

## Dr. John Oswalt, Kings, Session 24, Part 3

### 2 Kings 13-14, Part 3

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From the end of Solomon's kingdom in 930 until about 800, so 130 years, Assyria had been steadily expanding, growing, reaching in all directions, southeast to Babylon and beyond, north to what is now Armenia, west into what's now Turkey, and especially southwest toward Egypt. So, for 130 years, that pressure increased and increased, and then about 800, it stopped. I've said to you before, I think this is the ministry of Jonah.

You've got two kings in a row, Assyrian monarchs, who are not aggressive. They don't seem to be weaklings in terms of how they govern there in the region of Assyria, but they're just not aggressive. Well, that means from round figures, and let's be a little more precise, from about 790 to 745, the pressure's off.

Now, this is roughly identical to the reign of Jeroboam II in the northern kingdom. It's apparent this is a time of great prosperity. It's a time of peace.

It's a time of expansion. We are told that Jeroboam was able to recover all the lands that had been lost during those Syrian days, all the way from the Gulf of Eilat, all the way up off the top of the map to Hamath. Wow.

Counting the years of co-regency with his father, 41 years. And look how many verses he gets. 23 through 29, seven verses for 41 years.

What's that about? Clearly a powerful king. Clearly a pretty good administrator. Clearly a capable military leader.

How does Kings evaluate a king? By their heart to the Lord. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord and did not turn away from any of the sins of Jeroboam I, son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit. Now, here's just a little snippet.

He was the one who restored the boundaries of Israel from Labo Hamath, that's up in the north, to the Dead Sea, in accordance with the word of the Lord, the God of Israel, spoken through his servant Jonah, son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath-hepher. The Lord had seen how bitterly everyone in Israel, whether slave or free, was suffering. There was no one to help.

Since the Lord had not said he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam, son of Jehoash. What do you make of that? Well, he's blessing a sinner, isn't he? Well, maybe there's a better way of saying it. He's blessing a nation.

Here's the same theme that we've seen already tonight. He's not willing to quit. He's willing to bring judgment upon them, but with what hope? The hope that they'll do what? Turn back to him.

And he's willing to be gracious to them in what hope? Same thing, that they'll turn back to him. You see in these pictures. Once again, it's not about King Jeroboam, 41 years.

41 years of going right on with the sins that had been committed. It's about God, about God's grace. Hey, hey, I'm going to give you back.

This is where Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh had their territory. I'm going to give that back to you. What do you say? Turn to Amos, Amos chapter 5. That's after Daniel.

Then comes Hosea, and then Joel, and then Amos. Amos chapter 5. Clearly, the people of Israel are saying, wow, wow. We haven't had it so good since Solomon.

Obviously, God is blessing us. That's great. So, God, what about it? You've said that you're going to bring the day of the Lord.

Goody. Okay, go ahead and do it, God. We're ready.

Your supplication for the day of the Lord, your first intention, and your vision for the day of the Lord are nothing but simple, something like God in Goliath. It's called oil and holy spirit, Ha Onam. We're all going to have oil and holy spirit house and rested his hand on the wall, and a snake bit him.

So, you're walking down the road. There's a bear. Oh, man.

Oops. There's a lion running in the house. Bingo.

You want the day of the Lord. You want the day of the Lord. I hate, I despise your religious festivals.

Your assemblies are a stench to me. Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I won't accept them, even though you bring choice fellowship offerings. I'll have no regard for them.

Away from the noise of your songs. I won't listen to the music of your harps. How about using that for a call to worship next Sunday? Instead of putting a Paul on things.

Let justice roll on like a river. Righteousness is like a never-flowing, ever-flowing stream. Again, this follows right on with the theme of Kings.

What is the evidence you are in covenant with God, and what is the way you treat other people, especially those who can't pay you back? Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings 40 years in the wilderness, people of Israel? Well, of course, we did. You told us to. Yeah.

And at the same time, you lifted up the shrine of your King, the pedestal of your idols, the star of your God, which you made for yourselves. Therefore, I'll send you into exile beyond Damascus, says the Lord, whose name is God of heaven's armies. Woe to you who are complacent in Zion, to you who feel secure on Mount Samaria, you notable men of the foremost nation to whom the people of Israel to come.

Go to Calneh, one of the great cities that the Assyrians had captured. Look at it. Go from there to great Hamath, another city. Go from there down to Gaza in Philistia. Are you better off than they are? Is your landlord's land larger than yours? You put off the day of disaster and bring near a reign of terror, false religion, and complacency.

And here's the third one. You lie on beds made of ivory. I like the Hebrew; the Hebrew says you lie on beds made of teeth, elephant teeth, and you lounge on your couches.

You dine on choice lambs and fattened calves. You strum away on your harps like David improvise on musical instruments. You drink wine by the bowl full and use the finest lotions, but you do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph.

Joseph is the Northern kingdom. Therefore, you'll be among the first to go into exile. Your feasting and lounging will end.

There is nothing between my soul and the Savior. Nothing between, let nothing between. How easily, how easily.

Well, we've got Elisha. It'll be all right. Well, I just want a big battle. It's all right. Well, we've got peace and prosperity. It's all right. We don't need Elisha. We don't need victory. We don't need prosperity. We need the Lord.

Let's pray.

Dear heavenly father, forgive us for being so easily distracted. So easily, we get our eyes off you and onto the world around us. And when everything is going well, we think fine. We can get along without him.

And when things are going badly, we scream, where are you? Why have you abandoned us? Have mercy upon us. Oh Lord, have mercy upon us. Help us to know easy words to say, but help us to know that all we need is you to help us not only to say it but to believe it in your name, and we pray. Amen.