

The unravelling of the kingdom

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[0:00] Well, please turn in your Bible then to 1 Kings chapter 11, and we're going to start in the middle of that chapter and go through to the middle of the next chapter.

And these are chapters in which, it seems to me, things all go wrong. When it all goes wrong, why? Where is God when it all goes wrong?

So in our world, we hear wars and rumors of wars. We have refugees and all sorts of scenes on our TVs. When we have losses and crosses, things that we lose, things that go against what we were planning and hoping.

When we encounter problems and trouble in health and in family. When we are conscious of problems with ourselves, that we're so stupid and so on.

And we say, has God left? Is that really what's happening? Is it all out of control? And we might ask, why is it happening? Is there an explanation?

[1:22] And certainly, these are the sorts of questions that the people in our chapters could well be asking. Because up till now, we've been living in the golden age of Solomon.

And it really was the golden age. It was fantastic. It's a picture of everything perfect and glorious and golden.

And then, suddenly, really, we descend into the trouble and the fragmentation of these next chapters.

So let's look at them together. So let's look at what happens in the story. Let me introduce you to the characters quickly and then we'll go back over them more slowly.

So if you look in chapter 11, verse 14. I'm never sure how to pronounce these. I'll just go with whatever comes to lip, as it were.

[2:21] So I think this was Hadad. And he is, there he is, he's green. He's an adversary, verse 14. The Lord raised up against Solomon an adversary.

Adversary in Hebrew is Satan. And that's the proper word, Satan, the adversary. The Lord raised up against Solomon a Satan.

So I've done a little snake there on the screen. The next person that we meet is in verse 23. And it says, and God raised up against Solomon another adversary.

Another Satan. I've done him in red. And we learn about him. And then the third character is in verse 26.

Jeroboam, son of Nebat, also rebelled against the king. So he's looking surprised there. It doesn't say he's surprised, but he does get a surprise. He is a sort of a replacement king, split off from Solomon's household.

[3:36] So we've got Jeroboam. He's an alternative king. And there's some, a speech bubble that goes with him. And then the, one more character is in chapter 12.

Rehoboam, who is Solomon's son. And he gets crowned as king. But he turns out to be a tyrant king in a divided kingdom, leading to a divided kingdom.

So those are one, two, three, four human characters in this story. And it's certainly a confusing story.

I'm still confused by it. And I've been reading it all week. There's one other character in this story who is the Lord. And you will have noticed that it says about these adversaries, it says quite specifically, verse 14, the Lord raised up against Solomon an adversary.

And in verse 23, it says, and God raised up against Solomon another adversary. And in the case of Jeroboam, the word that triggers his rebellion is actually a word from the Lord.

[5:03] And in chapter 12, verse 15, it summarizes this or reflects on it. And it says, just look at chapter 12, verse 15. So the king did not listen to the people, for this turn of events was from, and you can see who it says it's from.

I'll keep it as a surprise by pretending I haven't already told you. This turn of events. So the word for turn is an unusual word. It comes from the word to go around, you know, to go around Jericho to make a circular tour.

To go around the houses. Or in the Midlands where I was from, we'd say around the Reakin. Did you say around the Reakin? Yes, around a famous hill. So it's going all the way around the houses. And this all going around the houses, this strange detour. I've done a picture of a detour there because we get quite a few of them. This strange turn of events was from, well, you can see who it's from, and I've put it on the screen.

But I'll keep it as a surprise. So let's now look at these people in a little bit more detail and see if we can get any further with understanding what's happening.

[6:23] So let's look then at Hadad, verse 14. Hadad the Edomite from the royal line of Edom. And it goes back in history to when David was fighting in Edom and Joab, the commander of the army, had gone up to bury the dead.

And he annihilated, he killed all the men. And it took six months doing that, verse 16. Joab and all the Israelites stayed there for six months until they had destroyed all the men in Edom.

But Hadad, who presumably was just a youngster, had escaped. So he's from the king of Edom and he, I've got some pictures, there he is escaping.

And strangely enough, he went to Egypt. They went down to Midian, then they went to Paran.

Taking men from Paran with them, they went to Egypt. To Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who gave Hadad a house and land and provided him with food.

It's a little bit like Israel. Because Israel went to Egypt, do you remember? And then came back. Sort of the opposite of Moses, because Moses escaped from Egypt and went to Midian.

[7:47] And when he heard that the people who sought his life were dead, he went back to Egypt. So it's the sort of opposite of Moses. Although, like Moses, there's a connection with the royal palace.

It's a bit like Mary and Joseph, actually, isn't it? Because didn't Mary and Joseph go to Egypt? So, I don't know, I'm confused. He's like all sorts of people, but he's not actually any one of them in a clear sort of way.

He marries Pharaoh's wife's sister. And if you think that Solomon had married Pharaoh's daughter, so in a sense there's almost a relation between Hadad and a family relation between Hadad and Solomon, strangely enough.

So there he is marrying Pharaoh's wife's sister. A little bit like Solomon. And then at the death of King David, when he was in Egypt, verse 21, Hadad heard that David rested with his fathers, and that Joab, the commander of the army, was dead.

So Hadad said to Pharaoh, let me go, that I may return to my own country. A bit like Moses. Moses said, let me go. Let my people go. So back they go. There's a turn.

[9:03] And this man, Hadad, made trouble. It says in verse 25, that Rezon was Israel's adversary as long as Solomon lived, adding to the trouble caused by Hadad.

So Hadad is a source of trouble. He's a source of irritation. It's a difficulty. And although it doesn't actually tell you what trouble he made, it might well have been that he, living in the south, was like an outlaw robbing stagecoaches, making trouble along the trade routes in the south.

So Solomon's kingdom depended on trade, and if he was in the south making trouble, that's the sort of trouble he could easily have made. I find him a confusing personality. I don't know what I'm supposed to say about him.

I'm confused. And we might ask the question, well, why? Why is he here? Why is the Bible telling us about him? I shall go on to the next person now.

He was a snaky person, wasn't he? Let's look at Rezon. Verse 23. And God raised up against Solomon another adversary, Rezon, who had fled from his master.

[10:18] So there's his master. The master is the king of Zobah, Hadadezar. And this chap, Rezon, it says, He gathered men round him and became the leader of a band of rebels.

Do you think of anybody else in the Bible who escaped from his master, the king? Yes, David, didn't he? He gathered people round him, people that were discontented and felt they'd been unfairly treated, all gathered round David.

So he's a little bit like a David figure. There's the people being gathered round him. He's a bit like David. I mean, he isn't David. And he too makes trouble.

Verse 25. He made trouble. Zobah is in the north. So maybe he was in the north making trouble up there.

So you've got somebody in the south making trouble and somebody else making trouble in the north. And I think, why? Why is this here? Good question.

[11:27] Why? Why this trouble? He's snaky too. Let's look at Jeroboam. So verse 26. Jeroboam, son of Nebat, rebelled against the king.

He was one of Solomon's officials, an Ephraimite from Zerodah, and his mother was a widow named Zerohah. And this is the account of how he rebelled. Now he was, it's, sorry, Solomon had built the supporting terraces and had filled in the gap in the wall in the city of David, his father. Now Jeroboam was a man of standing. There's a couple of words there meaning a mighty man of strength and substance. So he was a, authorised version would have said he was a mighty man of valour.

You know, somebody you'd notice, somebody to be reckoned with. And when Solomon saw how well the young man did his work, he put him in charge of the whole labour force of the house of Joseph.

So here he is, he's a fine young man. People obviously like him because it says later they invited him to do things for them.

[12:32] And he's competent, he does some work and he does it very well and gets promoted, does that well and gets promoted again.

And in the end, he's in charge of the whole labour force of the house of Joseph. So he's, he comes from nowhere particular, but he rises up by virtue of his, you know, his qualities, his abilities and he gets promoted.

He's effective and hard working. Now, okay, and then all of a sudden, verse 29, At that time Jeroboam was going out of Jerusalem and Ahijah the prophet of Shiloh met him on the way. Well, who's Ahijah the prophet of Shiloh? No, we don't know. He's just sort of popped into the story, just bang like that. Okay, we've now got a prophet. We haven't had prophets in the story, really. We've had Nathan the prophet. And he's always there to assist David. He's sort of part of the establishment. But this prophet comes in from the outside where nobody's expecting him.

[13:41] And he's subversive. He really, he comes in and changes things. So here he is and somebody's wearing a cloak.

And let's assume it's Ahijah because that's one way of translating it. So he meets Jeroboam on the way wearing a new cloak. The two of them were alone out in the country.

And Ahijah took hold of the new cloak he was wearing. Well, either his own cloak, new cloak, and he tears it into pieces. Or Jeroboam's cloak, which would be even more surprising for Jeroboam to have his cloak taken off him and ripped into pieces.

And he takes it and tears it into 12 pieces. And somewhere I've got a picture of 12 pieces in case you didn't know what 12 pieces looked like.

So he says, so he does this sudden action. In verse 31 he says to Jeroboam, So take 10 pieces for yourself, for this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says.

[14:41] See, I'm going to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hand and give you 10 tribes. But for the sake of my servant David and the city of Jerusalem, which I've chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, he will have one tribe.

So let's see if we can get this. There you are. When I did it this morning I realised I'd done 16. But I think I've got that back to 12 at the cost of the blue background.

So is that 12, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. 10 and, yeah. If you do the maths you get confused because there's 12. Take away 10 tribes.

Leaves 2 actually. But he says it's going to be 10 and 1. So people say, well what's the extra 1? Well it could be the tribe of Levi. Of course they were sort of scattered everywhere. Or it could be the tribe of Benjamin who come in into the accounting later.

But there's a split. And all of a sudden we're told that there'll be 10 tribes for Jeroboam. The northern 10 tribes. And just one tribe left in the south.

[15:46] And we are told about why that should be the case. And it says here. I will do it, verse 33, because they have forsaken me. And worshipped Ashtaroth, the goddess of the Sidonians.

Chemosh, the god of the Moabites. Molech, the god of the Ammonites. And have not walked in my ways. Nor done what is right in my eyes. Nor kept my statutes and laws as David, Solomon's father, did.

That's why, so we're given an explanation. But I will not take the whole kingdom out of Solomon's hand. I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of David my servant, whom I chose and who observed my commands and statutes.

I will take the kingdom from his son's hands. And give you 10 tribes. I will give one tribe to his son, so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, in the city where I chose to put my name.

However, as for you, I will take you, and you will rule over all that your heart desires. You will be king over Israel, if you do whatever I command you, and walk in my ways, and do what is right in my eyes by keeping my statutes and commands, as David my servant did.

[17:10] I will be with you. I will build you a house as enduring as the one I built for David, and will give Israel to you.

And I will humble. The word could be afflict. I will humble. I will afflict David's descendants because of this, but not forever.

Well, that's quite a thing to find when you're on your way out of the city with or without a new cloak. And so, in the case of Jeroboam, here comes the word of the Lord, suddenly, with an action, and then an interpretation in words.

He tears up the cloak, and then he explains it in words. So, a quite dramatic intervention here. And not least is this David-like promise to this chap who has nothing to do with David.

I will give the kingdom to you. And just as I did for David, I said, if you follow me faithfully, if you walk in my ways, that will be a long-lasting house as enduring as the one I built for David.

[18:28] And you'll have that. That's an amazing promise, isn't it? Amazing thing for him to hear. It's very unexpected.

Now, we're given some explanation, but I'm still, you know, there's still a good question. Why this intervention in this way? Let's follow the story of Jeroboam on.

It's, although he was told that this would happen in the lifetime, not of Solomon, but of Solomon's son, it looks as though he managed to get on Solomon's bad books.

Anyway, verse 40, Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam. So, there's Solomon, and there's Jeroboam running off. And again, he goes off to Egypt.

So, Egypt keeps popping into the story, not in a helpful way. It's interesting that Solomon, in all his wisdom, married the daughter of Pharaoh, presumably, to try and get some sort of stability in a political relationship with Egypt.

[19:36] But in these stories, Egypt is not particularly helping Solomon at all. It's a place of refuge for his enemies. So, Jeroboam flees to Egypt.

And on the death of Solomon, verse 40, he returns. He stayed there until Solomon's death.

So, he returns. And we find that on the coronation of Rehoboam, chapter 12, Rehoboam went to Shechem for all the Israelites had gone there to make him king.

When Jeroboam, son of Nebat, heard this, he was still in Egypt where he had fled from King Solomon, he returned from Egypt. So, they sent for Jeroboam and he and the whole assembly of Israel went to Jeroboam.

So, he gets invited back. He's obviously a popular chap. And there he is with the assembly. Okay, there's Jeroboam. Let's look now at Rehoboam.

[20:38] It talks in the story about the young men. If you work out the maths, he was about 41. So, 41 is a definition of being young. And so, we can now find out what happened when Rehoboam becomes king.

So, the whole assembly. So, he goes to Shechem to be crowned. I think that's quite a wise move because that's up in the north. The history of the tribes, including the time when David became king, there's a little bit of a fault line between the northern tribes and the southern tribes.

And David was accepted by the southern tribes first and only later by the northern tribes. There's always been a little bit of a tension between them. I mean, there often is between north and south, isn't there?

But it's here in this history. So, he goes up to the north to be crowned. That seems like a good move. And at the assembly, they say this to Rehoboam, verse 4.

Now, you're the new king. You're the Jeremy Corbyn of Israel, as it were. It's interesting.

[22:00] The word for heavy is very close to the word for glory. Solomon had glory. But as they now reflect on it, it was pretty heavy sort of glory.

It was rather harsh sort of glory because all that building, we really, it was us who did it. And please don't make life so hard for us in the future.

So, there they come to talk to him. And he says, come back in three days. Three days is always a good time in the Bible. A lot of good things happen after three days, as I'm sure you're well aware. But he says, come back in three days. In between times, we'll have a consultation. So, in verse 6, he asks the old men what they think. And he says, how would you advise me to answer these people?

And this is their reply. You notice a word gets repeated. If today you will be a servant to these people and serve them and give them a favorable answer, they will always be your servants.

[23:09] Do you notice a repeated word? Servant. So, they say, if you are a servant king, they will serve you. If you serve them, they will serve you.

And Rehoboam wasn't keen on that advice. So, he said, we'll get some other advice from the young men. I've got spiky hair. He says, what's your advice? How should we answer these people who say, lighten the yoke your father put on us?

And the young men who had grown up with him said, tell these people who have said to you, my father put a heavy yoke on us, but make our yoke lighter. Tell them, my little finger is thicker than my father's waist.

My father laid a heavy yoke. Well, I will make it heavier. My father scourged you with whips. I will scourge you with scorpions.

So, the advice they're giving is, I put the word macho there. Do you know the word macho? Is it an Italian word? Macho? It means, I'm more of a man than my father.

[24:20] He was weak. I'm strong. This is the answer that the young men say he should give. I'm more macho. It was heavy, but don't think you're going to get away with anything with me.

It's going to be heavier. So, I'm going to show them who's boss, who's master here. And the whips will turn into scorpions, which is a strange thing to say.

So, they come back. And he gives them, he tells them this.

Where am I? Verse 13. The king answered the people harshly. They've come back after three days. Rejecting the advice given him by the elders, he followed the advice of the young men and said, My father made your yoke heavy, I will make it heavier.

My father scourged you with whips, I will scourge you with scorpions. So, the king did not listen to the people. There's the people. He didn't listen to them. For this turn of events was from the Lord.

[25:35] This strange reversal, this going off course, this which actually goes right around the houses, was from the Lord.

And they respond by saying, Okay, we're out of here. It's a rash, foolish response.

And they respond in a rash overreaction as well. Verse 16. When all Israel saw that the king refused to listen to them, they answered the king, What have we got to do with you?

We don't come down here from the south, we're from up north. So, we're going back up there, and you can look after your soft southern ways down here. So, the Israelites went home.

Verse 17. But as for the Israelites who were living in the towns of Judah, Rehoboam still ruled over them. And there's a couple of, he has a couple of goes at changing the situation. First off, he sends out another strong man, Adoniram, who was in charge of the forced labor.

[26:41] So, up he goes and says, Now, you lot, I want you to come to heal and do what you're supposed to do. And they stone him to death. So, that's not very good. King Rehoboam manages to escape.

And he says there's been this split ever since. His next response was to summon an army. To get together an army.

And this is where the tribe of Benjamin comes in. To make war against the house of Israel and regain the kingdom for Rehoboam, son of Solomon. But at this point, the word of God comes in again.

This time through Shemaiah, the man of God. And the word of God comes to him to say, Do not fight against your brothers. The Israelites, Go home, every one of you, for this is my doing.

And strangely enough, and I think it is strange, they obey the word of the Lord and went home again as the Lord had ordered. So, civil war is averted by the word of God.

[27:47] But we end up with this split. So, we've got trouble and we've got these complicated routes through things and things turning out the way we hadn't expected.

So, what's going on here? Well, let's try and answer that question as far as we can. I don't want to try and tell you that we can always answer the question, why, with a neat, simple answer.

And I think this chapter shows that we can't always do that. But why? Why two Satans? Why splitting into ten plus one? Why is all that? Where is God in this?

And the answer is, now let's just wind back a little bit. We've had described to us two adversaries. We've had described to us a split of this wonderful kingdom into two pieces.

We've got new kings. One of them seems to be completely unsatisfactory and the other one we don't know yet. maybe he's very gifted. But it's all, you know, if you look at it, you'd think this is very confusing.

[29:00] Not simple and straightforward. Where is God in all this? And I answer, God is involved in the whole thing from start to finish.

Isn't that true? Verse 14 said, the Lord raised up this adversary. Verse 23 says, God raised up this adversary.

Verse 31, have I got that right? Verse 31 says, this is the word of the Lord that triggers this tearing of the kingdom.

12.15 says, this turn of events was from the Lord. So, the Lord is in this from start to finish.

Well, that's reassuring, isn't it? The Lord isn't absent from this. He's in this. And, we can say a little bit more than that.

[30:10] He's in it sending and fulfilling his powerful word. So, if you look at verse 15, it's chapter 12, verse 15, the king did not listen to the people.

This turn of events was from the Lord to fulfill the word the Lord had spoken. So, it's not just the Lord in an abstract sense, but the Lord in connection with his word.

And, that's certainly the case in verse 22, isn't it? The word of the Lord came and said, don't fight. So, they obeyed the word of the Lord as the Lord had ordered.

So, the word of the Lord is very much part of this. And, can I turn you please to 1 Samuel chapter 7. Please go back to 1 Samuel chapter 7.

1 Samuel that's not right.

[31:19] That's not the one I wanted. Why have I made that mistake? bear with me.

It might well be 2 Samuel chapter 7. Yeah, thank you. Thank you very much, Steve.

2 Samuel chapter 7. So, this goes back to something else God said where he, where he was making the promise to David that he would be king and how this would all work out in the future and how the, the scope of the promise was that there would be a king in David's line forever.

But, he does say this in 2 Samuel 7 verse, have I got the verse right? verse 12. Yeah, I'll take it from verse 12.

I will raise up your offspring to succeed you who will come from your own body. I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my name. I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

[32:40] I will be his father and he shall be my son. When he does wrong I will punish him with the rod of men and with floggings inflicted by men but my love will never be taken away from him as I took it away from Saul whom I removed before you.

I think that's a very powerful interpretation of this confusion that we've seen in our chapters because God promised to the son of David I have in mind a permanent kingdom.

I have in mind that I will be the father and he will be the son. That's what I have in mind and this is part of what that involves. When he goes wrong I will punish him with the rod of men.

I will shout at him I will smack him I will make life difficult for him and I will use human beings to do that. I will punish him with the rod of men and with floggings inflicted by men but my love will never be taken away from him.

It's a very powerful interpretation of what's happening. What's happening? He's being disciplined and why is he being disciplined? Because he's got it wrong which Solomon did and what is the motivation for this discipline?

[34:04] Because God loves and what is the relationship of this discipline? It's a father and a son. And this is a very powerful thing for us.

It's part of God's policy. Those he loves he disciplines. And Hebrews 12 makes that very clear. In your struggle against sin you have not resisted to the point of shedding your blood and you've forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons. My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline nor lose heart when he rebukes you because the Lord disciplines those he loves and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.

Endure hardship as discipline. God is treating you as sons for what son is not disciplined by his father. If you are not disciplined and everyone undergoes discipline, you are illegitimate children and not true sons.

So it says something about human parenting. It says it's your job in love to discipline your children and if you just let them get away with things and wander into the road and you don't shout at them and you always take your cue from them, you're not being a good parent.

[35:24] But it's more importantly saying about how God runs our lives. why doesn't everything always run smoothly for us?

Answer because God loves us. If everything ran smoothly you might well have cause to say well I can't be a child of God because he's given up disciplining me.

Those he loves he disciplines. It just puts everything in a completely different perspective doesn't it? Why do I have these health issues?

Why is this problematic? Why has this suddenly happened? It's hard. It's unpleasant. It hurts. Why? Because God is sending this into my life as a father disciplines his child.

And he says therefore don't go no no don't moan about it. Make something positive out of it. Endure the hardship as discipline.

[36:37] Don't make light of the Lord's discipline. Is there something to be learned? Is there something God is pointing out? To change us into godliness.

That's why God does these things to his children. And it can be a very painful and unpleasant process. I think it was Robert Murray McShane who said this to one of his parishioners.

How bad sin must be if so loving a surgeon has to cut so deep. He was talking to somebody who had been bereaved. And the woman was saying why has God done this to me?

And he's saying you must understand that God does things out of love for his people. But how bad sin must be if so loving a surgeon has to cut so deep?

Well that's one answer to the question. And he loves us and disciplines us too. Let's go back into the passage again and see if we can take that a little bit further.

[37:50] This bit about Jeroboam so we're back in 1 Kings chapter 11. It's worth pondering this. Why ten tribes given to the north and one tribe given to the south?

Well the ten tribes were taken away because Solomon had worshipped false gods. That's what it says. He worshipped Chemosh and Ashtaroah and Molech and so on and so on.

So ten tribes were taken away. Interestingly what it says is if you worship other gods your kingdom will just be taken away from you.

Everybody will go into exile and that will be the very end. But you see it wasn't the very end was it? God sort of had a plan B. He said well I won't actually send you all into exile.

What I'll do is I'll split the kingdom. And it seems to me that in this confusion you could say actually Israel were given an amazing second chance.

[39:01] Do you follow me? They should have been sent into exile strictly speaking. God says right we'll try it again I'll give you a new king he's a bright young man he's a high achiever got lots of things going for him I'm going to give the kingdom to him right you've got a second chance and if you walk in my ways I'll bless you as I bless David okay that's a big promise it's a second chance!

you're just walking along what's going on here you're going to be a king oh right never thought of that this morning didn't put that you know never sent off my CV on that so quite amazing and I think the word for that is grace actually because we're looking at the passage we're thinking it's all to do with trouble and it's all going wrong but I think we could see there's some real amazing grace here so Jeroboam could really have been seeing amazing grace how sweet the sound that made a king from a wretch like me I once was just a building executive but now I'm found and made into a king so what about the one remaining tribe the one that Solomon is still in Solomon's family well

I think if you think about that something going on there too why why keep them why not send the whole lot to Jeroboam well it tells us that God chose verse 32 I've got the right verse this time for the sake of my servant David and the city of Jerusalem which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel he will have one tribe chosen I've made a choice I'm going to bless that city says it again in verse 34 I've made him ruler for the sake of David my servant whom I chose so something going on here which is not about what people have made of it but is about what God has decided in his generosity he's going to do I'm going to bless that city I'm going to bless those people I know they're stupid and I know they're very ungrateful but I'm going to bless them God chose to do it

I think that's grace and it says that it's on the basis not of how Rehoboam is achieving or Solomon but on David so it's a and other who's done this the kept God's will not the people who benefit from it and I think here we've got a remarkable picture of grace and favour shown to the southern people why why am I here because God chose to do so and Christians might well be thinking something like that themselves why am I sitting here in Calvary this morning what did I do to deserve this how is it that I can pray to God as my heavenly father and the Bible says there's a very deep truth that you're there because God chose to bless you and he chose in such a way with such a fierce determination that even your stupidity wouldn't stop him blessing you and we would also say that he hasn't done it for our sake but for the sake of someone else someone and even the civil war was averted by the word of

God so it could have been far worse who set up this rival kingdom and this fragmentation it was guilty Solomon's folly that caused it and it said in 1139 I will humble David's descendants because of this the word is afflict I will afflict David's descendants because of this I will afflict them presumably with the idea of getting them to turn back again perhaps deserved affliction however I can't but think that there is another place where someone was afflicted and he done nothing to deserve it as someone of whom it's written we considered him smitten by God and afflicted and why did it happen to him he was pierced for our transgressions he was crushed for our iniquities an innocent sufferer whose afflictions save others that goes beyond this these events but it goes to

[44:15] Jesus so why is the trouble it's very confusing at the time and even afterwards but God knows what he's doing although that doesn't mean that we know what he's doing the Lord is in charge he is fulfilling his purposes and promises for the kingdom of Jesus even the opposition of the adversaries under God's control and by his permission God works in judgment he works in mercy he works in grace and there's a lot of grace in the way God deals with people the trouble in this chapter

interestingly that when Solomon prayed about the temple he said when adversaries arise we can pray towards this temple and God will hear us

and I can't see any record of anybody praying but it's meant to turn us
to prayer and as a good father God disciplines!

us for our good because he loves us and he will succeed in saving his people let's sing number 875