

Kings and Prophets 14-08-22b

We resume our study now, we're looking at Kings and Prophets, and we're stepping back to see some things that God has placed in this section of Scripture at a somewhat higher level. Why are we looking at this? Because it's important. It is here for a reason, but it is not for the faint of heart.

There's a reason why this isn't just laying on the ground to be picked up. There's a reason why it takes a little bit of digging, and we talked about the fact that it is worthwhile to reach up and out and beyond this rather simple materialistic realm in which we live to lay hold of things that belong to God. Things that are, they used to have a word, supernal.

They're above, they exceed, they are beyond. This is one of the great things about being human. I don't think like my dog thinks.

My dog has a very short, my dog is my trio, our trio now of dogs, which I'm happy to share and distribute the ownership and responsibility of. But dogs, you watch them, and God gave them to us for a reason. They're very much in the moment, aren't they? Truck goes by, all thought is forgotten.

The new little dog is so obsessed, and his universe is filled with his new mistress, until he hears Chow being fixed in the kitchen. He's at the door howling. He's crying.

He's woe be gone. He's about to just melt into a little poodle pile there by the door. My mistress is gone.

I'll never see her again. He sets up this pathetic howl. All you got to do, I figured this out, all you got to do is hit a can with a spoon.

Food? Mistress? What mistress? What? From then on his, you know, food is his new, it's just immediately superseded. It is as though there's anybody else in the world except whoever's closest to the food. Well, thankfully as human beings, we should be above that.

We should be beyond that. We should be able to grasp and enter into the things that God has prepared our souls to achieve and to enter into. Well, these are some of those things.

Now, there are things that are low-hanging fruit. There are things that are essentials. There are things that are foundational.

There are things that are structural and necessary. The Lord Jesus is our Savior. We come to God through Him.

We come to the kingdom and eternal life through Him. There are functional things that we can do day by day to ensure that God can be gracious to us. We have a means of cleansing ourselves of the lingering effects of the sins that we commit.

We can confess those. There are functional things. The truth is important.

The Lord Jesus is important to worship and to pray. These things are important, but do you want to be a private first-class or a Lance Corporal for your entire 30-year career? Or would you like to become a corporal, a sergeant, a staff sergeant, a gunnery sergeant, a master gunny, a first sergeant or whatever? Do you want to move up? Do you want to be more useful? Do you want to be more functional? Do you want to be able to see more, do more, partake of more, earn more, be appreciated more, have a bigger... And there's people who say, you know, I'm just perfectly content to chop cotton in my own little corner of the plantation. Well, God has given us a choice.

As for me and hopefully me and my house, hopefully us in this House of God assembly, we are anxious to make the Lord happy that He saved us, make God the Father happy that we are body of Christ, future bride of Christ, those who will go forward into the eternal future with Him and will be equipped to do something. Well, this is part of what will help us to do that. And what it gets into is how does God use Scripture to guide us? Is it a little puzzle box and I say, well, or like the Magic 8-Ball, all right, should I, you know, some girl says, well, is Johnny gonna ask me out for a date? Oh, Magic 8-Ball, and you turn it over and wait for the little thing to float up and maybe.

Thank you, Magic 8-Ball. A lot of people kind of think of their Christianity in this way. Well, God might answer and He might not or I might just get a big maybe.

God's guidance is more sophisticated than that. His plan and purpose is more elegant than that. The God who created the galaxies, the God who created DNA, who created the angels and created everything around us is not simple and He calls us to enter into the beauty and the elegance and the symmetry of His plan and purpose and this requires a little bit of us and it is going to spread the field.

So my question to you tonight is, are you up for it? Are you ready to go for it here and see if we can understand some of the finer things in God's Word because here we go. I mentioned that the kingdom split in 932 BC. From that time to our nexus point and the reason we have paused here with Jehu in 841 BC is because there's a reset here from 932 to 841 you have a certain way that God is dealing with the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom.

All of a sudden there is a change and it starts at the same time in both kingdoms. Well, this seems readily apparent. Well, this actually had its beginnings a bit earlier in 853.

There is a great synchronicity, if you will. There's a matching time in 853. 932 to 853, 79 years.

79 actual years. But if you add up the reign years in the northern kingdom and say, well, Jeroboam reigned so many years, Nadab reigned so many years, Baasha so many years, Elah so many years, Zimri Amri, remember that was kind of a short-term deal. One of them didn't even make it to a year.

Ahab and Ahaziah, you end up with 86 years instead of 79. Why is that? Well, here you go. If you can hang on and not get thrown off the carnival ride here, you are going to understand more than about 98% of seminary graduates understand about this particular period in Israel's history.

Here it is. It's the way you count the numbers. Now you say, oh, well, I don't want to just find out that the numbers actually match.

What's it for? The numbers mean something. But we've got to understand how God got the numbers in here, why the numbers are in here, and why the numbers are what they are. Well, this is how it works out.

There were two different ways that you could count how long a king was king. And this is, if you want the detailed clobber-my-head-to-mush explanation, go to Edmund Thiel, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*. I am distilling for you 400-odd pages of information into the next few minutes.

Here's the key. Two ways you can count the number, the reigns of kings. One of them is called accession year reckoning.

What that means is, let's pretend like there's a king in America and our year starts in January. I become king right now. I become king on August the 22nd.

Hey, King Sam, great, hurrah. Well, until we get to January the 1st, I'm in sort of a year zero. In 2015 will be year one of King Sam.

Got it? Accession year means my accession year sort of doesn't count. My years don't start counting until I get to the first New Year's and I count a full year. So January of 2016 would start Sam's second year of reign, even though I reigned for several months in 2014, it doesn't start counting until I get to a New Year's and complete a full calendar year.

So 2015 would be year one of King Sam. Got it? That's accession year. Accession year means your first few months don't count.

Your stuff doesn't start hitting the meter until you pass a New Year's Day. Okay? Accession year reckoning. Now, this is the way Judah counts the years for their kings, starting with Rehoboam.

Okay? Now, there is another way, and by the way, this is the way that they did it in Assyria. This is the way they did it in Babylon. This is the way they did it in Persia.

It was common. This is the way the nations do it. Okay? There's another way you can do it though, and it sort of inflates your grandeur.

And this is King Sam hits the throne in August. This is my year one. And next year is my year two.

Even though it's kind of like, you know, deductions for tax purposes. I was born on December 31st. My dad got to count me for the whole year as a deduction, right? I was only around for less than a day, but he got to credit for the whole year of a dependent, right? That's non-accession year reckoning.

We give you credit for a whole year, even though you only had a little bit. Okay? So guess where they did this? In the north, in the northern kingdom, non-accession year. Now, what this means is, let's say you have King Jeroboam, and he reigns for so long.

I don't have it written down. I have to go look it up. He reigns for so long a period of time, all right? Well, the next king that comes along in the middle of the year is going to count the whole year as his year one, which also counts as the last year of Jeroboam, right? So there's an overlap.

So if you have eight kings in the north during this period, you're going to get an extra seven years, right? Because that's how many overlaps you've got. So you gain a year every time a new king comes to the throne. He's counting the last year of his predecessor as his first year.

Non-accession year reckoning. This is how you get 86 years up north, because you had eight kings, right? And you've only got 79 years in the south, because the Judah kings, it dovetails. You only get credit for as much of a, you know, your last year is a full year regardless of when it ends, but your first year doesn't start until the calendar.

Now, if you were holding on tight with your right hand, put your left hand down and grab on because there's another complication here. When does the year start? If you remember from your intimate detailed knowledge of ancient Israelite history, you know that there's two calendars in view. When is the Jewish New Year? You are wise not to answer because which one? There's two, right? The civil calendar starts in the fall with the month Tishri.

Rosh Hashanah, head of the Shana, the year. Rosh, head, Shana, year. Rosh Hashanah, head of the year.

When is Rosh Hashanah? It's the first of the fall feast, right? Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Feast of Booths, all that stuff happening in the fall, right? That's the new year, the civil new year. However, a little thing happened in Egypt right before they left. Remember? What they called the Tenth Plague.

You've got a perfect set of three times three, and then you've got this really special event, death of the firstborn, and the households that did not lose their firstborn, what had they done? Blood of the Passover lamb splashed in what ends up making the shape of a cross on the door above and dripping down below and then on each of the doorposts, doorposts and lintel, and what did God say? You will observe this as a memorial from now on. This shall be the beginning of the year for you. What month is that? Nisan.

Okay, so religious new year in the spring, Nisan, civil new year in the fall, Tishri. Got it? Nisan,

Tishri. Now, one of the kingdoms of Israel counted their years as starting in Tishri, and the other kingdom counted their years as starting in Nisan.

Just taking a wild stab, which one do you think did what? Judah for Nisan because that's the religious, Israel for Tishri because that's non-religious. It's backwards. It's in Judah that they started the years in Tishri.

It is in Israel that they started, well, this has its own significance now, which we'll get to. They count it from Nisan in the north. They count it from Tishri in the south, and I ask myself, because I thought what you thought, certainly the godly Jehoshaphat teacher distributing loving remnant people in the south are going to be following God's law and the Passover and the head of the year, and no, they don't.

It's just backwards. However, if you pick your way carefully through the books of Kings and Chronicles and you carefully note the references, so-and-so became king in the south, and by the way, whichever kingdom you're in, when it says that a king of Judah became king in such-and-such year of the king in the north, well, which system is he using? This is a third complication. If he says Amaziah became king in the second year of Jehoash, well, the second year of Jehoash as the northern kingdom counts it, or the second year of Jehoash as we count them down here.

Which is it? Well, thankfully, and this is beautifully consistent all the way through the account, if the reference is that it's from the standpoint of the north, this king in the north became king in such-and-such year of a Judah king, that they're counting the Judah king the way they count years in the north. If you're talking about a northern king, all of the years are figured on non-accession year reckoning, including any king of Judah they talk about. If you're talking about a king in the south, it will always be accession year reckoning, even when they're talking about a king in the north.

So thankfully, it's consistent. With those three keys, if you understand accession year reckoning in the south versus non-accession year reckoning in the north, if you understand that in the south they start their years in Tishri, and in the north they start their years in Nisan, hang on, both hands, right? Still with me, okay? Accession year versus non-accession year, Tishri versus Nisan, and thirdly, whichever king you're talking about, whatever kingdom you're standing in, when you say this guy became king in the year of that guy over there, they're going to count it the way they do in the kingdom you're standing in. The king you're talking about that just came to the throne in the year of that guy over there, they're going to count the years the way they do where this guy just became king, okay? Those are your three keys.

Now, still got a tight grip, right? Here's the thing, it changes. That's true from Rehoboam all the way down to our year when Ahab is killed and Ahaziah reigns, and you get down to 841 with Jehu. It's true all the way down to Jehu.

Remember I said we're at the point of a big reset? Because in 841 all of the kings die, and you

get a fresh start at the same time in both kingdoms, right? Jehu just murders everybody and everything, you know, it's just blood running in the gutters and the chariots and the dogs are licking it up, and everything starts fresh. Well, at this time, 841 BC, a weird and special thing happens, and it's kind of understandable. Down in Judah, where they have always used accession year reckoning, we're not going to inflate our numbers by counting a little partial year that we started the way they do in the north, we're going to do it the way it's accepted in the rest of the world.

Assyria, Babylon, Persia, the way those guys do it, or we'll do it, that's the way we do it. Well, they change, and starting in 841 with Athaliah in the south, Jehu in the north, down in the south, they start reckoning in the years the same way they do in the north. Why? Who's ruling in the south? Athaliah.

Where did she come from? The north. And so from 841 and all the way down to 796, they're going to count their years like they do in the north. Now, that's the first big reset.

Hang on. I know, I know, you're thinking, it's starting to spin, room's starting to spin. Grab something and hang on.

Remember now, these numbers are important. It's important. It will be worth it all when we see Jesus.

All right. So, let's just take a deep breath and review. Two different ways to count your first year, right? Two different times to start the year, and there is this difference between the south and the north.

And whichever kingdom you're talking about, that's the way you're going to reckon the years, even when you're talking about the other guys. Those are our keys. There is this big reset right here at Jehu.

Jehu literally wipes the slate clean. Stuff changes radically with Jehu. And now Judah is going to look like the north in the way they count their years, and they're going to do that from 841 to 796.

841 to 796. How many years is that? 45? About 45 years. Okay.

841 to 796. That is when King Joash is going to die, and Amaziah is going to take the throne in Judah. Really close to that time, 798, is when Jehoash, the grandson of Jehu, is going to take the throne in the north.

Remember you had Jehu? He reigns a long time. Then you have Jehoaz, and he reigns a while, and then you have Jehoash, the grandson of Jehu. Well, Jehoash comes to the throne with, there's a little two-year window here, where he comes to the throne in 798, Amaziah comes in 796.

Okay? This is another interesting line, because from this point forward, it flips, and everybody from 798 until the end, is going to do it the way Judah did it to begin with. They're going to all count the numbers the way they did in Judah, and the way they do in Babylon, and Assyria, and Persia. It's all going to be accession year reckoning.

So, if you take one kingdom at a time, if you think about it, you've got non-accession year, inflate my number by one, all the way down, uninterrupted, to 798, and with Jehoash, it flips, and they start counting the reign like they do in the south. 798, okay? Close to 800, all right? In the south, it starts out being accession year, you have this weird little interlude where it's non-accession year for 45 years, and then it goes back to accession year again. Okay? That's down in the south.

So, we've got three things to remember about the way those years are counted. We've got three different phases in the south, and we've got two phases in the north. With that information, every single year reference, and for centuries, people threw rocks at the Bible and said, this thing is hopelessly screwed up, the numbers are all wrong.

Even the guys that translated the Septuagint, a couple hundred years before Christ, thought it was messed up, and tried to change the numbers in the Greek text to make them match. And they goofed it all up, because they did not understand. You know more than the Septuagint translators right now.

You right now, if you can keep these facts in your mind, you know more than almost anybody that's graduated seminary. Ask almost any pastor you know if he understands how the, why do you think Thiel called his book the mysterious numbers of the Hebrew kings? But with those observations, what I have just shared with you, every single time reference in the Hebrew text, in this section of Kings and its match in Chronicles, makes perfect sense. It aligns exactly.

Not a single mistake, not a single erroneosity, not a single bogosity, not a single inelegancy, not a single conundrum. They line up perfectly. This is the level of detail that God has woven into the account.

God is in charge of this stuff. Why did he let these guys go nuts with the reckoning, and with the flipping it around, up and down, and Tishri versus Nisan, and all of that? Because there are certain things that God has reserved. Hear me now, if you haven't heard anything else I've said except the introduction, when I was talking about Robin Williams, and do you want to try to pursue everything in this life, and come to the end of a shallow well, and find that it has run dry? Or do you want to just begin to cross the threshold into things that are infinite? Into things that are eternal? Into things that you will carry forward with you beyond this life, and be so glad that you have, when the Lord Jesus shows up, you've actually got a robe with pockets.

You've actually got a belt to tie around your waist. You've actually got some stuff you brought with you from this life, because you were diligent. You persevered.

You have need of endurance, the New Testament tells us, so that after you have persevered through, after you have suffered a while, you will inherit. Inheritance is reserved for people who are willing to stick, willing to stay, willing to push, willing to choose to do the hard stuff. This is some of the hard stuff, but it is, as they say, way worth it.

So this is it. Now, that's, all of that is just to get equipped with these tools, with this knowledge, which is all here in Scripture. Theol is just a gift of God, and he didn't do his work until relatively recently, in terms of history, but it is the key that unlocks a massive door.

And God, in these latter days, is unlocking and exposing these truths, and they are available to those who want them. They are available to those who are willing to do the work to get them. Remember in Proverbs chapter 2, if you seek for it as silver, if you search for it as for hid treasure, how do you get silver? Have you ever seen a silver mine? Have you ever seen people that go looking for silver? Do you just find big blobs of silver laying around? Oh, look, silver! If you seek for it as silver, if you search for it as for hid treasure, search because it's hidden.

Guess what? You know why this convoluted stuff is here? It's not so much convoluted as it is complex. It's sophisticated. It is elegantly interwoven.

It's a hidden treasure. But if you are willing to keep on looking, if you're willing to use, Spurgeon called his newsletter the spade and trowel, because you're using these to excavate and look for these things, these are the people that God is going to bless with inheritance, with opportunity, with potential, with challenges for service now and mostly in the ages to come. So we're separating, we're finding out what are we really made of? Are we casual? Are we somewhat indifferent? Are we kind of along for the ride? Well, if I don't have to strain, I can understand it.

Or are we serious? God is looking for people who seriously love him, who seriously have an interest and who seriously recognize that it is the exact opposite of the lie that Satan tells, that religious people are simplistic, religious people are dopes, religious people need a crutch and need comfort and cling to superstitions. No. You've got to be extremely perceptive.

You have to be patient. You have to build line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. That's when you understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

Satan would love to get everyone to believe that it's just a lot of superstitious hooey. He's hoping you'll believe that because if you can enter into these things and come to understand them, you are going to be walking the path that the Lord Jesus walked. You're going to be walking the path that the Apostle Paul walked, that the prophets of old walked, because they understood the fear of the Lord and they found the knowledge of God.

Now, given the background that we have painted tonight, we're going to look at some things and I'm just going to mention some things that we'll talk about in detail next time. I encourage

you this coming week, read through, start at about 2 Kings chapter 8 and read through until you hit Jeroboam the second. That's 782.

That's getting toward the end of this special section of Israelite history. This is a gem in the middle of Israelite history. Jeroboam, Rehoboam and Abijah and Asa and Jehoshaphat and Baasha and Omri and Ahab and all those guys lead up to it on one side and you've got the decline on the other side.

This is the gemstone in the middle and it is marked very clearly with the career of Jehu and with the presence of the prophet Elisha. It's no accident. It's on purpose.

It's no accident that so many king names are doubled here because there is symmetry. It's a marker. God has put a little... It's like these undersea divers that are looking for wrecks and they say, wow, you know, there be gold in them there wrecks, you know, and you're driving down trying to find the doubloons or the Spanish pesos or whatever it is down there.

What do they do when they find it? Well, they put a buoy up there, a little floating marker. That's not the treasure. That's the buoy telling you that if you're willing to go down far enough and if you can get there and grab it and pull it up, there's treasure.

Well, these markers, these doubled names, everything being doubled with Elisha, this is the marker. This is the buoy that says, hey, if you're paying attention, there's treasure here. That's what we're going to try to look at.

We're just going to be able to touch on it because I am telling you this has threads that run all the way through the rest of Scripture. It has threads that run very strongly and directly to and through the Lord Jesus Christ, 1st Advent and 2nd Advent. It has threads that run all the way back to the garden.

It has threads that run through Jacob and Joseph, that run through David and Absalom, that run through... It's just, you begin to say, I feel like the guy that started to write portraits of Christ in the Bible. I told you this story. In the preface, he ended up publishing a book called Portraits of Christ in Genesis.

And he said, I started out to write a book called Portraits of Christ in the Bible, but I suddenly realized that it was way too... I couldn't comprehend that much material. So I said, well, I'll do Portraits of Christ in the Old Testament. And he said, that ended up just getting away from me and becoming incredibly too large.

So I thought, well, I'll do Portraits of Christ in the Pentateuch. And that swarmed and became so large that he couldn't comprehend it and wrestle it down into a book-length shape. So he ended up doing Portraits of Christ in Genesis.

And he said, and even this, I'm only giving you a taste of everything that I have found, just looking at Portraits of Christ in Genesis. Well, I feel very much like that guy. But this is one of

those places where the vein of gold runs close to the surface and we're going to dig down and look at it and we'll see the suggestions of where it goes.

But this is some of the stuff I think we'll be looking at and being amazed at. I told Ken earlier in the week, I think there's going to be a giant dent in my head right here, a smack mark, where I'm going, why didn't I see that? Why didn't I see that? Oh, look at how beautiful and how elegant and how obvious that is now that I'm in my resurrected body and I can see it so much more clearly. But it's a beautiful thing.

And here's the thing. It's not just interesting and it's not just fascinating and it's not just impressive. It changes the way we look at our lives because it changes the way we understand the way the Lord Jesus lived His life.

And we are Him now. He's gone. We are here in His place.

We are His body. That's what we're learning in Ephesians. So this is, you know, I saw a magician movie a while back and saw a reality show where some guy's walking around, locking himself in boxes and, you know, living underwater for a week or whatever.

And people always want to know, how did you do it? How did you do it? And we often think, well, the Lord Jesus was so incredibly impressive in His earthly life. How did He do it? This is how He did it. This is how He could follow that straight path, never diverging, never departing, went through at high speed, the straight gate to life, and is bringing all of us in train with Him, if we'll stick with it.

And if we've got the patience and the perseverance to follow Him, this is how it is done. So let me just mention a couple of numbers. We're out of time for tonight.

But this starts really the year that Ahab is killed. Ahab, King Ahab, Wicked King Ahab, the crown jewel of the Omri family, is killed in 853 BC. That is also the year that Jehoshaphat becomes incapacitated.

He's still on the throne. And this is one of those things that's not real obvious, because King Jehoshaphat is still on the throne, but there's something wrong with him. Something happens, and he makes Jehoram regent.

And Jehoram becomes the de facto ruler down in Judah. Remember, Jehoram is the one that married Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. So the couple, Jehoram, Athaliah, come to power as royal regent, as acting ruler, de facto king, even though Jehoshaphat is technically still alive, and the year is 853.

The same year that Ahab is killed, and Ahaziah comes to the throne. Remember, he's a flash in the pan. By his non-accession year reckoning, he reigns two years, but it was really only a year.

Because we understand the way those years are counted. He's only there one year. In 841, 12

years pass from 853 to 841.

It is exactly 12 years in the north and in the south. You wouldn't get that if you didn't understand accession and non-accession year reckoning. But it is exactly the same length of time.

853 to 841, it is exactly 12 years. Jehu arrives on the scene, and the sword of Jehu cuts a big horizontal line across the history of the northern and southern kingdoms. And it's a reset, and a new clock starts ticking, 841.

Now, Jehu is going to reign, by his own reckoning, 28 years, 28 years. In the south, because Ahaziah gets killed the same time that Jehoram is killed, remember, arrows through the chest, blood in the chariots. Who comes to reign down in Judah? Slays all of the other royal heirs, and she, Athaliah, comes to the throne.

And she reigns, by her reckoning, remember now, we're reckoning years down in the south, like we do in the north. By her reckoning, she reigns seven years, but it's really only six. Seven, but it's only six.

Seven, but it's only six. Twenty-eight, but it's only twenty-seven, okay? This makes, it has no resonance or meaning yet, just tuck it away. Athaliah, eventually, remember, the little boy that was hidden away, baby Joash.

How old is he when he comes to the throne, when the high priest brings him out? How old is he? Seven years old. Seven years old. Can't fake and say, I'm really only six.

He's seven, okay? This is in the seventh year of Jehu. He's six going on seven. Remember how Jehu counts his years, but how do they count them down in the south? In this period, non-accessionary reckoning.

So he's six, but he's called seven. He's six, but he's called seven. It's because it's the seventh year of Jehu, seven years old, so it's kind of, it's six and it's seven.

It's six and it's seven. Six and seven. Did I say that enough times? Okay.

That's Joash, comes to the throne in the seventh year of Jehu. He's seven years old, but we know how time is reckoned down there. It's kind of a six-seven deal.

Well, that's 835 BC. Think about it. 41 minus seven, actually minus six, 835 BC, Joash comes to the throne.

Jehu is still in the middle of his big, long 28 slash 27 year reign in the north, right? He's going to have another 21 years to go. So Joash comes down. Now, Jehu is eventually going to have his career come short in 814 and you're going to have Jehoahaz come to the throne in the north.

This is in the 23rd year of Joash, but it's still non-accessionary reckoning. So it's really kind of

like the 22nd year, right, of Joash. He's going to come to the throne.

That's 814 and he's going to reign for what he's going to call 17 years, which is really only 16 years. And that brings you down to 798 in the north. The end of Joash's reign is 796 in the south.

You've got an almost, you just got a little two-year pericope there, a little two-year gap between the change of throne in the north in 798 and the change of throne in the south from Joash to Amaziah. Well, at that point, 796, 798, everybody's going to change the way they count time. From now on, we're doing it the way the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, and the way Judah always used to do it.

And we're going to be honest with the reckoning. Your first year doesn't count as anything. Your last year, however long it is, counts as a full year, okay? That's the way they will count it from now on.

So you're going to have Joash in the north, sort of. And this is the last thing I'm going to point out tonight. I'm running long, but just bear with me because there's another little symmetry here.

Joash is going to come to the throne, but five years into his reign, Jeroboam II is going to become co-regent. He's going to technically reign 16 years, Joash is. But he's only actually sole king five of those years.

The rest of the time, Jeroboam II is the de facto king. He's slipped in under the radar. He's actually ruling, Jeroboam II.

In the south, after Joash, little baby Joash, seven years old, comes to the throne, reigns for 40-39 years. And then you come to 796 and Amaziah comes to the throne. He's going to nominally reign for 29 years.

He starts in 796, but four years later, a co-regent shows up. Even though on paper he's king 29 years, he's only sole king for four years. And a co-regent slips under the radar, Azariah.

And Azariah is going to be co-regent from 792 all the way down for about 25 years. It's a co-reign and Azariah is the de facto king. But it's under the radar.

It's slipped under. It's interleaved. Well, all of this is not accidental.

All of this means something. It carries freight. It's a basket and there's fruit in it.

How many people have ever gone in and picked this fruit? You see how difficult it is just to figure out where the basket is and what's in it. And what it's shaped like. However, I think next week you'll see that our labors here are worth it.

There's something going on. You can see it. You can taste it.

You catch the aroma of something good here. You know, you walk in the house and something smells good. What's in the oven? Something sure smells good.

Is that roast? Is that chicken? What is that? Something really smells good. Well, there's something really good here. The buoy is floating on the ocean.

We've been swimming our way down, breathing carefully, and we're about to hit. What is it here for? And that's what we'll try to cover next week. I say all of that, however, to say this.

God is not casual. He's not sloppy. He's not haphazard.

The details of your life are as carefully organized as this history and this account. God is paying as close attention to you as he does the mitochondrial DNA in your cells and the configuration of every galaxy in the universe that Hubble can see and all the ones that it can't. God is equally aware of galactic space, intergalactic space, the entire universe at one go, and the smallest subatomic particles, quarks, gluons, and all the rest of that.

God knows it all. Don't think that this stuff is happenstance. Don't think the episodes and the details of your life, when and where you were born, what family, who you know, where you live, the daily things that you confront.

For our understanding and for the purposes of instruction, it is as though you are a Bible character. And the daily events, the conversations, the challenges, the decisions you make are of the same level of importance in God's plan as anything you find in the Bible, anything you find in human history, anything you find at the microscopic or the macroscopic level. Don't underestimate God.

It is a serious mistake to underestimate the Lord God. Don't think He's not paying attention. Don't think He doesn't have a perfect, detailed, intricate, tightly woven plan for your life.

And we either hit it or we miss it. We either grab hold or we lose out. And it is so finely balanced, and it is solving for choice.

It is solving for attitude. It is testing you, like it is testing me, like it has tested every human being, for attitude, for priorities, for goals, for values. Mene, mene, tekel.

Don't let it be ufarsin. You are weighed in the balance. Don't be found wanting.

Every single one of us is being weighed in the balance. It is a very fine balance. It misses nothing.

Don't kid yourself. Don't be fooled. Don't swallow the lie that the world and the flesh and the devil are trying to feed us.

This is the God we're talking about here. And we're going to see just the fringe on the edge of the robe that descends from heaven down into the Holy of Holies when we look at this again

next time. Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word.

Thank You for Your grace. It's so astonishing to realize that, along with the psalmist, we say, what is man that You are mindful of him or the son of man that You visit him. And yet You do crown us with glory and honor.

You lift us up and raise us on high in Christ. We thank You for him. We thank You for this opportunity.

We pray that we can be found worthy of it, that we can take advantage of it, that Your Holy Spirit will impress it on our hearts and keep us ever mindful of it. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.