

# God's Message to Us in 1 Kings 12 – 2 Kings 25 (Part 2)

*Halifax, NS*

15 April 2018, 2:00 PM

## **Introduction**

Today in our sermon series on God's message to us in every book of the Bible, we are continuing in the books of Kings.

- Perhaps you will remember that last time I took up 1 Kings 12 through the end of 2 Kings, but decided to stop before I finished the sermon.
- So today I want finish that sermon.

This will now be our third week of looking at First and Second Kings...

- The first week, we focused on the first 12 chapters of First Kings—
  - looking at Solomon as a type of Christ as the King of glory in His ultimate reign of peace that is yet to come.
- Then, last time, I set out to cover from 1 Kings 12 all the way to the end of Second Kings—2 Kings 25.
  - We set out to look at three general things the Lord shows us in these chapters...
    - First, the importance of proper worship.
    - Second, at how the LORD speaks through His prophets.
    - Third, at God's zeal in preserving the House of David.
  - We looked at the first two... which I will briefly review now... first...

## **I. In 1 & 2 Kings, the Lord shows us the importance of proper worship.**

- We observed the great interest that the LORD took in how each king maintained worship among His people.
  - With all 41 of the various kings of Israel and Judah, He comments on whether they led the nation to worship in accordance with His commandments.
  - This shows us how important it is for us to worship only as God commands without adding or taking away anything.
- The kings of Israel and Judah fell into four categories of faithfulness.
  - A. First, there were those who fully followed the Lord.
    1. There were only two out of 41 who did this: Hezekiah and Josiah.
    2. This shows us what a hard time God's people have in worshipping God without adding their own innovations and traditions.
      - We must be willing to go against the crowd when it comes to worship.
  - The second category that kings fell into was this:
  - B. They followed the Lord mostly, but allowed worship at the high places.
    1. This is the category into which most of the kings of Judah fell.
      - God described these kings, like King Asa, as faithful men who had a heart for Him except that they allowed worship at the high places.
    2. From this we learn that we have many faithful brothers and sisters who add to the worship of God that which He has not authorised.
      - This is wrong and God is displeased with it, but we should still receive them as our brothers because God accepts them.

- C. Third, there were those who did evil by **only** worshipping at the high places.
1. Instead of worshipping at Jerusalem as God appointed,
    - these kings only worshipped the LORD at the high places.
    - It was still the LORD that they worshipped, but not in the way He appointed.
  2. This is what *all* of the kings of Israel did.
    - Jeroboam was the first king of the ten tribes of Israel when they were separated from the house of David...
      - Jeroboam was afraid that his subjects would turn back to David's house if they continued to go to Jerusalem to worship, so he set up alternative worship centres at Dan and Bethel using calves for God's throne and using men who were not Levites as priests.
    - God had specially commanded that Israel continue to worship at the temple in Jerusalem after the kingdom was divided... and He was very displeased with Jeroboam.
      - Thereafter, Jeroboam was always referred to as the one who caused Israel to sin... Every king of Israel without exception followed in this sinful policy—not one lead the people to worship at Jerusalem.

TRANS> But there is a fourth category of kings that was even worse—they went a step beyond the sin of Jeroboam.

- D. Fourth, there were those who worshipped other gods instead of the LORD.
1. Jeroboam may have worshipped the LORD in the wrong way, but the house of Omri (to which Ahab belonged) worshipped Baal and Asherah.
  2. There were also kings of Judah who did this—men such as Ahaz and Manasseh.
    - It was for these sins that God eventually sent both Judah and Israel into exile.

TRANS> So we saw what a great emphasis is placed on the worship of God.

- We need to learn from this that how we approach God matters!
  - The most important thing of all for us is that we come to Him through Jesus Christ.
  - The heart of New Testament worship is not ceremonies, but the faithful proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Now let me review the second thing we looked at last time from Kings... that...

## II. In 1 & 2 Kings, God shows us how He speaks through His prophets.

- We saw the wonderful role they have in revealing the Lord to us.
- A. They are, in every period of history, God's voice of pleading with His people.
1. This is brought out in 2 Kings 17:13-14...
    - **2 Kings 17:13:14: Yet the LORD testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets." 14 Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the LORD their God.**
    - Today, God continues to speak to us through the writings of the prophets we have in scripture, preached by the ministers that He has appointed.
      - It is His word, and we are to pay careful attention to it and obey it.

2. The Lord showed through Elijah that His primary way of working was not through great signs and wonders, but through the quietly spoken Word.
    - Elijah was ready to give up because so few repented when God sent fire down from heaven to show that He was God instead of Baal...
    - And the LORD told him that it was through a still small voice that He would work.
    - We should not grow weary if great things are not happening in our day, but continue in the word that God has given us.
- B. We also looked at two ways that God used His Word in this period...
1. He used His word to proclaim that He is LORD... not Baal...
    - By His prophets, He declared that it would not rain until He said so—Baal was a god of rain—showing that He is LORD of all.
    - By His prophets, He declared who would be king, who would win battles, how kingdoms would fall, and many other things... showing that He is LORD of all.
  2. Second, He used His word to show how eager He is to show mercy.
    - For example, when very wicked men like Jeroboam or Ahab turned to Him for mercy, He declared through His prophets that they would have it!
    - And when Hezekiah and Josiah pled for mercy for the whole nation, He immediately declared by His prophets that He had heard...
      - The prophets teach us in this way that God is ever ready to show mercy!

TRANS> Indeed, even when His people are unfaithful, the LORD will never forget His covenant promise of salvation.

- And that brings us to the third lesson I want to present to you from 1 and 2 Kings...
- The lesson that we are focusing on this week.

### III. In 1 & 2 Kings, the Lord shows us His zeal in preserving the house of David.

- A. In looking at this, we must first consider why it matters that the house of David was preserved.
1. It matters immensely because over the years God had revealed that Jesus Christ, the one and only Saviour of the World, would come from the house of David!
    - a. There is the first promise of Him as the Son of the woman who would crush the serpent's head in Gen 3:15 where God says to the serpent: **“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”**
      - Here is a promise that there will be a people called *the seed of the woman* who will turn against Satan—they will be delivered from bondage to sin to serve God.
      - And there is this One Son of the woman that will bring ultimate destruction to Satan for us, crushing his head.
    - b. And then to Abraham, there is the promise of this Son through whom all the nations will be blessed... Genesis 22:18 says: **“In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.”**
      - And of course the only way sinners can be truly blessed by God is to have forgiveness of sin and eternal life... and this will be by the Son born to Abraham—a Son that will be sacrificed on the mount for sin.

- c. This promise is renewed to Isaac and Jacob, and in Genesis 49, we are told that He will come from the tribe of Judah...
    - Judah is told in Genesis 49:8 that his brothers will praise him and bow down to him, and in Genesis 49:10 it says that: **“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.”**
  - d. And this promise was greatly expanded and clarified in 2 Samuel 7 where David was told that his Son will sit on the throne forever and ever.
    - God speaks to David of many generations of sons, promising to chasten them when they need it...
      - but also promising that eventually, a Son will be born who will sit on the throne forever...
    - That means that the house of David, though it may fall under the chastening hand of the Lord, will never be wiped out the way the house of Saul was.
      - David’s descendants will continue until at last Jesus Christ, the Messiah takes the throne to reign forever—not only over Israel, but over all the nations of the earth!
- Do you see how important the preservation of David’s house was for all of God’s people who have ever lived and who ever will live?
2. Tension is created throughout the entire Old Testament narrative. Time and again, it looks like this Son will not come.
- a. There is tension long before David is born...
    - There was tension with Abraham, when Sarah his wife was barren and it seemed that the promise of the son coming through him had failed...
    - There was tension again when Jacob, the son through whom Christ was to come, was threatened by Esau and by Laban and by others—if Jacob and his sons had been killed, then the Son of promise could not come.
  - b. And there is tension after David receives the promise throughout the entire book of kings as David’s dynasty is attacked and threatened with extinction again and again...
    - We will look at this tension in just moment, but first let me show you how this tension played out *after* the period of the kings.
    - The period of the kings which we are looking at ended when the house of David was brought into exile—
  - c. And there is tension after the book of Kings when the house of David has gone into exile.
    - This was an incredibly troubling thing for those who were looking for God’s promised salvation from David’s house.
      - Everyone wanted to know what had happened to the promise that David would have a Son to sit on his throne forever?
- 1) Psalm 89 labours with this terrible struggle...
- Turn there for a moment and look at it with me.
  - Notice how it begins with a declaration of God’s faithfulness to show the mercy that He had promised to establish David’s seed forever.

- **Psalm 89:1-4: I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever; With my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations. <sup>2</sup> For I have said, “Mercy shall be built up forever; Your faithfulness You shall establish in the very heavens. <sup>3</sup> I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: <sup>4</sup> ‘Your seed I will establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations.’”**
  - The Psalm goes on talking about this faithfulness and mercy all the way through verse 37.
    - In verses 30-37, God explains that if David’s sons (over the generations) forsake Him, He will chasten them, but that He will not forget his promise...
      - Let me read it to you...
      - **Psalm 89:30-37: If his sons forsake My law and do not walk in My judgments, <sup>31</sup> if they break My statutes and do not keep My commandments, <sup>32</sup> then I will punish their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. <sup>33</sup> Nevertheless My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him, nor allow My faithfulness to fail. <sup>34</sup> My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. <sup>35</sup> Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: <sup>36</sup> his seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; <sup>37</sup> it shall be established forever like the moon, even *like the faithful witness in the sky.*”**
    - In verse 38 that struggle erupts because it appears that God *has* forsaken them.
      - It begins with these words:
        - **Ps 89:38: But You have cast off and abhorred, You have been furious with Your anointed. <sup>39</sup> You have renounced the covenant of Your servant; You have profaned his crown by *casting it* to the ground. <sup>40</sup> You have broken down all his hedges; You have brought his strongholds to ruin...**
      - It goes on and in verse 49, it even says:
        - **“Lord, where *are* Your former lovingkindnesses, *which* You swore to David in Your truth?”**
    - This Psalm does not come to a resolution—
      - There are promises, and there are prayers, but from all appearances it looks as if the promise has failed.
- 2) The later prophets explain that God has not forgotten His promise.
  - They explain that even though David’s throne has fallen, that out of the stem of Jesse, David’s father, would come the promised Messiah.
    - Daniel even gives prophecies that specify the time of His coming such that at the appointed time, everyone is looking for the one they call the Son of David...
    - Those who recognised that Jesus was the promised One often called Him the Son of David...

- For example,
  - In his prophecy, Zacharias says in Luke 1:69 that the Lord **has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David,**
  - And in Acts 13, we saw how in standard apostolic preaching, the apostles refer to Jesus as the fulfilment of the promises God made to David.
  - At the end of the Bible in Revelation 22:16, Jesus refers to Himself as *the Root and Offspring of David...*
    - a tremendous description—
      - that as He is the Son of God, He is the *Root* from which David came,
      - and as the Son of Man, He is the *Offspring* of David—the One who came from David.
    - David comes from Him and He comes from David!

TRANS> So there is this tension about the house of David, and there is the fulfilment of the promise in Christ...

- But in Kings, we get to see God's commitment to His promise to preserve the house of David in a way that is unique to this period.
  - Let's consider that now... delighting in the commitment God has to us as His people that was shown in the times of the kings.
  - It is God's revelation of His faithful covenant love to us in First and Second Kings...

B. See how God preserves the house of David and give thanks!

- The promise to David is never forgotten by the LORD.
- 1. In contrast with Israel, the northern kingdom, David's house, the southern kingdom, remains.
  - a. With Israel, one royal dynasty after another is completely wiped out.
    - There is the house of Jeroboam, wiped out in judgment...
    - Then the house of Omri which is entirely wiped out by Jehu...
    - And Jehu's dynasty only lasts for four generations...then it is wiped out.
    - Then there is one king after another from different families—many taking the throne by assassinating the king they are replacing.
  - b. David's house stands out in stark contrast.
    - Even though he had wicked sons in his line, and some of them are brought to death, he always has at least one descendant in every generation.
    - This is obviously and conspicuously the hand of God, preserving the ones who are to bring forth His Son!
      - Under normal circumstances, David's house would have been wiped out, but under God's special protection, it was not.
- 2. The book of Kings expressly states that God is acting so as to *preserve a lamp to David*.
  - Several times it is mentioned.

- a. In 1 Kings 11:36, it is mentioned when God first separates the ten tribes from David's house because of Solomon's sin.
  - When the ten tribes were torn away, it would be natural for those who were looking for salvation from David's house to be concerned...
    - What does this mean for the promise?
  - But in 1 Kings 11:36, the Lord says: **“And to his [Solomon's] son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there.”**
- A lamp for David—
  - That means that his household would never be snuffed out.
  - And we see the lamp-promise again...
- b. When Rehoboam's wicked son Abijam, Solomon's grandson, dies, the Lord says of Abijam:
  - 1 Kings 15:3-4: **And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him; his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. 4 Nevertheless for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by setting up his son after him and by establishing Jerusalem...**
  - In other words, Abijam deserved to be cut off along with his sons, but God won't let that happen because of His promise concerning David.
    - The emphasis on the promise to David is clear.
- c. And even after Ahaz reigned who worshipped other gods, we are told in 2 Kings 8:19: **Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah, for the sake of his servant David, as He promised him to give a lamp to him and his sons forever.**
- So there are three times when it is expressly stated that God is working in a special way to preserve a lamp in David's house.
  - He would not let His promise fail.
    - A Son would come from David's line to reign forever.
  - But God not only expressly states that He is preserving David's house... He carries out the promise in the drama of history...
- 3. God's commitment to preserving the line of David is dramatically seen in the day of Athaliah, the wicked queen mother, Ahaziah's mother.
  - Ahaziah was one of David's wicked descendants.
    - He was executed at age 23 after only one year on the throne.
    - His wicked mother Athaliah then tried to usurp the throne.
    - In an effort to make it secure for herself, she endeavoured to kill all the royal heirs of David's house... and she thought she had succeeded, but she had not.
  - Understand that if she had succeeded, the promise that David's Son would one day take the throne would have been frustrated!
    - 2 Kings 11:1-2 tells us what happened: **When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal heirs. 2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons who were being murdered; and they hid him and his nurse in the bedroom, from Athaliah, so that he was not killed.**

- This little heir to the throne—Joash—was the one son upon whom the salvation of the world depended! Just think of it... one little boy!
  - He was successfully hidden until the day came that the faithful priest who had been protecting him brought him out and anointed him as king.
    - Athaliah cries, “Treason!” but is quickly executed.
  - How committed the LORD was to His promise to David—and to the whole world that David’s Son would save them!
- How frustrated Athaliah and the Devil who led her were!
  - They came so close, but they could not snuff out the house of David.
- 4. God’s commitment to the promise is highlighted again at the very end of 2 Kings with Jehoiachin.
  - This is especially noteworthy...
  - At the end of 2 Kings, the sins of David’s house have reached such epic proportions that the LORD drives them into exile.
    - Needless to say, the house of David is at great risk...many of his heirs are executed, but the book of 2 Kings ends with a unique message of hope!
  - One of David’s descendants, Jehoiachin, is spared!
    - He is taken into exile and is roughly treated, but then he is spared.
    - He is the one who is listed in Matthew 1:11 (under the name Jeconiah) as the one through whom Christ came in that generation.
    - Look at the very last four verses of 2 Kings and see what it says about him...
      - **2 Kings 25:27-30: Now it came to pass in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, that Evil-Merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. <sup>28</sup> He spoke kindly to him, and gave him a more prominent seat than those of the kings who were with him in Babylon. <sup>29</sup> So Jehoiachin changed from his prison garments, and he ate bread regularly before the king all the days of his life. <sup>30</sup> And as for his provisions, there was a regular ration given him by the king, a portion for each day, all the days of his life.**
  - With these words that LORD is showing us that even though the house of David had fallen, He would not allow it to be wiped out!
    - Here was Jehoiachin, a son of David, being sustained by the King of Babylon.
    - Despite how wicked the covenant people had become, God was still committed to His promise of mercy!
      - He was still going to bring forth His Son, just as He had promised!

#### C. How the Lord loves us!

- Do you see His love in this?
  - All through this time of such unfaithfulness among the covenant people, He made sure to keep the lamp of David going.
- And now He has done even more and we have seen it!
  - Now He has brought forth His Son according to His promise that we might be saved.
    - Jesus Christ, the Son of David, has been born.



- He has done all the will of God as our King.
- As our King, He has been truly faithful beyond what David or any other King had been.
- As our King, He has even gone to the cross to bear the full penalty of our sin, something only He could do because He alone is the Son of God.
- As our King, He has been exalted, just as God promised, to sit on the throne of David, over the whole church, forever and ever.
- He will reign until all His enemies are put under His feet.
- He will come again and destroy Satan and all who are in league with Satan, but He will bless all of those who have come to Him for salvation.
- Have you come to Him for salvation?
  - Are you trusting in Him to take away your sins?
  - God made sure that nothing could stop Him from coming because He loves us and wanted to save us.
- And why does He want us to be saved?
  - It is so we can be His people forever and He can be our God.
  - It is so we can have communion with Him and live in His house forever.
  - It is so we can see His great love and power and grace.
- **First and Second Kings shows you that you have every reason to hope in God's mercy.**
  - Even when your nation has been wicked... even when the church has been wicked... even when *you* have been wicked...
    - God will never abandon His Son, and if you will repent and turn to His Son in faith, He will be pleased—delighted—to receive you.
    - He is a gracious God who loves to show mercy to His anointed King!
      - Come to Him with confidence and gratitude.