

2 Kings 15

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 23 September 2016 11:20

Once again we find a sad unmitigated history of the Hebrew kings and the people. Even when a king of Judah was good, he still allowed evil worshippers to continue. And the kings of Israel (after Solomon) were *all* bad, corrupting the people chosen by God, and so defrauding the Lord of His rightful worship and honour... except when it suited them. It is not much different today, when a thousand world cities plan to erect copies of the arch that led to Baal's temple!

In more 'religious' ways, most churches continue in false traditions, being little better than their fully-pagan counterparts in the world. I do not hesitate to say that the two calves are being worshipped in churches, just as they were in ancient Israel. They are not the physical calves, but their spiritual prodigies. In this way people can claim Christian allegiance and still continue in pagan beliefs and practices. The latest of these are the charismatics. Possibly the oldest is Roman Catholicism. (Both are connected). So, when reading this very sad list of kings who were bad, look inwards and look at your local churches. Then, look at your own sinful hearts for following them. And remember the way God warned the churches in John's Revelation. Be wary of failing, be quick to repent.

Verses 1-4

1.

In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign.

2.

Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jecholiah of Jerusalem.

3.

And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done;

4.

Save that the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places.

2 Kings 15

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 23 September 2016 11:20

Azariah/Uzziah began to reign in Judah when Jeroboam had already reigned 27 years, and was contemporary with Isaiah. Azariah was 16 years of age when he began his rule, which lasted 25 years. His mother was a citizen of Jerusalem.

Unfortunately, like his father, he failed to remove the cultic groves where unbelievers and believers alike used to worship false gods. Today, many Christians do this by giving credence and sympathy to a huge number of cults and to preachers of the Church who woefully misrepresent God and true worship. And many do so willingly. I watched them jump with glee into the cesspit of the Toronto Blessing and charismaticism. Many are still in it, to their shame. Even reformed churches have adopted phrases and ideas (such as tongues and healing) from this ungodly movement, so they cannot condemn the cult of charismaticism. These are real Christians whose minds have been taken captive by God's enemy, Satan.

Verses 5-7

1.

And the LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house. And Jotham the king's son was over the house, judging the people of the land.

2.

And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

3.

So Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

God had shown great patience towards erring kings and people, but at this time He decided to make an example of the new king, Azariah. We know this by the description: *"the Lord smote the king"*. Did you realise that in modern days God can similarly smite a Christian for an unholy act or statement? So, while incense to false gods was burnt in the high places, the king's life had the odour of disease. Make no mistake, if a Christian follows sin and sympathises with cultic behaviour, then

2 Kings 15

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 23 September 2016 11:20

his life is noxious in the nostrils of our Holy Lord.

In Azariah, this was shown in his leprosy, probably of the worst kind. This appears to be the case for he lived in “a several house”, a *chophshuwth*; this indicates he suffered greatly with the disease and lived in a hospital-type dwelling. The word can also mean ‘freedom’, but not in this context.

Because of the severity of the king’s disease, his son, Jotham, ruled under him. No more is said in this book about Azariah, but more is found in Chronicles. He died aged 41 and was buried with the other kings of Judah in Jerusalem. Then, Jotham, who was a good king, took full control of Judah.

Verses 8-12

1.

In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did Zachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months.

2.

And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

3.

And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him before the people, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

4.

And the rest of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

5.

This was the word of the LORD which he spake unto Jehu, saying, Thy sons shall sit on the throne of Israel unto the fourth generation. And so it came to pass.

2 Kings 15

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 23 September 2016 11:20

When Azariah was aged 38, Zachariah began to rule in Israel, but only lasted six months. Like others before him he was evil. Shallum killed him in the presence of others, and began to rule in his stead. By doing this he brought to an end the dynasty of Jehu, just as God prophesied. For more on Zachariah, see Chronicles.

Verses 13-15

1.

Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria.

2.

For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

3.

And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

In the way of almost all kings who have ever ruled in ancient times, Shallum's reign was even more short-lived, as there were plenty who conspired against him. He lived for just a month after his coronation, before he was killed by Menahem, who came from Tirzah in the north. He reigned for ten years, and was contemporary with Hosea and Amos. Read more of him in Chronicles.

Even in our day, Christian 'leaders' conspire to be greater than others around them! They want more glory, more praise, more income, more status, so they engineer their way through life. They begin by being 'associate pastors' and leave every church after a few years, to get one that is deemed 'higher' on the scale of status. And though most reformed pastors do not admit to it, they also look out for larger numbers of the attending congregation. To enjoy their status, they tend not to speak the whole truth, but omit 'controversial' subjects. I know all this from

2 Kings 15

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 23 September 2016 11:20

observation, and from the lips of those thought to be highly-placed and famed in Christian circles. Is this not usurpation of a spiritual reign?

Verses 16-18

1.

Then Menahem smote Tiphseh, and all that were therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up.

2.

In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, and reigned ten years in Samaria.

3.

And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

Wishing to establish his reign and to gain more power, Menahem attacked Tiphseh in his own land, Tirzah, which was on the Euphrates river, and other cities, because they did not care to open their gates to him. In this he was most murderous, and “ripped up” the pregnant women. That is, he sliced open their bellies and pulled out the babies.

Azariah was still king in Judah at this time. Menahem proudly continued in the unrighteous wickedness of his predecessors, and took over the evil pastime of leading the ordinary people into sin... which many enjoyed. However, even at that time, there were still true prophets in the land (Hosea and Amos), and so some of the people, at least, were genuine followers of the Lord. The prime aim of EVERY Christian should NOT be to join with others in a show of strength, but to stand alone, with dignity and faith, before God. If others join him, so be it, but if a Christian cannot stand alone with God, he will always fall to an attack of any kind. Make sure of your faith, and that you plant your feet firmly in the ground of holiness.

Verses 19-22

2 Kings 15

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 23 September 2016 11:20

1.

And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand.

2.

And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land.

3.

And the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

4.

And Menahem slept with his fathers; and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.

The king of Assyria/Asshur, Pul (Babylonian name for Tiglath-pileser III) began to attack Israel, but Menahem gave him a thousand talents of silver to leave them alone. Pul took advantage of this weak king, and also demanded 50 shekels of silver from each of the wealthy men of Israel. Then he left. It never helps to give in to an aggressor. It is even worse to appease him.

The king died after ten years and was followed by his son, Pekahiah, who was just as bad. If the root of evil is never pulled up and destroyed, it will continue to produce evil fruit. (Note: Assyria is not Syria, but was located farther north east, approximating to modern-day western Turkey, northern Syria and northern Iraq).

Verses 23-26

1.

In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned two years.

2 Kings 15

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 23 September 2016 11:20

2.

And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

3.

But Pekah the son of Remaliah, a captain of his, conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arieah, and with him fifty men of the Gileadites: and he killed him, and reigned in his room.

4.

And the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

Pekahiah only ruled for two years and was just as wicked. It seems that around this time in Israel's history, God had had enough of the wickedness of the kings. So it was that Pekah, a captain in the king's army, decided to murder him. Another evil king came and went! Pekah killed the king in his own palace, with two close accomplices, Argob and Arieah, and a contingent of fifty soldiers.

Verses 27-31

1.

In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years.

2.

And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

3.

In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and

2 Kings 15

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 23 September 2016 11:20

Abelbethmaachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria.

4.

And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.

5.

And the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

Pekah reigned for 20 years and he, too, was wicked. Israel was 'locked in' to centuries of evil, by not standing up against the wicked kings in favour of God. In our day, Christians are just as fickle and sinful by not speaking against what is wicked in their own rulers. Indeed, they even vote to put them in office! And so the penalties can be seen all around us.

As I said earlier, it is never a good idea to appease an enemy. And so, the king of Assyria (here given his Assyrian name), again attacked Israel. He successfully vanquished eight regions of Israel, taking the useful inhabitants as slaves back up north. Possibly because of the king's weakness in the face of an adversary, Hoshea killed Pekah and became the 19th king of Israel, at a time when Jotham was still king over Judah. Evil begets evil, and nothing proves this like the succession of kings of Israel. That is why Christians must remove sin in their lives, root and branch. God can see us, and He knows when we sin gratuitously, deserving of His wrath.

Verses 32-38

1.

In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel began Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to reign.

2.

Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok.

2 Kings 15

Written by K B Napier
Friday, 23 September 2016 11:20

3.

And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD: he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done.

4.

Howbeit the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burned incense still in the high places. He built the higher gate of the house of the LORD.

5.

Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

6.

In those days the LORD began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah.

7.

And Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

At the time of Pekah's reign, Jotham reigned in Judah, and was a good king. Again, however, he failed in one major thing – he did not remove the places of cult worship. Yet, he constructed the 'higher gate' to the Temple. As in modern times, so many Christians and preachers try to mix godly action with ungodly, and do not think twice about it. During Jotham's reign both Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah attacked Judah. When Jotham died his son, Ahaz, began to reign, but inherited none of his father's goodness, returning the nation to sin.

© April 2016

2 Kings 15

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 23 September 2016 11:20

---oOo---

{loadposition btm_address}