Kings and Prophets 14-08-28b

We resume our study now, we're looking at this particular time in the history of the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel, and we've come down to the year 841, and we've seen in detail and reviewed extensively how the slate gets wiped clean by Jehu. Among other things, the rise of Jehu in the north brings to an end a particular dynasty. This is the dynasty that of course includes the family of Ahab, but who did it begin with? Began with Omri, Omri, they're called the Omride dynasty because they're descended from Omri.

It's very interesting how often you have a change of royal family in both of the kingdoms. Let's think about, starting with David, how long did the line of David last in the northern kingdom? Careful now, how long did the line of David last on the throne in the northern kingdom? Is Jeroboam a son of David? Not only did it not last, it didn't really ever get started. So you have David and you have Solomon, and the Davidic dynasty runs into problems right off the bat with the splitting of the kingdom because Jeroboam is not Davidic.

How long does Jeroboam's dynasty last? One generation, Jeroboam reigns for 22 years, his Nadab comes after him, he's a Jeroboamite, and then there's a change to Baasha, you have Baasha and then Elah, and then you have Zimri who is there for hours, and then you have Omri, and Omri quickly dispatches Zimri and takes over. And that begins a dynasty that goes for Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram. How many generations is that? In this preceding time leading up to our days of Jehu, if you will, at 841, how many, it's the longest running show in the northern kingdom.

Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah was kind of a flash in the pan, but then Joram, 12 years, right? Four generations. Now we have Jehu, and let's just start looking forward from 841, Jehu is going to reign for 28 years. More about that number shortly.

What's the date today? Okay. Jehu, when he finally checks out, is going to be succeeded by Jehoahaz, Jehoahaz will be succeeded by Jehoash, and Jehoash is going to be succeeded by Jeroboam II. Now this is in accordance with a promise that is made to Jehu.

Do you remember the promise? Because you've been faithful in wiping out the house of Ahab and doing according to all that I ask you to do, your sons will sit on the throne of northern Israel, how long? To the fourth generation. There is never again that long a string in the north. There's only two times that they achieved a four generation run.

Right before Jehu and Jehu's line. The Omrides, four generations, the Jehuites, four generations. The mirror surface is at 841.

Four before, four after. So we've got that number four keeps cropping up. What does four represent in the ancient Semitic cultural mind? It is the universality of things on this earth.

The four winds, the four points of the compass, four dimensions. You have height and depth

and length and breadth. It is universality of things on this earth.

Completeness of things on earth. When the new Jerusalem comes down out of heaven and sits on the new earth, what kind of a city is it? It is a city built what? Four square. Why four square? Why not three square? Why not seven fold? I guess you can't really say three square, can you? I guess 27 is three squared, but it's four square.

And again, this is completeness, perfection, fulfillment on the earth. The camp of Israel was laid out in four directions. The cross has four arms.

It is a completeness and fulfillment of things on this earth. You can go on and on with the number four. So these four generations that precede this dividing line, and that is the most wicked dynasty.

Whenever somebody is reaching for what's the most evil time in the Old Testament, it's the Omride dynasty. Nobody was as wicked. There was never a king like Ahab for wickedness, never anybody like Omri.

They'll go back to the sins of Jeroboam when he caused Israel to sin. But the Omride dynasty, Ahab, Jezebel, just really takes the cake. Now, keep in mind that we've talked about how when you have two of a thing, there is a suggestion of identity, like both of those things are talking about the same thing in two different ways.

And this is true of God's people and of the kingdom of God with the divided kingdom. The divided kingdom is two lines of argument about the relationship between God and his people. And the things that happen in those successions are illustrations and metaphors and illuminations of God's dealing with his people.

They are two different, instead of having four gospels looking at the Lord Jesus Christ, why four gospels? Perfection of God's revelation of himself on this earth, four accounts. But in the Old Testament, on the testimony of two or three witnesses, a thing is established. And so we've got God's dealing with his people in this divided kingdom.

And so it is talking about the same thing. And that suggests that if there is any sort of anticipation in the things we're looking at, if it is prophetic in any way, then there's going to be one kind of prophetic perspective in one kingdom. And there's going to be another, perhaps different, perspective in the other.

The great thing about 3D movies is when you put the little funny glasses on, it feeds a slightly different image to each eye, which gives you the illusion of depth, which allows you to see dimensionality, allows you to see more than you can see with one eye by itself or even both eyes open, but only looking at one thing. Instead of 2D, you get 3D. You can see a whole lot more just because you're given this binocular perspective.

These kingdoms give us a binocular perspective. And interestingly, you would think, well, if God

was going to communicate to us with numbers, there would be fours in the north and fours in the south. There'd be sevens in the north and sevens in the south.

There'd be twelves here, twelves there, and so on. Interestingly, the numbers are different in the two kingdoms. And when their significance is recognized, when you realize, hey, this is what four means, this is what three means, this is what seven means, there is a story being told in the northern kingdom and there's a story being told in the southern kingdom.

So this is kind of what we're watching for. I'm suggesting that we kind of get our 3D glasses on here so that we can see these things go on in both kingdoms. So notice in the north, there is a symmetry at this very signal time, 841, that we're looking at.

The only time they have four generations in a row, and it's the worst kings you can imagine, is the Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Joram deal. In the south, I'm sorry, in the north after 841, you have Jehu, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, and Jeroboam. What about in the south, in the kingdom of Judah? Well, there is a, obviously these two kingdoms are related.

What was especially unique in the whole history of kings and so on up in the north during those four generations leading up to 841? What happened with the second king? Ahab, son of Omri, introduced who into the picture? Jezebel. And Jezebel pertains over, Omri is the only one that doesn't have to contend with Jezebel. Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram have all got Jezebel in the wings, you know, yanking on strings.

So the skirts of Jezebel cover three out of the four kings, right? But what happens in 841 to Jezebel? Along with everything else Ahab, she's dog food. However, there is a strange sort of resurrection in Judah because what happens in 841 to the throne in Judah? Which man is sitting on the throne in Judah starting in 841? No man. Instead, it is the reincarnation of Jezebel in the form of her daughter Athaliah.

So at this mirror line, when you cross over, it is the two doves for the cleansed leper. You kill one, the other one has blood on it, but it's set free. And this is sort of the evil nemesis version of the dove story.

Instead of doves, it's buzzards and you kill the old buzzard in the north and the daughter buzzard comes back in the south. And so Athaliah, as it were, reappears and there's no three kings that she has to pull strings on. She slays everyone and becomes the de facto queen of Judah.

How long does this last? It begins in 841, it ends in 835 when baby Joash, having been preserved by Yehoshua and so on, and Jehoiada the priest, emerges to take the throne. But it's that six year period, six years. Let me read you, I brought, this is a fascinating book.

If you're intrigued by numbers in scripture, you can't do better than Bullinger, Number in Scripture. Most of you probably have this or can get access to it. Some of it's some pretty heavy sledding.

Bullinger goes where no man has gone before or since on some of these numbers by factoring them and doing the factorials. I got left at the depot in a couple of these chapters. Let me read you what he says about the number six that impinges on our study.

The six years of Athaliah's reign. That's where we're at. This is page 152 in my copy.

The six years of Athaliah's reign were six years of usurpation of the throne of David. Second Kings 11, Second Chronicles 23. Athaliah slew all the seed royal, as she thought, but God in his providence overruled events so that one son, Joash, was quote, rescued from among the king's sons that were slain.

He was hid in the house of God during the six years with Jehoshua, who was shut up with him, her affections being centered upon him, while Jehoiada, her husband, she is the wife of the priest, her husband Jehoiada was occupied for the king going about and securing loyal adherence by his simple repetition of Jehovah's promise. Behold, the king's son shall reign as the Lord hath said of the sons of David. Second Chronicles 23.

This promise of the return of a Davidic king to the throne during the days of the rule of a wicked woman, usurper, sustained people all through the six years. And this priest spoke these words. You can look at 23rd chapter of Chronicles.

This promise was the support of the hearts of the faithful during those six years of usurpation until the seventh year came. And Joash was manifested upon his throne and all his enemies destroyed. Joash, who survived a purge of all the babies when he himself was a baby, wasn't able to come to the throne at that time.

But the six years having passed and in the seventh year, he is able to come to the throne in the seventh year, which things are a type of the king's son, capital K King, even Jesus who was rescued by resurrection from among the dead and is now hid in the house of God on high. While he is seated and expecting, Hebrews 10, 12 and 13, all who are in Christ are hid with him, Colossians 3, 3. And while in this aspect their hearts, like Jehoshua's, are occupied with the person of the king, their activities, like Jehoiada's, are going out for him, witnessing and testifying to the blessed truth that the king is coming again and will surely reign. And the seventh year of blessing will come at last.

Until that moment arrives, the promise of Jehovah will be their support, that the seed of the woman shall in due time crush the serpent's head, Genesis 3.15. So that's Bullinger's quick notation under the heading the number six. So notice that this is six years down in Judah, with the seventh year being the time of the revelation of Joash. What is going on in the north? Those are six of 25 years of Jehu's reign.

Now, if two things can be speaking about the same thing, then Jehu's reign in the north can also be talking about the future reign of the Lord Jesus, even as more obviously we see an analogy and a foreshadowing down in Judah. And I believe that to be the case. If you look at the

numbers, you have Jehu's reign lasting how many years? 28 years.

28 factors to four times seven. Seven is the number of perfection in heaven, God's complete and perfect accomplishment of all of his purposes. He works in six days, sits back and enjoys it on the seventh, and that's the fullness.

He doesn't just work and then immediately go on to another six-day work week. The seventh day of appreciation and enjoyment is a part of the work. It is the goal for which the work was done so that the rest and peace can be enjoyed.

It is integral with it. That's God's number of perfect accomplishment. Thy will be done on earth, four, as it is in heaven, seven.

Four times seven, 28. So 28 is the number of the completion of God's perfect purposes reflected both in heaven and on earth. His heavenly purposes reflected on earth, his earthly purposes reflected in heaven.

28. There is a case to be made that Jesus was close to this age when he began his earthly ministries. He was about 30 years of age.

But he had certainly accomplished 28 years as the God-man, as the man of heaven and the man of earth. He's got both of those idea sets embodied and embedded in his person. At any rate, you've got Jehu up there for 28 years.

He is the one who slew Jezebel. And Jezebel, who has been a force of nature for three previous kings, is not a force of nature during his reign. What does Jehu's name mean? The Lord is he.

Remember who is he, he is she, she is it in Hebrew. Everybody say it with me. Who is he, he is she, and she is it.

Those are the suffixes. If you say Yehu, this is Yehoahu, Yahweh, who, who is he, Yahweh is he, the Lord is he, Yehu. Now, how many times does the name Jehu show up in the history of Israel? More than once, right? Didn't we have a Jehu once before? We did.

Who was the previous Jehu? Didn't we have a prophet Jehu, the son of Hanani, son of Hanan, Hanani. He's a prophet. He was active in the ninth century.

Of course, Hanan is the word for grace. So this was the Lord is he, son of God's grace. He is the one who condemned Baasha of the previous dynasty for his evils and branded him with perpetuating the sins of Jeroboam, who was from yet the previous dynasty.

And Jehu's prophecy was fulfilled in the reign of Elah, Baasha's son, when the traitor Zimri assassinated Elah and murdered all of Baasha's family. This is back in 1 Kings 16. What's interesting about that is the prophecy of Jehu.

Keep your finger where we are here in 2 Kings and turn back to the first Jehu in 1 Kings chapter

16. The word of the Lord came to Jehu, the son of Hanani, against Baasha, saying, I exalted you out of the dust and made you prince over my people Israel. And you have walked in the way of Jeroboam and have made my people Israel sin to provoke me to anger with their sins.

Surely I will take away the posterity of Baasha and the posterity of his house. I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Baasha and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field.

Jehu delivered the first prophecy about people's remains getting eaten by the dogs. The second Jehu brings a very similar prophecy to pass. Now, you're already at 1 Kings 16.

Just flip back two more chapters to 1 Kings 14. Why did Baasha get in trouble? He perpetuated the sins of who? Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. What does 14 tell us? Look at 14 verse 7. Ahijah heard the sound of footsteps.

Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why do you pretend to be another person? I have been sent to you with bad news. You remember this? We covered this a few months back.

Tell Jeroboam, thus says the Lord God of Israel, because I exalted you from among the people and made you ruler over my people Israel, tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you. Notice he's not in the house of David. Ah, you've not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, followed me with all his heart to do only what was right in my eyes.

You have done more evil than all who were before you. You've gone and made yourself other gods, molded images to provoke me to anger, have cast me behind your back. Therefore, behold, I will bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam.

I will cut off from Jeroboam every male in Israel. By the way, when you see that every male, the Hebrew for that is all those who urinate against the wall. That's what it literally says.

It's designed to get attention. There are other ways of saying males or men or sons, but this is their, their biological functions are going to stop. They're identified by the way they perform this biological function.

But that's what male is there. It's literally those who urinate on the wall. And there is a, this, this, by the way, is always, uh, in a condemnation context.

It is as though these are characterized by disrespect. You know, there are other places to urinate than against a, a wall, which indicates civilization inhabitant, you know, habitation. Uh, there are places to do this outside the camp.

If you are doing this on the wall, you have disregard for propriety and establishment and things that, that belong to courtesy and so on. And so this is used as, as a term of disrespect for one's descendants anyway. Uh, and when it says bond and free, I learned something new on this this

past week while I was studying.

Apparently bond and free, uh, doesn't always refer to slavery or being a free man. It can also, uh, refer to just the strong and the weak, whether they are handicapped or, uh, able to function. Sometimes the bond actually means handicapped bond in the sense of, and he says whether they're weak or strong, whether they are, have freedom of movement or they are restricted.

Uh, there's, there's a real interesting academic paper that got written on this a while back talking about that. It doesn't mean bond and free. This Hebrew phrase means I'm going to kill all your people and without respect of persons.

It doesn't matter if they're high or they're low. It doesn't matter if they are capable or incapable. Doesn't matter if they are admirable or not so much, if they're really healthy or if they're sickly, they're all going to go because they all have this urinating on the wall attitude.

As one takes away trash until all is gone, look at verse 11, the dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Jeroboam and dies in the city and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field for the Lord has spoken. Notice we have something of a dog theme and apologies to all of you who are dog lovers, but we have something of a dog theme here, do we not? Because after Solomon, you had the house of Jeroboam take over and Jeroboam's descendants are cut off and the dogs eat them. They're slain and the dogs eat them.

Who comes next? Baasha, his house is evil, is God swears that they will be cut off and they will be fed to the dogs. Who comes after Baasha? You have Zimri who is a zero month flash in the pan and then you have Omri and the Omrides are under, you will all be cut off and eaten by the dog's curse. So you've got a nice consistency for everybody leading up to Jehu in the northern kingdom.

They're all under the dog curse. They're all under the, you will be cut off and your refuse will be eaten and the birds will be picking out the eyes of anybody that's left. It's very graphic.

It's very potent. So back to second Kings and our passage in chapter 10. We're at 841 and Athaliah is taking over and we're kind of straddling because we back up a little bit.

Chapter 11 says, Athaliah the son of Ahaziah, the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead. She arose and destroyed all the royal heirs. But just before that you see here's the death of Jehu, Jehu's whole reign.

So the left eye of Jehu is in the preceding chapter. The right eye of Athaliah is in chapter 11. But you saw all of those that were killed and you saw the motif that we alluded to last time in terms of things that were taking place in a chariot.

We've seen the, just remember the dog motif now. This is in first Kings. You might want to write these down just for reference, for future reference.

There are nine dog references in the book of Kings. 1411 that we just read, the dogs will eat whoever belongs to Jeroboam. First Kings 1411, number one.

Number two, first Kings 16, four, the dogs will eat whoever belongs to Baasha. 2119 speak to Ahab. Thus says the Lord in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours.

Fourth reference concerning Jezebel, just four verses later, 2123 concerning Jezebel. The Lord also spoke saying the dog shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Not just the ones who urinate against the wall, but when Jezebel splatters against the wall, the dogs are going to eat her also.

That's the fourth. The fifth is in the very next verse, the dog shall eat whoever belongs to Ahab and dies in the city and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field. Threefold dog curse on Ahab and Jezebel.

The fulfillment is a chapter later, 2238 of first Kings washing the chariot at a pool in Samaria. The dogs licked up his blood while the harlots bathed according to the word of the Lord, which he had spoken. That's the fulfillment of Ahab's death.

Second Kings 8.13, this is the oddball one. Elisha goes to Damascus, visits with Hazael, says, Hazael, you brought me 40 camel loads full of loot, but I got a message for your master. He's not going to recover.

You're going to tell him he's going to recover, but he's not. Stares at him real hard, weeps for all the destruction that he's going to wreak. You get the idea, maybe this is why Elisha didn't want to go see Jehu, because he looked at Hazael and saw all the blood that would be on his hands.

And so he says, look, some of the prophets, you go anoint Jehu. I don't want to see that kind of thing again, perhaps. But 8.13 of second Kings, Hazael says, what is your servant, a dog that he should do this gross thing? Yes, you're one of the dogs that is going to be eating those under God's curse for evil and disobedience.

And the answer is, yeah, uh-huh, pretty much. Outside are the dogs, fornicators, liars, all of those who lose their inheritance. Not a good thing.

Second Kings 9.10, the dogs shall eat Jezebel on the plot of ground at Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. Reiteration of the previous Jezebel curse. And then verse 36 of chapter 9, on the plot of ground at Jezreel, the dogs surely did eat the flesh of Jezebel.

So Jezebel's demise and departure from the realm of corporal reality by turning into chow for the dogs is actually emphasized several times. Those are the dog things. Now, what about another very interesting and prevalent motif here, which is chariots.

We have chariots and horsemen. We have chariots and horses. This, we've got about 50 references to chariots, and I'm not going to give all of them to you.

They start back in the days of Solomon. In the very first chapter, you have Adonijah trying to become king instead of Solomon. And what does he do? In other words, what we're looking for here is what is the significance of chariots? We know what the significance of dogs is.

Dogs are batting clean up after God has executed those who are evil. What do the chariots represent? Well, Adonijah thinks it represents status and power, because when he wants to take the throne, he exalts himself saying, I will be king. And he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen and 50 men to run in front of him.

Solomon had all kinds of chariots and commanders for them. Solomon had 1400 chariots. That's two times 700 chariots, 1400 chariots for Solomon.

David as the king for seven, Solomon is the double portion. So Solomon's got 1400 chariots, and he has 12,000 or 12 elephs of horsemen. Number 12 is significant.

We've seen that four times three. This is first Kings 1026, by the way. And he made chariot cities to station his chariots in all over the area.

It tells us in first Kings 1029, a chariot imported from Egypt. Hear me now. Solomon's got 1400 chariots.

His chariots are all made in Japan. No, they're made in Egypt. What does Egypt stand for? Where does Joseph get his wife? Joseph becomes king in a faraway land, Egypt.

Out of Egypt, I've called my son, a chariot imported from Egypt. Solomon's chariots are imported. They cost 600 shekels of silver, 600 shekels of silver.

Bring one from Egypt, a horse, 150. And thus through their agents, they exported them to the Hittites and everybody else. Rehoboam ends up fleeing in his chariot in chapter 12 of first Kings.

Zimri was commander of the chariots before he assassinates his master in chapter 16. Elijah sends a messenger after the seventh time when his servant goes and sees the cloud, the size of a man's hand seven times. He says, go tell Ahab to prepare his chariot because he's going to need to outrun the rain.

Ben-Hadad in chapter 20, notice that the chariots are always associated with figures of power, figures of influence. They're either about to become influential or they have become influential. You remember Jehu was a chariot commander before God raised him up.

In first Kings 22, 32, when the captains of chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, surely it is the king of Israel. They turned aside to fight against him. Remember, this is because the king of Israel didn't want to be outed as the king.

Ahab didn't want to be identified as the king. It happened when the captains of chariots saw it was not the king of Israel. They turned back from chasing him.

Then man drew a bow at a venture, arrow flies, hits a chink in the armor, bleeds to death in his chariot. The blood ran out from the wound under the floor of his chariot. Someone washed the chariot at a pool in Samaria.

The dogs licked up his blood according to the word of the Lord, which he had spoken. And that's where you've got the crossover of the dogs and the chariots. Just like with Jezebel, you have the crossover of the dogs and the chariots, as we've seen that before.

The power of the chariot is going to end up being blood licked by the dogs. Cursed is the man who puts his trust in man and makes flesh his strength. What chariots do you want? My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and its horsemen.

There is the contrast between the power of God and the power of man, and it is implicit, it is signaled, it is flag-waving with the mention of these chariots. Only two kinds of chariots mentioned in the book of Kings, first and second. And that's the kingly chariots of guys like Adonijah, that's how he gets introduced.

That's Ahab, that's Joram, that's these guys who think that they've got the kingly power. And there are the chariots of God ranged on the hillside with his horsemen, his power. This is what takes Elijah to his retirement, Hacienda, and so on.

And when Elijah is retired, Elisha says, my father, my father, this is 2 Kings 2.12. My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen, chariot singular. There is only one power in Israel, and it is chariot singular. The chariot of Israel and its horsemen, its honor guard.

And he took his own clothes and tore them into two pieces. Elisha is the man of two forever. You'll find later on that when Elisha is going to die, somebody is going to say the very same thing to him.

My father, my father, the chariots and the, this is down in chapter 13 of 2 Kings. Joash king of Israel came down and wept over his face and said the very same thing Elisha said when it was Elijah's time to depart. My father, my father, the, this time he says the chariots of Israel and their horsemen, which tells you the decline in understanding.

Well, there is, I think you can already begin to see the outlines of foreshadowing in the sequence and the timing and the associated ideas in each of these realms. We're not going to parse every single detail and map it all out. We're just going to look at some of the main ones like we've looked at tonight, the reign of Athaliah for six years and being overthrown in the seventh by the king who was spared in the purge of the children, who is going to be a good king and is going to rule in righteousness in many ways.

That's one aspect of the future coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Interestingly enough, Jehu with his 28-year reign reflects another aspect of the Lord. You've got the lamb, Joash, you've got the lion, Jehu.

Both northern and southern kingdom reflect things. The 28 years is significant in a different way than the six years followed by the reign of Joash. The names are significant.

Jehu ties back to the prophet Jehu and he is the fulfillment of prophecy that bore his name in the same way that Yeshua is the fulfillment of prophecy from the first Yeshua who bore his name and took God's people into the land of promise to their inheritance. And Jehu and Jehu, it is no accident. Jehoram Jehoram or Joram Joram in the north and the south right before this is no accident.

God is going to be lifted up regardless of how human history declines and regardless of how evil people become. Even the people who bear the name, even the high priest who is as corrupt as they come is going to utter a prophecy. Wouldn't it be better if one man could die for the sins of the nation? And out of the mouths of babes, Jesus said, if these people weren't crying out, the rocks would cry out.

In some cases, these kings bear names that have nothing to do with their character. They have everything to do with the forward progress of God's plan. What we'll do next time is pick up right here in the midst.

We're now down past 841 and we're going to look at this. There is a four generation bracket of the dynasty of Jehu. And when that ends, there is a finish line in the southern kingdom as well.

And these events are foreshadowing both the first and second advents of the Lord Jesus. Because remember in the Old Testament, they were compressed and you didn't see the interim. You didn't see the church.

At least they didn't. However, it doesn't mean that because it was not revealed in former times, it wasn't there. It is in the Old Testament, unrevealed.

The Apostle Paul, I don't think, got all of his mystery doctrines on a pipe from heaven. He was given the key to unlock what had never been seen before in the Old Testament scriptures. With those keys, we can begin to see that there actually is foreshadowing even of the church and the church age in these Old Testament scriptures.

And looking at these, the values of these symbolic associations with the kings like chariots, like dogs, like threefold repetitions. Is he deceived or is he not deceived? Peace, peace, peace. Anointed, anointed, anointed.

And these things in triplicate. All of these sort of stick to a king and his time frame and give us a picture. You put all of those things together and it gives a picture.

And we'll start tacking these pictures up on the board next time. But here's the bottom line. You say, well, that's all great, but so what? Is it even worth the effort to try to figure them all out? Because I'm not running human history.

I don't have to schedule the next event. I'm just along for the ride. I'll just look out the window and watch it all happen.

Here's the thing. Never forget these things are written for our instruction. And as goes the nation in the Old Testament, so goes the individual believer in the new.

And the way God deals with his people in giving multiple opportunities to learn and to be awakened to potential. And the consequences of missing that potential are detailed here, are emphasized here, are illustrated and made large in these events. And the implication for us is, do you think these people really were paying that much attention, especially the apathetic and indifferent, the ones that said, well, so what if the high places? Well, yeah, I didn't take down the golden calves.

Well, I didn't really eradicate all the evil worship in the land. What difference does it make? I've got a kingdom to run here. I've got Syrians running amok.

And I've got the international relations and commerce and trade. And look at all these court cases. It's just I'm too busy to really think about the bigger picture.

God is nothing but looking at the big picture. And all of these things shrink to insignificance. What difference does it make how your foreign policy turned out when your kingdom is destroyed? What difference does it make how you adjudicated a case when all of your people die in a famine or are wiped out or are deported and led into captivity? These things that seem so important at the time are important only because you're ignoring what is really important.

This is a mistake we do not want to make. And by looking at the example of others, it's so much easier to see in others than it is to see in ourselves. Nathan comes to David and says, here's the poor man with the lamb.

The rich man slays it and feeds it to a traveler. You are the man. As we look at these kings and as we look at these people and we look at these dynasties in the northern and southern kingdom, we are the man.

These things matter to us. And understanding them and recognizing God's priorities for his people is a key for our successful travel through this portion of God's word. Let's close in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the fascinating way that you have presented it to us. You have packaged it in much as treasure where some of it is on the surface and others, parts of it are buried underground.

We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will help us to understand, to assimilate, to understand and to see the pertinence and the applicability of these things in our daily walk before you. We want to reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus in our lives. We want to be ready to serve him and to serve you in the ages that are to come.

We know that this is the way to do so. And we ask your blessing on us in Jesus' name. Amen.