

Mercy in the Midst of Rebellion

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles tonight, turn over to 2 Kings. We'll go and dismiss teenagers on up to class there tonight.! We can see ourselves in the Kings.

We can see our culture in the book of Kings. We can see the things going on around us even today and the mindset of individuals.

And we know that while the kings of Judah we've been looking at were generally moderately good kings, it says they did right in the sight of the Lord. That was in their actions.

But their problem was is their heart was not close to the Lord. Their heart was away from God. And we know that you can do the right things outwardly and not have a right heart with the Lord.

And so as we've learned through that, but meanwhile on the northern kingdom here, the son of Jehu continued down the path of evil in the sight of the Lord.

[1 : 16] And the ways of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had continued to plague the people of Israel, drawing them farther and farther away from the Lord.

And so tonight we're going to change our focus here back to the northern kingdom and the reign of Jeroboam, son of Joash, king of Israel. And this king is often referred to, if you see him referred to in like commentaries and stuff, is Jeroboam II.

Because remember the first king of Israel was Jeroboam, but he was Jeroboam the son of Nebat. And this is Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel. And so they don't even share a lineage, but they do share a name.

But they do definitely, they may not share a physical lineage, but you definitely see they share a spiritual lineage. You know, oftentimes we forget that you're passing a spiritual lineage to a next generation.

And it continues moving from one generation to the next, what we invest in our children. And we see this lineage, even from the days of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, as he turned away from God and wanted people to turn away from the Lord, how it impacted the kingdom.

[2 : 31] And it continues here, the spiritual lineage, it continued to cause that division of them away from the Lord.

And so if you found here in 2 Kings chapter 14 here tonight, 2 Kings chapter 14, we'll begin looking here at verse 23. And it says this, in the 15th year of Amaziah, the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel, began to reign in Samaria and reigned forty and one years.

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. He restored the coast of Israel from the entering in of Hamath under the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittiah, the prophet, which was Gaphir.

And so for the Lord saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter and that there was not any shut up, nor any left, nor any a helper for Israel. And the Lord said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam, the son of Joash.

And now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam and that which he did and his might and how he warred and how he recovered Damascus and Amath, which belonged to Judah for Israel, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

[4 : 03] And Jeroboam slept with his father, even in the kings of Israel, and Zechariah, his son, reigned in his stead. So let's pray. Heavenly Fathers, we take a few moments here this evening as we look into your word, Lord.

We look at Jeroboam here tonight, Lord, an important figure, the longest reigning king in the northern kingdom and his impact, and Lord, even how you used him, even though he didn't turn to

you, Lord.

But we know that your mercy shows forth as we look at his life and what you've done and provided for even Israel as they had rejected you, Lord, but you still had mercy.

And Lord, we just thank you for your mercy and your grace that you even give to us today. Lord, help us to always be mindful that that is part of who you are. And Lord, we just give you all the praise in Jesus' name.

Amen. You know, as we see here, Joash obviously thought highly after the first king, Jeroboam, because what? He named his son after him.

[5 : 07] You know, usually when people name their children after somebody, it's something that they deemed important or somebody that had a prominence or somebody that they looked up to or looked towards in that.

And so we know that Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel, began his reign about 793 B.C. And the reign would be the longest of the kings of Israel.

It'll be 41 years that he reigned. He was the longest reigning king in the northern kingdom. And he led the nation through what we might say, on the surface, he was a very prosperous and productive king because economically, they lived well.

Economically, they did well. They did prosper as a people. We find here that militarily, they did well. They conquered and took back territory that they hadn't possessed since the days of Solomon. And we see these things. So the nation prospered under Jeroboam, the son of Joash. On the outside, it looks really good. You know, everything politically speaking and economically and militarily, it was a time of really a prosperous living.

[6 : 24] People had wealth, they had substance, things were turning around, you know, and oftentimes we try to judge generations by how much they have. But in reality, you can have a lot of stuff and still be wicked.

You can have a lot of stuff and still not, and still miss what God would have for you. You know, we get tied up in stuff and think that's the measure of success.

But we see in the life of Jeroboam that just because he had everything that everybody would want in this life didn't mean he was successful. And it's easy to get distracted even today because, you know, how often do we judge people by what they possess or how successful they are in the eyes of the world to how successful a person they are?

You know, you can possess a lot of things and be miserable spiritually. You can possess all the things of this world and go to hell. You can miss, have everything and miss the most important thing that you can have.

But we know that he was a king that welded military might and political influence. It says he recovered Damascus and Amoth, both of which had been under the authority of David and Solomon.

[7 : 40] And his reign was centered upon the same ideological motivation that his namesake had used earlier, Jeroboam, the use of religion to control people.

You know, throughout history, you can see that the devil loves to use religion to control people.

Religion can be a tool of control, but you know, God doesn't want us to control us.

He wants us to submit and turn to him. There's a difference in that because we need, God tells us we have a choice. You can't force somebody to worship God.

You cannot force somebody to do that. It's against their will. And we understand God calls us to repentance. And we're going to see that picture even here with the children of Israel.

You know, when we understand that his motivation, though, he kept the idolatry that was established for political reasons, mainly to keep the people from going to Jerusalem.

[8 : 41] You know, why did the first Jeroboam set up the golden calves in Bethel and Dan? What did he do that for? To keep the people from going back to Jerusalem to worship. He says, these are good enough, O Israel.

Here's the God who brought you out of Egypt. Remember, we went back and looked at when we covered Jeroboam, the first king, Jeroboam.

We talked about that. It's a picture of how he used what took place coming out of Egypt. But, you know, it's interesting that people love to do that, but they don't tell you the whole story.

There's many people lost their lives because they worshiped the golden calf. You know, we love to have this part of a story, but we see he used these things as a way to keep people from worshipping

in Jerusalem and cutting off that tie, both religiously and politically.

You know, when we see this dynamic, his focus was not to turn the people back to the Lord, but instead to keep the people loyal to the throne. You know, that's how people use religion, is to keep people loyal.

[9 : 49] It keeps control of people. And we need to understand, especially as people who believe the Bible, we don't use the Bible to control people because we believe they ought to surrender to the conviction of the Holy Spirit and allow God to work in their lives.

They need to be changed from the inside out. You know, that's the reason it's such an important dynamic that liberty that we have in Christ and His focus, though, was to keep those things and have this state-run religion.

You know, look back in our text here. Look at verse 24. As it tells us here, it says, And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

You know, we find here that God allowed him and the kingdom to prosper, even though he never once thought or concerned himself with the things of God.

You say, well, why would God do that? You know, why would God allow Jeroboam, a wicked man, a man that turned his back upon God, why would God allow his reign to prosper?

[10 : 57] You know, that's a question sometimes we get frustrated with, isn't it? Lord, why are you letting somebody, a wicked person, be successful? You know, I think as we look at Jeroboam's reign tonight, we're going to see that it had nothing to do with Jeroboam.

It had everything to do with God. When God allows somebody that's wicked to be successful, it has everything to do with what God is doing and how God is working.

Because we're going to see God was working mightily in the days of Jeroboam. We're going to see that God was doing some things. He was working in hearts and lives.

He was working through the prophets that he sent. And we understand that Jeroboam here will look and see he was a fulfillment of a promise earlier from his grandfather.

You know, look back over into 2 Kings chapter 13 for a moment. You know, if you remember over here in 2 Kings chapter 13, look down here at verse 4. And it says, You know, what took place here?

[12 : 13] Well, very simply is this. God raised up Jeroboam to remove the oppression that was upon the people. In other words, God allowed him to be successful to remove.

He was fulfilling the promise that he made to his grandfather who had besought the Lord because of the oppression of the Syrians. God was allowing him to be successful to push off that oppression. And when he sought the Lord, God was listening. He was not because they merited God's kindness. It wasn't because they merited his mercy or God's longsuffering.

I want you to understand that it was because of who God is and God's promises that he allowed it. Because God was allowing these things to take place. You know, take a look at verse 25.

He says, He restored the coast of Israel from the entering in of Hamath under the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord of Israel, which spake by the hand of his servant Jonah. And yes, this is the same Jonah who went to Nineveh, up to the Assyrians.

[13 : 20] Later on, you're going to see the impact of Jonah's ministry in their interaction with the Assyrians. Jonah was the one who brought the word of the Lord to Jeroboam saying, Hey, God's going to allow you to do this because of what promise he made.

God's going to allow these things. God's going to do this. He's going to have mercy upon you. And we see that as Jonah was there, this period here is recorded in more detail.

You know, Jonah was the prophet that told him, but you find Amos and Hosea, both are minor prophets there.

But you read through, they're dealing with the kings in this time period. Even Isaiah is dealing with some of this. And we see those prophets that God sent to declare the truth.

And we know that Jonah was definitely a mighty prophet in that day. I mean, God didn't send him up to Nineveh just because he was timid. You know, we understand that Jonah had his own struggle with things.

[14 : 31] And we can look and understand why those things might be. But we know that Jonah here delivered the Lord's message to Jeroboam, that he would be victorious in taking back the lands that were lost to Syria.

You know, in doing so, that affliction would be lifted from Israel. You know, this ought to cause us to pause and consider some things about God.

You know, when we consider some things about God as we read through this account, because you think about God's patience and mercy towards his people, even though they were rejecting him in the midst of it.

God's love and God's promise supersedes the actions of people. God's going to keep his word. God's keeping his word to Israel.

Even though they had rejected him, he still shows them mercy. He gives them better days than they deserve. He sends the prophets to warn them. You know, oftentimes we don't consider that God's sending somebody to tell you that you need to get right with God.

[15:40] You ought to say that's a blessing from God. What's God desiring? He wants you to be right with him. Why'd he send somebody to tell you to get right? Or why'd he convict you with his spirit through the word of God?

Hey, to get right. That's God's mercy to repent and to turn to the Lord. Or all's going to be lost. You know, the prophet Hosea stressed the compassion and mercy of God for the wicked, both for the unfaithful king and for the people.

You know, Hosea there, if you remember his account, he was married to an adulterous woman. And that picture of him and his relationship with his wife was a picture of God's relationship to Israel.

And he preached through those things. And his own heartbreak in his own personal marriage, the prophet declared that God loves the people who had turned away from them, those who had committed spiritual adultery against him, but he would accept and forgive them if they just turned back.

That's what the whole book is about. He's preaching here the message that, hey, turn to God. God will forgive. Come back to God. You know, look over to Hosea there, chapter 4.

[16:57] You know, we see here in Hosea chapter 4 and verse 1, it tells us this. It says, Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel. For the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land.

You know, that's a nice way of saying it, isn't it? You know, you're rejecting God. He says, hey, we have a controversy with you. But really it is.

It is a controversy. You know, they didn't want to do what God had for them. And we see here, it says, Because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.

Hey, think about that. God says that I want you to come to me and I'm sending people to let you know what you're missing. That you need to understand who I am and what there is about me. But notice here, instead of teaching truth and showing mercy or understanding God, in verse 2 it says, By swearing and lying and killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break out and blood touches blood.

[18:04] In other words, they're lying, cheating, stealing, manipulative killers. He says, God shows you mercy and you turn your back on him. You do exactly the opposite. Turn to chapter 6.

Chapter 6 in verse 4 says this, O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? Because remember, Ephraim is another name we find for the northern tribe of Israel.

It's a picture here of a prominent tribe within. And it says, O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? You know, he's still talking to Judah even.

This is a lesson. Judah had kings who still pointed him to the Lord. And God's saying, hey, pay attention because what I'm about to do to Israel, if they don't repent, it's going to happen to you. God says, my judgment's coming.

My judgment's going to be held to account. Now, and notice here it says, for your goodness is as the morning cloud, and the early dew it goeth away. You know, the dew doesn't last very long in the morning.

[19:10] You know, for it bakes away. And we see, therefore I have hewed them by the prophets. I have slain them by the words of my mouth and my judgment, as are the light that goeth forth. For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

Now, let me put that in what we might call today. In other words, God says, I'm more concerned about why you're doing something than what you're doing. Because you can be doing all the right things for the wrong reason.

God says, you can put on a show, you can do all the right things, and everybody else is looking at you saying, hey, you're doing all right. Because remember the kings of Israel did what? They did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart.

They did what was expected when everybody was looking, but did their own thing when nobody wasn't. They wanted to do their own thing.

And we see here that verse 7, it says, but they like men have transgressed the covenant, and they have dealt treacherously against me. You know, look over to chapter 13.

[20 : 15] Chapter 13 here, we find that in verse 1, the prophet tells him this. He says, When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel, but when he offended in Baal, he died.

And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver and idols, according to their own understanding. All of it the work of the craftsmen, they say of them, let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves, and therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, as the early dew that passes away, as the shaft that is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney.

Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no God but me, for there is no Savior beside me. And you think about it, what's God telling them?

He says, All your stuff just burns up into nothing if you forget about who I am, because I'm the only God. You know, we like to make a lot of gods that we worship. You know, our culture today, we worship money, we worship power, we worship, you know, lineage.

You know, this person was born of this person. People think that has some prominence to it. It may in this life, but you know, who your parents were is not going to get you to heaven. Who your grandparents were aren't going to get you to heaven?

[21 : 38] Your children aren't going to get to heaven if they don't know about the Savior. If they don't make a choice for the Savior, and we see here that God's calling the people to repentance.

The final chance for the people to repent and turn back to God had passed. You know, we're going to see here, instead of forsaking their wicked ways, they continue to commit evil in every form imaginable.

They continue to go down this road away from God, even though God had showed him mercy.

Have you ever heard something, well, if God just did this for me, I'd turn to him.

You know, if God just answered this one prayer that I really need, then I'll believe in him. You know what the problem is? If you don't believe God where you're at, you're not going to believe if he does something good for you.

But you know, we have a fallacy in our mindset that, you know, if God just does something good for some, you know, then they'll turn to him. You know, I want you to understand, the Bible tells us that's not the case. You think about Israel.

[22 : 41] They were the most prosperous they had been since the division of the kingdom under Jeroboam, the son of Joash. They took more land, held more territory, threw off the oppressors, had more money, had more resources, had everything was more profitable, economically, politically, militarily.

Everything was going just smoothly the way they thought it was going to be. And you know what? They went farther and farther away from God instead of closer and closer to him. They continued to reject those things of God.

You know, take a look over to Amos, the prophet Amos there in chapter 2. And as he's describing this dynamic that's taking place, look here in verse 6, it says this, Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions of Israel, and for four I will not turn away the punishment thereof.

Because they, notice what they were doing, why they had all this prosperity. They sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes. That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek, and a man and his father would go into the same maid to profane my holy name.

And they lay themselves down upon clothes laid to pledge by every altar, and they drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their God. Think about that for a moment.

[24 : 09] They oppress the poor. They don't do justly. In other words, they're modifying the judicial system for advantage, and immorality was rampant.

Doesn't sound far from today, does it? When you see this dynamic taking place, you know, look here in Amos chapter 4. You know, notice what he says here in verse 1 of chapter 4.

It says, You know, the people loved wealth more than kindness.

Hey, let's just have a good time. You know, as you read through the days of Jeroboam, it's amazing that it's very similar to where even our culture is today. Whatever it is, so I can have a good time, that's all we're looking for.

Stock market's doing good. My retirement's doing good. And this is doing good. And that's doing good. And let's just party and have a good time. And we'll ignore what the foundation that got us here.

[25 : 12] We're going to do what we want to do. Culturally, they have all these things that are counter to the things of God. You know, look over to Amos chapter 6.

What he tells them here, he says this, he says, Woe to them that are at ease in Zion and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations to whom the house of Israel came. You know, look down at verse 3.

It says, Ye that put far away the evil day and caused the seed of violence to come near that lie upon the beds of ivory and stretch themselves upon their couches and eat the lambs out of the flock and the calves out of the midst of the stall that chant to the sound of the vial and invent to themselves instruments of music like David.

They drink the wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the chief ointments, but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. Let me sum that up for you. They want to have a good time and don't care whether it's sinning or not.

There's no fear of God before their eyes. They could care less what God had to say about it. You might say this is a party generation before the party generation.

[26 : 17] They had no thought of what the next day may bring. You know, you consider the dynamic here, the ease. They appreciated the ease of things was more important than righteous character.

You know, when you get to heaven, God doesn't care what you possessed here. There's only one thing gonna matter and that's what you've done with Christ. And when we understand that importance, as a result, we're gonna see here that God was left with no choice for the people had proven they would not repent.

They would never live righteous lives or build a peaceful, compassionate, and just society.

Judgment was now gonna begin to fall upon the nation. And as we're gonna see at the end of the reign of Jeroboam, the end of the nation was coming quickly.

The fall of Israel and the northern tribes, it wasn't gonna be very many years, less than a generation before Assyria would come and take them away.

God had been patient these many years with them. And but we're gonna see here that judgment was gonna fall upon the nations. Using other nations as the instruments of his judgment, God allowed the Assyrians to come and destroy the northern kingdom of Israel.

[27 : 33] You know, Jeroboam died leaving a prosperous kingdom to his son, Zechariah. But you know, within six months, there was already upheaval and there was somebody else on the throne.

His son was killed in the streets. When we see this dynamic that they turned their back on God and we see that the lesson here is very simple.

There's an important lesson of the life of Jeroboam and even the children of Israel, but also for Judah, who was gonna continue on that same path. They would have fewer and fewer good kings in the coming years.

You'll find they go from great kings to totally rebellious kings. And you know what? God's saying, hey guys, you should have been paying attention to what I did to your brethren up in Israel.

And you know what? They did the same thing many people do. Oh, that was them. It doesn't affect me. You know? It's kind of like we get the, get out of jail free card.

[28 : 31] You know? We run around, this doesn't apply to me. You know, they deserved it, but I don't. And we see this lesson. It was recorded for us even today. You know, look over to the New Testament.

Go to Romans chapter 15 for a moment. That's what Romans 15 tells us here in verse four. It says, You know, one thing about it, we can learn a lot about God because reading through Kings and Chronicles, we find that God definitely showed himself to be patient.

God showed himself to be compassionate. God showed himself to be plenteous in mercy. When he tolerated the rejection of those that he had blessed so much, he had brought them out of the

oppression of Egypt, brought them into a land that was plentiful.

And we see where they came down to. And I want you to understand, it's a picture, a lesson for us because today God's long-suffering and compassionate with us. You know, the problem is, is we have a lot of people who preach that yeah, God's compassionate and God's long-suffering, but they forget the other part.

God's patience runs out. God may be merciful. He might allow things to go on for a long time, but it's coming a day when God's gonna hold to account.

[29 : 59] Why does God allow those things to take place? Why does he allow the wicked to prosper? Because God's still having mercy upon everybody. He's having mercy for us.

And consider how patient God is with us today. You know, think about our society today in America. You know, we ought to be thankful God's merciful, that God's long-suffering.

When you consider that our nation, the world, even the evil and lawlessness that abounds, even things that you read on the news, or you hear on the news, even the day where you got some young man who gets all confused and caught up in the evil of this world, and he goes and kills others.

You know, people say, what's going on there? I want you to understand that's just, God's holding to account. God will hold to account, but we ought to be thankful that God doesn't give us all what we deserve the moment we deserve it.

His patience with our sin and wickedness, the false worship, the rejection of God, just as we'll all see with Israel, one day the clock is gonna run out.

[31 : 03] But yet today we have an opportunity to be forgiven. You know, today people have an opportunity to receive a pardon from God for the choices that they've made, for the things that they've done.

You know, when we understand that picture, turn to Psalm 78 for a moment. You know, is this something important for us? Even if you're saved, it's important to keep in mind, why does God allow some of these things?

I want you to understand because God's long-suffering. He allows some things. He allows evil to look like it's prospering for the benefit of you and I even.

For others to be able to come to Him. Notice what it tells in Psalm 78. Look down at verse 38. It says this, but He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity and destroyed them not.

Yea, many a time turned He His anger away and did not stir up all His wrath. You know, sometimes I think we hold an opinion like this of saying, you know, why doesn't God judge?

[32 : 05] I don't think we understand God's wrath. If God pours out all His wrath, we're in trouble. If you want to see a picture of what God's wrath being poured out, you can read through the book of Revelation where it talks about God pouring out the bowls of judgment.

When we understand what's being seen here, go over a few pages to Psalm 86. Psalm 86, look down here at verse 15.

The Word of God tells us this. He says, But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion and gracious and longsuffering and plenteous in mercy and truth.

You know, I want you to understand, God's graciousness, His longsuffering, benefits us too. God being gracious even to us and to others because, you know what, God wants people to come to Him.

He's given them opportunity. Why did He extend this to Israel? Under the days of Jeroboam, He says, Hey guys, I want to get your attention and see if you'll come to Me. He had them under oppression.

[33 : 05] He had them under blessing. You know, under both, they did what? They rejected Him. So it has nothing to do with the conditions. It has everything to do with how people look and consider who God is.

You know, look over to the prophet Joel for a moment. Joel chapter 2. You know, look what it tells us here in verse 13. It says, And rend your heart and not your garments. Now, that's a phrase. We don't rend garments today usually, but it was a sign of either great misery or even repent. You'll see them tear their garment.

You'll see even when Jonah went to Nineveh, what they do, they took their garments off and sat in sackcloth and ashes. You know, it's a picture here. It says to rend your heart, not your garments.

Don't put on a big show, but have it impact you inside. Notice what it says here. And turn to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil.

[34 : 08] You know, God's going to hold to account. Sin's going to run its course, and sin's going to end in destruction. There's going to be terrible destruction, but we need to understand, why is God merciful?

Look over at Lamentations chapter 3. Lamentations chapter 3. You know, Lamentations, here Jeremiah the prophet tells us something very important. Notice what he says down in verse 22. I want you to think about this statement as we read it. Notice what it says. It says, You know, we've got to be thankful God's merciful.

It says, Because His compassion is what? They fail not. They are new every morning. Great is thy faithfulness. You know, when we look at Israel in the Old Testament, and we look at the kings, we can see and understand God's faithfulness.

When God makes a promise, He always keeps His promise. You know, that's important when you consider salvation, because salvation is built upon the promise of God. It's built upon what He said, what He accomplished, and what He's done.

[35 : 20] And He says, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. When you call upon the Lord, what are you doing? You're calling upon His promise. He says, I've taken care of it, and I will forgive you because I've taken care of it if you'll turn to me.

He makes it very clear the why about it. You know, look back over in the New Testament. Go to 2 Peter chapter 3. Look down at verse 9. It says, The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness.

You know what? Sometimes when God allows things to take place, we say, well, why is God allowing that? Why is God slack about that? Notice what it says, But as long-suffering to us, we're not willing that, what, any should perish, but what?

That all should come to repentance. You know, why does God allow things to go on sometimes? Because He's working in the background to lead everybody to have an opportunity to turn to Him. The reality is, is everybody going to turn to Him? No, but you know what? God doesn't want, nobody's going to stand before God and say, God, you didn't give me an opportunity. Nobody's going to stand before God and say, well, I didn't know about that.

[36 : 35] You know, the Bible tells us very clearly in the book of Romans that our conscience bears witness. We understand that there's a God. We understand that there's right and wrong. Now, we might have a warped conscience and have a wrong picture of right and wrong, but it's amazing how many people, have you ever met somebody who doesn't know there's right and wrong?

Because no matter what, even if it's a wrong idea about something, they believe there's something right and there's something wrong. They have a conscience that's operating. They know by nature that there's things that are right and there's things that are wrong.

What is that? That's God telling them and revealing to them, yes, there's accountability for your choices. There's accountability for your sin. And God's not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

And so we see this great picture even in the days of Jeroboam as God is working by having mercy on them. Even in their prosperity, they rejected Him.

And when they were oppressed, they rejected Him. But God's still merciful to them. God's still merciful to us. We can be thankful for God's mercies because without it, we would all be consumed.

[37 : 50] As we look at the life of Jeroboam, and we're going to see as his dynasty ends very quickly under his son, Zechariah, lasts six months before Shalom comes and kills him in the street and takes the throne.

And then it's a constant downward spiral within the nation of conspiracy and overthrow until the Assyrians come and God takes them into captivity.

The first step of the captivity. And we'll look at that here in the weeks to come. But just remember that we can be thankful that we have a merciful God that gives us a chance and desire for us to come to Him.

Let's pray. Heavenly Fathers, we just thank You for Your Word. We're thankful for Your compassion.