

A Tale of 2 Kings

I. Slide1 **Announce:**

- A. Slide2 REAL Tuesdays: Ladies this Tues 7-8:30. The power of real words.
- B. Slide3 Married Couples Study: 6 week study.

II. Slide4 **Intro:** A Tale of 2 Kings

- A. Charles Dickens's novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*, opens with famous lines describing the scene in England and France prior to the French Revolution: *“It was the **best** of times, it was the **worst** of times, it was the age of **wisdom**, it was the age of **foolishness**, it was the epoch of **belief**, it was the epoch of **incredulity**, it was the season of **Light**, it was the season of **Darkness**.”*
 - 1. Dickens portrayed a tale of two cities. **Today's chapter** is a tale of a divided country, a tale of two kings, 1 of Judah, 1 of Israel.
 - 2. They had similar dichotomies: *wisdom and foolishness, belief and disbelief, light and darkness.*
- B. Read last 2 verses of ch.13 (Andrew from last week).
 - 1. Ch.14 is *the 1st stroke of punishment* upon Jeroboam's house.
 - 2. *Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?* Jn.9:2
 - a) *In that case?* neither, **but** that the works of God should be revealed in him.
 - b) *In that case?* the parents/the dad/the king.

III. Slide5 **A BLIND PROPHET SEES JEROBOAM'S DOOM (1-20)**

- A. (1) Abijah - means *my father is Yahweh*. He is referred to both by the Hebrew word *na'ar* (meaning *boy/adolescent*; v.3,17) **and** *yeled* (meaning *child*; v.12).
 - 1. He's hoping to get *a more favorable outcome* if the prophet doesn't know who's son it is.
- B. Slide6a (1,2) *Trouble* will often remind us of our real friends & of God's servants (*ie. Jeroboam & Ahijah the prophet*)
 - 1. Slide6b Jeroboam didn't need *Ahijah in his prosperity*, **but in his trial** he passes by the priest he had made, **and** goes to the man of God.

2. What a coward, he didn't want his people going down south to worship. And if he went himself, it would weaken his religious establishment.
- C. (3) As part of the ruse...she brought only the gifts of a poor peasant women.
- D. Slide6c (4,5) The blind prophet could see more with his *spiritual eyes* than Jeroboam could see with his *physical eyes*.
1. Isn't it funny, he's going to a prophet who he believes *can look into the future*, but believes that he *couldn't look behind the disguise* assumed by a visitor?
- E. Slide6d (6) *Hypocrites* are stripped of their garb in the sight of God & receive their doom.
1. We *veil ourselves* under *many disguises*, but we do not deceive God.
 2. God cannot be tricked. No disguise can cover our pretentious heart.
 - a) *God is not some trinket that we rub when we are in trouble.*
 - b) He calls for a relationship of *faithful obedience* and *repentance from sin*, not *gimmicks* and *quick fixes*. *Jeroboam learned that lesson all too well.*
- F. Slide7 (8) *David* served as the standard for *good* kingly behavior. A standard to which only *Josiah* measured up (2 Kgs 22:2).
- G. (12) I'd be tempted to not return home.
- H. God had shown Jeroboam *great grace* in raising him up and giving him a kingdom.
1. *But now Jeroboam's fate was disastrous*: his child will die, all male descendants will be cut off, his dynasty will be destroyed, his house utterly burned, and all of Israel will be taken into exile.
 2. Slide8 His stinging pronouncement: *you have done more evil than all who were before you, for you have gone and made for yourself other gods...and have cast Me behind your back.* vs.9
 - a) Similar to the rebuke against *the wicked* in Ps.50:17 *you hate instruction and cast My words behind you?*
- I. Slide9 (13) *Good news* about the son but bad news about *everybody else* in the royal fam
1. Interesting, how did he have this great devotion with God without going down south to worship in the Jerusalem temple? Or did he?
 - a) There is always *discrimination* in the *divine judgements*.

2. God saw true devotion in the son & would not permit him to grow up in such an evil home.
 3. *An early death can be God's mercy in disguise.*
 4. In the worst of families there is often one of God's children.
 - a) Such are sometimes taken away (protected) from the evil to come. **But** it is a terrible thing for a home when God removes its *salt & light*.
 5. *How often God has brought beautiful lives out of foul surroundings, as the pure Lily cup out of the muddy pond. F.B.Meyer*
- J. (15) **Wooden Images** - *Asherah* = goddess of fertility. *Asherim* (pl.)*used here* = usually refers to the **wooden poles** erected throughout the hill country of Canaan which *provided focal points for her worship*.
- K. **Slide10** Where do your priorities lie?
1. *Do you spend more time and energy on your work and personal advancement than you do seeking to grow in God's grace and walking in His ways?*
 2. **If so**, make **today** the day you rearrange your priorities, stripping your life of idols, **and** turning back to the Lord.

L. *Mean-while, back in Judah...*

IV. **Slide11 REHOBOAM'S REALM RIVALS THE NORTH IN SINNING (21-31)**

- A. We haven't heard anything about Rehoboam since his *foolish decision* to oppress the people
- B. (21) The fact is that except for being *the location* for the true worship of God, **Judah** was *not much better off spiritually than Israel*.
- C. Only the **mothers** of those kings descended from **David** are recorded in 1 & 2 Kings.
 1. It's a mark of **prestige**, even if Rehoboam bears the social stigma of his mother being a foreign wife.
- D. (23) *Hideyoshi*, a Japanese warlord who ruled over Japan in the late 1500s, commissioned a colossal statue of **Buddha** for a shrine in Kyoto. It took **50,000 men 5 years to build**, **but** the work had scarcely been completed when *the earthquake of 1596* brought the roof of the shrine crashing down and wrecked the statue. In a rage Hideyoshi

shot an arrow at the fallen colossus. “I put you here at great expense,” he shouted, “and you can’t even look after your own temple.”

- E. Though we do not face a pantheon of false gods like the Israelites did, we face pressures from a pantheon of false values: *materialism, love of leisure, sensuality, worship of self, security, and many others*. The 2nd commandment deals with idols. This may be something that most of us can’t relate to...unless we include life goals that revolve around something other than God Himself.
1. Slide12a/b What is the object of our affections, our efforts, and our attention?
- F. **Idolatry is worshipping** anything that ought to be used, or using anything that ought to be worshipped. *Augustine*
1. Today’s idols are more in the self than on the shelf.
- G. Think about this: Every person is serving a god or gods in his life. Every person is transformed into an image of his god.
- H. (24) **Male shrine prostitutes** - were common elements of *Canaanite* religious practice.
1. Rehoboam allowed the use of **male prostitutes** in pagan worship, a form of degradation not mentioned in Israel.
- I. (25) According to 2 Chron.12:2-12, Rehoboam and his officials **did humble themselves before God** when threatened by Shishak. God relented when He saw this, but He permitted Shishak to take the temple's treasures.
- J. (27) The costly gold shields were replaced by bronze shields.
1. How the gold was dimmed & the brass...a poor substitute.
 - a) These were simply the outward evidences of the sad & worsening spiritual condition of Judah.
 2. And the guards & the king went through the same ceremony.
 - a) They seemed to have been *keeping up with appearances*.
 - b) Slide13 Everything looks the same *but the value* has vanished.
 - c) Sounds like certain peoples lives or ministries.