

Kings and Prophets 13-12-27b

We pick up our study now in 2 Kings chapter 2, and Dr. Godbold made the mistake of mentioning puns on the break, and I told the girls that tonight's lesson was going to be Baldy Locks and the Two Bears. So, just prepare yourselves, bear with me. No, there really is significance in every word of Scripture, and there's a reason why when this curse is pronounced, this is the form that God's judgment takes, and this is the number of people on whom it is perpetrated.

Everything is significant, and I really do appreciate it. I want to say again, I appreciate... This is one of the great things about a fellowship, is that we benefit from our enthusiasm for God's Word. The questions that you ask are always appreciated, and many times it sends me back to look for things that I didn't see or didn't suspect.

So, thank you for your questions. Anytime you have things that doesn't seem like all the wrinkles quite got ironed out, let me know, because it is a... I get a great benefit from all of the discussions that we have, the questions that you have, the comments and observations that you make, many times fill out my understanding, and I benefit from hearing your thoughts about what you've seen and the way things strike you. So, don't hesitate to share those.

Especially people that email me, I apologize, because I am the worst. I've told everybody that has ever known me, and if I haven't told you yet, you'll hear it now, and most of you have heard this many times. I am the worst.

God gave me a wonderful wife who is a great correspondent, because I have a deficit greater than anyone can fill. My good friends, I've got friends that are near and dear to my heart, stick closer than a brother, but when we're separated by distance, I never hear from them, they never hear from me, and it's understood. Don't expect a letter.

If you get a card, my wife probably sent it. I'm horrible at correspondence. So, if you get anything from me, be aware that it's probably late and it's probably short, but it's just not one of my gifts.

I'm not good at corresponding, so I apologize in arrears and in advance. Anyway, we want to take a look at this particular judgment. Why this? This has given occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme and say, what a cruel God, picking on toddlers, sending bears to chew little kids, just for calling some old dude names, and bears are chewing these children up.

What kind of a God would do that? Oh, this is the same God that told Abraham to kill his son. This is the same God that thinks it's great to dash the baby's heads on rocks in the Psalms. They just love to pick these things out.

Why would God do this? Aren't these children, shouldn't we cut them some slack, give them a break? Well, no. And I like some of the people who have approached this passage and have

said, frankly, I can't figure this out, but here's the thing, God's ways are higher than our ways, and I will take it on faith that God was just. And that's a really good answer.

If you don't have the luxury or the occasion to dig into this and really plumb the depths of it or understand why God did this specific thing, it's a great attitude to say, I don't know why He did it, but I know God, and whatever He does is fair. And the fact that I don't understand it doesn't mean that it wasn't the perfect response in this situation or that there isn't a meaning that maybe I can come to later. But there is something going on here.

And first of all, let's talk about two female bears. It doesn't say two bears, it says two she-bears. Now, what's the difference, I ask myself, as I come to this passage and I have questions, other people have questions, and I say, all right, what's going on? Well, the first thing that comes to my mind is, why does it say she-bears? What's the difference in a male bear and a female bear that God would specify and tell us these are female bears? What's the difference? What is it about a she-bear that's different than a he-bear? Well, they reproduce, they have offspring.

And so then I begin to think about those passages in Scripture that talk about a bear robbed of her cubs. There are no cubs in evidence here. And one of the pictures in Scripture that we have mentioned a few times is the wrath, the anger, the actions of a she-bear who has been robbed of her cubs.

A passage of Scripture that existed already in this day, that was already known Scripture beyond the Pentateuch in this day, is found in the collected Proverbs that were put together and published and distributed by Solomon, who reigned not far from here. If there's anybody that would have a copy of the Proverbs and would know the Proverbs and would have heard them quoted and repeated and perhaps set to music, it is these people in Jericho, which is walking distance from Jerusalem. Remember we saw in the New Testament when Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan, what road does that incident take place on? It's the road between Jerusalem and Jericho.

And there is a priest and these people are walking the road because this is sort of a commute to the burbs, to the suburbs. By this time, Jericho is sort of a suburb of Jerusalem and people would commute on foot on this road. And this is where this incident that Jesus describes takes place.

So, Proverbs 17.12, pithy, succinct. Let a man meet a she-bear robbed of her cubs rather than a fool in his folly. It's better to encounter an angry she-bear than it is to be in the company of a fool who is in the midst of perpetrating his folly.

These youths, are they wise or are they foolish? And are they involved in foolishness elsewhere or is this in fact an expression and manifestation of their folly? In other words, is this not a group of fools in their folly? It is. And what has God already spoken through King Solomon, wisest man who ever lived? I'm actually helping you out here by sending these she-bears because continuing to associate with one another is worse than what these bears are going to

do to you. Application.

How important is it to separate from those who are actively perpetrating their folly, their rebellion against God, their lack of thanksgiving to God, their lack of appreciation and exploitation of God's mercy and God's grace. Instead of going in there and partaking of this healed water and planning with the rest of the people in this city, you know what we can do now? Now that our water is good, think of the things that we can do with this good water. What are they doing? They're chasing God's prophet as he's leaving town and mocking him, which is an expression of their disdain and their disregard and their lack of gratitude to God himself.

And God says, I'm going to remind you of a little something. These bears, they're going to come and maul you. This is better than you all continuing this activity.

It's a Bible class. It is a Bible reference. It is Proverbs 17, 12 in reality.

Now, let's talk a little bit about these bears. This isn't a grizzly bear. This is not a black bear.

The bears that lived at this time, this is a specific well-known species of bear. This is the Syrian brown bear. It's the only bear that has ever lived in this area, by the way, now extinct in Israel.

The species itself is not extinct, but if you want to see one, the only example of this bear in Israel right now is at the zoo in Jerusalem. They are extinct in the wild. They have been hunted to extinction.

But this is the Syrian brown bear. It's a bear that reaches a little in excess of 6 feet in height when it stands on its hind legs. The adults are a vicinity of 450 pounds.

This is a reasonably, this isn't a little cuddly bear. This is not a hog-sized bear. This is comparable to the brown bears in the United States, 450 pounds, more than 6 feet in height when raised up on its haunches.

It was a straw-colored bear, very light in color, which makes sense because it blends into the hills, the rocky hillsides in that area. It's what scientists would call an adaptation. It's a design feature for their ability to hunt their prey and to blend into the background in that region.

If you've seen the hillsides, you know what color that is. That's about the color of these bears. It is the only species of bear ever that has white claws.

The Syrian brown bear has white claws. It's the only bear that does. All of the bears have black claws.

Syrian brown bear has white claws. White claws. White is the color of what? White is the color of what? What's fine linen? What does it represent? These claws that Maldives use are the only white claws anywhere in the bear world.

White claws. Now, what are the details of the attack of a brown bear? This you will not find in

your Sunday school quarterly. You won't find it in ISBE.

I had to dig and dig and dig to find out what happens when you get attacked by this particular kind of bear. It's not the same as a grizzly bear attack. It's not the same as a black bear attack.

Brown bears have a unique way of attacking when they attack humans. A, brown bears in general, and Syrian brown bears in particular, typically avoid humans. There has never been a recorded instance of brown bears of any type attacking any group of human beings when the group was larger than seven people.

They do not like crowds. So this is extremely unique and atypical that two bears would wade into a group of probably in excess of 100 youths. If they were able to catch and maul 42 of them, the group had to be at least two to three times that size.

These guys can run. And bears are not really known for their swiftness. They caught and attacked 42 youths.

So how many did there have to be? And by the way, what sort of threat did this pose to Elisha, a gang that size, with that attitude and the mob mentality? What typically happens when a large group like that has this much antipathy and this much bitterness and this much mocking derision? Bad things ensue. And God's perpetration of this judgment is also a protection for Elisha. Second point of application.

What was our first point of application? Not a good idea to hang with fools. You'd be better off getting attacked by a brown bear that's angry because her cubs have been taken. The word that is used there in Hebrew for robbed is specific.

It's not just any old robbery. It's not like you took my watch, you stole my TV. This is a word that means bereaved of offspring specifically.

It's the only word ever used of the bear robbed of whelps, and it's used in a couple other places of women whose children have been torn from them. It is a righteous anger. It's not right to take cubs from the mother.

It's not right to take children away from their mothers by force and by violence. And so this isn't a bear that's been poked with a sharp stick. This isn't a bear that's having a bad day.

This is a bear that has been wronged. This is a she-bear that has an understandable anger. We can empathize with this anger.

You take that bear's young away from her, she has a right to be angry. She has a right to come after those who have done this wrong. A bear robbed of her cubs, her whelps.

And the Hebrew word distills that justice. It is anger, but it is just anger. Now, you can't get that if you send lions.

You don't get that if you send dogs. You don't get that if the earth opens and swallows them the way you get it from these she-bears. It represents and communicates a righteous indignation.

What are the details of a brown bear attack? Guess where I'm getting this information. Starts with a W and ends in Pedia. Yes, there is a Wikipedia article on bear attack.

And it's got subdivisions based on kind of bear. This is straight out of Wikipedia. Brown bears under bear attacks.

As a rule, brown bears seldom attack humans on sight and usually avoid people. They are, however, unpredictable in temperament and will attack if they are surprised or feel threatened. Sows with cubs account for the majority of injuries and fatalities in North America.

In the majority of attacks resulting in injury, I skipped a little bit, brown bears precede the attack with a growl or huffing sound. There is warning before the attack. And seem to confront humans as they would when fighting other bears.

Now, listen to this. Brown bears, brown bears in particular, attack a human the way they would attack another brown bear. And it's like this.

They rise up on their hind legs and attempt to disarm their victims. How do you disarm a fellow bear? By biting and holding onto the lower jaw to avoid being bitten in turn. So, how does a brown bear attack? It bites the lower face.

Go up, old. Guess we won't be saying that anymore, will we? Because we can't, because the bear has bitten your lower jaw. The mauling and the biting is in the lower face.

The source, where did the salt go? To the source of the problem. Where does this judgment go? To the source of the problem. They're biting them in the mouth.

They're biting them in the jaw. Biting them in the lower face. That's how brown bears attack.

Just as a side note, in direct confrontations, people who run are statistically more likely to be attacked than those who stand their ground. And I would imagine all of these cowardly types were running. And so, they didn't have the courage to stand because, of course, they're cowards.

Violent encounters with brown bears usually last only a few minutes, though they can be prolonged if the victims fight back. And again, as I mentioned, they don't up a little bit. But small parties of one or two people are more often attacked than large groups, with no attacks being recorded against parties of more than seven people.

In contrast to injuries caused by American black bears, which are usually minor, brown bear attacks tend to result in serious injury and, in some cases, death. So, that's just the general description of brown bear attacks. Now, God has something to say about people in Israel who

are in covenant relationship with Him.

And if you have your Bibles, you might turn back to Leviticus 26. Leviticus 26 is one of those chapters that stands out, like Hebrews 11, 1 Corinthians 14, John 3, as a well-known chapter because of its content, its subject matter. And for reference, if you don't know what Leviticus 26 is, and especially if you're an old testament, this is the five cycles of discipline chapter.

Where are the five cycles of discipline, national discipline? It's Leviticus 26. This is the blessings and cursings chapter. And God gives some covenant requirements in the first few verses.

You shall make no idols or images, neither rear you up a standing image, neither set up any image of stone in your land to bow down unto it. I am the Lord your God. You shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary.

I am the Lord. Then you have the blessings. If you walk in my statutes, keep my commandments and do them, here's what I will do.

I will give you wonderful water provision. It's the very first thing mentioned. If you walk in my statutes and keep my commandments and do them, I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase.

What was the problem in Jericho? No rain, bad water, and the land did not yield its increase. There was barrenness everywhere. The trees of the field yield their fruit.

Your threshing will reach the vintage. The vintage will reach the sowing time. You'll eat your bread to the full, dwell in your land safely.

Peace in the land. You will lie down. No one will make you afraid.

And I will rid evil beasts out of your land. If you will not hearken to me, and you will not do these commandments, and you despise my statutes, if your soul abhors my judgments, so that you will not do all my commandments, you break my covenant, I will also do this unto you. I will appoint over you terror, consumption, and burning, that shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart.

You will sow your seed in vain. Your enemies shall eat it. I will set my face against you, and you shall be slain before your enemies.

They that hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when none pursues you. And if you will not for all this hearken to me, these things have happened, and you have not turned, you have not changed your mind, I will bring seven times more plagues upon you, according to your sins. I will send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children.

I will send wild beasts among you, who will rob you of your children. Notice, this is sort of in the second cycle, there's already been warning that has not been heeded. There has been warning in this generation previously.

What has been happening down in the southern kingdom? What's been happening in the northern kingdom? Remember, Jericho is right on the border. Has Elijah not been up there? Has he not been proclaiming? And Judah, with a good king, sending teachers all throughout the land. But when you look at the attitude of these children, where did this attitude come from? Is this the new young sassy generation, and none of the parents have had this attitude, this is a fresh new thing? Why was there a curse in the land? Why are there going to be problems down in Judah? Why is God going to allow the daughter of Jezebel, Athaliah, to come down there and wreak all kinds of havoc? Why does idolatry take off and proliferate down in Judah? Because there is already a disregard and a disdain for the covenant of God, and they have no excuse.

They've had a good king sending teachers all over that place for years, but they've already started to have problems. There's already been incursions from the outside. We've seen it and we will see it as we go through kings.

You remember what happened when they went up there and tried to take back some cities, when they confederated themselves with the north wrongly and against God? They've been ruled over by those that hate them. They have had trouble coming from terror and consumption and burning that consumes the eyes and causes sorrows of heart. They've sowed their seed in vain.

They've had their enemies come and take their stuff. And if for all this you will not hearken, I will break the pride of your power. I will make your heaven as iron and your earth as bronze.

Your strength will be spent in vain. Your land will not yield or increase. The trees of the land will not yield their fruits.

And so after one and two warnings, you walk contrary to me. Here come the wild beasts that rob you of your children. There has been the offer.

God has gone more than halfway. And this healing of the water in Jericho, this ministry of Elisha that is going to circulate, and where is Elisha going to go? He's going to go back up to the north. But there is this demonstration right here on the line.

People in Judah see this. People in Jerusalem see this. And it is a warning.

It is an example. God is here. There is the covenant.

There is blessing associated with the covenant. Remember the covenant. Remember Leviticus chapter 26.

Think, people. Think. There is blessing and there is cursing.

And on the same day, you have blessing and you have cursing. And this is right in the center of the curses. This is right in the middle.

This is like right in the center. Wild beasts taking your children. Gee, what does that remind me

of? Bear robbed of her whelps.

Fool and his folly. What does this remind me of? It's a Bible class in an episode. Nobody needs a scripture written down and handed to them.

Nobody needs more teachers to go through the land. All they need to do is hear the details and they think, Bears mauling our children. Fool and his folly.

There was a curse lifted and there was a curse pronounced in the same day. Read Leviticus 26. There is a blessing and a curse in the same chapter, in the same handful of verses.

How big a hammer do you need to be hit with to get this message? It's a Bible class. It's a blessing. Look, take your judgment and respond to it.

What is God doing? He says, the reason I sent you this first set of judgments is for you to turn. If you don't turn, I'm going to have to send more. What was the function? It's not vindictive.

It's not petty. It's not revengeful. It is designed to turn them.

It is designed to change their minds. And if they don't turn, God says, I will have to send more. And I will send more because you need to hearken.

And if you will not yet for all this hearken unto me, which is your covenant bargain, your covenant agreement, your covenant requirement is to hearken, to obey. Look at all of the blessings that come when you obey. And if you drop your end of the bargain, I will send you reminders and increasing levels of turn ye at my reproof.

Why will ye die, O house of Israel? This incident is a newsflash that reverberates through the entire northern kingdom, the entire southern kingdom, and everybody knows who Elisha is after this day. He is God's representative on earth. His presence can bring blessing and healing and restoration and the lifting of a curse.

Or it can bring a fresh curse and a reminder that God is serious about covenant requirements. 42 youths get mauled here. But God says, look, in a sense, from a human point of view, it's worth it if you will listen, if you will turn.

If this is what it takes to turn you, then so be it. Now, there's Hosea chapter 13 and verse 8. Of course, Hosea is going to be after this. But it is another reminder, it is an expression of God's anger.

He says in Hosea 13.6, When I fed them, they were satisfied. Talking about His people, I fed them and they were satisfied. When they were satisfied, they became proud.

Then they forgot me. Point of application. When God blesses us, this ought to spur us to greater devotion, to greater faith, to greater obedience, to greater interest, more motivation.

God says, you look at my people. I fed them, they were satisfied. They were satisfied, they became proud, and they forgot me.

Verse 13.7, So I will be like a lion to them, like a leopard I will lurk by the path. Verse 8, Like a bear robbed of her cubs. Can you think of any other context where you get a lion, a leopard and a bear all within the space of a few verses like this? Ever been through the book of Daniel? Ever seen the course of what Babylon is represented as? A lion, what's Medo-Persia? Bear, one shoulder higher than the other, three ribs in the teeth.

What's the Greek empire? It's a leopard with four heads. God says, look, you could have been the empire of all empires. You could have been the central image in history.

Instead, it's going to be Babylon, it's going to be Medo-Persia, it's going to be Greece, and finally Rome, the dragon with the iron claws and teeth and so on. But God says, like a bear robbed of her cubs, very same word that we saw in Proverbs, I will attack them and rip them open like a lion I will devour them. A wild animal will tear them apart when they become proud, complacent, indifferent and ungrateful.

Point of application. We are so blessed. We have been given so much in Christ as we've seen in Ephesians.

What a tragedy to be apathetic, to be unappreciative, to be unmotivated. And God takes this seriously. He takes the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross seriously.

And to disregard the benefits and the blessings, to become sated because we have been fed is to mock Elisha. It is to mock the Lord on the cross. That's how seriously God takes it.

And He will send judgment to turn us because we know better. And we should know better. These people should have known better.

Very quickly now on the number 42, there are 42 youths. I was thinking about this as we got our Go Bible, that wonderful enacted sound effects Bible, and on Christmas Day we listened to the Nativity narrative in Luke and we listened to the Nativity narrative in Matthew and just listened to it. Gabriel is speaking, Mary is responding.

Zacharias, Gabriel is speaking, Zacharias is no longer speaking. The whole thing acted out. But something caught my ear in there because we listened to Luke first, all the way until Jesus was 12 years of age.

Then we went back to Matthew. How does Matthew begin? The genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ starts, goes all the way through. Then what does it say? From Abraham... Turn to Matthew chapter 1 just real quick.

All the generations from Abraham to David are 14 generations. From David under the captivity in Babylon are 14 generations. From the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are 14 generations.

If you add those up, what do you get? 42. 42. From Abraham, where does the covenant begin? Where is the first time God makes a covenant with His people? It's Abraham.

When is that covenant fulfilled and at the same time people miss it and judgment comes instead? There is a division at Christ. The judgment comes and there's a division. There are people on the right side of it who enter the church age and get the Holy Spirit.

There are those who are divided by that judgment and are taken out. Within 40 years, Jerusalem itself is destroyed by the legions of Titus. He is either the stone of stumbling and the rock of offense and judgment or He is the rock of salvation upon which we fall and are broken because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

You get the proud on one side, you get the humble on the other. You get the arrogant mockers on one side, you've got the humble partakers who end up in Christ receiving these blessings on the other. But from Abraham to the Christ are 42 generations.

And every generation has the opportunity for blessing. Every generation has the opportunity for judgment. How many places did Israel visit in the wilderness wanderings from the time they left Egypt until they entered the land under Joshua? When you go back to that account, how many stations are there? How many places? Moses rehearses it.

He says, we went from here to En-Rogel. We went from here to the place of the palms. We went from here to here, here to here, here to here.

It is... Let me give you the passage for that. In... No, that's not it. It's in Numbers.

There are two additional 42s that we can look at real quick. One of them is in Numbers chapter 33. The journey from Ramses in the first month, on the 15th day of the month of the first month, on the day after the Passover, after Pesach.

They left in the sight of all Egypt. They journeyed from Sukkot. They camped at Etam.

They went to Pi-Ha-Kirot. And you go on and on and on. There are 42 stations, 42 encampments that are detailed there.

And interestingly, if you look at this, especially in Hebrew, that list of 42 places is in 42 verses. And they break into three groups of 14. So you go from basically verse 3 through verse 14.

And it covers the first 14 places. Then in the middle section, verses 15 through 35, you have the middle 14 places. And then verses 36 through 49, you have the final set of 14 places.

So verses 1 through 14, verses 15 through 35, and verses 36 through 49. Those are your three 14-verse deals that give 14 places each. And they're separated.

The first 14 verses have details of what happened at some of those places. And it's elaborated and it's sort of detailed. Then 15 through 35, the center 14, it just says they went from Kadesh

and encamped at Hor-Ha-Har.

They went from Hor-Ha-Har and camped at the next place. They went from this place and there's no details. It's just that set of 14 is distinguished by no extraneous details.

Then the final 14 is the non-standard, here's what happened, here's extra little details in it. So it breaks consciously into three sets of 14 each. Also in the book of Numbers, and I think I mentioned this a couple of weeks ago, but how many cities of refuge were there in Israel? Careful now, how many cities of refuge? Specifically designated cities of refuge.

There are six. It's in Numbers chapter 35. Among the cities which ye shall give to the Levites, there shall be six cities of refuge, which ye shall appoint for the manslayer, that he may flee thither.

And to them ye shall add 42 cities. Total number of cities of the Levites is 48. There are six primary cities of refuge, and there are 42 Levitical towns, 42.

These towns are under the oversight of the Levites. What is supposed to happen in each of those 42 towns? That's where the Levites live. Who communicates the word of God? Who reminds people of the significance of their relationship with God? It's the Levites.

And there are 42 towns. In every generation from Abraham to Christ in particular, there ought to be a reminder of that covenant relationship with God. So, is it significant? I'll give you one final 42.

This is a little tricky. You remember the crucifixion and the associations, the connections we've made. Even Jesus on the cross, they thought He was calling out to Elijah when He said, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani.

And they said, He's calling for Elijah. There's a reason why that detail is included, because we're supposed to think back. The Lord Jesus was crucified.

Then you have the Sabbath, the high Sabbath. That is Passover starting at sundown. Then you have the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

How long does that feast last? What's the total length of the Feast of Unleavened Bread? Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread is a total of 8 days. How many days are there from Passover to Pentecost? Pentecost. What's 50 minus 8? How many days are there after the Feast of Unleavened Bread until Pentecost? 42 days.

So is it significant that there were 42 youths who received this powerful judgment? The bear, even when it represents the Medo-Persians, there's a logic, there's significance in the animals. In the same way that the metals in Nebuchadnezzar's vision, gold is the softest. It's the most valuable, but it's the softest.

It's the least useful for practical things. And as you go down the image, the metals get less

valuable, but they are also stronger. The weakest is gold.

It's the softest, most malleable. Silver, less so. Brass, bronze, less so.

Iron, less so. Same thing with the animals. You have the lion representing Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon.

Then the next one is the bear. The bear is stronger. Bears can beat up lions.

Bears accomplish their stuff by strength. And the Medo-Persian Empire was known for achieving its victories by just sheer brute strength. Just massing forces.

And when they beat up Egypt and Edom, and I forget what the third rib is, the three things, Lydia, I think, there are three great victories. The three ribs sticking out of their teeth, it's ribs in the teeth. It's just force, brute force.

This group of youths, safety in numbers. We can mock the prophet because look how many of us there are. Well, two she-bears put that entire group to flight because God's might is greater than man's might.

But the bear, kind of like the ox, represents great strength. Anyway, there is great significance in this number 42. And every time you see this number 42... By the way, what were Israelites supposed to be doing during that time? After the Feast of Unleavened Bread until Pentecost? It says, you shall count.

And even today in Jewish tradition, there is the counting of the Omer, the counting of the days. And it is an accounting. It is a time of reflection and of self-evaluation.

Those 42 days are days of evaluation. You shall count to yourselves 50 days from Passover, and then you have Pesach. From Pesach, then you have Pentecost.

And it is a time of evaluation. There's a time of evaluation in the Spring Feasts. There's a time of evaluation in the Fall Feasts between the Rosh Hashanah and the Day of Atonement.

So, blessing and cursing, it is a choice. There is a covenant. You can be blessed, you can be cursed.

It's Leviticus 26. It is all of the generations from Abraham to the Lord Jesus, Abraham to David, 14 generations. From one man to a nation with a king, a great king, a victorious king, a blessed king, whose name will be attached to the Messiah.

From David to the carrying away in Babylon, huge descent, 14 generations. From the carrying away in Babylon to the Lord Jesus, 14 generations. Every generation has that opportunity.

42 Levitical cities, 42 places where the Levites were to communicate the choice and the opportunity and the consequences to the people of Israel. Is it significant? 42 stops in the

wilderness wandering? What is your choice? What do you choose? Yes, it's significant. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word and the tremendous sharp sword that divides us under our soul and spirit, our joints and marrow and discerns the thoughts and intents of every heart. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will use that power to enable us to be cleansed, to be healed, to be renewed, to be encouraged and motivated and equipped for every good work so that we will be on the right side of the division. We will be in that spirit and power that accomplishes your purpose, that results in blessing and in the reflection of your glory.

We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.