

Kings and Prophets 13-05-01a

This is Friday, the 1st of May, 2013. We continue our study in Kings and Prophets on this Wednesday night, and we'll be resuming where we left off last Friday in Chapter 13 of 1 Kings. We'll take a moment to dedicate our time of fellowship and study to the Lord, and then we'll begin.

Father, what a blessing and a privilege to spend this time together, to lay aside and retreat from all of the normal activities and demands of our lives, to focus on our spiritual identity and those things that you have given to us to help us to live as we should and to prepare for the life that is to come. We pray that as we look at this passage together, that your Holy Spirit will teach us and commit to each heart the portions of this truth that are pertinent and applicable and will bear fruit for each of us in the days to come. We pray it in Jesus' name, Amen.

If you remember, this is the days now in the divided kingdom where Jeroboam is up north, by just down south, and a prophet from Judah has come up to condemn the altar and the fake priesthood and the notions of worship that have been introduced up in the north. And after Jeroboam has made these two golden calves that he set up, one in Bethel and one in Dan, this thing became a sin, that's chapter 12, verse 30, the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. He made shrines in the high places, made priests from every class of people who were not of the sons of Levi, got all kinds of priests, just maybe you pay a little bit and you too can be a priest.

If he lived today, you could be a priest online, you could go charge your credit card, take a couple of classes, maybe name the nine stones in the breastplate of the high priest and you'll get your diploma and now you're a priest. He ordained a feast on the 15th day of the 8th month, and we saw that this is actually in competition with the 15th day of the 7th month, Feast of Tabernacles, and a variety of explanations for why it's in the 8th. You know they had trouble with the lunar calendar drifting and every so often they had to throw in a 13th month.

It could have been that by this time it was off a month. It could be that they had an intentional drifting of this thing trying to keep up with the seasons and they weren't really committed to the law of Moses dates anymore. They did it for convenience and at the time of harvest because they weren't doing a good job of keeping up the calendar.

Whatever it is, this is his competing feast. He may have even offset it so that it wouldn't compete and he could get people to not go down to Jerusalem on the appointed day and instead stay up north and do this one. Whatever it is, it's definitely in competition with the closing feast of the feast cycle.

He is at Bethel sacrificing to the calves that he had made. Now this is sort of typical of the back and forth nature of ancient Near Eastern storytelling. If you look at this closely, it says that he took the gold and made two calves, right? And where did they go? One is at Dan and one is at

Bethel.

But this is the first feast and even though it says up above that he put one in Dan and one at Bethel in verse 29, down here in 31 it says that after making all of these priests, in 32 he offered sacrifices to the calves that he had made. So at Bethel he installed the priests of the high places which he had made, made offerings on the altar which he had made. So you get the idea that this is his plan.

He's going to install this one at Bethel, he's going to have this big feast and dedication and sacrifice. He's the grand wizard of the proceedings. And then maybe he was planning to travel up to Dan with the other calf and do the same thing up there, sort of formally christen the thing, crack a bottle of something over its head and whatever.

But apparently both of the calves are at Bethel even though he's eventually going to put the other one up north. That's interesting to me because what do we know about traveling men of God and the region of Dan, especially men that come from down in Bethlehem? We saw this story, we've got precedents for this in other places, but we'll take a look at that when we catch ourselves up. So chapter 13, Behold a man of God went from Judah to Bethel by the word of the Lord and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.

The man of God cries out against the altar by the word of the Lord and says, O altar, altar, altar. Thus says the Lord, Behold a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you and men's bones shall be burned on you. And he gave a sign the same day saying, This is the sign which the Lord has spoken.

Surely the altar shall split apart and the ashes on it shall be poured out. Now the two things to remember here, if you've marked your Bibles, this is what I would, you can circle, you can checkmark, put a little arrow in the margin. I would suggest, just for my own intents and purposes, two specific things to point out here.

Thus says, in verse 2, He cried out against the altar by the word of the Lord and said, O altar, altar. Put a little mark there. We want to return back to this.

Secondly, He gave a sign in verse 3, The altar shall split apart. Put a mark next to split apart. So it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God who cried out against the altar in Bethel, that he stretched out his hand from the altar saying, Arrest him.

Then his hand which he stretched out toward him withered so that he could not pull it back to himself. The altar also was split apart. The ashes poured out.

The ashes poured out from the altar according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord. The king answered and said to the man of God, Please entreat the favor of 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 became as before.

The man of God entreated the Lord and the king's hand was restored to him and became as before. You can put a mark next to withered and put a mark next to restored. The king said to the man of God, Come home with me and refresh yourself and I will give you a reward.

But the man of God said to the king, You could give me half your house. I would not go with you, nor would I eat bread or drink water in this place. For so it was commanded me by the word of the Lord saying, You shall not eat bread nor drink water nor return by the same way you came.

You shall not eat bread nor drink water nor return by the same way you came. Put a little mark next to that entire set of sayings. Eat bread, drink water, return by the way you came.

So he went another way and did not return by the way he came to Bethel. Now this is where it's going to get interesting. An old prophet dwelt in Bethel.

His sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel and also told their father the words which he had spoken to the king. Their father said to them, Which way did he go? His sons said, See which way the man of God went who came from Judah. He said to his sons, Saddle the donkey.

So they saddled the donkey for him and he rode on it and went after the man of God and found him sitting under an oak. He said to him, Are you the man of God who came from Judah? And he said, I am. You can put a little mark next to I am.

You may start to see a pattern of what I'm having you mark. Then he said, Come home with me and eat bread. And he said, I cannot return with you nor go in with you, neither can I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place.

For I have been told by the word of the Lord, you shall not eat bread nor drink water there nor return by going the way you came. He said to him, I too am a prophet as you are. 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.

Of course, he's lying. He went back with him and ate bread in his house and drank water, which he has already emphasized to both the king and the man that he's not supposed to do. What changes his mind? The man says, God told me it's OK.

God told me it's OK. Now what happened is they sat at the table that the word of the Lord came to the one who had been brought back. The word of the Lord comes to the man from Judah.

And he cried out to the man of God who came from Judah. This is God crying out, saying, Thus says the Lord. The word of the Lord came, thus says the Lord, because you have disobeyed the word of the Lord and have not kept the commandment which the Lord your God commanded you.

But you came back, ate bread and drank water in the place which the Lord said to you, eat no bread and drink no water. How many times does this have to be emphasized before we realize that this was a really big deal? It only tells us that he went and cried out against the altar once, but it tells us he made this mistake three times minimum in emphatic detail. Your corpse shall not come to the tomb of your fathers.

Verse 22, make a mark next to your corpse will not return to the tomb of your fathers. So it was after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, you can make a mark next to that. After he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, he saddled the donkey for him, the prophet whom he had brought back.

When he was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him and his corpse was thrown on the road and the donkey stood by it. The lion also stood by the corpse, make a mark next to that. There men passed by and saw the corpse thrown on the road and the lion standing by the corpse.

They went and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt. Now when the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard it, he said, it is the man of God who is disobedient to the word of the Lord. Therefore the Lord has delivered him to the lion which has torn him and killed him according to the word of the Lord which he spoke to him.

Notice he doesn't say the word of the Lord which I spoke to him. It is possible, there is an outside chance that God used the old prophet and kind of took him over like Balaam's donkey, possible, the Hebrew is a bit murky there. The one thing I know for sure is that God spoke directly to the man who wasn't doing what he was supposed to.

So the old prophet spoke to his son, saddle the donkey for me, they saddle it. He went and found his corpse thrown on the road and the donkey and the lion standing by the corpse. The lion had not eaten the corpse nor torn the donkey.

The prophet took up the corpse of the man of God, laid it on the donkey and brought it back. The old prophet came to the city to mourn and to bury him. You can put a mark beside those two verses.

Then he laid the corpse in his own tomb and they mourned over him saying, alas, my brother. Then you have the notation, the guy instructs his sons, when I die, put me in there next to that guy. Lay my bones beside his bones, put a mark next to that.

For the saying which he cried out by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel and against all the shrines on the high places which are in the cities of Samaria will surely come to pass. Now this is a bottom bracket. This sort of chiastically goes back to his initial appearance where he shows up and cries out against the altar.

That hasn't really been mentioned since he did it. And you get the withered hand and you get the prophet incident and now we're back to referring to the original mission for which he came.

And then verse 33 picks up with Jeroboam not really repenting.

The starting point that I would suggest to you for what we're going to observe here, perhaps the most obvious salient point is in verse 29 and 30. 29 and 30 really sort of unlock the door to this whole thing. If we hadn't gotten it anywhere else, this last detail really hammers the last nail in.

The prophet took up the corpse of the man of God, laid it on the donkey and brought it back. So the old prophet came to the city. Now picture this scene.

The people in the city, when they look up to the road, what do they see? They see how many donkeys? Two. They see how many prophets? Two. What's the condition of the prophets? Two prophets, one is young and one is old, one is dead and one is alive, right? But per the instructions of the old prophet, they will be eventually united in death.

Two prophets riding on two donkeys, right? So here's my suggestion. Turn over in your Bible to the Gospel of Matthew chapter 21. This is Jesus.

It's the run up to the crucifixion. When they drew near Jerusalem, they came to Bethphage at the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two disciples saying, go into the village opposite you and immediately you will find a donkey tied and a colt with her.

One old donkey, one younger donkey, right? Loose them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, the Lord has need of them and immediately he will send them. All this was fulfilled that it might be spoken by the prophet, tell the daughter of Zion, behold your king is coming to you lowly and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey." Donkey, colt, the foal of a donkey.

The prophecy out of Zechariah 9 mentions donkey twice, two donkeys. So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded. They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them and set him on them.

Now if you're in Jerusalem and you look up the road, what do you see? You see two donkeys, right? One is old and one is young. How many people do you see sitting on the donkeys? One. How many times in the Old Testament is it necessary for God to use two things to represent the Lord Jesus? He is the suffering servant and he's the conquering king.

He is the dove that is split and slain and he is the dove that is dipped in its blood and living water and set free. He is the sacrificed goat and he is the scapegoat. He's two things.

It takes two things because you just can't get one to do it all without wreaking all sorts of miracles. So what I'm suggesting to you and what I think the passage is suggesting to us is that there is a Christological picture in this prophet's story. Go back and look at the marks that we put next to the details in this story.

First of all, in the very first verse, a man of God went from Judah to Bethel. It's a man of God from Judah. This is a point of contact as well.

He cries out against the altar by the word of the Lord. What is the altar? What does it represent? What do you do at an altar? Worship. Worship.

This is an altar of incense, right? It's not going to have an animal on it. Remember, Jeroboam is reaching out to, I think in verse 2, someone will be born to the house of David. He gave a sign in verse 3. And Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God.

He stretched out his hand from the altar saying, arrest him. But this appears to be, it doesn't mention an animal sacrifice on this altar. It seems to be an altar where some symbolic sacrifice is being given.

We don't know exactly what's on it. Here's the thing. It's a place of worship.

In this case, it is false worship. So what is the man from Judah crying out against? What is he decrying and condemning? It is false worship. What is the sign going to be that this worship is false? The altar is going to split and its ashes are going to spill out.

It's going to split and the ashes are going to spill out. Just one more time, split and gush forth. So you have a prophecy against this place of worship, right? And the sign is the altar will split.

Now, let's think about this vocabulary. Let's just go down our list of marks. You know the tribe that the Lord Jesus is from, Judah.

You know that a large portion of his ministry was dedicated to decrying and pronouncing woes against false worship. You have the altar in verse 5 splitting apart and the ashes pouring out from the altar according to the sign which the man of God had given. What happened when the Lord Jesus was crucified? Did something split? Veil in the temple split to reveal that the Ark of the Covenant wasn't there and hadn't been there probably since the time of the captivity.

But the worship there Jesus had already decried when he overturned the tables of the money changers. That wasn't the only thing that was split. The earth split open and what came out? Dead people.

I see dead people. Many came forth and appeared, or actually they came forth and appeared unto many, if you recall, but there was an earthquake. The day was split by that period of darkness.

It was an artificial night for three hours and the day was split into two parts. The body of the Lord himself was torn. His blood, of course, spilled forth.

His betrayer was suspended like the veil and he split when he fell off his rings, when he fell off his suspension and his bowels gushed forth. Jeroboam, who tried to stop the man of God, his hand is withered and he has to pray for restoration. Jesus predicted that in the day of his return

and his second coming, that they will look upon him whom they have pierced.

Every knee will bow, every tongue will confess, but these who crucified the Lord are going to be in the darkness which is outside. They will see many coming from the northeast, south and west to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but they themselves will be thrust out. They are restored, but it's never the same.

Their claim for leading and promoting false worship is gone. That's not going to happen in the millennial kingdom. The altar was split apart and the man of God from Judah is tested.

He is offered up to half the kingdom and he turns it down. The Lord Jesus was tested and offered the kingdoms of the world and turned it down. What else was the Lord Jesus asked to do by the tempter? Turn the rocks into what? And what did he say? Man shall not live by bread alone, but by what? You can say it.

You can say it louder than that. By every word. How many times have we seen that particular item referenced in this passage? How about the first verse? Went from Judah to Bethel, how? By the word of the Lord.

What did he do in verse 2? He cried out against the altar, how? By the word of the Lord. What did he say in verse 3? What is the sign? How does he get the sign? Spoken by the Lord. That would be the word of the Lord, don't you think? Every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

So in verse 5, the altar was split apart and the ashes poured out from the altar according to the sign which the man of God had given, how? By the word of the Lord. The man of God said to the king in verse 8, if you were to give me half your house, I would not go in with you. I would not eat bread nor drink water in this place.

Why? Verse 9, so it was commanded to me by what? The word of the Lord. This guy is aces when it comes to following the word of the Lord and fulfilling the word of the Lord, isn't he? The young prophet. So he went another way and did not return.

When the old prophet questions him, he replies in verse 17, I have been told by the word of the Lord not to eat bread or drink water, nor return by the way I came. In verse 18, the turning point for the young prophet comes where he trips and stumbles and falls is when the old prophet says, I have a word from the Lord. Now, there should have been a couple of clues for the young man.

First of all, if God has given him consistently all of these words, why would it suddenly come through some other prophet? Is God having difficulty communicating with this young prophet? He's not. So why would he? I used to think of this because there was a church that was heavy on Bible teaching and they had a lot of young people, and I heard and read several stories of young men who would come up to young women in the church and say, well, God's revealed to me that you're my right woman. We should be married.

And girls would fall for this, you know, and go out with them and, oh, well, you know, if God told you. And I always thought, did they never stop to think, well, why didn't God tell the girl that he's the right guy? Why is this a one-sided revelation? If it was really from God, both of them would get it. Kind of like Mary and Joseph, both got a message from Gabriel.

How is it that one person gets it and I have to take your word for it that God told you that this is God's will for me? Secondly, he says, an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord. So let me get this straight. The Lord spoke to an angel.

The angel spoke to the old prophet. The old prophet is speaking to the young prophet. So we've got, you know, potential problems here.

There's no mention of an angel in the young prophet's reception of the word of the Lord. If there was one, it doesn't say. But this is a new element.

And whether the old prophet is befuddling this guy or trying to dazzle him with, well, I don't just hear from God. Angels come and talk to me or trying to lend it some additional authenticity. But for whatever reason, he goes back with him, ate bread in his house and drank water.

And then verse 20, the word of the Lord comes. And guess what? There's no angel. And it comes to the young man the way I read the passage.

Thus says the Lord, because you have disobeyed what in verse 21, the word of the Lord and have not kept the commandment, which the Lord your God commanded you. This is the word of the Lord to you. But you came back, ate bread and drank water in the place which the Lord said to you.

That's the word of the Lord. Eat no bread, drink no water. Your corpse will not come to the tomb of your fathers.

Your corpse will not come to the tomb of your fathers. Now, no Old Testament picture is complete, perfect or totally correspondent in all of its details. There are necessary elements of putting an Old Testament picture together that are necessary to put the picture together, but they don't translate to the future.

Jesus, of course, was not disobedient. He didn't yield to temptation and thus get in trouble. But if I suggest to you that the young prophet represents the Lord Jesus, how is it that he comes to his end? He has done his job totally right.

Whose fault is it that he fails, really? It's the old prophet. The old prophet brings about the young prophet's death with his false words, his false testimony. Right? The old prophet gives false testimony and that results in the young prophet's death.

Now, in the Old Testament story, the young prophet is not without fault. But in the translation

reflecting into the future, you can see where if the old prophet who is no longer fulfilling his responsibilities, he didn't go up and cry out against the altar. God hadn't sent him any word in years.

But he is a prophet. So what does he represent? The old prophet, to my eye, is the religious establishment in Israel in Jesus' day. They have the office, they have the title, they have the job, but they're not doing it.

And when Jesus comes along, they want to find out what's up with him. They want to co-opt him. They want to try to bring him into line.

And when he will not, they see to it that he dies. They bring about his death. Now, the reason this is important is, you know, this is the most difficult lack of correspondence in the whole thing.

If you had a joint in this, that's the place where it would not correspond. A turning point, a bookend, that's where they put two books face to face. This page corresponds with this, this page corresponds with this.

But right in the middle of the binding, they depart because that's what holds them together. So pretend like this is the little binding part. Jesus committed no sin.

He didn't die on the cross because he suddenly failed or gave in to the wheedling of the Pharisees. Somebody else gave in to the wheedling of the Pharisees. Someone else betrayed the Lord Jesus with a false word.

The trial and sentence of death came about from false testimony. By the way, back in verse 14, I don't have to tell you the last two words of that verse suggest something about the young prophet. Are you the man of God who came from Judah? I am.

Could you ask that same question of the Lord Jesus? And would he give the identical same answer? Did he not use these words on more than one occasion? I am. During his trial, are you who they say you are? I am. In the garden, are you him? I am.

And they fall back. Picking up in 23, after the young prophet eats the bread and had drunk, what did Jesus do the night before he was crucified? What is specifically mentioned? It doesn't say anything about a Passover. It doesn't say anything about a paschal lamb.

It doesn't say anything about the spices. It doesn't say anything about the bitters. What is it specifically mentioned? He ate bread and he drank.

In this case, it's water. In that case, it's wine. What did Jesus turn water into? He saddled the donkey for him, the prophet who had brought him back.

You remember when we talked about the tragic entry and how even the people who wanted to make Jesus king at the feeding of the 5,000, even the people who hosannned him as the son of

David and the king on that Sunday before the crucifixion were doing it out of false motives. They didn't really understand who he was. They didn't get it.

This is why he's going to be crucified and not enthroned four days later. So he's put on a donkey by the old prophet. When he was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him.

What is the picture you see after he's dead? There's the corpse of the young prophet. And what else? There's the lion and the donkey. Lion and the donkey.

The lion does not eat the corpse and doesn't attack the donkey. The donkey doesn't run away, even though it's standing right next to the lion. They are sitting there as a tableau that God has created.

Why would God do this? Is it just, wow, miraculous? Or does it have a meaning? Why a lion? Why not a bear? Why not a jackal? Why not a fallen tree? Why not an angel with a flaming sword? Of all of the different things that it could be, what is it? It's a lion and it's a donkey. What does Zechariah 9.9 say? You'll know your king when you see him humble, riding on a donkey. When the Lord Jesus returns to the nation of Israel, he is the lamb that was slain.

Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive glory and honor and power and wisdom and blessing. Remember that? The lamb that was slain. Compared to the old prophet, the young prophet is like a lamb, right? What does the lion represent in Israel? If you say lion to somebody in Israel, what do they think? Lion of the tribe of Judah.

Revelation 5.5 specifically calls the Lord Jesus the lion of the tribe of Judah. Genesis, Jacob in his closing blessing calls Judah a lion's whelp, right? Genesis to Revelation and right here in the middle, you've got the lion standing by this dead prophet and the donkey that was to bear him. Where would the donkey have taken him if he hadn't been killed? Where would he have ridden into? Back down to Judah.

Might have gone right through Jerusalem on his way back to his own land, but he stopped short by his death. And the kingship, remember the two identities of the Lord Jesus, suffering servant, conquering king. Well, the conquering king aspect is cut short by the suffering servant, lamb of God part.

It is necessary that he be put to death. Do you not think when God gave the young prophet these instructions, he knew that he was going to turn aside? He knew that he was going to eat and drink. He knew that he was... Who do you think sent the lion to slay the prophet? Who sent the lion? Who controls the wild beasts? This is of God and this young prophet, even in his disobedience, actually serves.

Woe to him by whom these things come, but he serves and creates this picture. And then you have that reminder. You've got the old and the new.

Jesus said, I have not come to destroy the law, but to do what? To fulfill it. The young prophet

comes up to do the job the old prophet is no longer doing. And you have that picture of the old prophet and the young prophet coming together into the city, which even though we know the name of the city, the story purposely keeps leaving the city unnamed, which suggests to us that we're not supposed to think so much about the actual city as the fact that it is a city, city of the prophet.

So it's interesting, no? It is suggestive. Well, we're going to pause here and take our break. I've already run myself way over time.

But we'll pause here and take our break. When we return, we'll see if we can answer the question, well, let's say all of that is right and that it's intentional. Why would God do this? Why is this picture placed here? What is its function? We'll see if we can answer that question when we come back.