the king.

1 Kings 1:16 Then Bathsheba bowed and prostrated herself before the king. And the king said, “What do you wish?”

1 Kings 1:17 She said to him, “My lord, you swore to your maid servant by the Lord your God, saying, ‘Surely your son Solomon shall be king after me and he shall sit on my throne.’

1 Kings 1:18 “Now, behold, Adonijah is king; and now, my lord the king, you do not know it.

1 Kings 1:19 “He has sacrificed oxen and fatlings and sheep in abundance, and has

invited all the sons of the king and Abiathar the priest and Joab the commander of the army, but he has not invited Solomon your servant.

1 Kings 1:20 “As for you now, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.

1 Kings 1:21 “Otherwise it will come about, as soon as my lord the king sleeps with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be considered offenders.”

- So Bathsheba goes to David while he's being tended to by Abishag the nurse.
 - And within custom during that time, it was fitting for those who enter into the king's presence to bow themselves before him as a sign of respect and honor.
 - From there David acknowledges Bathsheba and asks her to share what is on her mind regarding her visit.
 - Bathsheba proceeds to inform the king about the present condition regarding Adonijah's coup and self-declaration as king, just as Nathan stated.
 - And as coached, she phrases this manner in a way as to display to the king that this situation is happening on your watch.
 - And furthermore, the people of Israel are looking to you as their leader to know who will succeed you.
 - This is a masterful means of communicating truth while holding leadership accountable.
 - The reality was, if David did not respond accordingly, it would leave the kingdom in disarray and those in whom he loved in danger.
 - Therefore, a proper response is necessary and will be further confirmed by another witness as planned – Nathan the prophet.
 - Check out verses 22-27.

1 Kings 1:22 Behold, while she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in.

1 Kings 1:23 They told the king, saying, “Here is Nathan the prophet.” And when he came in before the king, he prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground.

1 Kings 1:24 Then Nathan said, “My lord the king, have you said, ‘Adonijah shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne’?”

1 Kings 1:25 “For he has gone down today and has sacrificed oxen and fatlings and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king's sons and the commanders of the army and Abiathar the priest, and behold, they are eating and drinking before him; and they say, ‘Long live King Adonijah!’

1 Kings 1:26 “But me, even me your servant, and Zadok the priest and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and your servant Solomon, he has not invited.

1 Kings 1:27 “Has this thing been done by my lord the king, and you have not shown to your servants who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after

him?"

- Without fail, Nathan arrives at the right time following up with Bathsheba's report regarding Adonijah's counterfeit rise to the throne.
 - Nathan, in a similar manner, bows before the king in honor and respect as is custom and proceeds to ask the king if Adonijah's succession was his doing.
 - And in so doing, he continues to probe the king for a retaliatory response to this egregious coup.
 - Nathan seems to be quite respectable in the matter as he seeks not to anger the king, but for the king to provide swift action.
 - And to his benefit, the king responds swiftly and with haste.
 - Perhaps, this is from years of David having experienced betrayal by those closest to him yet his failure to act in a timely manner.
 - So, David, having walked with the Lord and having been advised by the prophet of the Lord, responds wisely.
 - And as we've mentioned before in our recent teaching through Philippians, wisdom is simply applied knowledge.
 - And in this case, David wants to not only get ahead of the situation but wants to make crystal clear who the next King is.
 - Check out David's response.

1 Kings 1:28 Then King David said, “Call Bathsheba to me.” And she came into the king’s presence and stood before the king.

1 Kings 1:29 The king vowed and said, “As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from all distress,

1 Kings 1:30 surely as I vowed to you by the Lord the God of Israel, saying, ‘Your son Solomon shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place’; I will indeed do so this day.”

- In response to Nathan and Bathsheba's news, without hesitation, David responds with immediacy.
 - Clearly, some time had passed between Nathan's news and David's response, because Bathsheba is summoned back to David's room.
 - And upon her arrival, David doesn't just respond but he calls upon the God of Israel as the one who will fight this battle.
 - This becomes a powerful moment in the text and sets the precedence for why David's rule as King was so prominent and powerful.
 - The phrase, “As the Lord lives” occurs about 14 times alone in 1 and 2 Kings.
 - And it shows who fought David's battles time and again during his reign.
 - And it would be this same God who was now going to fight on behalf of David in

interest of His purpose and plan regarding Israel.

- Only this time Nathan and Bathsheba could see the God of Israel work sovereignly in this matter.
- When we consider the circumstances we face in this life, and are honest about them, the Lord tends to be our last resort of refuge.
 - We will look to our own means of preservation or strength to take care of the situation before us.
 - Yet here we find this biblical principle of dependence upon the Lord even amidst grave uncertainty.
- David could call upon the Lord with great certainty because he had seen the Lord show up time and again when David had come to the end of himself.
 - We saw the example of David's dependence on the Lord in 2 Samuel 22 where David declared, "The Lord is my rock and salvation!"
- Furthermore, David understood that when it comes to the Lord's word spoken to Him that the Lord always backs His word!
 - So, knowing that the Lord's covenantal promise to David is tied to Solomon as the next in line meant that not only should David respond by faith to it, but in turn, the Lord would back His word in it!
- So, in response to the 'hesed of the Lord' (loving-kindness), David provides next steps to "nip this situation in the bud".
 - Watch how David's response is accomplished in verses 31-40.

1 Kings 1:31 Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the ground, and prostrated herself before the king and said, "May my lord King David live forever."

1 Kings 1:32 Then King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." And they came into the king's presence.

1 Kings 1:33 The king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon.

1 Kings 1:34 "Let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there as king over Israel, and blow the trumpet and say, 'Long live King Solomon!'

1 Kings 1:35 "Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne and be king in my place; for I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah."

1 Kings 1:36 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, "Amen! Thus may the Lord, the God of my lord the king, say.

1 Kings 1:37 "As the Lord has been with my lord the king, so may He be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David!"

1 Kings 1:38 So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule, and brought him to Gihon.

1 Kings 1:39 **Zadok the priest then took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, “Long live King Solomon!”**

1 Kings 1:40 **All the people went up after him, and the people were playing on flutes and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth shook at their noise.**

- In a customary response, Bathsheba responds to the king's instruction by stating, “May my lord King David live forever”
 - This wasn't a plea for David to live forever, but a way to express gratitude and connotes a righteous act of the king.
 - It's like someone saying, “God bless you” when they are gifted with something unexpectedly.
 - From that point, David calls Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada to the room.
 - And this combination of men will be the means by which God's work to accomplish Solomon's ascension to the throne takes place.
 - David says for them to take the servants of the Lord and have Solomon ride on David's personal mule and bring him down to Gihon.
 - First thing to notice is the difference of preparation.
 - Adonijah rides in on a horse signifying war whereas Solomon is coming and riding on a donkey – thus signifying royalty and peace.
 - Most especially, a king's entrance to a city on a donkey also expressed the king's role as the people's servant.
 - But notice too, this is not just any donkey, but David's donkey – this is huge!
 - The fact that this was David's donkey meant that there would be certain trappings (clothing) on the donkey.
 - The people would potentially recognize it and know this is the King's doing!
 - And the fact that Solomon was riding on the King's donkey would suggest that an official succession is taking place.
 - Secondly, David has them escort Solomon to a place called Gihon which was about a mile north of En-rogel, where Adonijah had set up his feast.
 - So this proximity will explain Adonijah and his guest's response momentarily.
 - Verses 34 and 35 become quite a staple in the text because it demonstrates the proper means by which a King was selected and appointed by law.
 - The prophet of the Lord affirms the King in whom the Lord has chosen, the same way in which Samuel called upon both Saul and David.
 - Next, there would be an anointing of the king (servant of the Lord) in which Zadok the priest anoints Solomon according to the instruction of the Lord.
 - This anointing ceremony indicated that the Lord has affirmed and will provide His Spirit for the service of Solomon, on His behalf, to Israel.

- It was a means of consecration which simply means that the Lord has set Solomon aside as his own.
- And what good news for us today that those who are in Christ have been given the Holy Spirit as a promissory and permanent indwelling.
 - That where the Holy Spirit would temporarily rest upon a servant of the Lord in the Old Testament, within the Church-age, the Holy Spirit resides permanently within us. What a privilege it is!
- After the anointing of the King followed the blowing of the trumpet (Shofar) which symbolized the official nature of the ceremony.
 - And from that moment, it signified who the rightful King of Israel was to be.
 - And this is expressed from the loud shout from the people, “Long live King Solomon!”
- So from this great acclamation and celebration came great excitement of the Lord’s choosing for Israel its new servant-King!
 - Finally, the men and Solomon were to return up to Mt. Zion where Solomon would sit as King in David’s place on the throne. (Potential co-regency)
- Now remember, Gihon was only 1 mile from En-rogel where Adonijah and his crew were.
 - Therefore, a celebration this huge would have been heard from afar which means someone would try and inquire what’s going on.
 - Check out Jonathan’s inquiry on the matter. Check out verses 41-50.

1 Kings 1:41 Now Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they finished eating. When Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, “Why is the city making such an uproar?”

1 Kings 1:42 While he was still speaking, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came. Then Adonijah said, “Come in, for you are a valiant man and bring good news.”

1 Kings 1:43 But Jonathan replied to Adonijah, “No! Our lord King David has made Solomon king.

1 Kings 1:44 “The king has also sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites; and they have made him ride on the king’s mule.

1 Kings 1:45 “Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon, and they have come up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise which you have heard.

1 Kings 1:46 “Besides, Solomon has even taken his seat on the throne of the kingdom.

1 Kings 1:47 “Moreover, the king’s servants came to bless our lord King David, saying, ‘May your God make the name of Solomon better than your name and his throne greater than your throne!’ And the king bowed himself on the bed.

1 Kings 1:48 “The king has also said thus, ‘Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who has granted one to sit on my throne today while my own eyes see it.’ ”

1 Kings 1:49 Then all the guests of Adonijah were terrified; and they arose and each went on his way.

1 Kings 1:50 And Adonijah was afraid of Solomon, and he arose, went and took hold of the horns of the altar.

- This scene sets a terrifying end for Adonijah and his crew of treasonous men.
 - The jig is up, and the curtain has been pulled back to announce who the true King over a United Kingdom was – the rightful, King Solomon.
 - The reception of this news evidently takes the wind out of the sails of these men who have gathered against David.
 - It begins with a roaring sound just north of En-rogel where the feast is taking place. All seems well at the start for Adonijah – or so he thought.
 - But little did he know that an entire inauguration and celebration was happening as the newly crowned King was announced.
 - And this celebration and praise can be heard to the point that the sound resonated as if it could be felt.
 - The text mentions that Joab initially inquires as to what could be causing such an uproar.
 - Well, in the midst of Joab asking the question, in comes Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, who had to have been in Gihon during the festivities.
 - And his arrival to the party comes with unfortunate news for the guest.
 - One could imagine Jonathan having all types of knots in his stomach as he brings this news to the false king, Adonijah.
 - Upon Jonathan’s return, Adonijah sees him and welcomes him with open arms and pleasantries.
 - And included in these pleasantries was the assumption that Jonathan’s arrival contained good news.
 - Perhaps he thinks his secret rebellion is working to his advantage.
 - In any case, Jonathan must have heard the words, “...you bring good news”, to which the text documents Jonathan’s reply as an emphatic, NO!
 - This is the moment when all the air gets sucked out of the room and everyone perks up to hear every word.
 - Jonathan proceeds to tell Adonijah a series of statements dealing with both the Royal arrangements and the peoples’ reception.
 - Verses 44, 45, and 46 speak to the Royal arrangement:
 - 1. Solomon rides on David’s Mule
 - 2. Zadok and Nathan anoint David as King in Gihon.

- 3. Solomon sits on David's throne.
- And finally, in verses 47 and 48, we find the positive reception of the people and the approval of the King, David Himself.
 - 1. The servants bless David, bless Yahweh for the guidance and leadership of Solomon, and finally David, in his bed, bowed himself.
 - 2. And David blessed the Lord himself for God's Covenant faithfulness to His word and the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7).
- What makes verse 48 stand out is that the Lord graciously allows David to witness the succession of his son onto his throne with his own eyes.
 - According to the text, David doesn't die until 1 Kings 2, which means that there might have been some type of co-regency until Solomon becomes sole King in 971 BC.
 - In any case, this news has now hit the ears of both Adonijah and his guests.
- Verse 49 and 50 tells us that the people were terrified.
 - The Hebrew word for "terrified", *hrd* (ha-rad), means to tremble in the sense of physical disturbance.
 - And Adonijah became afraid of his brother Solomon because he knew that once word gets to Solomon, his life would be cut short!
- So, in a desperate plea to save his own life, Adonijah runs to the tabernacle for refuge by taking hold of the horns of the Altar.
 - The idea of grasping the horns of the altar in the Near East was such that those who offend a fellow man would plea for mercy at the altar.
 - And this pattern is based upon the Altar being a place in which the atonement for sins was made on behalf of the people.
- The reality is every one of us is in need of mercy and the opportunity to receive mercy is found only in Christ!
 - Adonijah may have some sense after all – or so we think.
- Now that the rebellion has died out and folks have parted ways, justice must be served and these wrongs must be made right.
 - So as Solomon settles in to being king, he is informed of the matters regarding his brother and his whereabouts.
 - Check out verses 51-53.

1 Kings 1:51 Now it was told Solomon, saying, “Behold, Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon, for behold, he has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, ‘Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.’”

1 Kings 1:52 Solomon said, “If he is a worthy man, not one of his hairs will fall to the ground; but if wickedness is found in him, he will die.”

1 Kings 1:53 So King Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And

he came and prostrated himself before King Solomon, and Solomon said to him, “Go to your house.”

- At this point, one would have expected such a treasonous individual would have received the highest extent of punishment possible.
 - Most certainly, with the moves that Adonijah made against the Lord and the King, death was sure to come!
 - Adonijah anticipates his end – death – and therefore pleads with Solomon that he might be spared.
 - What becomes quite interesting in the text here is that knowing this impending judgement is coming, there seems to be no repentance from Adonijah – just fear.
 - And could that perhaps be the reality of cultural Christianity: We are used to the customs of “doing church” but lack repentance?
 - Adonijah seeks refuge because he wants to escape death, but a heart that is not positioned to be made right simply seeks formality and not formation.
 - I say this because in Chapter 2 Adonijah is still seeking a way to become king by going to Bathsheba to inquire about David’s nurse, Abishag.
 - And (spoiler alert) this attempt by Adonijah leads to his death in Chapter 2.
 - But watch the mercy that is extended towards Adonijah.
 - In verse 52, Solomon tells Adonijah, “If you are a worthy man you won’t be harmed, but if wickedness is found in you, you will die.”
 - The opportunity for mercy was simple: Serve the King and demonstrate loyalty to his cause and you will be spared.
 - Herein lies before Adonijah a choice to be made, and that choice boils down to life or death.
 - And according to what we will see in Chapter 2 is that death becomes his end.
 - Well that begs the question: Why would Adonijah fail to humble himself and receive this olive branch of mercy?
 - The answer is: his heart.
 - Adonijah had set his heart on himself and his desires and not the things of God.
 - Adonijah’s pride, all though masked for a while (false intentions), would eventually rear itself up again, revealing the true state of his heart.
 - From Adonijah’s perspective, and from typical succession customs in the east, the eldest son would become next in line as king.
 - However, Solomon was not the oldest nor was his birth that of deemed nobility, yet God saw fit because He alone chose Solomon.
 - As a matter of fact, throughout God’s framework of Divine Election, God has always done things His way.
 - From Isaac being chosen over Ishmael or Jacob being chosen over Esau, or David over his brothers...etc.

- God, in His sovereign choosing does not acquiesce to man. Rather, God has established His Law and expects man to follow accordingly.
- And in the same way, God has orchestrated how man is to be saved.
 - It is not based upon merit, striving, or IQ, rather it is by simply responding to God's way and means.
 - And in the case of salvation, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ for the Salvation of your soul.
- Adonijah, was not interested in this opportunity of mercy.
 - He was more interested in the “buying of time” to readjust his failed attempt and find another way to the throne.
- What we recognize here is Solomon's great display of grace and mercy towards Adonijah.
 - Solomon had all the right to slam the book down on Adonijah and everyone who set themselves up against him.
 - Yet, Solomon doesn't hurry to this end. Instead, he extends what Adonijah doesn't deserve.
 - And what a beautiful indication of Jesus' First Coming. He came in peace to reconcile broken humanity back to God.
 - And in doing so provided even greater risk to Himself – death on a cross.
 - Yet, in knowing the cost required, He gives of Himself that we might come to know Him and draw near.
 - The reality is, there will be some that respond to this free gift of salvation and there are others who will not.
 - What shouldn't be missed in this picture is the general theme of the mercy of God.
 - Mercy is God graciously holding back what we rightfully deserve.
 - And in this case, Solomon's response to his brother, Adonijah, amidst all this controversy, tells him to, “Go to your house.”
 - The mere fact, that Solomon allows Adonijah to go home without any issue, demonstrates the grace of the King.
 - Therefore, Grace is the favor of God we have freely received in which we do not deserve.
 - Jesus Christ is the ‘greater Solomon’ in that He is the very personification of both grace and truth.
 - Even more so, the Kingdom of God and all its glory is made known through the wisdom of Christ.
 - This means that one who rejects Christ, fails to experience this reality.
 - This becomes Jesus' point in Luke 11:31 where he addresses the leadership of Israel rejecting the signs in which He has demonstrated as Messiah.
- We could have truth standing right in front of us yet reject it all the while because of our

pride and selfish hearts.

- Friends, the only way in which salvation can be had is if our faith is in the one who came to die for our sins.
 - This mercy and grace is fully realized in Christ, and like Solomon, when someone rejects this free grace, it does not fare well in the end.
 - And as we will see in 1 Kings 2, it will not fare well for Adonijah either.

- Last time we witnessed the failed attempt of Adonijah's plot to take the throne of David for himself.
 - Adonijah had recruited a whole host of men who at one point showed somewhat partial loyalty to David during his reign.
 - Adonijah's banquet of celebration ended up quickly turning into a banquet of mourning as he and his coconspirators fled for their lives.
 - David is informed of this matter by Nathan and Bathsheba and quickly responds as to get ahead of the situation.
 - We then saw that that resulted in Solomon being crowned as King and is then seated on his father's throne.
 - We discussed last time that these matters of injustice of Joab and others would be dealt with, which we will see in this chapter.
 - However, today we will closely examine the first 12 verses of 1 Kings and conclude the chapter next week.
 - Our reason for breaking up the chapter this way is because this will be the concluding end of David's physical life on earth.
 - So, it is important for us to glean from the wisdom that David is going to share with Solomon before he dies.
 - If I were to outline our time tonight, we would see the following:
 - 1. David's Charge to Solomon (vv.1-9)
 - 2. David's Death (vv.10-12)
 - And if I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would simply be: David's Final Words of Counsel.
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 2:1-4 for the reading of the word.

1 Kings 2:1 As David's time to die drew near, he charged Solomon his son, saying,

1 Kings 2:2 “I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man.

1 Kings 2:3 “Keep the charge of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and His testimonies, according to what is written in the Law of Moses, that you may succeed in all that you do and wherever you turn,

1 Kings 2:4 so that the Lord may carry out His promise which He spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons are careful of their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’

- At this point in the narrative, we aren't given the amount of time that has passed from Adonijah's coup to the further decline of David's health.

- But whatever time has passed, it becomes clear that David is approaching the end of his life.
 - He has ruled well for forty years, he has seen many victories in which the Lord has provided for him.
 - One can imagine this point of drawing closer to death allows one to be quite reflective on the life which was lived.
 - Furthermore, this would provide many lessons learned to share with those who will remain, and this is exactly what David does.
- David tells Solomon that, he is going the way of all the earth, which is a way of saying, “I am getting ready to die.”
 - There almost seems to be this idea of great confidence and hope in David’s instruction, not fear.
- And David continues by telling his son Solomon to “Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man.”
 - In other words, it is time to step up to the plate and receive the responsibility in which has been entrusted and appointed to you.
- What’s interesting here is David’s use of the phrase, “Show yourself a man”.
 - The literal translation is “Become a man.”
 - The question becomes, how?
- Solomon, at this point in history is somewhere in his late adolescent years. He’s still a bit wet behind the ears on some things.
 - So, how does Solomon move from late adolescence to becoming a man who will take on the weight and responsibility of an entire nation?
 - It’s not like there is a book written on how to go from being a boy to being a man.
- However, we find from David’s response that the way in which Solomon would transition from late adolescence to becoming a man was found in scripture.
 - It’s in verses 3-4 that David says that the way to mature in this way begins with one’s obedience to the Lord.
- Manhood and even womanhood, for that matter, is not defined by what the world tries to thrust upon you.
 - Understanding our identity and position in Christ is rooted in who God has created us to be.
 - And when we submit our ways and thoughts to His, we begin to see the intent of our design and how we are to flourish in the Lord.
- The Lord provided similar instruction to Joshua regarding the “passing of the baton of leadership from Moses to Joshua”.
 - Check out what Yahweh tells Joshua in Joshua 1:6-7 after Moses had died:

Joshua 1:6 “Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of

the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

Joshua 1:7 “Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go.

- God tells Joshua twice in both verses to be strong and courageous, and the reason this can be told to Joshua is because the Lord promises He will be with him.
 - The same goes for Israel’s chosen King – you obey, you will prosper.
 - And you prosper not because you “worked for something” but because I am with you and you responded positively to my word!
 - For Israel’s Kings, according to the Torah, the way by which the King and Nation flourished were contingent upon the Kings’ obedience to the scriptures.
 - Remember, it was in Deuteronomy 17:18-20, that the King was responsible for not only making a copy of the Law but for reciting it too.

Deuteronomy 17:18 “Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests.

Deuteronomy 17:19 “It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes,

Deuteronomy 17:20 that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel.

- So, David’s final words and encouragement for his son is to stick with the Lord, know His ways, and follow Him.
 - For when Solomon did these things, the Kingdom would be blessed and Solomon would see the Davidic Covenant worked out!
 - We can also see some indications of the Jewish Shema within David’s words – again all centered on God being Solomon’s focus.
 - After David, provides what is of utmost importance, the primacy of God and His word, he then moves towards insightful matters regarding the administration.
 - It’s in verses 5-9 that David will mention the names of Joab and Shimei who Solomon is to exercise great wisdom in how he deals with them.
 - What becomes interesting about this section of the text is that David did not address the issues of these men sooner.
 - David demonstrated great mercy towards these two men, yet as time progressed, David knew justice was to be served.
 - Therefore, the justice that was postponed for a time would now be released in this changing administration.

- This becomes a key piece to this narrative because it alludes to David's timeliness and wisdom as well.
 - So he will provide this information as to prepare his son for the establishment of his Solomonic administration.
 - In other words, make sure you clean house because there are a few loose cannons that serve as potential saboteurs.
 - Check out the text.

1 Kings 2:5 “Now you also know what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to Abner the son of Ner, and to Amasa the son of Jether, whom he killed; he also shed the blood of war in peace. And he put the blood of war on his belt about his waist, and on his sandals on his feet.

1 Kings 2:6 “So act according to your wisdom, and do not let his gray hair go down to Sheol in peace.

1 Kings 2:7 “But show kindness to the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who eat at your table; for they assisted me when I fled from Absalom your brother.

1 Kings 2:8 “Behold, there is with you Shimei the son of Gera the Benjamite, of Bahurim; now it was he who cursed me with a violent curse on the day I went to Mahanaim. But when he came down to me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the Lord, saying, ‘I will not put you to death with the sword.’

1 Kings 2:9 “Now therefore, do not let him go unpunished, for you are a wise man; and you will know what you ought to do to him, and you will bring his gray hair down to Sheol with blood.”

- So, David instructs Solomon to have both Joab and Shimei killed due to their respective disobedience and flagrant disregard for the King and ultimately the way of the Lord.
 - But instead of just killing these men outright, David instructs Solomon to, “act according to your wisdom”.
 - In other words, as King Solomon was to execute the justice required to deal righteously with these atrocious acts and potential acts.
 - And the way in which justice was to be served was according to the Law’s requirements on how to deal with violations of the Law.
 - In Joab’s case, he had ruthlessly killed two of David’s commanders as recorded in 2 Samuel.
 - Those men were Abner and Amasa.
 - Additionally, Joab had disobeyed David’s direct order in preserving his son, Absalom’s life.
 - Unfortunately, due to Joab’s need to serve the king loyally yet without accountability, Joab killed Absalom.

- So being that Joab is still alive, it expresses the King having shown mercy upon mercy yet Joab not quite understanding the mercy he was shown.
 - And as a means of biblical principle, we often overlook God's mercy as if it is something that is to be expected because we think we are "doing good".
 - Yet, in the end, when repentance is not demonstrated or a change of mind has not commenced, justice will be served.
- Next, we have Shimei. Shimei had cursed the King in 2 Samuel 16 which was a direct violation against the Law. (Exodus 22:28)

Exodus 22:28 "You shall not curse God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

- And again, David demonstrated great mercy towards Shimei in that day.
 - But now he makes Solomon aware of the fact that these past behaviors are now to be accounted for.
 - And in this case, the propensity for Shemei to return to his ways, once David is dead, seemed highly likely.
 - So, David tells Solomon, in few short words, to be discerning and operate in wisdom as to how to deal with Joab and Shimei.
 - Now you may notice that in verse 9, David mentions that both Joab and Shimei's actions must not go unpunished.
 - That both are to be brought down in their old age "...to Sheol with blood."
 - It is worth examining that phrase "Sheol" for a moment because the tendency is to think that Sheol here means hell.
 - And most certainly, Sheol means an underworld or wasteland, or the location where the dead reside.
 - And in this case, David's use of the phrase does not mean the lake of fire or the like, it simply refers to death – bringing someone to their end.
 - So, David makes clear that both Joab and Shimei must be brought to death for their unjust actions.
 - However, there is a group of men in whom David tells Solomon are to be shown mercy as they had shown David mercy.
 - These men would be the sons of a man named, Barzillai.
 - Barzillai was an eighty-year-old man who escorted David over the Jordan in 2 Samuel 19, after Absalom was killed.
 - And because of how Barzillai took care of David during his stay in Mahanaim, David remembered and tells Solomon to show Barzillai's sons *hesed* – loving-kindness.
 - What shows as a powerful principle in this narrative is how David informs his son on these matters that his administration starts on the right foot.
 - Operating wisely in leadership is key to the flourishing of those in who are being

led.

- And with David coming to the end of His life, he sees the need in pouring into his son as to prepare him for the things that are to come.
- And with that comes the necessity to apply what Solomon is being taught!
- Because at the end of the day wisdom is simply applied knowledge.
- Check out verses 10-12.

1 Kings 2:10 Then David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David.

1 Kings 2:11 The days that David reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years he reigned in Hebron and thirty-three years he reigned in Jerusalem.

1 Kings 2:12 And Solomon sat on the throne of David his father, and his kingdom was firmly established.

- It's after David has disseminated wisdom to Solomon regarding the current administration that the text mentions that, "David slept with the fathers".
 - The phrase, "slept with the fathers", is an idiom for describing David's physical death.
 - The same goes for the phrase we find in verse 2 where David says, "I am going the way of all the earth."
 - With both phrases used here, an interesting detail comes to a head and that is the theme of death.
 - Where do we see death introduced within scripture?
- Death is introduced to the narrative of scripture first in Genesis 2:17 where the Lord instructs Adam about not eating from the Tree of knowledge of good and evil.
 - It's there that the Lord tells Adam that on the day that he eats of it he would surely die.
 - However, as we know, in the Genesis narrative, Adam and Eve ate the fruit from the tree of good and evil which resulted in their physical separation from God.
 - But along with that came a curse which was placed upon Adam and all of his descendants which was physical death.
 - So being that physical death was a consequence of man's sin means that death was never to be a "normal" thing for humanity. We were meant to live forever!
 - So, because of Adam's disobedience to the Lord God, death becomes a part of humanity.
 - Paul tells us this regarding death and its spread to all of humanity in Romans 5:12.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—

- This reality of the curse due to sin which brings death is not just splattered throughout the Old Testament, but the New Testament as well.
 - And the primary cause of death is the disobedience of man which began in the garden and continues to this day.
 - This is something that Yahweh reminds Moses of in Deuteronomy 30 as Israel is getting prepared to go into the land in the second giving of the Law.
 - Pay attention to the language God uses regarding man's choice of obedience versus disobedience.

Deuteronomy 30:15 “See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity;

Deuteronomy 30:16 in that I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the Lord your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it.

Deuteronomy 30:17 “But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them,

Deuteronomy 30:18 I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You will not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it.

Deuteronomy 30:19 “I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants,

Deuteronomy 30:20 by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”

- Notice that Moses' instruction to this believing generation going into the land of Canaan was about right fellowship with the Lord, not justification.
 - It was in Moses' earlier writing in Genesis 15:6 that Moses discussed the reality that Abraham was justified by faith – not works.
 - In other words, Abraham was not blessed because of what he did, but rather he was blessed for what he believed and in whom he believed.
 - That because Abraham believed God for what He said regarding the promise of a seed, the Lord provided blessing for Abraham.
 - So, when Moses is giving the Second giving of the Law, he is speaking about how the Israelites are to walk in right fellowship with God in the land.
 - And herein lies a biblical principle that translates to New Testament theology in that those who are in Christ are justified by faith.
 - And walking in right fellowship with the Lord allows the believer to grow in the

second tense of salvation which is sanctification.

- We do not obey the Lord as a pre-requisite to being saved. We are saved by His free grace alone!
 - And when we believed the Lord, according to His word, we then walk in obedience to grow in relationship with the Lord.
 - And we obey because we love the Lord and recognize what He has done for us through the death of Christ.
- To show you how this connects to the New Testament writers regarding sanctification, check out Jesus' words in John 14:15-21.

John 14:15 “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

John 14:16 “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;

John 14:17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

John 14:18 “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

John 14:19 “After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also.

John 14:20 “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

John 14:21 “He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.”

- So God tells Moses in Deuteronomy 30 that the Israelites are given a choice and that choice is to be made out of love;
 - Either choose life and prosperity, which is choosing what is good.
 - Or, choose death which is a result of doing evil.
 - Verse 16 of Deuteronomy 30 is captivating because it echos the very focus of Deuteronomy 6 of the Jewish Shema.
 - The commands of the Lord were to always remain on the minds and hearts of the Jewish people. (Love the Lord your God...) Loyal Love/affection
 - For from their constant abiding and dwelling with the Lord came about the ability to do good and to serve the Lord well.
 - But when the hearts of the people were turned away and they did not obey the instruction of the Lord, Yahweh states that they would surely perish by death or be removed from the land in captivity.
 - The Hebrew word for “perish” means to be destroyed or cease to exist.
 - So, Moses outlines for the believing generation that one’s great pleasure and

enjoyment of life resides in their obedience to the word of God.

- This statement of blessing in obedience also begs a question that may be in the back of your minds: When will this curse be lifted and through whom?
- Knowing that the promises in which the Lord has provided covenantally would suggest that those who were not able to see the full promise would one day.
 - In other words, death is not the end, but is simply a doorway into either life with God or life apart from Him.
 - The reality is, although death is introduced in Genesis 3, death is not the end of the story.
 - A part of God's redemptive work is also restoring creation back into proper order!
- We find in Acts 13, Paul, after the reading of the Law and the Prophets (Hebrew Bible) in synagogue, he stands up and preaches a message on the history of Israel.
 - And Paul traces this history to a culminating point and person in whom the narrative of scripture and promises of God is fulfilled and about – Jesus Christ.
- And in Paul doing so, he comes to an interesting point where he mentions this connecting thread from a past promise to David to Jesus.
 - Check out Acts 13:34-39.

Acts 13:32 “And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers,

Acts 13:33 that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, ‘You are My Son; today I have begotten You.’

Acts 13:34 “As for the fact that He raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to decay, He has spoken in this way: ‘I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.’

Acts 13:35 “Therefore He also says in another Psalm, ‘You will not allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.’

Acts 13:36 “For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers and underwent decay;

Acts 13:37 but He whom God raised did not undergo decay.

Acts 13:38 “Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you,

Acts 13:39 and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.

- So, by way of Jesus' resurrection from the dead leads to His exultation (being seated at the right hand of the Father) and from there eschatologically speaking, Jesus being crowned King in the Millennial Kingdom.
 - The reality is (spoiler alert) Solomon, as wise as he was, eventually gave way to his

eyes and failed to obey the instructions of the Lord.

- Therefore Israel, from then to now, is awaiting their Messiah-King who will rule with power and wisdom.
- So that where David is currently “asleep” or in the presence of the Lord, Jesus Christ is alive and seated at the right hand of God.
 - Furthermore, there is an eternal and eschatological ramification for all who are in Christ and that is that death and decay is not our end.
 - Instead, there will be an eternity with the Lord from either our coming physical death or meeting Jesus in the clouds via the Rapture.
 - Paul says it this way in Romans 6:23:

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Jesus says these words in John 11:25-26.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,

John 11:26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?”

- So, the New Testament writers are able to understand that this curse of death is not the end.
 - Furthermore, the Person who lifts that curse is none other than God, through Christ.
 - Romans 7:24-25 tells us this:

Romans 7:24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

Romans 7:25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!.... So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

- So back in 1 Kings 2, the phrase “David slept with his fathers”, expresses David’s physical death, yet speaks to the reality of a temporary resting and coming restoration.
 - As 2 Corinthians 5:8 tells us, “to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.”
 - In other words, although our spirit will be separated from this physical body in death, it will be reunited with our resurrected bodies in the end.
 - So, David, too has this confidence in knowing that he too will see His Lord according to the word of His promise.

- Lastly, we see that David is buried in the city of David which simply means he was buried in Jerusalem.
 - It's in verses 11-12 that the author begins to round out the life of David in whom we have had the pleasure of studying in the Samuel narrative.
 - This section of the text really becomes this moment of great reflection of a man after God's own heart.
 - A man that pursued the Lord well, served the Lord well, and worshipped the Lord with every opportunity given.
 - At the same time, we recognize that David wasn't a perfect man.
 - He had certain character flaws, made plenty of mistakes, but David was never defined by those things.
 - Rather, David is known and remembered as the Lord's King in which through David's descendants would come God's Son in whom would be the Messiah.
 - The author of the Kings mentions in verse 11 the years in which David reigned over Israel both in her weakest moments, and moments of great power.
 - David was a righteous king because the Lord God made Him righteous.
 - David was a just King because God made him just.
 - Furthermore, the death of David leads to the continuation of God's covenantal promise regarding the Davidic Covenant.
 - And as a wise father, David has coached his son to listen to, follow, and obey the covenant keeping God of Israel.
 - For through Solomon's obedience would come a firmly established Kingdom.
 - And so it would be that in verse 12, the writer notes that Solomon sat on the throne of his father, David and his kingdom was firmly established.
 - As we will see in the coming chapters, the use of the word "firmly" holds true because Solomon's reign will begin with great power and wisdom.
 - Next week, we will complete Chapter 2 and see that David's last words to Solomon will become Solomon's first line of business.
 - Let's Pray.

- Last week, we explored the closing of the life of David.
 - As David's health declined, at the age of 70, it was time for new leadership and Solomon was God's choice.
 - David tells his son in few short words, "Show yourself a man".
 - And in preparing his son to reign over the united kingdom of Israel, David passes down some much-needed wisdom.
 - For Solomon to reign well over the Kingdom, it required that Torah be prioritized, studied, and greatly cherished.
 - These were the very instructions of God for the people of God and His king in the land that God had given them.
 - And alongside the priority of the Torah came the warning of men to be watchful of.
 - David warned Solomon of the men that needed to be executed and a man that needed to be shown much compassion.
 - This idea of needing to execute the co-conspirators who sided with Adonijah was necessary for a proper royal administration to be successful.
 - So, Solomon's first order of business was to clean house and make some difficult decisions at the start of his administration.
 - But as we will see, as long as Solomon obeyed Torah and operated in wisdom, he was given everything he needed.
 - Peter would say it this way according to 2 Peter 1:3:

2 Peter 1:3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

- If I were to outline our time tonight, we will see the following:
 - 1. Adonijah's Request (vv.13-18)
 - 2. King Solomon's Response (vv.19-25)
 - 3. Solomon's Dismissal of Abiathar (vv.26-27)
 - 4. Joab's Execution (vv.28-35)
 - 5. Shimei's Execution (vv.36-46)
- And our tag for the text tonight is: Clean House: The Purging of the Lord's enemies.
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 2 starting in verses 13-17.

1 Kings 2:13 Now Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, "Do you come peacefully?" And he said, "Peacefully."
1 Kings 2:14 Then he said, "I have something to say to you." And she said, "Speak."

1 Kings 2:15 So he said, “You know that the kingdom was mine and that all Israel expected me to be king; however, the kingdom has turned about and become my brother’s, for it was his from the Lord.

1 Kings 2:16 “Now I am making one request of you; do not refuse me.” And she said to him, “Speak.”

1 Kings 2:17 Then he said, “Please speak to Solomon the king, for he will not refuse you, that he may give me Abishag the Shunammite as a wife.”

1 Kings 2:18 Bathsheba said, “Very well; I will speak to the king for you.”

- Now that David has died and has left Solomon with this wisdom and information for properly reigning, it requires Solomon to put that knowledge to use.
 - And like a good story line, the plot thickens, and the opportunity is now being set up for Solomon to do just that.
 - Remember, within David’s instructions to Solomon was the need to get rid of any and all enemies that pose a threat to Solomon’s reign.
 - And David mentioned some names in whom would potentially cause Solomon’s reign to be compromised in some way.
 - Of those names were Joab and Shimei.
 - But as we will see later in this chapter, it will also consist of a priest whose son was the messenger for Adonijah in Chapter 1.
 - So, to set up this “purge of enemies” within the royal administration, the writer of the Kings begins with a request made by Adonijah.
 - Adonijah comes to Bathsheba to make a request to marry his father’s nurse Abishag.
 - However, before the request could even be made there is a bit of hesitation because Bathsheba is not sure if Adonijah’s appearing to her is of good will.
 - Think about it, this is the same brother who not too long ago plotted against his own brother and father for a throne that was not his to take.
 - So, it makes sense that there be some trepidation in his arrival.
 - This is why the writer says that Bathsheba asked if Adonijah came “peacefully” or not.
 - So Adonijah reassures her that his coming to her was not to kill her or bring about dispute, but rather in a peaceful, amicable manner.
 - After lowering her walls of hostility, Adonijah makes the request and this request ultimately reveals the heart and intentions of Adonijah.
 - He states that the kingdom was to be his and that all of Israel anticipated his ascension.
 - These words sound like the words of a bitter and prideful man.
 - Because on one end he exalts what he deemed was the unanimous consent of the people to make him king.

- Yet in the same breath he makes mention that the Kingdom has turned about because of the Lord's doing.
- This is a powerful statement in the text, because it reveals to you and I the reality of the human heart and condition.
 - For some, they will never be able to escape the truth of the matter because they have set themselves up to be their own author of their story.
- So Adonijah wanted one thing, but he unwillingly recognized that the Lord had another plan in mind.
 - Now, I use the word “recognized” very loosely because the revealing of Adonijah's heart lies in the request he makes to Bathsheba.
- Adonijah requests David's nurse, Abishag to be his wife.
- To Bathsheba, this request may have seemed innocent and far from harmful, but there is more to the story.
 - Adonijah is not as innocent as he appears to be.
 - Because although it may look like a “match-making opportunity” for Bathsheba, Adonijah sees this as another way to the throne.
- It's important to note that although Abishag was David's nurse and he did not sleep with her, to the people she was a part of David's “harem” (Concubines).
 - And in other cultures, like Persia, someone marrying the concubine of a deceased King was the same as establishing their claim to the throne.
- So it becomes clear that Bathsheba was not wise enough to see the subtle tricks of Adonijah, however, we will quickly find that Solomon sees right past him.
 - So, Bathsheba, in her innocence, brings this request to the king, almost as if she is this unaware pawn being used by the enemy.
 - However, notice how Solomon filters through the fluff to get to the point behind the request. Check out verses 19-25.

1 Kings 2:19 So Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah. And the king arose to meet her, bowed before her, and sat on his throne; then he had a throne set for the king's mother, and she sat on his right.

1 Kings 2:20 Then she said, “I am making one small request of you; do not refuse me.” And the king said to her, “Ask, my mother, for I will not refuse you.”

1 Kings 2:21 So she said, “Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as a wife.”

1 Kings 2:22 King Solomon answered and said to his mother, “And why are you asking Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask for him also the kingdom—for he is my older brother—even for him, for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah!”

1 Kings 2:23 Then King Solomon swore by the Lord, saying, “May God do so to me and more also, if Adonijah has not spoken this word against his own life.”

1 Kings 2:24 “Now therefore, as the Lord lives, who has established me and set me

on the throne of David my father and who has made me a house as He promised, surely Adonijah shall be put to death today.”

1 Kings 2:25 So King Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him so that he died.

- So when Bathsheba meets with the King, she is greeted in an honorable manner as the King's mother would be.
 - And she presents what she called “a small request” to the king on behalf of Adonijah.
 - Perhaps, this was a part of Adonijah's ploy, that if the heart strings of the son is pulled then maybe he would get what he truly wanted – power.
 - It's upon hearing this request that Solomon immediately responds, by wisdom, to make his mother alert to the intent behind the request in a sarcastic manner.
 - Solomon understood that this request was nothing more than an attempt for Adonijah to gain something that, once again, wasn't his to have.
 - This tactic would have been quite similar to Absalom's move in raping his father's concubines as a power move to take the throne.
 - But here we find that Solomon can pick up on this second pre-mature attempt to the throne.
 - And he makes this secondary attempt visible to his mother by stating in few short words, if you give him Abishag, you might as well give him the kingdom.
 - And if that isn't enough, from a human perspective, because he would be the oldest of David's sons there is yet another qualifier for Adonijah to be king.
 - Yet, these humanistic realities are not the driving factor by which the Lord God establishes His rule upon the Davidic throne.
 - God's methods of how He moves and works will at times make no sense to us.
 - The only thing that we are called to do is respond to His truth and trust Him in the process.
 - The Lord says the following in Isaiah 55:8-9.

Isaiah 55:8 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord.

Isaiah 55:9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.

- What Solomon sees is that although mercy had been extended, the heart of his brother doesn't seek to please the Lord but rather to go against Him.
 - Solomon understood what Adonijah was trying to do, and that is sabotage Solomon's reign.
 - Yet Adonijah doesn't seem to realize who he truly is going up against! Adonijah is

directly attacking the plans and purposes of Yahweh.

- This request that Adonijah made was no “simple request”, it was an act of treason and, by law, worthy of death.
- And as we have mentioned before, the purpose of the King was to rightly administer the justice and reign of God throughout the earth.
 - Therefore, Solomon, under the guidance and authority of the Lord, requests that Adonijah be put to death by Benaiah, son of Jehoida.
- And as a quick note, notice that along with this guilty verdict and declaration of death of Adonijah followed the co-conspirators: Abiathar the priest and Joab.
 - Therefore, verse 22, becomes the upcoming series of events by which Solomon, by way of God’s authority, will execute justice as an effort to firmly establish his reign.
 - And he will do so by first addressing Abiathar the priest. Check out verses 26-27.

1 Kings 2:26 **Then to Abiathar the priest the king said, “Go to Anathoth to your own field, for you deserve to die; but I will not put you to death at this time, because you carried the ark of the Lord God before my father David, and because you were afflicted in everything with which my father was afflicted.”**

1 Kings 2:27 **So Solomon dismissed Abiathar from being priest to the Lord, in order to fulfill the word of the Lord, which He had spoken concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.**

- Solomon’s address of Abiathar partnering with his brother Adonijah against the king’s will, was gracious and at the same time fulfilled God’s prophecy.
 - Knowing that death was a proper and lawful result of Abiathar’s participation in this coup, action had to take place.
 - So Solomon’s mercy towards Abiathar was centered on the fact that Abiathar had loyally served David as a priest.
 - Apparently, Abiathar suffered well alongside David when travel was required.
 - So instead of killing Abiathar, which would have been lawfully acceptable, Solomon simply quarantines him to his land in Anathoth to die.
 - But as mentioned before, this punishment would not go without a vehement reminder of God’s word providentially at work.
 - Although Abiathar’s life is spared, his role as priest was not. The text mentions that Solomon removed Abiathar from the office of priest.
 - And from there the text alludes to the fact that Solomon’s dismissal of Abiathar from the priesthood was a prophecy fulfilled.
 - The writer of kings mentions that this fulfillment of prophecy was related to a matter concerning “the house of Eli in Shiloh”. Very specific.
 - This means that the writer intends for us to be familiar with the narrative surrounding this fulfilled word of the Lord.

- The question to ask is: Where in the storyline of scripture did the Lord speak against the house of Eli regarding the removal of a descendant from the office of the priesthood?
- If you did our VBVMI study in 1 Samuel, you may remember that it was in Chapter 2 that there was a man of God who visited Eli, who was a priest in Shiloh.
 - Eli was a judge in Israel for 40 years and was the mentor of the prophet Samuel.
 - He also happened to be the father of 2 corrupt priests, Hophni and Phinehas.
- Now you might be wondering how does Abiathar connect in any way to Eli?
 - It happens that Abiathar is the great, great, great-grandson of Eli.
- And it was in 1 Samuel 2:27-36 that we find that the Lord tells Eli that because of his disobedience to the Law, that Eli's line of priests would be cut-off.
 - However, the promise in verse 33 is that the office of priest would not end.
 - Check out 1 Samuel 2:30-37:

[1 Samuel 2:30](#) “Therefore the Lord God of Israel declares, ‘I did indeed say that your house and the house of your father should walk before Me forever’; but now the Lord declares, ‘Far be it from Me—for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed.

[1 Samuel 2:31](#) ‘Behold, the days are coming when I will break your strength and the strength of your father’s house so that there will not be an old man in your house.

[1 Samuel 2:32](#) ‘You will see the distress of My dwelling, in spite of all the good that I do for Israel; and an old man will not be in your house forever.

[1 Samuel 2:33](#) ‘Yet I will not cut off every man of yours from My altar so that your eyes will fail from weeping and your soul grieve, and all the increase of your house will die in the prime of life.

[1 Samuel 2:34](#) ‘This will be the sign to you which will come concerning your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: on the same day both of them will die.

[1 Samuel 2:35](#) ‘But I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who will do according to what is in My heart and in My soul; and I will build him an enduring house, and he will walk before My anointed always.

- So, where Eli has failed in obeying the Law and where his children have failed in obeying the Law, the Lord makes a promise of a future priest who would obey.
 - This becomes a powerful picture because this priest is one who will have an enduring house and will walk before His anointed always.
 - As Eugene Merrill notes in the BKC (Bible Knowledge Commentary), he states that “within human terms this prophecy was fulfilled when Abiathar was removed and the priesthood was given to Zadok, a descendant of Aaron.” (1 Kings 2:35)
 - However, there is a futuristic expectation for a priest to come who will do all that the Lord requires without fail (1 Samuel 2:35).

- This picture becomes interesting even more so when you consider the order of Melchizedek.
- Melchizedek was both a king and a priest and we know that Jesus, according to Hebrews 7:13-17 is of the order of Melchizedek.
- Check out Hebrews 7:13-17 really quickly:

Hebrews 7:13 For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar.

Hebrews 7:14 For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests.

Hebrews 7:15 And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek,

Hebrews 7:16 who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life.

Hebrews 7:17 For it is attested of Him, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”

- So where Eli's lineage has been cut off due to the failure of the priest, there is a prophetic awaiting for a greater High Priest who will know of our infirmities, yet without sin.
 - Hebrews 4:15 tells us this regarding our Lord Jesus Christ:

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 4:16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

- What we should be seeing is that the writer of the Kings is pointing to one who is the greater priest, and more specifically, the greater King. (King-Priest)
 - Because as we move further along in the King's narrative, we will find that even in Solomon's great wisdom, there is great failure in covenant faithfulness.
 - So there is this longing for both a Righteous King and faithful high priest in which Jesus Christ, being of the order of Melchizedek, meets both requirements.
 - From this point, the writer now moves to Joab's execution.
 - And what we are seeing is Solomon operating in wisdom as it relates to the ends of these men.
 - Check out verses 28-35

1 Kings 2:28 Now the news came to Joab, for Joab had followed Adonijah,

although he had not followed Absalom. And Joab fled to the tent of the Lord and took hold of the horns of the altar.

1 Kings 2:29 It was told King Solomon that Joab had fled to the tent of the Lord, and behold, he is beside the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, “Go, fall upon him.”

1 Kings 2:30 So Benaiah came to the tent of the Lord and said to him, “Thus the king has said, ‘Come out.’ ” But he said, “No, for I will die here.” And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, “Thus spoke Joab, and thus he answered me.”

1 Kings 2:31 The king said to him, “Do as he has spoken and fall upon him and bury him, that you may remove from me and from my father’s house the blood which Joab shed without cause.

1 Kings 2:32 “The Lord will return his blood on his own head, because he fell upon two men more righteous and better than he and killed them with the sword, while my father David did not know it: Abner the son of Ner, commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, commander of the army of Judah.

1 Kings 2:33 “So shall their blood return on the head of Joab and on the head of his descendants forever; but to David and his descendants and his house and his throne, may there be peace from the Lord forever.”

1 Kings 2:34 Then Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up and fell upon him and put him to death, and he was buried at his own house in the wilderness.

1 Kings 2:35 The king appointed Benaiah the son of Jehoiada over the army in his place, and the king appointed Zadok the priest in the place of Abiathar.

- As one could imagine, the news of the death of Adonijah and the dismissal of Abiathar from the priesthood travelled quickly to the ears of Joab.
 - Every co-conspirator in some way has been caught and has faced their rightful judgement.
 - Joab knows what his end is to be even with him having been faithfully loyal to Solomon’s father, David.
 - So, Joab, picks up a familiar play from Adonijah’s playbook in 1 Kings 1:50 where he flees to the tabernacle and holds onto the horns of the alter (where sacrifices took place).
 - This action was committed when an individual was seeking refuge from oncoming danger.
 - It was like a “safe zone” during times of war.
 - However, according to the Mosaic Law, this policy of refuge was not meant for murderers.
 - As a quick reminder, let’s read Exodus 21:13-14:

Exodus 21:13 “But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint you a place to which he may flee.

Exodus 21:14 “If, however, a man acts presumptuously toward his neighbor, so as to kill him craftily, you are to take him even from My altar, that he may die.

- - So as a wise king, Solomon understands that the evil and rowdy bunch that is among him must be fully purged as a way to prepare for a prosperous reign.
 - Solomon then gets word that Joab has fled to the tent. We find in verses 29-30 that Solomon doesn't desire to kill Joab on the altar.
 - Perhaps, Solomon desires to not shed human blood in the tabernacle, so he orders Benaiah to tell Joab to come out of the tent to face his death.
 - And instead of acquiescing to the command of the king, Joab refuses to do so which prompts Benaiah to give word to the King.
 - As a quick character note, where Benaiah responds according to the king's desires, he waits to kill Joab.
 - Whereas, if the shoe was on the other foot, Joab would have killed Benaiah on the spot without question.
 - This becomes an indicator of sorts as to who will be the one to replace Joab in the end – one trustworthy and fitting of the position.
 - So, once Benaiah reports back to Solomon of Joab's refusal to surrender and leave the tent, Solomon gives Joab exactly what he wished for.
 - Remember, Joab told Benaiah that “he would die there on the altar”
 - And in a comical way, Joab got exactly what he asked for – a death at the altar.
 - It's interesting to note the conversation between Benaiah's report to Solomon and Benaiah's execution of Solomon's command.
 - Apparently, the weight of the innocent deaths of Amasa and Abner were upon the house of David.
 - And this was the case because this happened under David's leadership as king.
 - So as long as Joab was alive, that guilt rested upon David's house.
 - Therefore, Solomon needed to respond in such a manner that would position the Davidic dynasty to be worked out.
 - And as expected, as one member of the administration is purged, they are replaced by another of trustworthy character.
 - Benaiah replaces Joab and Zadok the priest replaces Abiathar.
 - We now move to another familiar character from the Samuel narrative, Shimei and his execution. Check out verses 36-46.

1 Kings 2:36 Now the king sent and called for Shimei and said to him, “Build for yourself a house in Jerusalem and live there, and do not go out from there to any place.

1 Kings 2:37 “For on the day you go out and cross over the brook Kidron, you will know for certain that you shall surely die; your blood shall be on your own head.”

1 Kings 2:38 Shimei then said to the king, “The word is good. As my lord the king has said, so your servant will do.” So Shimei lived in Jerusalem many days.

1 Kings 2:39 But it came about at the end of three years, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away to Achish son of Maacah, king of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, “Behold, your servants are in Gath.”

1 Kings 2:40 Then Shimei arose and saddled his donkey, and went to Gath to Achish to look for his servants. And Shimei went and brought his servants from Gath.

1 Kings 2:41 It was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and had returned.

1 Kings 2:42 So the king sent and called for Shimei and said to him, “Did I not make you swear by the Lord and solemnly warn you, saying, ‘You will know for certain that on the day you depart and go anywhere, you shall surely die’? And you said to me, ‘The word which I have heard is good.’

1 Kings 2:43 “Why then have you not kept the oath of the Lord, and the command which I have laid on you?”

1 Kings 2:44 The king also said to Shimei, “You know all the evil which you acknowledge in your heart, which you did to my father David; therefore the Lord shall return your evil on your own head.

1 Kings 2:45 “But King Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the Lord forever.”

1 Kings 2:46 So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he went out and fell upon him so that he died. Thus the kingdom was established in the hands of Solomon.

- It was earlier in the chapter that David had reminded Solomon of how Shimei had treated him during his escape from Absalom.
 - It is recorded in 2 Samuel that Shimei both verbally and physically attacked David.
 - It got so bad that one of David’s officials asked David if he could have permission to kill Shimei on the spot.
 - However, David responds with mercy towards Shimei knowing that his judgement would be postponed at a later day.
 - So, David makes Solomon aware that Shimei’s “wishy-washy” ways were to be watched closely.
 - And in so doing, the proper retaliation was to keep close watch over him.
 - So, Solomon tells Shimei to build a house in Jerusalem for himself where Shimei would reside for the remainder of his days.
 - For if he were to leave Jerusalem and cross the Kidron valley, he would “surely die”.
 - And the cause of death would be because of Shimei’s own doing.
 - One possible reason for Solomon’s demand for Shimei to remain in Jerusalem was the potential for Shimei to stir up an insurrection among the Benjamites.
 - So, Shimei agrees to these terms and vows to stay and obey the word of the king, which ultimately was an oath before the Lord.

- However, the text tells us that three years later, after two of Shimei's servants ran away, that Shimei went after them.
- When news got back to Solomon that Shimei had left and returned, Solomon summoned Shimei.
 - This is probably that feeling of knowing you did something wrong in grade school and got sent to the principal's office.
- Solomon then confronts Shimei with the exact conversation they had three years prior, and Solomon verifies Shimei's own words.
 - The issue with Shimei breaking this vow was because this was an "oath of the Lord."
 - It's like saying "no take backs" when a deal is done. It's etched in stone.
 - But before Solomon has Shimei killed, he states these words to him. Check out verses 44-45:

1 Kings 2:44 The king also said to Shimei, "You know all the evil which you acknowledge in your heart, which you did to my father David; therefore the Lord shall return your evil on your own head.

1 Kings 2:45 "But King Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the Lord forever."

- ○ Verse 44 is essential to understand because what Solomon is ultimately saying is, Shimei's heart was never set on doing what was right.
 - In other words, Shimei's actions are "double-speak", meaning I say one thing but intend another.
 - David speaks of this ultimate downfall of the wicked in his song to Yahweh regarding Cush, a Benjamite. Here is what Psalm 7:16 says:

Psalm 7:16 His mischief will return upon his own head, And his violence will descend upon his own pate (*skull*).

- ○ And indeed, this will be the end of all the enemies of the Lord.
 - Every nation that sets itself up against the Lord will face a violent end themselves.
 - Furthermore, Solomon's point becomes clear when we understand the Davidic Covenant and its promises.
- The Lord remains faithful to His word and those who obey it will see the blessings of the Lord through their obedience, most especially those of David's house.
 - So, in an effort to uphold the promise of the Lord, Solomon knows that it will be necessary to purge all evil out of the Kingdom for it to be at peace.
- Remember, this promise regarding the Davidic covenant was made known in 2 Samuel 7:13. (*Eternal House, Eternal Kingdom, Eternal Throne*)
 - And by completing the task of executing both David and Solomon's enemies, the Kingdom would be firmly established in the hands of Solomon.

- Notice, that through Solomon's obedience to wisdom and instruction came the fortifying of his reign.
 - Solomon begins his reign by remaining committed to the Torah.
 - And where Solomon loosens his grip on faithfulness to Torah, is when trouble creeps in. (1 Kings 11)
- Before we close tonight, I want us to see how the book of Kings narrative points the reader to great anticipation for the Coming Kingdom.
 - First, we see this idea of evil being purged from the Kingdom in order for the Kingdom to reign peacefully.
 - And Solomon's first few years, as we will see further in our study, reflects that reality.
 - His rule not only brings about peace, but it also provides prosperity for the Kingdom as well.
 - However, the moment that Solomon's heart becomes pulled by foreign women and he gives way to other gods in the land, is the moment that he begins to fall.
 - And from that point on (Chapters 12-22) we see that the narrative is anticipating this righteous king amidst a divided kingdom.
 - There is a longing for a king who will serve Yahweh faithfully and this is simply a picture of the greater Solomon – Jesus Christ. (Matthew 12:42)
 - Secondly, we see the King purging out all evil from the Kingdom and establishing peace throughout the land.
 - This becomes a picture of what will be witnessed in the Second Coming of Christ.
 - Upon His arrival, there will be great destruction by the power of His word and the slaying of Nations. (Battle of Armageddon – Revelation 16; Revelation 19:11-20)
 - If we were to be honest for a moment, we know that there is no present Kingdom now.
 - Time and again scripture speaks to the fact that upon the Lord's return, His enemies will be under His feet, yet Gentile nations are still in power.
 - David writes these very words under the inspiration of the Spirit. Check out Psalm 110:1:

Psalm 110:1 The Lord (Yahweh) says to my Lord (Adoni): "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."

- We know that at this very moment, the Lord Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father.
 - And it is there that He sits in His High Priestly session.
 - And when Israel responds to the Lord in repentance saying, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord". (Matthew 23:39 – Jesus' words)
 - Then the Lord will be mounted on His horse and bursting forth through the

clouds descending with a myriad of myriad of angels. (Zechariah 14:1-3; Revelation 16:12-16)

- And then the Lord will destroy every antisemite, and every enemy that has stood against the Lord.
- So, we see that Solomon, although not perfect, is simply a picture of the true and better king, Jesus Christ.
 - Next week we will cover Chapter 3 and see Solomon's wisdom demonstrated and his rule greatly established.
 - Let's Pray.

- Last week, we witnessed Solomon clean house of all those who had sided with his brother Adonijah.
 - And with cleaning house came the execution of these men in order to firmly establish Solomon's reign as king.
 - Solomon's ability to exercise wisdom in the elimination of disruptive agents in his administration was necessary to have the blood-guilt removed and peace established.
 - Tonight, we will see the Lord establish Solomon in the manner of administrating wisdom, discernment and justice in his rule and reign as King.
 - And the prompting event for Solomon to operate in this manner will be a dream that the Lord shows Solomon.
 - If I were to outline our time in the text, we will see the following things:
 - 1. Solomon's prayer, God answers (vv.1-15)
 - 2. Solomon's wisdom in practice (vv.16-28)
 - If I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would simply be: The Wisdom of the King.
 - With that being said I, invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 3 beginning with verses 1-5.

1 Kings 3:1 Then Solomon formed a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the city of David until he had finished building his own house and the house of the Lord and the wall around Jerusalem.

1 Kings 3:2 The people were still sacrificing on the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the Lord until those days.

1 Kings 3:3 Now Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, except he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

1 Kings 3:4 The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place; Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.

1 Kings 3:5 In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream at night; and God said, “Ask what you wish me to give you.”

- Chapter 3 immediately thrusts us into a bit of a perplexing question and that is, “What is Solomon doing marrying a foreign woman when the Law says otherwise?”
 - Notice that this moment is right off the heels of Solomon's reign being firmly established regarding his rule and administration.
 - Solomon has cleaned house of his co-conspirators and is now trying to forge the path forward.
 - However, this marriage alliance seems to be problematic according to Deuteronomy 17:17.
 - We have mentioned before that these types of “marriage alliances” during that time

were more geared towards political advancements.

- And knowing that the Lord was behind the victory and prominence of Israel's growth and widespread fame meant that this allegiance was more for the Egyptians than for Israel.
- During this particular time in history, Egypt was experiencing a political decline.
- It was common practice in Egypt for kings to take on foreign princesses (in their strength), but they refrained from giving up their daughters to foreign kings.
 - So, with this peace treaty between Egypt and Israel came the hands of Pharaoh's daughter which expresses desperate times for Egypt.
- And within this treaty, comes a foreshadowing of how Solomon's heart becomes overtaken by his entanglement with foreign women. (1 Kings 11)
 - Because, although the gesture, for politics' sake, might seem small, sin's hold and control begins to slowly but surely brew.
 - And isn't that how sin works in our hearts even today?
 - It begins as something small and seemingly unharmed – at best even innocent, yet when it grows it produces devastation.
 - James, Jesus' half-brother, says these words to a predominantly Jewish audience in James 1:14-16.

James 1:14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

James 1:15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

James 1:16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

- So, this alliance between Egypt and Israel foreshadows the ultimate downfall and split of a united Israel in Chapter 11 onward.
 - The reality is, a divided heart fails to uphold its allegiance to one thing/person alone.
 - Verse 2 continues by expressing yet another pagan expression adopted by the Israelites and that was the sacrificing on "high places".
 - The "high places" were mountainous locations where pagan nations would worship their gods.
 - These pagan nations, such as the Canaanites, believed that the closer they got to heaven, the easier their prayers could reach their gods.
 - And within the Pentateuch (Leviticus 17:3-4), Moses writes out that offering sacrifices at places other than the tabernacle was prohibited.
 - Here is how Leviticus 17:3-4 reads:

Leviticus 17:3 "Any man from the house of Israel who slaughters an ox or a lamb or

a goat in the camp, or who slaughters it outside the camp, Leviticus 17:4 and has not brought it to the doorway of the tent of meeting to present it as an offering to the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord, bloodguiltiness is to be reckoned to that man. He has shed blood and that man shall be cut off from among his people.

- So, the point of sacrifices being done in a particular place was based upon the Lord's desired meeting place for fellowship and worship.
 - It's this idea of a "sacred space". It is a meeting place where the Lord and His people can commune.
 - We see the establishment of a "meeting place" first in Genesis in the Garden of Eden.
 - So in the same way, the Lord desires a central place in which His people may come to meet Him and bring their sacrifices.
 - However, the text mentions that because there was no house built for the Lord yet, the place that was established was at Gibeon.
 - Gibeon was known as "the great high place".
 - Gibeon was located approximately five miles north of Jerusalem in the territory of Benjamin.
 - And it is at this sacred space that the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream.
 - And in this dream, the Lord tells Solomon to "Ask what he wished for the Lord to give him."
 - And Solomon's response becomes a window into the heart and wisdom of Solomon as a king and leader.
 - Check out verses 6-9.

1 Kings 3:6 Then Solomon said, "You have shown great lovingkindness to Your servant David my father, according as he walked before You in truth and righteousness and uprightness of heart toward You; and You have reserved for him this great lovingkindness, that You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

1 Kings 3:7 "Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David, yet I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in.

1 Kings 3:8 "Your servant is in the midst of Your people which You have chosen, a great people who are too many to be numbered or counted.

1 Kings 3:9 "So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

- Solomon's response to the Lord's ask began with thanksgiving and adoration.
 - He begins by recognizing the Lord's (hesed) loving kindness towards his father

David.

- As a matter of fact, Solomon emphasizes the extent of lovingkindness Yahweh has shown his father by saying the Lord showed David “great” hesed.
- And the reason for the Lord’s remarkable magnitude of loyal love and kindness was due to David’s faithfulness (obedience) before the Lord.
- This has always been the promise of the Lord to those who walked well before Him.
 - And what this shows is that the Lord is faithful to His word and His promises in that when you respond to His word He responds accordingly.
 - Solomon’s initial response of thanksgiving also becomes a measure of wisdom by which the believer in Christ should respond as well.
- Our typical pattern of prayer begins immediately with what we need rather than an acknowledgement of who God is and what He has done.
 - When we approach the Lord in thanksgiving acknowledging His ways and faithfulness, it allows us to approach the throne of grace with confidence.
- So, it’s after this initial thanksgiving that Solomon makes his request in a position of humility.
 - Notice, that Solomon acknowledges who has placed him in this position as king. Solomon uses the pronoun “You” twice.
 - He then continues by referring to himself as a “little child”.
 - This simply speaks to the reality that Solomon recognizes that he knows nothing and is nothing apart from God’s hand upon him.
- I mentioned in our last session, that Solomon was in his late adolescence. Some scholars suggest Solomon became king at the ripe age of 20 years old.
 - And if this is the case, this explains David’s words earlier in Chapter 2 where he tells Solomon to, “Show yourself a man”.
 - In other words, seek the Lord in wisdom that you may be led rightly in your walk and not look to your left or your right.
- This position of humility in Solomon’s prayer is quite life-giving from a biblical principal perspective.
 - That when we recognize that we bring nothing to the table, it helps us see that we are to be ever dependent upon our Creator and Lord.
 - And Solomon realizes this because he says, “I do not know how to go out or come in”. In other words, I don’t know what I’m doing – show me!
- This reality is further expounded because in verses 8-9 Solomon continues using the You/Your pronouns, emphasizing the Lord’s election of Israel and His Sovereignty over all.
 - Solomon sees that the number of people whom he is over is a number too great to be counted.
 - If you have read through the book of Genesis, you may recognize some Abrahamic Covenant language there.

- Because Solomon is addressing the very promise in which Yahweh promised Abraham regarding his descendants.
- That Abraham would have more descendants than the stars in the sky.
- So, with Solomon knowing the vast amount of responsibility and accountability he now has as a leader was quite overwhelming and humbling.
 - And he knew that in and of himself, he could not do it alone.
 - Therefore, he had to rely upon the wisdom and knowledge of Yahweh to govern the Lord's people.
- So, he asks the Lord for “an understanding heart to judge” and the ability to “discern between good and evil”.
 - The word “understand” in Hebrew is *shema*. We should be familiar with this word because of Deuteronomy 6.
 - *Shema* simply means to listen with the intent to obey. It’s a heart that hears and responds to the voice of the Lord.
 - In other words, Solomon desires to have a heart to know the word of the Lord and to obey it righteously to judge the people accordingly.
- As believers in Christ, we too are given the opportunity to seek the Lord for wisdom for things we need. And it requires us to ask the Lord in confidence by faith!
 - James 1:5 tells us this:

James 1:5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

James 1:6 But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.

- He then mentions he wants to discern between good and evil.
 - The word “discern” is the filter mechanism by which helps one to determine what is good, better, or best.
 - And the way to discern requires a heightened awareness of what is in the word of God.
 - Therefore, there’s a need to not only have a heart for the word and doing it, but to study it so that it may guide our decisions and actions.
 - Solomon understands that being Yahweh’s King requires the King to be intimately in fellowship with Yahweh.
 - It’s like having a particular brand of car that needs to be properly maintained yet you go to a mechanic that knows nothing about your brand of car.
 - You can’t expect the mechanic to know the nuances of your vehicle just because he knows about cars.
 - You need to have your vehicle maintained by its master manufacturer who knows it from the inside out.

- In the same way, for Solomon to be king and steward the kingdom well in which the Lord has given him, he will need to be dedicated to Yahweh himself.
 - From this request, the Lord is well-pleased with Solomon's ask and commences with Solomon's prayer request. Check out verses 10-15.

1 Kings 3:10 **It was pleasing in the sight of the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing.**

1 Kings 3:11 God said to him, “Because you have asked this thing and have not asked for yourself long life, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have you asked for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself discernment to understand justice,

1 Kings 3:12 behold, I have done according to your words. Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you.

1 Kings 3:13 “I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days.

1 Kings 3:14 “If you walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and commandments, as your father David walked, then I will prolong your days.”

1 Kings 3:15 Then Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. And he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and made peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

- Solomon's request to the Lord wasn't rooted in selfish gain or individualized power struggle, it was simply rooted in wisdom to rule and executing the justice of the Lord.
 - Moses makes a similar response in Exodus 33:13, where he asked to understand God and His ways.
 - In other words, where Moses asks for the “why” Solomon asks for the “what”.
 - “Lord what should I do, how should I do it” versus Moses asking, “Lord why are you doing this so that I may follow your ways.”
 - In any case, the Lord responds to Solomon's request by granting him the wisdom that he sought.
 - But the Lord did not stop there, he exceeded Solomon's request with the things in which Solomon would also need.
 - So, the Lord provides Solomon with riches and honor as to distinguish Solomon from the kings before him and after him.
 - What we see the Lord do here is exceed the request in which Solomon made when Solomon prioritized the things of the Lord over and above himself.
 - Jesus speaks of the prioritization of Kingdom matters over the pursuit of oneself.
 - The point being, the Lord will always meet the needs of his own. Check out Matthew 6:33.

Matthew 6:33 “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

- This is a key biblical principle that we find through the narrative of the Kings: That when we prioritize the things of God, we need not worry about our needs.
 - Additionally, in verse 14 the Lord mentions that if Solomon walked in His ways and kept the commands that the Lord would prolong his days.
 - From there Solomon awakes, heads to Jerusalem, and stands before the ark of the covenant to offer 2 offerings before the Lord.
 - The first one is the burnt offering and the second a peace offering.
 - The burnt offering expressed personal dedication while the peace offering expressed gratitude for fellowship with the Lord.
 - Plainly put, these offerings were a means of commitment to the Lord and praise in fellowship.
 - Well, it's after this special moment with the Lord that the scene now pivots.
 - And the next section of our text demonstrates God's commitment to fulfilling his promise to Solomon on being endowed with wisdom and discernment.
 - Check out verses 16-28.

1 Kings 3:16 Then two women who were harlots came to the king and stood before him.

1 Kings 3:17 The one woman said, “Oh, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth to a child while she was in the house.

1 Kings 3:18 “It happened on the third day after I gave birth, that this woman also gave birth to a child, and we were together. There was no stranger with us in the house, only the two of us in the house.

1 Kings 3:19 “This woman's son died in the night, because she lay on it.

1 Kings 3:20 “So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me while your maid servant slept, and laid him in her bosom, and laid her dead son in my bosom.

1 Kings 3:21 “When I rose in the morning to nurse my son, behold, he was dead; but when I looked at him carefully in the morning, behold, he was not my son, whom I had borne.”

1 Kings 3:22 Then the other woman said, “No! For the living one is my son, and the dead one is your son.” But the first woman said, “No! For the dead one is your son, and the living one is my son.” Thus they spoke before the king.

1 Kings 3:23 Then the king said, “The one says, ‘This is my son who is living, and your son is the dead one’; and the other says, ‘No! For your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.’ ”

1 Kings 3:24 The king said, “Get me a sword.” So they brought a sword before the king.

1 Kings 3:25 The king said, “Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other.”

1 Kings 3:26 Then the woman whose child was the living one spoke to the king, for she was deeply stirred over her son and said, “Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him.” But the other said, “He shall be neither mine nor yours; divide him!”

1 Kings 3:27 Then the king said, “Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him. She is his mother.”

1 Kings 3:28 When all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had handed down, they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.

- Well, with any granting of wisdom and discernment comes the necessity by which it should be tested and proven.
 - And what a scene by which Solomon is tested and proven of the wisdom in which the Lord has granted him.
 - We are told that two women who are prostitutes come before the king in need of a judgement to be made.
 - And the issue is concerning a child. Both women have borne children, only one child has died due to the mother having rolled on her child at night.
 - The first woman mentions that the woman whose baby had died switched the dead baby with the one that was alive.
 - So when the mother who had the child that was alive woke up, she realizes that her child was dead.
 - However, looking closely at the child the woman realized that child was not hers.
 - After the woman tells her story, the other woman blurts out that the living son is hers and the dead son was the other woman’s son.
 - This argument goes back and forth between both women to the point that the king interjects.
 - And he makes mention of the back and forth debacle regarding who’s child is whose.
 - There were no DNA test or birth records that would be able to properly identify who was telling the truth and who wasn’t.
 - So, this unique case of whose child belongs to which mother would have to be dealt with in a more “upfront” way.
 - The king requested a sword. And the point was that the child’s true mother would speak up to preserve her child’s life versus there being two dead children.
 - Ultimately, what the king was doing here was implementing discernment regarding the compassionate natural maternal instincts.
 - The true mother would rather choose for their child to live and be given to another

than for them to die for the sake of “being even”.

- And the text mentions in verse 26 that at the king’s word to divide the baby in half (killing the baby) that the child’s mother was “deeply stirred”.
- This word “deeply stirred” is quite interesting.
 - The word can either mean to be aroused with compassion or great feeling or, experiencing deep awareness of sympathy for another’s suffering.
 - It is as if to say one’s compassion has grown hot.
 - And some places this word is found in the Hebrew bible is in Genesis 43:30 and here in 1 Kings 3:26.
- In Genesis 43:30 the word is used for Joseph when he had hurried out of the room where his brother was, having seen his father’s youngest son and his brothers.
 - And Joseph is deeply stirred to the point of great weeping because of the deep emotional connections experienced in that moment.
 - Hosea 11:8 speaks similarly to how the Lord’s compassion for his people moves him deeply.
 - And in the same way in our text tonight, this same compassion is that of a mother for her son.
 - Herein lies Solomon’s indicator as to who the true mother is.
 - Because after the one mother asks to not kill the child the other mother responds in a selfish manner and reveals her nature.
 - Solomon’s verdict is rendered, and the first woman received her living child.
 - And from what the text mentions, this verdict became well-known among the people of Israel which sparked fear.
 - The question becomes, what is it that sparked the fear of the king regarding the verdict of his judgement?
 - Well, the text tells us that the people saw the “wisdom of God in Solomon’s administration of the Lord’s justice.”
 - Proverbs, which is majority written by Solomon, is to provide God’s people with detailed instructions on how to deal successfully with practical everyday matters.
 - And this is what Solomon writes in Proverbs 9:10:

Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

- Fear, in this context is dealing with a holy reverence and respect for the Lord.
 - That our reverence for Him is expressed in our obedience of Him.
 - Jesus says these very words to His disciples in John 14:15, “If you love me, keep my commandments.”

- In other words, your love for Jesus is expressed in your obedience to His words.
- Therefore, understanding and wisdom of the Lord comes by our submission to His word (the scriptures).
 - But this also means that to grow in wisdom also means that we are to grow in knowing His word.
 - But it's more than just knowing His word for the sake of intellectual ascent or memorization, but it requires the doing of it.
- This is why James says the following words to his fellow Jewish brothers and sisters in the diaspora in James 1:22-25:

James 1:22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

James 1:23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror;

James 1:24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.

James 1:25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

- What becomes something interesting to note in observation is that the actions of the king served as a revelation of the power of God's word in action.
 - The word "saw" in Hebrew (*rah-ah*) means to see the face of a king or to see the face of God.
 - In other words, through the actions of the King the people saw the Lord at work.
 - What powerful imagery that creates for one to understand the majesty and power of God at work within the earth?!
 - That as God's custodial representative obeys and submits that the power and wisdom of God is made manifest for others to see and know.
- The role of the king under God's authority is to reflect God in their decision making.
 - That when the king is submitted and following the ways of the Lord, the ways of the Lord will be made evident through his actions and judgement.
 - So, Solomon becomes this picture of the greater king in an eschatological sense.
 - That the embodiment of righteous rule and judgement and one who establishes true shalom throughout the land is none other than Jesus!
 - Paul mentions the person in whom all treasures of wisdom and knowledge is hidden. Check out Colossians 2:2-3:

Colossians 2:2 that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in

love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself,

Colossians 2:3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

- Paul also in 1 Corinthians 1:24 identifies Jesus as both the power and wisdom of God.
 - So, where Solomon displays these pictures of fear and reverence before Israel in a united Kingdom, it will be Christ who will be feared for His perfect rule and judgement in the Millennial Kingdom!
- As we continue through our study of the Kings, we will see these narratives reveal biblical principles by which we as believers are to apply and practice daily.
 - And at the same time, these narratives point us to a greater eschatological promise of a time in which Jesus will reign as King over a united Israel and whose domain will be the entire world.
 - It will be in Jesus' reign that we will see what true justice looks like – not partial justice but full justice.
 - Justice will not be defined by policies of flawed men and women moved and manipulated by their constituents.
 - Rather, Justice will be defined by the word of the Lord according to His holy and righteous truth.
 - The reality is, as long as we are living in this life absent of Christ on the physical throne of David, we will continue to be disappointed in what we see.
 - We cannot expect to see true change within man-made delegations and voting.
 - This doesn't mean that we don't participate in our political system, but this does mean that we don't look to politics to change the condition of human hearts.
 - We must look to the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, knowing that when He comes, He will make all things right!
 - Let's Pray.

Citation:

- Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, p. 292. Cf. Abraham Malamat, "The Kingdom of David and Solomon in Its Contact with Egypt and Aram Naharaim," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 21:4 (Dec. 1958):97; Alan Schulman, "Diplomatic Marriage in the Egyptian New Kingdom," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 38 (1979):190-91.
- Eugene Merrill coins the term "sacred space" in his book Everlasting Dominion: A Theology of the Old Testament. The point of a sacred space speaks to a place designated as holy and set apart for the Lord to meet His people for fellowship and worship.

- Last week we learned that Solomon, being young in age, understood that he needed wisdom and discernment to lead the Nation of Israel.
 - So in his desire for wisdom, his request to the Lord is that he wanted to have understanding of mind to govern the people and to discern between good and evil.
 - From that request, the Lord was pleased with Solomon's selfless request and granted to him both vast wisdom and discernment.
 - And if that wasn't enough, he provided great wealth for Solomon, something that Solomon did not ask for.
 - And what we learned from that was that when you seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, the Lord will always meet your every need.
 - And in this case, the responsibility that Solomon would have to take on in building the Temple for the Lord would require great wealth.
 - Lastly, towards the end of Chapter 3, Solomon's wisdom was put to the test when he had to judge between 2 women and a child.
 - The issue at hand was whose baby was the living child and whose baby was the dead child.
 - No witnesses were present and there were no video feed or baby monitoring system that could attest to who did what.
 - The only thing that the king could do was to test the hearts of the mothers.
 - Solomon made the wise decision to divide the child in two, knowing that the true mother would speak up and do whatever necessary for her child to live.
 - It was through Solomon's ruling that the actual mother was given her child and throughout the land the people of Israel feared the King.
 - Tonight, we will witness the continual implementation of wisdom of the King within his administration.
 - And most importantly, we will begin to see the institution of a central government throughout Israel and how Solomon's obedience to Yahweh establishes peace and security for the people.
 - If I were to outline our time tonight, we will see the following:
 - Solomon's High Officials (vv.1-6)
 - Solomon's Twelve Officers (vv.7-19)
 - Peace in the land through the wisdom of the King (vv.20-28)
 - The Wisdom of the King (vv.29-34)
 - If I were to put a tag on tonight's text it would simply be: Solomon's Wealth and Wisdom on Display.
 - I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 4 starting in verses 1-6.

1 Kings 4:1 Now King Solomon was king over all Israel.

1 Kings 4:2 These were his officials: Azariah the son of Zadok was the priest;

1 Kings 4:3 Elihoreph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha were secretaries; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was the recorder;

1 Kings 4:4 and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the army; and Zadok and Abiathar were priests;

1 Kings 4:5 and Azariah the son of Nathan was over the deputies; and Zabud the son of Nathan, a priest, was the king's friend;

1 Kings 4:6 and Ahishar was over the household; and Adoniram the son of Abda was over the men subject to forced labor.

- At this point in Kings, we see that the granting of wisdom and rule to Solomon has further established his rule as king over Israel.
 - And along with his rule would come the needed assistance of those in whom would loyally serve him within his administration.
 - We saw in our last session that Solomon understood that with this great number of people would require assistance from the Lord.
 - At this point in history there were millions of Jewish people under the reign of King Solomon's rule.
 - And with that vast number would require the assistance of those who would come alongside Solomon in the care of the people.
 - The reality is, with such great responsibility comes the necessity of trustworthy individuals who are gifted in a particular way to bear the weight of the responsibility.
 - We see this shared responsibility within the structure of the church today.
 - If the responsibility of church was solely on the pastor, that pastor would immediately burn out!
 - However, the Lord has both gifted and provided the body of Christ with multiple people by which leadership is shared under the "little" shepherd of that house.
 - This is why we have elders, deacons, ushers, and the like. There is a sense of shared responsibility within the body of Christ.
 - And in the same way, Solomon has men in whom have not only showed trustworthiness along the way by competence in their work and roles.
 - So we see that it was necessary for Solomon to have previously cleaned house for the sake of preparing an administration that would rule in peace.
 - What's interesting to note in verse 2 of the naming of these high officials is who the author of Kings names first.
 - I point this out because the order in which we find David's administration listed is quite different.
 - To see what this is all about let's go back to 2 Samuel 8:15-18 and see the ordering of David's administration.

2 Samuel 8:15 So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered justice and righteousness for all his people.

2 Samuel 8:16 Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army, and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder.

2 Samuel 8:17 Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were priests, and Seraiah was secretary.

2 Samuel 8:18 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief ministers.

- ○ Now let's examine the order of Solomon's administrative officials:

1 Kings 4:2 These were his officials: Azariah the son of Zadok was the priest;

1 Kings 4:3 Elihoreph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha were secretaries; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was the recorder;

1 Kings 4:4 and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the army; and Zadok and Abiathar were priests;

1 Kings 4:5 and Azariah the son of Nathan was over the deputies; and Zabud the son of Nathan, a priest, was the king's friend;

1 Kings 4:6 and Ahishar was over the household; and Adoniram the son of Abda was over the men subject to forced labor

- ○ There seems to be, perhaps, a prioritization within Solomon's reign of spiritual matters being established as top priority.
 - And this seems to be the case because as we will see throughout Chapter 4, Israel will not only be dwelling securely in the land but will be at peace.
- So, we see that Solomon has established Zadok's son, Azariah, as the priest and within this context "priest" here is dealing with the high priest over Israel.
 - Along with his high priest we find that Solomon has established two secretaries or scribes.
 - Everything regarding record keeping, decrees from the king, etc., would all be done by these individuals.
- With the scribes would be the record keeper of the information.
 - This would require Jehoshaphat to be quite diligent in his organizational and managerial skillset.
 - Things would need to be rightly filed for when things needed to be recalled to the king's memory.
- We then see, in verse 4, that Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, is over the army, a position he acquired after the killing of Joab by order of the king.
 - One strange detail we find in verse 4 is the mentioning of Abiathar as a priest. This isn't a typo.
- It was in Chapter 3 that we witnessed Solomon strip away Abiathar's title and role as priest.
 - But although he was fired Abiathar still retained the honor and title of priest.
 - From there we see that Azariah and Nathan are given the responsibility of being over the governors over the twelve regions throughout Israel.
- This particular task would require these men to know the ins and outs of activities of these particular jurisdictions and their provisions, governmentally speaking.
 - So, what we are seeing thus far is that Israel is functioning as a central government by which Solomon's rule and reign is being established.
 - There is function and order within this government where people have roles and responsibilities for the purposes of the flourishing of the Kingdom.
- Lastly, we see that Ahishar was over the care of Solomon's household and Adoniram

was over the forced labors for Israel.

- Again, all of these things Solomon could not do on his own and it required delegation of roles and responsibilities according to the giftings of these men.
- And this should remind us of what Paul wrote in Romans 12:4-8:

Romans 12:4 For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function,

Romans 12:5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Romans 12:6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith;

Romans 12:7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching;

Romans 12:8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

- ○ Your service to the Lord in whatever capacity or gift you have matters.
- Oftentimes, people assume that the Pastor is the main means of Church growth, etc. However, that is far from the truth.
- Everyone is gifted to serve one another for the overall flourishing of the body.
- So, this shows us that what we have been graced to do that we are to do it well as unto the Lord.
- Let's check out verses 7-19.

1 Kings 4:7 Solomon had twelve deputies over all Israel, who provided for the king and his household; each man had to provide for a month in the year.

1 Kings 4:8 These are their names: Ben-hur, in the hill country of Ephraim;

1 Kings 4:9 Ben-deker in Makaz and Shaalbim and Beth-shemesh and Elonbeth-hanan;

1 Kings 4:10 Ben-hesed, in Arubboth (Socoh was his and all the land of Hepher);

1 Kings 4:11 Ben-abinadab, in all the height of Dor (Taphath the daughter of Solomon was his wife);

1 Kings 4:12 Baana the son of Ahilud, in Taanach and Megiddo, and all Beth-shean which is beside Zarethan below Jezreel, from Beth-shean to Abel-meholah as far as the other side of Jokmeam;

1 Kings 4:13 Ben-geber, in Ramoth-gilead (the towns of Jair, the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead were his: the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, sixty great cities with walls and bronze bars were his);

1 Kings 4:14 Ahinadab the son of Iddo, in Mahanaim;

1 Kings 4:15 Ahimaaz, in Naphtali (he also married Basemath the daughter of Solomon);

1 Kings 4:16 Baana the son of Hushai, in Asher and Bealoth;

1 Kings 4:17 Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in Issachar;

1 Kings 4:18 Shimei the son of Ela, in Benjamin;

1 Kings 4:19 Geber the son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, the country of Sihon king of the Amorites and of Og king of Bashan; and he was the only deputy who was in the land.

- As we approach verses 7-19, some will look at it and struggle to see the significance of what seems to be “just” a list of names.
 - However, we know that every word in scripture is inspired by the Holy Spirit and is therefore necessary for understanding the storyline of the bible.
 - And what we are starting to see is this unfolding governmental structure being established throughout Israel over the land God promised Abraham.
 - We are beginning to see a move from more of cliquish “tribal” focus to more of a centralized government with cooperation and delegation from all 12 tribes.
 - In other words, where there was tribal independence among the people, there would now be centralized support under one leader.
 - And along with that came the taxation and needed representation by which those districts would be supported and at the same time support the King.
 - We are told in verse 7 that the twelve governors over these districts (tribes) were to, once a month in rotation, provide for the king and his household.
 - If you were to think about it in the sense of taxes in the United States, our tax dollars, whether state or federal, go to support the needs of the Nation.
 - The role of government is to both provide safety and security for the people.
 - We won’t go through the trouble of delving into the background of each governor, but it is important to note that Solomon makes two of his sons-in-law governors.
 - Those two men are Ben-Abinadab and Ahimaaz and with this move it must mean that Solomon held these men in high regards on two ends.
 - 1) Their ability to marry his daughters and 2) To govern over a particular region in the Nation.
 - So, we see that this vast amount of land that Israel owns, which was much larger than in David’s reign, requires loyal and responsible governors.
 - The unfolding of this government structure, when understood through the timeline of scripture, is a fascinating development.
 - It was the Hebrew people that in centuries past were under captivity of the Egyptian pharaoh.
 - They were enslaved, overworked, and mistreated.
 - They are then set free by the God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob.
 - That same God brings them through dry land because he parted the Red Sea.
 - He then brings them through the wilderness through a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.
 - He then makes them His own people and gives them the Law by which they are to live by.
 - He then leads them to the land in which He has for them and gives them the strategy by which to eliminate their enemies.
 - And from there, over time, provides them with mercy and favor to establish themselves within the land.

- And all of this is done because of the mighty name of Yahweh and His power and plan for Israel.
- So, this section is more than a list of names. We are witnessing the hand of God on His chosen people in whom He is turning into a mighty nation.
 - And through it all, God remains faithful to His covenant promises demonstrating His faithfulness to His word.
 - Let's keep moving. Check out verses 20-28:

1 Kings 4:20 Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand that is on the seashore in abundance; they were eating and drinking and rejoicing.

1 Kings 4:21 Now Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt; they brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.

1 Kings 4:22 Solomon's provision for one day was thirty kors of fine flour and sixty kors of meal,

1 Kings 4:23 ten fat oxen, twenty pasture-fed oxen, a hundred sheep besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened fowl.

1 Kings 4:24 For he had dominion over everything west of the River, from Tiphsah even to Gaza, over all the kings west of the River; and he had peace on all sides around about him.

1 Kings 4:25 So Judah and Israel lived in safety, every man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.

1 Kings 4:26 Solomon had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 horsemen.

1 Kings 4:27 Those deputies provided for King Solomon and all who came to King Solomon's table, each in his month; they left nothing lacking.

1 Kings 4:28 They also brought barley and straw for the horses and swift steeds to the place where it should be, each according to his charge.

- We find in verses 20-28 that Solomon's Kingdom was well secured, strong, and numerous in population.
 - Notice the language the writer of the Kings uses for the size: he mentions they are numerous as the sand that is on the seashore.
 - This language is very similarly connected to that of the Abrahamic Covenant.
 - Check out the Lord's recommitment of promise to Abraham in Genesis 22:17-18.

Genesis 22:17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.

Genesis 22:18 "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

- - Not only is the Abrahamic covenant language used here but we also see Deuteronomistic language regarding the Law and the promises therein.
 - We will see this later in verses 24-25.

- Clearly, in Solomon’s reign there was great joy and means of rejoicing because the text states “they were eating and drinking and rejoicing”.
 - This type of feasting was not based on a false sense of success like that of Adonijah and his banquet where they ate and drank.
- This celebration was based upon the fact that the Lord has done great and mighty things for His people.
 - And here it is that Solomon, being Yahweh’s King, is the instrument by which this means of peace and joy would be expressed.
- The writer continues documenting the vast land control in which the Lord has granted Israel through means of the Abrahamic Covenant.
 - Understand that this does not mean the Abrahamic Covenant has been fulfilled, but you see its outworking of the promise taking place.
 - Furthermore, with the prosperity of the nation, and the peace from among the surrounding nations due to Israel’s prominence, there was no need for the people to fear.
- Verse 24 and 25 mention that all around Israel was “shalom” (peace) and that they dwelled safely. (1 Chronicles 22:9 – peace and quiet in Solomon’s days).
 - The expression used in verse 25 “every man under his vine and his fig tree” speaks to the reality of peace and prosperity.
- The fig tree and the vine both symbolize the nation of Israel and pictured the Promised Land’s agricultural prosperity. (Tom Constable)
 - The fact that the writer uses this language speaks to an even greater day.
 - I say this because as we know, it’s after Solomon’s reign that the Kingdom is divided, and the people will eventually be exiled for 70 years.
- But when we get to Micah 4:2-4 we notice that there is this similar expression of the nation sitting under “his vine” and under his fig tree.
 - Check out the text:

Micah 4:2 Many nations will come and say, “Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord And to the house of the God of Jacob, That He may teach us about His ways And that we may walk in His paths.” For from Zion will go forth the law, Even the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Micah 4:3 And He will judge between many peoples And render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they train for war.

Micah 4:4 Each of them will sit under his vine And under his fig tree, With no one to make them afraid, For the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken.

- ◦ Micah is speaking of the “latter days”, in which the future King, the Promised Messiah would rule in Jerusalem and reign and all the nations of the earth would be under His Divine care.
 - God in His grace gives Israel and the readers of the text just a small glimpse of what it will truly look like when Jesus comes back.
 - Except under Jesus’ administration there will be true security and safety.

- If we were to look at the current state of Israel, they are not dwelling safely in their land.
 - Hostility is growing and anti-semitism is on the rise.
 - Yet God promises a day when all of that will end and that there will be a time in which men will not learn of war because of the extent of peace.
- This type of peace in the land is mentioned in Zechariah 3:10. Check out the text:

Zechariah 3:10 'In that day,' declares the Lord of hosts, 'every one of you will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and under his fig tree.' "

- ◦ The phrase "In that day" refers to this future eschatological moment regarding the Second Coming of Christ.
 - And it will be in that day that the Lord will purge the world of His enemies and cleanse Israel of her sin as He ushers in the Kingdom.
 - There will be true peace in every sense! What a glorious day we await!
- But until that moment arrives, we see scripture grant us a brief picture of what that day, yet future, will look like.
 - Provision for the King and the Kingdom will be made,
 - Both believing Jews and Gentiles will dwell securely in Jerusalem with the Lord, and the Kingdom will experience 1,000 years of peace.
 - And as Solomon's household did not lack anything, so will those in the Kingdom lack for nothing.
- All of this is made possible because of the Lord's hand being upon Solomon and through the wisdom and discernment in which the Lord has granted him.
 - But most importantly, God's word is being accomplished as He said it would!
 - Let's read our last 6 verses, verses 29-34.

1 Kings 4:29 Now God gave Solomon wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand that is on the seashore.

1 Kings 4:30 Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the sons of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt.

1 Kings 4:31 For he was wiser than all men, than Ethan the Ezrahite, Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was known in all the surrounding nations.

1 Kings 4:32 He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005.

1 Kings 4:33 He spoke of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even to the hyssop that grows on the wall; he spoke also of animals and birds and creeping things and fish.

1 Kings 4:34 Men came from all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

- It's without question that Solomon was endowed with great wisdom and discernment from God.
 - And without fail, the Lord demonstrated faithfulness to His every word concerning Solomon's request for wisdom and discernment.
 - Apparently, Solomon's wisdom was so great that his knowledge and wisdom surpassed some of the great kings, nations, and sages of that time.

- And people became so impressed by his wisdom that they would travel from far distances came just to hear of the wisdom of Solomon.
 - As we had seen from Chapter 3, the king used his God-given discernment and wisdom to provide the right mother with her living child.
- This verdict sparked great fear among the people because of the King's ruling on the matter.
 - If I were to plainly express the wisdom of Solomon, imagine the wisest person in the world and exceed that!
 - This was the wisdom in which Solomon was able to operate in. It was superior than all the others.
- We find that a way of preserving some of the wisdom that God had given Solomon can be found in the wisdom section of scripture.
 - The proverbs in which Solomon spoke are found in the Book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. (Both in which he wrote)
 - And one of the 1,005 songs he penned can be found in Songs of Solomon.
- Apparently, it's in verse 33 that Solomon could be considered the far most expert and authority in matters of plants and animals.
 - Clearly, Bill Nye the science guy has nothing on the wisdom and knowledge of Solomon.
 - You put the top intellectuals of today against Solomon and there would be no need to debate.
- God's grace towards Solomon was undeniable and his hand upon him was evidently seen.
 - If there were any doubt of who was Israel's God, it became clear through the wise and discerning actions of Yahweh's King, that the only Living God was Yahweh Himself.
 - And a principle that we come across here is how the Lord uses those in whom are His.
 - That when the elect of the Lord responds properly to the things of God, the Lord in return responds accordingly.
 - However, the inverse of this statement holds true as well, that when the elect of God operates outside of God's purposes, discipline will ensue.
 - And what we will come to find later throughout 1 Kings is that although Solomon was endowed with great wisdom, he did not always make wise choices.
 - And herein lies the sticky yet complex reality of God's Sovereignty and man's choice in decisions.
- We are often quick to acknowledge the Sovereignty of God which is a core biblical doctrine by which we hold to as believers.
 - But when discussions of choice come into play, we scream from our theological hilltops that, "God knew we would because He is sovereign" – and this is true!
 - However, when we play that game, time and again, our actions in life seem to be more "programmed" than "lived out" under the sovereign hand of God.
 - In other words, the Sovereignty of God is not separated from the choice of man.
 - Rather, we are to understand God's sovereignty as His demonstrated power and authority over all things.
 - And our decisions within the established framework of the Lord's authority and

power are assessed accordingly.

- For example, Solomon, although given wisdom and discernment of all things, still married foreign women for himself.
 - All the while, we can assume that Solomon knew that him marrying foreign women was against the Law – however he made that choice.
 - Therefore, the consequence of Solomon’s decision, did not change God’s Plan or Will, it simply exposed Solomon’s heart and proved a point.
- That point being that man, apart from truly loving the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, cannot fully obey the Lord.
 - And the reality is, this is what God desires for His people – that their hearts and desires be ever-fixed upon the Lord’s purposes and will.
- This is why understanding that Jesus is the greater Solomon is so key!
 - Because where Solomon, although full of wisdom and discernment, failed in obedience and faithfulness, the Lord Jesus responded perfectly.
- This is the point of the blessings and the curses in Deuteronomy. We can’t expect blessing where we do not obey!
 - The same principle applies within the church today, if we are not in right fellowship with the Lord, how do we expect to become more like Christ.
- The beautiful reality of what Christ accomplished on the cross and His resurrection is that the striving to obey the Law to the “t” was accomplished in Him.
 - We couldn’t keep the Law! Solomon, as wise as he was, didn’t keep the Law perfectly. David as much as he loved the Lord, still fell short.
- There had to be a human-agent by which could accomplish the law perfectly, without fail, and obeyed the Lord God to a “T”.
 - And the only one that could do that was that human-agent also being the God-man, Jesus Christ.
- So now that we are in Christ, the need to strive has ceased.
 - We now simply respond in obedience out of our love for God and what He has done through Christ.
 - It is because of God’s faithfulness to His word that you and I can love the Lord well and serve Him with our whole hearts.
 - And that even when we fall short of His glory, His grace meets us, picks us up, and moves us forward.
- This great demonstration of wisdom and discernment is what drew the people and other nations to Israel to see the King.
 - And in a similar way, it is grace and truth through the illuminating power of the Spirit that will draw men and women, far from God to God.
 - Let’s Pray.

- In our last session, we discussed the continued implementation of wisdom in the life of Solomon given to him by God.
 - And in wisdom we witnessed Solomon's ability to disseminate responsibilities and roles to trustworthy men throughout the land.
 - The reality was, because of the vastness of the kingdom and the great number of people, it was too much for Solomon to handle alone.
 - Therefore, by way of wisdom, Solomon is able to hand off responsibility to establish a functional administration.
 - This dissemination of responsibility is similar to what Moses' father-in-law mentioned to him regarding Moses' responsibility in judging the people.
 - Jethro tells Moses to find trustworthy men to do the work so that the stress and responsibility doesn't fall completely on his shoulders.
 - Furthermore, we were able to see the establishment of a centralized government in Israel.
 - Taxation and proper representation for the flourishing of the nation and kingdom was essential.
 - And along with that came a move away from tribalism to a more unified nation as a whole.
 - Tonight, we enter a significant portion of the Kings narrative as it has to deal with the building of the temple.
 - This would be the permanent dwelling by which the LORD would dwell among His people.
 - And as we will find, the effort to get this done was not easy and required the hands of many skilled laborers.
 - Our outline tonight is straight forward. We will see:
 - 1. Solomon reaffirming his alliance to King Hiram (vv.1-12).
 - And if I were to tag our time in the text tonight, it would simply be: Preparation for the Temple.
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 5 starting with verses 1-6.

1 Kings 5:1 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, when he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram had always been a friend of David.

1 Kings 5:2 Then Solomon sent word to Hiram, saying,

1 Kings 5:3 “You know that David my father was unable to build a house for the name of the Lord his God because of the wars which surrounded him, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet.

1 Kings 5:4 “But now the Lord my God has given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary nor misfortune.

1 Kings 5:5 “Behold, I intend to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as

the Lord spoke to David my father, saying, ‘Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he will build the house for My name.’

1 Kings 5:6 “Now therefore, command that they cut for me cedars from Lebanon, and my servants will be with your servants; and I will give you wages for your servants according to all that you say, for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians.”

- 1 Kings 5 transitions into the preparation period of the building of the Temple.
 - What we should note at this point in the text is that the preparation for the temple was something that began prior to Solomon’s reign as king.
 - If you recall in the later portion of the 2 Samuel narrative, I mentioned that David had the intention of building the temple himself.
 - However, because of David’s rule having been marked by much war, the Lord desired that His dwelling place be built during a time of shalom (peace). (1 Chronicles 28:3)
 - And having briefly reviewed 1 Chronicles 28, we discovered that David was given instructions by the Lord that Solomon would build the Temple instead.
 - Check out 1 Chronicles 28:5-7.

1 Chronicles 28:5 “Of all my sons (for the Lord has given me many sons), He has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel.

1 Chronicles 28:6 “He said to me, ‘Your son Solomon is the one who shall build My house and My courts; for I have chosen him to be a son to Me, and I will be a father to him.

1 Chronicles 28:7 ‘I will establish his kingdom forever if he resolutely performs My commandments and My ordinances, as is done now.’

- But prior to the Lord revealing this to David, we find that David was preparing for the building of the temple as if he would build it in his time.
 - And this becomes a quick yet interesting point in the narrative.
 - This demonstrates the leadership, stewardship of resources, and the diligence of David in preparation for what was to come.
 - And with any good leader should follow the necessity to prepare the next successor of leadership for their successful administration.
 - Along with this preparation of transition comes a prior political alliance with King Hiram of Tyre which forged a long-lasting friendship
 - Apparently, David and Hiram were good friends and discussed many things, one being the “building of a house”.
 - The Hebrew word for “house” here is *ba’yit* which can mean a dwelling, a king’s palace, or a temple.

- And in this particular context, it refers to “a house for the Lord”.
- This has always been the desire of the Lord. We find this desire expressed in Exodus 29:45-46. Check out the text:

Exodus 29:45 “I will dwell among the sons of Israel and will be their God.

Exodus 29:46 “They shall know that I am the Lord their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them; I am the Lord their God.

- This friendship between David and Hiram seems to have begun in 2 Samuel 5:11 where David received supplies from Hiram for the building of the Temple.
 - 1 Chronicles 14 provides a bit more detail as its parallel text in 2 Samuel 5:11 mentions the building of “a house”.
 - So, when David receives word in 1 Chronicles 28 about not building the house, he does not cease preparation but continues in faith for his son Solomon to take on the project.
 - What could be assumed is that from the time of David’s reign to Solomon’s reign, that David has shared some details regarding his alliance with Hiram.
 - And along with those details were the mention of who was the major political alliance contributing materially for the building of the temple.
 - So it’s at this point in the narrative that 2 Chronicles 2:3 lets us know that Solomon actually sends word to King Hiram to re-commit and affirm their political alliance with Solomon now as king.
 - Check out how 2 Chronicles 2:3 reads:

2 Chronicles 2:3 Then Solomon sent word to Huram the king of Tyre, saying, “As you dealt with David my father and sent him cedars to build him a house to dwell in, so do for me.

- At this point in Solomon’s rule, the timetable is set for the next phase of his administration – the building of the temple.
 - And if you notice, Solomon, in wisdom is following the instructions of the Lord to a “t”.
 - Remember, the Lord desired for the temple to be built during a “time of peace”.
 - And it’s in verse 4 that Solomon tells Hiram that Yahweh has given Israel “rest on every side”.
 - This period of rest deals with peace in and around the land – undisturbed from war and conflict.
 - Furthermore, Solomon mentions that there is neither adversary nor misfortune.
 - The word for adversary is “Sa-tan” or “the Satan”.
 - And the literal translation for “misfortune” is that there is no evil occurrence in

the land.

- This moment in history becomes a picture of sorts, because the absence of evil influence and the holding back of Satan sounds quite eschatological.
 - This picture becomes a foreshadow of what the period of the Millennium Kingdom will be like.
 - There will be a thousand years of rest and peace in the land.
 - No one will know what war looks like and there won't be a need to learn about it.
- The people will be dwelling securely in the land and all will be well because Christ will be reigning with justice throughout the world.
 - Another parallel that I would be remiss to mention is the parallel between King Solomon and the Greater Solomon, Jesus Christ.
- In our immediate context we find that King Solomon has been given the task by Yahweh to build the temple where the Lord will dwell among His people.
 - And as we know, historically, this dwelling in the temple during Solomon's day only lasts for a while, ultimately leading to the destruction of Solomon's Temple in around 586-878 BC.
 - And this destruction comes as a means of judgement and discipline for Israel by the instrument nation of Babylon.
 - However, in a future day, there will be a rebuilding of the temple by a Greater Solomon, Jesus Christ in the Millennium Kingdom.
 - I want to bring your attention to two texts that point to this future moment.
 - The first that we will look at is Zechariah 6:12-13. Check it out:

Zechariah 6:12 “**Then say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, “Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the Lord.**

Zechariah 6:13 “**Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the Lord, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.”**”

- The first thing that we should pay attention to is “a man whose name is Branch”
 - The Branch is a title which is always in reference to a future king from the lineage of David, meaning the Messiah – Jesus Christ.
 - And notice what Zechariah says Messiah would do in this future day.
 - It says, “He will build the temple of the Lord”. Not only will Jesus build the temple, but He will sit and rule on His throne (Davidic Throne).
 - Now, if that is not convincing enough as to who the man is check out verse 13.
 - The text mentions that He will be a priest on His throne and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices, meaning King and Priest.

- Historically, we know that these two offices were never allowed to mix they have always been separate.
- And whenever a king of Israel attempted both they would be immediately punished for it.
- Yet, the text lets us know that in this future day, the Messiah will rule as both King and Priest.
 - It should begin to click how Jesus, being of the order of Melchizedek forever, is able to be both King and Priest.
 - And that there is no issue between those two offices being occupied by Messiah Himself.
- Lastly, where Solomon's reign of 40 years comes to an end, so does Israel's ability to dwell securely and be at peace within the land.
 - And, in the Millennium Kingdom, there will be a thousand years of justice and peace throughout Jesus' rule on the throne of David.
- So Solomon's rule becomes not just literal history in which we can go back and read about, but it speaks to this promising future day!
 - So with Solomon informing King Hiram about his intentions to continue in the plans of building the temple, he lays out a plan by which he intends to have buy-in from an old ally.
- Solomon's request is that King Hiram have his laborers prepare the cedars from Lebanon for the building of the temple.
 - The cedars of Lebanon were old trees made of beautiful wood excellent for construction purposes.
 - This type of wood was not prone to decay or insect infestation.
 - So this type of wood for what would be a modern-day masterpiece of a building was of premier quality.
 - Along with quality materials followed the recruitment and service of quality workers.
 - Solomon was aware of a very skilled people known as the Sidonians, a people north of Tyre, who were considered experts in the cutting of timber.
 - You could consider the Sidonians modern day master carpenters.
 - Let's keep moving. Check out verses 7-12.

1 Kings 5:7 When Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly and said, “Blessed be the Lord today, who has given to David a wise son over this great people.”

1 Kings 5:8 So Hiram sent word to Solomon, saying, “I have heard the message which you have sent me; I will do what you desire concerning the cedar and cypress timber.

1 Kings 5:9 “My servants will bring them down from Lebanon to the sea; and I will

make them into rafts to go by sea to the place where you direct me, and I will have them broken up there, and you shall carry them away. Then you shall accomplish my desire by giving food to my household.”

1 Kings 5:10 **So Hiram gave Solomon as much as he desired of the cedar and cypress timber.**

1 Kings 5:11 **Solomon then gave Hiram 20,000 kors of wheat as food for his household, and twenty kors of beaten oil; thus Solomon would give Hiram year by year.**

1 Kings 5:12 **The Lord gave wisdom to Solomon, just as He promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a covenant**

- From this deliberation between King Solomon and King Hiram, it is observed by King Hiram the wisdom of King Solomon.
 - Because from this discussion came much rejoicing from the King Hiram who makes a profound declaration.
 - He says, “Blessed be the LORD (Yahweh) today, who has given to David a wise son over this great people.”
 - In other words, King Hiram recognizes who the giver of this great wisdom to the young king Solomon is.
 - It is none other than the God of Israel!
 - What a testimony of the goodness of God based upon how the stewards of God’s gifts and wisdom operate in obedience to the Lord.
 - What becomes even more profound is how a pagan King over a pagan nation can recognize and bless the true and living God based on the actions of the follower of Yahweh.
 - And herein lies a biblical principle that we find in the text:
 - Those who are followers of Christ should be able to stand out even amongst an unbelieving world.
 - Our actions and lives will either point people to a living Savior or cause them to question who we serve?
 - In any case, King Hiram receives these words from the King and responds positively to the request.
 - And King Hiram outlines for Solomon the trade route by which the materials will be delivered to him.
 - It’s in 2 Chronicles 2:16 that King Hiram mentions the route by which the wood would be sent for easy transportation to Jerusalem.
 - Check out the text:

2 Chronicles 2:16 **“We will cut whatever timber you need from Lebanon and bring it to you on rafts by sea to Joppa, so that you may carry it up to Jerusalem.”**

- It seems as if the King of Hiram is willing to do whatever is necessary for King Solomon to accomplish his project.
 - And at the same time, you see that the text insinuates a sense of reciprocity for the services in which King Hiram is providing King Solomon.
 - It's the idea that I do this for you but I need you to do something for me as well.
 - So in return for these shipping and contracting services, King Hiram requests food for his royal household in which, according to verse 11, Solomon agrees to the terms.
 - And in this case, as Solomon puts in his request so the king of Tyre, fulfills said request.
 - This interaction is simply a means of exchange of services by which services are requested and bartering commences.
 - Notice the vast amount of goods that Solomon provided to King Hiram for his services:
 - 1. 20,000 kors of wheat as food (38,053 barrels of wheat)
 - 2. 20 kors of beaten oil (1,162 gallons of oil)
 - 2 Chronicles mentions that in addition to what the writer of Kings provides was 20,000 kors of barley and 20,000 baths of wine (116,236 gallons).
 - And this is what King Solomon provided King Hiram, year after year.
 - Now think about these numbers over a period of time – these are a lot of resources, especially that of wine and grapes!
 - Yet, the fact that this is sustained year by year and doesn't dip into the reserves of the Nation of Israel shows God's sustaining hand and Israel's surplus!
 - There seems to be this sense of proper stewardship of resources by Solomon.
 - Perhaps this is why the text mentions in verse 12 that, "The Lord gave wisdom to Solomon, just as He promised."
 - The literal translation here would be, the Lord gave wisdom to Solomon according to the word of the Lord.
 - In other words, the promise keeping God of Israel was faithful, and is faithful, to His every word according to His promises.
 - Verse 12 rounds out by mentioning that there was peace between Hiram and Solomon and that the two of them made a covenant.
 - There are some people who will examine this text and take issue with two things in particular.
 - 1) Why is Israel gaining wealth from other pagan Nations. Does this mean that they weren't trusting in the Lord for their provision?
 - 2) Was it wrong for Solomon to establish a Covenant with a Gentile Nation such as Tyre? Did God approve?
- Let's examine the first question. When looking at who is benefiting from what transaction, we come to see that Israel was actually blessing another Nation – Gentiles.

- The deeper question that is to be asked is: Did God desire for Israel to be a Nation that blessed itself – solely for Jewish benefit?
 - The answer to that question is an emphatic – No!
- God never intended for Israel to be a Nation of immense blessing to simply keep it to themselves.
 - Scripture outlines for us that God intended for Israel to be a Nation that blessed others; this includes Gentile Nations.
 - And we find this truth in Genesis 12:1-3. Check out the text:

Genesis 12:1 Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father’s house, To the land which I will show you; **Genesis 12:2** And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; **Genesis 12:3** And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

- ○ This language suggests that the Lord would make an individual who was pulled out of paganism and from him would come a people blessed by God.
 - And that this people/nation would be used to be a blessing to the people of the world!
- So most assuredly, we see God using Solomon as an instrument of blessing to this Gentile nation who in turn sees the greatness of Yahweh.
 - And just as Solomon was an instrument of blessing to Tyre as a Gentile nation, the Lord Jesus through His death, burial, and resurrection is a blessing to all who will place their faith in Him.
- And the reality is, this principle should be evident within the Church today.
 - That the unbelieving world should be able to see the love of Christ displayed yet without the compromise of the truth of God!
- That as the world sees how believers love one another that in turn the unbelieving world should scratch their heads as to say, what are we missing?
 - And the answer to that question is – You are missing the very one who has fashioned you in His image!
- The second question to answer is: Was it wrong for Solomon to establish a covenant with Hiram?
 - The emphasis of the question involves matters of covenant contracts.
 - The word “covenant” is *be’rit*. And this can be a contract or an agreement.
 - The Abrahamic and Davidic covenants are contracts that the Lord has put into play.
 - And here in the text we find Solomon putting a contract together with Hiram, only this covenant is more of an agreement with outlined terms.

- And in this case the terms are simple, “I purchase materials from you and pay your hired workers for a period of time and compensate them accordingly.”
 - This contract is not to say that Solomon joined in partnership with Hiram to build the temple.
 - Rather, Solomon entered into an agreement of contractual service.
- Some have looked at this to say this is the believer being unequally yoked with non-believers. However, this does not apply contextually.
 - The reality is believers do business everyday with companies that are not “Christian” and vice versa.
 - We are simply engaging in business exchange with others for the purposes of services and this does not equate to “dirty money” or the like.
- We simply see that Solomon’s exercised wisdom and discernment in his dealings with Hiram is based upon being a good businessman.
 - We’ll round out tonight with the last 6 verses, verses 13-18.

1 Kings 5:13 Now King Solomon levied forced laborers from all Israel; and the forced laborers numbered 30,000 men.

1 Kings 5:14 He sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in relays; they were in Lebanon a month and two months at home. And Adoniram was over the forced laborers.

1 Kings 5:15 Now Solomon had 70,000 transporters, and 80,000 hewers of stone in the mountains,

1 Kings 5:16 besides Solomon’s 3,300 chief deputies who were over the project and who ruled over the people who were doing the work.

1 Kings 5:17 Then the king commanded, and they quarried great stones, costly stones, to lay the foundation of the house with cut stones.

1 Kings 5:18 So Solomon’s builders and Hiram’s builders and the Gebalites cut them, and prepared the timbers and the stones to build the house.

- Lastly, we find that the magnitude of this labor force to begin the building process was immense.
 - Solomon, in total has nearly 183,300 men working in efforts of establishing the foundation of the Temple.
 - This was not a light task and the type of laborers provided were skilled in their own right.
 - Although I have not had the opportunity of visiting Israel, in pictures where the Temple Mount once stood remain some foundation stones and they are massive.
 - The skill and ability it took to carve out the stones and transport these materials to their destinations were incredible.
 - This massive building project was taken on through the workforce of non-Israelites who were individuals that remained in the country after the removal of Israel’s

enemies out of the land.

- And it is important to note that these individuals were not slaves.
- So all in all we are seeing how the Lord is working through the wisdom of Solomon to build the permanent place in which He will dwell.
 - And in doing so, Solomon recruits the best of the best, even if it is outside of the Israelite people themselves.
 - Because the Lord has a very interesting way of using the most unlikely people, in this case a Gentile people, to accomplish the Lord's purposes.
 - Solomon writes these words in Proverbs 16:7:

Proverbs 16:7 When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

- ○ Let's Pray.

- Tonight's lesson will be a bit different in that we will be going over the details of the building and layout of the Temple.
 - The teaching will be very straightforward as we will be dealing with some archeological realities as well as some architectural details.
 - In other words, what you see is what you get.
 - To some this may be a bit boring but if you are a lover of history and architecture, then tonight is a night you will enjoy.
 - Especially given the fact that we have quite a few pictures and illustrations to aid in our reading tonight.
- I want to begin tonight with helping us first understand the significance of the details of the Temple and the Temple itself.
 - In one sense we can marvel at the amazing construction methods and materials used to build the dwelling place of the Lord.
 - On the other hand, we can see how the Lord desired to dwell with His people and where the tabernacle began.
 - When we begin our reading tonight, you will see that the writer will not provide us with who designed the temple or where the schematics came from themselves.
 - But by doing some scriptural background we come to find that the designs themselves were given to Solomon by his father, David.
 - But then that begs a question as well, which is where David got the details of the dimensions of the Temple.
 - For as we will see, the dimensions of the Temple vary from that of the Tabernacle in Moses' day.
 - We come to find that the detailed blueprints in which are used for Solomon's temple were inspired by the Holy Spirit.
 - And we find those details in 1 Chronicles 28:11-19.
 - However, there should be another question that comes to mind, because with any good design, there requires a designer.
 - And every design begins with some type of prototype or in this case an antetype.
 - An antetype simply means an earlier form.
 - And we find that in 2 Chronicles 6:21,30,33,39, that Solomon was aware that this earthly dwelling place was related to the heavenly antetype.
 - In these several verses there is the mentioning of "Your heavenly dwelling place".
 - So we will see that this dwelling place in which has been divinely designed and revealed is to be a place in which the Lord will dwell with His people.
 - So with that being said, if I were to outline our time tonight, we will see the following:
 - 1. External Frame and size of the Temple (vv.1-10)

- 2. Word of the Lord to Solomon (vv.11-14)
- 3. Internal Framing and structure of the Temple (vv.15-36)
- 4. Timeframe of Construction (vv.37-38)
- If I were to put a tag on our text it would simply be: The Building of the Temple
 - With that being said, I invite you to pick me up in 1 Kings 6:1-10.

1 Kings 6:1 Now it came about in the four hundred and eightieth year after the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord.

1 Kings 6:2 As for the house which King Solomon built for the Lord, its length was sixty cubits and its width twenty cubits and its height thirty cubits.

1 Kings 6:3 The porch in front of the nave of the house was twenty cubits in length, corresponding to the width of the house, and its depth along the front of the house was ten cubits.

1 Kings 6:4 Also for the house he made windows with artistic frames.

1 Kings 6:5 Against the wall of the house he built stories encompassing the walls of the house around both the nave and the inner sanctuary; thus he made side chambers all around.

1 Kings 6:6 The lowest story was five cubits wide, and the middle was six cubits wide, and the third was seven cubits wide; for on the outside he made offsets in the wall of the house all around in order that the beams would not be inserted in the walls of the house.

1 Kings 6:7 The house, while it was being built, was built of stone prepared at the quarry, and there was neither hammer nor axe nor any iron tool heard in the house while it was being built.

1 Kings 6:8 The doorway for the lowest side chamber was on the right side of the house; and they would go up by winding stairs to the middle story, and from the middle to the third.

1 Kings 6:9 So he built the house and finished it; and he covered the house with beams and planks of cedar.

1 Kings 6:10 He also built the stories against the whole house, each five cubits high; and they were fastened to the house with timbers of cedar.

- We're given, at the onset of Chapter 6, a very detailed chronology of when the construction of the Temple began.
 - We're told that it came about 480 years after the wilderness wonderings. (Exodus)
 - For someone who may not have a strong grasp on the chronology of dates regarding the Exodus, here is a text that helps in solidifying timelines.
 - In one sense, we are given specifics of the month and year of the building of the Temple.

- Secondly, we know the timeframe in which Solomon ruled.
- Ancient writings hold that Solomon reigned from 971-931 BC.
- So, if we were to go back 480 years earlier from 966/967 BC in which the Temple construction began, we find that the Exodus took place around 1445 or 1446 BC.
 - So, these moments recorded by the writers of Jewish history help us to navigate a proper timeline for Israel's history as a whole.
- We now find the writer of Kings moves to explaining, with accurate precision, the dimensions of the building of the house of the Lord.
- He mentions that the length was sixty cubits, its width twenty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.
 - These numbers mean nothing to us if we aren't able to have a modern metric to measure these dimensions.
 - 1 Cubit is roughly 18 inches (45cm).
 - So, in total, the dimensions were 90 feet long (27m), 30 feet wide (9m), and 45 feet high (13.5m).
 - What we know dimensionally is that Solomon's temple for the Lord was much larger than the tabernacle that was transported with Israel in their wanderings.
 - So, in one sense, the new Temple is a permanent dwelling place for Yahweh unlike the previous temporary structure.
 - Secondly, the grandeur of this *ba'yit* (house) is great in size and splendor and with added features. For instance, the addition of a porch in front (v.3)
 - The writer then mentions that a porch, 20 cubits in length with a depth of 10 cubits added more square footage.
 - And with the height of this three-story structure came the artistic framing of clearstory windows.
 - Verses 5-6 we see that the outer walls of the temple had extensions built around as a means of storage, halls, and stairwells.
 - And what we find structurally is that there seems to be two structures interconnected but not intermingled.
 - And this is done so that there is clear distinction and separation between the inner sanctuary and Most Holy Place versus these surrounding halls.
 - The height of this structure was about 25-30 feet tall and divided into three stories.
 - We find an interesting detail in verse 7 because the writer expresses that Solomon desired that the construction site not be disturbed by loud noise.
 - So instead of cutting the stone on site, Solomon demanded the stone be prepared from the stone sight.
 - This suggest that the measurements of the building site needed to be precise and communicated to the hewers accordingly.
 - What accuracy this must have been for these builders to build such a grand

building.

- Verse 8, we are given details of vertical circulation of the storage rooms and their respective entrances.
 - And what we see in its entirety is that the temple is structurally sound and composed of the trees of Lebanon and the planks of cedar.
 - On the slides, you can see how these beams were structurally laid.
- The writer of Kings then pivots to a significant portion of the text that is worth noting.
 - Check out verses 11-14

1 Kings 6:11 Now the word of the Lord came to Solomon saying,

1 Kings 6:12 “Concerning this house which you are building, if you will walk in My statutes and execute My ordinances and keep all My commandments by walking in them, then I will carry out My word with you which I spoke to David your father.

1 Kings 6:13 “I will dwell among the sons of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel.”

1 Kings 6:14 So Solomon built the house and finished it.

- Solomon is given a word from the Lord Himself which pertained to both a reaffirming of His promise He made to David as well as an “if statement”.
 - The promise that the Lord made, as we have previously discussed, is in reference to the Davidic Covenant.
 - In particular, this promise coincides with the establishment of David’s throne forever according to 2 Samuel 7:13.
 - However, Solomon’s obedience or the lack thereof towards the Mosaic Covenant would render a particular result.
 - If Solomon obeyed the Mosaic Covenant, God would not forsake His people and keep the Kingdom intact.
 - However, if Solomon were to fail to keep the covenant, then the Kingdom would be divided, and the Lord would cease to dwell among the people for a time.
 - What we need to understand at this point is, Solomon’s disobedience toward the Covenant would not erase or cancel the Lord’s promise to David.
 - It would simply, as Victor Hamilton writes, mute the promise for a time.
 - When you consider this reality, it begins to sound a lot similar to how during Jesus’ ministry, the religious leaders rejected the very offer of the Kingdom in the first century.
 - In other words, because of their lack of trusting in Messiah, the very Logos of God, they had the offer of the Kingdom rescinded, not cancelled.
 - So, the flourishing of the Kingdom under Solomon’s leadership was contingent

upon his obedience to the Law.

- And what we find is yet another reason as to why Jesus is the greater Solomon.
- That where Solomon failed in perfect obedience to the Law, Jesus succeeded. (We will see more pictures throughout the Kings).
- Another theme that we see in the Old Testament that is well-developed in the New Testament is this understanding of being in right fellowship with God.
 - Right fellowship with the Lord is based upon obedience to His word.
 - And this obedience to His word is an outworking of our love for the Lord.
- This doesn't mean that we will be perfect at it or get it right every time, but it does mean that our priority is to submit to His word and where we fail to turn to Him.
 - Check out what John says in 1 John 5:1-5.

[1 John 5:1](#) Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.

[1 John 5:2](#) By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.

[1 John 5:3](#) For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

[1 John 5:4](#) For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

[1 John 5:5](#) Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

- We see John mention this sense of fellowship in a different way in John 15:10. Check out the text.

[John 15:10](#) “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.

- The word “abide” in Greek means to remain, to stay, to dwell or reside.
 - And John makes extricably clear that there is a direct correlation between one’s obedience in keeping Jesus’ commands and being in right fellowship with Him.
 - Notice, for those who are in Christ, when one falls short, there is no loss of salvation, there is simply a loss of fellowship.
 - And that fellowship is able to be restored when we return to the Lord by way of repentance and to obey Him.
 - So when you see the New Testament writers talking about salvation and our security in Christ, you can begin to see how theology is established.
 - And by way of the New Testament writers, doctrine is established by which we are to adhere to as believers in Christ.

- All that to say, when one understands the Old Testament, it helps in clarifying the writings of the New Testament writers.
- So as we see in 1 Kings 6:14, Solomon responds positively to the word of the Lord and continues in building the house that the Lord may dwell with Israel.
 - We now find the writer of Kings move towards the interior of the Temple and its furnishings and finishes.
 - Check out verses 15-38.

1 Kings 6:15 Then he built the walls of the house on the inside with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house to the ceiling he overlaid the walls on the inside with wood, and he overlaid the floor of the house with boards of cypress.

1 Kings 6:16 He built twenty cubits on the rear part of the house with boards of cedar from the floor to the ceiling; he built them for it on the inside as an inner sanctuary, even as the most holy place.

1 Kings 6:17 The house, that is, the nave in front of the inner sanctuary, was forty cubits long.

1 Kings 6:18 There was cedar on the house within, carved in the shape of gourds and open flowers; all was cedar, there was no stone seen.

1 Kings 6:19 Then he prepared an inner sanctuary within the house in order to place there the ark of the covenant of the Lord.

1 Kings 6:20 The inner sanctuary was twenty cubits in length, twenty cubits in width, and twenty cubits in height, and he overlaid it with pure gold. He also overlaid the altar with cedar.

1 Kings 6:21 So Solomon overlaid the inside of the house with pure gold. And he drew chains of gold across the front of the inner sanctuary, and he overlaid it with gold.

1 Kings 6:22 He overlaid the whole house with gold, until all the house was finished. Also the whole altar which was by the inner sanctuary he overlaid with gold.

1 Kings 6:23 Also in the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olive wood, each ten cubits high.

1 Kings 6:24 Five cubits was the one wing of the cherub and five cubits the other wing of the cherub; from the end of one wing to the end of the other wing were ten cubits.

1 Kings 6:25 The other cherub was ten cubits; both the cherubim were of the same measure and the same form.

1 Kings 6:26 The height of the one cherub was ten cubits, and so was the other cherub.

1 Kings 6:27 He placed the cherubim in the midst of the inner house, and the wings of the cherubim were spread out, so that the wing of the one was touching the one wall, and the wing of the other cherub was touching the other wall. So their wings were touching each other in the center of the house.

1 Kings 6:28 He also overlaid the cherubim with gold.

1 Kings 6:29 Then he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved engravings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, inner and outer sanctuaries.

1 Kings 6:30 He overlaid the floor of the house with gold, inner and outer sanctuaries.

1 Kings 6:31 For the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors of olive wood, the lintel and five-sided doorposts.

1 Kings 6:32 So he made two doors of olive wood, and he carved on them carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold; and he spread the gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees.

1 Kings 6:33 So also he made for the entrance of the nave four-sided doorposts of olive wood

1 Kings 6:34 and two doors of cypress wood; the two leaves of the one door turned on pivots, and the two leaves of the other door turned on pivots.

1 Kings 6:35 He carved on it cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers; and he overlaid them with gold evenly applied on the engraved work.

1 Kings 6:36 He built the inner court with three rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams.

1 Kings 6:37 In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid, in the month of Ziv.

1 Kings 6:38 In the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished throughout all its parts and according to all its plans. So he was seven years in building it.

- The writer moves now to describing the inside features of the Temple itself in which we find that the entirety of the Temple is filled with boards of cypress from floor to ceiling.
 - He begins in verse 16 by detailing the dimensions of what is described as an “inner sanctuary” which is synonymous for the Most Holy Place or Holy of Holies.
 - We are given the details of dimensions of the Most Holy Place later in 1 Kings 6:20 as well as 2 Chronicles 3:8.
 - The dimensions were approximately 30 feet by 30 feet with a height of 30 feet. So, picture a 30 foot cube (9×9×9).
 - Verse 17 we see that the “nave” or space in front of the Most Holy Place was the main hall, also known as the Holy Place.
 - This space was double the size of the holy of holies in width – it was 60 feet long (18m).
 - Verses 19-22 we’re told that within the Most Holy Place that the ark of the covenant was to be placed there.
 - And plastered throughout all the walls of the *ba’yt* was pure gold and along with the walls, he poured gold on the altar.

- Verse 23 the writer describes that within the Most Holy Place were placed two olive wood cherubim.
 - Cherubim are angels which are the highest ranking of celestial beings.
 - The Hebrew word translated “cherub” has the root meaning “to guard” or “to cover”.
 - The Cherubim guarded the entrance of the garden after Adam and Eve sinned so that they would not return to that “sacred space” again.
 - And we are told that cherubim have two wings.
 - This pattern of including the cherubim at the mercy-seat in the Holy of Holies was first documented in Exodus 26:1 where the cherubim were embroidered on the veil in the tabernacle.
 - These two cherubim were ten cubits high which is 15 feet high (4.5m).
 - The span of just one of the wings was 5 cubits which is 7.5 feet (2.2m).
 - Verses 23-28 document that these cherubim were of the same size and were spread out that the tips of their wingspan touched from one end to the next.
 - And they too were layered with gold.
 - It’s also important to note that with the inner laying of cypress wood came the engravings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers.
 - This further describes the masterful craftsmanship of these laborers and contractors.
- In verses 31-36 we find that the layout of the temple shows clear datums designating separation between the most Holy Place and the entrance to the inner court (Holy Place).
 - These datums were separated by doors.
 - The entrance of the inner sanctuary were made of olive wood.
 - And on these doors were the carvings of cherubim, palm trees and open flowers
 - Whereas the doors leading from the porch to the holy place were made of pine.
 - Lastly, we see the description of the inner court which is the exterior layout of the building itself.
 - And scripture lets us know that there were elevation differences from the inner court (highlighted here) versus the outer court, not mentioned in 1 Kings 6.
- The writer then rounds out the description of the temple by reiterating the beginning construction month of the Temple to its concluding date.
 - It began in the fourth year in the month of Ziv (March/April) and ended in the 11th year in the month of Bul (October/November).
 - That would put the Temple being complete by 959 BC which means that the Temple took approximately 7 years to be completed.
 - As we know, biblically, the number 7 means completion or 100%. Therefore to the Jewish people the Temple was viewed as a perfect structure.

- Now let's go back to a term we discussed earlier in the series - sacred space.
 - This is where the Lord comes to dwell and be with His people.
 - The first sacred space we see recorded in scripture is in the Garden of Eden.
 - God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day.
 - But after they sinned there was separation.
 - There needed to be because God is holy – He cannot dwell where there is sin.
- But God still desires to be near His people so He provided a way that allows those that are far from Him to draw near
 - God instructs us on how to approach Him (Remember the example of Cain, sin was crouching at the door).
 - But jealousy stirred and Cain wanted to do things his way.
 - It's all about right fellowship.
 - The story of Moses and the burning bush - Yahweh tells him, remove your sandals for the place where you are standing is Holy ground.
- So this language of holiness and sacred spaces is beginning to edge its way into culture.
- During the time of the Israelites in the wilderness, God gives Moses instructions (for a tent) in order for the Lord to dwell with His people.
 - As seen on the slide, when the tabernacle was established the 12 tribes would surround it, but not right up close.
 - There had to be space between the tabernacle and the people because that was holy ground.
 - But as the people leave their tents to go to worship or sacrifice, there is a mental activity happening as they cross this holy ground.
 - As they are walking across this space to go and be and dwell with the Lord, they are thinking of being in right fellowship.
 - The separation reminds them that they are at odds with God.
- Fast forwarding to the New Testament –

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14a And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us

- In Greek the word means “tabernacled”.
- When we start to see in the gospels the lineage of Jesus, it's letting us know God has come to us.
 - Emmanuel, God with us.
- So when the veil is torn in the Holy of Holies there is no longer separation.

- Jesus tells His disciples, don't leave Jerusalem.
- I am going to send you a helper, the paraclete, to indwell you.
- God is telling us, we are now the tabernacle, the new place where the Holy Spirit of God is going to dwell.
 - We no longer have to go to the church house/synagogue to be in right fellowship with Him.
- So when we look at these dimensions, they have come from the Creator himself, because He has literally patterned a prototype for us on earth, as it relates to what is already in heaven.
 - When it comes down to Jesus before He ascends, you'll notice in particular areas that Jesus is never touched.
 - Why?
 - There has to be a cleansing.
 - The veil has been torn on earth, the atoning work of Christ has taken place on earth.
- So when we think about our bodies as Paul says in Romans, as living sacrifices, this is where He dwells.
 - And when we gather together, Jesus is in the midst. His Spirit is in us.
 - It's not about the building, it's about being together, fellowshipping with one another (Ecclesia).
- The promise Jesus made to His disciples, I will be with you always, even to the ends of the earth – He tabernacles with us.
- Although this building we have studied in our text today was destroyed by Babylon, as Jesus said in Matthew 16 – the gates of hell will not prevail against His church.

- In our last session, we covered the craftsmanship, detail, and effort that went into the building of the Temple.
 - We discussed the time in which it took to build the temple and the precision which went into each section.
 - Understand that the efforts towards completing the temple was no small feat and required great minds to complete its build.
 - Tonight, we will see that after the completion of the construction of the building itself, that Solomon moves to now complete his own house.
 - And we will understand the significance of this pattern of build within Israel in that day, later tonight.
 - And from there, we will come back to the finishings of the temple as it relates to interior furnishings and finishes for both the Temple and the inner court.
 - And if time permits, we will cover the first 11 verses of Chapter 8.
 - If I were to put an outline together for our time tonight, it would be the following:
 - 1. Solomon's Palace (vv.1-12)
 - 2. Hiram's work in the Temple (13-51)
 - 3. The Glory of Yahweh (8:1-11)
 - And if I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would simply be: His House, His Glory.
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 7 beginning in verses 1-12.

1 Kings 7:1 Now Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house.

1 Kings 7:2 He built the house of the forest of Lebanon; its length was 100 cubits and its width 50 cubits and its height 30 cubits, on four rows of cedar pillars with cedar beams on the pillars.

1 Kings 7:3 It was paneled with cedar above the side chambers which were on the 45 pillars, 15 in each row.

1 Kings 7:4 There were artistic window frames in three rows, and window was opposite window in three ranks.

1 Kings 7:5 All the doorways and doorposts had squared artistic frames, and window was opposite window in three ranks.

1 Kings 7:6 Then he made the hall of pillars; its length was 50 cubits and its width 30 cubits, and a porch was in front of them and pillars and a threshold in front of them.

1 Kings 7:7 He made the hall of the throne where he was to judge, the hall of judgment, and it was paneled with cedar from floor to floor.

1 Kings 7:8 His house where he was to live, the other court inward from the hall, was of the same workmanship. He also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's

daughter, whom Solomon had married.

1 Kings 7:9 All these were of costly stones, of stone cut according to measure, sawed with saws, inside and outside; even from the foundation to the coping, and so on the outside to the great court.

1 Kings 7:10 The foundation was of costly stones, even large stones, stones of ten cubits and stones of eight cubits.

1 Kings 7:11 And above were costly stones, stone cut according to measure, and cedar.

1 Kings 7:12 So the great court all around had three rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams even as the inner court of the house of the Lord, and the porch of the house.

- The writer of Kings picks us up in Chapter 7 with yet another spectacular building project that took place not too far from the Temple.
 - This project was Solomon's own Palace along with an addition for his wife.
 - The writer begins by telling the reader how long Solomon's palace took to build.
 - A total of thirteen years it took to complete Solomon's palace.
 - We're told that his palace was built with cedars from the forest of Lebanon.
 - The measurements were 100 cubits in length, 50 cubits in width and its height 30 cubits on four rows of cedar beams on pillars.
 - So those measured dimensions in feet are 150 feet long (45m), 75 feet wide (22m) and 45 feet high (13m).
 - This would total about 11,250 square feet (1,045 square metres) of living space.
 - It could be understood that the size of this complex was necessary for the various functions and needs of the king, his family, and administrative duties along with an armory and a hall of justice.
 - The makeup of the palace consisted of cedar and artistic windows in a pattern. Even the doors and door posts were made of artistic frames.
 - Within the complex structure were two halls, one was known as the Hall of the throne (Judgement).
 - The Hall of the throne was where Solomon would go to make judgements on matters that were brought to him.
 - This space was 50 cubits (75 feet/22m) by 30 cubits (45 feet/13m) and it was paneled with cedar from floor to floor.
 - The Second structure was the Hall of Pillars (Pillard Hall) also known as the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.
 - This area was used in a different capacity.
 - It was used as an audience chamber, state treasury, and displayed selected precious objects.
 - The text continues in verse 8 by telling us that Solomon's wife's quarters held

the same dimensions and finishes as that of the judgement hall.

- One probably would ask the question, where were they living while the construction of this 13 year project was commencing?
 - We find that answer in 2 Chronicles 8:11. Check out the text:

2 Chronicles 8:11 Then Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the city of David to the house which he had built for her, for he said, "My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because the places are holy where the ark of the Lord has entered."

- So apparently, for a time, she was in Jerusalem living in David's palace.
 - From verses 9-12, we see that, all in all, the structure of this complex was great and made of fine materials and costly stones interlocked with courtyards throughout.
- One question that many ask today is where, specifically, was Solomon's palace located.
 - There are many archeological questions that arise, yet none know for certain.
 - It is argued that the location could not have been far from the Temple based upon how the ancient near east functioned.
 - Meaning that in that time, the ancient world regarded a king's palace as a reflection of the greatness of their god.
 - However, Israel was not like the other nations in the sense that where those pagan nations would have their places of worship amid the city, Israel separated the locations.
 - Israel understood that they served the Living God and that He alone was Holy and was to be distinct (Holy Other).
 - So, a logical conclusion would be that the location of Solomon's temple would be near yet separated by maybe elevation and distance.
 - Here is what one scholar mentioned regarding the prominence and symbology of the Palace and the Temple in that day.

"Palace and temple complexes are the most important visual symbols of royal power and indicate more precisely the location of the center within a stratified society."

- So, in rightful order, having first built the Temple and then the palace, Solomon is able to further establish his prominence through the world.
 - This ultimately demonstrates to the outside nations, concretely, that the God of Israel is with His people and has blessed His chosen King.
 - If we were to think about this in plain terms, Solomon has been divinely endorsed by the Living God Himself and the Lord is pleased.
 - The writer now moves back to the focus of the Temple and its furnishings. Let's look

at verses 13-22.

1 Kings 7:13 Now King Solomon sent and brought Hiram from Tyre.

1 Kings 7:14 He was a widow's son from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in bronze; and he was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill for doing any work in bronze. So he came to King Solomon and performed all his work.

1 Kings 7:15 He fashioned the two pillars of bronze; eighteen cubits was the height of one pillar, and a line of twelve cubits measured the circumference of both.

1 Kings 7:16 He also made two capitals of molten bronze to set on the tops of the pillars; the height of the one capital was five cubits and the height of the other capital was five cubits.

1 Kings 7:17 There were nets of network and twisted threads of chainwork for the capitals which were on the top of the pillars; seven for the one capital and seven for the other capital.

1 Kings 7:18 So he made the pillars, and two rows around on the one network to cover the capitals which were on the top of the pomegranates; and so he did for the other capital.

1 Kings 7:19 The capitals which were on the top of the pillars in the porch were of lily design, four cubits.

1 Kings 7:20 There were capitals on the two pillars, even above and close to the rounded projection which was beside the network; and the pomegranates numbered two hundred in rows around both capitals.

1 Kings 7:21 Thus he set up the pillars at the porch of the nave; and he set up the right pillar and named it Jachin, and he set up the left pillar and named it Boaz.

1 Kings 7:22 On the top of the pillars was lily design. So the work of the pillars was finished.

- We're told that King Solomon sent for Hiram from Tyre who was a widow's son from the tribe of Naphtali and his father a man of Tyre.
 - This means that this Hiram was half Jewish by blood being that his mother was of a tribe of Israel.
 - And being that this is the case, it helps in distinguishing that, perhaps, this Hiram is different from King Hiram of Tyre.
 - Both men being from Tyre yet one being King and the other being a "master craftsman".
 - I believe these two individuals are distinct for two reasons.
 - 1. The accounts between the Kings and the Chronicles. (Who is being sent...)
 - 2. Because of the skills mentioned regarding Hiram.
 - Check out 2 Chronicles 2:14 so that we may see the distinction:

2 Chronicles 2:12 Then Huram continued, “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who has made heaven and earth, who has given King David a wise son, endowed with discretion and understanding, who will build a house for the Lord and a royal palace for himself.

2 Chronicles 2:13 “Now I am sending Huram-abi, a skilled man, endowed with understanding,

2 Chronicles 2:14 the son of a Danite woman and a Tyrian father, who knows how to work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone and wood, and in purple, violet, linen and crimson fabrics, and who knows how to make all kinds of engravings and to execute any design which may be assigned to him, to work with your skilled men and with those of my lord David your father.

- The point here being, although details of the mother are different, King Huram is sending Huram-abi to do the bronze work.
 - One scholar notes that the addition of “abi” at the end of Huram is either a part of the name or is a title such as “my master craftsman”.
 - And being that King Huram is the one sending him establishes that distinction between the two individuals.
 - We are told that this Huram fashioned the two pillars in the front of the temple out of bronze.
 - Both pillars were eighteen cubits in height which is 27 feet/8m tall and 12 cubits in circumference which is 18 feet/5m.
 - And with the capital moldings for the pillars they reached a height of 34 feet/10m.
 - These pillars consisted of great bronze details from decorative pomegranates that circulated around the pillars as ornaments.
 - Throughout the ancient near east, pomegranates served as a symbol of luxuriant fertility and of life.
 - These pillars stood as free-standing elements at the porch of the nave.
 - The right pillar was named Jachin (Ya-kin) which means “He (Yahweh) shall establish” and the left pillar was named “Boaz” which means “in Him (Yahweh) is strength”
 - It is often mentioned that with one of the pillars being named Boaz, who was King David’s grandfather, that this was a means of connection to the Lord’s promise to the Davidic Covenant.
 - Ultimately, these two pillars served as a constant reminder for Israel’s security in God’s strength made available to them if they obeyed.
 - We now move to the inner court area. Check out verses 23-26.

1 Kings 7:23 Now he made the sea of cast metal ten cubits from brim to brim, circular in form, and its height was five cubits, and thirty cubits in

circumference.

1 Kings 7:24 Under its brim gourds went around encircling it ten to a cubit, completely surrounding the sea; the gourds were in two rows, cast with the rest.

1 Kings 7:25 It stood on twelve oxen, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east; and the sea was set on top of them, and all their rear parts turned inward.

1 Kings 7:26 It was a handbreadth thick, and its brim was made like the brim of a cup, as a lily blossom; it could hold two thousand baths.

- The next descriptor that is given is that of what was known as “The Sea”.
 - This was the large circular basin that rested on the backs of 12 sculptured bulls.
 - The dimensions were ten cubits from brim to brim, approximately 15 feet/4.5m in diameter giving it a circumference of 45 feet/13m and a height of 7.5 feet/2m tall.
 - Around the brim of the basin were gourds (ornament imagery) that were engraved.
 - It is estimated that this basin provided 2,000 baths for priests to emerge in to be ceremonially cleansed for their temple work.
 - The Sea ultimately replaced the laver for the Tabernacle during the wilderness wanderings.
 - And this basin held 11,250 gallons/42,585 litres of water.
 - Underneath the basin were 12 sculptured oxen, 3 facing in each cardinal direction.
 - Underneath the basin were 12 sculptured oxen, 3 facing in each cardinal direction.
 - The Sea became a symbol of sorts as it rested on top of the strength and service and contained symbols of fertility.
 - The 12 oxen themselves might have represented either the twelve tribes of Israel or potentially Solomon’s 12 administrative districts.
 - Lastly, it could be reasonably assumed that for the priest to be cleansed in these waters, there was some mechanism to get them up there – maybe a ladder of sorts.
 - Let’s keep moving, verses 27-45.

1 Kings 7:27 Then he made the ten stands of bronze; the length of each stand was four cubits and its width four cubits and its height three cubits.

1 Kings 7:28 This was the design of the stands: they had borders, even borders between the frames,

1 Kings 7:29 and on the borders which were between the frames were lions, oxen and cherubim; and on the frames there was a pedestal above, and beneath the lions and oxen were wreaths of hanging work.

1 Kings 7:30 Now each stand had four bronze wheels with bronze axles, and its

four feet had supports; beneath the basin were cast supports with wreaths at each side.

1 Kings 7:31 Its opening inside the crown at the top was a cubit, and its opening was round like the design of a pedestal, a cubit and a half; and also on its opening there were engravings, and their borders were square, not round.

1 Kings 7:32 The four wheels were underneath the borders, and the axles of the wheels were on the stand. And the height of a wheel was a cubit and a half.

1 Kings 7:33 The workmanship of the wheels was like the workmanship of a chariot wheel. Their axles, their rims, their spokes, and their hubs were all cast.

1 Kings 7:34 Now there were four supports at the four corners of each stand; its supports were part of the stand itself.

1 Kings 7:35 On the top of the stand there was a circular form half a cubit high, and on the top of the stand its stays and its borders were part of it.

1 Kings 7:36 He engraved on the plates of its stays and on its borders, cherubim, lions and palm trees, according to the clear space on each, with wreaths all around.

1 Kings 7:37 He made the ten stands like this: all of them had one casting, one measure and one form.

1 Kings 7:38 He made ten basins of bronze, one basin held forty baths; each basin was four cubits, and on each of the ten stands was one basin.

1 Kings 7:39 Then he set the stands, five on the right side of the house and five on the left side of the house; and he set the sea of cast metal on the right side of the house eastward toward the south.

1 Kings 7:40 Now Hiram made the basins and the shovels and the bowls. So Hiram finished doing all the work which he performed for King Solomon in the house of the Lord:

1 Kings 7:41 the two pillars and the two bowls of the capitals which were on the top of the two pillars, and the two networks to cover the two bowls of the capitals which were on the top of the pillars;

1 Kings 7:42 and the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, two rows of pomegranates for each network to cover the two bowls of the capitals which were on the tops of the pillars;

1 Kings 7:43 and the ten stands with the ten basins on the stands;

1 Kings 7:44 and the one sea and the twelve oxen under the sea;

1 Kings 7:45 and the pails and the shovels and the bowls; even all these utensils which Hiram made for King Solomon in the house of the Lord were of polished bronze.

- After Hiram of Tyre forms and engravings “The Sea” reservoir for the inner court, he then makes 10 bronze moveable stands.
 - Each of these stands were 6 feet/1.8m long by 6 feet/1.8m wide and had a height of 5.5 feet/1.6m.

- These basins could hold 230 gallons/870 litres of water (approximately 40 baths).
- And all basins were decorated with panels of bronze and around its borders were frames of lions, oxen and cherubim.
- And with a total of 10 basins all together, there would be five on the south of the Temple and five on the north.
 - And to move these basins around required that they be on wheels in which they too were made of bronze.
- It's then in verses 40-47 that we see the entirety of Hiram's (Huram) workmanship and work product.
 - Hiram did everything from the bronze altar which is mentioned in (2 Chronicles 4:1).
 - The Sea with the 12 oxen underneath, the 10 Basins, and the two pillars of Jachin and Boaz.
- The extent of his work and craftsmanship really speaks to the glory of the Temple and its beauty in every single way.
 - From its interior finishings to its exterior craftsmanship, the work of the house of the Lord was well built and well done.
- Lastly, because of the extent of the work of the Temple finishings, we find that the weight of these items was too much to be counted. Check out verses 47-51.

1 Kings 7:46 In the plain of the Jordan the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarethan.

1 Kings 7:47 Solomon left all the utensils unweighed, because they were too many; the weight of the bronze could not be ascertained.

1 Kings 7:48 Solomon made all the furniture which was in the house of the Lord: the golden altar and the golden table on which was the bread of the Presence; **1 Kings 7:49** and the lampstands, five on the right side and five on the left, in front of the inner sanctuary, of pure gold; and the flowers and the lamps and the tongs, of gold;

1 Kings 7:50 and the cups and the snuffers and the bowls and the spoons and the firepans, of pure gold; and the hinges both for the doors of the inner house, the most holy place, and for the doors of the house, that is, of the nave, of gold.

1 Kings 7:51 Thus all the work that King Solomon performed in the house of the Lord was finished. And Solomon brought in the things dedicated by his father David, the silver and the gold and the utensils, and he put them in the treasuries of the house of the Lord.

- We find that these bronze objects were cast in clay molds in the Jordan Valley between Succoth and Zarethan.
 - This was approximately 35 miles north of the Dead Sea and east of the Jordan River.

- There are some that may ask the question: Why was it that some materials were gold while others were of bronze, etc?
- To understand the significance of this difference requires us to go back to understanding the Tabernacle during Moses' day.
- The closer that materials were to the Most Holy Place or the Throne of Yahweh, the more valuable metals would be used.
 - This is why in the Holy place, all gold was used to reflect the reality that the Glory of the Lord is there.
 - So this is why you will see that all furnishings and finishes are gold.
 - From the golden altar, the golden table for the bread of presence (showbread), the golden lampstands etc. all reflected the glory of the Lord.
- Lastly, we see that these furnishings finished the work done for the house of the LORD.
 - And as a way to honor his father David, Solomon brought in the items his father dedicated for the temple.
 - And these items were to be stored in the Temple treasuries which according to the layout would have been the side storehouses.
 - Therefore, the house of the Lord and His storehouse was a place in which offerings of worship to the Lord would be brought.
 - Now this should sound a bit familiar regarding the bringing of things to the storehouse of the Lord. (Malachi 3:10)

Malachi 3:10 “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.

- This scripture is often used in the church today as a ploy to manipulate people into giving more money to the church.
 - However, as we see, the use of this text as a means of giving is not only improper, but it is unbiblical.
 - New Testament giving is done not out of obligation but rather by the cheerfulness of the giver (2 Corinthians 9:7) because of the grace God has graciously displayed through Christ.
 - The context of Malachi 4 is dealing specifically with the post-exilic Jews to get back to their obedience to the Lord.
 - In this instance, the example is used of their tithing, in which they were still not doing.
 - Israel was commanded to tithe not once but three times in total.
 - The first tithe was the Levitical or sacred tithe found in Numbers 18:21,24
 - The second tithe was the tithe of the feasts found in Deuteronomy 14:22-27

- Thirdly, the tithe for the poor, which was every third year, found in Deuteronomy 14:28,29.
- So being that the Law had required these things, He lets them know that the only way in which He would return and bless them as a nation was if they obeyed His Law.
 - So even with all their complaining and questioning as to why God was not blessing them, He consistently reminds them after the Babylonian invasion, “You must return to me in obedience, and I will return to you”.
 - It goes right back to this idea of being in right fellowship with God.
- And as a relief for those who have been under teaching that says if you don’t give you won’t be blessed, I pray this truth found in scripture will free you.
 - Because we are believers in the Church Age, you are not under the commands of the Mosaic law but under God’s grace.
- So, what we are seeing is that the very house of the Lord was complete at this point, now the only thing that was missing was His very presence indwelt in the Temple.
 - To give us a sneak preview, we will read the first 11 verses of Chapter 8.

1 Kings 8:1 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' households of the sons of Israel, to King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord from the city of David, which is Zion.

1 Kings 8:2 All the men of Israel assembled themselves to King Solomon at the feast, in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.

1 Kings 8:3 Then all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark.

1 Kings 8:4 They brought up the ark of the Lord and the tent of meeting and all the holy utensils, which were in the tent, and the priests and the Levites brought them up.

1 Kings 8:5 And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who were assembled to him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen they could not be counted or numbered.

1 Kings 8:6 Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the Lord to its place, into the inner sanctuary of the house, to the most holy place, under the wings of the cherubim.

1 Kings 8:7 For the cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim made a covering over the ark and its poles from above.

1 Kings 8:8 But the poles were so long that the ends of the poles could be seen from the holy place before the inner sanctuary, but they could not be seen outside; they are there to this day.

1 Kings 8:9 There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, where the Lord made a covenant with the sons of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

1 Kings 8:10 It happened that when the priests came from the holy place, the cloud

filled the house of the Lord,

**1 Kings 8:11 so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud,
for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.**

- Here we find the climactic point of 1 and 2 Kings which is the symbolic enthronement of Yahweh as Israel's King.
 - Up to this point we have witnessed the preparation for the materials for the temple, the building of the temple and its internal finishings.
 - Now the only thing that is left, is to make way for Yahweh to take up residence in His permanent place of dwelling!
 - Think about when you are preparing for guests to come to your home, you take the time to tidy and clean up every nook and cranny because guests of honor are coming.
 - Only this time the home in which was to be prepared is the home of the true and Living God.
 - Therefore, this arrival would be a cause of great celebration throughout the land, and Solomon knew this.
 - Therefore, Solomon assembles this event to take place during the feasts of Booths in the month of Ethanim (September/October)
 - This was significant because the feast of booths/tabernacles was a remembrance of the Israelites' wilderness wanderings.
 - It looked back to their time in slavery all the way until their establishment in the Promised Land knowing that God was with them.
 - The text tells us that Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, the governors, and heads of tribes for this auspicious occasion during this period.
 - And to prepare for this occasion, it was now required to bring the finishing touch to the Temple.
 - The Ark of the Covenant which was in the city of David had to be retrieved by the priest.
 - And the means of retrieval was done as according to the Law of Moses with the long poles for the purposes of being carried.
 - King Solomon has all of the belongings of the previous tabernacle to be brought with the Ark of the Covenant.
 - And as a means of celebration and worship, sacrificing of many sheep and oxen took place that the text says it could not be counted.
 - So imagine the amount of blood spilled and animals slain for this occasion!
 - Verses 6-8 tells us that the priests escorted the Ark into the temple, passed the inner sanctuary and into the Most Holy Place.
 - Apparently, the poles were so long that they could be seen from the Holy place but not from the outside.

- And we are told that within the ark itself was just the two tablets in which Moses put there from Mt. Sinai (Horeb).
 - Thomas Constable makes an important note expressing how although the look of the tabernacle and its internal finishing changed but the ark did not, was quite significant.
- In other words, the symbology here is that perhaps the Lord did not change the ark as a means to express to the people that He Himself does not change.
 - That although environments change and buildings can change and people can change, the word of the Lord remains the same.
 - And isn't that good news that the Lord remains consistent in His character, nature, and Person.
- Lastly, notice what happens in verses 10-11. That when the priests left the Most Holy Place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD!
 - This cloud filled it so much so that the priests could not stand to minister because, "the glory of the LORD filled the house of the Lord".
 - The Lord's (*ka-vod*) glory filled the entire temple!
- This cloud and manifestation was visible for all to see!
 - The Lord has come to take up permanent residence in His House and what would be the means of His presence to remain with them there in His House was their obedience.
- And isn't it amazing to know that because of Jesus' perfect sacrifice and righteousness, that now the Holy Spirit of God permanently indwells us today.
 - Our right fellowship with the Lord grows and deepens as we continue to submit our bodies as a living sacrifice to the Lord for this is our true and proper worship!
 - But most importantly, this ability to live in such a manner is possible because of the enabling work of Christ on the cross.
 - We can, because He did – and let us not forget that!
 - Let's Pray.

- Over the course of several weeks, we have been covering the preparation, transportation, construction, and functionality of the Temple.
 - We have looked back at the significance of the wilderness wandering tabernacle to the now grand and glorious Temple in which Solomon built.
 - We have witnessed the immense detail that was required to build it and the manpower required to complete this task in about 7 years.
 - The house of the Lord would become this great symbol to the world of the power and greatness of Israel's God.
 - From there we read about the finishing touches of the Temple itself. It could not be complete without the presence of the Lord being there.
 - Therefore, the ark of the covenant is transported there for the presence of the Lord to tabernacle in the house of the Lord.
 - This occasion was one of celebration and indeed it was because thousands of animals were sacrificed as a means of worship to the Lord.
 - We now arrive to the point of Kings that will show to be quite theological and insightful.
 - If I were to outline our time tonight, we will see the following things:
 - 1. Solomon addresses the people (vv.12-21)
 - 2. Solomon's prayer of dedication - Part 1 (vv.22-34)
 - If I were to put a tag on tonight's text it would simply be: The Prayer of Dedication.
 - With that being said, I invite you to open a copy of the scriptures and meet me in 1 Kings 8, starting at verse 12-21.

1 Kings 8:12 Then Solomon said, “The Lord has said that He would dwell in the thick cloud.

1 Kings 8:13 “I have surely built You a lofty house, A place for Your dwelling forever.”

1 Kings 8:14 Then the king faced about and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing.

1 Kings 8:15 He said, “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who spoke with His mouth to my father David and has fulfilled it with His hand, saying,

1 Kings 8:16 ‘Since the day that I brought My people Israel from Egypt, I did not choose a city out of all the tribes of Israel in which to build a house that My name might be there, but I chose David to be over My people Israel.’

1 Kings 8:17 “Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a house for the name of the Lord, the God of Israel.

1 Kings 8:18 “But the Lord said to my father David, ‘Because it was in your heart to build a house for My name, you did well that it was in your heart.

1 Kings 8:19 ‘Nevertheless you shall not build the house, but your son who will be born to you, he will build the house for My name.’

1 Kings 8:20 “Now the Lord has fulfilled His word which He spoke; for I have risen in place of my father David and sit on the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised, and have built the house for the name of the Lord, the God of Israel.

1 Kings 8:21 “There I have set a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the Lord, which He made with our fathers when He brought them from the land of Egypt.”

- It is after the ark of the covenant has been placed in the Most Holy Place (Holy of Holies) and the glory of the Lord fills the Temple, that Solomon will make a public address.
 - Solomon, seeing the Lord dwell in a thick cloud, sees for himself that the Lord is pleased to dwell there as he first addresses the Lord.
 - It is worth noting however in verse 13, the phrase “Your dwelling place forever” is better understood to mean “as long as possible”.
 - The reason being is twofold, but in part it is key to recognize that God is omnipresent and is not contained to one place.
 - This is oftentimes the misconception of those who may be unfamiliar with scripture as well.
 - Some believe that they have to go to the church building to seek God or to experience His presence, but that is not the case.
 - And in the same way, this elaborate dwelling place was not a means to fully encapsulate all of who God was and is.
 - This bayit was simply a place that reflected the power and magnificence of the glory of God. A place that could be visibly seen because God can't be seen in His fullness.
 - So after speaking to the Lord in a personal sense, almost in a sense of awe, Solomon then turns to speak to the people regarding this sacred moment.
 - Remember, this ceremonial presentation gathered the entire people of Israel at the king's request, so they too are witnessing this in real time.
 - So as the king turns, he is facing hundreds of thousands of people.
 - If this were happening in today's time, every major news media outlet would be present to broadcast this moment.
 - It's here that Solomon blesses the Lord amongst all the people at the Lord's promising keeping power and work.
 - Notice Solomon's words describing the fulfillment of this Davidic outworking because of the mouth and hands of the Lord.
 - In other words, it is the Lord who has fulfilled this work because of His promise made to David in 2 Samuel 7.
 - This all the more speaks to God's covenantal promises and the fact that we can indeed take Him at His word.
 - Solomon outlines a brief recall of history regarding their ancestors' deliverance out of Egypt and how the Lord was their deliverer.

- He then mentions that the Lord's desire was to dwell amongst the tribes of Israel from the great city of Jerusalem.
- We find specifically in 2 Chronicles 6:5-6 these words. Check out the text:

2 Chronicles 6:5 ‘Since the day that I brought My people from the land of Egypt, I did not choose a city out of all the tribes of Israel in which to build a house that My name might be there, nor did I choose any man for a leader over My people Israel;

2 Chronicles 6:6 but I have chosen Jerusalem that My name might be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.’

- Solomon continues his address by stating his father's desire to build a house for the Lord.
 - However, although well intentioned the building of the Lord's bayit would be, the responsibility would be given to Solomon.
 - You may notice time and again in the address, when Solomon is speaking about the Lord's attributes and the like, the phrase “for My name” is used.
 - This once again speaks to the Lord's prominence and reputation being made known throughout the land.
 - Every time the Israelites or foreign travelers would see the Temple of the Lord it was a powerful reminder of Yahweh's presence and character.
 - Two details that I want to highlight in verses 20 and 21 and that is the phrase, “Now the Lord has fulfilled His word”, and “the covenant of the Lord” in verse 21.
 - Both terms are intricately connected in that they both deal with the covenantal character of God.
 - In other words, when the Lord makes a promise, He always keeps His word.
 - God's word is always tied to His character!
 - The next term is dealing with the word covenant or the covenant of the Lord.
 - The word for covenant in Hebrew is *be-rit*. It means an agreement or contract.
 - And in this case this particular contract was one signed by God in regards to His promises towards the Jewish people.
 - The contract is best known as the Mosaic Covenant which is the means by which Israel maintained their fellowship with God.
 - The Lord's promise to them concerning this contract was that if they obeyed there would be blessing and if they disobeyed there would be punishment.
 - It's in Deuteronomy 30:15-18 that we are able to see the outline of these contractual conditions regarding the Lord's blessing and curses.

Deuteronomy 30:15 “See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity;

[Deuteronomy 30:16](#) in that I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the Lord your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it.

[Deuteronomy 30:17](#) “But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them,

[Deuteronomy 30:18](#) I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You will not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it.

- What's important to take note of is that the prosperity and blessing for the Israelites is directly tied to their living in the land.
 - But most importantly, the Lord remaining with them in the land for it is the Lord who is the divine distributor of their sustained blessing.
 - Understand that the Torah (The Law) itself was not a means of salvation as it relates to what we know of in the New Testament through the death of Christ.
 - The Torah and obedience to it for the Israelites was a means of spiritual life.
 - And now for New Testament believers, life in Christ moves us from spiritual death to Spiritual life.
 - And this is possible because Christ fulfilled the Law to a “t” and was completely obedient to the Father.
 - This is why Paul in his epistles is always stressing the importance of living “in Christ”.
 - Because it is “in Christ” that there is true spiritual life.
 - The Law simply served as a tutor and was pointing to the greater grace that was ahead – Jesus Christ.
 - Therefore, this covenantal promise and the reminder of the ark was a way to have people understand that the God of Israel is a promise-keeping covenantal God.
 - So, as they submitted and obeyed the Law, they would experience the blessings of the Lord accordingly.
 - And what we are going to see throughout all of Chapter 8 is the constant emphasis of the Mosaic Covenant.
 - The language of Solomon and the appearing of the name Yahweh 21 times in this chapter are meant to stress to the reader the importance of the Law.
 - There is no doubt in the writer's mind and there should be no doubt in our minds, that Solomon understood well the Law of Moses.
 - We now move to Solomon's prayer of dedication in which he prays before the people, personally leading them into worship to the Lord.
 - And you'll notice that his prayer is not pawned off to the priest or to the prophets in that day.

- He alone, the King over Israel, the custodial representative, will lead the people into right worship of their God.
- Check out verses 22-27.

1 Kings 8:22 Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven.

1 Kings 8:23 He said, “O Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart,

1 Kings 8:24 who have kept with Your servant, my father David, that which You have promised him; indeed, You have spoken with Your mouth and have fulfilled it with Your hand as it is this day.

1 Kings 8:25 “Now therefore, O Lord, the God of Israel, keep with Your servant David my father that which You have promised him, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons take heed to their way to walk before Me as you have walked.’

1 Kings 8:26 “Now therefore, O God of Israel, let Your word, I pray, be confirmed which You have spoken to Your servant, my father David.

- In verse 22, Solomon stands before the assembly of people before the altar of the Lord and he goes into a posture of prayer and worship.
 - As a quick side note, notice that Solomon is not on his knees in prayer or lying flat on his stomach. This prayer is the longest recorded prayer in the bible.
 - His physical prostration before the Lord is not what the focus is, rather it's Solomon's heart before a Holy God.
 - Our heart before Holy God should be set upon making much of Him, His greatness and grandeur – nothing else.
 - Along with Solomon's public prayer came 9 requests to the Lord.
 - Let's begin with the first which was for God's presence and protection.
- Solomon first begins by acknowledging the very presence, promise, and power of God.
 - He begins in verse 23 with how Holy God stands alone and can not be compared to another.
 - As one theologian states, God is Holy other. There are no pagan gods or idols that can even stand against the Creator God Himself.
 - Notice Solomon's words here. He says, "...there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath."
 - Check out what Solomon's father, David, said regarding his own prayer and abiding trust in the Lord.

Psalm 86:8 There is no one like You among the gods, O Lord, Nor are there any

works like Yours.

Psalm 86:9 All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And they shall glorify Your name.

Psalm 86:10 For You are great and do wondrous deeds; You alone are God.

- Not only does Solomon look back at the stand-alone uniqueness of the God of Israel, but he speaks to the faithfulness of Yahweh.
 - Notice in 23b, he says, “keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness to your servants”
 - That word “lovingkindness” is the Hebrew word *hesed* which means loyal love.
 - The God of Israel is the God who He alone exists in which none can compare, His word is true (promise keeper) and when He speaks His word is so!
 - We will see as we continue through this prayer that Solomon is going to both look back at Yahweh’s faithfulness as well as look forward towards His mercy.
 - Notice that the text mentions that the Lord has “Spoken with His mouth” and “fulfilled it with His hand”.
 - This once again reaffirms the promise-keeping faithfulness of the Lord.
 - Therefore, we know that the Lord is covenantal, a promise-keeper, steadfast, and can be taken at His word.
 - Furthermore, in verse 25 we see that as Solomon looks back on the faithfulness of God and His covenantal promises, that He request the Lord to continue to be faithful.
 - Solomon himself is seeing the Lord working out, yet not fully, the Davidic covenant at this moment.
 - This covenantal promise was provided with a conditional statement that David reminded his son about in 1 Kings 2.
 - That, if your sons take heed to their way to walk before Me as David had walked, that the throne of David wouldn’t lack a man to sit on it.
 - Therefore, Solomon anticipates the same faithfulness of God given to him in his reign as was given to his father, David.
 - And he asks that the Lord confirm this promise. In other words, show this word to be truth as His word is truth.
 - And as we have studied throughout the scriptures, God’s word does not return to Him void. He always fulfills what He says He will do.
 - And this covenant would be no different even if the king and the people fail to uphold their conditional ends.
 - In other words, the Mosaic Covenant is not reliant upon the people to do their part in order for God to be faithful to His word.
 - Their success is blessed by God and their disobedience is rightfully judged by God, therefore God will always uphold His word!

- Check out verses 27-30.

1 Kings 8:27 “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!

1 Kings 8:28 “Yet have regard to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Your servant prays before You today;

1 Kings 8:29 that Your eyes may be open toward this house night and day, toward the place of which You have said, ‘My name shall be there,’ to listen to the prayer which Your servant shall pray toward this place.

1 Kings 8:30 “Listen to the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place; hear in heaven Your dwelling place; hear and forgive.

- Solomon continues on by acknowledging the reality that this permanent building on earth, by no means, was able to “contain” the Living God.
 - The reality was God was not contained just in the Temple, or even in the earth for that matter.
 - God dwelled in heaven yet He has the ability to be omnipresent which is being present everywhere and anywhere at any and all times.
 - This is what David was writing about in Psalm 139 talking about the omnipresence and omniscience of God. Check out Psalm 139:7-10.

Psalm 139:7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?

Psalm 139:8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.

Psalm 139:9 If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,

Psalm 139:10 Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me.

- Yet even with God’s ability to be in any place at any moment in time, verse 28 reveals that the Lord inclines His ear to His children.
 - How good it is to know that the Lord is so far yet so near.
 - So grand yet so intimate with His creation.
 - That the Lord dwells in the highest place yet at the same time draws near to hear the cry and prayers of his people.
 - You don’t get too far in verse 30 without coming to the question of praying towards a particular direction.

- It would seem that Solomon is advocating for the prayers of the people to be directed towards the Temple in order for the Lord to hear.
- However, as we just discussed, God is omnipresent.
- That whether you are facing west, east, north, or south God can hear you – the prayers of His people.
 - This aspect of the text is not prescriptive on the matter of prayer.
 - The Temple of the Lord simply served as a symbol of God's everlasting character and presence.
 - And Solomon was very careful not to equate God's presence as being in the Temple alone and this was made clear in verse 27.
- Solomon now moved to asking the Lord to show mercy upon Israel when the people committed covenant violations when they turned back to Him.
 - The following verses, between this session and the next, are quite prophetic.
 - I say this because with all the shortcomings that Solomon mentions in the prayer, in verse 30b Solomon continues with the phrase, hear and forgive.
- In other words, Solomon understood that with covenant violation came the curses of the Lord as mentioned in Deuteronomy.
 - And with those curses, there would require a turning of the people's hearts from disobedience to obedience.
 - Therefore, mercy would be essential that the people may be restored not only in right fellowship with the Lord, but back to their spiritual life (blessing) in the land.
 - Check out verses 31-34.

1 Kings 8:31 “If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath, and he comes and takes an oath before Your altar in this house,

1 Kings 8:32 then hear in heaven and act and judge Your servants, condemning the wicked by bringing his way on his own head and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness.

1 Kings 8:33 “When Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy, because they have sinned against You, if they turn to You again and confess Your name and pray and make supplication to You in this house,

1 Kings 8:34 then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You gave to their fathers.

- As we walk through the subsequent verses, you will see the pattern of future violations of the people related to the Mosaic covenant.
 - The first one that Solomon mentioned is sinning against one's neighbor.
 - This was a covenant violation in several ways: 1) It was a violation against a fellow countryman (Jew), 2) a violation against God

- Whether it is dealing with a neighbor's property or the like, restitution would be required.
- In the same way, we also know that the Law required according to Leviticus to love our neighbor as ourselves.
- And with that violation, we are failing to truly love God.
 - So we see that Solomon has quite a good handle on understanding Torah as this is communicated through his prayer life.
- I have mentioned before, how important it is that we as believers learn how to pray the scriptures.
 - This becomes essential because the more that we increase our scripture reading and time with the Lord, the more we can increase our prayer life.
 - And the more that we increase our prayer lives, the more that we get into alignment with the will of the Lord for our lives.
- It is often said that our prayer life helps to align our affections and will to that of the Lord's will.
 - We can adjust our temperament and focus on kingdom-minded matters rather than our own personal matters.
 - Because as we discovered, when we seek first the Kingdom of God and all His righteousness, all these things (whatever our needs are) the Lord will provide.
 - Again, our needs not our greeds!
- Therefore, within Solomon's prayer, he understands that no man will be able to keep the law perfectly.
 - He mentions this very reality in verse 46 of Chapter 8, check out the text:

1 Kings 8:46 “When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin) and You are angry with them and deliver them to an enemy, so that they take them away captive to the land of the enemy, far off or near;

1 Kings 8:47 if they take thought in the land where they have been taken captive, and repent and make supplication to You in the land of those who have taken them captive, saying, ‘We have sinned and have committed iniquity, we have acted wickedly’;

1 Kings 8:48 if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who have taken them captive, and pray to You toward their land which You have given to their fathers, the city which You have chosen, and the house which I have built for Your name;

- So, Solomon is speaking to both the righteous judgment of God in accomplishing His justice for Jews who have wronged one another. (Exodus 22:8-11)
 - Solomon then moves to discussing forgiving the Israelites for their sins which ultimately will cause them to lose in battle.

- Remember, when they are in right fellowship with Yahweh, the Lord always provides them victory.
- However, when there is covenant violation, the Lord, by means of divine discipline will give them over to the hands of their enemies.
- Notice the language that Solomon uses in verse 33b and 34. That where there is violation, he asks for mercy.
 - This mercy becomes an extension of the people's recognition of their violation against Holy God.
- That there must first be a turning of the hearts of the people of Israel and confession of their sin before God.
 - The word for "turn" in Hebrew is *sheen-vav-ved* it means to return or turn away from something and come back to a place or condition.
 - It's what we know of in the New Testament as repent.
- In order for there to be a turning from one thing, a recognition that violation has occurred must be made evident.
 - When that violation is made known something must be done and in this case forgiveness must be sought after, and that comes when there is a turning of the heart.
- And notice that as it relates to the Jewish people when violation occurs the result is that they are removed from the land.
 - This all connects to the Abrahamic Covenant.
 - The Abrahamic covenant provides three things: 1) Land 2) Seed, and 3) Blessing.
- We know that the seed is directly tied to that of the Davidic covenant which connects to Messiah, Jesus Christ.
 - The Land deals specifically with the promised land of Israel in which God has given the Jewish people.
- Lastly, is the blessing which is the promise of the New Covenant for the Jewish people.
 - This promise is what Jeremiah talks about in Jeremiah 31:31-34. Check out the text:

Jeremiah 31:31 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

Jeremiah 31:32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord.

Jeremiah 31:33 “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the Lord, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Jeremiah 31:34 “They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his

brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the Lord, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

- This future promise of the law being put upon the Jews' minds and hearts and them knowing the Lord because of an inward ability, through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, was a yet future event for them.
 - This is ultimately the thrust of Peter's message in Acts 2.
 - That in order to understand what had been completed through the person and work of Christ, there first had to be a turning of the heart.
 - The New Testament word for repent in this sense is *metanoeo* which means a change of mind.
 - A change of heart and an abandonment of former dispositions occurs which is the action of New Testament repentance which leads one to knowing Christ.
 - This is why in Acts 2, after Peter's sermon, verse 37 mentions that “they were pierced to the heart”
 - That word “pierced” means wounded in conscience, there was a realization of an egregious violation, and in this case the realization of the death of Christ because of their sin (“whom you crucified”).
 - So when we go back to 1 Kings 8:34 what we see is Solomon asking the Lord to show mercy to the people when that time comes that they may return back to the land.
 - We know that this mercy was extended at a particular time in history.
 - The culminating piece of Israel's history regarding their disobedience led to them being removed from their land in the Babylonian captivity.
 - Therefore, Solomon is given prophetic insight into the prophet's days as it relates to the discipline in which Israel is going to go through.
 - However, even in their discipline and ultimate removal from their land, it would only be for a time.
 - And the reason being is because of one simple thing – God's mercy shown towards them by the reemergence and revival of His word in their hearts.
 - So when we get to books such as Ezra and Nehemiah or even Zechariah and Malachi, it is the prophets trying to get the people back to the heart of God by way of Torah.
 - The words of Solomon would ultimately be necessary for the Jewish exiles in a future day, to plea for repentance in order to return to Jerusalem.
 - And in a similar manner, it will not be until towards the end of the tribulation when national Israel declares Matthew 23, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord”, responding to Jesus Christ as their Messiah, that Christ will return.
 - And in His returning, the fulfilment of their hearts being made new and their return to the Land that they will see the fulfilment of God's promise.
- What a day that will be in which all who have placed their faith in Christ will witness the

culminating power and glory of our promise-keeping God.

- That every nation will be represented in the Kingdom, both Jew and Gentile, all singing praise to the King.
 - And of the celebrations in which will inaugurate the Millennial Kingdom will be the very feast celebrated as in Solomon's day of prayer and dedication – the Feast of Tabernacles.
- There is a future day in which the Lord Jesus Christ, the God-man and King, will dwell with His people here on earth in Jerusalem for a thousand years.
 - And in that yet future day, He will reign gloriously with justice and righteousness.
 - The promise of the Lord will be fulfilled, and His glory made continuously known throughout the earth.
 - Let's Pray.

- In our last session, we discussed the overarching implications of Solomon's dedicatory prayer.
 - This prayer is the longest recorded prayer in the bible and that makes sense being that it is so Torah-rich.
 - Solomon, as we have discovered, is quite aware of Torah and its conditions resulting either in Israel's blessing or failure.
 - Solomon began this prayer by first acknowledging the Holy "otherness" and uniqueness of Yahweh.
 - He makes it known that there is none that can compare to the greatness and grandeur of the God of Israel.
 - We then witnessed, through the start of Solomon's prayer, that the Lord is a covenant-making, promise-keeping, faithful God.
 - God's very character and integrity is tied to His word and because He cannot lie, means that His word is true.
 - We also witnessed that although God is omniscient and omnipresent, He is an intimate Creator. One who desires to dwell and be with His creation.
 - And because this is the case, He requires that His creation both approaches and submits to His ways accordingly.
 - Solomon's entire prayer is filled with Torah and Deuteronomistic underpinnings.
 - The best way to think about this prayer is how a parent deals with their children.
 - If the child listens and obeys their parent's instruction, that child is rewarded for their obedience.
 - However, if that child gets beside themselves, that child will experience consequences by which they have to endure.
 - And by having to be disciplined, that should produce a turning or correction in that child to follow their parent's instructions.
 - Ultimately, the discipline of a parent is not meant to break the child but to firmly correct the child because you love them.
 - In the same way, the Lord tends to Israel and even the New Testament believer, for that matter, in the same way.
 - Scripture tells us very clearly, "God disciplines those in whom He loves..." (Hebrews 12:6)
 - So tonight, we continue in this prayer of dedication at the temple after the Lord has filled the temple in a cloud.
 - If I were to put an outline together of what we will see in the text, it will be the following:
 - 1. The cursings and the turning (vv.35-40)
 - 2. Matters concerning the Foreigners (vv.41-43)
 - 3. Instructions to Israel concerning their Enemies (vv.44-53)

- 4. Solomon Blesses the Lord (vv.54-60)
- 5. The Goodness of the Lord (vv.62-66)
- If I were to put a tag on tonight's text it would be, Prayer of Dedication – Part 2
 - I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 8:35-40 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 8:35 “When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain, because they have sinned against You, and they pray toward this place and confess Your name and turn from their sin when You afflict them,

1 Kings 8:36 then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants and of Your people Israel, indeed, teach them the good way in which they should walk. And send rain on Your land, which You have given Your people for an inheritance.

1 Kings 8:37 “If there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence, if there is blight or mildew, locust or grasshopper, if their enemy besieges them in the land of their cities, whatever plague, whatever sickness there is,

1 Kings 8:38 whatever prayer or supplication is made by any man or by all Your people Israel, each knowing the affliction of his own heart, and spreading his hands toward this house;

1 Kings 8:39 then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive and act and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart You know, for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men,

1 Kings 8:40 that they may fear You all the days that they live in the land which You have given to our fathers.

- Solomon moves into what Deuteronomy classifies as the cursings, meaning that when Israel disobeys, in comes divine discipline.
 - What we find in verses 35-36 is that Solomon has a strong grasp on Torah.
 - He mentions that when the heavens are shut up, meaning there is no rain, that serves as a sign of Israel having sinned.
 - If you recall, Israel being in the land was a blessing from the Lord and with the blessing came prosperity and flourishing in the land.
 - And a part of that flourishing in the land was agricultural enrichment.
 - So, with a lack of rain meant that the people would experience drought and with drought comes what we find in verse 37, famine.
 - This was a consequence of the sins of the people found in Torah. For example, check out what Leviticus 26:18-19 says:

Leviticus 26:18 ‘If also after these things you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

Leviticus 26:19 ‘I will also break down your pride of power; I will also make your sky like iron and your earth like bronze.

- And the idea of the sky being “like iron” and the earth, “like bronze” is metaphorical.
 - It speaks to the shutting up of the heavens and the lack of forthcoming food for the people.
 - The turning event of this result is that the people first turn to the Lord, confess the sin before the Lord, and to turn from their ways.
 - In other words, there must be an acknowledgement of what they have done.
 - Interestingly enough, the only way in which someone can know they are in the wrong is if they have been taught/shown right from wrong.
 - And we find in Isaiah 54:13 that in a future day, in the Millennium Kingdom, that Jesus Christ will in fact “teach the inhabitants”.
 - Check out the text, Isaiah 54:13:

Isaiah 54:13 “All your sons will be taught of the Lord; And the well-being of your sons will be great.

- - Notice the start of verse 13 states that “all your sons”, meaning Israel, will be taught or discipled by Christ, Himself.
 - Furthermore, from their turning from sin, confession, and correction, the Lord stands ready to forgive the people.
 - This turning produces restoration. This cycle of sin is what we find within the narrative of the Judges.
 - We see this similar cycle structure within Deuteronomy Chapters 28-30.
 - It’s the cycle where the people, after having been in the land, fall into apostasy, whether idolatry or lack of obedience to Torah.
 - And from their sin comes Divine punishment which resulted in the people being removed out of the land (scattered).
 - And it’s in the scattering that the prophets are used by God to turn the hearts of the people back to Torah.
 - And once there is a revival or a return to Torah, the people return to the land.
 - So, these blessings and cursing, as Deuteronomy outlines them, become the central section of Torah by which Solomon is referencing.
 - It’s in verses 37 and 38 that we find further results of the sins of Israel.
 - It ranges from famine in the land, pestilence, blight, mildew, the list goes on.
 - And notice, the location where these events occur: they occur in the land.
 - So, we see that the issues of the land are dealing with 1) the Abrahamic Covenant and 2) The Lord takes His word seriously!
 - What should stand out in verse 38 is the fact that turning back to the Lord requires there having been a recognition of wrongdoing.
 - For how can someone seek forgiveness of wrongdoing if they have not been

made intrinsically aware that they have “missed the standard”?

- Therefore, those who are afflicted in this way must be, as Jesus mentions in His Sermon on the Mount, “Poor in Spirit”. (Matthew 5:3)
- The idea of being “poor” here is not dealing with financial lack, but rather those who are not “spiritually arrogant”.
- These are men and women who are ever dependent upon the word of God for all that they need because the word is all they have.
- So, there must be an acknowledgement of one’s motives that then leads them to rest upon the truth of the word of God.
 - And as verse 39 mentions, once there is a turning of our heart, the Lord will forgive and respond accordingly.
 - This is why in Malachi 3:7, the Lord, through Malachi the prophet, tells the people this:

Malachi 3:7 “From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord of hosts. “But you say, ‘How shall we return?’

- In other words, when you obey my word, when you submit to my truth, I will respond according to my word, and return and dwell.
 - What becomes such a beautiful thing as believers in Christ, is that because we are positionally His, our eternal salvation is secure.
 - So, when we sin, we do not lose our position eternally, we simply are out of fellowship with the Lord for a time.
 - It’s like when you and a friend are at odds with one another, it does not remove the friendship, but it fractures the fellowship.
 - So that when forgiveness happens, proper fellowship is restored, and the blessing of the friendship can commence.
 - This is the same for our relationship with the Lord Jesus and is what John expresses about the believer and forgiveness in 1 John 1:9.
 - If you understand the context of this book and who John is talking to, you better understand that he is not talking about salvation, rather he is talking about right-fellowship with the Lord (We, My little children).
 - Check out the text:

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- So this is why in verse 40, the Lord brings up the idea of fearing the Lord again and returning to the land.

- The point being: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom! (Proverbs 9:10).
- But to fully understand that scripture written by Solomon, you must acknowledge the second half of the verse:
 - “And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding”
 - Wisdom unattended or unapplied is simply great information and truth without an instrument to use it! Wisdom requires application!
 - Solomon had all the wisdom in the world, divine understanding was given to him, yet he did not apply it all the time.
 - He was able to write the law and apply the law where needed, but when his life was left unattended or unguarded, he fell into folly.
- Friends, the principle here is that: Our lives can end up in the same way if we do not guard our hearts and minds in Christ!
 - If His word is not the very air we breathe in our decision making and the aim of our affections, we too will fall into folly.
 - And as we see for Israel, their turning from sin will lead them back to the blessings (dwelling in the land and with the Lord).
 - The Lord now moves to dealing with the foreigners or Gentile nations regarding how they deal with His chosen people, Israel.
 - Check out verses 41-43.

1 Kings 8:41 “Also concerning the foreigner who is not of Your people Israel, when he comes from a far country for Your name’s sake

1 Kings 8:42 (for they will hear of Your great name and Your mighty hand, and of Your outstretched arm); when he comes and prays toward this house,

1 Kings 8:43 hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name, to fear You, as do Your people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by Your name.

- Within Solomon’s prayer, Solomon not only focuses on the Israelite people alone, but he seeks for the Lord’s name to be made known to them so that they may come to Him.
 - This once again shows us that Solomon is quite aware of Torah and how the Jewish people were to be a light to the nations.
 - It would be through the Jewish people that the word was to be blessed!
 - This is what we find in Genesis 12:3 which is often lacking in our exegesis in the West.

Genesis 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

- Solomon understood that even Gentile nations could respond positively to the God of Israel and in turn be blessed.
 - That the God of Israel was not only interested in making Himself known to the Jewish people, but to all people.
 - And we see this reality of blessing and desire in the Church-age.
 - Now we have the Holy Spirit personally indwelled in every believing Jew and Gentile who has placed faith in Yeshua!
 - And the reality is this was made possible because of the Lord's providential plan at work through His people to be made known to the world.
 - Solomon now moves his prayer in requesting from the Lord on how to deal with their enemies. Check out verses 44-53:

1 Kings 8:44 “When Your people go out to battle against their enemy, by whatever way You shall send them, and they pray to the Lord toward the city which You have chosen and the house which I have built for Your name,

1 Kings 8:45 then hear in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

1 Kings 8:46 “When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin) and You are angry with them and deliver them to an enemy, so that they take them away captive to the land of the enemy, far off or near;

1 Kings 8:47 if they take thought in the land where they have been taken captive, and repent and make supplication to You in the land of those who have taken them captive, saying, ‘We have sinned and have committed iniquity, we have acted wickedly’;

1 Kings 8:48 if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who have taken them captive, and pray to You toward their land which You have given to their fathers, the city which You have chosen, and the house which I have built for Your name;

1 Kings 8:49 then hear their prayer and their supplication in heaven Your dwelling place, and maintain their cause,

1 Kings 8:50 and forgive Your people who have sinned against You and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You, and make them objects of compassion before those who have taken them captive, that they may have compassion on them

1 Kings 8:51 (for they are Your people and Your inheritance which You have brought forth from Egypt, from the midst of the iron furnace),

1 Kings 8:52 that Your eyes may be open to the supplication of Your servant and to the supplication of Your people Israel, to listen to them whenever they call to You.

1 Kings 8:53 “For You have separated them from all the peoples of the earth as Your inheritance, as You spoke through Moses Your servant, when You brought our fathers forth from Egypt, O Lord God.”

- It's here that Solomon moves towards the Lord upholding Israel in times of battle.
 - What we should ask ourselves at this point is: Why is Solomon praying for aid in battle if they are reigning in times of peace?
 - If the Lord has been with them in battle before, why would He not be in battle with them again?
 - If the people held fast to Torah before and their prayers and dependence upon the Lord before, why would that change?
 - Well, there seems to be something here that Solomon senses prophetically or has prophetic insight about regarding Israel's state of peace.
 - Because when we get to verse 46, Solomon's word choice switches because he doesn't say, "if they sin" he says "when they sin..."
 - Solomon has foresight that Israel will sin against God and notice what he says:
 - "When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin).
 - Here it is, the wisest man in the world made it known that no one on earth is perfect, but that all fall short of the Glory of God.
 - This means that even on your best day, we still fall short, which means our ability to stand before a Holy God can't be on our own merit!
 - This means that for us, to even be made right before God, that God would have to do something so that we could even stand in His presence!
 - But at this point in the story line, Christ had not yet come to be the propitiation of man's sins.
 - The only thing that was required was faith in the word of Yahweh.
 - So, in God's mercy, knowing man's proclivity to sin, He provided a means of grace for the Old Testament saints and even us today to be corrected: Divine discipline.
 - Remember, for the Old Testament saints, that Spiritual life was experienced in the land. That was the blessing!
 - So, when they disobeyed, the discipline of the Lord would be to have them removed from the land and taken captive by their enemies as we have discussed in Deuteronomy, prior.
 - It was in fact Israel's (Judah's) captivity by Babylon, that they remained in foreign land for 70 years.
 - As a matter of fact, Daniel, in Daniel 6 takes a similar posture before the Lord in prayer on behalf of Judah, so that they may return to the Land.
 - The same principle applied as from earlier, when there is a turning of hearts, the Lord would bring them back into the land.
 - And from that turning of hearts, the Lord would make Israel "objects of compassion".
 - This becomes a powerful statement because the same enemy that took them captive, by God's sovereign grace, would be used to show compassion toward Israel.

- The reality is discipline is often a tool used by God to draw men and women back to His word, more specifically, those in whom the Lord loves.
 - We often lose sight of the goodness of the Lord when we are most comfortable.
 - But the moment things get out of control, we are running back to the Lord to speak to us, reveal, and respond – we have all been there.
- And God, in His grace, is so merciful that through discipline, the enemies of the Lord would see Israel's God's hand of love and compassion towards His children.
 - And in turn Israel's enemies would have compassion on the very ones they captured.
- So, Solomon recognizes the uniqueness of Yahweh in that His people hold a special place in His heart – like a father to a child.
 - Therefore, in verses 51-53 you'll notice that Solomon is simply pointing to God's history with Israel and His compassion towards her.
 - It was demonstrated when He released them from captivity in Egypt and it will continue until they call upon the name of the Lord.
 - And we know this will happen at a future time because Jesus makes known in Matthew 23, that He would not return for them until they did something: Check out the text:

Matthew 23:39 “For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’”

- ○ [And we know that it's in the subsequent chapter, Chapter 24, that Jesus speaks to the signs of His return.]
- We now move to verses 54-60 for the benediction of Solomon's prayer and as one commentator notes, Solomon's posture has changed from when he started.
 - That where Solomon began standing with His hands lifted, he is now on his knees submitting his supplications to the Lord.
 - One could imagine Solomon is probably overwhelmed and burdened by what he has been shown regarding this future exile.
 - So, this is a pleading of sorts, petitioning before a Holy God to provide mercy.
- So, Solomon now pivots from his supplications before the Lord to his blessing of the people.
 - Solomon begins his benediction of prayer and blessing of the people with an acknowledgment of the faithfulness of God.
 - What a beautiful reminder for us as church age saints today, that within our prayer lives that we should consistently see the faithfulness of God.
- Solomon points to the reality that the Lord has not failed Israel and that His promises are good.
 - In other words, the Lord is a promise-keeper!

- From there, Solomon speaks a blessing over the people of Israel that first reinforced the steadfast promises and goodness of the Lord.
 - These types of blessings over the people were something that was typical for a king.
- Secondly, the blessing included a future hope that the Lord would turn Israel's hearts back to the Lord.
 - Moses had taught about the necessity of the people keeping the word of the Lord close to their hearts.
 - And from their holding near to His word (Torah) that it would translate to them being effectual doers.
 - So, when James mentions in James 1 about being effectual doers of the word and not simply hearers, he draws this reality straight from Torah.
 - In other words, if the word of God is not applied, you simply are aware of information (revelation) about Him without the needed transformation!
 - Jeremiah, in Chapter 31:31-34, records the very means by which the Lord would put the word of the Lord into the hearts of men.
 - That, by way of the New Covenant, Israel would have the indwelling Holy Spirit that would allow the word to be written on their hearts.
 - And as benefactors of this promise, we as believers have the Holy Spirit indwelt in us too.
- This provides then, the perfect segway into the third aspect of the blessing: That the Lord would uphold His word.
 - That with the Lord upholding His word meant that He was executing judgement.
 - For not only would the righteous judgement of the Lord uphold His very nature and character, but in turn the nations of the world would come to know Him.
 - Israel through their obedience and disobedience become an instrument used of God to make known the Creator of the Universe.
 - And it would be through Israel's obedience to the Law and teaching of the Law that men and women would come to know Him.
 - This is why in our evangelistic efforts of sharing the Gospel that we seek opportunities to share the Gospel with our Jewish neighbors.
 - This is why the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ began with Israel and not the Gentile nations.
 - The Lord had to come to His own house first so that they would then go out to make disciples of all nations.
 - And too often in the western church, we have centered the gospel on western ideals and thought – however the gospel is first for the Jew and then for the Greek (Gentile).
 - Solomon concludes the blessing with a charge of sorts and that is for the people to remain steadfastly devoted to the Lord.
 - To walk in His statutes and ways and to keep His commandments.

- This was the charge not only to the King but also to the people as well.
- For when the King and nation obeyed the nation was blessed.
- And like with any conclusion of a blessing would follow celebration and worship of the Lord. Check out verses 62-66:

1 Kings 8:62 Now the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifice before the Lord.

1 Kings 8:63 Solomon offered for the sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered to the Lord, 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. So the king and all the sons of Israel dedicated the house of the Lord.

1 Kings 8:64 On the same day the king consecrated the middle of the court that was before the house of the Lord, because there he offered the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat of the peace offerings; for the bronze altar that was before the Lord was too small to hold the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat of the peace offerings.

1 Kings 8:65 So Solomon observed the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of Egypt, before the Lord our God, for seven days and seven more days, even fourteen days.

1 Kings 8:66 On the eighth day he sent the people away and they blessed the king. Then they went to their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had shown to David His servant and to Israel His people.

- At the conclusion of the prayer of dedication and benediction, Solomon leads the people into worship and offering to the Lord through sacrifice.
 - As we noted in prior teaching, sacrifice was a way in which to not only atone for sins but to worship the Living God.
 - What is worth noting is the number of animals sacrificed for this particular occasion for dedication.
 - 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep! This dedication of the temple spared no expense because the name of the Lord was to be made known there!
 - The sacrifices placed on the bronze alter located in the inner court. It was a 30 foot by 30 foot structure and was 15 feet high.
 - It was quite a sight to see as it was on an elevated platform and wide enough to host many sacrifices.
 - Immediately following this sacrifice before the Lord as worship was the observation of the feast. This feast was the Feast of Booths or Tabernacle.
 - This feast, which is normally one week, was extended to two weeks due to this special event – well worth celebrating!
 - An interesting piece to see in the text is that the writer provides geographical locations to emphasize the fact that all of Israel participated in this event.
 - He mentions that from the entrance of Hamath which is in Northern Israel near the Euphrates, to the brook of Egypt, which is far south that “all assembled”.

- The best example I could give as to the magnitude of this event of dedication would be similar to the vast gathering of an inauguration of a President.
 - The big difference between the two is that this was the enthronement of the Living God in His temple and all of His people coming to engage in this moment.
- All in all, from Chapters 6-8, we were able to see the establishment, building, and greatness of the Temple of the Lord and what this moment meant for Israel.
 - Not only did this establish Israel as a well-respected and prominent Nation in that day, but it all the more made known the greatness of Israel's God.
 - The true and Living God has revealed Himself to His people time and again and now is able to permanently dwell with them in the land.
 - They are given instructions on how they are to remain in right fellowship with the Lord according to the Law.
 - And they are given instructions on the rightful judgements of their disobedience.
 - This moment serves as a climactic point in the Kings narrative because the people dwelling securely in the land is based upon their obedience to the Lord.
 - The literary build up in this narrative, and Solomon's prophetic insight, reveal that a downfall is on the horizon.
 - Therefore, obedience to the Lord and His word must be held as priority.
 - Consider, what Israel as a Nation has gone through and what they have just witnessed – the Lord moving in their midst having made Himself visibly known.
 - But as we will see in Chapter 11, Israel's prominence and Solomon's greatness will begin to wane as Solomon's heart becomes pulled.
 - What we should gather from this section of the text is that, when our eyes are fixed and our affections are set upon the Lord, we will see the blessing of the Lord.
 - But secondly, we come to understand that there are consequences to our disobedience and in those consequences, there requires a turning.
 - The turning of our hearts is based upon God's merciful illuminating nature.
 - In that where we fall, it is His kindness and love towards us that leads us to repentance.
 - May we grow to be a people that, like David, have our hearts always turned to the Lord.
 - That we seek to ask the Lord to reveal to us anything in us that is not like Him so that we may conform more to the image of Christ.
 - Let's Pray.

- Last week, we finished up the concluding ends of the building of the Temple, the Palace, and the dedication of the Temple.
 - If you have not had an opportunity to listen to Chapters 6-8, I recommend you start there.
 - Because knowing those details will provide a lot more clarity and understanding for the subsequent chapters.
- Chapter 9 becomes an interesting chapter, because as we will see it begins to highlight more subtle shortcomings of Solomon.
 - We have been able to witness the greatness and wisdom of Solomon earlier on in this book.
 - As a matter of fact, we will see within the following chapter, the prominence of Solomon as King over a United Israel.
 - However, amidst the prominence of Solomon lies the subtle shortcomings of Solomon as well.
 - What we should recognize is the writer of Kings, being led by the Spirit, is not choosing to withhold or edit any information out from Solomon's life.
 - He lays before us the all-encompassing truth of Solomon and his life.
 - And what we should be seeing is that although Solomon is David's son and his reign was in peace, that Solomon too had his short comings.
 - Chapter 11 becomes the chapter that tips the scales over and lets the cat out of the bag.
 - Up to this point, Solomon has, for the most part, obeyed Torah and has walked well with the Lord.
 - But as time has progressed and prominence has risen, it seems as if Solomon's confidence becomes more self-reliant with time.
 - Yet at the same time, there is this seemingly keen awareness of His need to depend upon the Lord.
 - And herein lies the tension that the writer provides by the leading of the Holy Spirit.
 - That we too become prone to this wandering (even on our best days), if we do not guard our hearts and minds in Christ.
 - Because, within today's culture, prominence and fortune looks to be a blessing.
 - Yet a heart that is not tethered to the word and dependent upon the Lord is a life bankrupt and devoid of blessing.
 - So, through this chapter, we will have a glimpse into this constant struggle of a balanced life in the Lord.
 - If I were to outline our time throughout the text tonight, we will see the following things:
 - 1. God's Promise and Warning (vv.1-9)
 - 2. Hiram's displeasure in compensation (vv.10-14)
 - 3. Solomon's Forced Laborers (vv.15-28)

- If I were to put a tag on our teaching, it would be: Flaws in Us All
 - With that being said, we begin tonight with verses 1-9 of Chapter 9 where the Lord provides Solomon with both a promise and a warning.

1 Kings 9:1 Now it came about when Solomon had finished building the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all that Solomon desired to do,

1 Kings 9:2 that the Lord appeared to Solomon a second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon.

1 Kings 9:3 The Lord said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your supplication, which you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built by putting My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.

1 Kings 9:4 "As for you, if you will walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you and will keep My statutes and My ordinances,

1 Kings 9:5 then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, just as I promised to your father David, saying, 'You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'

1 Kings 9:6 "But if you or your sons indeed turn away from following Me, and do not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them,

1 Kings 9:7 then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them, and the house which I have consecrated for My name, I will cast out of My sight. So Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

1 Kings 9:8 "And this house will become a heap of ruins; everyone who passes by will be astonished and hiss and say, 'Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this house?'

1 Kings 9:9 "And they will say, 'Because they forsook the Lord their God, who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and adopted other gods and worshiped them and served them, therefore the Lord has brought all this adversity on them.' "

- At this point in the narrative, Solomon has been ruling over Israel for 20 years.
 - The Lord has blessed Solomon's rule and Solomon has proven to be a king well fit and obedient to the Lord so far.
 - God had first communicated His covenantal expectations with Solomon at Gibeon, and now He reiterates it a second time to Solomon.
 - The Lord revealed Himself to Solomon after the dedication prayer and worship.
 - And the Lord is well pleased with what was given and confirms with Solomon His perpetual covenantal commitment to Israel.
 - Along with that commitment came the promise of the Lord dwelling with Israel

forever, contingent upon their obedience.

- So, we are seeing that both the Abrahamic covenant and the Davidic covenant are both at play here.
- One is dealing with the promised seed of David from Genesis 3 and the blessing of the land with the Lord dwelling in it.
- And with that in mind, Yahweh reiterates the very words He shared with Solomon:
 - “Walk well before me as David did, walk with upright integrity according to Torah.”
 - Doing so, the Lord would establish the Davidic throne over Israel forever.
 - And with that, David’s descendants will not lack a man on the throne of Israel.
 - In other words, this promise of the scepter never departing from Judah would remain in effect. (Genesis 49:10)
- And what we discovered about this promise is that although it deals with David’s descendants, it also is not dependent on them following Torah to a “t”.
 - Solomon made of this reality in our last session where he said, “there are none who have not sinned”.
 - Therefore, this covenantal promise is upheld by the Lord using imperfect men to accomplish His perfect plan.
 - And we know this ultimately leads us to Jesus Christ, a son of David, but also the Son of God, who is the Promised Seed.
 - One who is perfect and obeys the Torah to a “T”.
- Remember, the blessings to Israel in the land are contingent upon their obedience to Torah.
 - Therefore, it was of great importance for Solomon to adhere to the instructions as He first did in the beginning of His reign.
- And what a great reminder: That no matter how long you’ve been in the faith, your commitment to trusting and obeying the Lord should grow all the more.
 - It’s after the Lord provides Solomon with the re-affirmed promise that He responds with a warning.
 - Notice in verse 6, that the good news precedes the bad news with the conjunction, “But”.
- The Lord stipulates that if Solomon and his sons do not follow Torah and the ways of the Lord and begin to serve foreign gods, that consequences would follow.
 - 1) They would be removed from the Land
 - 2) The Lord would abandon the Temple
- And the Lord makes this statement recorded in Deuteronomy, Psalm, and Jeremiah regarding Israel becoming a “proverb and a “byword among all people”.
 - The word, “byword” literally means a taunt or an object of ridicule.
 - That when the Gentile nations see them outside of the land and outside of the

protection of Yahweh, Israel would become a spectacle of mockery.

- Verses 8-9 explains further: Because the Lord says that the Temple will become ruin and those who once admired the Nation will now stand in awe due to their vulnerability.
 - And what becomes an interesting foreshadow is that Jesus Himself gives the Jewish people a similar warning in Matthew 23.
 - The very Logos of God (Jesus Christ) made known, in both a verbal and visible manner.
 - Jesus longed for Israel to respond positively to the offer of the Kingdom, and this was directly tied to their obedience to Torah.
 - Check out Matthew 23:37-39:

Matthew 23:37 “**Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.**

Matthew 23:38 “**Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!**

Matthew 23:39 “**For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ”**

- In the 1st century, Israel’s pride in Herod’s temple was prominent, yet their ability to obey the word of God was absent.
 - And this, in a way, reveals something for the church today: The Lord is not interested in our commitment to these buildings and organizations.
 - The Lord is seeking to renew and transform the hearts in which His Holy Spirit dwells – our bodies!
 - When our hearts and affections are set upon the Lord and His word, in turn, we see the blessings of the Lord in other areas of our lives.
 - At the root of it all, God desires to get the maximum glory out of our lives!
 - But when we become so attached to things and the distractions of life, we end up missing the Lord and what He wants to do – dwell with us!
 - So until Israel calls upon the name of the Lord at the end of Daniel’s 70th week, then the Lord will come.
 - So it first begins with them having to be brought low to the point of desperation that they will have eyes to see and ears to understand.
 - What makes this warning worse is that the Lord uses foreign nations as a tool to chastise Israel and recounts their own history to them.
 - It’s almost as if the Lord’s dwelling with Israel was a public demonstration of the people’s obedience and dependence on God.
 - And the lack of their obedience became a sign to the world of the judgement of the Living God on His own people.

- This is why the Lord had Moses record the following in Deuteronomy 29:22-29 as a result of Israel's disobedience. Check out the text:

Deuteronomy 29:22 "Now the generation to come, your sons who rise up after you and the foreigner who comes from a distant land, when they see the plagues of the land and the diseases with which the Lord has afflicted it, will say,
Deuteronomy 29:23 'All its land is brimstone and salt, a burning waste, unsown and unproductive, and no grass grows in it, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the Lord overthrew in His anger and in His wrath.'

Deuteronomy 29:24 "All the nations will say, 'Why has the Lord done thus to this land? Why this great outburst of anger?'

Deuteronomy 29:25 "Then men will say, 'Because they forsook the covenant of the Lord, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.'

Deuteronomy 29:26 'They went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they have not known and whom He had not allotted to them.'

Deuteronomy 29:27 'Therefore, the anger of the Lord burned against that land, to bring upon it every curse which is written in this book;

- So this goes to show how the Nation of Israel was to be a light to the world to show them who the Living God is!
 - So, it's after verses 1-9 that the writer seems to highlight some things that point to a change in the narrative.
 - Up to this point we have witnessed Solomon rule well following the instructions of the Lord.
 - We have seen how the Lord has blessed Israel because of the King's faithfulness to Torah.
 - So, it would seem like the perfect story line up to that point, however we begin to see small deviations in Solomon's decisions.
 - These deviations become more apparent later in the narrative because when you get to Chapter 11 verse 25, the writer makes an interesting statement:

1 Kings 11:25 So he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, along with the evil that Hadad did; and he abhorred Israel and reigned over Aram.

- There will be two prior enemies of Israel whom the Lord will raise up as enemies against Solomon and Israel because of Solomon's future disobedience.
 - So, this confirms my previous statement regarding several missteps that Solomon is taking.
 - And how the narrative is unfolding that the Lord, in His Sovereignty, is setting up

particular players to move Israel to exile.

- So, where Solomon's reign began in peace, it slowly begins to change because Solomon's heart is beginning to turn.
 - This becomes such an important observation for us today: That we must become very aware of the matters of our hearts.
 - Because the moment that we let up or compromise, we begin to give way to other things taking precedence over the Lord.
 - Solomon's compromises began very small, such as marrying Pharaoh's daughter as a political alliance.
 - But soon after that, Solomon began to make other subtle compromises, that although there were no immediate consequences, sin was simply crouching at the door.
 - Sin can be very tricky because the way that it works is the initial action doesn't flat out kill you, but it paralyzes you to the reality of the impending consequence.
 - So as human beings, if we don't get the initial disciplinary action, we deem it permissible.
 - Therefore it gives way even further to sin being invited more and more into our hearts.
 - James, Jesus' half-brother, writes this about how sin roots itself in our lives. Check out James 1:14-16.

James 1:14 **But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.**

James 1:15 **Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.**

James 1:16 **Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.**

James 1:17 **Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.**

- James understood that flirting with sin, even when it appears harmless, is truly harmful.
 - And with all the wisdom that Solomon had from the Lord, Solomon's lack of obedience to what He knew to be true ultimately led to his and Israel's fall.
 - So what we will see in the next few verses will further reveal Solomon's heart and motives. Check out verses 10-14

1 Kings 9:10 **It came about at the end of twenty years in which Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the Lord and the king's house**

1 Kings 9:11 **(Hiram king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress timber and gold according to all his desire), then King Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee.**

1 Kings 9:12 So Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him, and they did not please him.

1 Kings 9:13 He said, "What are these cities which you have given me, my brother?" So they were called the land of Cabul to this day.

1 Kings 9:14 And Hiram sent to the king 120 talents of gold.

- Solomon and King Hiram's trade and goods relationship over the past 20 years or so had been quite beneficial for both parties.
 - Solomon was able to have the Temple and his palace built with the finest of building materials.
 - As we will see in later verses, things were so well that Solomon even established a Naval fleet that further increased the nation's wealth.
 - So as promised, with the work and labor executed by King Hiram, the exchange was proper payment which had been in gold.
 - However, it seems that upon receiving payment for promised inventory and work, King Hiram didn't receive what was promised.
 - As a matter of fact, the payment that Solomon makes to King Hiram would be the equivalent to a check that bounced due to insufficient funds.
 - The writer records that Solomon gave Hiram 20 cities in the land of Galilee.
 - So, like any good businessman, Hiram goes to survey the land that Solomon is giving him.
 - (This is issue number one, we will discuss momentarily)
 - Secondly, the writer tells the reader that the land "did not please Hiram".
 - Now from a logical perspective in todays terms, real estate, for the most part, depending on where it is located is a great asset.
 - It can hold its value and when needed can be a valuable liquid asset.
 - So to some extent, one has to ask the question: Why did King Hiram respond in the manner in which He did.
 - He goes to Solomon and says, "What are these cities in which you have given me, brother?"
 - In other words, what am I supposed to do with this!
 - The question that probably is beginning to come to mind is: "Well what's wrong with the land?"
 - Apparently, the 20 cities in which Solomon gave Hiram were in an area that was not agriculturally productive and favorable.
 - This is why in verse 13b, the region of those cities were called Cabul in that day.
 - Cabul, is a Hebrew word which means, "good for nothing".
 - And to make matters worse, Hiram sent Solomon 120 talents of gold which is the equivalent to approximately \$225 Million dollars (US currency).

- So, Hiram, in few short words, was getting the “bad end of the stick” while Solomon reaped the benefits of the labor.
- I mentioned earlier that Solomon made a huge mistake in selling 20 cities to Hiram and the reason being was due to it being a covenantal violation.
 - Warren Wiersbe mentions in his writing on 1 and 2 Kings that *“All the land belonged to the Lord and could not be deeded away permanently.”*
 - And when you examine Leviticus 25:23, the Lord tells Moses the following regarding the land. Check out the text:

Leviticus 25:23 ‘The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me.

- If Wiersbe is correct in his analysis, then Solomon had no right to sell any land that was given to him to take care of any debt he may have owed.
 - So, within this landscape of the text, we are seeing some geo-political issues potentially arising.
 - This means that Solomon may need to “beef up” his defense system to protect the Nation.
 - However, if Solomon goes that route, he misses the most important part – depending upon the Lord for all that he needs.
 - And what we will see in verses 15-28 is that Solomon is tightening up his own defenses rather than trusting in the Lord. Check out the text.

1 Kings 9:15 Now this is the account of the forced labor which King Solomon levied to build the house of the Lord, his own house, the Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer.

1 Kings 9:16 For Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and captured Gezer and burned it with fire, and killed the Canaanites who lived in the city, and had given it as a dowry to his daughter, Solomon’s wife.

1 Kings 9:17 So Solomon rebuilt Gezer and the lower Beth-horon

1 Kings 9:18 and Baalath and Tamar in the wilderness, in the land of Judah,

1 Kings 9:19 and all the storage cities which Solomon had, even the cities for his chariots and the cities for his horsemen, and all that it pleased Solomon to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land under his rule.

1 Kings 9:20 As for all the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, who were not of the sons of Israel,

1 Kings 9:21 their descendants who were left after them in the land whom the sons of Israel were unable to destroy utterly, from them Solomon levied forced laborers, even to this day.

1 Kings 9:22 But Solomon did not make slaves of the sons of Israel; for they were men of war, his servants, his princes, his captains, his chariot commanders, and

his horsemen.

1 Kings 9:23 These were the chief officers who were over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, who ruled over the people doing the work.

1 Kings 9:24 As soon as Pharaoh's daughter came up from the city of David to her house which Solomon had built for her, then he built the Millo.

1 Kings 9:25 Now three times in a year Solomon offered burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar which he built to the Lord, burning incense with them on the altar which was before the Lord. So he finished the house.

1 Kings 9:26 King Solomon also built a fleet of ships in Ezion-geber, which is near Eloth on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.

1 Kings 9:27 And Hiram sent his servants with the fleet, sailors who knew the sea, along with the servants of Solomon.

1 Kings 9:28 They went to Ophir and took four hundred and twenty talents of gold from there, and brought it to King Solomon.

- Notice now, that the writer moves from the King Hiram issue to taking account of Solomon's summary of forced laborers.
 - These men were a part of building projects that spanned most of Israel and included some significant buildings such as the Temple and Solomon's Palace.
 - And what we come to find is that the forced laborers consisted of foreigners.
 - One question that people tend to bring up is the issue of slavery in texts like this.
 - However, it's important to note that slavery during that time period was a result of being captured during war.
 - But in the case of those who were captured by Israel because of their failure to drive them out, Solomon used these men to accomplish heavy labor.
 - These laborers were also used to button up walls used to protect cities within Israel.
 - Of those cities were Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer, Beth-horon, Baalath, and Tamar.
 - These building projects centered around the need to protect certain valuables and assets of the King.
 - These projects were considered "storage cities" or utilized for the storing of his horses for war.
 - Now when you consider these building projects during a time that was supposed to be peaceful, it begs the question: Why is Solomon doing this?
 - Perhaps it speaks to the same reason that David took a Census in 2 Samuel towards the end.
 - Because Solomon sees the riches and possessions, all of this begins to go to his head.
 - Oh may we be ever so careful to guard our hearts and minds in Christ and not what this world has to offer.

- Perhaps this is why Solomon comes to the conclusion that all is vanity.
- Joseph Free in his book Archeology and Bible History says this regarding excavation in Megiddo:

“The excavation of Megiddo by the University of Chicago has revealed a section of extensive stone stables from the level of Solomon’s time. This particular stable has been estimated to have been capable of housing from three to five hundred horses and illustrates in part the type of stable referred to in the Bible.”

- Ultimately, these were large, fortified cities that Solomon sought to fortify in his own strength rather than depending upon the Lord.
 - And so, to expedite these preparations, Solomon has the foreign capturers as forced laborers and the sons of Israel as overseers.
 - Next, in verse 24 the writer provides a brief explanation of Solomon’s built structure for his Egyptian wife, as previously mentioned in 1 Kings.
 - However, what the writer is suggesting is that the marriage to this foreign wife was also a covenant violation against God.
 - So, these things are mounting up regarding Solomon’s covenant violations and the impending judgement that God will have against Israel.
- Finally, it’s in verses 25-28 that the writer seems to round out the text because Solomon is shown, once again, as remaining faithfully committed to the Lord.
 - This becomes expressed by the three feasts that Solomon officiates:
 - These three festivals that the writer referred to are more than likely the three required feasts: 1) Unleavened bread 2) Pentecost, 3) Tabernacles
 - These responsibilities were to be rightfully upheld by the King as the custodial representative of God’s people.
 - Immediately following verses 25, verses 26-28 mentions Solomon’s naval fleet which further points to his wealth and width of influence.
 - And perhaps this also speaks to Solomon’s sense of growing his wealth, something the Lord forbade the king to do in Torah. (Deuteronomy 17:17)
 - So the fortifying of storehouses and upkeep of these fortresses along with a naval fleet, suggests a divergence from faithful reliance upon the Lord.
 - This sense of, “returning to Egypt” was beginning to happen.
 - Lastly, it seems as if the relationship between King Hiram and Solomon are still intact, and Solomon continued to benefit.
 - We are seeing the growing wealth and prominence of Solomon as king and at the same time witnessing the increasing changes of Solomon’s heart.
 - And what a lesson this teaches us to be mindful of, even today – how our reliance upon the Lord can wane when things take priority over the Lord’s prominence in our lives.

- This is why the book of Deuteronomy becomes such an important book of study in conjunction with 1 and 2 Kings.
- Because this “Royal Handbook” becomes the blueprint by which either brings blessing to Israel or cursing for them.
- And in a similar way we can see biblical principles by which to apply to our own lives as Christians.
- One, we must be constantly reminded of the truth of the word of God and not pulled away from the anchor of our very lives.
 - This is what Paul meant when he said in Philippians 3:1 that, “to write the same things again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.”
 - In other words, to grow in Christ and guard yourself from sin, you must constantly be reminded of the truth.
- In music, we know this as “muscle memory” where because we have practiced time and again, we can close our eyes and our fingers know exactly what to do.
 - And even if you haven’t picked up the instrument in years, and may be a bit rusty, your muscles immediately recall their placement.
 - In the same way, when we are daily abiding in Christ and applying His word, we guard ourselves for the things to come.
- Two, we must be aware of the dangers around us and our sin nature, within us.
 - There must be a constant inward check on where we are. This sense of awareness is able to be checked by way of the Holy Spirit.
 - King David assessed himself in this manner in Psalm 139:23-24. Check out the text:

[Psalm 139:23](#) Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts;

[Psalm 139:24](#) And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.

- David is constantly aware that the Lord is ever-present and when he, himself is unaware of his wrongdoing but is made aware, he immediately responds in repentance.
 - Unfortunately, for some Christians, they have become comfortable in thinking that they’re insulated from discipline or judgement.
 - We should have the heart and posture of, “Lord, like an MRI machine, search me, correct me, convict me, and make known what needs to change.”
 - May we never get so comfortable in our sin that we become content in that condition because this breeds dis-fellowship from the Lord.
 - Thirdly, we should see how being “in Christ” changes the very way in which the Church-Age believer is able to approach God and grow in Christ.
 - Meaning, our ability to keep the Law is no longer the way in which makes us

“right with God”.

- Rather, through the work of Christ on the cross, it is His deeds, His goodness, and His righteousness that makes us right before the Father.
- Therefore, there is no work needed to be done! That because of Jesus’ finished work, we can now walk in Him.
- This walk now becomes grace-driven and grace-sustained, meaning we now walk in Him in a manner worthy because of what He has done!
 - He has, by His Spirit, given us eyes to now see and ears to now understand.
 - And because we have that illumination, we are enabled to obey and therefore should obey knowing what has been richly done on the cross.
- May we not think ourselves or trust in ourselves to be so wise that we become fools.
 - We are quick to memorize Proverbs 3:5-6, but verse 7 becomes the why behind the need to do verses 5-6.
 - Check out Proverbs 3:5-7:

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding.

Proverbs 3:6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and turn away from evil.

- ○ Let’s Pray.

Citation:

- Wiersbe, p. 435
- Joseph P. Free, Archaeology and Bible History, p. 169
- D. J. Reimer, “Concerning Return to Egypt: Deuteronomy 17:16 and 28:68 Reconsidered,” in Studies in the Pentateuch, ed. J. A. Emerton, VTSup 41 (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 217–29. There is evidence that the domesticated horse was known in Middle Kingdom Egypt, but its use, especially with the chariot, proliferated in the so-called Hyksos era (ca. 1730–1580 b.c.). See J. Van Seters, The Hyksos (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 183–85.

- In our last session we were able to look past the veil of Solomon's glory and wisdom to witness the common struggle of humanity.
 - And what we discovered was, when we fail to entrust ourselves to the word of God and compromise, we give way to sin.
 - And this has become, slowly but surely, the reality of King Solomon.
 - That where he was to be faithful to Torah, his sin nature has continued to rule him in certain aspects of his growth as king.
 - Tonight, we will find a common thread in the narrative as Solomon's wisdom and glory continues to spread throughout the ancient world.
 - As we continue through our study of the kings, I pray that we are able to see ourselves in the text.
 - That these stories are much more than actual history, but most specifically, the word is a mirror to our lives.
 - And as we examine these biblical characters, it is my prayer that we will submit ourselves daily to the control of the Spirit.
 - If I were to put an outline together for what we will cover, it would be the following:
 - 1. Queen of Sheba and the Wisdom of Solomon (vv.1-13)
 - 2. The Wealth of Solomon (vv.14-29)
 - And if I were to put a tag on tonight's text, it would simply be: Reward, Riddle, and Ruin.
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 10 starting at verses 1-5 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 10:1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with difficult questions.

1 Kings 10:2 So she came to Jerusalem with a very large retinue, with camels carrying spices and very much gold and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart.

1 Kings 10:3 Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from the king which he did not explain to her.

1 Kings 10:4 When the queen of Sheba perceived all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built,

1 Kings 10:5 the food of his table, the seating of his servants, the attendance of his waiters and their attire, his cupbearers, and his stairway by which he went up to the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her.

- As mentioned before, the transition to this chapter although it may seem disconnected has a very similar theme.
 - And that theme that is connected from last week speaks to the greatness and glorious rule of Solomon.

- Not only was Solomon's rule made great within Israel, but he garnered much attention from surrounding nations.
- And in this case, there is a queen from a region named Sheba who comes to inquire about Israel's king.
- But before we delve in too quickly, let's begin with some historical-geographical information regarding Sheba.
 - Sheba was located about 1,200 miles southeast of Jerusalem in what is known as modern day Yemen.
- The text mentions that Sheba comes to "test" Solomon with "difficult questions". And she does this as a means to see if what she has been hearing about Solomon is really true.
 - Her testing however was much more than merely putting his wisdom to the test.
 - Even more than that, we will see that there is intention behind her questions.
 - Sheba was known for their spices and incense which had become quite prominent in the spice market.
 - And as we will see, these gifts will become a part of a treaty deal later on.
 - Remember, at this point in Israel's history they were well known and dominating in wealth, wisdom, and power.
- As we read prior, along with the queen's inquiry regarding Solomon's wisdom and wealth, came a series of questions, almost in a rolodex type fashion.
 - The text mentions that she spoke to him about all that was in her heart.
 - And what we find from her question goes back to the point we made earlier which speaks to the typical ancient near east practice of "testing with questions".
 - This was something that rulers did with other neighboring nations both near and far as a way to discern intent and potential relationship.
 - We see a quick example of the exchange of riddles with Samson in Judges 14:12, and the thirty companions at his wedding feast.
 - The word for "riddle" in Judges 14:12 and "difficult question" in 1 Kings 10 is the same Hebrew word.
 - The range of these questions could be from difficult diplomatic questions to matters of ethics or even deep spiritual insights.
 - Again, all used to discern and even test the rumored wisdom of Solomon.
 - And what we see is that in all the questions that the Queen of Sheba asks, Solomon is not moved but rather responds to every inquiry.
 - In fact, the Queen is so taken back by the width and the depth of Solomon's wisdom that the text mentions, "there was no more spirit in her."
 - In other words, she was so overwhelmed by Solomon's ability to answer her exhaustive list of questions that she was out of breath.
 - This reality now moves her to her conclusion. Check out verses 6-9.

1 Kings 10:6 Then she said to the king, “It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom.

1 Kings 10:7 “Nevertheless I did not believe the reports, until I came and my eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. You exceed in wisdom and prosperity the report which I heard.

1 Kings 10:8 “How blessed are your men, how blessed are these your servants who stand before you continually and hear your wisdom.

1 Kings 10:9 “Blessed be the Lord your God who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness.”

- After catching her breath, the Queen of Sheba confesses that the report she read about his wisdom in Sheba was indeed true.
 - It is amazing to consider the fact that the works, organization, and wisdom of Solomon was known almost 1,500 miles away.
 - Apparently, the queen was so skeptical that she wanted to wait to see this truth for herself with her own eyes and ears.
 - What a powerful moment that must have been for a pagan queen to rise from her seat of power to inquire about a king who serves the Living God!
 - This is not to say that the queen became a follower of Yahweh, but it is safe to say that she acknowledged the very presence and power of Yahweh evident in His king.
 - What becomes an interesting detail in the text is the phrase, “until I came and my eyes had seen it”,
 - This statement should remind us of another character in the New Testament – doubting Thomas.
 - He had heard the reports of Jesus being raised from the dead and that he had returned to the disciples for a brief time, yet he refused to believe.
 - It wasn’t until Thomas, for himself, laid eyes on Jesus and placed his own hands in his wounds. Check out John 20:25-29.

John 20:25 So the other disciples were saying to him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

John 20:26 After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, “Peace be with you.”

John 20:27 Then He said to Thomas, “Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

John 20:28 Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”

John 20:29 Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.”

- Truth, at the end of the day will either be believed or rejected.
 - And the reality is sometimes truth can be staring you right in the face having made itself known but because of closed hearts, it is rejected.
 - Unfortunately for many people, they need “additional proof” or a sign that truth is truth.
 - This was the case for the religious leaders in Jesus’ day which is why in Matthew 12:43, Jesus made the following statement:
 - I will include verses 38 to 43 to establish context.

Matthew 12:38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.”

Matthew 12:39 But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet;

Matthew 12:40 for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Matthew 12:41 “The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

Matthew 12:42 “The Queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

- Ultimately, what this speaks to is how even when truth is presented in front of you – and truth has a name (Jesus Christ), that unbelieving people will still demand yet another dynamic sign of proof.
 - And Jesus’ point here in Matthew 12 is that you are my own people, and you know Torah and its signs pointing to Messiah.
 - Yet you ignore the very truth in front of you for the sake of being right.
 - Friends, wisdom can either be extremely beneficial or very costly.
 - Here is a pagan queen (non-Israelite) coming from a godless country to a country established by God and sees the powerful demonstration of God’s hand.
 - Yet those who claim to know God cannot even see for themselves that the God-man has come to bring the Kingdom to them!

- Well, with seeing the wisdom and grandeur of Israel's King, firmly established by Yahweh, the queen of Sheba blesses the name of the Lord.
 - And here becomes just one way in which the Lord is working out His word: By having Israel accomplish their purpose in bringing the Gentiles to Yahweh.
 - She first acknowledges how blessed the servants of Solomon and the people of Israel are for having such a wise king.
- She then moves to bless the Lord and calls Him Yahweh. She acknowledges the attributes of God.
 - His steady love, his justice, his righteousness, but most importantly His delight in His chosen people.
 - Here is food for thought: Is the unbelieving world able to see the God of Israel's hands upon you in a way that they praise Him?
 - Do the actions and attitudes of your heart burst forth as a demonstrative example of your worship and love for the Lord?
- The queen of Sheba is able to acknowledge the very character and attributes of Yahweh through the righteous and just actions of His King.
 - And that, friends, is the role in which the King served as a custodial representative of their God and in this case the Living God.
 - From there, the queen of Sheba is pleased with what she sees and continues in her desire to enter into a trade agreement with Israel.
 - Check out verses 10-13.

1 Kings 10:10 She gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and a very great amount of spices and precious stones. Never again did such abundance of spices come in as that which the queen of Sheba gave King Solomon.

1 Kings 10:11 Also the ships of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir a very great number of almug trees and precious stones.

1 Kings 10:12 The king made of the almug trees supports for the house of the Lord and for the king's house, also lyres and harps for the singers; such almug trees have not come in again nor have they been seen to this day.

1 Kings 10:13 King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire which she requested, besides what he gave her according to his royal bounty. Then she turned and went to her own land together with her servants.

- At this point in the narrative, things begin to sound a bit familiar to Solomon's agreement and trade with King Hiram.
 - We find here that an agreement is made, and currency is exchanged and what becomes clear is that the queen of Sheba has some wealth of her own.
 - The text mentions she gave the king 120 talents of gold along with a great number of spices and precious stones.
 - To estimate that amount of wealth today, 120 talents of gold is about 9,000

pounds which is equivalent to approximately \$118,759,680 US dollars.

- Needless to say, Israel's treasury and economy had a great supply of wealth.
- And apparently, the queen of Sheba's inventory of spices was so great that Israel had never again seen an import of that magnitude.
 - Perhaps, this may be a reason why the writer of kings includes verses 11-12.
 - The point being that Israel had no lack of supply or trade agreements including that of King Hiram of Tyre.
- At the conclusion of her trip and trade agreement, King Solomon gives to the queen all that she desired and requested.
 - This trip, as one could imagine, would be an encounter she would forever remember.
- From this point, notice that the theme of the chapter is going to shift a bit.
 - It began with a pagan queen hearing of the wisdom and greatness of Israel's king.
 - And now it moves to the wealth and wisdom of the king.
- So, although the second half of this chapter is not dealing with any character interactions, we will see how the wisdom of the Lord aids in further expansion of the king's wealth.
 - Yet at the same time, we will also see how the pursuit of this wealth becomes another problem the writer brings forth.
 - Check out verses 14-29.

[1 Kings 10:14](#) Now the weight of gold which came in to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold,

[1 Kings 10:15](#) besides that from the traders and the wares of the merchants and all the kings of the Arabs and the governors of the country.

[1 Kings 10:16](#) King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold, using 600 shekels of gold on each large shield.

[1 Kings 10:17](#) He made 300 shields of beaten gold, using three minas of gold on each shield, and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

[1 Kings 10:18](#) Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with refined gold.

[1 Kings 10:19](#) There were six steps to the throne and a round top to the throne at its rear, and arms on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the arms.

[1 Kings 10:20](#) Twelve lions were standing there on the six steps on the one side and on the other; nothing like it was made for any other kingdom.

[1 Kings 10:21](#) All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None was of silver; it was not considered valuable in the days of Solomon.

[1 Kings 10:22](#) For the king had at sea the ships of Tarshish with the ships of Hiram;

once every three years the ships of Tarshish came bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks.

1 Kings 10:23 So King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom.

1 Kings 10:24 All the earth was seeking the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart.

1 Kings 10:25 They brought every man his gift, articles of silver and gold, garments, weapons, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year.

1 Kings 10:26 Now Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; and he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.

1 Kings 10:27 The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the lowland.

1 Kings 10:28 Also Solomon's import of horses was from Egypt and Kue, and the king's merchants procured them from Kue for a price.

1 Kings 10:29 A chariot was imported from Egypt for 600 shekels of silver, and a horse for 150; and by the same means they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of the Arameans.

- As mentioned before, the following verses that we will examine are simply a summary of the great wealth that Solomon attained.
 - We are told in verses 14-15 that the amount of gold received on an annual basis was 666 talents of gold which is about 25 tons or 50,000 pounds.
 - Friends, this conversion to US dollars today is easily over 1 billion dollars.
 - On top of that this total does not include what was brought in by traders and merchants from their designated taxes.
 - What I find interesting in observation is the number of talents in gold, 666.
 - As we know, the number 6 biblically is reflective of man and our human weakness most importantly the manifestation of sin.
 - I mention this because we are told throughout the narrative that the Lord would make Solomon rich.
 - So, in one sense, money is not the issue nor is being rich a problem.
 - We understand that money is a tool by which things are able to get done.
 - *However, what begins to distort the purposes of the use and attainment of money are the matters of the heart.*
 - And what begins to emerge, in a way, is Solomon's desire to increase his wealth and fortune.
 - What we see in verses 14-17 is that Solomon is accumulating these riches as ornaments of security and independence.
 - In other words, like David with the census, what God has allowed him to attain

is beginning to get to his head.

- And that becomes a biblical principle within this narrative as it relates to sin.
- Sin starts off in a very small way and is oftentimes masked by subtle pleasantries and at times false humility.
- And if not addressed and submitted to the Lord, it can begin to fester in the heart and spread like gangrene.
- What we have talked about, regarding Torah, is that the Lord forbade his kings to multiply their wealth.
 - Check out quickly, Deuteronomy 17:17.

Deut. 17:17 “He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself.

- Some commentators make it seem as if Solomon's fall as king happened abruptly, however, I believe the writer has dropped subtle hints of violation throughout the narrative.
 - From Solomon marrying Pharaoh's daughter to even the multiplying of the wealth of the kingdom.
 - These become the small subtle instances by which sin begins to grow and grow.
 - In verses 16 and 17 we see that Solomon uses some of this gold as a means to create shields.
 - However, gold is a soft metal so its use on a shield made no sense. It was an ego gesture!
 - And if that wasn't enough, he then put the shields on display in the house of the forest of Lebanon (display hall).
 - The use of gold continues as the king uses it as an overlay on his throne.
 - His throne was on an elevated platform and was nestled between two lions at his arms.
 - As the stairs ascended to the throne overlaid in gold, they were accompanied by 12 lions, 2 lions on each step leading to the king.
 - Perhaps the 12 lions were representative of the twelve tribes of Israel.
 - Clearly, there was nothing lacking for the king. He had everything at his fingertips and a treasury in the excess of over 1 billion dollars.
 - And if that wasn't enough, ships from Tarshish came bringing gold, silver, and other minerals.
 - Solomon stood in a class all by himself and all desired to be near him and associated with him and to hear the wisdom in which the Lord had given him.
 - What becomes so profound beyond his great wealth is the wisdom writings.
 - It is as if, towards the end of his life that he realized everything he had chased

was for nought.

- Solomon comes to the conclusion that even in all his wealth , pursuit of pleasure and striving, it was all vanity! (Ecclesiastes 2:9-11)

Eccl. 2:9 Then I became great and increased more than all who preceded me in Jerusalem. My wisdom also stood by me.

Eccl. 2:10 All that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor.

Eccl. 2:11 Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun.

- This begins to beg the question: If Solomon was considered the wisest king of all kings, yet Solomon experienced some short comings, who would be Israel's ultimate King?
 - The reality was, the Lord desired a king for Himself who would follow Torah to a “t” and would not be corrupted by sin.
 - Yet, at the same time, the Lord made a covenant with David that his descendant (a son of David) would be the one to rule forever.
 - So when you get to passages like Psalm 89:27, what does the writer mean when he speaks of “the highest of the kings of the earth”?
 - Friends, the writer is alluding to something that speaks to a “greater Solomon”.
 - It is often mentioned that the writer of the Psalm wrote it on behalf of either David or Solomon during a time of great trouble.
 - Here is what Psalm 89:27 says:

Psalm 89:27 “I also shall make him My firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth.

- This psalm speaks of a future fulfilment by which David's descendant, in whom will be the highest of the kings of the earth, will reign and rule.
 - The Messianic Psalm points to Jesus Christ, who at His Second Coming, will rule as the greater Solomon, something He alluded to in Matthew's gospel, but the people missed it.
- There will come a future day where all the earth will come to both see and know of the greater Solomon, Jesus Christ.
 - The difference between the former Solomon and the greater Solomon, Jesus Christ, is that the spoils of life, ultimately sin, has no hold on Him.
 - This is what makes Jesus' reign in the Millennial Kingdom so great because He, being both just and the justifier, will uphold the government in peace.

- His righteousness will reign throughout the world and His power and rule will be known by all, both near and far.
- Isaiah 9:6-7 tells us this:

Isaiah 9:6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

- In the meantime, I want to briefly go back to the point made earlier regarding these subtle hints of Solomon's growing upholding of the Law.
 - Notice verses 26-29. The text mentions that Solomon has now begun to gather for himself chariots and horsemen in great number.
 - And Solomon gathered these horses and recruitment of horsemen from around the surrounding nations.
 - He received imported horses from Egypt and Kue (*Q-e*) which was a kingdom northeast of the Mediterranean. It is what's considered today as modern Turkey.
 - Now as you consider the gathering of horses and warrior men, what comes to mind? Battle, war, and the like.
 - This begs the question: What could Solomon potentially be preparing for?
 - The Lord had promised peace in his reign, so where does the need to gather these weapons and men for war come from?
 - Herein lies yet another indicator of the temptations of the things of this world.
- When we consider wealth or the attainment of wealth in this life, what automatically comes along with it? The need to protect your assets.
 - If your possessions are not properly protected, it leaves one vulnerable and susceptible to attacks from those around.
 - The reality is, the attainment of wealth that Solomon had gained began with the Lord providing for Him by way of His grace.
 - But somewhere along the way, like David, Solomon began to think that he had something to do with the growth of Israel's wealth.
 - Here we see the sinful nature of man in full display.
 - Ultimately, Solomon disobeyed yet another command of the Lord. This one we find in Deuteronomy 17:16. Check out the text:

Deut. 17:16 "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the Lord has said to you,

'You shall never again return that way.'

- God told Israel and their king to not multiply their horses which was in turn the military might of forces in that day.
 - God's immense blessing upon His people was for them to see that He was their refuge and strength.
 - That He was the one who provided for their every need.
 - But before we catch spiritual amnesia, lest we forget that we too are prone to the same fall.
 - As believers, we get so comfortable in our walk with the Lord or our commitment to missions and ministries that we don't feel the need to personally submit ourselves to the Lord.
 - We become so spiritually savvy in our positions and titles or knowledge of God that we feel entitled to certain things and privileges.
 - Therefore, we end up exempting ourselves from the very standards of the word of the Lord.
 - Our dependency upon the Lord must always be primary, because the moment that the word of the Lord is not priority, we leave room for our sin nature to lead us astray.
 - And in this life, wealth is one of the many ways in which our flesh can get the best of us, because wealth in this life provides many things.
 - However, wealth cannot provide eternal security.
 - Wealth cannot provide peace which surpasses understanding.
 - Wealth cannot provide comfort that is eternal.
 - Wealth cannot bring about joy unexplainable.
 - Wealth cannot bring hope where there seems to be hopelessness.
 - Wealth cannot bring contentment and satisfaction.
 - Wealth cannot lead one into divine wisdom that leads to spiritual life.
 - Solomon, towards the end of his life came to that realization that all is vanity.
 - That you can have the entire world, the fame, the notoriety, the fortune, the likes on social media, etc.
 - But what can't be bought is eternal life.
 - This type of life can only come about when one has come into full contact with Divine truth and wrestles with the truth itself.
 - This is why the queen of Sheba came to inquire from over 1,200 miles away. Is this King Solomon all that he purports to be?
 - To which, in her seeking and inquiring, came to the realization that he is who she has heard him to be.
 - So how much more, through one earnestly seeking the Lord and who is far from the

Lord, will come to be drawn by the Lord to know How great He is!

- This reality is made known through Jesus Christ who is full of grace and truth.
- Only through Christ, who fulfilled the Law, can one be made righteous and move from death to life.
- And in Christ, it is there that we find the fulness of wisdom, power, might, and strength.
- Let's Pray.

- In our last session we covered the entirety of Chapter 10 which served as an extension of the subtle compromises of Solomon's heart.
 - It began with the great inquiry of the Queen of Sheba who has heard of the great things that Solomon has achieved by Yahweh's kindness.
 - Solomon's achievements weren't because of His own doing, rather because of God's promises according to His word.
 - That where there was covenant faithfulness, there would commence covenantal blessing according to Torah.
 - However, in verses 14 onward, we began to see in very obscure ways that Solomon's attainments went to his head.
 - He forgets that the increase of his wealth was not due to his own charismatic abilities or breadth of wisdom.
 - Rather, these skills and opportunities were made possible by the giver of all good gifts from above, God Himself.
 - Therefore, the results were not a result of Solomon's goodness, but rather God's goodness.
 - And what we were able to see here was a biblical principle which is that, God, who is the Creator is the giver of all good gifts and things.
 - And the same applies for believers today, we are not saved because of something we have done, but solely on the merit of Christ alone.
 - Merit does not save us and merit does not keep us – only the grace of God alone through Christ accomplishes that.
 - Therefore, we must be careful not to get beside ourselves in our walk with the Lord, because the moment that we think we have done anything, we boast in the wrong thing!
- Tonight, is the pivotal chapter for 1 Kings. Here is where we see the decline of Solomon's reign due to the compromise of His heart.
 - And that change occurs not just in a moment, but has slowly been occurring over time.
 - If I were to outline our time tonight, we will see the following:
 - 1. Looking for love in all the wrong places (vv.1-6)
 - 2. A Change of heart (vv.7-12)
 - 3. A Promise held (v.13)
 - 4. God's instruments of discipline – Hadad (vv.14-20)
 - 5. God's instruments of discipline – Rezon (vv.23-25)
 - 6. God's instruments of discipline – Jeroboam (vv.26-39)
 - 7. The death of Solomon and the rise of Rehoboam – (vv.40-43)
 - If I were to put a tag on our text tonight it would simply be: Looking for Love in All The Wrong Places.

- With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 11 beginning with verses 1-6 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 11:1 Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women,

1 Kings 11:2 from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the sons of Israel, “You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods.” Solomon held fast to these in love.

1 Kings 11:3 He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away.

1 Kings 11:4 For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been.

1 Kings 11:5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites.

1 Kings 11:6 Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not follow the Lord fully, as David his father had done.

- Although the ending of Chapter 10 into Chapter 11 may seem a bit detached regarding relative details, they connect in a broader sense.
 - It was at the end of Chapter 10 that small hints of Solomon's departure from the law increased all the more.
 - And we find that these small departures from the law give way to the failure of Solomon leading to the eventual division of the Kingdom.
 - Verses 1 and 2 begin with Solomon's flagrant disregard for the Law as it relates to the folly of his eyes.
 - Solomon found himself looking for love in all the wrong places.
 - And this was to be avoided according to the law, according to 2 areas in Deuteronomy: Deuteronomy 7:3-4 and Deuteronomy 23:3-4.
 - Check out the text:

Deuteronomy 7:3 “Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons.

Deuteronomy 7:4 “For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you.

- And as it relates to nations in which Israel and their king should not associate, we

find Solomon's violation in Deuteronomy 23:3-4.

Deuteronomy 23:3 "No Ammonite or Moabite shall enter the assembly of the Lord; none of their descendants, even to the tenth generation, shall ever enter the assembly of the Lord,

Deuteronomy 23:4 because they did not meet you with food and water on the way when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you.

- The reason for Israel and their king to avoid these pagan relationships was because it would result in a “turning of the hearts”.
 - The idea here is that Israel’s inquiry into these other nations would cause their interest to be dissuaded from Yahweh and be given to foreign gods.
 - And indeed in Solomon’s old age, his heart “held fast” to his wife and foreign concubines.
 - The word “held fast” at the end of verse 2 in Hebrew means to cleave or hold to.
 - This is the same word we find in Genesis 2 where Moses wrote that when a man leaves his father and mother that they are to cling to each other.
 - In other words, Solomon’s mind was set upon the affections of these women and their motives and ultimately their gods.
 - What makes things worse in the writer’s record is how many wives and concubines Solomon had.
 - Verse 3 mentions that he had 700 wives and 300 concubines giving a total of 1,000 women. (Harem\Ha-rem)
 - So imagine, Solomon’s mind (heart) is literally pulled in 1,000 directions. Whatever they wanted he provided however they wanted it.
 - Solomon had gotten so entangled in the sin of his flesh that he has now moved to a divided heart.
 - Solomon believes that he could worship Yahweh alongside the false gods around him.
 - And herein lies an important biblical principle: That if we are not careful as to where our affections lie, we give way to being susceptible to our own desires too.
 - Our devotions will either be fully for the Lord, or we attempt to serve two masters.
 - Jesus mentions the same concept but in regard to money which can become an idol for some: Here is what he says in Matthew 6:24.

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

- Whether it's money, possessions, hobbies, etc., whatever you prioritize over the Lord, there your affections reside.
 - Verse 5 mentions that Solomon went after various gods ranging from the Sidonians and the Ammonites.
 - And what becomes well documented is the writer's disgust of these pagan gods. There is a holy indignation!
 - Ashtoreth was the Canaanite fertility goddess whose worship involved sexual deviance and unbridled lust.
 - And Milcom, also known as Moleck, was the Ammonite god where they practiced human sacrifices, even of children.
 - And although Solomon did not promote this kind of worship, through his actions, he tolerated it.
 - And what this speaks to is that in our lack of guarding our hearts from unbiblical things, it gives way to compromise in our lives and behaviors.
 - The moment that you compromise on your beliefs, it won't be too far long before you begin to compromise in your behaviors.
 - And this is the compromise that we are seeing in our governments and world leaders today – small compromises over time leading to devastation.
 - These changes did not happen overnight, but rather over time and once they sink in roots, in comes complete corruption.
 - And ultimately, the writer of Kings expresses the reality of Solomon's small compromises in verse 6.
 - “Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and did not follow the Lord fully as David his father did.”
- Now, we can look at this and say, well wait a minute, David didn't do things right all the time either?
 - Sure, however what we do know is that when David fell short of God's standard, he turned back to the Lord for forgiveness. (Repentance)
 - However, in Solomon's situation, there seems to be no immediate sense of conviction or violation of the Law within his conscience.
 - And as a note for us all, that becomes a principle by which we should all apply:
 - We must grow in our awareness of our sin-nature by way of maturity in Christ.
 - The more that you grow in your maturation in Christ, the greater your fear becomes of the Lord because your intimacy has grown all the more.
 - Check out what Solomon records in Proverbs 1:7.
 - Perhaps during his later time in writing the proverbs, he came to understand the error of his ways.

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

- There has clearly been a change of his heart and a great lack of fear in the Lord, therefore causing a deviation in his ways. Check out verses 7-12.

1 Kings 11:7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon.

1 Kings 11:8 Thus also he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

1 Kings 11:9 Now the Lord was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice,

1 Kings 11:10 and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not observe what the Lord had commanded.

1 Kings 11:11 So the Lord said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you, and will give it to your servant.

1 Kings 11:12 “Nevertheless I will not do it in your days for the sake of your father David, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son.

- Solomon continues in establishing these “high places” where his wives are able to worship their foreign gods in the land.
 - The writer provides an additional pagan god named Chemosh who was primarily worshipped in Moab and Ebla and this worship consisted of human sacrifices.
 - So, Solomon continues in establishing these “high places” where his wives are able to worship their foreign gods in the land.
 - It’s in verse 9 that the anger of the Lord is kindled against Solomon and rightfully so. Solomon’s heart has become divided.
 - What makes matters worse is that God had warned Solomon about these matters twice before.
 - The first time was in 1 Kings 3:5 and the second time in 1 Kings 9:2.
 - And in both instances, the Lord reminds Solomon of his need to keep his ways before the Lord.
 - So now, the Lord comes to Solomon to lay down the gavel, if you will. And the consequence is that the Kingdom will be “torn” from him.
 - However, all will not be lost based upon the Lord’s covenantal promise made to David in 2 Samuel 7.
 - Check out verse 13.

1 Kings 11:13 “However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.”

- So, although there would no longer be a United Kingdom of all 12 tribes, the Lord would preserve the tribe of Judah in which would remain in the house of David.
 - Furthermore, the fact that the Lord would not remove Solomon from ruling the Kingdom in his 40-year reign was an act of mercy of the Lord.
 - The principle here being: We are often not given what we rightfully deserve simply because of the lovingkindness and mercy of God.
 - Therefore, Solomon's servant will be given all the northern tribes of Israel, while Solomon's son will solely govern Judah and the small tribe of Benjamin in the south.
 - Now what will happen next begins to demonstrate God's acting providence and sovereignty in human history.
 - Because, as these things are going on, simultaneously, we will witness the Lord raising up instruments of discipline before Solomon's passing.
 - And it's important that we pay attention to the language, because what Moses documents in Deuteronomy 31 now begins to set the stage.
 - Check out verses 16-17. This is before the Israelites go into the Promised Land:

Deuteronomy 31:16 **The Lord said to Moses, “Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers; and this people will arise and play the harlot with the strange gods of the land, into the midst of which they are going, and will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them.**

Deuteronomy 31:17 **“Then My anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide My face from them, and they will be consumed, and many evils and troubles will come upon them; so that they will say in that day, ‘Is it not because our God is not among us that these evils have come upon us?’**

- The Lord was quite aware of Israel's defection from His covenant law and worship to surrounding pagan gods.
 - And because of this, the Lord already established means of correction if they did not remain loyal to the covenant.
 - So what we will witness in verses 14-22 sets the stage for Israel's beginning internal conflict which leads to isolation and ultimately the withdrawing of God's presence.
 - And what would come of that after Solomon's reign would lead to Israel being removed from their land by foreign instruments raised up by God.
 - Check out verses 14-22.

1 Kings 11:14 **Then the Lord raised up an adversary to Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was of the royal line in Edom.**

1 Kings 11:15 **For it came about, when David was in Edom, and Joab the commander of the army had gone up to bury the slain, and had struck down every male in Edom**

1 Kings 11:16 (for Joab and all Israel stayed there six months, until he had cut off every male in Edom),

1 Kings 11:17 that Hadad fled to Egypt, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, while Hadad was a young boy.

1 Kings 11:18 They arose from Midian and came to Paran; and they took men with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house and assigned him food and gave him land.

1 Kings 11:19 Now Hadad found great favor before Pharaoh, so that he gave him in marriage the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen.

1 Kings 11:20 The sister of Tahpenes bore his son Genubath, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house; and Genubath was in Pharaoh's house among the sons of Pharaoh.

1 Kings 11:21 But when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers and that Joab the commander of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Send me away, that I may go to my own country."

1 Kings 11:22 Then Pharaoh said to him, "But what have you lacked with me, that behold, you are seeking to go to your own country?" And he answered, "Nothing; nevertheless you must surely let me go."

- Within the next few moments we will see the Lord, due to Solomon's divided heart, raise up three adversaries (literally, a satan): 2 external and one internal.
 - We will begin with the first external adversary – Hadad the Edomite.
 - Notice, how these enemies are "stirred or awaken" due to the king's lack of covenant faithfulness.
 - Hadad was a prince of Edom, an enemy of Israel during David's reign as king.
 - Hadad was a young boy during the war that broke out between Israel and Edom.
 - As a result, Hadad escaped to Egypt making his way from Midian, which was south of Edom all the way to Paran, in the area of the Sinai Peninsula.
 - As one could imagine, much hostility was built up against David, especially Joab, who ruthlessly slayed every male in Edom.
 - So, as one would expect, Hadad had built a plan against Israel at the right moment.
 - We are told while in Egypt, that Hadad found favor with Pharaoh of Egypt to the point that Hadad was able to marry Pharaoh's wife, Tahpenes' sister.
 - From that relationship came forth a child named Genubath. It would seem like life in Egypt was where it would be and there was no turning back.
 - However, when Hadad got word that David had died and that Joab was dead, Hadad requested to go back to his own country.
 - One could gather that Pharaoh was slightly taken aback as he had treated Hadad as his own and there was no need for him to leave.

- But according to the writer of Kings, Hadad's mind was set on heading back to his own country after years of being displaced.
- Now remember, the surrounding nations were at peace with Israel during Solomon's reign. This means there was nation-state coordination.
 - This type of relationship was possible because the Lord had kept the "satans" away.
 - In other words, while Israel was in obedience, there were no issues in which Israel had to deal with. There was peace on all sides.
 - However, the moment that they broke the law, it gave way for divine discipline to commence.
- This principle we often want to avoid but it remains true: That sin must always be dealt with. There is no sweeping it under the rug.
 - And as the Lord had made clear and as Solomon's previous prayer mentioned, "Lord be merciful and forgiving".
 - But this can only take place when there has been an acknowledgment of wrongdoing and turning from sin.
 - And the beautiful thing is that in Christ forgiveness is found!
 - We now move to the next adversary, Rezon. Look at verses 23-25.

1 Kings 11:23 God also raised up another adversary to him, Rezon the son of Eliada, who had fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah.

1 Kings 11:24 He gathered men to himself and became leader of a marauding band, after David slew them of Zobah; and they went to Damascus and stayed there, and reigned in Damascus.

1 Kings 11:25 So he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, along with the evil that Hadad did; and he abhorred Israel and reigned over Aram.

- Solomon now comes across another enemy in his later years who brings more hostility near the land.
 - This individual is named Rezon who, like David, had fled from his king, Hadadezer, king of Zobah, for safety.
 - So far, we are seeing there is a return of an enemy in the south with Hadad and now enemy from the north in Rezon.
 - And with Rezon, he has gathered a group of men to sabotage and create conflict from the north near Damascus.
 - And this eventually became a pain point for Solomon in his later years. This is why verse 25 says he was a "satan" (adversary) to Solomon.
 - Ultimately, the writer of kings makes known that between Hadad in the south and Rezon in the north, the satans were being brought upon Israel.
 - And if that wasn't bad enough, we then find that there was an internal adversary

that arose within Solomon's own ranks – a man named Jeroboam.

- Check out verses 26-39.

1 Kings 11:26 Then Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, Solomon's servant, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also rebelled against the king.

1 Kings 11:27 Now this was the reason why he rebelled against the king: Solomon built the Millo, and closed up the breach of the city of his father David.

1 Kings 11:28 Now the man Jeroboam was a valiant warrior, and when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious, he appointed him over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph.

1 Kings 11:29 It came about at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Now Ahijah had clothed himself with a new cloak; and both of them were alone in the field.

1 Kings 11:30 Then Ahijah took hold of the new cloak which was on him and tore it into twelve pieces.

1 Kings 11:31 He said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces; for thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and give you ten tribes

1 Kings 11:32 (but he will have one tribe, for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel),

1 Kings 11:33 because they have forsaken Me, and have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the sons of Ammon; and they have not walked in My ways, doing what is right in My sight and observing My statutes and My ordinances, as his father David did.

1 Kings 11:34 'Nevertheless I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, but I will make him ruler all the days of his life, for the sake of My servant David whom I chose, who observed My commandments and My statutes;

1 Kings 11:35 but I will take the kingdom from his son's hand and give it to you, even ten tribes.

1 Kings 11:36 'But to his son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may have a lamp always before Me in Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen for Myself to put My name.

1 Kings 11:37 'I will take you, and you shall reign over whatever you desire, and you shall be king over Israel.

1 Kings 11:38 'Then it will be, that if you listen to all that I command you and walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight by observing My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build you an enduring house as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you.

1 Kings 11:39 'Thus I will afflict the descendants of David for this, but not always.' "

- We are now introduced to the third adversary against Solomon and the Kingdom. This

time, it is one of Israel's own, a man named Jeroboam.

- Jeroboam's name means "May the People be great", and his name becomes a tell-tale sign of his motives.
 - We are told that Jeroboam was an Ephraimite and the Ephraimites were the leading tribe of the northern tribes.
 - And the writer provides a back story in which Jeroboam's mother, Zeruah also rebelled against King David during his reign.
 - What makes the rise of this adversary even worse, besides being a fellow countryman, was that Jeroboam was a part of Solomon's court.
 - The writer of kings provides us even more background regarding how Jeroboam rises to the ranks of leadership in Solomon's court.
- It was when Solomon built a terrace and filled in some gaps in the wall of the city of David that Solomon saw Jeroboam was a good worker. (1 Kings 11:28)
 - We are also told that Jeroboam was a valiant warrior.
 - Perhaps this becomes an identifier to Solomon of Jeroboam's leadership strength.
 - And if that is the case, it leads Jeroboam to lead the forced laborers over the house of Joseph.
 - From there, it is as if the scene switches and we are now thrust into a new character, the prophet Ahijah.
- What we are told regarding Ahijah from scripture is that he was a Shilonite which means he was from the region of Shiloh.
 - And the region of Shiloh was within the tribe of Ephraim as seen in the map provided.
 - And it is this prophet that the Lord will use to demonstrate to Jeroboam the coming results of the Kingdom of Israel.
 - The writer records that as Solomon's external adversaries began to arise that Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem.
 - And it was there that Ahijah met him on the road.
 - Ahijah, wearing his new cloak, representative of the firmly established Kingdom of Israel, now tears this cloak into 12 pieces.
 - Ahijah then takes these 12 pieces and tells Jeroboam to take 10 pieces for himself and proceeds to tell him that the Lord will tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hands and give him 10 tribes.
 - This would mean that Solomon's descendants would be left with only two tribes to govern.
 - Now notice, verse 32 says that only one tribe would be given – understand that because Benjamin's tribe was so small it was regarded as one.
- So, what we are seeing is that as the Lord told Solomon, because of his sin of idolatry, he would tear the kingdom from him and give it to his servant.

- And without fail, the Lord uses his prophet to meet with Jeroboam and explain what the result of Solomon's judgement is.
 - Imagine for a moment: This was not an easy thing to hear as Jeroboam was an employee of King Solomon.
 - But now, because of Solomon's failure to obey the law, someone underneath him will now become an instrument of disruption.
 - Yet at the same time, the internal disruption regarding rule over these tribes is none other than a Jew (fellow countryman).
- The next thing that we come to see within this text is the theological realities that emerge from this situation.
 - In one sense, although Solomon has failed drastically, it does not null the Davidic covenant.
- In other words, not only does David's descendants continue to reign over Judah but the headquarters of the Davidic dynasty will remain in Jerusalem. (Mt. Zion)
 - This is where the Lord has always made known that he will richly dwell in, and that wouldn't change regardless of the failures of the Judean kings.
 - What this also shows us is that God is faithful to His word even when we fall short.
- Therefore, Solomon's son, Rehoboam, who we will be introduced to at the end of this chapter, will continue as king but over the southern kingdom.
 - What becomes an interesting detail, which speaks to the theological significance of this book, is verse 36b regarding the lamp burning before the Lord.
- The “lamp” signifies the standing promise of God's covenant with David, being that David is God's chosen king and that Jerusalem is his chosen city. (2 Samuel 21:17)

[2 Samuel 21:17](#) But Abishai the son of Zeruiah helped him, and struck the Philistine and killed him. Then the men of David swore to him, saying, “You shall not go out again with us to battle, so that you do not extinguish the lamp of Israel.”

- We see a similar expression in Psalm 132:11-18:

[Psalm 132:11](#) The Lord has sworn to David A truth from which He will not turn back: “Of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne.

[Psalm 132:12](#) “If your sons will keep My covenant And My testimony which I will teach them, Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forever.”

[Psalm 132:13](#) For the Lord has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His habitation.

[Psalm 132:14](#) “This is My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it.

[Psalm 132:15](#) “I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her needy with bread.

Psalm 132:16 “Her priests also I will clothe with salvation, And her godly ones will sing aloud for joy.

Psalm 132:17 “There I will cause the horn of David to spring forth; I have prepared a lamp for Mine anointed.

Psalm 132:18 “His enemies I will clothe with shame, But upon himself his crown shall shine.”

- So not only is David Yahweh's choice, but Jerusalem is the place in which Yahweh has chosen to reign from.
 - And His word will not “turn back”, meaning will not return void.
- The second thing that we pick up from the text theologically is that sin divides.
 - In this sense, we see a literal manifestation of that truth, however, applicationally speaking, we know that sin causes disfellowship with the Lord.
 - That where our sin encroaches and takes root, it brings about a separation in fellowship.
 - Plainly put, sin impacts our relationship with God! And the only thing that puts us back into right fellowship is repentance (lower case r).
 - So from the sin of idolatry, it leads Solomon and the nation into this coming state of apostasy and now the Lord provides a condition to Solomon's servant.
 - And the Lord gives similar conditions to Jeroboam in that if Jeroboam follows the ways of the Lord, he will build him an enduring house.
 - Notice however the differences in these conditions: David's promise is unconditional yet Jeroboam's isn't. The covenant is with David!
 - So even, if Jeroboam was to follow the Law as David did, it would not cancel God's covenant promise with David regarding the Davidic covenant.
 - So this meant that, for a time, the Davidic descendants would be humbled.
 - Friends, what we are seeing is that there would come a future day in which the Messianic promise of a Davidic descendant would come about.
 - And as we know that reality was realized through the person of Jesus Christ.
 - And furthermore, Christ as King will be actualized in His Second Coming.
 - We now come to our last four verses for tonight, verses 40-43.

1 Kings 11:40 Solomon sought therefore to put Jeroboam to death; but Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt to Shishak king of Egypt, and he was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

1 Kings 11:41 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon and whatever he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon?

1 Kings 11:42 Thus the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years.

1 Kings 11:43 And Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of his father David, and his son Rehoboam reigned in his place.

- Now, as one could imagine, Solomon getting word regarding this tearing of the Kingdom from his hands put him in a rage. Like what Saul did to David
 - ■ So, to escape this impending threat of death, Jeroboam flees to Egypt until Solomon dies.
 - And we find that the ruling Pharaoh that Jeroboam confides in and finds refuge under is Shishak of Egypt.
- And knowing that Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter shows that there has been some change in leadership.
 - And with any major change in leadership means that alliances also shift if not further confirmed.
- Ultimately, Solomon and his descendants would have to endure the coming discipline of the Lord by way of disrupting neighboring nations.
 - That where there once were allies of Israel, they would now become enemies of Israel.
 - A theme that seems to become quite evident in the King's narrative is God's Sovereignty at work.
 - His discipline and dealing with a disobedient Israel does not exclude them from His promises for them, it simply readies them to accomplish His good pleasure.
 - Paul makes mention of God's Sovereign work throughout all circumstances in Romans 8:28:

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

- As we get to the ending of Chapter 11, we come to find that Solomon's life ends rather tragically.
 - This great king who was given great wisdom beyond all kings has now found himself the very cause of the division of the kingdom.
 - The question that comes to mind for some is how could a man with so much wisdom come to the end of his life so foolishly?
 - The short answer to this is: When our affections become misplaced by the blessings we possess rather than the one who has blessed us, we too will fall.
 - Solomon's fall was not a matter of having failed once and consequences ensue – no! There were several decisions made over time that led to this end.
 - And even with all the wisdom given, Solomon failed to apply the wisdom of God accordingly that he might prosper.
 - It's one thing to have a knowledge of the word of God, but to see the blessing of God, that word must be applied.
 - God has graciously allowed Solomon to rule over Israel a total of 40 years, from 971 to 931 BC).
 - And now Solomon would be buried with his fathers in the city of David.
 - But as we previously saw, although the Lord brings about judgement towards

Solomon, He remains faithful to His promise towards David.

- And so this will now lead to the rise of a new character in this narrative who was not previously introduced up until now – Rehoboam.
- And what we will see from this point on is that the following choices of the kings, except for a few, will lead to utter disaster.
- As we continue in the Kings narrative, you are going to see a rise in the prophetic voices from the prophets.
 - And the goal of the prophets is simple: To bring the people back to the obedience of the Law.
 - These men will be threatened, mocked, experience highs and lows, and mostly be ignored by the kings of the Kingdoms.
- There will be both prophets from the north and south, yet they are giving the Israelite people the same message, in essence. Get back to Torah!
 - The only way in which the Lord would bless the nation is if they returned to His Law.
 - And their failure to do so would ultimately result in their removal from the land and the withdrawing of his presence in the temple.
- Therefore, the kings would need to make a choice, and for the most part the kings continued in their independence from God and continued in idolatry.
 - Yet what becomes such a beautiful reminder in all of this, is that God has not forgotten Israel.
 - And if I might bring in present application: He has not forgotten you!
- The leadership of the world will fail, the policies will continue to reflect the God-less society of men and women that are creating these rules.
 - And the results of those decisions always lead to the decline of a nation.
 - So like the prophets, we must pray, trust in the Lord, and know that He is faithful to Himself and therefore faithful to His word.
 - And those who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!
 - Let's Pray.

- Last week, we witnessed a major turning in the narrative of the life and legacy of Solomon and his reign over Israel.
 - Solomon's rule began under the guidance, direction and submission to the Lord by way of the wisdom of God.
 - This was something that Solomon had requested of the Lord at Gibeon when the Lord appeared to him.
 - Solomon desired that he have the necessary wisdom and discernment to lead the people of God well.
 - But somewhere along the road, whether fame, riches, or power, these things took ahold of Solomon causing a lapse in judgement.
 - Solomon's failure to apply wisdom over the course of his latter years as king caused a great downward spiral in his leadership.
 - From Chapters 6-9, we witnessed moments of compromise and change very subtly in Solomon's decisions.
 - And that observation became a glaring spotlight for us because it helped us to see that if we do not guard our hearts, we too will fall.
 - So because of Solomon's series of compromises, it led to the rising discipline of the Lord.
 - The Lord in His sovereignty raised up enemies of Israel in whom existed during David's day and would now become enemies of Solomon.
 - And we were able to see in our previous lesson that the Lord has a way of getting our attention when we are out of line.
 - But what becomes a grace in it all is knowing that the Lord is very near to us and is able and willing to forgive us our sins.
 - We simply must turn from our ways, seek forgiveness, and return to the Lord in humility.
 - Finally, it was towards the end of Chapter 11 that the Lord raised up an internal enemy against Solomon who was close to him.
 - A man by the name Jeroboam. The Lord would use Jeroboam as an instrument of disruption causing the Kingdom to be divided in two.
 - The 10 tribes of Israel in the North and the 2 tribes in the south, in which Benjamin was included with that of Judah.
 - And the Lord uses a prophet by the name, Ahijah who will give Jeroboam this prophecy in which Jeroboam would be given the 10 northern tribes as his own.
 - However, the Lord, in His grace would spare Judah as a promise made in Genesis 49:10:

Genesis 49:10 “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

- That because the chosen seed of the Lord would come from Judah, the Lord preserves this tribe and the city itself for Himself.
 - And as one would imagine, the news of the splitting of a United Kingdom getting to Solomon became an enraging matter.
 - And so Solomon seeks to eliminate any possible threat against the Kingdom in its unified form.
 - So as a way to stay safe, Jeroboam goes into hiding until the death of Solomon.
- What we see from Chapter 11 is that the Lord prepares the stage for His outworking plan of man's failure to uphold His word.
 - And He sets up particular men who will be used to cause destruction which eventually opens way to Assyria and Babylon wreaking havoc in the land.
 - We are then left with the successor of Solomon's rule, now over the southern kingdom of Judah and Benjamin – Solomon's son, Rehoboam.
 - So, as we move into Chapter 12, we are going to begin to see the rise of God's prophets who will serve as His mouthpiece to both the northern and southern kingdoms.
 - And secondly, we are going to see the rise and fall of kings and their fall in their folly.
 - Although there will be a few kings who will try to remain anchored in the Lord, it won't be done perfectly.
 - Israel is awaiting their King and the only means of their receiving Him is by them returning to God's righteous Son, Jesus Christ.
 - With that background in mind, I want to provide us with an outline of what we will see in the text:
 - 1. Rehoboam seeks Counsel (vv.1-5)
 - 2. A Tale of two counsels and the failure to execute wisdom (vv.6-15)
 - 3. The Kingdom divides (vv.16-20)
 - 4. The Word of the Lord given to Rehoboam (vv.21-24)
 - 5. Jeroboam's slippery slope (vv.25-33)
 - If I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would simply be: The Issues of Two Kings.
 - With that being said, I invite you to open your bibles and meet me in 1 Kings 12, starting at verses 1-5 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 12:1 Then Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king.

1 Kings 12:2 Now when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it, he was living in Egypt (for he was yet in Egypt, where he had fled from the presence of King Solomon).

1 Kings 12:3 Then they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying,

1 Kings 12:4 “Your father made our yoke hard; now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”

1 Kings 12:5 Then he said to them, “Depart for three days, then return to me.” So the people departed.

- Solomon has died and we are now introduced to a new character in the narrative, a son of Solomon, Rehoboam.
 - We are not given much about the upbringing of Rehoboam or any other of Solomon's sons for that matter.
 - And perhaps this is the case because the writer, by the leading of the Spirit, is focused on the actions of Rehoboam himself.
 - We are immediately thrust into this coronation moment where he is sent to be crowned king over a still united Israel.
 - The writer tells us that the location of coronation is in a place called Shechem.
 - Scripture doesn't tell us why the coronation was to be in Shechem, because as one would assume Jerusalem would have been most appropriate as that was where the Temple resided and the King's palace.
 - Whatever the cause for Shechem being selected, we are told that among those gathering for the upcoming coronation of Rehoboam was Jeroboam.
 - The writer provides the latecomer into the narrative with background as to where Jeroboam has been.
 - Remember, Jeroboam had to flee from the wrath of Solomon because that Jeroboam was the man in whom the Lord chose to remove 10 tribes from a united Israel.
 - However, with such an auspicious occasion, it was recommended, as a fellow countryman, for Jeroboam to participate in the coronation festivities.
 - Especially having served in the previous king's administration.
 - Perhaps, the sending of Jeroboam went beyond him being a fellow countryman but extended even further.
 - Meaning that, the people sought to leverage Jeroboam's previous political position to advocate on behalf of them.
 - This is why in verses 4-5 we find the people unanimously speaking up regarding their frustration regarding the heavy burden that Solomon placed upon them.
 - One question that might arise is: What was the heavy yoke that was placed upon the people?
 - In one way, in order for so many of Solomon's construction projects to occur, it required money. That money could only come from one place – the people.
 - So, the more the country has to put out financially means the more there is a heavier burden on the people to pay.

- On top of that, there may have also been heavy work restrictions on the people.
- So with all of these demands being made to the king on the day of coronation, it could seem too confrontational than celebrational.
 - So in order to better have a hold over the situation and assess what could be done, Rehoboam requests from the people 3 days to process.
- What will be interesting to observe in the next few verses is Rehoboam's decision-making process through it all.
 - Check out verses 6-11.

1 Kings 12:6 King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had served his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying, “How do you counsel me to answer this people?”

1 Kings 12:7 Then they spoke to him, saying, “If you will be a servant to this people today, and will serve them and grant them their petition, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.”

1 Kings 12:8 But he forsook the counsel of the elders which they had given him, and consulted with the young men who grew up with him and served him.

1 Kings 12:9 So he said to them, “What counsel do you give that we may answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, ‘Lighten the yoke which your father put on us’?”

1 Kings 12:10 The young men who grew up with him spoke to him, saying, “Thus you shall say to this people who spoke to you, saying, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, now you make it lighter for us!’ But you shall speak to them, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins!’

1 Kings 12:11 ‘Whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.’ ”

1 Kings 12:12 Then Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day as the king had directed, saying, “Return to me on the third day.”

1 Kings 12:13 The king answered the people harshly, for he forsook the advice of the elders which they had given him,

1 Kings 12:14 and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.”

1 Kings 12:15 So the king did not listen to the people; for it was a turn of events from the Lord, that He might establish His word, which the Lord spoke through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat

- We come to a section of the text where one must ask the question: Who can I run to, to make the right decision?
 - This section of the text highlights the theme of wisdom and its rightful pursuit.

- We are told that after the people have made their petition quite vocal that Rehoboam immediately goes to seek counsel – great step!
- However, if you don't pay attention to the wording of the text, you will see that his decision was already made up a while ago.
- Notice that Rehoboam begins by going to consult the elders who served his father, Solomon – great first step!
 - Because they served Solomon during his rule, they would understand the people's frustration and provide adequate counsel for Rehoboam's success.
 - They suggest that Rehoboam approach the people with a servant-mindset and not one of a heavy-handed ruler.
 - In other words, it would require the humility of the king to see the needs of the people and to meet that need. (Meekness)
 - “Rehoboam, you respond in humility, and you will win the hearts of the people”
- Maturity says, let's walk well with the people so that there may be peace within the Nation, whereas immaturity rejects wisdom and increases the burden.
 - We're told in verse 8 that the wisdom of the elders is rejected, and Rehoboam now seeks the counsel of his peers.
 - What makes verses 9-11 so disappointing but quite revealing is the wording used by the writer of the king's heart.
- Notice, Rehoboam asks his friends, “What counsel do you give that “we” may answer this people...”
 - It becomes quite clear that under this new rule of leadership Rehoboam had made the decision who his counsel would be.
 - Furthermore, there is this sense that Rehoboam had a “get back” spirit.
 - Meaning, he had something he sought to prove, pride was swelling up, and that he wouldn't be put down by the people's petition!
- This reveals so much regarding the very character of Rehoboam as king: His lack of discernment, his unwillingness to follow wise counsel, but most importantly pride.
 - Out of all of these verses, we fail to see the first counsel in which he ought to have sought – the counsel of the Lord.
 - And herein lies a biblical principle: That when we fail to seek the Lord's counsel, we end up taking matters in our own hands.
- God's ways and wisdom are greater than our ways and our rejection of His counsel leads to great disappointment.
 - There is something beautiful about the diversity of age within the body of Christ because it provides a sharpening in discipleship that is unmatched.
 - It's what I call, cross-generational discipleship. This is what Paul gets at in Titus 2:1-10 where he talks about older men pouring into younger men.
 - Older women pouring into younger women and showing them what it means to be a woman of God in a corrupted culture.

- There is great benefit in the wisdom of the older generation when we are willing to sit down and listen to their counsel instead of rejecting their words.
 - Job 12:12 says the following:

Job 12:12 “Wisdom is with aged men, With long life is understanding.

- ◦ So instead of Rehoboam seeking wisdom from the elders who walked with wisdom, he chose the heavy thumb of dominance and pride as the means of his rule.
 - However, we know that the Coming King Jesus Christ will rule in a completely different fashion.
 - For it was in Mark 10:45, that Jesus in His first coming made it known that although He was Messiah, His first coming was not to be served but to serve.
 - This friends, becomes the epitome of true servant-leadership a willingness to lead out of love and wisdom, not out of selfishness and ambition.
- So, after Rehoboam’s request for three days of processing and need to seek counsel, he returns to the people with his verdict.
 - And his verdict does not satisfy the hearts of the people it simply increases the hostility of the people, further establishing the Lord’s word to Jeroboam.
- Here is where we see God’s sovereignty at play throughout the drama of human history.
 - This stage setting of Israelite agitation from the north had to ensue for the people’s desire to pull away from the King’s rule.
 - And in turn, this allows Jeroboam’s ascension to political leadership and eventual kingship in the north is able to take place.
- And if you noticed from the beginning of the text, you could already see the writer showing the people getting behind Jeroboam by sending word for him.
 - And through these moments of irritation and aggravation in the hearts of human interaction, it led to the Lord’s word coming about.
 - And as verse 15 reveals, the instrument of cause is none other than the Lord Himself using men and their very nature to bring about His very purposes.
 - For the only way in which Jeroboam would become King is if there was an internal disruption that would cause this political schism within Israel.
- And what a powerful witness to human history, that God is not detached from the engagements of this world, meaning nothing falls outside of His Sovereign control.
 - There is nothing that escapes the hand of God without His Will or permission.
 - That whether good, bad, ugly, or indifferent, it is all used to bring Him Glory and to make much of His great name.
 - The question becomes, how will you see it?! Even when it means that certain circumstances come knocking at your door.
- Maybe there are circumstances that the Lord brings about in your life that may take

you aback.

- However, if you believe that He is Sovereign, you will see it not as a hinderance but as an opportunity for the Lord to get the glory out of your life.
- Because these opportunities, under the Sovereign hand of God, are ways to further conform us to the image of Jesus and for us to set our eyes upon eternal things.
- So from this point, we now begin to see God's word move toward being fulfilled.
 - A United Kingdom being divided into 2 kingdoms: 10 Northern tribes against 2 Southern tribes. Check out verses 16-20.

1 Kings 12:16 When all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying, “What portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse; To your tents, O Israel! Now look after your own house, David!” So Israel departed to their tents.

1 Kings 12:17 But as for the sons of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

1 Kings 12:18 Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the forced labor, and all Israel stoned him to death. And King Rehoboam made haste to mount his chariot to flee to Jerusalem.

1 Kings 12:19 So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

1 Kings 12:20 It came about when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, that they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. None but the tribe of Judah followed the house of David.

- Being that the people saw that there was going to be no relief from King Rehoboam they moved to the next viable option – rebellion.
 - And this rebellion begins in quite a familiar way with that of Sheba's rebellion in 2 Samuel 20.
 - It seems that the same feeling of separation and alienation began to arise only this time due to the nature of the king's unwise behavior.
 - The Northern tribes revert to old habits where they say, “What portion do we have in David?”
 - The northern tribes had enough and were no longer going to take this sense of unfair treatment, that they perhaps believed the southern tribe were not receiving.
 - Whatever the case, it becomes clear that Judah was staying beside their king while Israel was going to depart home.
 - Now, on one end one could understand the Northern tribe's frustration, however there is order to God.
 - And being that the North was rebelling against God's anointed king, regardless of His ways, meant that the North was rebelling against God.
 - The key point in verse 16 is the line that reads, “Now look after your own house

David".

- The assumption here is that their lack of submission was not just to David's descendant, but ultimately their rebellion against God!
- And with that, in due time, the Lord would deal with them accordingly.
- Now, whether as a means to control the situation or perhaps to find common ground, Rehoboam sends a man named Adoram after Israel.
 - So, imagine, this is one man, perhaps with a message to the people versus an entirety of 10 tribes – this would have been hundreds upon thousands of men.
 - One would hope that the messenger wouldn't get shot, but in this occasion all bets were off the table because you have an enraged people.
 - And just like that, Israel stoned Adoram, who was over forced labor, to death.
- Israel's response to the King's servant became a clear message to stay clear or be killed and it became clear to Rehoboam to part ways.
 - From there, Rehoboam flees back to Jerusalem and from that point a once United Kingdom of Israel has now officially been divided in two.
 - What a telling tale of how a divided heart moved to a falling away from truth, which further gave way to inflamed perverted power.
- The principle here becomes that unchecked sin gives way to radical rule of that sin in our lives!
 - And all of this became unhinged because of small departures from absolute truth along the way!
 - Oh that we guard our hearts and are mindful of our ways lest we too become prone to fall.
- So as all of these events are unfolding before our eyes regarding Israel's history, we find that the stage setting is continuing to unfold.
 - Because it is in verse 20 that we see that when Israel see that Jeroboam returns they, without hesitation, make him King over Israel.
 - Clearly, Israel had their eyes on Jeroboam and knew that he too was a valiant warrior as Solomon did.
 - And who better to lead them in this upcoming rebellion of independence but Jeroboam, himself.
 - And as prophesized to Jeroboam by Ahijah, his rise to the throne manifested before his very eyes.
 - However, as one would imagine having such a great divide such as this would not be likely welcomed by a King.
 - Therefore, Rehoboam is going to prepare for war! Check out verses 21-24.

1 Kings 12:21 Now when Rehoboam had come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, 180,000 chosen men who were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel to restore the kingdom to

Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

1 Kings 12:22 But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying,
1 Kings 12:23 “Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin and to the rest of the people, saying,
1 Kings 12:24 ‘Thus says the Lord, “You must not go up and fight against your relatives the sons of Israel; return every man to his house, for this thing has come from Me.”’” So they listened to the word of the Lord, and returned and went their way according to the word of the Lord.

- A huge turn of events happens here as we had just read that Rehoboam was preparing for a civil war.
 - Issues escalated between the North and the South when an initial attempt to restore the Kingdom under Rehoboam’s rule was rejected.
 - And from that rejection came the further inflammation of his pride which led to war rather than further peace.
 - This further perpetuates Rehoboam’s lack of discernment and wisdom as a leader over the people.
 - However, before things could progress any further, we are told that the word of the Lord came to a prophet named Shemaiah.
 - And the word was for there to be no fighting between the relatives of the sons of Israel (fellow brothers).
 - This was definitely a word from the Lord because to say these words in front of the king and a group of close to 180,000 warriors requires boldness.
 - And what the writer notates next is that the people and the king both respond in obedience to the word of the Lord, by way of Shemaiah.
 - And this reaction, in such a unanimous way, goes to show that despite the opposition of the hearts of men, God will always get His way!
 - Just another way in which scripture demonstrates to the reader of the Sovereignty of God!
 - We now arrive to our last few verses where the scene pivots from a focus on the Southern Kingdom to now a light shining onto the Northern Kingdom.
 - Check out verses 25-33.

1 Kings 12:25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and lived there. And he went out from there and built Penuel.

1 Kings 12:26 Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom will return to the house of David.

1 Kings 12:27 “If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will return to their lord, even to Rehoboam king of Judah; and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah.”

1 Kings 12:28 So the king consulted, and made two golden calves, and he said to them, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt.”

1 Kings 12:29 He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.

1 Kings 12:30 Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan.

1 Kings 12:31 And he made houses on high places, and made priests from among all the people who were not of the sons of Levi.

1 Kings 12:32 Jeroboam instituted a feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast which is in Judah, and he went up to the altar; thus he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves which he had made. And he stationed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made.

1 Kings 12:33 Then he went up to the altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised in his own heart; and he instituted a feast for the sons of Israel and went up to the altar to burn incense.

- At this point in the narrative, the writer picks back up on the storyline for the Northern Kingdom.
 - It was in verse 20 that Israel had assembled together to make Jeroboam King over them.
 - So where the writer picks back up is there along with Jeroboam “settling in” to his new position as king just as the Lord said he would.
 - Perhaps this could have been the beginning of the Northern Kingdom operating in a positive way – obeying the Mosaic covenant.
 - Remember, the prophet Ahijah had informed Jeroboam that there was opportunity for the Lord to build for him an enduring house as well. (1 Kings 11)
 - So the tension of the text is moving in that direction: What path will Jeroboam take?
 - Will it be the way of Solomon or the way of David? However, it wasn’t too long till we get to verse 26.
 - It’s in verse 26 where Jeroboam now begins to experience this “turning of his heart”.
 - And this turning occurs because of rising jealousy of anticipated paranoia which was, “the people may turn from me and go back to the house of David.”
 - In other words, rather than taking God at His word regarding the promise He made to Him, Jeroboam attempts to take matters into his own hands.
 - This goes back to the attempt at altering the Creator/creature distinction!
 - The premise for his paranoia was that there will be a need for the people to go back to Jerusalem to worship the Lord at the Temple.
 - And in their going back to Jerusalem, the people will seek to recommit themselves to the house of David and the promise to the Davidic covenant.

- Do you see where the failure in trust happened here? Jeroboam did not believe the promise of the Lord!
- There was more concern about what he would lose than what He would gain in simply trusting in the promises of the Lord.
- And here is yet another biblical principle: The failure in trusting in the Lord only leads to the building of idols of god(s) you want and can control!
 - We live in a culture today where people want to be right and look right and if anyone opposes them they will change the narrative so they can sound right.
 - And instead of engaging the culture with absolute truth, they'll engage them with lies and half-truths as a form of manipulation and control.
 - This is the reality in which Jeroboam has found himself in: He has exchanged God's promise for his own personal security.
 - Not realizing that his own security rested in the very promises of God!
 - And this type of deception only leads to further apostasy, and so it did!
 - Notice, verse 28 says that the king consulted and made two golden calves and tells Israel in few short words, "No need for you to travel to Jerusalem"!
 - He in turn, provides mere substitutes for Israel to utilize as idols in which they could worship instead of turning to the one true God of Israel.
 - So, Jeroboam provides these "high places" in two locations, one in Bethel and the other in Dan.
 - The insinuation behind Jeroboam's gesture is as if to say, "If I can't have you, no one will!"
 - Yet Jeroboam is failing to realize that he has set out a full-fledged rebellion against the Lord Himself and now has the people believe this is okay!
 - Because the text mentions in verse 30 that the people went to worship these idols, as far as Dan.
- What becomes even more detestable is the fact that Jeroboam begins to establish his own line of priests!
 - He completely disregards the order and ways of Yahweh and establishes his own system of religion establishing his own line of priest outside of the Levitical priesthood.
 - We are talking about dangerous waters being treading because of the unbelief of Jeroboam due to his pride.
 - And isn't that the reality of unbelief? That it will have you see things in one way when the truth of the matter is right in front of you.
 - Unbelief exchanges the truth about who God is and His ways for a lie that it wants you to settle for – that is the game plan of the enemy.
 - It's the oldest trick since the beginning of time and how the enemy seeks to kill, steal, and destroy.
 - He causes curiosity to give way to causation, and causation gives way to doubt and doubt gives way to lack in confidence which therefore moves one to

distrust.

- So in a matter of moments or days, Jeroboam establishes this new religious system in the north to mimic the worship of Yahweh in Judah.
 - Lastly, notice verses 32-33, the writer mentions that Jeroboam institutes a feast in the eighth month.
 - However, what becomes the issue with that? There is no Jewish feast in the eighth month on the Jewish Calendar.
 - This becomes a feast that Jeroboam starts himself to mimic Judah and their religious feasts, further establishing his evil ways.
- All this Jeroboam had done because he began to “devise in his own heart”.
 - This “moving away” from the commands and ordinances of the Lord only further pulled men and woman to their own devices.
- The further away that one moves from truth is the greater the hold that deception will have.
 - Friends, if the truth of scripture is not the guide post for your way of life, be weary of your way.
 - And what a reminder for our non-believing friends: Don’t be fooled by the progression of your lives apart from the absolute truth of the word of God.
 - Because the great delusion of that is, in the end, you still have to face the reality of your decisions apart from the grace of God in the end!
- For it is only in Christ that there is true freedom!
 - It is only in Christ that we are saved. Our works don’t save us, how good you think you are, isn’t a ticket into the kingdom.
 - It is only through and by the sufficient work of Christ on the cross that we are made righteous before a Holy God!
- My prayer for all, especially non-believers, is that the eyes of men and women will be opened to the reality of their own deception and false sense of hope.
 - And that they may truly come to rest upon the available promise of the Lord found in the person of Jesus Christ!
 - Let’s Pray.

- In our last session of 1 Kings, we covered the straw that broke the camel's back which led to the division of the United Kingdom of Israel.
 - It began with King Rehoboam rejecting the wisdom of the elders who served under his father, King Solomon.
 - Rather than Rehoboam easing the burden in which his father had placed upon the people, he decides to increase it all the more.
 - This response was ultimately rooted in the pride of Rehoboam operating in the strength of the crown rather than the humility as a servant to the people.
 - This rejection of wisdom led to the Northern tribes pulling away from the South causing Jeroboam's rise to leadership.
 - The opportunity before Jeroboam was to walk in the ways of the Lord so that he too would have an enduring house.
 - However, pride becomes the downfall of Jeroboam as well.
 - Jeroboam becomes worried that a day would come in which the people would desire to return to Jerusalem to worship Yahweh and serve the King.
 - As a result of this anxious attitude, Jeroboam sought to establish his own system of religion to mimic Yahwehism.
 - And in doing so, Jeroboam, for the first time in Israel's history as a nation, brought the people into full-on apostasy and idolatry.
 - He established his own religious feast and worship in the north and compelled others to worship on his established "high places"
 - And as one could imagine, Jeroboam's rejection of the Lord's promise to build Jeroboam an enduring house was now at stake.
 - So, what we will see unfolding in the following chapters will be a clear distinction between that of the North and the South.
 - The south remains in worshipping Yahweh while the North moves towards the worship of idols and the like.
 - Yet, God in His mercy will provide a prophetic word through a prophet sent to the north to turn the heart of the king back to God.
 - If I were to put an outline together for our time in the text, we are going to see the following:
 - 1. Jeroboam Warned (vv.1-10)
 - 2. A Disobedient Prophet (vv.11-19)
 - 3. Consequence for the disobedient prophet (vv.20-25)
 - 4. The guilt of the Old Prophet (vv.26-32)
 - 5. The way of Jeroboam (vv.33-34)
 - If I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would simply be, Shoo Fly, Don't Bother Me.
 - With that being said, turn with me to 1 Kings 13 beginning in verses 1-10 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 13:1 Now behold, there came a man of God from Judah to Bethel by the word of the Lord, while Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense.

1 Kings 13:2 He cried against the altar by the word of the Lord, and said, “O altar, altar, thus says the Lord, ‘Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.’ ”

1 Kings 13:3 Then he gave a sign the same day, saying, “This is the sign which the Lord has spoken, ‘Behold, the altar shall be split apart and the ashes which are on it shall be poured out.’ ”

1 Kings 13:4 Now when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar in Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, “Seize him.” But his hand which he stretched out against him dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself.

1 Kings 13:5 The altar also was split apart and the ashes were poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 13:6 The king said to the man of God, “Please entreat the Lord your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me.” So the man of God entreated the Lord, and the king’s hand was restored to him, and it became as it was before.

1 Kings 13:7 Then the king said to the man of God, “Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward.”

1 Kings 13:8 But the man of God said to the king, “If you were to give me half your house I would not go with you, nor would I eat bread or drink water in this place.

1 Kings 13:9 “For so it was commanded me by the word of the Lord, saying, ‘You shall eat no bread, nor drink water, nor return by the way which you came.’ ”

1 Kings 13:10 So he went another way and did not return by the way which he came to Bethel.

- The writer of Kings begins Chapter 13 by introducing us to a “no-name” prophet from the Southern kingdom of Judah.
 - And this prophet from the south is sent with a word from the Lord that bears both a prophecy and condemnation regarding the ways of Jeroboam.
 - However, instead of this word being given directly to Jeroboam, this prophecy is spoken to the altar where Jeroboam is standing.
 - It’s like the person who uses someone else to talk to you about you and your ways because they’re too upset to talk to you directly.
 - Perhaps this is a mercy of the Lord extended to Jeroboam to get himself together.
 - So this prophet proceeds to tell the altar a prophecy regarding the house of David.

- The prophecy consisted of a future king of the South named Josiah who would eventually decimate the illegitimate priesthood of the north.
- And along with the destruction of the priest would come the desecration of the “high places” with human bones.
- And as a sign in that day of the legitimacy of this prophecy, the Lord would cause the altar where Jeroboam was standing to be split apart and ashes poured out.
 - Imagine you being Jeroboam and hearing this prophecy as you are standing near the altar...
 - There would be a sense of rage or anger being that someone has come to let you know that there would be an upending of your religious system.
- Furthermore, you are told that the person who would do this would be from the house of David.
 - This would probably further exacerbate Jeroboam’s anxiety of losing the kingdom, therefore wanting to further secure his throne.
- But what makes this word from the Lord from this “no-named” prophet so powerful is that the prophecy of Josiah was 290 years in advance.
 - We won’t hear of King Josiah of Judah until 2 Kings 23:15-20 where he will accomplish to a “t” everything the Lord said would be done.
- So in hearing these words from this prophet, he cried out, stretching his arm in an authoritative manner demanding this prophet from the south be seized.
 - And with the attempt of cutting off the word of God from the prophet, the text tells us that the hand of Jeroboam dried up – literally withered!
 - What a demonstration of the power of God against one who has tried to go against His messenger.
- Immediately after the withering of Jeroboam’s hand came the sign that this word was to be fulfilled.
 - The altar split apart, and ashes were poured out from the altar just as the prophet from the south said it would.
 - So with Jeroboam witnessing these things before his very eyes, got his attention so much so that he asks the man of God to undo the damage.
- Apparently, the Lord granted such a request because his arm was immediately restored which then prompted the king to ask the man of God a question.
 - The king wanted to now extend hospitality to the prophet for having his hand restored from a withered state.
 - This type of gesture was a typical custom in the East and along with it came the offer of a meal and drink and at times, physical protection.
- However, the prophet from the south wanted no dealings with the fellowship of Jeroboam and his wicked idolatrous ways.
 - The prophet, in a very straightforward manner let Jeroboam know the instructions in which the Lord had directly given him.
 - And in that, there was no room for compromise on the word of God as

Jeroboam had done several times over.

- Herein lies good food for thought as believers today: Even when the culture invites us with a seat at the table, it leaves no room to compromise the Lord's word.
 - There are too many churches, pastors, and ministries that compromise the word of God simply to have "a seat at the table".
 - We must learn that the Lord's desire for His people is obedience.
 - And as we will see the moment that we compromise the truth of the word of God because it "sounds legit" is the moment we give way to discipline.
- So with great haste and obedience to the word of the Lord, the prophet parts ways from Jeroboam and leaves in the opposite direction in which he came.
 - Check out verses 11-19.

1 Kings 13:11 Now an old prophet was living in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the deeds which the man of God had done that day in Bethel; the words which he had spoken to the king, these also they related to their father.

1 Kings 13:12 Their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" Now his sons had seen the way which the man of God who came from Judah had gone.

1 Kings 13:13 Then he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey for him and he rode away on it.

1 Kings 13:14 So 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."

1 Kings 13:15 Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat bread."

1 Kings 13:16 He said, "I cannot return with you, nor go with you, nor will I eat bread or drink water with you in this place."

1 Kings 13:17 "For a command came to me by the word of the Lord, 'You shall eat no bread, nor drink water there; do not return by going the way which you came.' "

1 Kings 13:18 He said to him, "I also am a prophet like you, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.' " But he lied to him.

1 Kings 13:19 So he went back with him, and ate bread in his house and drank water.

- As the narrative continues, we can see that the writer pivots to a different scene of sorts.
 - Jeroboam is no longer in the picture at this point, and we are introduced to what the writer calls "an old prophet" who's living in Bethel.
 - This "old prophet" is not named but rather is characterized by his age and eldership in the city.
 - These details, although quite small, bring some very interesting details to light.

- The reality was, according to 2 Chronicles 11:13-17, there was a migration of priests and people from the North to the South.
 - And the reason for this migration was because of the ways of Jeroboam in the North.
 - Check out the text:

2 Chronicles 11:13 **Moreover, the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel stood with him from all their districts.**

2 Chronicles 11:14 **For the Levites left their pasture lands and their property and came to Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had excluded them from serving as priests to the Lord.**

2 Chronicles 11:15 **He set up priests of his own for the high places, for the satyrs and for the calves which he had made.**

2 Chronicles 11:16 **Those from all the tribes of Israel who set their hearts on seeking the Lord God of Israel followed them to Jerusalem, to sacrifice to the Lord God of their fathers.**

2 Chronicles 11:17 **They strengthened the kingdom of Judah and supported Rehoboam the son of Solomon for three years, for they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years.**

- So, scripture tells us that individuals who desired to seek the God of Israel departed from the North so that they may engage in worship to Yahweh.
 - However, the text tells us that this “old prophet” remained.
 - Perhaps this was indicative of the man’s stubbornness or steadfast ways and complacency.
 - Furthermore, we are told by the historian Josephus the following:

““Now there was a certain wicked man in that city, who was a false prophet, whom Jeroboam had in great esteem, but was deceived by him and his flattering words. This man was bed-rid by reason of the infirmities of old age ... Whereupon he was afraid that this stranger and prophet should be in better esteem with the king than himself, and obtain greater honour from him ...”

- We’re told that this old prophet has sons who inform him about the scene that took place between Jeroboam and the prophet from the south.
 - They must have been in the vicinity because they speak to details of the matters as those who were nearby.
 - Upon hearing this information, unaware of intentions, brings some intrigue in which the old prophet seeks to inquire more information on a first-hand basis.
 - So he asks his sons which way the prophet went and follows after him

- The “old prophet” finds the prophet from the south under an oak and asks the man the same question that Jeroboam asked him some time ago:
 - “Come home with me and eat bread.”
- One question that is worth asking at this point is: “Why?” Why does this old prophet seek the company of this prophet?
 - Could there be some underlying motives that foster a bit of ill-intent?
 - Perhaps Josephus’ words hold weight in that this old prophet began to be impacted by the ways of Jeroboam and pride settled in.
 - Whatever the case, we find that initially the prophet from Judah was not moved by the old prophet’s words.
- The prophet from the south informs the older prophet that he has been given words from the Lord that he was not to depart from the instructions given.
 - What a solid response – this prophet is unmoved and steadfast in the instructions of the Lord.
 - However, this becomes short lived because of the manipulation of the “old prophet’s” false information disguised as divine revelation from God.
- The “old prophet” tells the younger prophet that he too has gotten revelation, however, he says that an angel spoke to him from the Lord.
 - And he proceeds to tell the prophet from the south that this “new word” from the Lord says to invite him back to the house to eat and drink water.
- Herein lies the way the enemy seeks to deceive, especially within the confines of the church.
 - The enemy is so crafty that he will use words that sound like they come from God but are not from the Lord.
 - This is why it is so very important that we know what thus saith the Lord!
 - Because even in pulpits today, pastors are preaching what people want to hear rather than what they need to hear!
 - 2 Timothy 4:3-4, the Apostle Paul tells young Timothy these words:

2 Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,

2 Timothy 4:4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

- If we do not guard our hearts in the word of God, we can be fooled to think something said to us that “sounds good” is good.
 - When the reality is, the Lord didn’t say it and therefore what HE does not say is not good for me!
 - So the prophet from Judah, having bought into the lie from the “old prophet”

proceeds to go with him to his home. Check out verses 20-25:

1 Kings 13:20 Now it came about, as they were sitting down at the table, that the word of the Lord came to the prophet who had brought him back;

1 Kings 13:21 and he cried to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Because you have disobeyed the command of the Lord, and have not observed the commandment which the Lord your God commanded you,

1 Kings 13:22 but have returned and 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 grave of your fathers.’ ”

1 Kings 13:23 It came about after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, that he saddled the donkey for him, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

1 Kings 13:24 Now when he had gone, a lion met him on the way and killed him, and his body was thrown on the road, with the donkey standing beside it; the lion also was standing beside the body.

1 Kings 13:25 And behold, men passed by and saw the body thrown on the road, and the lion standing beside the body; so they came and told it in the city where the old prophet lived.

- - What becomes such a mind-blowing reality is that as they are sitting at the “old prophet’s” table to eat, that true divine communication comes to him.
 - And this word is a word of judgement upon the prophet from the south.
 - And this judgement is that he will not receive an honorable burial in the burial grounds of his father.
 - This had to have been a sobering moment for both the young and old prophet.
 - For the young prophet, he had followed the instruction of the Lord up to a certain point, then compromised, forfeiting an honorable burial.
 - And perhaps an early death.
 - On the other hand, the “old prophet”, having lied about the very words of God, now hears the word of the Lord for Himself.
 - This had to be a humbling moment on both ends of the stick!
 - Without hesitation, the young prophet has his donkey saddled and departs from the home.
 - Some time passes and the younger prophet is killed by a lion on the road.
 - However, this scene is a bit strange, because the lion does not eat the prophet, he simply stands next to the body and the donkey.
 - This becomes a divine interaction from the Lord by which the prophet’s body is preserved but was met with judgement according to his disobedience.
 - The initial thought here becomes, why that type of death? Shouldn’t the “old prophet” have suffered judgement for having lied to the man.

- On the onset, it would seem that that route would be fair and just.
- However, if the Lord hadn't dealt righteously with the man in whom He had given a word and mission to complete, how would the Lord be perceived?
- God's dealings and justice are far better than our own and at the end of the day, the Lord desires obedience rather than compromise.
 - Moreover, the responsibility was greater for the prophet which means that the severity of punishment would be equally great.
 - Unfortunately, the writer does not provide us with the consequences of the "old prophet's" lies, but we can tell that there is some guilt felt.
 - Because in verses 26-31, we find the "old prophet's" response to the death of the prophet from Judah.
 - It is as if the judgement that befell the young prophet brought about conviction within the heart of the "old prophet". Check out the text.

1 Kings 13:26 Now when the prophet who brought him back from the way heard it, he said, "It is the man of God, who disobeyed the command of the Lord; therefore the Lord has given him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke to him."

1 Kings 13:27 Then he spoke to his sons, saying, "Saddle the donkey for me." And they saddled it.

1 Kings 13:28 He went and found his body thrown on the road with the donkey and the lion standing beside the body; the lion had not eaten the body nor torn the donkey.

1 Kings 13:29 So the prophet took up the body of the man of God and laid it on the donkey and brought it back, and he came to the city of the old prophet to mourn and to bury him.

1 Kings 13:30 He laid his body in his own grave, and they mourned over him, saying, "Alas, my brother!"

1 Kings 13:31 After he had buried him, he spoke to his sons, saying, "When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones."

1 Kings 13:32 "For the thing shall surely come to pass which he cried by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria."

- The "old prophet" as best he can seeks to provide the young prophet an honorable burial.
 - And he does so by picking up the body, transporting him back to the town of the "old prophet" and burying him in his very own grave.
 - The old prophet concludes in the end based upon the judgement that fell upon the old prophet that his words about this future king was true.

- The conviction comes about when he realizes how the Lord had dealt accordingly to the man of God.
- This brings about an important point in application: The weight and responsibility on the pastor/teacher is a heavy one!
 - Because we are responsible for what we preach!
 - Not only in making sure that we are preaching the unadulterated word of God, but if we fail to live by it, we suffer all the more greatly.
- James says in his writing in James 3:1-2 the following regarding the role of teacher:

James 3:1 Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

- All in all, the Lord's dealing with the prophet confirmed for the "old prophet" that: 1) the Lord doesn't play with His word and 2) the Lord shows no favoritism.
 - Finally, the writer comes to a concluding point which at first glance may seem distant in discussion, however it is very much connected.
 - Because in verses 33-34, he reveals a particular response from a certain individual that did not change – Jeroboam. Check out verses 33-34.

1 Kings 13:33 After this event Jeroboam did not return from his evil way, but again he made priests of the high places from among all the people; any who would, he ordained, to be priests of the high places.

1 Kings 13:34 This event became sin to the house of Jeroboam, even to blot it out and destroy it from off the face of the earth.

- There seems to be a sense of contrast between the response of Jeroboam after the word of the Lord is given, versus that of the "old prophet's" response to the word of God.
 - Jeroboam's initial response to the judgement of a withered hand was not centered on a contrite heart, but rather a sense of circumstantial surrender.
 - In other words, because this has happened to me, what must I do to transactionally resolve the matter.
 - Jeroboam's display of pleasantries to the prophet was not due to what the prophet had to say, but rather what the prophet could do for him.
 - Jeroboam's heart was not stirred to repentance after the word of the Lord was given.
 - Instead, Jeroboam responded out of the abundance of his heart which was centered on himself, not a proper response – obedience to the word.
 - Now you juxtapose Jeroboam's response to the word of God versus that of the old prophet.
 - The old prophet begins in lies and deception because he has become

complacent in “the ways of Jeroboam”.

- He then receives a true word of revelation from the Lord to give the man of God and ultimately realizes that his words have brought about judgement on the man.
 - And this response from the Lord due to the guilty hands of the old prophet moves him to guilt and a way to restore honor to the prophet from Judah.
 - Clearly, there was a light switch moment for the old prophet because at the end he realizes that the word of the Lord given to the prophet from Judah was true.
 - And in turn even the old prophet believed the words of the Lord.
- However, this same sense of fear and remorse has not captured the heart of Jeroboam.
 - Because the text tells us that in verse 33, after the young prophet dies that “Jeroboam did not return from his evil way...”
 - Simply put, Jeroboam did not turn from his evil ways or show a repentant heart.
- As a matter of fact, Jeroboam continues in his ways so much so that he made more priests for these “high places” for idolatrous worship.
 - There is this sense of overwhelming blindness in the actions of Jeroboam because the text mentions that anyone who desired to be an “illegitimate priest” was accepted.
- What a place of desperation and darkness one must be at to not only neglect the standards in which God has established for His priesthood.
 - But even more so to seek whoever has a pulse to do an illegitimate job for the sake of looking right is a low that Jeroboam was willing to go.
- Jeroboam’s lack of submission to the will and word of God and his giving into apostasy caused the North to fall into “great sin”.
 - As we continue through the study of 1 Kings, you will notice the writer will use this phrase, “in the ways of Jeroboam”,
 - This phrase speaks directly into the continued sin of apostasy and idolatry that was brought on by Jeroboam and his leadership in the North.
- One thing is for sure, the Lord was not pleased with Jeroboam and his lack of obedience to the Law.
 - More than that, Jeroboam’s neglect for the word of God became such a sore spot for the Lord that He wants to completely rid Jeroboam from the throne.
- When we give our ear to the voices of individuals who do not know the word of God, we give way for confusion to settle in, compromise to get comfortable, and so on.
 - The guarding of our gates (hearts/mind) is so vitally important especially in the world we live in today.
 - There are people who claim to know God and His word, yet if not discerned against the very words of God, you can be fooled.
 - Scripture tells us that there will be a time in which people are going to want their ears tickled and their word diluted.

- And the scary part about that is people are okay with it! But friends, may we take heed and know that a departure from the word leads to nothing good.
 - May we not be moved in our walk with the Lord even if the things that people say sounds “like God”.
 - We should be so stubborn in our faith that we do what the Bereans did: Ask the question, “where did you see that in the scriptures?”
- If God did not say it, I don’t want to hear it!
 - There was this Sunday school song we used to sing when I was a child that went like this:
 - “Shoo fly don’t bother me, shoo fly don’t bother me, Shoo fly don’t bother me cause I belong to somebody (pointing to the Lord in Heaven).
- And I loved this song because we were saying, “Move away all the distractions and nuisances that is around me – I belong to the Lord”.
 - The Lord is wanting to get your attention! Know the truth, discern His truth. His truth is found in His word.
 - And may we not let anything, or anyone get in the way of the pursuit of knowing what thus saith the Lord.
 - Let's Pray.

Citation:

- Tom Constable, [Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), 1 Ki 13:1. Josephus, Antiquities of ..., 8:9:1.

- Last week we dealt with a timely prophecy, a disobedient prophet, and a word given to Jeroboam by a no-named prophet from the south.
 - This prophecy dealt with the ways of Jeroboam and how he had caused Israel to defect from Torah and given towards idolatry.
 - Reluctant to hear the words about himself, Jeroboam sought to cut off the word of the Lord by trying to kill the prophet.
 - As a result, the Lord instantaneously caused Jeroboam's arm to be withered up for a time.
 - To which Jeroboam sought to request of the Lord that his hand might be restored.
 - The scene then switches to a disobedient prophet from the North who adopted the ways of Jeroboam who seeks to be dishonest with the prophet from the south.
 - This ultimately resulted in the prophet from the south being killed which was prophesied by the old prophet.
 - And having been guilt stricken by the lies of his lips sought to restore honor to the young prophet by burying him in his own grave.
 - And what became an interesting point in the text was the juxtaposition between that of Jeroboam and the Old Prophet.
 - That where they both once walked in “the ways of Jeroboam” doing evil in the sight of the Lord, only one showed change by responding to truth.
 - And that person was none other than the old prophet himself.
 - He went from spewing lies about the Lord to now, under the very command of God, being used to proclaim truth about the word of the Lord.
 - And that became the point in it all – the Lord takes His word seriously and you will either respond to truth or not.
 - And as we witnessed with Jeroboam, there was no willingness to change – he simply remained in his ways.
 - Well, as we know, once the mercy of the Lord is extended and one continues in disobedience, the gavel must come down as a way of justice being administered.
 - It's in this chapter, Chapter 14, that we will witness a series of events that result in the ways of Jeroboam as a means of judgement from God.
 - If I were to outline our time in the text tonight, we will see the following:
 - 1. Prophecy against Jeroboam (vv.1-16)
 - 2. Prophecy of the Lord fulfilled (vv.17-20)
 - 3. Rehoboam's end (vv.21-31)
 - If I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would simply be: The Domino Effect: One thing Leads to Another.
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 14 beginning in verses 1-16.

1 Kings 14:1 At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam became sick.

1 Kings 14:2 Jeroboam said to his wife, “Arise now, and disguise yourself so that they will not know that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh; behold, Ahijah the prophet is there, who spoke concerning me that I would be king over this people.

1 Kings 14:3 “Take ten loaves with you, some cakes and a jar of honey, and go to him. He will tell you what will happen to the boy.”

1 Kings 14:4 Jeroboam’s wife did so, and 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.

1 Kings 14:5 Now the Lord had said to Ahijah, “Behold, the wife of Jeroboam is coming to inquire of you concerning her son, for he is sick. You shall say thus and thus to her, for it will be when she arrives that she will pretend to be another woman.”

1 Kings 14:6 When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet coming in the doorway, he said, “Come in, wife of Jeroboam, why do you pretend to be another woman? For I am sent to you with a harsh message.

1 Kings 14:7 “Go, say to Jeroboam, ‘Thus says the Lord God of Israel, “Because I exalted you from among the people and made you leader over My people Israel, **1 Kings 14:8** and tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you —yet you have not been like My servant David, who kept My commandments and who followed Me with all his heart, to do only that which was right in My sight;

1 Kings 14:9 you also have done more evil than all who were before you, and have gone and made for yourself other gods and molten images to provoke Me to anger, and have cast Me behind your back—

1 Kings 14:10 therefore behold, I am bringing calamity on the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male person, both bond and free in Israel, and I will make a clean sweep of the house of Jeroboam, as one sweeps away dung until it is all gone.

1 Kings 14:11 “Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city the dogs will eat. And he who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat; for the Lord has spoken it.”

1 Kings 14:12 “Now you, arise, go to your house. When your feet enter the city the child will die.

1 Kings 14:13 “All Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he alone of Jeroboam’s family will come to the grave, because in him something good was found toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.

1 Kings 14:14 “Moreover, the Lord will raise up for Himself a king over Israel who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this day and from now on.

1 Kings 14:15 “For the Lord will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; and He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will

scatter them beyond the Euphrates River, because they have made their Asherim, provoking the Lord to anger.

1 Kings 14:16 “He will give up Israel on account of the sins of Jeroboam, which he committed and with which he made Israel to sin.”

- The writer of Kings continues in the narrative following the previous events recorded in Chapter 13.
 - We are able to surmise this because he begins verse 1 by saying, “At that time”, meaning these events took place not too long after the previous chapter.
 - This becomes a subtle hint for the reader, you and I, as we make our way through this chapter.
 - And what this begins to allude to is the observation of Jeroboam’s continued habits in doing evil in the sight of the Lord.
 - We are told that Jeroboam’s young son fell ill and like any parent, Jeroboam sought help to aid his child back to health.
 - However, in doing so, Jeroboam’s method of choice becomes quite questionable because of his chosen approach.
 - He has his wife disguise herself in a way that will not give way to her identity as Jeroboam’s wife.
 - And she is to go to Shiloh to the prophet Ahijah for his son to be healed.
 - What I found most interesting in the text at this point was Jeroboam knew who to go to.
 - He did not run to go to the prophets which he hired for his false religious system.
 - He did not go to the golden calves in which he established as “high places”
 - No, he goes to the man of God who gave him the very word of the Lord by which established him as king over Israel (Northern tribes).
 - How quickly we run to our source of help and strength, some fail to fully acknowledge His truth, glory, and majesty.
 - Jeroboam then has his wife take 10 loaves, some cakes, and a jar of honey to the prophet as if to win a favorable “turn of events”.
 - This is the equivalent to an unbeliever thinking that their giving somehow puts them into right standing with God.
 - God cannot be bought, nor can he be fooled by the ways of men!
 - The reality was, this was the methodology for the idol worship that Jeroboam had established himself.
 - That to appease his “god of choice” he had to present certain things or preform in a certain way to get his attention.
 - However, as we will see, Yahweh does not work that way. God is to be approached in the way He has established for men to approach Him.

- Jeroboam sought to somehow turn his current unfavorable odds into an opportunity of favor.
 - However, how can one expect the Lord to bless them in any way if there is failure in obedience to His truth.
 - God is not a genie in a bottle where we can rub the magic lamp and make our wishes and be served!
 - This clearly shows us that not only was Jeroboam's theology thrown off, but His submission to the God that established him was lacking greatly!
- So, in response to her husband's request, Jeroboam's wife goes to Shiloh to meet with Ahijah.
 - It's in verse 4 that we're told that as Jeroboam's wife is being sent to him, that the Lord is preparing his prophet to send back a response.
 - We find that Ahijah is now in old age and at the point that he is not able to see.
 - However, despite the lack of physical vision, Ahijah is given the spiritual insight to know the scheme that Jeroboam has cooked up.
- This really serves as a great reminder of God's sovereignty at work in the lives of his people.
 - That even in our greatest means of disadvantage, the Lord is able to still use us and work through us.
 - Ahijah although blind, is still able to see, in a way, the foolish ways of men because of the help of the Lord.
 - And as a way of application: Don't ever allow your frailties dictate your faith in the Living God. Even with a limp, the Lord can still use you!
- Verse 5 tells us that the Lord is divinely downloading information to Ahijah to prepare him for the arrival of Jeroboam's wife.
 - And the Lord gives him the very words that he is to speak regarding the inquiry of their son and his condition.
 - The Lord even lets the prophet know that Jeroboam's wife will disguise herself as someone else.
 - So it's not a surprise that by verse 6 when Ahijah hears footsteps at his door, he says with firm confidence, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam".
 - And if that wasn't rattling enough, he continues by saying, "Why do you pretend to be another woman."
 - This had to be quite shocking given the fact that Jeroboam had not prepared her for Ahijah knowing what was discussed in secret.
 - This simply goes to show how there is nothing that is hidden from the Lord. He is all-knowing.
 - Furthermore, although Jeroboam's wife was sent with a message, she was not prepared for the message that the prophet had for her.
 - And the message that the Lord has for Jeroboam is one that would be harsh or "difficult".

- The message begins with acknowledging the fact that Jeroboam was king because Yahweh had established it as such – God made him leader over the people.
 - However, because of Jeroboam's failure to remain faithful to Torah the Lord was going to “cut off Jeroboam”.
- And the way in which the “cutting off” would occur was through Jeroboam's dynasty.
 - The text says that “calamity” or destruction would befall Jeroboam's house and this would be done through the removal of every male descendant.
 - In that, not only would the male seeds be destroyed, but anyone belonging to Jeroboam who died would be eaten by dogs in the city or birds in the field.
- What this means in plain language is that there would be no proper/honorable burial for Jeroboam's descendants.
 - You might recall how Eli, the prophet who trained up Samuel, had his children experience a similarly devastating end.
 - And if that was not enough to handle, he concludes with a personal note.
 - He states that when she leaves Shiloh and her feet enter their city, the child in whom she came to inquire about will die.
 - I'm sure at this point the bread, cakes, and the like are on the floor or completely forgotten about as she wrestles with this reality.
- What becomes a profound aspect of this text is that in verse 13, the prophet mentions that with this child that will soon die, he will be mourned for and buried.
 - And the reason for that is because, “...in him something good was found toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.”
 - What a profound statement! I say this because remember every other descendent will be killed and not given a burial.
 - Yet this child who is to die will be given a proper burial and the Lord found good in him.
- Herein lies a mystery in which many wrestle with theologically: If the child was good why did he have to die?
 - Why not have all of Jeroboam's descendants die except this child?!
 - So many questions can run through our minds regarding these matters, yet we come to a point of solace in the text.
 - And that point is that God is Sovereign and He alone is in control!
 - We often do not have the answers as to why the Lord allows certain things to happen and why He chooses not to withhold other things.
 - Furthermore, the writer does not establish any leads as to the reason in which the Lord made that decision.
 - Perhaps this child's death was a blessing in disguise knowing the mess his father had made.
 - Or perhaps being that good was found in him, who knows what he would have

had to face as a leader amidst a secularist culture.

- We can speculate all day on this matter, but what becomes certain is that God knows, and we can trust that it was for the good of the child. (Romans 8:28)
- Following this prophecy, we see in verse 12 that the death of the child would serve as confirmation of what was coming to Jeroboam's house.
 - This prophecy continues with some confirming yet prophetic pronouncements.
- It's in verse 14 that the Lord mentions "how" Jeroboam's house would be cut off.
 - Ahijah mentions that the cut-off would occur by the Lord raising up for Himself another king who would bring about this destruction.
 - And this king goes by the name Baasha, we learn in 1 Kings 15:27-29.
 - Check out with me really quickly verse 25-30 of Chapter 15.

1 Kings 15:25 Now Nadab the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years.

1 Kings 15:26 He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father and in his sin which he made Israel sin.

1 Kings 15:27 Then 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, while Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon.

1 Kings 15:28 So Baasha killed him in the third year of Asa king of Judah and reigned in his place.

1 Kings 15:29 It came about as soon as he was king, he struck down all the household of Jeroboam. He did not leave to Jeroboam any persons alive, until he had destroyed them, according to the word of the Lord, which He spoke by His servant Ahijah the Shilonite,

1 Kings 15:30 and because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, because of his provocation with which he provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger.

- ○ So what we see is that there would be a fulfillment of the word of the Lord spoken by the prophet Ahijah.
 - Once again, the Lord takes His word seriously and He does not lie.
 - And what a great reminder of the faithfulness of God regarding His fidelity to the very scriptures.
 - We can know that these 66 books that we read are inspired by the Holy Spirit so that we may grow in our trust in His word, timing, and for our good (maturity).
- After the mentioning of Baasha being raised as king to "cut-off" the lineage of Jeroboam, the prophetic word continues regarding the Lord coming against Israel.
 - Ahijah states that the Lord was going to "strike" Israel in verse 15.
 - The word "strike" in Hebrew means to affect or afflict and in some cases with the use of a divine agent.

- In other words, the Lord was going to use someone(s) to afflict the northern kingdom.
 - The text mentions that this will be done as a “reed is shaken in the water”
- A reed is a very tall and hollow stem that grows in marshes.
 - It easily sways in the wind and can oftentimes seem very unstable in its stature.
- So, what the Lord is illustrating here in the text is how the northern kingdom is experiencing instability like a shaky reed in water.
 - If Jeroboam says jump, they jump, if Jeroboam says crawl they crawl. The nation was suffering greatly at the ways of Jeroboam.
- So as a consequence of the disobedience of Israel, the Lord would execute discipline upon them by “uprooting them from the land”.
 - This is significant because this does not mean that God’s dealing with His people was done, but this was a consequence of their disobedience.
 - And according to Deuteronomy, (the blessings and the cursing), when this type of action is committed, the people must be taken out of the land for a time.
- The text mentions that from the uprooting that there would proceed a scattering of the people beyond the Euphrates.
 - And as we know through our bible reading, this scattering for the North did take place as a result of Israel’s judgement in 722 B.C.
 - And the instrument in which God used to accomplish this scattering was the Assyrians.
- So again, notice the reason for this removal from the land, it is because the people had made “Asherim” (plural form)
 - This means that the establishment of idolatry throughout the land along with these high places was numerous and a direct assault against the Lord.
- Lastly, we get here to verse 16, where the text mentions that the Lord would “give up Israel”.
 - Now on the onset, some will look at this and say “Here’s proof that Israel is no longer God’s focus, it’s the church now”.
 - These types of passages, if not understood in the grand scheme of the biblical narrative, can be very confusing.
- Let’s understand what the text IS NOT saying. It is not implying that the Lord gave up Israel as His chosen children.
 - Or for that matter that the Lord gave up on his covenantal promises regarding Israel.
 - If that were the case, the Lord’s word becomes void and He ceases to be the promise-keeper the word shows Him to be.
 - So what is the text actually telling us?
- The word “give up” in Hebrew in this context means to surrender something over.
 - In other words, the Lord will allow a temporary “handing over” of Israel to face

their judgement, because of the sins of Jeroboam.

- So the idea that the Lord “gave up” or forsook Israel is only in a temporary conditional sense.
- So this prophecy is given with great detail as to “how” this would be accomplished.
 - Again, this information had to have shaken Jeroboam’s wife to the core because now she has to relay this information to her husband.
 - Check out verses 17-20.

1 Kings 14:17 Then Jeroboam’s wife arose and departed and came to Tirzah. As she was entering the threshold of the house, the child died.

1 Kings 14:18 All Israel buried him and mourned for him, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke through His servant Ahijah the prophet.

1 Kings 14:19 Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he made war and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

1 Kings 14:20 The time that Jeroboam reigned was twenty-two years; and he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his place.

- Within an approximate 15-mile journey, one could only imagine the grief and immense sadness that Jeroboam’s wife was carrying.
 - The text tells us in verse 17 that as she left Shiloh and entered Tizrah that upon entering, her child died just as the prophet had stated.
 - At this point, the writer concludes his mentioning of Jeroboam and his actions, directly.
 - We are told in verse 19 that the remaining acts of Jeroboam’s total 22-year reign is documented in “The book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel”.
 - These documents are historical in nature and were kept as royal archives of the kings and their activities.
 - What we should understand from the writer not including all of Jeroboam’s acts and rule is that he is wanting us to see something regarding Jeroboam.
 - The Holy Spirit, inspiring this writer, is shining a light on the very ways of Jeroboam which can be reflective of his entire rule.
 - Here is where we are able to see that what scripture highlights and details is for the benefit of our knowledge and growth in the Lord. (2 Timothy 3:16)
 - We are told that Jeroboam, after his 22 year reign, dies and in his place rises his son named Nadab.
 - And as we read earlier, Nadab’s reign is short lived, because not too long during that time, he will be killed by Baasha.
 - The writer now pivots from a focus on the king of the north and shines a light on the king of the south, Solomon’s son, Rehoboam. Check out verses 21-31.

1 Kings 14:21 Now Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city

which the Lord had chosen from all the tribes of Israel to put His name there. And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess.

1 Kings 14:22 Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked Him to jealousy more than all that their fathers had done, with the sins which they committed.

1 Kings 14:23 For they also built for themselves high places and sacred pillars and Asherim on every high hill and beneath every luxuriant tree.

1 Kings 14:24 There were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord dispossessed before the sons of Israel.

1 Kings 14:25 Now it happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, that Shishak the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.

1 Kings 14:26 He took away the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house, and he took everything, even taking all the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

1 Kings 14:27 So King Rehoboam made shields of bronze in their place, and committed them to the care of the commanders of the guard who guarded the doorway of the king's house.

1 Kings 14:28 Then it happened as often as the king entered the house of the Lord, that the guards would carry them and would bring them back into the guards' room.

1 Kings 14:29 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?

1 Kings 14:30 There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.

1 Kings 14:31 And Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David; and his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. And Abijam his son became king in his place.

- Right when you think that things would be different for the Southern Kingdom...think again.
 - The only difference between the North and the South is that the city in which was the capital of the Southern Kingdom remained was God's chosen place where His name would dwell as well as His chosen seed would come from.
 - And the writer sees fit to make the distinction accordingly.
 - For the only thing upholding Judah was what the Lord would bring forth out of them in years to come – Jesus Christ the son of David.
 - And this was so because of the promise that the Lord made to David in 2 Samuel 7 regarding the Davidic Covenant.
 - We are given some historical information regarding Rehoboam such as his time of rule and age in which he began as king of Judah.
 - He became king at 41 years of age and that his reign lasted 17 years (from 931-913 BC).
 - What should stand out to us in this text is how the writer includes a detail regarding Rehoboam's mother.

- Notice how he describes Rehoboam's mother – she is an Ammonite and Ammonites were Canannite worshipers of the idol god, Molech.
- Secondly, Torah forbade the kings to intermarry with nations in which the Lord deemed deplorable or were pushed out from the land itself.
- What this shows is that Rehoboam was no better than that of Jeroboam. Both committed covenant violations.
 - And if that wasn't proof enough, the text mentions in verses 22-24 that the ways of the Ammonites were carried out throughout Judah as well.
 - Perhaps influenced by his mother, Rehoboam permits the establishment of idol worship in Judah and establishes high places on the high hills.
- So, where David had thwarted out all of these idolatrous conditions in the past, his grandson now reinstates these idols in the land.
 - The conditions from the North are now transpiring in the south and it is all due to the failure of submission to Torah.
 - And as we witnessed with Jeroboam, all covenantal unfaithfulness results in judgement and discipline from the Lord.
- And indeed discipline did ensue because as verse 25 records, in Rehoboam's 5th year as King, Shishak, King of Egypt "came up against Jerusalem".
 - If you remember, Jeroboam had fled to Egypt, escaping the threat of death from Solomon and found permission of refuge from Shishak.
- So as a means of judgement, Egyptians began to strip Judah of their strength and wealth.
 - Judah's strength being the Temple and her wealth being stored in the King's palace.
 - The very glory of Israel's temple and strength was beginning to be defaced all due to the covenantal unfaithfulness of Rehoboam.
 - We know that this is the case because of what 2 Chronicles 12:1-7 tells us. Check out the text:

2 Chronicles 12:1 When the kingdom of Rehoboam was established and strong, he and all Israel with him forsook the law of the Lord.

2 Chronicles 12:2 And it came about in King Rehoboam's fifth year, because they had been unfaithful to the Lord, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem

2 Chronicles 12:3 with 1,200 chariots and 60,000 horsemen. And the people who came with him from Egypt were without number: the Lubim, the Sukkiim and the Ethiopians.

2 Chronicles 12:4 He captured the fortified cities of Judah and came as far as Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 12:5 Then Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the princes of Judah who had gathered at Jerusalem because of Shishak, and he said to them, "Thus says the Lord, 'You have forsaken Me, so I also have forsaken you to Shishak.' "

2 Chronicles 12:6 So the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, "The Lord is righteous."

2 Chronicles 12:7 When the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, “They have humbled themselves so I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some measure of deliverance, and My wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by means of Shishak.

- Notice that 2 Chronicles documents a different reaction in the south versus that of the North.
 - That where the King sees that the Lord is not pleased, both he and the people of Israel (Southern assemblies) repent and turn their hearts towards the Lord.
 - This turning of the heart leads to a relenting of destruction and allows time for mercy.
 - What an amazing principle to see here that the Lord’s mercy is ever so available when we respond accordingly. What a grace that is!
 - So the Lord in His kindness relents the destruction for a time, check out what he says in verse 7 of 2 Chronicles 12:
 - “and My Wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by means of Shishak”.
 - In other words, because of Judah’s repentance the Lord would withhold war and provide peace.
 - And in return, with all that was lost in the war, as verses 26-28 state, Rehoboam replaced the stolen expensive items with bronze replacements.
 - In other words, the damage that was done couldn’t be replaced and perhaps served as a reminder to the King and the people of Judah.
- What a lesson that must have been. Consider this, the halls that were once walked through and admired by those near and far was now ransacked.
 - And not only that but the things that were on display are no longer available to see and are replaced by mere substitutes of lower quality.
 - Perhaps this served as a reminder to the people of Judah of what sin can do if not cut out – it causes great loss.
 - Relationships that are broken due to sin, often are not able to be fully restored as though they once were because of how sin mars.
 - Sin that we commit against our own bodies causing physical ailments that can warrant life-time repercussions.
 - Yet, the Lord allows these things as reminders to us that although damage has been done, He is still merciful.
 - He still preserved our lives and our hearts are still intact.
 - There can be no indulging in sin without great loss in the end to some extent. At the end of the day friends, sin is costly.
 - The level of attack that Judah experienced was the first of its kind since Saul’s reign as King.
 - And this simply goes to show that when a Nation begins to pull away from truth, it only descends and suffers.

- Finally, in verses 29-31 the writer concludes similarly to how he summarized the remainder of Jeroboam's life.
 - He mentions that the remaining acts of Rehoboam's life is recorded in the "book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah".
 - Again, there seems to have been a historical record of royal documentation regarding the reign of both the kings of the North and South.
 - One can assume that these historical documents contained much more information than what the writer of Kings provides.
 - And the writer's point becomes evident in what he chooses to omit regarding Rehoboam's reign.
 - In other words, what the Holy Spirit intended for us to know is that the ways of Rehoboam were in defect to the Laws of Moses.
 - And this independence from Torah gave way to further internal conflict between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms.
 - Verse 30 mentions that there was war continually between Rehoboam and Jeroboam.
 - Some suggest that this civil war was the result of border disputes, however the text does not disclose this matter.
 - Simply put, the writer's point is for the reader to see the ways of the Kings and in turn the result of the Nation and their consequences.
 - Lastly in verse 31 the writer concludes in a summarized fashion the conclusion of Rehoboam's life.
 - And in his death, he is buried with his father in the city of David.
 - What I find quite telling is the writer's repetitive nature of mentioning Rehoboam's mother, as if a prominent player in his life.
 - To mention her suggests that she has had some type of role in the ways in which the Southern Kingdom has defected.
 - Through it all, the Davidic lineage continues through Rehoboam's son named Abijam.
 - And what will be quite revealing, as we approach Chapter 15, is the ways of the father don't depart the ways of the son.
 - For as long as the kings remain independent of Torah, the further into destruction they find themselves in.
 - Let's Pray.

- In our last session, we came across the sobering consequences of Jeroboam's ways and rule as king in Israel.
 - It was because of his failure to return to Torah and the Mosaic Covenant in repentance and walk away from idolatry that led to the ending of his dynasty.
 - What once was a promising opportunity to have the Lord establish an enduring house for him, now turned into a complete elimination of his line.
 - The Lord had provided opportunity after opportunity for a turning of Jeroboam's heart back to the Lord.
 - However, every offer of mercy was met with hostility and arrogance.
 - Therefore, the Lord returned to Jeroboam what he had shown the Lord.
 - It was in Chapter 14, that a prophecy was given to Ahijah regarding Jeroboam's son who fell sick.
 - Jeroboam, seeking to find a way to heal his son, sent his wife to Ahijah that the Lord would heal the boy.
 - However, Jeroboam has the wife disguise herself as someone else in an attempt to trick the prophet.
 - The Lord informs Ahijah of Jeroboam's trickery and lays down a heavy pronouncement of judgement.
 - And within that pronouncement came the announcement of the ending of Jeroboam's lineage through the raising of another king.
 - And this king would kill every male child and descendent of the line of Jeroboam.
 - We also witnessed another tragedy in the South where Rehoboam began to operate in the ways of idolatry just like their fellow countrymen of the north.
 - This theme of defecting from the Mosaic Law and turning towards idolatry began to spread throughout the entire nation.
 - So as the kings die and their sons or others ascend to the throne, we will find that there is a constant revolving door of failed kings with the exception of a few.
 - If I were to put an outline together, we will see the following:
 - 1. Abijam's Reign (vv.1-8)
 - 2. Asa's Reign (vv.9-24)
 - 3. Nadab's Reign (vv.25-32)
 - 4. Baasha's Reign (vv.33-34)
 - And if I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would simply be: More of the Same.
 - With that being said, meet me in 1 Kings 15, beginning with verses 1-8 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 15:1 Now in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, Abijam became king over Judah.

1 Kings 15:2 He reigned three years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom.

1 Kings 15:3 He walked in all the sins of his father which he had committed before him; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the Lord his God, like the heart of his father David.

1 Kings 15:4 But for David's sake the Lord his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, to raise up his son after him and to establish Jerusalem;

1 Kings 15:5 because David did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the case of Uriah the Hittite.

1 Kings 15:6 There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life.

1 Kings 15:7 Now 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.

1 Kings 15:8 And Abijam slept with his fathers and they buried him in the city of David; and Asa his son became king in his place.

- The spotlight now shifts towards Rehoboam's son, Abijam, who will now be the new king of Judah.
 - And to establish timelines of the king's reign, you will notice the writer identifying the reign of a particular king during the reign of the opposing king's reign.
 - So, in this instance, we find that while Jeroboam was still reigning in his 18th year as king in the North, that Rehoboam's son began his reign.
 - These dates would be approximately 913-911 BC, which gives a total of three years in which Abijam reigned in Jerusalem.
 - You might notice that the writer picks up on the same identifying language as he did in the previous chapter regarding the mother of the king.
 - This detail still plays a significant role as it relates to the king's behavior in his rule overall and giving into the worship of idols.
 - We're told that Abijam's mother is Maacah, the daughter of Absolam.
 - You will also see a little later that Asa's "mother" was Maacah. So we will address this confusion soon. Check out verse 3.
 - We're told that Abijam "walked in the sins of his father". In other words, the rule of the son did not depart far from the rule of the father.
 - Where Abijam has the opportunity to turn things around regarding his rule as King, he continues in the ways of idolatry as did Rehoboam.
 - The text tells us that Abijam's heart was not "wholly devoted" to the Lord.
 - Plainly put, the interest of his heart was pulled due to something or someone else taking priority over that of Yahweh Himself.
 - So, we are seeing that there is this defection with the kings and their ability to obey

Torah.

- And as a result, they concede to the ways of their nature, seeking to make idols as if they are gods.
- But despite the ways of the king of Judah and the people, there is a promise connected to both the people and the place – the Davidic Covenant.
- The writer reminds us that despite the frailties and idolatry of the people playing the harlot, that God was not going to forsake His promise according to 2 Samuel 7.
 - God's promise was that there would arise from Judah a king.
 - A descendant of David who would indeed be the lamp in Jerusalem and ultimately the world.
 - And knowing that this rule was based upon the obedience of the king begged a question: "Who would be the ideal King of Judah?"
 - David, although a man after God's own heart, still fell short.
 - Therefore this promised King would have to be someone that not only knew Torah but fulfilled it!
- Furthermore, this rule of the ideal king would also bring about peace!
 - The people understood this reality and anticipated this Royal outcome through the scriptures and partially experienced in Solomon's rule.
 - Therefore, the constant failure of the kings was to draw great anticipation for this promised King (2 Sam. 7).
- We find in verse 6 that war was a constant between Rehoboam and Jeroboam.
 - We will see this mentioning of war appear 4 times regarding civil war.
 - And as the narrative unfolds, we will see that this civil war centered around border territory.
- Ideally, what makes a nation-state a nation-state is the clear identification and claims of its borders.
 - For when a nation lacks in their establishment of proper borders, it leaves them vulnerable to others.
- And as we witnessed in last week's teaching, it was King Shishak who had invaded Judah because of Judah's disobedience to the Lord. (1 Kings 14:25)
 - And it just so happened that Shishak was also an ally of Jeroboam.
- If that wasn't enough, war continued between Rehoboam's son, Abijam and Jeroboam as well.
 - And if you are interested in learning more about this war between Abijam (Rehoboam's son) and Jeroboam, check out 2 Chronicles 13.
 - And as a quick note to clarify confusion, Abijam in 1 Kings and Abijah in 2 Chronicles are the same person – it is simply a variant spelling with the translators.
- So, the writer then sums up Abijam's reign in the typical concluding manner as before.

- He provides the historical book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah where the acts of Abijam is documented.
- It's then in verse 8 that we see that Abijam dies and is buried with his father and is succeeded by his son, Asa. Check out verses 9-24.

1 Kings 15:9 So in the twentieth year of Jeroboam the king of Israel, Asa began to reign as king of Judah.

1 Kings 15:10 He reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom.

1 Kings 15:11 Asa did what was right in the sight of the Lord, like David his father.

1 Kings 15:12 He also put away the male cult prostitutes from the land and removed all the idols which his fathers had made.

1 Kings 15:13 He also removed Maacah his mother from being queen mother, because she had made a horrid image as an Asherah; and Asa cut down her horrid image and burned it at the brook Kidron.

1 Kings 15:14 But the high places were not taken away; nevertheless the heart of Asa was wholly devoted to the Lord all his days.

1 Kings 15:15 He brought into the house of the Lord the dedicated things of his father and his own dedicated things: silver and gold and utensils.

1 Kings 15:16 Now there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

1 Kings 15:17 Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and fortified Ramah in order to prevent anyone from going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah.

1 Kings 15:18 Then Asa took all the silver and the gold which were left in the treasuries of the house of the Lord and the treasuries of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants. And King Asa sent them to Ben-hadad the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, king of Aram, who lived in Damascus, saying,

1 Kings 15:19 "Let there be a treaty between you and me, as between my father and your father. Behold, I have sent you a present of silver and gold; go, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so that he will withdraw from me."

1 Kings 15:20 So 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, besides all the land of Naphtali.

1 Kings 15:21 When Baasha heard of it, he ceased fortifying Ramah and remained in Tirzah.

1 Kings 15:22 Then King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah—none was exempt—and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber with which Baasha had built. And King Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah.

1 Kings 15:23 Now the rest of all the acts of Asa and all his might and all that he did and the cities which he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? But in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.

1 Kings 15:24 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.

- The writer now chooses, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, to focus his attention on the reign of King Asa, son of Abijam.
 - And we're told that his reign lasted a total of 41 years. His reign went from 911-870 B.C.
 - The writer mentions that Maacah was also Asa's mother who is the granddaughter of Absalom.
 - You may find in your text some variance of wording between the NIV and the NASB.
 - The NIV records that Maacah was the grandmother whereas the NASB mentions she is his mother.
 - However, it is best understood to be that Maacah was the grandmother.
 - Nelson's Study Bible mentions that the mothers of the kings of Judah established legitimacy to the throne.
 - Furthermore, what we find is that depending upon who the mother/grandmother is, that they carried quite a bit of weight in the administration.
 - You'll see what I mean by this in a minute.
 - You'll notice in verse 11, that unlike the other kings in Judah, that Asa did "what was right in the sight of the Lord."
 - And this "doing right" in the sight of the Lord didn't mean that he was perfect, rather it demonstrated his sense of reform to the former ways.
 - Asa desired to get Judah back to the Mosaic Covenant and is the first of four of the Kings of Judah who would accomplish this.
 - The remaining three kings would be Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah.
 - Notice the ways in which Asa reformed Judah's ways back to Torah and the Mosaic Covenant:
 - 1. He put away male cult prostitutes from the land
 - 2. Removed idols which his father Abijam had made
 - 3. He removed Maacah his mother from being "queen mother"
 - "Queen Mother" was an office of authority that the mother (matriarch) of the king held, therefore it carried some weight in the land.
 - And what we find here is that Asa sees the idolatrous images that his grandmother established, and both removes her from authority and cuts down the idols.
 - John Whitcomb notes in his book, "A History of Israel" that the queen mother was "a sort of Jezebel".
 - So, this type of reform required boldness and courage because to remove his

grandmother from position, one can assume, wasn't the easiest of tasks.

- So, he takes every idol and horrid image that defiled the Lord and he burns it all in the brook Kidron which is often noted as a constant place of burning.
- There becomes a point in this section of the text: That no matter the relationship of a person, wrong is wrong and truth is truth.
 - We all must have the boldness to correct where needed and not simply compromise for the sake of "peace" for peace sake.
- However, it's in verse 14 that we notice that not "every high place was removed."
 - Well that begs a question: If Asa is the King who is reforming the ways of the people back to the Lord, why not tear down all things that are against the Lord?
 - We aren't completely told the full story in 1 Kings, however, 2 Chronicles 14 gives us a bit more information to have a clearer picture.
 - Check out the texts.

2 Chronicles 14:1 So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David, and his son Asa became king in his place. The land was undisturbed for ten years during his days.

2 Chronicles 14:2 Asa did good and right in the sight of the Lord his God,

2 Chronicles 14:3 for he removed the foreign altars and high places, tore down the sacred pillars, cut down the Asherim,

2 Chronicles 14:4 and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers and to observe the law and the commandment.

2 Chronicles 14:5 He also removed the high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah. And the kingdom was undisturbed under him.

2 Chronicles 14:6 He built fortified cities in Judah, since the land was undisturbed, and there was no one at war with him during those years, because the Lord had given him rest.

2 Chronicles 14:7 For he said to Judah, "Let us build these cities and surround them with walls and towers, gates and bars. The land is still ours because we have sought the Lord our God; we have sought Him, and He has given us rest on every side." So they built and prospered.

- So according to 2 Chronicles we are given a period of the first 10 years of Asa's reign which consisted of strict reform in the land.
 - This becomes the reason why Asa was right in the sight of the Lord.
 - So all in all, the majority of the high places were torn down but not all – the text doesn't provide much clarity beyond that point.
 - But what we do know is that Asa's heart was "wholly devoted" to the Lord all his days.
 - So whether there were places Asa did not know the high places were stored, his

heart sought to please the Lord and to follow His ordinances.

- And this is further perpetuated in his dedication of possessions and items of gold and silver to the storehouse of the house of the Lord.
- You might have noticed a slight pivot in the scene now because at verse 16, the writer documents that Asa and Baasha were at war all their days.
 - As I mentioned in the previous teachings, there seemed to have been an issue on territory between the North and the South.
 - This is confirmed because in verse 16b and 17, we are abruptly introduced to a character, almost a bit prematurely.
 - We are introduced to a man named Baasha who is said to be the King of Israel.
 - However, we just read in verse 9 that it was the 20th year of Jeroboam king of Israel's reign. So what's going on here?
 - Well remember, Jeroboam reigned a total of 22 years, so at this point in the writer's narrative, there are two more years left of his reign.
 - This might seem a bit confusing but we need to keep at the forefront of our minds the author's point:
 - He is giving us a summary view of these Kings, their reign, but most importantly their positive or negative response to God's promises.
 - So the writer is expressing some overlay within the reigns, but most importantly this war will lead to a fulfilment of God's word to Jeroboam.
- So, within this war Baasha seeks to establish Ramah as a territory of Israel and fortifies the city as if building a wall of sorts.
 - Baasha is the boarder czar if you will of Ramah and his presence there would prohibit any threat of the king of Judah to make his way through.
 - At this point it becomes a chess match between that of Asa and Baasha.
 - However, in verses 18-20, we see that Asa has a plan to thwart Baasha's plan of establishing Ramah as Israel territory.
 - His plan is to establish a treaty between Judah and Ben-hadad the king of Aram (a pagan king) as an effort to drawback Baasha and his men.
 - This plan on the onset seemed quite strategic and well thought out, and it was.
 - However, there was one small thing – it lacked any consultation with the Lord.
 - This was similar to what both David and Solomon did when they got beside themselves with pride.
 - As a matter of fact, this arrangement demonstrated a lack of trust in the Lord's ability to defend and uphold Judah as a nation.
 - And resulted in Judah seeking external partnerships to further solidify their stance geo-politically.
 - We find this reality played out in 2 Chronicles 16:1-9. Check out the text:

2 Chronicles 16:1 In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and fortified Ramah in order to prevent anyone from going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah.

2 Chronicles 16:2 Then Asa brought out silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the Lord and the king's house, and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Aram, who lived in Damascus, saying,

2 Chronicles 16:3 "Let there be a treaty between you and me, as between my father and your father. Behold, I have sent you silver and gold; go, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so that he will withdraw from me."

2 Chronicles 16:4 So Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim and all the store cities of Naphtali.

2 Chronicles 16:5 When Baasha heard of it, he ceased fortifying Ramah and stopped his work.

2 Chronicles 16:6 Then King Asa brought all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber with which Baasha had been building, and with them he fortified Geba and Mizpah.

2 Chronicles 16:7 At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you have relied on the king of Aram and have not relied on the Lord your God, therefore the army of the king of Aram has escaped out of your hand.

2 Chronicles 16:8 "Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim an immense army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the Lord, He delivered them into your hand.

2 Chronicles 16:9 "For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars."

- The writer of Chronicles brings up a powerful point. He reminds them that the Lord has been faithful to them before.
 - The Lord had made a way for them when numerically, the battle made no sense – Judah was outnumbered.
 - But because they had trusted in the Lord and His might, they came out victorious over a ravaging enemy.
 - Yet now, they find themselves in another pickle but have developed amnesia and seek to rely upon another nation to be their strength.
 - And before we are too quick to judge Judah for their downfall, it really becomes a picture of the believer today.
 - We are quicker to find strength and refuge in our own abilities and resources rather than relying on the Lord.
 - Because at the end of the day, it really boils down to control and humanity wanting to be in charge of our own outcomes.

- This ultimately resulted in the King of Aram backstabbing King Baasha for a better deal with King Asa – potentially more money it would seem.
 - So with the now increased manpower and strength, King Asa takes the material of the North to construct their fortresses for the Southern border.
- It's then in verses 23-24 that we find the same pattern of the writer of 1 Kings.
 - The documented location of the remaining acts of the King in the book of the Chronicles.
 - One thing that should stand out to us is verse 23b where it says, “But in the time of old age he was diseased in his feet”.
 - This becomes a huge indicator of the concluding reign of King Asa.
 - It's in 2 Chronicles 16:12 that we find the answer to this abrupt conjunction at the end of verse 23. Check out the text:

2 Chronicles 16:12 **In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet. His disease was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek the Lord, but the physicians.**

- Once again, the repeated theme is the defection from trusting in the Lord and dependence upon man.
 - This is the very antithesis of the Creator/created distinction. Man is always seeking to make their own path.
 - Jeremiah makes note of this very reality in Jeremiah 17:5.

Jeremiah 17:5 **Thus says the Lord, “Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind And makes flesh his strength, And whose heart turns away from the Lord.**

- ○ It's like the old adage: You give someone an inch and they'll take a mile!
 - We desire to have the freedom to be in control or have authority, yet we fail to realize that we are simply stewards of what God has graciously provided
- So where Asa had the opportunity to be made well had he sought the Lord with this diseased foot, he once again seeks the counsel of men rather than the one who heals!
 - This section of the text serves as a reminder to me and hopefully to you: May we never get beside ourselves.
 - I desire to remain like a child with their father – ever dependent upon the Lord for all that I need!
- We're told that Asa dies and is buried in the city of David along with his father, and the next in line to rule over Judah is his son, Jehosaphat.
 - We will cover more of Jehosaphat's reign in Chapter 22.
 - Let's move on to verses 25-32.

1 Kings 15:25 Now Nadab the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years.

1 Kings 15:26 He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father and in his sin which he made Israel sin.

1 Kings 15:27 Then 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, while Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon.

1 Kings 15:28 So Baasha killed him in the third year of Asa king of Judah and reigned in his place.

1 Kings 15:29 It came about as soon as he was king, he struck down all the household of Jeroboam. He did not leave to Jeroboam any persons alive, until he had destroyed them, according to the word of the Lord, which He spoke by His servant Ahijah the Shilonite,

1 Kings 15:30 and because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, because of his provocation with which he provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger.

1 Kings 15:31 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?

1 Kings 15:32 There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

- The writer now goes back in time to the 2nd year of King Asa's reign where Nadab, the son of Jeroboam becomes king over Israel.
 - And what we find is that Nadab's reign is very short lived and for good reason.
 - We are told that he reigned over Israel for two years and while reigning it was very similar to that of his father.
 - We see that phrase again, "He walked in the ways of his father", meaning that idolatrous worship continued on with Jeroboam's descendant.
 - Now if you remember, it was in Chapter 14 that the Lord had sent a young prophet from Judah to prophecy against Jeroboam.
 - There was an opportunity for Jeroboam to repent and turn away from his idolatry and return to the worship of Yahweh.
 - However, that opportunity for mercy was continually rejected and because it was, the Lord brought down a heavy verdict.
 - He mentioned that there would be a king to arise who would kill every descendant of Jeroboam as a consequence of the sins of Jeroboam.
 - It's in verses 27-30 that we find the background story as to how Jeroboam's entire lineage was eradicated.
 - It was through a battle with the Philistines that Baasha kills Jeroboam in Gibbethon and takes the throne from him.
 - And to top off this assassination, Baasha makes the extra effort of removing any and all threats to his rule on the throne by killing Jeroboam's male

descendants.

- All of this fulfilled what the Lord spoke to Ahijah the prophet regarding Jeroboam.
 - Once again, a testimony to the word of the Lord not returning to Him void!
 - Verse 31 quickly concludes the short-lived reign of Nadab as King regarding his remaining acts written in the Book of the Chronicles.
- One would think that this change in leadership from Nadab to Baasha would have been better, however as we saw some verses prior Baasha wasn't any better.
 - Check out verses 33-34.

1 Kings 15:33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha the son of Ahijah became king over all Israel at Tirzah, and reigned twenty-four years.

1 Kings 15:34 He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin which he made Israel sin.

- As a matter of fact, within his 24 years of reign throughout Israel he continued to “walk in the ways of Jeroboam” as if Jeroboam’s example of leadership wasn’t example enough of what NOT to do!
 - However, what we are seeing is how power, control, and prestige can get the best of someone and drive them to independence from God.
 - This pattern continues throughout the remaining chapters of 1 Kings which results in even further judgement and consequences upon the King and the Nation.
 - Therefore, you can bet your bottom that come Chapter 16, Baasha will be addressed regarding his ways.
 - Because the reality is, although Baasha’s means of rise to power was by ill-will, the Lord in His sovereignty allowed that to play out for His purposes.
 - And although he uses those instruments of judgement, because He alone is the justifier, He will respond accordingly to the means of their use of injustice.
- What we are seeing more and more is how the Lord deals with both the North and the South Kingdoms regarding His word!
 - The blessings are contingent upon the King’s obedience and the curses are a result of his disobedience as outlined in Deuteronomy.
 - And if the people are to prosper in the land it comes with the requirement to uphold the Mosaic Covenant.
 - And what is to be realized is that man is incapable of upholding the Law.
 - That where the Law is to shine a light on our sins, it cannot serve as our mediator. It only serves as a tutor.
 - And the reality is there is only one who could be able to fulfill the law perfectly and His name is Jesus Christ, the true Messiah and Son of David.
 - Israel, the church, and the world is awaiting a true ruler who does not look to the interest of himself but to the service of those in whom are in His care.

- These kings we have covered lack in humility, lack in leadership, and lack in faithfulness to the word of God.
 - However, when Christ returns, our eyes will be able to gaze upon the glory of the one true King who will reign supreme and victoriously.
 - Let's Pray.

Citation:

- The Nelson Study Bible, p. 589.

- As we prepare to study Chapter 16, it is important that we follow the progression of the storyline regarding the succession of the kings.
 - It was in Chapter 15, we were introduced to Abijam's son Asa who became king in his place over Judah.
 - Abijam's reign was marked by much sin and consistent ruling to that of his father, King Rehoboam.
 - Remember, Rehoboam's rule was marked by idolatry and great turning from God by establishing Asherim and high places of worship.
 - Along with idol worship was the practice of male prostitution in the land which gave way to homosexual practice. (Sex and religious shrines)
 - Ultimately, the practices that the Lord was purging from the land in Joshua's day were now returning under Rehoboam's leadership.
 - This unraveling and removal of truth and lack of submission to Torah caused the ways of a previously united Kingdom to rapidly decline.
 - And where the leadership failed to lead appropriately, the Nation became the casualty.
 - And this becomes a warning in which we as believers should adhere to as well:
 - That where the word of God decreases in priority in our lives, that we give way to disfellowship with the Lord and an open door to sin.
 - This is why Paul expresses in Philippians that we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.
 - In other words, the word of God must remain the standard.
 - For when we go against the word of truth, it is the Holy Spirit that draws us to repentance and submission out of holy reverence to God.
 - And this comes about because of the reality of what the Lord Jesus has done for us and knowing what we rightfully deserve apart from His grace.
- As we work through Chapter 16, we will see how the writer will use the time references of rule of the kings to show how transitions in leadership take place.
 - And with these kings and their reigns as time stamps, we can better understand the history of both the northern and southern kingdoms.
 - And more specifically, how one's rule is compared to or contrasted with the other.
 - Lastly, what we will continue seeing within the narrative is the use of prophets speaking to the kings of both the North and the South.
 - And tonight, we come to see another prophet in whom the Lord will use named Jehu.
 - If I were to outline our time through Chapter 16, we will see the following:
 - 1. Baasha's fall (vv.1-7)
 - 2. Elah's short lived reign (vv.8-14)
 - 3. Zimri's successful coup and 7 day reign (vv.15-20)

- 4. Omri's reign (vv.21-28)
- 5. Ahab's upcoming reign and the introduction to Jezebel (vv.29-34)
- If I were to put a tag on our teaching tonight it would simply be: The Fall of Men and Kings.
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 16 beginning with verses 1-7.

1 Kings 16:1 Now the word of the Lord came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying,

1 Kings 16:2 “Inasmuch as I exalted you from the dust and made you leader over My people Israel, and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam and have made My people Israel sin, provoking Me to anger with their sins,

1 Kings 16:3 behold, I will consume Baasha and his house, and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

1 Kings 16:4 “Anyone of Baasha who dies in the city the dogs will eat, and anyone of his who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat.”

1 Kings 16:5 Now the rest of the acts of Baasha and what he did and his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

1 Kings 16:6 And Baasha slept with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah, and Elah his son became king in his place.

1 Kings 16:7 Moreover, the word of the Lord through the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani also came against Baasha and his household, both because of all the evil which he did in the sight of the Lord, provoking Him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and because he struck it.

- As we discovered last week, Baasha, who was the son of Ahijah, conspired against Nadab, King Jeroboam's son, and killed him. (Graphic)
 - Nadab had only reigned over the Northern Kingdom of Israel for two years until Baasha conspired against him.
 - This ultimately led to Baasha reigning a total of 24 years over the Northern Kingdom, from approximately 909-886 BC.
 - And what we will see throughout Chapter 16 is that the various changes of the Northern kings are seen through the lens of the reign of Asa's rule in Judah.
 - For King Asa of Judah reigned from 911-870 BC, a total of 41 years.
 - It's in verse 1 that we're introduced to another prophet by the name, Jehu, the son of Hanani (Ha-na-nah).
 - Hanani was a seer and was used by the Lord to pronounce judgment on Asa, King of Judah (2 Chronicles 16:7).
 - And we are told that Jehu gives Baasha a very direct word from the Lord regarding his rule over Israel.

- According to the wording of the writer in 1 Kings, it seems as if Baasha had an opportunity, given to him by the Lord to change the tide.
- Baasha could have turned Israel back to the Lord, yet he continues in the way of Jeroboam.
- So where Baasha was used as an instrument to fulfill the word of the Lord by ridding Jeroboam's lineage of rule, Baasha falls into the same judgement.
- Remember, it was in 1 Kings 14:11-14, emphasizing verse 14, that the word of the Lord was fulfilled by Baasha. Check out the text.

1 Kings 14:11 “**Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city the dogs will eat. And he who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat; for the Lord has spoken it.”**”

1 Kings 14:12 “**Now you, arise, go to your house. When your feet enter the city the child will die.**

1 Kings 14:13 “**All Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he alone of Jeroboam's family will come to the grave, because in him something good was found toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.**

1 Kings 14:14 “**Moreover, the Lord will raise up for Himself a king over Israel who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this day and from now on.**

- Now, this same judgment ensues for Baasha, because Baasha chose to not return Israel to Torah.
 - And as noted in verses 4-5, we see the same pattern of the writer of Kings concluding the deaths of the kings referencing their acts in the Chronicles.
 - So, what we are seeing in this concluding interaction with Baasha is that his failure to remain faithful to the Mosaic covenant brought about the same sorrows as Nadab and Jeroboam.
 - Most importantly, we are seeing, in the words of 19th century historian Lord Acton, that “absolute power corrupts absolutely”.
 - That where human beings fail to submit under the authority of God, they will ultimately see themselves as a god.
 - This ultimately leads into what we see in today's growing culture of trans-humanism, progressivism, and the like.
 - This is where man “attempts” to switch position with the Creator rather than understanding we are created beings.
 - So, this is where understanding the Creator/creature distinction matters.
 - We find in verse 6-7 that where Baasha dies, his son Elah will now rise to power and continue on in the ways of Jeroboam.
 - However, as the Lord spoke through Jehu, the word of the Lord now comes against Elah, son of Baasha.
 - And the same pattern seems to ensue. Check out verses 8-14.

1 Kings 14:8 In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel at Tirzah, and reigned two years.

1 Kings 14:9 His servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, conspired against him. Now he was at Tirzah drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was over the household at Tirzah.

1 Kings 14:10 Then Zimri went in and struck him and put him to death in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and became king in his place.

1 Kings 14:11 It came about when he became king, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he killed all the household of Baasha; he did not leave a single male, neither of his relatives nor of his friends.

1 Kings 14:12 Thus Zimri destroyed all the household of Baasha, according to the word of the Lord, which He spoke against Baasha through Jehu the prophet,

1 Kings 14:13 for all the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son, which they sinned and which they made Israel sin, provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with their idols.

1 Kings 14:14 Now the rest of the acts of Elah and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

- We now come to the next round of Israel's northern kings and as noted earlier, the timeframe is still within the context of King Asa of Judah's reign over a 41-year period.
 - And it is here that the writer now focuses on the reign and rule of Elah, son of Baasha in the capital of Tirzah, where he reigned for 2 years.
 - And the reason for Elah's short-lived term was due to the conspired assault against him by Zimri, the commander of half his chariots.
 - We are told by the writer of Kings that Zimri's attack against the king occurred while he was drunk.
 - Perhaps there was some built up animosity that grew over time, and it was completely poured out on the king at that point.
 - Whatever the case, we find that the same end that Nadab had was the same end that Baasha had and thus for Elah.
 - And this was the consequence of Baasha's failure to uphold the Mosaic covenant according to the word of the Lord.
 - So, there is this repetitive action that occurs for Baasha's descendants as well, because of failure to return to Torah.
 - Remember, the reason for the division of the Kingdom was due to the King's "turning heart".
 - Solomon wanted to worship Yahweh and his wives' foreign gods.
 - And we know that no one can serve two masters. Paul says the following in Romans 6:16-19.

Romans 6:16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as

slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?

Romans 6:17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,

Romans 6:18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

Romans 6:19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh.

For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.

- You will either be submitted to the ways of the flesh or the leading of the Spirit of God.
 - And in the case of these kings both in the north and, as we will see, the south, there is this constant war between Torah and idols.
 - And being that God backs His words and judgements, Elah will experience a similar end as those before him who have gone the way of their idols.
- Notice that idolatry becomes a common theme that will become more prevalent within 1 Kings.
 - An idol is anything that is valued or placed above the Creator.
 - And the reality is, even today, idolatry is a dominating sin amongst our society.
 - It may not be a golden calf as was for the Israelites at Mt.Sinai, but it can be a job, a title, a position, etc.
 - And as we will see in 1 Kings 18, the prophet Elijah is going to have a comical field day at the pagans worshiping an idol.
 - Because at the end of the day, the created can never exalt itself above the Creator no matter how creative the created tries to be.
 - The writer now moves to Zimri's reign as king over the North from the capital, Tizrah.
 - Check out verses 15-20.

1 Kings 16:15 In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri reigned seven days at Tirzah. Now the people were camped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines.

1 Kings 16:16 The people who were camped heard it said, “Zimri has conspired and has also struck down the king.” Therefore all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the camp.

1 Kings 16:17 Then Omri and all Israel with him went up from Gibbethon and besieged Tirzah.

1 Kings 16:18 When Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the citadel of the king's house and burned the king's house over him with fire, and died,

1 Kings 16:19 because of his sins which he sinned, doing evil in the sight of the

Lord, walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, making Israel sin.

1 Kings 16:20 Now the rest of the acts of Zimri and his conspiracy which he carried out, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

- Zimri's rule over Israel was very short-lived, so much so that he only reigned for 7 days.
 - As a matter of fact, Zimri's reign was the shortest in the history of the Northern Kingdom in 885 BC.
 - And the reason for Zimri's short-lived reign was due to the people having heard how Zimri came about his new position as king.
 - So when word of this conspiracy was found true and made its way to the commander's ears, it was not long until something was to be done.
- Imagine if there is treason in any level of leadership in government, the one who has committed treason is to immediately face the consequences.
 - And in this case death by sword was in view for Zimri having exalted himself to this position.
 - However, Zimri knew what this meant for him so he takes matters into his own hands and commits suicide.
 - The writer of Kings notes that the death of Zimri was caused by his very own sin as was for those before him. (Sin always leads to death!)
 - Now, you may have picked up on the repeated phrase, "walking in the way of Jeroboam".
 - And this phrase is repeated for the majority of the kings of the North who exhibited similar patterns of sin in their rule.
 - And the fall of these leaders were almost always due to their personal and selfish pursuits to attain power and position.
 - And where they had the opportunity to submit to the Lord and turn things around, they seek power over humility – pride over prostration before God.
 - So, it's after Zimri's death that there seems to be a further division of the north between two leaders. Check out verses 21-28.

1 Kings 16:21 Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; the other half followed Omri.

1 Kings 16:22 But the people who followed Omri prevailed over the people who followed Tibni the son of Ginath. And Tibni died and Omri became king.

1 Kings 16:23 In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king over Israel and reigned twelve years; he reigned six years at Tirzah.

1 Kings 16:24 He bought the hill Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; and he built on the hill, and named the city which he built Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill.

1 Kings 16:25 Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord, and acted more wickedly than all who were before him.

1 Kings 16:26 For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat and in his sins which he made Israel sin, provoking the Lord God of Israel with their idols.

1 Kings 16:27 Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did and his might which he showed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

1 Kings 16:28 So Omri slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria; and Ahab his son became king in his place.

- Verse 21 reveals that the succession of a new king of the northern kingdom did not happen automatically.
 - The writer mentions that the people were divided on who would be the next king of Israel.
 - Half of the people sided with a man named Tibni, son of Ginath and the others followed Omri who was the commander of the army.
 - And the reason for this schism was due to the fact that there was no proper successor after the coup.
 - Herein lies a biblical principle and a beautiful thing regarding the founding fathers in America and that is how succession was established for if anything happened to the President.
 - The same thing becomes a wise plan for matters regarding the church, that when a Pastor dies that there are people in place to step up when necessary.
 - And isn't it a beautiful thing in how the Lord has prepared elders in the church to assist in these types of transitions.
 - So that when crisis arises, it doesn't shake the people of God because men of God are there to guard the truth and the flock.
 - However, in this historical instance, there was a situation that had no strategy behind it and therefore division arose.
 - Not much is given to us about who Tibni was, but what we can surmise is that he carried some type of prominence in the north.
 - And on the other side of the aisle was Omri who was the commander of the army which meant there was much strength and leadership from him.
 - Whatever the case, the writer records that Omri prevails over Tibni as King over Israel.
 - The writer does not mention any course of physical dispute between Omri and Tibni, but the word in Hebrew for prevail can suggest an altercation could have been possible.
 - As a matter of fact, the Septuagint adds a clause here implying that Tibni was aided by his brother Joram, suggesting that perhaps a fight ensued.
 - From there we are told that upon Omri becoming King that his rule took place in

the thirty-first year of King Asa's rule in Judah.

- And he reigned 12 years in total, being that 6 of those years were in the then capital – Tirzah.
- I say “then capital” because verse 24 mentions that Omri purchased land that he names Samaria for 2 talents of silver and builds a city on it.
 - For it would be the city of Samaria that would become the new capital of Israel under Omri's leadership and rule.
- It is stated, historically, that Omri's rule as King was deemed the most “capable” King Israel experienced since its division.
 - Abram Sacar, in his book “A History of the Jews”, writes that “He [Omri] has often been called the ‘David of the North.’”
 - Apparently, Omri brought stability to the people of the Northern Kingdom and with his experience in war they felt secure.
- Assyrian records have mentioned that the land of Northern Israel was often referred to as “the land of Omri”.
 - However, what I find most fascinating is that although history recorded one thing the writer of 1 Kings documents another.
 - Because it's in verse 25, that the writer mentions that “Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord and acted more wickedly than all who were before him.”
- The reality is, we do the same thing in history, we emphasize the great accomplishments of a leader and want to only except those things.
 - But we tend to shy away from the ugliness of these “great men” which brings about a sense of humility to their true reality.
 - Because when authenticity and truth is not the forefront of what we do, we will allow our pride to get in the way.
 - And clearly, the writer of 1 Kings wants us to know that although everything looked great on the outside, internally Omri was corrupt.
 - This king was Israel's worst spiritual leader up to this point – but trust and know that it would only get worse.
 - And the very next verse mentions that the reason for Omri's spiritual degradation was because he followed the way of Jeroboam.
 - So this pattern of idolatry and covenant violation continues to grow even more.
 - Finally, as patterned by the writer, we are told that the rest of the acts of Omri are recorded in Chronicles, he dies, and this time there is a successor, his son, Ahab.
 - Check out verses 29-34.

1 Kings 16:29 Now Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years.

1 Kings 16:30 Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord more than all

who were before him.

1 Kings 16:31 It came about, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he married Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went to serve Baal and worshiped him.

1 Kings 16:32 So he erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal which he built in Samaria.

1 Kings 16:33 Ahab also made the Asherah. Thus Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

1 Kings 16:34 In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho; he laid its foundations with the loss of Abiram his firstborn, and set up its gates with the loss of his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which He spoke by Joshua the son of Nun.

- We don't have to read too far into the last few verses of Chapter 16 to see that the apple doesn't fall too far from the tree.
 - Omri's son, Ahab, becomes King in the 38th year of King Asa of Judah's reign.
 - And we are told that King Ahab reigned over Israel in the now capital of Samaria for 22 years (874-853 BC).
 - And immediately in verse 33 we see that Ahab's reign, too, was marked by doing evil in the sight of the Lord – "more than those before him".
 - This means that the sins of the kings are becoming progressively worse!
 - We see the fact that Ahab's sins were exceedingly worse in 1 Kings 18 where Ahab completely replaced the worship of Yahweh with idolatry.
 - This was the first time in Israel's history that this type of change took place and would become the very cause of their decline (apostasy).
- Notice in verse 31, how the writer mentions that for Ahab, walking in the sins of Jeroboam were trivial matters to him.
 - In other words, Ahab was so unmoved by his behaviors or actions to the Lord that there was no concern in his mind to repent.
 - Ahab had made up his mind that the way in which he lived was okay and it satisfied him.
 - And if we were to be honest for a moment, and look at our world today, these are the exact sentiments of the world.
 - The world holds on to their idols and see no wrong in their current policies and legislation regarding matters that the Lord specifically addresses in His word.
 - But this becomes the "norm" when the word of God is removed from the government and systemic functions in society.
 - For when God is no longer prioritized and moved from His rightful position, you find a culture and society in deep dung.
 - The same follows suit for those in whom we link ourselves to – that if we are not careful in the company we keep, we too fall victim to their ways.

- And this becomes quite indicative of Ahab's decision in who he married, because the text tells us that he married a woman by the name, Jezebel.
- We are quite familiar with that name, but do you know what that name means?
 - Jezebel means "dunghill" and in the matter of who Ahab married, she came with more than he could chew.
 - Not only was it a covenant violation, having married a non-Israelite, but even more so, he fell into the same trap as Solomon – worshipping pagan gods.
- So, Ahab, similar to Solomon, not only gives way to worshipping foreign gods, but according to verse 32, he erects an altar for Baal in a house for Baal in which he built in the capital of the Northern Kingdom.
 - Friends this becomes a foreshadow of the very means by which the Antichrist in the 7-year tribulation will try to establish himself as king.
- This is how the one world order system will seek to dominate – remove the things that ground society and culture (truth) and replace it with other things!
 - For the first time in Israel's history, the worship of the God of Israel is dismissed and replaced by a Canaanite god.
- So as one could imagine the anger of the Lord was kindled against Ahab and rightfully so.
 - We finally come to a verse that on the onset seems a bit out of place. Let's reread verse 34.

1 Kings 16:34 In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho; he laid its foundations with the loss of Abiram his firstborn, and set up its gates with the loss of his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which He spoke by Joshua the son of Nun.

- Although this verse may seem unattached from the present narrative, there is a common theme at play.
 - The writer uses previous history and the disobedience of men and how they are judged to foreshadow how the Lord would deal with the same pattern with his kings.
 - The writer pulls from a previous experience regarding Joshua, in his day, having placed a curse on anyone that attempted to rebuild Jericho after the Lord had destroyed it.
 - However, a man named Hiel rebuilt the city as to establish its former conditions.
 - And in doing so, the very curse that Joshua had spoken some time ago now fell upon Hiel.
 - Some might ask the question how are these two narratives connected and the best way to explain is that the writer is making an illustrative point.
 - In one sense, he is showing that God's word is not to be played with.
 - Secondly it is to demonstrate God's fulfillment of judgement towards and on all

who oppose His word.

- And in this case, the very end of all the kings prior would be the very same end for Ahab.
- The reality was that Ahab was seeking to restore Israel to a former time, when they were enslaved as they were in Egypt.
 - Ahab was completely destroying the system of rule for God's people by moving them back to pagan worship.
 - Moreover, the foundation sacrifice in which Hiel was establishing consisted of child-sacrifices which was yet again a covenant violation.
- As time progresses through the narrative, we will see that the leadership of these kings further draws Israel into further apostasy which ultimately will lead to them being exiled from the land.
 - When we fail to uphold the Creator/creature distinction men move away from truth and into establishing their own sense of truth.
 - And as history shows us, it never ends well for a Nation or culture when this happens.
 - Let's Pray.

Citation:

- Jamieson, Robert. A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical, on the Old and New Testaments: Joshua–Esther. Vol. II. London; Glasgow: William Collins, Sons, & Company, Limited, n.d.
- Abram Sachar, A History of the Jews, p. 47.
- T. C. Mitchell, "Israel and Judah Until the Revolt of Jehu (931-841 B.C.)," in Cambridge Ancient History, 3:1:467

- In our last session, we combed through a list of the rise and fall of some of the kings in the north (Israel).
 - These kings ruled and reigned throughout the majority of King Asa of Judah's 41 year rule.
 - And in all of the ruling of the Northern kingdom, there were no good kings.
 - As noted from last week, each King followed the way of King Jeroboam who brought Israel into further idolatry and away from Torah.
 - And if that weren't enough, the further into the succession of Northern kings, the worse they became.
 - It's almost as if the writer is painting a picture of these Northern kings further distancing themselves from Torah and into self-governance.
 - And as I mentioned last week, these subtle compromises over time eventually lead to the created wanting to be the Creator.
 - This Creator/creature distinction framework helps one to better understand that only the Creator can dictate and establish His rule because He alone is Creator.
 - However, because of the fall of man and our sin-nature, the created always seeks to "attempt" to place themselves in the creator's position.
 - Pride has a way of having us to think/believe that we alone can sustain our needs or provide our own sense of refuge through means of financial gain.
 - And it is in those moments that the Lord, in His kindness will use His word as a means of correction to get us back into alignment with Him.
 - So in the case of Chapter 17, the Lord is going to use another prophet, one who is arguably the most well-known prophet in scripture – Elijah.
 - And with any prophet, their primary role is to be a mouthpiece of the Lord and to speak to the king/people that they may turn back to Torah.
 - Tonight, we will see three scenes regarding Elijah's introduction to the narrative of 1 Kings.
 - And although these movements may feel detached in a way, they are really all interconnected.
 - What becomes interesting is how the Lord introduces Elijah onto the scene.
- You'll recall towards the end of Chapter 16, we were introduced to King Ahab who had married Jezebel.
 - And the rise and beginning rule of King Ahab, especially under the influence of Jezebel, was quite notorious, to say the least.
 - King Ahab's rule was marked by even greater sin than Jeroboam because during his rule was the first time in Israel's history that they abandoned the worship of Yahweh for pagan gods.
- So the Lord, by His Spirit, transitions the writer to the introduction of Elijah on the scene which is pivotal in the narrative.
 - And the three movements we will be introduced to in Chapter 17 will demonstrate just how serious God is about His word.

- And even more so God's desire for His people, and all people, for that matter, to turn to Him rather than themselves.
- If I were to outline our time for tonight, we will see the following:
 - 1. Elijah's pronouncement to King Ahab (vv.1-7)
 - 2. Little becomes enough (vv.8-16)
 - 3. Elijah revives the widow's son (vv.17-24)
- If I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would be: A Raven, A Widow, and A Word.
- With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 17 beginning in verses 1-7 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 17:1 Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the Lord, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.”

1 Kings 17:2 The word of the Lord came to him, saying,

1 Kings 17:3 “Go away from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.

1 Kings 17:4 “It shall be that you will drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to provide for you there.”

1 Kings 17:5 So he went and did according to the word of the Lord, for he went and lived by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.

1 Kings 17:6 The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he would drink from the brook.

1 Kings 17:7 It happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

- It's almost as if we are thrust into an abrupt introduction to a new character in this narrative, a man named Elijah.
 - No prior history is given to us about Elijah except for what the writer provides for us here.
 - In the words of Eugene Merrill, this mysterious appearance of Elijah the prophet “ushered in a whole new phase of prophetic ministry.”
 - Because alongside Elijah's prophetic ministry also came his ability to do astonishing miracles on behalf of the Lord.
 - Elijah's ministry as is witnessed in both 1 and 2 Kings, is set to demonstrate a proper understanding of who God is.
 - The name Elijah in Hebrew means “my God is Yahweh” and his name becomes quite reflective of his nature and mission.
 - God would use Elijah the prophet to make visibly known the power and magnitude of the God of Israel through personal demonstration.
 - We are told that Elijah was from a community called Tishbe in Gilead.

- According to the books of Deuteronomy and Joshua, these regions were assigned to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh.
 - It becomes apparent that with Elijah's sudden arrival on the scene that Elijah was already being prepared for this prophetic assignment.
- Elijah pronounces boldly to King Ahab that the heavens will not bring forth rain for a period of time.
 - We find later in scripture that the Lord withheld rain from Israel for 3 years and 6 months. (1 Kings 18:1, Luke 4:25, James 5:17)
 - And this drought would occur as a promise from the Lord regarding Israel's disobedience according to Deuteronomy 11:16-17. Check out the text:

Deuteronomy 11:16 “Beware that your hearts are not deceived, and that you do not turn away and serve other gods and worship them.

Deuteronomy 11:17 “Or the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its fruit; and you will perish quickly from the good land which the Lord is giving you.

- So, this declaration before the King becomes a pivotal moment within the storyline.
 - Remember, what has King Ahab introduced as the new religious system? Baalism. (Israel serving other gods would bring about cursings)
 - Furthermore, to the pagans, Baal was known as the “god of the rain and weather”.
 - So, for Elijah to come and declare that the God of Israel was going to withhold the rain for an extended period of time was a direct assault against the idol worship of the day.
 - The God of Israel, the Only Living and True God was making known to His creation who the Creator is.
 - This begins the mark of a showdown between the God of Israel and the idolatrous worship of Baal.
 - After giving that bold pronouncement to the king, the Lord tells Elijah to go and hide himself by the brook Cherith, east of the Jordan.
 - It could be understood that this time of hiding for Elijah was not a cowering away, but rather a time of preparation.
 - In one sense to prepare Elijah for the mission ahead and secondly to providentially prepare the stage for what was coming.
 - We are told that during this preparation time that “ravens” came to bring Elijah bread and meat in the morning and at night for his nourishment.
 - And along with the solid provisions came the drinking water from the brook itself.
- What becomes such a beautiful picture in this first movement of Chapter 17 is the scene, setting, and the situation.

- The setting is located in the wilderness areas of the “Wadi Cherith” also comically named “Wadi Boondocks”.
 - This place was a no mans land. It literally means “Cut-off”.
 - We will see next week that there is a bit of play on words here in Hebrew because in 1 Kings 18, Jezebel is “cutting off” prophets.
- And at the same time, one could assume that King Ahab would seek to “cut-off” or kill some animals to appease “Baal” as a way for rain to be sent.
 - The only difference between King Ahab and Jezebel versus that of Elijah is that although Elijah is cut off from the people, He is not cut off from God.
- Isn’t it interesting that even when the world is doing the “popular thing” which is oftentimes the “wrong thing” that although the believer is ostracized we are never alone.
 - It’s something about God’s provision being made dynamically known in the most dire of circumstances!
- To set the scene, we have two opposing parties: we have those who are following Baal, versus Elijah, the lone sheep who is serving Yahweh, the Living God.
 - To some, they will see Elijah’s conditions and ask where is God in that circumstance?
 - Here’s where the situation gets interesting: With Elijah being in the wilderness where there is no source of nourishment for his body, he is being fed by ravens.
- Interestingly enough, when we search through scripture, we find that ravens neglect their young after a certain point, literally driving them out of the nest.
 - We see evidence of this in Job 38:41. Check out what the text says:

Job 38:41 “Who prepares for the raven its nourishment When its young cry to God And wander about without food?

- How is it that the ravens who push out their young at an early age can feed a grown man in the wilderness bread and meat in the morning and at night?
 - Remember, the drought that the Lord promised has begun so these ravens aren’t getting this food nearby.
 - More than likely, they have traveled afar to retrieve this food, not for themselves but for the prophet Elijah.
 - And along with food, Elijah is able to drink running water through the brook in a time that water was extremely low.
 - For how can there be running water in a drought? No one and nothing but the grace of God!
 - Friends, here is where you see the handiwork of the Creator on full display, this is the work of an Almighty God!
 - If the Lord can take these “unclean” animals to provide nourishment for a

prophet, what do you think the Lord can do for you in your time of need?

- God is at work in both providing and sustaining His prophet while those around Elijah are suffering due to the idolatry that has corrupted the hearts of men.
 - What an amazing biblical principle to know that the Lord will always take care of those in His care!
 - But most importantly, to know that even when your circumstances may seem bleak, He is with you in your wilderness!
 - For He is the God of more than enough! Check out verses 8-16.

1 Kings 17:8 Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying,

1 Kings 17:9 “Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there; behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.”

1 Kings 17:10 So he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks; and he called to her and said, “Please get me a little water in a jar, that I may drink.”

1 Kings 17:11 As she was going to get it, he called to her and said, “Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand.”

1 Kings 17:12 But she said, “As the Lord your God lives, I have no bread, only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil in the jar; and behold, I am gathering a few sticks that I may go in and prepare for me and my son, that we may eat it and die.”

1 Kings 17:13 Then Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go, do as you have said, but make me a little bread cake from it first and bring it out to me, and afterward you may make one for yourself and for your son.”

1 Kings 17:14 “For thus says the Lord God of Israel, ‘The bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty, until the day that the Lord sends rain on the face of the earth.’ ”

1 Kings 17:15 So she went and did according to the word of Elijah, and she and he and her household ate for many days.

1 Kings 17:16 The bowl of flour was not exhausted nor did the jar of oil become empty, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke through Elijah.

- We come to our next scene of the narrative where Elijah will go to Zarephath where he will be provided for by a widow.
 - Zarephath was a town between Tyre and Sidon which were Gentile regions in Phoenicia.
 - This was the region in which was the hotbed for cultish worship and idolatry in which King Ahab reintroduced to Israel.
 - One detail that we should not overlook is the circumstance in which the Lord led Elijah to right after his time in the wilderness.
 - The Lord tells Elijah that it will be a widow in this Gentile city who will be the

one that will provide for him.

- How peculiar yet similar are the details in which Elijah has just come from? Therefore could it be that the writer is alluding to yet another miracle to come? (I believe so)
 - The question that may come to mind after reading and re-reading the passage is: "Why a widow?"
 - Could there have been maybe a wealthy Gentile that knew of Yahweh in whom the Lord could have used? Perhaps.
 - Yet, the Lord in His Sovereignty made it such that a woman, during that day, who was deemed poor and the first to run out of food during a drought, to be the vessel in which the Lord would use to feed the prophet!
- Friends, this goes to show us that the Lord has a way of taking things that make no sense and makes it sensible!
 - This is what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:27:

1 Corinthians 1:27 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong,

- So, in accordance to the word of the Lord, Elijah departs to Zarephath and upon his arrival to the gate of the city, he meets a widow.
 - Not knowing which particular widow it would be he asks the woman to grab him a little water in a jar so that he could drink.
 - To his favor she brings him a drink to which he now asks, in few short words, if she could also feed him.
 - Notice her response, because it gives way to an incredible reality.
 - When Elijah asks about the bread, the woman tells him, "As the Lord your God lives..." (Let's stop here for a moment)
 - Here we see a Gentile widow acknowledging two things:
 - 1) The man who she is talking to is an Israelite
 - 2) Her faith in that she believes that the God of the Israelites is the true and Living God.
 - And with these acknowledgments comes an appeal of sorts that she makes.
 - Her reality was, there are not many resources left. As a matter of fact, the very least that she has was preparation for her and her son's last meal.
 - Therefore, the appeal becomes: "Here is what I have, here is where I am, yet, I know the God you serve!
 - It's almost as if there is a sense of faith in knowing that even with this little the Lord can do much.
 - And as such Elijah reassures her of this, but that assurance does not come without

the requirement of faith!

- Elijah tells her not to fear but instead of making two cakes, one for her and her son, make one more for Elijah.
- What becomes a powerful yet small detail here is the order in which Elijah gives her to make the cakes.
- He says to make his cake first and then proceed to make the remaining two for her and her son. Here is where faith is required!
- If she makes Elijah's cake first, it will technically only provide a source of sustenance for either her or her son.
 - And in the case of this widow, she will put the interest of her son before her own meaning that she would end up dying.
 - However, verse 14 tells us that based upon the word from the Lord, regarding her obedience, there would be a different outcome.
- That with her responding to the word of Yahweh, by way of His prophet, this Gentile widow would neither see her bowl of flour or oil exhausted! (vv.15-16)
 - Here becomes the key to her abundance and blessing amidst a time of drought – Obedience to the word of the Lord!
- How ironic is it that the Israelite people, having experienced at one point the dwelling presence of the Living God in the Temple, are now in a time of drought because of their disobedience to His word!
 - Yet, at the same time, here we see the Lord abundantly blessing this Gentile widow from Phoenicia who has heard and believed the Lord, but had not seen Him move experientially, in a personal sense.
 - Friends, when considering this reality, what covenant comes to mind regarding the actions of the Lord – The Abrahamic Covenant.
 - The Lord has always had provisions made for His name and glory to not only be made known to the Jewish people, but to the Gentiles as well.
 - And all who are able to come and know of the Living God, are able to partake in the blessings of the Lord as benefactors!
 - When considering Elijah's interaction with this widow woman, what becomes a similar story that you find in the New Testament.
 - You might recall, Jesus in Matthew 15:28, and his interaction with the Syrophenician woman in the same area (Tyre and Sidon).
 - It was in this woman's most desperate time of need that she appealed to the Lord Jesus by her faith in Him.
 - That where the disciples saw her as a disturbance to their journey at hand, the Lord lends his ear to this Gentile.
 - And she too, comes to an experiential knowledge of who Jesus was not just as a prophet, but as the Messiah, as she had called Him, Lord, Son of David.
 - Her faith in who He was, in right connection to His rightful position, made way for her to see the demonstrative power of God at work through His Son.

- So here we see how the text draws parallels in seeing Elijah the prophet versus Jesus as the greater prophet!
- Well, just when you thought the story was getting better, there seems to have been a turn of events. Check out verses 17-24.

1 Kings 17:17 Now it came about after these things that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became sick; and his sickness was so severe that there was no breath left in him.

1 Kings 17:18 So she said to Elijah, “What do I have to do with you, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my iniquity to remembrance and to put my son to death!”

1 Kings 17:19 He said to her, “Give me your son.” Then he took him from her bosom and carried him up to the upper room where he was living, and laid him on his own bed.

1 Kings 17:20 He called to the Lord and said, “O Lord my God, have You also brought calamity to the widow with whom I am staying, by causing her son to die?”

1 Kings 17:21 Then he stretched himself upon the child three times, and called to the Lord and said, “O Lord my God, I pray You, let this child’s life return to him.”

1 Kings 17:22 The Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the life of the child returned to him and he revived.

1 Kings 17:23 Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house and gave him to his mother; and Elijah said, “See, your son is alive.”

1 Kings 17:24 Then the woman said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth.”

- We come to the last movement of the narrative in Chapter 17, that where the widow, at one point, was rejoicing for her provision, she now moves to confusion and mourning.
 - We’re told that some time has passed between verses 16 and 17, and between that time, the widow’s son has died.
 - And the woman’s immediate reaction to the loss of her child was that she was somehow being punished by God because of her past sins.
 - In fact this is a common way of thinking for most in that day.
 - This is why Jesus had to correct the thinking of His disciples in John 9:2-3 regarding the man born blind.
 - Jesus tells His disciples neither the man nor the parents have sinned, but this was done so that “the works of God might be displayed in him.”
 - The Lord hadn’t mentioned this part to Elijah and his time with the widow!
 - So in the meantime, we witness both the prophet and the widow trusting in the Lord to bring the child back to life!
 - So Elijah takes the boy to the upper room in his arms, as he commanded the widow

to do so.

- While in the upper room, Elijah lays the boy on the bed and calls upon Yahweh to return life into the boy's body.
- He begins with a cry of compassion knowing that this widow has been through much and now has to deal with the loss of her son.
 - However, Elijah immediately calls upon the Lord to respond in a mighty and miraculous way.
- I love that the writer of the text first recognizes the pain of the mother rather than missing the moment of ministry!
 - Too often we will bring scriptural references to people in time of need as an immediate response without first being compassionate toward the brokenhearted.
 - Psalm 34:18 tells us this:

Psalm 34:18 The Lord is near to the brokenhearted And saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Psalm 34:19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all.

- The text tells us that Elijah stretched over the boy three times meaning that as he laid on top of the dead child, he pleaded his prayer once more.
 - There is the sense of persistence despite the circumstance that Elijah has witnessed, and the woman was experiencing.
 - Once again, faith has been demonstrated by both the widow and Elijah because the woman entrusts her child unto the hands of the prophet, while the prophet entrusts the woman's child unto the power of God!
 - This type of faith becomes the breeding ground by which the Lord is able to do miracles!
 - And most importantly through the miracle, there is always a point to be shown!
 - And in this case, the woman in verses 23-24 is able to see for herself, experientially, who the God of Israel truly is!
- God is in the business of making Himself known both verbally and visually!
 - This widow who was amongst others' suffering in the drought brought upon by the sins of the people, has witnessed twice, the goodness of God!
 - What makes Chapter 17 so profound is the very last verse (verse 24), where the woman says these words:
 - "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth!"
 - This woman, by faith, responded to the word of the prophet of the Lord regarding the need of her lack in supply.

- She took the prophet at his word, according to the word of the Lord and was able to see God provide.
- She then witnessed the Lord resuscitate her son's life simply by a word from the Lord and persistence in prayer.
 - That where this woman, who lived in a community that worshipped Baal, who had no power, she was able to witness a God in whom she had heard about who held all the power!
- What a powerful picture of the reality that not only is the God of Israel, a supplier of needs, sustainer of all, and keeper of all, but He holds the power over death itself.
 - God, in a way, was demonstrating to the least of them, so that in a matter of time He would demonstrate to all of them that He is God!
 - Friends, God's ways to some may seem foolish and obscure, but when you are able to try Him for yourself and know Him for yourself, He will blow your mind.
 - The widow's response reminds me of the old church mothers in the Baptist church, when they used to say:
 - "Baby, you can't make me doubt Him, cause I know too much about Him!."
 - This Gentile woman had an experience with the Living God, that in a matter of time, all of the Baal worshippers would attest to the greatness of the one true God!
 - Let's Pray.

Citation:

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- Last week, we witnessed the beginning troubles and trials of the famine through the life of a widow and her son.
 - However, despite the trials faced during this time, the widow is able to attest to the God of Israel and His power.
 - Through a series of events, she sees her provisions met, her son raised, and the God of Israel prove Himself time and again.
 - Tonight's text will be no different, as this time all of the Northern tribes will attest to the power and might of the God of Israel.
 - If I were to outline our time in the text tonight, we will see the following:
 - 1. Elijah meets with Obadiah (vv.1-16)
 - 2. Elijah confronts Ahab (vv.17-19)
 - 3. Show down Part 1: Baal (vv.20-29)
 - 4. Showdown Part 2: Yahweh (vv.30-40)
 - 5. The Lord brings rain (vv.41-46)
 - And if I were to put a tag on our text tonight it would simply be: The Great Showdown.
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 18:1-16 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 18:1 Now it happened after many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, “Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the face of the earth.”

1 Kings 18:2 So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the famine was severe in Samaria.

1 Kings 18:3 Ahab called Obadiah who was over the household. (Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly;

1 Kings 18:4 for when Jezebel destroyed the prophets of the Lord, Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them by fifties in a cave, and provided them with bread and water.)

1 Kings 18:5 Then Ahab said to Obadiah, “Go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the valleys; perhaps we will find grass and keep the horses and mules alive, and not have to kill some of the cattle.”

1 Kings 18:6 So they divided the land between them to survey it; Ahab went one way by himself and Obadiah went another way by himself.

1 Kings 18:7 Now as Obadiah was on the way, behold, Elijah met him, and he recognized him and fell on his face and said, “Is this you, Elijah my master?”

1 Kings 18:8 He said to him, “It is I. Go, say to your master, ‘Behold, Elijah is here.’”

1 Kings 18:9 He said, “What sin have I committed, that you are giving your servant into the hand of Ahab to put me to death?”

1 Kings 18:10 “As the Lord your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent to search for you; and when they said, ‘He is not here,’ he made the kingdom or nation swear that they could not find you.

1 Kings 18:11 “And now you are saying, ‘Go, say to your master, ‘Behold, Elijah is here.’”

1 Kings 18:12 “It will come about when I leave you that the Spirit of the Lord will carry you

where I do not know; so when I come and tell Ahab and he cannot find you, he will kill me, although I your servant have feared the Lord from my youth.

1 Kings 18:13 “Has it not been told to my master what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the Lord, that I hid a hundred prophets of the Lord by fifties in a cave, and provided them with bread and water?

1 Kings 18:14 “And now you are saying, ‘Go, say to your master, “Behold, Elijah is here” ’; he will then kill me.”

1 Kings 18:15 Elijah said, “As the Lord of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to him today.”

1 Kings 18:16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

- Quite a bit of time has passed since Elijah’s encounter with the widow and her son.
 - The text tells us that it is now the third year of the famine in the land which means that this is the last year of the famine. (James 5)

James 5:17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months.

James 5:18 Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.

- - - And it’s within this last year of the famine that the word of the Lord comes to Elijah for his next steps.
 - So, the Lord gives Elijah a command which is to go and show himself to Ahab and then He would send rain upon the earth.
 - So, in obedience to the word of the Lord, Elijah makes his way in that direction.
 - An interesting note is found in verse 2 where the writer mentions that “the famine was severe in Samaria”.
 - This statement becomes the writer’s way to lead us into the upcoming details of the narrative.
 - Indeed, this drought was severe, but most especially in the region of the land of Samaria.
 - And the reason being is because this was the headquarters of Israel’s great apostasy and departure from the Mosaic Law.
 - So, because of the extent of the drought’s reach, it would force individuals to get creative with where they could find struggling sources of nutrition.
 - The scene quickly pivots to the introduction of a new character – a man named Obadiah.
 - We’re told that Obadiah was a servant of Ahab’s household, but most importantly, the writer mentions that Obadiah “feared the Lord greatly”.
 - In other words, Obadiah was a follower of Yahweh, and this is further expressed in Obadiah’s protection of the sons of the prophets.
 - He would hid in a cave close to 100 prophets from the crazed vengeance and Jezebel and would supply them with food and water.
 - It is also worth noting that this Obadiah is not the same Obadiah named after the Old Testament book.

- The writer continues by adding that this Obadiah along with Ahab are on a search for land and water to keep the horses.
 - Because the way of life during this time was agrarian it required plentiful crops and water sources to sustain the food sources.
 - This included their only means of transportation in that day – horses and mules.
 - And being that they are setting out to look for land that provided just a sign of life further demonstrates how severe this drought was.
 - It gets so bad that someone figures it would be best to split up and cover more ground.
- As a result of that decision, Obadiah comes across Elijah and being that Obadiah knew who Elijah was immediately fell to his face in reverence.
 - From that point, Elijah gives Obadiah very direct instructions: “Go, say to your master, “Behold Elijah is here.””
 - To which Obadiah immediately responds, “What sin have I committed, that you are giving your servant into the hand of Ahab to put me to death?”
- To paint a quick picture, Jezebel has searched throughout the entire lands for anyone who believed in Yahweh and for them to be killed.
 - Anything that looked like Yahwehism (Worship of Yahweh) or resembled the worship of Yahweh was to be destroyed.
 - And if that wasn't good enough, verse 10 mentions that surrounding kingdoms were on notice to swear that there was no sight of any prophets.
 - Consider the deep conviction and necessity to eliminate truth from every public place and then for it to be replaced with lies concocted by governing leadership?
 - This might sound a lot like what we are beginning to see more and more in our world today.
 - Jezebel becomes the very epitome of the causation of the collapse of nations by way of circumcising nations from their foundational truths!
 - And if Jezebel didn't get things her way, she had the power of the pillow which means that she has the ear of the King.
 - And with the ear of the King comes the power of his armory and more!
 - So as Elijah tells Obadiah to go to King Ahab and tell him that he is in the city, Obadiah is worried for his very own life – and rightfully so.
 - So Obadiah seems to be wavering a bit between wanting to obey the words of Elijah or to acquiesce to the corners of silence.
 - It gets so bad that in verse 12, Obadiah says, if I tell the King you are here what if the Spirit of the Lord just whisks you away – I have to account for what I said.
 - So you can feel the tension; comical yet difficult tension of the conversation.
 - And perhaps this is the tension that some may even find themselves in today.
- What do you do when you find yourself on the job and something is done that was improper or went against your very values as a believer.
 - Do you stand up and say something, knowing that it might cost you something in the end – maybe that promotion, friendship, or even worse the job?!
 - This is the crossroads where Obadiah fell.

- However, Obadiah takes Elijah at his word (obedience), according to the word of the Lord, and shares the report with Ahab.
- And isn't that the very definition of what faith is: Not knowing what the next steps look like, but simply knowing that because He said it, I'll do it.
 - Faith is the only vehicle by which God uses to demonstrate to men and women who He is:
 - Hebrews 11:6 tells us this:

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

- ◦ Well, it's without fail that the Lord leads Elijah into the belly of the beast, as it were, to King Ahab himself. Check out verses 17-19.

1 Kings 18:17 When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, “Is this you, you troubler of Israel?”

1 Kings 18:18 He said, “I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house have, because you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and you have followed the Baals.

1 Kings 18:19 “Now then send and gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, together with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.”

- Without fail, at the sight of Elijah, King Ahab moves to accuse Elijah for the drought.
 - To which the reader reading this account would say: “Well ain’t that the pot calling the kettle black?”
 - How quick our sin blinds us to believe that we aren’t the problem but everyone else is.
 - The reality was, this drought was simply a physical demonstration of the king’s spiritual condition which now is reflected in the people as well.
 - Sin doesn’t just stay in one place, no – if it can it seeks to spread and will spread quickly, especially when unchecked.
 - The true cause of this calamity was due to the King’s compromises and restructuring of God’s order and ways.
 - Every king, for both the north and the south, are obligated and reminded about the conditions of the Mosaic covenant.
 - Yet the further we have moved away from Solomon’s rule, the more we begin to see a departure from the ways of the Lord.
 - And if you remember, this was the very warning in which both David’s father and the Lord Himself, gave to Solomon as a warning several times over.
 - This just goes to show us that we as sheep need constant reminders to not go too far! That’s the purpose of a Shepherd!
 - So in order to bring about a proper perspective for Ahab to see and understand, he walks him down memory lane to see where the departure first began.
 - Isn’t it amazing how the world sees Christianity as more opposition to truly loving people than they can?
 - Sin will have us think that down is up and up is down, and in Elijah’s case, truth in the midst of a delusional people must be greatly demonstrated.
 - And this is exactly what he sets out to show by the power of God

And this is exactly what He sets out to show, by the power of God.

- In few short words, Elijah tells Ahab, “I can show you who is both the Creator of your calamity and who is the Reliever of it.”
- Check out verses 20-29.

1 Kings 18:20 So Ahab sent a message among all the sons of Israel and brought the prophets together at Mount Carmel.

1 Kings 18:21 Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people did not answer him a word.

1 Kings 18:22 Then Elijah said to the people, “I alone am left a prophet of the Lord, but Baal’s prophets are 450 men.

1 Kings 18:23 “Now let them give us two oxen; and let them choose one ox for themselves and cut it up, and place it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other ox and lay it on the wood, and I will not put a fire under it.

1 Kings 18:24 “Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord, and the God who answers by fire, He is God.” And all the people said, “That is a good idea.”

1 Kings 18:25 So Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one ox for yourselves and prepare it first for you are many, and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it.”

1 Kings 18:26 Then they took the ox which was given them and they prepared it and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon saying, “O Baal, answer us.” But there was no voice and no one answered. And they leaped about the altar which they made.

1 Kings 18:27 It came about at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god; either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened.”

1 Kings 18:28 So they cried with a loud voice and cut themselves according to their custom with swords and lances until the blood gushed out on them.

1 Kings 18:29 When midday was past, they raved until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice; but there was no voice, no one answered, and no one paid attention.

- So, the true challenge begins: The showdown between the True and only living God, Yahweh, versus the idol worship of Baal.
 - Ahab accepts Elijah’s challenge and the location of the match.
 - The location was Mount Carmel a very familiar place for Ahab and the Baal prophets because this was the “sacred dwelling place of Baal”.
 - For some this is the difference between a home game advantage versus an opposing rival’s home game.
 - However, Elijah is not moved by where the location of the match will be because at the end of the day Elijah knows he serves the Living God!
 - At the point where all the people have assembled, Elijah draws near to the people with a powerful statement: “How long will you hesitate between opinions?”
 - The word for “hesitate” in Hebrew is *psh* (pa-sha) which means to limp or to waver.
 - In other words, how long will you all waver between the God of Israel and the idol

Baal?

- “A choice has to be made as to whom you will serve, but there is no serving two masters.”
- And here the people fell silent because they had no answer for Elijah at this point. For lack of better words: They were stuck between a rock and a hard place.
 - This language begins to sound quite familiar to the days of Joshua. You might remember these words from Joshua himself in Joshua 24:14-15.

Joshua 24:14 “Now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord.

Joshua 24:15 “If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

- ○ After Elijah’s statement to choose, he lets them know that the odds of this competition are stacked against him.
 - He mentions that he alone is left as a prophet of Yahweh (although a bit exaggerated) compared to the 450 illegitimate prophets of Baal.
 - He then takes it a step further and has the opposing team’s prophets choose the ox of their liking.
 - Similarly, he has them choose the oxen that he will use in the great showdown of who is the true God of Israel.
- Ideally, all the odds were in favor for King Ahab and his idol, Baal to succeed.
 - Elijah then lays down the rules of engagement for how this competition would work for both parties.
- He informs the Baal prophets to prepare their ox for sacrifice by cutting them up and laying it on the alter with no fire underneath.
 - He informs the Baal prophets to prepare their ox by cutting them up and laying it on the alter with no fire underneath.
- What makes this a bit comedic is that not only was Baal considered a fertility god, but he was also the one who supposedly sent lightning from heaven which would cause fire.
 - So as one could imagine with the past 3 years of great drought and famine in the land, there would seem to have been great silence from Baal.
 - And it leaves the question of tension on the opposing team hanging in the balance: Will Baal answer this time?
- As the writer continues, the competition begins and the Baal prophets are calling and pleading for Baal to consume the ox with fire from heaven.
 - They call on Baal morning, noon, and evening to the point that they are screaming, pleading for an answer.
 - If that weren’t enough, they seek to cut themselves in an attempt to appease Baal to respond to their request.
 - But to no avail, there remained great silence.
 - The writer mentions that Elijah has a bit of a comical moment as he awaits to see a

demonstration from Baal.

- Elijah tells the prophets in few short words: You might need to yell a bit louder; he is a busy god up there.
- Or maybe he is pre-occupied with other matters.
- He takes an even greater dig: "You know what he might be in a deep sleep and needs to be awakened".
- It's at the end of their time and there has been no response, and in that the people had nothing to say.
- Now the stage was set for a perfect opportunity for the people to see the only true and Living God demonstrate His great power.
- Clearly, there is a built up anticipation now to see what Elijah will do. Check out verses 30-40.

1 Kings 18:30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord which had been torn down.

1 Kings 18:31 Elijah took twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, "Israel shall be your name."

1 Kings 18:32 So with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he made a trench around the altar, large enough to hold two measures of seed.

1 Kings 18:33 Then he arranged the wood and cut the ox in pieces and laid it on the wood.

1 Kings 18:34 And he said, "Fill four pitchers with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." And he said, "Do it a second time," and they did it a second time. And he said, "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time.

1 Kings 18:35 The water flowed around the altar and he also filled the trench with water.

1 Kings 18:36 At the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, today let it be known that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and I have done all these things at Your word."

1 Kings 18:37 "Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that You, O Lord, are God, and that You have turned their heart back again."

1 Kings 18:38 Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

1 Kings 18:39 When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God."

1 Kings 18:40 Then Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal; do not let one of them escape." So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

- Now the real demonstration would begin! Elijah calls for all the people to come close as he prepared the altar of the Lord.
 - What becomes a significant moment here is that he rebuilds the very altar of Yahweh that the people had torn down before.
 - This had to have been quite a sobering moment because as Elijah is setting up the

alter with 12 stones, perhaps the people are remembering.

- Perhaps the people are reminiscing on a once united Israel where the Lord dwelled in the Temple built by Solomon.
- This would indeed be a moment they would not forget!
- Elijah proceeds to prepare for his sacrifice, but with a twist. He requests that a trench be made around the altar.
 - And within those trenches he has them filled to the brim along with the sacrifice itself being drenched in water.
 - And he has them do this three times.
- After the point of preparation, the writer notes that it is time for the evening sacrifice, which means it was about 3PM.
 - He then steps forward and makes a public prayer for the Lord to show Himself.
- Notice, Elijah's prayer is completely opposite of his Pagan predecessors.
 - Where the Baal priest sought the attention of their god with loud voices, screams, and cutting, Elijah is having an intelligible conversation with Yahweh.
- Elijah's prayer is quite simple: "Lord answer your servant so that this people will know that you are God and have turned their heart back again."
 - Immediately, the text tells us that the fire of the Lord consumed everything around the alter, as if it was licked clean, including the water.
- As one could imagine, a sight like that would have left anyone speechless.
 - And in this case, it moved the people to fall on their faces declaring aloud, "The Lord, He is God!" (Demonstration of repentance)
 - Truth had been made known to those who had been disillusioned by idol worship.
- Immediately, Elijah has every Baal prophet seized and brought down to the brook Kishon to be slaughtered according to the Law (Deuteronomy 13:12-15)
 - Check out what the text says:

Deuteronomy 13:12 "If you hear in one of your cities, which the Lord your God is giving you to live in, anyone saying that

Deuteronomy 13:13 some worthless men have gone out from among you and have seduced the inhabitants of their city, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods' (whom you have not known),

Deuteronomy 13:14 then you shall investigate and search out and inquire thoroughly. If it is true and the matter established that this abomination has been done among you,

Deuteronomy 13:15 you shall surely strike the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying it and all that is in it and its cattle with the edge of the sword.

- ○ Well, it's after this scene that the promise of the Lord providing rain was beginning to brew.
- Check out verses 41-46.

1 Kings 18:41 Now Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of the roar of a heavy shower."

1 Kings 18:42 So Ahab went up to eat and drink. But Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he crouched down on the earth and put his face between his knees.

1 Kings 18:43 He said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.” So he went up and looked and said, “There is nothing.” And he said, “Go back” seven times.

1 Kings 18:44 It came about at the seventh time, that he said, “Behold, a cloud as small as a man’s hand is coming up from the sea.” And he said, “Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Prepare your chariot and go down, so that the heavy shower does not stop you.’ ”

1 Kings 18:45 In a little while the sky grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy shower. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel.

1 Kings 18:46 Then the hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he girded up his loins and outran Ahab to Jezreel.

- As Elijah had predicted to Ahab, that until he gave the word, there would be no rain upon the land.
 - And now, here came the long-anticipated words in which King Ahab waited for: “Go up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of the roar of a heavy thunder”.
 - Without hesitation, King Ahab got up to go and celebrate the end of the drought with a banquet of sorts.
 - And while Ahab goes to celebrate, Elijah proceeds back up the mountain of Mt. Carmel and gets into a fetal position in prayer. He’s praying for rain.
 - Being that Elijah is in deep prayer, he sends his servant to go up and look towards the Mediterranean Sea to see if he sees rain coming.
 - And apparently, Elijah had him do that 7 times presuming the servant did not see any indication of rain.
 - What becomes a powerful point in this part of the narrative is Elijah’s persistence in his prayer, even when he doesn’t see a sign.
 - Elijah’s prayers are not moved by his failure to see God move, rather it motivates him to pray even more.
 - It’s on the seventh time around that Elijah’s servant sees something: “A cloud as small as a man’s hand coming up from the sea.”
 - At this sight, Elijah immediately gets up and attempts to send word to Ahab to hurry on his chariot quickly because of the heavy storms headed their way.
 - And without fail, the clouds grew dark, the winds increased, and the rain commenced.
 - And the writer notes that the hand of the Lord was on Elijah.
- What does the writer show us by the leading of the Spirit:
 - 1. We see the sovereign hand of the Lord at work through his servant.
 - 2. The power of the Lord through prayer
 - 3. The power of the Lord over nature
 - All of this was accomplished during a time of great apostasy in Israel’s history.
 - And the Lord turned hearts back to Him by revealing Himself and His nature in a powerful way!
 - The Lord demonstrated that His power alone can sustain life, replenish it, and deliver it.

- We saw in Chapter 17, amid the famine, the Lord sustain a widow, a prophet, and a son.
- And now that same God has turned hearts by showing Himself mightily.
- May we never underestimate God's control over the affairs of nature and human interaction.
 - God alone is worthy to be worshiped, adored, and praised!
 - Let's Pray.

- In our last session, we witnessed the showdown of a lifetime, Elijah the prophet goes head to head with the priests of Baal and their pagan worship.
 - Elijah has been equipped and prepared to confront King Ahab as he and his wife continue to pollute the Northern kingdom with idolatrous worship.
 - And Elijah comes to remind the people of the North of who the true and Living God is – none other than Yahweh.
 - And as a way to demonstrate the power of God amongst a backslidden and forgetful people, Elijah request a duel.
 - He has the Northern Kingdoms' over 450 priests, to choose a location, the object of sacrifice, and to prepare their altar.
 - This would all seem like a huge disadvantage for Elijah, yet he has the confidence in knowing that the God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob is with him.
 - Elijah places a caveat on this showdown – whichever god responds to the sacrifice, will be the god in whom is to be worshipped by the people.
 - The terms are agreed upon and the competition begins with the 450 priests.
 - After hours of the pagan priests seeking to appease and gain the attention of their gods, they receive no answer and no consumed sacrifice.
 - The stage is now set for the Lord to work mightily, and he does so with a few extra kicks for show.
 - And without fail, the Lord consumes the sacrifice and the prophets of the north are forced to concede.
 - And to put the icing on the cake, Elijah, according to Torah, has every one of Jezebel's prophets killed for turning the people away from Yahweh.
 - It was upon hearing that news that now Elijah is faced with another challenge before him.
 - Because Jezebel's system of religion has been shown a farce and her strength weakened.
 - Now, she is coming for Elijah. The question becomes, what will he do?!
 - If I were to put an outline together for our time in the text, we will see a few things:
 - 1. Jezebel's threat and Elijah's escape (vv.1-8)
 - 2. Elijah's Fear/ The Lord's Word (vv.9-16)
 - 3. You are not Alone (vv.17-21)
 - If I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would simply be: Faith over Fear.
 - With that being said, meet me in 1 Kings 19, beginning with verses 1-8 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 19:1 Now Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword.

1 Kings 19:2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So may the gods do to me and even more, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.”

1 Kings 19:3 And he was afraid and arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

1 Kings 19:4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down

under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, “It is enough; now, O Lord, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers.”

1 Kings 19:5 He lay down and slept under a juniper tree; and behold, there was an angel touching him, and he said to him, “Arise, eat.”

1 Kings 19:6 Then he looked and behold, there was at his head a bread cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and lay down again.

1 Kings 19:7 The angel of the Lord came again a second time and touched him and said, “Arise, eat, because the journey is too great for you.”

1 Kings 19:8 So he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mountain of God.

- After the great showdown between the prophets of Baal versus Yahweh, word is sent back to Jezebel, by her husband as to what occurred.
 - She's informed that all the prophets of Baal were killed by Elijah after having been defeated in the showdown.
 - One thing to note here is the detail concerning Ahab's rendition of the showdown.
 - He mentions not that Yahweh had demonstrated great power over Baal, but rather that the showdown was done by Elijah.
 - Now although a small detail, what seems to be overlooked by Ahab is the one behind Elijah doing the work – it is none other than Yahweh Himself.
 - This simply goes to show that Ahab is still blinded by the reality of the God behind this great demonstration of power.
 - As one could imagine, Jezebel receiving word of her prophets having died at the hands of Elijah infuriated her.
 - And as a result, she says in few short words that her response to this would be to seek the life of Elijah the next day.
 - So getting word of his life being threatened, Elijah flees to Beersheba, in Judah, and left his servant there.
 - However, it would seem that the distance wasn't far enough for Elijah because from Beersheba he heads further east into the wilderness.
 - Here he is back at a place of familiarity, isolated from the population in order to seek refuge from the source of impending infliction.
 - And the text tells us that he finds rest under a juniper tree and it is under that tree where Elijah cries out to the Lord to take his life.
 - Isn't it interesting that the same place that Elijah found himself before, where the Lord supernaturally sustained him, is the same place he seeks to die.
 - Perhaps the writer is using the wilderness as a reminder to the reader that the wilderness can be a place where the Lord can still meet you.
 - We oftentimes consider the wilderness as a place of dismissal, seclusion, but perhaps, the wilderness is a place that, when the Lord is invited can become an oasis.
 - What we see with Elijah is that he becomes discouraged by the upcoming circumstance that he was to face.
 - He was overwhelmed at what was before him having forgot that not too long ago

He was overwhelmed at what was before him, having forgotten not so long ago how the Lord had demonstrated His power mightily through Him.

- The reality is, we too have moments like Elijah in the fact that, one moment we are on the mountain top with Jesus, yet when we are in the valley we easily become discouraged.
 - What we must remember as believers in Christ is that God is not just the God of the great showdown, but he is also the God of the valley and the down trodden.
 - Isaiah 40:29 tells us this:

Isaiah 40:29 He gives strength to the weary, And to him who lacks might He increases power.

- - So while in the wilderness, Elijah seeks refuge under a juniper tree.
 - A Juniper tree, also known as a broom tree, was a small shrub which has roots that can be eaten or used for charcoal to cook.
 - Along with those specific properties, it was most known for its shading ability in hot areas.
 - And while under this juniper tree, looking to die, an angel touched him saying “Arise, eat.”
 - At first glance of that verse one would assume, where will the food come from – he’s in the desert, right?
 - However, the very next verse tells us that as Elijah got up that he is greeted with a bread cake, “baked on hot stones” and a jar of water.
 - Miraculously, food is provided for Elijah as well as water, perhaps from the brook nearby.
 - Perhaps, the stones that were used here might refer to the roots of the juniper tree as means to cook the bread cake.
 - We are told in verses 7-8 that “the angel of the Lord” came a second time to strengthen Elijah with a meal for the journey ahead.
 - Notice, that the text says “the angel of the Lord”. Perhaps this is the pre-incarnate Christ coming to aid the needs of Elijah for His journey.
 - What a refreshing thought to know that Christ is with us even in the depths of the valley!
 - I’m reminded of David’s words in Psalm 139:8-12 where he says:

Psalm 139:8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.

Psalm 139:9 If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,

Psalm 139:10 Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me.

Psalm 139:11 If I say, “Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, And the light around me will be night,”

Psalm 139:12 Even the darkness is not dark to You, And the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You.

- - What becomes an interesting detail in the text is the journey in which Elijah will take from the wilderness to Horeb.
 - Horeb is also known as Mt. Sinai where the Law was given to Moses some time

prior.

- And what is even more astonishing is the time in which this journey would take for Elijah – 40 days and 40 nights.
- The writer gives us this beautiful imagery of 2 significant biblical characters on the same mountain: Moses and Elijah.
 - Moses and the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years.
 - Elijah will travel for 40 days and 40 nights, and guess who else was in a wilderness strengthened by angels for the same amount of time – Jesus Christ.
- If those details aren't coincidental enough, when we move to the New Testament where the Lord Jesus shows His Glory to Peter, James, and John – who is there with Him?
 - None other than Moses on one side and Elijah on the other!
- This is why I believe the angel of the Lord in this text is the pre-incarnate Christ, because not only does God reveal Himself to Moses but He does the same for Elijah.
 - And in that moment on the mount of transfiguration both Moses and Elijah are able to witness the very God-man in whom gave them a glimpse of His Glory!
 - And in both these instances, Moses and Elijah were in a wilderness.
 - *Horeb* in Hebrew means desert or dried up!
- Clearly, the writer in Hebrew is casting foreshadows of the God-man in whom he himself has not seen with his own eyes.
 - Yet he is able to describe to the reader the sustaining provision, power, and Glory beheld in the God-man, Jesus Christ!
 - So not only does Elijah leave the wilderness full physically, but his courage will be replenished all the more.
 - Check out verses 9-16.

1 Kings 19:9 Then he came there to a cave and lodged there; and behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and He said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

1 Kings 19:10 He said, “I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.”

1 Kings 19:11 So He said, “Go forth and stand on the mountain before the Lord.” And behold, the Lord was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.

1 Kings 19:12 After the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing.

1 Kings 19:13 When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. And behold, a voice came to him and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

1 Kings 19:14 Then he said, “I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.”

1 Kings 19:15 The Lord said to him, “Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus, and when you have arrived, you shall anoint Hazael king over Aram;

1 Kings 19:16 and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place.

- Elijah leaves the wilderness and retreats to Mt.Sinai where he can find refuge in a cave.
 - This particular cave was not just any cave but perhaps this was the cave in which the Lord revealed Himself to Moses in the giving of the Law.
 - Elijah went back to a familiar place as to hopefully hear from the Lord and seek protection from Jezebel.
 - And to Elijah’s desire, he hears from the Lord and the Lord does not greet him with answers, but rather a question.
 - And that question was, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”
 - Now wait a minute! Why is it that God is asking a question that He already knows the answer to, to a fearful and timid prophet?
 - Well, it’s similar to how the Lord Jesus would answer questions from people during His time on earth.
 - The method of answering questions with questions was in the context of Jewish teaching.
 - For this would be the way in which the individual with the question would come to the answer in which they were seeking.
 - It’s like when we used to take tests in grade school and you had a question about familiar content.
 - Yet your teacher couldn’t give you the answer.
 - So, what she does is asks you questions which would cause previously studied material to come to mind.
 - And when you processed the question asked, it would bring you to a conclusion that you already knew the answer, you just needed someone to stimulate the previously learned information.
 - And what a powerful way to stimulate one’s mind to bring forth previously learned information!
 - Like Elijah, we too can come to the crossroads of fear and forgetfulness.
 - The fear of what life throws our way, the fear of circumstances arising that are out of our control.
 - It’s in those moments that the Holy Spirit has to remind us of something: Do you remember when the Lord delivered you before?
 - Do you remember when the Lord showed up mightily in your past situations.
 - Friends, it wasn’t too long ago that the Lord had used Elijah mightily by way of an all-consuming fire at the Altar showdown.
 - And somewhere between that high moment and this low moment, fear had completely crippled Elijah.
 - It’s in verse 10 that Elijah responds to the Lord’s question that he had been zealous for the Lord, that he had done mighty things for Him.
 - And now he feels that he has been forsaken himself because of the plot on his life.

Elijah feels as though he was the only one left.

- The reality is, we can identify with Elijah, because we too at some point have felt the same way:
 - Lord, I've served you, I've been faithful to your word, I've done ministry in your name, but where are you for me in my time of need?!
- And how kind is it that the Lord, in Elijah's forgetful fear-tantrum, reminds him that He is with Him.
 - So the Lord tells Elijah to go and stand on the mountain before the LORD.
 - Remember, this is the very mountain in which Moses has stood and what the Lord does next blows my mind!
- While standing there, four events happen. The first time a large wind blows breaking the rocks in pieces, and an earthquake occurs, and a fire, and finally a gentle blowing.
 - Within the first three events, the text lets us know that the Lord was neither in the large wind, the earthquake, or the fire.
 - However, it would be in that soft and gentle blow that Elijah would hear and respond to the voice of the Lord once again.
- Perhaps, Elijah was anticipating the Lord to speak through and demonstrate his revelation and power as He had done before – through earthquake and fire.
 - Perhaps, Elijah was seeking that at the very sign of threat from Jezebel that the Lord would completely consume her in an instant.
 - And that because of the Lord's lack of response in that matter, somehow Elijah assumed that the Lord was not with him.
- Could it be that the Lord needed to reorient Elijah's expectations regarding how He worked?
 - Perhaps, Elijah needed to be still and know that the Lord was God and in control, even when it didn't seem like things were in control.
- The most still moments of a hurricane are in the “eye of the storm”. It is recorded that there is a sense of stillness even when chaos is around.
 - It's this still gentle wind that Elijah hears that he both recognizes and hears the voice of the Lord!
 - He proceeds to walk to the opening of the cave and it is there that the Lord asks him the same question again – “Why are you here, Elijah?”
 - To which Elijah proceeds to give the same response he did the first time – only this time the Lord responds not with demonstrations of revelation but now with an answer.
- Sometimes the Lord will provide us answers in ways that we would least expect!
 - The Lord has a way of doing things in unconventional ways.
- From that point, Elijah responds with the same answer. He emphasizes his sense of being alone or the only prophet left. There is almost a sense of self-pity.
 - Elijah had, not too long ago, witnessed a powerful demonstration of God's power on the mountain at the great showdown.
 - And now he seems to be crippled by fear as if the God of Israel won't come through for him now.
- Furthermore, we witness that this sense of self-pity almost leads to this sense of “Woe

is me."

- Yet we find that the Lord deals gently with Elijah and lets him know that one, the Lord is with him.
- And two, that there is a remnant in the land in whom the Lord can use to accomplish his work.
- And this brings up an interesting point: May we not get so beside ourselves in thinking that without us the Lord can't accomplish His work!
 - The Lord can use whomever He needs in order to accomplish His purposes.
 - If the Lord can use a donkey for His purposes what makes you think He needs, you or me?!
 - It is an honor and privilege to serve the Lord and we should walk in humility knowing this reality.
- So, the Lord says in verse 15 that Elijah is to return to Israel and go to Damascus where he is to complete three assignments. He is to:
 - 1) Anoint Hazael king over Aram,
 - 2) Anoint Jehu king over Israel, and
 - 3) Appoint Elisha as prophet in his place.
- Interestingly enough, we will discover upon finishing 1 Kings, that Elijah only accomplishes one of these assignments directly and the other 2 indirectly.
 - Elijah will indeed appoint Elisha as his successor, however, it will be Elisha that will accomplish the tasks of anointing both Hazael and Jehu.
 - And the latter events will occur in 2 Kings Chapters 8 and 9. Check out verses 17-21.

1 Kings 19:17 "It shall come about, the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall put to death.

1 Kings 19:18 "Yet I will leave 7,000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him."

1 Kings 19:19 So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, while he was plowing with twelve pairs of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth. And Elijah passed over to him and threw his mantle on him.

1 Kings 19:20 He left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?"

1 Kings 19:21 So he returned from following him, and took the pair of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the implements of the oxen, and gave it to the people and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah and ministered to him.

- God responds to Elijah's questions of feeling left alone and abandoned by reassuring him that there is a plan.
 - This plan would consist of a direct assault and destroying of Baalism out of Israel through the Lord's instruments of choice.
 - And as we see, through the use of these three men, the Lord would eradicate Baalism and its grip upon Israel.

- And as a way of application, this is good news for us because even when we don't know the complete ways in which the Lord is working things out, we can trust that He is making a way!
 - And as a note of encouragement as we read in James 5 some sessions ago, we can often look at these biblical characters and think they are "the standard"
 - Or that we could never amount to the things that they have accomplished.
- But as James 5 mentions, Elijah, although used mightily by God, was still just a man and struggled with fear and was at times discouraged.
 - One could argue that Elijah, like David, dealt with depression at times!
 - So before we start elevating people into positions, know that as believers we are all on a journey with the Lord.
- We shouldn't be so quick to assume that because someone may be a pastor or an elder, or bible teacher, that they don't struggle with fear, discouragement, or even wrestle with God on matters!
 - We must be willing to humble ourselves and know that we are all in need of trusting that the Lord is enough.
 - And even when it doesn't make sense, that as we seek the Lord for understanding, He will provide all that we need.
- The Lord in His kindness also addresses Elijah's sense of being alone. Notice in verse 18 he lets him know that there is a remnant that will remain.
 - In other words, "Elijah, you aren't by yourself. There are some who haven't bowed the knee to Baal!"
- The reality is as our culture gets darker and darker, be of good cheer and know that there are still those who truly stand on the word of God.
 - Don't expect that everyone is yearning to be in a solid bible teaching church or to be in bible study week after week.
 - However, that does not mean that those who aren't here or listening to the ministry app, aren't faithful followers of Jesus.
- I believe that what the Lord was also addressing with Elijah was the idea that he was somehow the "forgotten one of privilege".
 - And the reality is, that is us sometimes:
 - Lord I have done such and such for you or I have taught the bible study, why are these things occurring in my life – as if we aren't meant to suffer!
- I'm reminded of the words of Jesus to His disciples in John 15:20-21. Check out the text:

John 15:20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

John 15:21 "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me.

- ○ So, Elijah beginning to understand what the Lord was showing him by way of gentleness, gets up and proceeds to do as the Lord sent him.
 - He goes to a small town named Abel Meholah, halfway between the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee.

- And it's there that he meets his successor – Elisha.
- The name Elisha in Hebrew means, "My God is Salvation".
- While Elisha was out plowing his father's field with 12 pair of oxen (a lot of land), Elijah comes by and throws his mantle on him.
 - In that day, a prophet throwing their cloak on another meant that there was a passing of the baton.
 - In other words, the power and authority of that prophetic office was being handed down to the one receiving the cloak.
 - Elisha understood what this meant because the text tells us that almost immediately, Elisha stopped what he was doing to go after Elijah.
- However, in taking up this mantle bestowed upon him, Elisha asks Elijah if he can say good-bye to his father and family.
 - To which Elijah responds, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?"
 - In other words, I'm not taking you against your will, do as you need to!
- We are then told that Elisha's decision on following Elijah and taking up this mantle is approved because of the slaughtering of the oxen.
 - One could imagine that these oxen, which belonged to the father was a heavy sacrifice, yet there is understanding with what Elisha needed to do.
 - This sacrifice of the oxen symbolized his commitment to the Lord and none other!
- I remember months before my mother died, I was going to tell her the Lord opened an opportunity for me to go into full time ministry at Verse by Verse Fellowship.
 - And I remember being nervous because in high school I remember sharing the same thought of full time ministry with my mom yet her response was different then.
 - In high school she told me with the most sincere face, Wesley, that's great but you need to get you a "real job first".
 - So years later, I was expecting the same response, hesitantly, yet this time I was met with a different response.
 - On the phone with my mom, she proceeds to tell me, "Wesley, I knew it was time. I'm so proud of you following the Lord!"
 - So here we see that the family participates in this feast of farewell celebration for the journey that Elisha is about to embark upon.
 - To which he departs from the feast and proceeds to follow Elijah on this journey of ministry that will unfold before his very eyes.
- Our following the Lord Jesus is something that is to be both carefully considered and courageously pursued.
 - When we placed our faith in Christ, we were illumined to abandon the things and our ways of the past and to pursue the Lord above all else.
 - In the same way, Elisha takes on this mantle as to commit himself to the works and assignments of the Lord for Israel as a whole.
 - And these works will be seen later in 2 Kings.
 - Let's Pray.

- In Chapter 19, we unpacked the experience of a fearful and discouraged Elijah who, not too long before, witnessed an incredible demonstration of God's power.
 - After having defeated Baal worship and the 450 priests of Baal, Elijah is forced to flee from the death threats of Jezebel.
 - It was there where Elijah quickly grew depressed and discouraged by the threat of his life and fearful that the Lord would not come through.
 - However, he was reminded through these subtle ways that the Lord has always made a way.
 - Herein lied the opportunity for Elijah's faith to grow all the more in knowing the Lord's word is true.
 - He was fed a special meal by the angel of the Lord to nourish him for the journey ahead.
 - He then came to the realization that his circumstances were not a means of deflation by consolation.
 - He came to realize that the Lord was at work and already ahead of Elijah by several years as it relates to how the Lord would deal with idolatry with the North.
 - He was then sent to a young man named Elisha who would be his protégé and continue on in the ways of the Lord according to the word of the Lord.
 - And what a beautiful lesson that served in knowing that the Lord is always going to accomplish His word through men and women of His choosing.
 - Tonight, we will see a shift in scene and setting yet a very common theme of God's power at work through the lives of people.
 - If I were to put an outline together for our time tonight, we will see the following:
 - 1. Battle between Ahab and Ben-Hadad: Part 1 (vv.1-25)
 - 2. Preparation for Battle (vv.1-12)
 - 3. Anticipation for the Battle (vv.13-25)
 - 4. Battle between Ahab and Ben-Hadad: Part 2 (vv.26-34)
 - 5. A Disguised Prophet (vv.35-43)
 - If I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would simply be: Only By His Grace.
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 20 verses 1-12 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 20:1 Now Ben-hadad king of Aram gathered all his army, and there were thirty-two kings with him, and horses and chariots. And he went up and besieged Samaria and fought against it.

1 Kings 20:2 Then he sent messengers to the city to Ahab king of Israel and said to him, "Thus says Ben-hadad,

1 Kings 20:3 'Your silver and your gold are mine; your most beautiful wives and children are also mine.'

1 Kings 20:4 The king of Israel replied, “It is according to your word, my lord, O king; I am yours, and all that I have.”

1 Kings 20:5 Then the messengers returned and said, “Thus says Ben-hadad, ‘Surely, I sent to you saying, “You shall give me your silver and your gold and your wives and your children,”

1 Kings 20:6 but about this time tomorrow I will send my servants to you, and they will search your house and the houses of your servants; and whatever is desirable in your eyes, they will take in their hand and carry away.’ ”

1 Kings 20:7 Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land and said, “Please observe and see how this man is looking for trouble; for he sent to me for my wives and my children and my silver and my gold, and I did not refuse him.”

1 Kings 20:8 All the elders and all the people said to him, “Do not listen or consent.”

1 Kings 20:9 So he said to the messengers of Ben-hadad, “Tell my lord the king, ‘All that you sent for to your servant at the first I will do, but this thing I cannot do.’ ” And the messengers departed and brought him word again.

1 Kings 20:10 Ben-hadad sent to him and said, “May the gods do so to me and more also, if the dust of Samaria will suffice for handfuls for all the people who follow me.”

1 Kings 20:11 Then the king of Israel replied, “Tell him, ‘Let not him who girds on his armor boast like him who takes it off.’ ”

1 Kings 20:12 When Ben-hadad heard this message, as he was drinking with the kings in the temporary shelters, he said to his servants, “Station yourselves.” So they stationed themselves against the city.

- To better understand where the narrative is picking up after the spotlight has been on Elijah for some time, we need to see when was the last time we encountered Ben-Hadad.
 - The last time that Ben-Hadad was mentioned was in 1 Kings 15:18 where King Asa of Judah partnered with Ben-Hadad against Baasha, King of the North.
 - This occurrence would have been some years prior to King Ahab's rise to the throne.
 - And with the time frame between King Baasha and King Ahab, there is a difference of several years and several kings.
 - There are some who assert that the Ben-Hadad of 1 Kings 15 is not the same as that of 1 Kings 20.
 - That perhaps 1 Kings 20 is talking about Ben-Hadad, the second. Whatever the case, we see that the king of Aram continues in discourse with the North.
 - We're told that the king of Aram attacked Samaria and began to lay siege to it.
 - And while holding the city hostage, Ben-Hadad sends messengers inside the city with a message for King Ahab.

- And that message, more of an order, was that all the king's silver and gold, wives and children were his.
- To which King Ahab replied in a few short words, "Whatever you want, it's yours. I don't want any trouble."
- This response from King Ahab was given with much haste as if he knew they were incapable to defend themselves.
 - And this was the case because numerically speaking, the odds were stacked against the Northern Kingdom, even on their best day.
 - So as a means to acquiesce to the terms, Ahab sends word back to Ben-Hadad with his compliance to the terms mentioned.
- Once word is sent back to Ben-Hadad, it is as if the request were "too simply" or easily given into.
 - So as a means to up the ante, Ben-Hadad sends word back that he would add more to his request which would now impact "all of his servants" and their belongings.
- It's at the hearing of the increased demands from Ben-Hadad that King Ahab assembles the elders of the land that he might seek counsel on how to proceed.
 - And like the American military, the elders of Northern Israel agreed that, "We do not negotiate with terrorists."
 - And they tell Ahab not to consent or even consider the demands of the king of Aram.
- It becomes clear, that Ahab is in no position to negotiate or has a leg to stand on due to the fact that he is in a vulnerable position.
 - However, he takes the advice of his counsel and acquiesces to the first set of demands but refuses the second half of the request.
 - For to give in to the second request would have completely pulled the rug from underneath him as king.
- It's in verse 10 that after word of Ahab's decision is sent back to King Ben-Hadad, that Ben-Hadad threatens King Ahab with total destruction of Samaria.
 - However, Ben-Hadad's confidence is quickly checked by King Ahab's quick wittedness.
 - King Ahab responds by saying: "Let not him who girds on armor boast like him who takes it off."
 - In other words, don't speak too soon before the battle has even begun. Check yourself before you wreck yourself.
- Well this message, received by Ben-Hadad while drinking to his pleasure, responds to his servants by telling them to ready themselves for battle.
 - In other words, in Ben-Hadad's self-confidence, his retaliation was: "I can show you better than I can tell you."
 - After the high school banter back and forth, the scene closes in on what's happening inside the camp in Samaria. Check out verses 13-25.

1 Kings 20:13 Now behold, a prophet approached Ahab king of Israel and said, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Have you seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will deliver them into your hand today, and you shall know that I am the Lord.’ ”

1 Kings 20:14 Ahab said, “By whom?” So he said, “Thus says the Lord, ‘By the young men of the rulers of the provinces.’ ” Then he said, “Who shall begin the battle?” And he answered, “You.”

1 Kings 20:15 Then he mustered the young men of the rulers of the provinces, and there were 232; and after them he mustered all the people, even all the sons of Israel, 7,000.

1 Kings 20:16 They went out at noon, while Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the temporary shelters with the thirty-two kings who helped him.

1 Kings 20:17 The young men of the rulers of the provinces went out first; and Ben-hadad sent out and they told him, saying, “Men have come out from Samaria.”

1 Kings 20:18 Then he said, “If they have come out for peace, take them alive; or if they have come out for war, take them alive.”

1 Kings 20:19 So these went out from the city, the young men of the rulers of the provinces, and the army which followed them.

1 Kings 20:20 They killed each his man; and the Arameans fled and Israel pursued them, and Ben-hadad king of Aram escaped on a horse with horsemen.

1 Kings 20:21 The king of Israel went out and struck the horses and chariots, and killed the Arameans with a great slaughter.

1 Kings 20:22 Then the prophet came near to the king of Israel and said to him, “Go, strengthen yourself and observe and see what you have to do; for at the turn of the year the king of Aram will come up against you.”

1 Kings 20:23 Now the servants of the king of Aram said to him, “Their gods are gods of the mountains, therefore they were stronger than we; but rather let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we will be stronger than they.”

1 Kings 20:24 “Do this thing: remove the kings, each from his place, and put captains in their place,

1 Kings 20:25 and muster an army like the army that you have lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot. Then we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we will be stronger than they.” And he listened to their voice and did so.

- While Ben-Hadad is planning his attack and rallying his men, we are given a peak behind the veil as to how Israel would defeat this enemy.
 - And the way that this message of victory would be delivered was through another no-named prophet to King Ahab.
 - And the message was that the Lord would deliver the Aramean army into the hands of the Northern kingdom.
 - However, notice that this statement of the Lord’s delivering power was preceded with a question.
 - The question was: “Have you seen all this great multitude?” In other words,

what you are going up against requires an even greater force.

- As verse 15 tells us, Israel's number was approximately 232 men in which he was able to gather together.
 - And if worse came to worst, the sons of Israel would be drafted which totalled to nearly 7,000 men.
 - Whereas, the Aramean army contained over 127,000 men according to verses 29-30.
- So as one would assume Ahab, not knowing how this victory would be possible, asks the prophet, "By Whom would the victory be accomplished?"
 - And he mentions that this victory would be accomplished because of the Lord's doing.
 - To which Ahab proceeds to ask, "Who will begin the battle?" and the prophet responds, "You".
- Notice, that the Lord intervening on behalf of Ahab and Israel was not based upon Ahab having repented.
 - It's not based upon Ahab turning the hearts of the people back to the Law.
- This provision of victory is simply an act of God's unmerited grace!
 - The Lord responds out of His love for His people and because He cares.
- Grace is the means by which God extends His undeserved kindness towards those who aren't deserving of it!
 - And the reality is, if it weren't for the grace of God on our side, we too would be hopelessly lost and in dire need of saving.
 - Yet, in His kindness, He saw fit to rescue us out of darkness and into His marvelous light by means of His sole provision.
- Grace, at the same time becomes the object by which gains our attention and affection to turn to the Lord all the more.
 - It's from the word of the prophet of the Lord that Ahab goes out in confidence to take the enemy by surprise.
 - While, Ben-Hadad is operating in a sense of self-assurance knowing that because of the number of his army that he would succeed, he fails to realize the Lord is working behind the scenes.
- So, while drinking himself to the point of intoxication, the young officers with Ahab are sent out for strategic purposes.
 - Ahab sends out 232 young men in whom Ben-Hadad, unaware of their intent, is taken by surprise.
- He assumes these men would come to talk for peace and seems to have an arrogance as to the strength that he possessed in number.
 - However, Ben-Hadad failed to understand that the God of Israel was behind His people to show them that He alone is God!
- Isn't it funny how sometimes the Lord will use our circumstances as a teaching tool to

recognize that He is the one in control.

- And where our independence and pride gets in the way, it hinders us from seeing the Lord respond victoriously in our circumstances.
 - In this case, Ben-Hadad witnessed for himself his army dwindle in number.
 - Where his confidence was inflated, it now became deflated, and he flees embarrassed for his life.
- The writer records that this slaughter was one of great number having been accomplished by a small army.
 - As one would imagine, this victory was well enjoyed. However, it was not to be missed that this was just the beginning.
- Furthermore, the prophet came to King Ahab to recommend he strengthen himself and prepare because Ben-Hadad was going to return stronger than before.
 - Perhaps, this was the opportunity for Ahab to reflect and recognize that the only reason that this battle was won was because of the grace Yahweh had shown.
 - And in turn Ahab would truly know where his strength came from – not from the Baals in which he was worshipping.
- The question that comes to mind in this section of the narrative is: Who will you run to?
 - Will you trust in Yahweh, the God of Israel, or will you continue in your ways knowing that the idols worshipped before are nowhere to be found.
 - God is not auditioning for Ahab's attention and affections, rather He is demonstrating to him His might and power that Ahab may choose rightly.
 - And the reality is, the Lord provides us with these divine encounters so that we may respond rightly to Him and see the Light of truth!
- While Ahab was receiving counsel from the prophet of Yahweh, Ben-Hadad was receiving counsel of his own.
 - It's in verse 23-25 that Ben-Hadad is told that their initial defeat was due to Israel's gods being the "god of the hills".
 - At first read it becomes clear that Arameans were pagan worshippers and had no regard for the true and Living God.
 - So they conclude that their mishap was due to terrain differences, not the power of a transcendental Creator.
 - This ultimately boils down to the idea of "luck" or "chance" with the non-believer today.
 - Rather than seeing life's events as divine actions or "allowables" of God's Sovereign plan, the world is reduced to circumstances by mere "chance".
 - However, the reality was that Ben-Hadad encountered the power of the Lord on the battle field.
 - Paul says the following regarding the wisdom of God and the foolishness of man in 1 Corinthians 1:27-29:

1 Corinthians 1:27 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong,

1 Corinthians 1:28 and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, **1 Corinthians 1:29** so that no man may boast before God.

- So, in his arrogance and ignorance, Ben-Hadad figures that a change in terrain would settle the score a second time.
 - Along with the change in terrain came a change in their personnel use on the field.
 - That rather than having the 32 allied kings on the field with them, they replaced them with typical army commanders.
 - And from there he was advised to regroup their army, refortify themselves, and prepare for the next opportunity to fight.
 - And as we will see in the next few verses, the battle would resume in the following Year (At the turn of the Year). Check out verses 26-34.

1 Kings 20:26 At the turn of the year, Ben-hadad mustered the Arameans and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel.

1 Kings 20:27 The sons of Israel were mustered and were provisioned and went to meet them; and the sons of Israel camped before them like two little flocks of goats, but the Arameans filled the country.

1 Kings 20:28 Then a man of God came near and spoke to the king of Israel and said, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Because the Arameans have said, “The Lord is a god of the mountains, but He is not a god of the valleys,” therefore I will give all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the Lord.’ ”

1 Kings 20:29 So they camped one over against the other seven days. And on the seventh day the battle was joined, and the sons of Israel killed of the Arameans 100,000 foot soldiers in one day.

1 Kings 20:30 But the rest fled to Aphek into the city, and the wall fell on 27,000 men who were left. And Ben-hadad fled and came into the city into an inner chamber.

1 Kings 20:31 His servants said to him, “Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings, please let us put sackcloth on our loins and ropes on our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; perhaps he will save your life.”

1 Kings 20:32 So they girded sackcloth on their loins and put ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel and said, “Your servant Ben-hadad says, ‘Please let me live.’ ” And he said, “Is he still alive? He is my brother.”

1 Kings 20:33 Now the men took this as an omen, and quickly catching his word said, “Your brother Ben-hadad.” Then he said, “Go, bring him.” Then Ben-

hadad came out to him, and he took him up into the chariot.

1 Kings 20:34 Ben-hadad said to him, “The cities which my father took from your father I will restore, and you shall make streets for yourself in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria.” Ahab said, “And I will let you go with this covenant.” So he made a covenant with him and let him go.

- The writer shifts the reader to a new season and time chronologically as the battle comes to a head.
 - Notice how he begins verse 26, he states “At the turn of the Year”.
 - Historically, this would mean “the next Spring” because in that day war was oftentimes fought during the spring time.
 - The reason being was because it was typical for kings to go to battle in the spring or early summer for their military expeditions.
 - The environment was ripe for horses to feed on grass for their nourishment.
 - And we are told it’s at this time in which the two armies are geared up and ready.
 - The writer includes the details of the sizes of both Israel’s army and Ben-Hadad’s army.
 - Israel’s army is said to have been “like two little flocks of goats”. In other words, they were small in size, numerically speaking.
 - Whereas the Arameans were great in number, however the only difference was that the Arameans did not have Yahweh on their side.
 - The prophet of God then goes to King Ahab to remind him of what the Arameans assumed regarding their previous victory.
 - He then reminds King Ahab that because the Arameans assumed that the Lord was only the God of the mountains, that the Lord would demonstrate His power even in the valley plains.
 - In other words, God is not limited to simple geographical or topographical limitations – He is Creator of all things and not bound by limitations.
 - In the words of my mother, “I will show you better than I can tell you!”
 - This statement would not only prove as true for Ben-Hadad in his arrogance, but it would also serve as a testimony to King Ahab of the One who provided the means of victory for Israel.
 - It wasn’t Ahab’s militaristic abilities or methodical battle strategies – it was simply the power of the Living God as a grace to the ones in whom He loves.
 - So the text says that for seven days Israel camped out over the territory of the enemy and on the seventh day, war ensued.
 - Now remember how many people Israel had versus the Arameans – the proportions did not make sense logically.
 - As a matter of fact to your best military strategists, the odds were stacked against the Northern kingdom of Israel. This was a hopeless cause.

- Yet, the people of God move forward in the strength of God by faith knowing that the Lord would come through as He had done before.
- The text says that the sons of Israel killed 100,000 foot soldiers in one day and because of the siege a wall fell on an additional 27,000 men while the others escaped.
 - 7,000 against over 127,000 men – yet the victory fell in the hands of King Ahab and his army – this is no ones doing but God alone.
- Imagine what the Lord can do in our lives when we simply take Him at His word!
 - So in this second defeat, Ben-Hadad and a few of his men manage to escape to a nearby city and take refuge in their chambers.
- Clearly, there was great force and power behind Israel because in verses 31-34 we see that Ben-Hadad is counseled to surrender to Israel's king.
 - And he is told to surrender because as the official mentions to him, "the kings of Israel are indeed "merciful".
 - So he suggests that they bind themselves with sackcloth and ropes as a sign of surrender and submission to the terms of the king.
- Ben-Hadad's servants send word to King Ahab that Ben-Hadad surrenders. And they do so by calling Ben-Hadad, "King Ahab's servant".
 - Oh how quickly evil will fall when it comes in contact with God in Holy War!
 - One day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess!
- However, therein lies an issue which was something that the prophet had warned Ahab which was to be considered.
 - You might recall after the great showdown between Elijah and the prophets of Baal, Elijah had all the prophets killed.
 - He did not show mercy, rather he abided by Torah and killed them for having turned the people from the instruction of God's word.
- God's Law required the death of Israel's enemies according to Deuteronomy 20:10-15. Check out the text:

Deuteronomy 20:10 “When you approach a city to fight against it, you shall offer it terms of peace.

Deuteronomy 20:11 “If it agrees to make peace with you and opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall become your forced labor and shall serve you.

Deuteronomy 20:12 “However, if it does not make peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it.

Deuteronomy 20:13 “When the Lord your God gives it into your hand, you shall strike all the men in it with the edge of the sword.

Deuteronomy 20:14 “Only the women and the children and the animals and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as booty for yourself; and you shall use the spoil of your enemies which the Lord your God has given you.

Deuteronomy 20:15 “Thus you shall do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not of the cities of these nations nearby.

- So, where the surrender began as a means of servitude, it quickly changed to a treaty of brotherhood.
 - Where this surrender initially took Ahab by surprise, something was happening in his heart.
 - Perhaps Ahab looked to the strength of Ben-Hadad as a potential ally for the future rather than considering the counsel of the prophet.
 - The use of the term “brother” here was not meant as “blood-relatives”. Rather it was cordial gestures implying partnership for “future protection”
 - This treaty, not authorized by the Lord, was established to protect Israel from future threats of a rising enemy, the Assyrians.
 - It’s as if Ahab completely neglected the fact that the Lord had just made a way out of no way for Israel’s victory.
 - Ahab completely failed to see that the victory was delivered not due to the military partnership of other nations, but because of Israel being God’s people.
 - How quickly we forget where our help comes from!
 - We will see the Lord move mightily in our circumstances through the valleys of life, yet when we see victory, pride sweeps in as if we did it in and of ourselves.
 - Rather than relying upon the strength of the Lord, Ahab thought it better to lean upon the strength of the Aramean army and Ben-Hadad’s partnership.
 - Compromise can happen quickly where there are no values or standards upheld.
 - For when we compromise in our faith, it leaves room to acquiesce to the dependency of others rather than upon the Lord.
 - So upon the agreement of this treaty, Ben-Hadad aids in fortifying the land for Israel and restoring streets and cities.
 - However, as we will see, this does not take well with the Lord as displayed through the actions of another unnamed prophet.
 - Check out verses 35-43.

1 Kings 20:35 Now a certain man of the sons of the prophets said to another by the word of the Lord, “Please strike me.” But the man refused to strike him.

1 Kings 20:36 Then he said to him, “Because you have not listened to the voice of the Lord, behold, as soon as you have departed from me, a lion will kill you.” And as soon as he had departed from him a lion found him and killed him.

1 Kings 20:37 Then he found another man and said, “Please strike me.” And the man struck him, wounding him.

1 Kings 20:38 So the prophet departed and waited for the king by the way, and

disguised himself with a bandage over his eyes.

1 Kings 20:39 As the king passed by, he cried to the king and said, “Your servant went out into the midst of the battle; and behold, a man turned aside and brought a man to me and said, ‘Guard this man; if for any reason he is missing, then your life shall be for his life, or else you shall pay a talent of silver.’

1 Kings 20:40 “While your servant was busy here and there, he was gone.” And the king of Israel said to him, “So shall your judgment be; you yourself have decided it.”

1 Kings 20:41 Then he hastily took the bandage away from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized him that he was of the prophets.

1 Kings 20:42 He said to him, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Because you have let go out of your hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction, therefore your life shall go for his life, and your people for his people.’ ”

1 Kings 20:43 So the king of Israel went to his house sullen and vexed, and came to Samaria.

- Although a unique turn of events, this section sums up the results of Ahab’s decision and the consequences of his disobedience.
 - And the Lord uses the “sons of the prophets” to accomplish this lesson demonstratively.
 - We are told that an unnamed prophet in a group known as the “sons of the prophets” said to another member of this group to “strike him down.”
 - Really quickly, “the sons of the prophets” was like a school for prophets being trained in the ways of Torah and to know the word.
 - Being that this instruction from the Lord was given through the man of God, the other students should have done according to the word of the Lord.
 - However, this particular pupil refused to engage in this activity and this refusal could be quite understandable.
 - However, because this was a command from the Lord, his refusal demonstrated an act of rebellion against the Lord.
 - So like anyone disobedient of the things of the Lord, judgement must fall and indeed it does.
 - We are told that the voice of the Lord speaks to the prophet, who requested to be struck down, and tells the other prophet that because of his failure to obey, he would die.
 - He even proceeds to tell the other prophet how he would die!
 - This story begins to sound a lot similar to the story of the young prophet from the south and the old prophet from the north.
 - And as soon as the prophet departs, he is killed by a lion.
 - We are then told in verse 37 that the prophet found another man, potentially another son of the prophets, however this man was willing to obey the command.

- And having struck the man, it now allows the prophet to disguise himself with a bandage over his eyes.
- This should remind us of another instance of someone disguising themselves in 1 Kings 14.
- This disguise is being done so that King Ahab will not be able to identify this prophet for the sake of relaying the message. (Prudent means)
- The next part of this narrative becomes a bit nostalgic!
- The prophet, now in disguise, comes across King Ahab who sees him on the side of the road – assuming the man is a wounded soldier, he stops!
 - The prophet then cries out to the king with a story explaining how he was told to guard a man and if the man escaped his life would be taken but if guarded he would be rewarded.
- The prophet continues the story that the servant “became busy” and the prisoner got away.
 - Having heard the story, the king immediately responded that judgement should be given regarding the man who neglected his responsibilities.
 - It was at that moment that the prophet quickly took off his bandage to which the King was taken aback and immediately recognized the prophet!
- Really quickly: Truth concealed will always be revealed!
 - This moment resembles the classic David and Nathan moment in 2 Samuel 12:1-7.
 - Where Nathan paints an illustration by way of a story so that David could ultimately see himself in that narrative.
- Storytelling has a very interesting way of allowing us to see ourselves in the narrative and once we see ourselves, we are forced to face ourselves in the mirror.
 - Friends, that is the point of biblical narrative: You and I must face ourselves with the ugly truth that is presented before us.
 - And the reality is it will either convict us to respond accordingly or keep us blind because we refuse to see ourselves in the end.
- Some will quickly come to a narrative like this one and say – “That’s an interesting story”, and walk away seeing it through a historical lens.
 - But the word of God serves as a mirror. James 1:23-27 says this:

James 1:23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror;

James 1:24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.

James 1:25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

James 1:26 If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless.

James 1:27 Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

- Well, from the completion of this story and the king's response, the prophet tells the king:
 - “Because you have let go out of your hand the man who I devoted to destruction, therefore your life shall go for his life and your people for his people.”
 - The prophet puts the cards on the table letting King Ahab know, you are the man that let the other go.
 - And because of your negligence to the instruction of the Lord, you must face the rightful judgement of your disobedience.
 - Now one may ask the question: “Where in the narrative did the Lord say that Ben-Hadad was to be killed?”
 - The reality was the writer does not include that in the narrative, however it is to be assumed based upon what we have just read in verse 42.
 - If the Lord has held Ahab to this word, it means that at some point it had been revealed prior.
 - However, Ahab saw fit to neglect the instructions given to him because he must have thought “his method and ways” were better.
 - And as one could imagine, hearing this word would have caused much internal/mental conflict for someone – and that it did.
 - Because in verse 43 we are told that upon the king's arrival home that he was sullen and vexed.
 - The word sullen in Hebrew means to be in a gloomy and darkened state – almost depressed and downcast.
 - And at the same time he was vexed – literally angry or furious.
 - He is probably sullen at the fact that his life was soon coming to an end, as we will see in Chapter 22.
 - But furthermore, he is angry. Angry at both himself for failing to have listened to the word of the Lord and angry at the prophecy itself.
 - Isn't it interesting that when we have been the primary cause of our issue that we would rather seek to shift blame of our downfall on others rather than examine ourselves.
 - It's the oldest trick in the book going back all the way to the garden in Genesis.
 - The moment that Adam has eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and God calls out to Adam where are you – how does Adam respond?
 - Turn with me to Genesis 3:9-12.

Genesis 3:9 Then the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?”

Genesis 3:10 He said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.”

Genesis 3:11 And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”

Genesis 3:12 The man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.”

- Adam completely ignores the fact that it was the Lord who gave him the instructions of what to eat and what NOT to eat.
 - Yet, Adam seeks to “blame shift” his frustration and missteps to his wife instead.
 - And here we find King Ahab, having neglected his duty of upholding the word of the Lord, yet he fails to do so because he thinks he has it under control.
 - The lack of obedience becomes his downfall which leads to the rightful judgement of God heading his way.
- The reality is, we all were doomed for the rightful wrath of God to fall upon us, but at the right time, God sent His Son.
 - Jesus fully accomplished the Law and obeyed the Lord to the “t” knowing that we would never be able to apart from His divine help.
 - So, He who knew no sin, took upon Himself our sin, so that we could become the righteousness of God.
 - His innocence for our guilt.
 - Our blame for His blamelessness.
 - Our brokenness for His beauty.
 - Christ obeyed the Father so that we could ultimately walk in obedience under the power of His Spirit, by way of His righteousness!
 - The word of the Lord and His truth will either move one to respond positively or it will cause one to be vexed.
 - The opportunity to respond to truth is available. The question is will you respond to the knocking of the Spirit of the Lord on your heart?
 - Let’s Pray.

- Last week we witnessed the power of the Lord mightily at work through the defeat of Ben-Hadad's army, not once but twice.
 - God, on two occasions, provides Ahab with victory over a mighty army.
 - One would suspect the Lord's mercy and demonstration of His love would have gained Ahab's heart's attention.
 - Yet, it did not, as Ahab simply sought the protection of Ben-Hadad rather than relying upon the protection of the Lord.
 - Ahab continued to ignore the words of the Lord through the prophet of the Lord which ultimately led to a judgement against Ahab.
 - This constant back and forth between the word of the Lord and Ahab could only last for so long, however.
 - Because there would have to come a time in which Ahab would have to "face the music".
 - It's in tonight's chapter, Chapter 21, that we find this decision of Ahab's adherence to the Lord take place.
 - If I were to outline our time in the text tonight, it would be the following:
 - 1. Naboth's Refusal (vv.1-7)
 - 2. Jezebel's Influence (vv.8-16)
 - 3. Ahab's Rebuke (vv.17-24)
 - 4. Ahab's Repentance (vv.25-29)
 - If I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would simply be: You Always Have A Choice.
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 21 beginning in verses 1-7 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 21:1 Now it came about after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

1 Kings 21:2 Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden because it is close beside my house, and I will give you a better vineyard than it in its place; if you like, I will give you the price of it in money."

1 Kings 21:3 But Naboth said to Ahab, "The Lord forbid me that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers."

1 Kings 21:4 So Ahab came into his house sullen and vexed because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and ate no food.

1 Kings 21:5 But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, "How is it that your spirit is so sullen that you are not eating food?"

1 Kings 21:6 So he said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said

to him, ‘Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you a vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’ ”

1 Kings 21:7 Jezebel his wife said to him, “Do you now reign over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”

- The writer now documents a sudden change of scene and setting at the start of Chapter 21.
 - And what we know from the writer of Kings is that, when he abruptly shifts the narrative, there are character threads or themes that intertwine throughout.
 - In other words, the writer is wanting the reader to pick up on common themes, flaws, or points that speak to certain implications.
 - In this case, we find that after some time has passed with the war between Ben-Hadad and Ahab, that war has ceased and a “new issue” arises.
 - This issue deals with Ahab’s close neighbor who possesses something that he desires.
 - Jezreel was a valley south of Galilee but north of the hill country of Ephraim.
 - The neighbor’s name is Naboth, a Jezreelite from Jezreel who owns a vineyard which Ahab desires to turn into a vegetable garden.
 - So Ahab offers to purchase this piece of property one or two ways:
 - 1) He would, in exchange for the vineyard provide a better property for Naboth or –
 - 2) He would compensate him monetarily for the value of the land.
 - So far, this seems like a good deal and is amicable for both parties, however, Naboth’s response takes Ahab for a loop.
 - Naboth responds by saying, “The Lord forbid me that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers.”
 - Notice, the word Lord is capitalized meaning that Naboth was a God-fearing Israelite, unlike what he was surrounded by.
 - That where some may have acquiesced to the request of an unruly and unbridled king, Naboth stands his ground and doesn’t relent.
 - Now, you might be asking, “What exactly is Naboth “standing on” ethically or morally so that he does not compromise what has been given him?”
 - Well, being that Naboth knows Yahweh as His God, means that Naboth is obedient to Torah, which means he knows the Law.
 - And according to the Law in Numbers 36:7, we find what Moses documents under the leading of the Spirit of God. Check out the text.

Numbers 36:7 “Thus no inheritance of the sons of Israel shall be transferred from tribe to tribe, for the sons of Israel shall each hold to the inheritance of the tribe

of his fathers.

- Naboth understood that what was given to him by his fathers was an inheritance of stewardship not transaction.
 - In other words, “I cannot give away what doesn’t belong outright to me.” This land is the Lord’s!
 - Secondly, because Naboth honored the Lord and His word, he outright refuses the king’s offer with a definite “No!”
 - So with Ahab having been told no by the land owner, Ahab, in few short words throws a pity party with himself.
 - And like any child that doesn’t get their way, he threw himself on the bed “sullen and vexed”.
 - Here we should pick up what the writer is trying to do here because we saw this very phrase “sullen and vexed” in Chapter 20 verse 43.
 - That when the Lord spoke to Ahab through the prophet the judgement that was coming his way, Ahab responded in a “sullen and vexed manner”.
 - It becomes clear that Ahab is really struggling with what the Lord commands and desires versus what Ahab himself wants and desires.
 - And every time Ahab is confronted with God’s truth, he retaliates in a manner of a child – unbecoming and selfishly instead of submitting.
 - And isn’t that how we can be sometimes with the Lord?
 - That because he didn’t show up the way we wanted or responded to our prayer the way we would have liked, we throw the melodramatic act.
 - Perhaps the Lord’s lack of response to our requests is not that He doesn’t care but that He wants us to see things the way He needs us to see them.
 - Sometimes our wants and desires can cloud our need to hear the Lord for what He desires to reveal for our good.
 - This would have been the perfect opportunity for Ahab to be introspective and seek the Lord, not just because he didn’t get the Land, but because his feelings of being sullen and vexed have appeared again.
 - Herein lies the dangers of feelings becoming the drivers in our lives.
 - Our feelings are simply indicators that something is off and that realignment in some way needs to be addressed.
 - And in both instances, Chapter 20 and now 21, Ahab doesn’t want to see things from God’s view, rather he sees what he was refused.
 - And it’s that reality that moves him to sulking in his feelings to the point that he doesn’t eat.
 - Well, it’s at this sight in which Jezebel notices Ahab’s demeanor and asks him, “What’s the matter?”
 - To which he replies, in few short words, “I didn’t get my way and I’m sad about

it!"

- You can almost hear this conversation played out in real time – her sitting on the bed rubbing his shoulders trying to confide in him.
- After hearing his saddened news, it almost seems as if Jezebel is a bit perplexed at his demeanor versus his position as king.
 - To which she asks the question out loud, "Do you now reign over Israel?"
 - In other words, your position as King should trump a refusal of those underneath you.
- This sort of response spoke to the reality that Jezebel's understanding of rule and leadership was contrary to what leadership looked like in the Kingdom.
 - That leadership as a King of Israel was not a matter of servitude and slavery, but rather service to those under your care.
 - The King served as a steward and representative of the Lord God and there were rules established in which the King was to abide by.
 - This both provided a sense of humility for the king to know that He was simply a steward over what God had given him, not the other way around.
- So where Ahab was to refrain from "lording" his role and rule over the people, he was to remain humble and observant of the Law of God.
 - However, because Jezebel was not an Israelite and an idolatrous worshipper, she had no loyalty to the ways of Israel or to Torah.
 - Therefore, as we will find in verses 8-16, she will take matters into her own hands to make Ahab's desire come through.
 - And she will do so by falsely forging documentation and weaponizing the law of the land (Torah) to get her way. Check out verses 8-16.

1 Kings 21:8 So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and sent letters to the elders and to the nobles who were living with Naboth in his city.

1 Kings 21:9 Now she wrote in the letters, saying, "Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth at the head of the people;

1 Kings 21:10 and seat two worthless men before him, and let them testify against him, saying, 'You cursed God and the king.' Then take him out and stone him to death."

1 Kings 21:11 So the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them, just as it was written in the letters which she had sent them.

1 Kings 21:12 They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the people.

1 Kings 21:13 Then the two worthless men came in and sat before him; and the worthless men testified against him, even against Naboth, before the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death with stones.

1 Kings 21:14 Then they sent word to Jezebel, saying, “Naboth has been stoned and is dead.”

1 Kings 21:15 When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, “Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead.”

1 Kings 21:16 When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

- Jezebel orchestrates a scandalous ploy to wrongly accuse Naboth of a crime in which he did not commit.
 - She takes Naboth’s words and twists them in a way to comply with her narrative.
 - She writes a letter, as if from the hand of the king, to the elders and nobles of the city to proclaim a fast and to seat Naboth at the head of the table.
 - And in doing, seat two worthless men before Naboth to testify that he “cursed God and the king”.
 - Jezebel does several things here that are to be noted:
 - 1. She covertly uses the king’s seal and authority to write a letter on his behalf that was not of his own volition.
 - 2. She has men falsely testify about an innocent man who stood firmly on the Mosaic Law and did not compromise.
 - 3. And the fact that she speaks about Yahweh in a general sense rather than a specific sense and equates the king’s position with Yahweh’s preeminence shows blatant disregard for Yahweh altogether.
 - And the unfortunate consequence from this situation is that an innocent, God-fearing man becomes the casualty of the adversary.
 - Jezebel shows to be quite manipulative and conniving, especially with how she uses Torah to her advantage.
 - Notice how many men she uses as a witness to testify falsely against Naboth – 2 witnesses.
 - Scripture tells us in Deuteronomy 17:6-7 the following regarding putting someone to death and the process by which this is done.
 - Check out the text.

Deuteronomy 17:6 “On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.

Deuteronomy 17:7 “The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

- - Moreover, cursing God was deemed a crime which was punishable by death. Check out Leviticus 24:16.

Leviticus 24:16 ‘Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

- What becomes an interesting point of the text is how Jezebel seeks to use the Law to her advantage yet does not apply the Law to herself!
 - This becomes a spotlight for all of us to be shined upon and that is the tendency to not put the weight of the word of God upon ourselves as we should.
 - Yet at the same time hold someone else accountable to the same standard!
 - The reality is, if it were not for the grace of God, we all would be damned for eternal darkness and separated from the love of God.
 - Yet, in His kindness and grace, the Lord took upon Himself our hypocrisy, or foolishness, our faults and failures, and died for us!
 - And when we look upon the reality of the cross, we can't help but to be sobered by the saving reality of Jesus's life, death, and resurrection!
 - So, Jezebel sends this letter out to the men of the city, the elders, and the nobles as if King Ahab had sent it by his hand.
 - And being that it carried his seal, meant that it carried his authority and weight to execute the task at hand.
 - And of course, as we see, the people who had received this notice complied with the action.
 - Might this be a peek into how far gone the Northern Kingdom had fallen away from Torah.
 - Where were the individuals who, after reading it, would say, “We can't put an innocent man to death nor conspire against him in this way.”
 - The fact that it came from the king meant that there was royal authority behind it. And as says the king, so the people do.
 - Word eventually gets back to Jezebel that the deed was done to which she relays the message to the king telling him the deed is done, “go and take possession of your land.”
 - Some might stop here and say, “There goes evil again, winning over those who have been done wrong. Where is the Justice?”
 - And to that response I say this: “Vengeance is the Lord's!”
 - We never have to worry ourselves about how the Lord will eliminate evil, once and for all, and vindicate those who have trust in Him.
 - Check out how the Lord will resolve this matter regarding an innocent man being treated unjustly. Look at verses 17-26.

1 Kings 21:17 Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

1 Kings 21:18 “Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria; behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth where he has gone down to take possession of it.

1 Kings 21:19 “You shall speak to him, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord, “Have you murdered and also taken possession?”’ And you shall speak to him, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord, “In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth the dogs will lick up your blood, even yours.”’”

1 Kings 21:20 Ahab said to Elijah, “Have you found me, O my enemy?” And he answered, “I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the Lord.

1 Kings 21:21 “Behold, I will bring evil upon you, and will utterly sweep you away, and will cut off from Ahab every male, both bond and free in Israel;

1 Kings 21:22 and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked Me to anger, and because you have made Israel sin.

1 Kings 21:23 “Of Jezebel also has the Lord spoken, saying, ‘The dogs will eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel.’

1 Kings 21:24 “The one belonging to Ahab, who dies in the city, the dogs will eat, and the one who dies in the field the birds of heaven will eat.”

1 Kings 21:25 Surely there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord, because Jezebel his wife incited him.

1 Kings 21:26 He acted very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the Lord cast out before the sons of Israel.

- Elijah now comes back into the picture as he will be the instrument of choice used to communicate condemnation towards Ahab.
 - Remember, just two chapters before, Elijah fled to the wilderness seeking to escape the clutches of Jezebel’s hands.
 - Yet now he finds himself going, in the strength of the Lord, to confront Ahab, and Jezebel by default, once again.
 - So he is to go to Samaria and meet Ahab at the land that was unjustly taken from Naboth and the Lord gives him the words to speak.
 - Notice how the Lord will approach Ahab – he will approach Ahab in a direct way.
 - The Lord tells Elijah to tell Ahab, “Have you murdered and also taken possession?”
 - This statement is powerful because the reader is probably thinking, “Wait... Jezebel killed Naboth, not Ahab.”
 - However, the Lord brings accusation against Ahab.
 - The question becomes why? This should begin to sound similar to the “tale as

old as time".

- As I mentioned last week, when we read Genesis 3, we see that although Eve ate the fruit first, it was Adam who was held responsible.
 - In the same manner, although Jezebel committed the murder and did the “evil deed”, the Lord holds King Ahab responsible for its outworking results.
 - Why? Because Ahab is complicit in the act and does not rebuke his wife for her misdeeds, but rather conforms to it as we saw in verse 16.
 - Therefore, Ahab has both murdered Naboth as well as having taken custody of land that was never his to begin with.
 - There is an applicational point to be made here which is: All manners of sin, if not dealt with at the root, give way to growth.
 - The issues of the human condition both begin and end in the heart.
 - Ahab had an opportunity to respond appropriately to this task but he doesn’t, plays victim, and wipes his tears as he claims his prize.
 - So, in the same manner that this action was committed against Naboth, so does the judgment of the Lord come swiftly.
 - The Lord tells Elijah that the same place in which the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth would be the same place in which his blood would be licked.
 - In other words, the same measure of cruelty given to Naboth was the same measure which would be returned to him.
 - It’s the very principle that Paul mentions in Galatians 6:7-8, where he says:

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

Galatians 6:8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

- In other words, the investments of the flesh or the Spirit, which are consistently made by one’s volition will become the result of one’s life.
 - Plainly put, our choices matter! And Ahab had plenty of opportunity to turn to the Lord in humility, yet he continued in his ways.
 - We always have a choice as to where we will invest our efforts spiritually – Will it be the things of the flesh or things of the Spirit?!
 - This is ultimately determined by what worldview you are operating in: If in a secular worldview, all you can see is the tangible temporal things.
 - This leads to a self-gratifying, me-centered, self-glorifying life absent of truth.
 - On the other end is the biblical worldview. This view centers around what is deemed absolute truth – the Word of God.
 - One asks the question: What does the word say versus what I want.

- The Spirit of God is our guide and teacher, illuminator and corrector, therefore we seek what does “Thus saith the Lord”.
- Our motivations and affections are not moved by the times, but our eyes are set on eternity!
- And it's in verses 20-22 that the Lord reveals that the ways of Ahab were consistently set on the ways of the flesh.
 - Ahab addresses Elijah in verse 20 as, “an enemy”. This means that Ahab was hostile against the very things of God.
 - And the reality, at one point, we were all alienated from God and enemies of God.
- The Lord mentions through Elijah that Ahab had “sold himself” to do evil in the sight of the Lord!
 - The phrase “sold yourself” in Hebrew means to “give oneself up” meaning that Ahab gave in to the ways of his flesh.
 - This was something that gradually worsened over time. This is why I say that sin doesn't just affect you and then it's over – No!
 - Sin is constantly creeping and lurking at every moment given to our weaknesses.
 - However, the question is are you going to give into it or will you seek to depend upon inner power of the Holy Spirit to overcome.
- We have been given the Holy Spirit who aids us in overcoming the power of sin over our lives in the second tense of our Salvation (Sanctification).
 - And this relationship, in the second tense, requires our engagement and submission to the Lord in partnership with His Spirit.
 - Ahab was simply required to trust the Lord's word, even after seeing Him make ways out of no ways!
- So because of Ahab's constant choices, the Lord would now deal accordingly.
 - It's in verses 21-22 that the Lord says he will now “cut-off” every male of Ahab, both bond and free.
 - And if that weren't enough, the Lord says he will make Ahab's house like Jeroboam and Baasha – both individuals whose lines were wiped out!
 - All of this would be done because of Ahab's refusal to submit to the Lord and steward well the people of Israel.
- I'm sure this next part did Elijah well because the Lord would include Jezebel in this proclamation of condemnation.
 - The Lord says that Jezebel would be eaten by the dogs in the district of Jezreel.
- These coming deaths would bring dishonor to Ahab and his reign and would cease his lineage.
 - We see that, in verse 26, the ways of Ahab were so evil that the Lord says there was none like Ahab who had given themselves over.

- He was one in a million in this sense – and not in a good way.
- We are then told the instigator behind the speedy decline of Ahab’s evil ways – it was through the encouragement of his wife.
 - There becomes a point of application which is the influence of marriage for the life of a believer.
 - That to have someone who you are equally yoked with and aids you in your walk with the Lord is vitally important.
 - His or hers looks and vocation aren’t enough: What does their spiritual life look like? Do they spend time with the Lord?
- Ahab was more moved by the appeal of Jezebel that he overlooked her ways but most importantly ignored the instructions of the Lord according to Deuteronomy.
 - That rather than following Yahweh and submitting to the Word of God, Ahab gave himself over to idolatrous Amorite gods.
- It was after hearing these words from the Lord a final time that the text provides us with a turn of events. Check out verses 27-29.

1 Kings 21:27 **It came about when Ahab heard these words, that he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and fasted, and he lay in sackcloth and went about despondently.**

1 Kings 21:28 **Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,**

1 Kings 21:29 **“Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days, but I will bring the evil upon his house in his son’s days.”**

- Hearing these words from the prophet Elijah almost immediately move Ahab’s position of arrogance to humility.
 - The writer mentions that Ahab tore his clothes and put on sackcloth which is a sign of humility and mourning that deals with repentance.
 - And from the repentant heart of Ahab came the relenting mercy of the Lord’s judgement upon Ahab and his family.
 - And this is noted by the writer because the Lord speaks to Elijah saying, “Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before me?”
- This reminds me of how our parents would teach us about the dangers of the stove.
 - They would put the stove plate on high heat and have you wave your hand 2 feet over the stove plate to the point that you can “feel the heat”.
 - Ahab was able to feel the heat of the judgement that was coming his way if he continued in his ways.
 - And this reality moved Ahab from the ways in which he was walking to the sobering reality of what was before him.
 - And what an amazing biblical principle of the power of repentance based upon a

“change of mind”.

- That when one is faced with the reality of the judgement of God based upon the justice of God, it will either get us in the right frame of mind or not.
- You see, we all have choices, and what you choose based upon what you know matters.
- The Lord notes to Elijah the humility that Ahab demonstrates to which the Lord relents from His judgement on Ahab, yet Ahab must still face his consequence.
 - Notice verse 29b. The Lord says, “I will not bring the evil in his days, but I will bring the evil upon his house in his son’s days.”
- How merciful that the Lord would extend Ahab’s lineage some years where his son, Jehoram would face this charge.
 - Now the question you might be asking is, why Jehoram? He did nothing wrong at this point.
 - Here is yet another way in which the mystery of God’s Sovereignty shows itself.
- How can the sins of the father impact the sins of the son?
 - As we have discovered before we are all given a choice (opportunity) as to how one responds to the word of God.
 - The unfortunate reality is that the Lord knew down the line that Ahab’s son, Jehoram, would not continue in the ways of the Lord.
 - Perhaps we can take understanding to how the Lord prevented Jeroboam’s unborn son from entering into the world as in 1 Kings 14.
- Because it’s in 2 Kings 9:24-26 that we see the Lord’s word played out regarding Ahab’s son’s death on Naboth’s property. Check out the text:

2 Kings 9:24 **And Jehu drew his bow with his full strength and shot Joram between his arms; and the arrow went through his heart and he sank in his chariot.**

2 Kings 9:25 **Then Jehu said to Bidkar his officer, “Take him up and cast him into the property of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite, for I remember when you and I were riding together after Ahab his father, that the Lord laid this oracle against him:**

2 Kings 9:26 **‘Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons,’ says the Lord, ‘and I will repay you in this property,’ says the Lord. Now then, take and cast him into the property, according to the word of the Lord.”**

- The reality is we may not ever know the results of why the Lord settled things in this manner and why Ahab’s son had to be impacted.
 - I could say, according to 2 Kings 8:18 that Jehoram, continued in the former ways of his father, doing evil in the sight of the Lord and never repented. That could most definitely be a possibility!
 - But we can know for certain that God knows and is Sovereign over all things, and we are to trust in that!

- The writer has us see that what Ahab rightfully deserved and what judgement would befall his dynasty was relented against.
 - And that is in fact the mercy of God in the story of our salvation.
- That God, who at one point was at enmity with us and we with Him, sent His Son, Jesus Christ to be our sin-bearer.
 - And at the right time, made Himself known to us that through Christ we would find freedom from the bondage of sin, power of sin, and ultimately removed from the presence of sin.
- But the means this freedom first began with the reality of a “change of mind” – Repentance.
 - We would have to come to the realization, through the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit, that Christ was the only means of provision from death to life!
 - And upon belief in the provision in which the Lord has provided according to His Word, we would be saved.
- That the security of our salvation is not found in the meritorious work of ourselves or even keeping the Law.
 - Rather, our salvation is upheld, eternally, through the finished work of Jesus Christ.
 - Ahab understood, although not perfect as no one is, that the judgement of God and His wrath was indeed real and that change needed to commence.
- My prayer for those who do not know Jesus is that their eyes will be open to see that there is no other means by which men can stand righteous before a Holy God.
 - Let's Pray.

- Last week, we witnessed the wrongful death of Naboth, at the hands of Jezebel all because Ahab wanted what he could not have.
 - We saw that Jezebel's ways led to the weight of this crime to fall in the hands of Ahab.
 - And because of Ahab's inability to have a backbone, he gives in to the ways of his wife and took possession of the land that was not his.
 - Ahab was ultimately confronted by a prophet that disguises himself to address Ahab for his wrongdoing.
 - The prophet addresses Ahab's impending consequences by way of a story.
 - It was then from that story, that Ahab was able to realize that the story given was reflective of Ahab's present situation and impending judgement.
 - A choice would have to be made!
 - Either Ahab would repent and turn from his ways or forfeit his entire lineage and house.
 - Surprisingly, Ahab humbles himself and repents and, for a time, is able to avoid the judgment that was coming for him.
- However, tonight we will find Ahab right back at his old ways as if nothing has changed.
 - If I were to put an outline to our text tonight, we will see the following things:
 - 1. Should I stay or should I go (vv.1-12)
 - 2. Unfiltered Truth | Vision Part 1 (vv.13-18)
 - 3. Unfiltered Truth | Vision Part 2 (vv.19-23)
 - 4. Adding Insult to Injury (vv.24-29)
 - If I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would simply be: The Whole Truth and Nothing But The Truth.
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 22 beginning with verses 1-12 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 22:1 Three years passed without war between Aram and Israel.

1 Kings 22:2 In the third year Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel.

1 Kings 22:3 Now the king of Israel said to his servants, “Do you know that Ramoth-gilead belongs to us, and we are still doing nothing to take it out of the hand of the king of Aram?”

1 Kings 22:4 And he said to Jehoshaphat, “Will you go with me to battle at Ramoth-gilead?” And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, “I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.”

1 Kings 22:5 Moreover, Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, “Please inquire first for the word of the Lord.”

1 Kings 22:6 Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four

hundred men, and said to them, “Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle or shall I refrain?” And they said, “Go up, for the Lord will give it into the hand of the king.”

1 Kings 22:7 But Jehoshaphat said, “Is there not yet a prophet of the Lord here that we may inquire of him?”

1 Kings 22:8 The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the Lord, but I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. He is Micaiah son of Imlah.” But Jehoshaphat said, “Let not the king say so.”

1 Kings 22:9 Then the king of Israel called an officer and said, “Bring quickly Micaiah son of Imlah.”

1 Kings 22:10 Now the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting each on his throne, arrayed in their robes, at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them.

1 Kings 22:11 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made horns of iron for himself and said, “Thus says the Lord, ‘With these you will gore the Arameans until they are consumed.’ ”

1 Kings 22:12 All the prophets were prophesying thus, saying, “Go up to Ramoth-gilead and prosper, for the Lord will give it into the hand of the king.”

- The writer lets us know that three years of peace have occurred since Ben-Hadad and Israel had been in war – a battle known as the “Battle of Aphek”.
 - The first time that Israel and the Arameans fought was in 1 Kings 20:26-34 and now a new battle was beginning to brew at Ramoth in Gilead.
 - The question becomes: “What caused the sudden change from peace to conflict between two allies, Israel and the Arameans?”
 - Unfortunately, scripture does not provide us this information, but the history books do.
 - We are told through Assyrian record that there was a battle between the two battles of Aphek and Ramoth-Gilead.
 - This battle was known as the “Battle of Qarqar” which consisted of Israel and the allied Aramean army against the Assyrians dated around 853 BC.
 - So, although scripture does not include this battle in the biblical account, we are able to see through history what potential impacts caused allied divisions.
 - Perhaps after that battle, Ahab got beside himself and sought to reclaim their once occupied territory in Ramoth-gilead.
 - Whatever the case, we can see that verse 1 alone is setting the scene and stage for why a new ally would be necessary.
 - It’s in verse 2 that we are told that in the third year, a troubling year for Ahab, that Jehoshaphat, King of Judah comes down to the king of Israel.
 - Now this should raise some questions as well: “Why is the king of Judah visiting

the king of Israel?"

- ...Especially given the history between the now two separate kingdoms.
- Here is where scripture referencing scripture, historically, becomes beneficial.
- We find the reason for King Jehoshaphat's coming down to King Ahab of Israel in 2 Chronicles 18:1-2. Check out the text.

2 Chronicles 18:1 Now Jehoshaphat had great riches and honor; and he allied himself by marriage with Ahab.

2 Chronicles 18:2 Some years later he went down to visit Ahab at Samaria. And Ahab slaughtered many sheep and oxen for him and the people who were with him, and induced him to go up against Ramoth-gilead.

- We are told by the writer of Chronicles that Jehoshaphat allied himself to Ahab by marrying his daughter.
 - So out of perhaps obligation to their alliance, Jehoshaphat comes down to meet with his father-in-law.
 - So far, this unlikely alliance already seems like a stretch since the Southern Kingdom is devoted to Yahweh.
 - Along with that, Israel has continued in the ways of idolatry which means there's only a matter of time before there is conflict that will arise.
 - Ahab's invitation to Jehoshaphat to come to Israel was to recapture Ramoth-gilead from Ben-Hadad and he needed the manpower to do it.
 - And like a good son-in-law and fellow countrymen, Jehoshaphat tells him, "Whatever you need."
 - But like any good king and steward of resources, King Jehoshaphat inquires if this pursuit has even been submitted to the Lord.
 - Here, we can see that Jehoshaphat is committed to Yahweh and His ways and seeks to operate with wisdom.
 - So to satisfy the requests of Jehoshaphat, Ahab assembles 400 prophets of Israel to bring comfort to King Jehoshaphat's inquiry.
 - However, in their response, there was this sense of a uniformed manufactured answer than was a true answer from the Lord.
 - And this was the pattern of the Northern Kingdom, that when the king wanted something, he got what he wanted.
 - Therefore, when Ahab asks them if he shall go to reclaim Ramoth-gilead, they answer with a unanimous yes and said that the Lord will provide it.
 - However, it's in verse 7 that King Jehoshaphat sees this little act as suspicious at best.
 - Although these prophets may not have been Baal prophets, it is clear that these 400 men were compromised or apostate at best.

- The M.O. of the false prophets is that they give the people what they want to hear and not what they “NEED” to hear.
- So, it becomes clear that King Jehoshaphat was seeking the wisdom of the Lord and knew what the truth was.
- So, the King of Judah inquires for another prophet of the Lord– this time one who lacks not in truth but only what the Lord says.
 - And what becomes so mind-blowing is Ahab’s response!
 - But as expected, Ahab responds to Jehoshaphat in a similar manner to the previous chapter when things didn’t go his way with the vineyard.
- Ahab tells Jehoshaphat that there is one man that is a prophet of the Lord, but he doesn’t like him – a prophet named Micaiah.
 - And the reason for his disdain for this prophet is that “he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.”
 - In other words, this prophet doesn’t tell me what I want to hear.
- Friends, when your reception of truth becomes more about how you feel than what is real, therein lies a huge problem.
 - Truth is not meant to conform to your desires, but rather, we are meant to conform to truth.
 - And this simply goes to show that Ahab is still wrestling with Yahweh as it relates to what is acceptable or not.
 - So to conform to Jehoshaphat’s requirement of seeking wisdom, Ahab sends word out for Micaiah despite his reservations.
- While they await the arrival of Micaiah before the two kings, the writer makes known that they are awaiting at the threshing floor at the gate entry.
 - The threshing floor was an elevated area which gave way for the kings to look out amongst large crowds.
 - And apparently, while sitting at the threshing floor, the prophets that Ahab assembled are steadily prophesying before the kings.
 - It’s almost as if they are wanting to get an answer from the Lord before Micaiah arrives and the spotlight is stolen from them.
- It’s in verses 11-12 that we are told that Zedekiah, son of Chenaanah makes horns of iron for himself claiming that the Lord spoke to him a word of victory.
 - Clearly, Zedekiah and these prophets are looking for any and every opportunity to give way for King Ahab’s unwise pursuit of Ben-Hadad.
 - Ahab and his prophets are yearning for this sense of victory and future hope, yet all the while seeking to hear the truth from the prophet’s mouth.
 - Check out verses 13-18.

1 Kings 22:13 Then the messenger who went to summon Micaiah spoke to him saying, “Behold now, the words of the prophets are uniformly favorable to the

king. Please let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favorably.”

1 Kings 22:14 But Micaiah said, “As the Lord lives, what the Lord says to me, that I shall speak.”

1 Kings 22:15 When he came to the king, the king said to him, “Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we refrain?” And he answered him, “Go up and succeed, and the Lord will give it into the hand of the king.”

1 Kings 22:16 Then the king said to him, “How many times must I adjure you to speak to me nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord?”

1 Kings 22:17 So he said, “I saw all Israel Scattered on the mountains, Like sheep which have no shepherd. And the Lord said, ‘These have no master. Let each of them return to his house in peace.’ ”

1 Kings 22:18 Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?”

- Upon returning to the threshing floor, the messenger arriving with the prophet Micaiah says to him in few short words, try your best to agree with the statement of these prophets.
 - In other words, give the king a favorable response that pleases him.
 - To which Micaiah responds, in few short words, “I will only say what the Lord gives me the words to say.”
 - So, Micaiah stands firmly on the fact that he will not compromise for the sake of pleasing the king.
 - I’m sure this statement had the messenger shaking his head as if to say, “Here we go again!”
 - Once Micaiah comes before King Ahab, he is asked the same question as the other prophets, “Shall we go to battle at Ramoth-gilead or not?”
 - At this point, two things are happening potentially:
 - 1) Ahab is expecting Micaiah to be forthright and deliver truthful news in which Ahab will deem upsetting in his sight.
 - 2) Micaiah, familiar with the king’s ways will sarcastically appeal to the king’s desires – almost as if taunting him.
 - And without hesitation, Micaiah speaks according to the false words from the other prophets.
 - You can tell that Micaiah’s response is one of sarcasm because Ahab immediately responds with equal sarcasm demanding the truth.
- This reminds me of the scene in the 1992 film, “A Few Good Men”, where Tom Cruise’s character angrily tells Jack Nicolson’s character, “I want the truth!”
 - To which Jack Nicolson responds by saying, “You can’t handle the truth!”
 - Here it was: Ahab wanted what he wanted, and gathers a group of prophets to bend their ways to his, yet Ahab is confronted with an obstacle.

- Truth must be revealed for the king of Judah to move forward with his plans to join in the battle at Ramoth-gilead.
- Therefore, it forces Ahab's hand.
- Truth will always be made known in the end!
- It's almost as if Micaiah uses the "sleight of hand" trick to ultimately have Ahab face the reality of what the truth really was.
- And the reality is: When it comes to the truth, our flesh doesn't handle the truth very well!
- Yet, when one comes face to face with the truth, or even better, demands the truth to be told – you have to "face the music".
 - Ahab is now forced to face the reality of his wanting to hear the truth.
 - Micaiah, in verse 17, tells Ahab a vision in which the Lord gave him concerning the people of Israel – the very people in whom Ahab is to shepherd.
 - Check out verse 17 again:

1 Kings 22:17 **So he said, “I saw all Israel Scattered on the mountains, Like sheep which have no shepherd. And the Lord said, ‘These have no master. Let each of them return to his house in peace.’ ”**

- Micaiah's vision from the Lord speaks to a sore spot in the heart of the king because what the Lord is pointing to is Israel's lack of a true Shepherd resulting in a lack of leadership.
 - This idea of sheep being scattered is indicative of wandering sheep in need of someone to adequately lead them in the right direction.
 - Clearly this news was a mouthful!
 - The vision continues by mentioning the fact that Israel, these sheep, have no master and that the sheep will return to their house in peace.
 - If we are properly following what Micaiah has been shown by the Lord, it would mean that the master in this vision is none other than Ahab.
 - And if the people no longer have a master in that case and return to their homes in peace, it would mean that the master has died.
 - The logical conclusion to this vision is that in this coming battle king Ahab would die, yet the people would not be violently pursued.
- As a quick overviewing note here, the phrase, "sheep without a shepherd" should be quite familiar to us, especially when we think about the New Testament.
 - In both Matthew and Mark's gospel, Jesus refers to National Israel in that same way – they were like "Sheep without a Shepherd".
 - That where the Pharisees should have been accurately teaching Torah and leading them in truth, the leadership of the day deceived the people.
 - Ultimately, the people of Israel were so malnourished that the majority would

seek to continue on in the ways of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

- This is why Jesus says in Matthew 23:37, the following words to the Jewish people in His day:

Matthew 23:37 “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.

Matthew 23:38 “Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!

Matthew 23:39 “For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ”

- Truth requires a choice to be made. You will either respond rightly or self-righteously.
 - So, where Ahab continued to reject the truth and wisdom of the Lord, He would suffer the impending consequences.
 - And as a result, the people would be placed under new leadership.
 - It was clear that Ahab did not take kindly to the truth that he requested, but was not ready for.
 - And if that vision wasn't enough to make the point, Micaiah continues with the rest of what the Lord had shown him in the vision.
 - Check out verses 19-23

1 Kings 22:19 Micaiah said, “Therefore, hear the word of the Lord. I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right and on His left.

1 Kings 22:20 “The Lord said, ‘Who will entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ And one said this while another said that.

1 Kings 22:21 “Then a spirit came forward and stood before the Lord and said, ‘I will entice him.’

1 Kings 22:22 “The Lord said to him, ‘How?’ And he said, ‘I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ Then He said, ‘You are to entice him and also prevail. Go and do so.’

1 Kings 22:23 “Now therefore, behold, the Lord has put a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; and the Lord has proclaimed disaster against you.”

- We now find ourselves at an interesting cross-section of the biblical text.
 - These verses are still discussed amongst many scholars and theologians regarding the character and nature of God.
 - We see that in Micaiah's vision that the Lord is deliberating with some of the heavenly court (angelic realm).

- And the issue of Ahab going to Ramoth-gilead comes into discussion as to who will “entice” Ahab to go.
- After the Lord asks this question, we are told that an angel stands before the Lord and says that he will “go out and be a deceiving spirit”.
 - Here is where the text gets tricky for some in their understanding of what’s happening.
- The question becomes: “Wait! If God is good and is truthful and cannot lie, how can he put a deceiving spirit in anyone to do anything against His very nature?”
 - There will be some that say, what about Titus 1:2 where Paul says that “...God cannot lie”
 - Or what about Numbers 23:19 where it states “...God is not a man that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent;”
 - Or Hebrews 6:18 where we are told it is impossible for God to lie.
 - In every instance, we know that God can not lie and never will.
 - At the same time, within this fallen world, the Lord can use whomever He chooses to accomplish His purposes. (Job)
 - I believe James 1:13-17 provides a solid explanation for how the Lord can retain His Holy Character and accomplish His divine will and oath through the brokenness of man. Check out the text.

James 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

James 1:14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

James 1:15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

James 1:16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

James 1:17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

- The best way to understand this text and how the Lord uses the deceiving spirit is boiled down to God’s Sovereignty.
 - There is nothing and no one that can operate outside of the divine jurisdiction of the Lord without the Lord’s permission.
 - This goes for human beings, angels, and demons alike!
 - Satan himself has boundaries by which the Sovereign Lord has established, and the enemy can’t go outside the storyline. (As in the Book of Job)
 - And the beautiful reality is, you and I as believers know the story line because it is outlined for us in these 66 books.

- What we see the writer doing here in showing us this spiritual vision is how the scene of the 400 prophets played out and eventually how it would conclude.
 - In other words, the Lord, knowing that Ahab was deceiving Himself, the lying spirit (angel) influenced the prophets in a way that deceived Ahab into fighting against Ben-Hadad.
- Some may argue at this point and say, “Why wouldn’t the Lord provide Ahab with another opportunity or show him some grace?”
 - The reality was, Ahab had been given the truth by Micaiah in the first half of the vision – Ahab just didn’t want to listen.
 - So, what happens when truth is rejected repeatedly – you are given over to your own pattern of lust.
 - Paul writes the following in Romans 1:28:

Romans 1:28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

- The Lord in His Sovereign Will simply gave Ahab over to his ways which ultimately played into the Lord’s prophecy regarding Ahab dying in war according to 1 Kings 20:41-43 and 1 Kings 21:17-29.
 - What we are seeing is that God’s word will not return unto Him void.
 - I like how Theologian, Robert Chisholm Jr., expresses God’s role in Ahab’s demise in his article in *Bibliotheca Sacra*. He says the following:

“... God is truthful in that He keeps His unconditional promises to His people and fulfills His sovereign decrees and oaths. God’s commitment to truthfulness, however, does not mean that He never uses deceit as a method of judgment on sinners. But He does so without compromising His truthful character and commitment to righteousness.”

- So, imagine hearing this vision from the Lord – a true word from the mouth of the prophet – many would have been taken aback.
 - However, as we will see in verses 24-28, this wasn’t going to be taken kindly. Check out the text.

1 Kings 22:24 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near and struck Micaiah on the cheek and said, “How did the Spirit of the Lord pass from me to speak to you?”

1 Kings 22:25 Micaiah said, “Behold, you shall see on that day when you enter an inner room to hide yourself.”

1 Kings 22:26 Then the king of Israel said, “Take Micaiah and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king’s son;

1 Kings 22:27 and say, ‘Thus says the king, “Put this man in prison and feed him sparingly with bread and water until I return safely.”’”

1 Kings 22:28 Micaiah said, “If you indeed return safely the Lord has not spoken by me.” And he said, “Listen, all you people.”

1 Kings 22:29 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up against Ramoth-gilead.

- Upon hearing that the 400 prophets were given a lying spirit to deceive the king, without hesitation Zedekiah, one of those prophets, came and slapped Micaiah in the face.
 - Now, a slap in the face in that day was much worse and meant much more than what it does today.
 - In that day a slap in the face was deemed a great insult which meant that Zedekiah was greatly offended at Micaiah’s words.
 - For Zedekiah’s perspective he was claiming that his prophecy was in fact from the Lord and not false.
 - This is why Zedekiah makes the statement, “How did the Spirit of the Lord pass from me to speak to you?”
 - What becomes quite comical is Micaiah’s response because he is not moved by Zedekiah’s defensive language.
 - Micaiah is not looking to do the back and forth because he knows what the truth is and who the truth comes from.
 - Therefore, he leaves his statement to stand on its own and lets him know that the Lord will show you Himself soon enough.
 - What an amazing point of application here: The truth of the word of God needs no defense – it stands on its own!
 - As my wife likes to say: The truth is always inconvenient to the agenda of man!
 - Therefore, if truth is consistently rejected, the Lord can show you better than He can tell you!
 - Following this scene, King Ahab orders Micaiah to be removed and held prisoner under Amon the city mayor and the king’s royal official.
 - Again, here was the attempt to shut the mouth of Micaiah which was ultimately an attempt to shut the mouth of the Lord.
 - Ahab seeks to remove all nourishment for Micaiah, both food and water.
 - But the key to this coming poetic justice are the words to Ahab’s conditional statement regarding Micaiah’s nourishment.
 - Ahab says, “Put this man in prison and feed him sparingly with bread and water until I return safely.”
 - Ahab, it seems, failed to have listened to the prayer of Moses found in Psalm 90 where he writes this in Psalm 90:12:

Psalm 90:12 So teach us to number our days, That we may present to You a heart of wisdom.

- For Ahab to assume that he would be returning from war this go round presented a sense of self-confidence.
 - He had once again failed to realize who was the One upholding him and keeping him from the dangers that had surrounded him.
 - So when Ahab confidently mentions his safe return, Micaiah responds quick wittedly, “If you indeed return safely the Lord has not spoken by Me.”
 - In other words, Micaiah lets him know, you won’t be returning as you suspect.
 - And Micaiah has the people, in few short words, to mark his very words. In other words, “you will see what I have spoken is true so pay attention.”
 - Next week, we will complete the remaining verses of 1 Kings, verses 29-53, and what we will see is that the word of the Lord does not return void.
 - This theme of Divine Truth being adhered to has been a constantly repeated theme throughout Ahab’s reign.
 - But what I pray we see all the more, is that the Lord will always come through and evil will always be dealt with.
 - May we never abuse the grace of God because we seek to give license to our sin.
 - Rather, may we submit our will and desires to the Lord and allow His truth to define us as we walk with Him.
 - Let’s Pray.

Citations:

- R. K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 733. See the map “The Assyrian Empire” in Merrill, Kingdom of ..., p. 362. Assyrian records establish a date as to this battle and records of King Shalmaneser royal records which survived and are on display in the British Museum.
- Tom Constable, [Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), 1 Ki 22:1.
- Robert B. Chisholm Jr., “Does God Deceive?” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 155:617 (January-March 1998):16-17.

- Last week, we only had time to go through the first 29 verses, but tonight we will conclude the last chapter of 1 Kings.
 - As a quick review, we were able to see both the King of the North and the King of the South and their respective responses to the word of the Lord by the prophet, Micaiah.
 - Jehoshaphat wanted to be cautious to if this war was necessary or not according to the wisdom of God, so he sought a prophet to confirm.
 - We were able to see that Jehoshaphat's desire to see if the Lord was pleased with this pursuit was an indication of his "way before the Lord".
 - Jehoshaphat was considered a good king as well as a king of reform in Judah because his heart was towards the Lord.
 - On the other hand we had King Ahab who continued in the ways of idolatrous worship seeking to satisfy himself and his ways.
 - And instead of seeking to pursue what the Lord said regarding Ramoth-gilead, he provided himself with 400 prophets who spoke what he wanted.
 - Once Micaiah came onto the scene, he "plays the fool" and in a sarcastic manner initially tells the king what he wants to hear.
 - After realizing the prophet was playing him, he forces Micaiah to tell him the truth which led to a vision from the Lord regarding a terrible end for Ahab.
 - The question we were left with last week was, what will Ahab do now?
 - Tonight's session continues this narrative regarding Ahab's decision on if they will take on Ramoth-gilead or not.
 - And us knowing Ahab's ways, it is safe to assume that we see where his end is going.
 - If I were to outline our time in the text, we will see the following:
 - Disguise and Decoy (vv.30-33)
 - The "gig" is up (vv.34-40)
 - Jehoshaphat's reign (vv.41-50)
 - Ahaziah's reign (vv.51-53)
 - If I were to put a tag on our text tonight, it would simply be: The Whole Truth and Nothing But The Truth: Part 2.
 - With that being said, I invite you to meet me in 1 Kings 22 beginning with verses 30-33 for the reading of the word of the Lord.

1 Kings 22:30 The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into the battle, but you put on your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into the battle.

1 Kings 22:31 Now the king of Aram had commanded the thirty-two captains of his chariots, saying, "Do not fight with small or great, but with the king of Israel alone."

1 Kings 22:32 So when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, “Surely it is the king of Israel,” and they turned aside to fight against him, and Jehoshaphat cried out.

1 Kings 22:33 When the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.

- We find at the start of verse 30 that Ahab is looking to do what he does best – finding a way to avert accountability for the sake of his own gain.
 - So, rather than going into the battle as king to take over a territory which is currently occupied by Ben-Hadad, Ahab seeks to disguise himself as a soldier.
 - I think this not only speaks to the character flaw of Ahab, but I think it reveals a spiritual issue as well.
 - In an applicational sense, when considering Ahab “lowering” himself to get what he wants, it further speaks to what sin does in our lives too.
 - Meaning, the very nature of sin causes us to act/live beneath who we truly are in Christ!
 - That when we realize we are image bearers of Christ, to lower who we are for the sake of temporary gain begins to sound quite frivolous.
 - So while King Ahab tells Jehoshaphat that he’ll disguise himself as a soldier, Jehoshaphat is to remain in his royal kingly robes.
 - Here is where we see the deception and “ways of King Ahab”.
 - If you recall, it was only 2 chapters ago that Ahab and Ben-Hadad established a treaty with one another.
 - And now because the tides have turned and Ahab has access to a bigger army, his pride flares up and he discounts the treaty altogether.
 - But even more than this, we find that Ahab has no concern as to the life of his son-in-law.
 - Keep in mind that, if Ahab breaks the treaty with Ben-Hadad then Ben-Hadad is going to be intensely looking to destroy Ahab.
 - So, Ahab sets it up in a way where there only looks like “one king” (King of Israel) with a large army.
 - It’s then in verse 31 that we see Ben-Hadad’s rationale plays out: He isn’t concerned with the soldiers – simply the king who is breaking the treaty (Ahab).
 - So when Ben-Hadad’s people see the king’s royal robes, they instantly assume that it was none other than the king of Israel, King Ahab.
 - As the Arameans pursue the king, the text suggests that as they got within striking distance, either a physical feature or vocal recognition gave way that this was not Ahab.
 - Immediately, the writer records that the men turned away from striking who they suspected was Ahab.

- For a moment, Ahab might have thought he had gotten away with his “duck and dodge” trick.
- However, he would see soon enough that the “jig was up”. Check out verses 34-40.

1 Kings 22:34 Now a certain man drew his bow at random and struck the king of Israel in a joint of the armor. So he said to the driver of his chariot, “Turn around and take me out of the fight; for I am severely wounded.”

1 Kings 22:35 The battle raged that day, and the king was propped up in his chariot in front of the Arameans, and died at evening, and the blood from the wound ran into the bottom of the chariot.

1 Kings 22:36 Then a cry passed throughout the army close to sunset, saying, “Every man to his city and every man to his country.”

1 Kings 22:37 So the king died and was brought to Samaria, and they buried the king in Samaria.

1 Kings 22:38 They washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood (now the harlots bathed themselves there), according to the word of the Lord which He spoke.

1 Kings 22:39 Now the rest of the acts of Ahab and all that he did and the ivory house which he built and all the cities which he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

1 Kings 22:40 So Ahab slept with his fathers, and Ahaziah his son became king in his place.

- Ahab’s deceptive ways quickly come to an end when “a certain” unnamed man strikes the king in the joint of his armor.
 - In other words, this was a skilled shot that ends up severely wounding Ahab.
 - Ahab is immediately withdrawn from the battlefield and is propped up in his chariot in front of the Arameans and dies.
 - This was a fatal blow by an un-named man. Perhaps there is something bigger to be seen here.
 - Because, you would want to know who was the one that took the victory shot of King Ahab.
 - However, I believe what the writer is showing us is that there is none that can escape from God’s final say – His Word!
 - It was in 1 Kings 21:19, that the Lord made known that Ahab would face his demise... “in the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth”. (v.38)
 - Furthermore, it was the prophet Micaiah in verse 28 of this chapter that again confirmed the coming death of Ahab.
 - So, in both instances, Ahab figured he could somehow wiggle himself outside the decree of the Lord.

- And unfortunately, this mentality persists within the hearts of the unbelieving world – that somehow they can escape the rightful judgement of God.
- So, the Lord, using a random soldier, directly guides him to target with great precision a fatal blow.
 - Well, with this final fatal blow, we find in verse 36-38 that the Lord's prophecy is fulfilled and both armies return to their homes.
 - And along with their return came the burial of king Ahab in Samaria, again, prophesied by the word of the Lord.
- As we've witnessed before regarding the writer's concluding summary of the kings, we see the same closing for Ahab.
 - We're told the rest of his acts, as well as an ivory house he built, are all recorded in the book of Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.
 - We find in Amos 3:15 a mentioning of "houses of Ivory".
- Amos lived near the southern border of Israel, yet his prophetic messages were directed towards the coming judgement of the Northerners for their idolatry.
 - The timeframe in which Amos ministered was during King Jeroboam the second (793-753 BC, Northern Kingdom) and King Uzziah (Azariah, Southern Kingdom) (792-740 BC).
 - So there was a gap in time from Amos's ministerial timeframe versus that of Elijah's.
 - And what this tells us is that even during Amos' day, the ramifications of the sin of the kings continued to persist.
 - So Amos, in Amos 3:13-15, by the decree of the Lord, warns them of the impending judgement coming for them.
 - Even on the things that they have built – from attempts of claiming "asylum" (v.14) to their commercial labor abuses on immigrant workers.
- This tearing down of their altars and mansions included the ivory house built by Ahab. Check out the text.

Amos 3:15 "I will also smite the winter house together with the summer house; The houses of ivory will also perish And the great houses will come to an end," Declares the Lord.

- Finally, after the passing of King Ahab, we find in verse 40 that Ahab's son Ahaziah, became king in his place.
 - So, a new ruler of the Northern Kingdom would come forth in whom we will see in verses 51-53.
 - And just in case you are hopeful for potential change...spoiler alert – the apple doesn't fall too far from the tree.
 - The writer of kings is now going to pivot to the reign of Jehoshaphat and his reform within the southern kingdom of Judah in verses 41-50. Check out the text.

1 Kings 22:41 Now Jehoshaphat the son of Asa became king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.

1 Kings 22:42 Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

1 Kings 22:43 He walked in all the way of Asa his father; he did not turn aside from it, doing right in the sight of the Lord. However, the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense on the high places.

1 Kings 22:44 Jehoshaphat also made peace with the king of Israel.

1 Kings 22:45 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might which he showed and how he warred, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

1 Kings 22:46 The remnant of the sodomites who remained in the days of his father Asa, he expelled from the land.

1 Kings 22:47 Now there was no king in Edom; a deputy was king.

1 Kings 22:48 Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but they did not go for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber.

1 Kings 22:49 Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat was not willing.

1 Kings 22:50 And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of his father David, and Jehoram his son became king in his place.

- We're given background as to the start, length, and type of reign which Jehoshaphat, son of Asa had. (Summary format)
 - The writer tells us that it was in King Ahab's 4th year of his reign in which Jehoshaphat became king. Jehoshaphat was 35 years of age at that time.
 - And he reigned 25 years in Jerusalem, from about 873-848 BC and was considered one of the Southern Kingdom's good kings.
 - And as I mentioned before, he was deemed one of the four reformers of the Southern Kingdom.
 - Verse 43 becomes a key verse in Chapter 23 regarding who Jehoshaphat was and the type of rule he had.
 - The text states that he "walked in the way of Asa and did not turn aside from it, doing right in the sight of the Lord."
 - We were able to witness this sense of pursuit of holiness and wisdom in how Jehoshaphat dealt with Ahab's request to take over Ramoth-gilead.
 - Rather than agreeing to go into war aimlessly, Jehoshaphat sought to seek the Lord's wisdom on what should be done.
 - You may notice in verse 43b, that the writer mentions once again that all the high places weren't removed.

- The first time is with Jehoshaphat's father, Asa in 1 Kings 15:14 and now he mentions it regarding Jehoshaphat himself in 1 Kings 22:43.
- Again, this may present some confusion because 2 Chronicles 17:6 does mention that the high places were removed.
 - However, because the people's ways were set against the Lord, they established these high places and in turn Jehoshaphat did not destroy them.
 - In other words, their behavior was so persistent that he ultimately left it alone.
- Herein lies a powerful applicational point: That although Jehoshaphat was implementing this spiritual cleansing through tearing down the high places, he could not tear down the idolatry rooted in the hearts of the people.
 - This is the difference between gospel transformation and behavioral modification.
- Until the heart has been transformed by the word of God, the behavior won't change or conform to the word of God.
 - As I have mentioned before, your orthodoxy (what you believe) will always inform your orthopraxy (what you do).
 - Meaning what you believe will inform how you live!
 - And in this case, the people remained in their ignorance because they did not want to give up the idols they had.
- In verse 44 we're told that Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel (Ahab).
 - And this was done by way of marriage between Ahab's daughter and Jehoshaphat.
 - Although not included in the King's narrative, we find in 2 Chronicles 19:2 that this marriage was not favored by the prophet, Jehu.
 - Check out the text:

2 Chronicles 19:2 **Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, “Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord and so bring wrath on yourself from the Lord?**

- So, although peace was brought about between the North and the South it would ultimately cost the South, greatly.
 - So, when you boil this down, was it really peace? I think the answer to that is no.
 - The reality is, establishing a false sense of peace only gets you so far. True peace that one can experience comes from the Lord!
 - In verses 45-49, we are given other acts of Jehoshaphat regarding his reign which consisted of some reformatory matters while the others served as a consequence of compromise.
 - Verses 45-46 speaks to the many acts of Jehoshaphat and his reforming focus in the land.

- These acts are mainly found in 2 Chronicles 17-20 which consist of ordering the teaching of Torah and tearing down the high places, etc.
- Furthermore, in verse 46 we are told that he drove out the remnant of the sodomites which speaks to his focus on spiritual reform.
 - You may notice that verses 47 and 48 are connected regarding Edom and the destruction of the ships.
- We're told that there was no king in Edom. The reason being was because Edom was under Judah's control.
 - This was more than likely the case, historically, because Jehoshaphat was feared by surrounding nations due to his obedience to the Lord.
- Unfortunately, because of Judah's control of Edom, there were some Edomites who sought to sabotage Judah's commercial efforts at the port of Ezion-geber.
 - And as a result, Jehoshaphat's efforts at retrieving gold from Ophir, in partnership with Ahaziah, ended frustratingly because of the Edomites destroying Judah's ships at Ezion-geber. (v.49)
- Ultimately, the majority of Jehoshaphat's reign consisted of great reform and focus on getting back to the worship of Yahweh in Judah.
 - However, within his great moments, there were times in which Jehoshaphat fell victim to trusting human resources and wisdom rather than submitting to the Lord's ways and will.
 - And isn't that indicative of how the life of the believer can sometimes look: We have our good days and our not-so-great days.
 - The way to live a blessed life is submitting our daily decisions to the One who is truly in control – God and God alone!
- Lastly, we see that Jehoshaphat dies in the end, as all men do, and is buried in the city of David, and his son Jehoram takes his place.
 - Finally, in the last three verses, the spotlight shifts back to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, where Ahaziah's rule is summed up relatively quickly.
 - Check out the text.

1 Kings 22:51 Ahaziah the son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel.

1 Kings 22:52 He did evil in the sight of the Lord and walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin.

1 Kings 22:53 So he served Baal and worshiped him and provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger, according to all that his father had done.

- Ahaziah's reign began in the 17th year of Jehoshaphat's 25 years as king of Judah. And we're told that his reign lasted 2 years.

- It doesn't take us long to see why his reign was so quick – he continued in the ways of his father, King Ahab.
 - Not only is he described as having walked in the ways of his father, but the writer includes that he carried on in the ways of his mother, Jezebel and the ways Jeroboam.
- The apple truly didn't fall far from the tree. Ahab's son continued in Baal worship which means that the people of the North continued in the same manner.
 - And with this constant defilement of Torah and disregard for the Lord, it would not be too much longer until the Lord brought about divine discipline.
- What we have been able to see throughout the entirety of 1 Kings is that the Lord had set in motion the requirements and expectations for His ideal king.
 - Torah was to guide the king and his decisions as he submitted himself unto the Lord.
 - However, because of the ways of men and our divided hearts, compromises over time led to both a divided kingdom and divided hearts.
 - And through the Lord's prophets, the Lord's words would go forth to bring the people back into alignment with the Lord so that the people may be blessed.
 - Although this concludes our teaching in First Kings, I encourage you to read on to 2 Kings because the story and drama of sin continues to unfold.
 - But through it all, the Lord will continue to provide for His prophets and sustain His remnant to stand on truth and not compromise for the sake of others.
 - Let's Pray.