

## **SERIES: PROPHETS, PRIESTS AND KINGS**

Godly leadership in the house of God and the heart of the believer

**TITLE: Setting Things Right: God's Plumb Line**

**TEXT:** 1 Kings 12-2 Kings 2 Chron. 10-28

**Key Passage:** 2 Kings 21 13; 2 Chron. 16:9

Walls crooked / leaving gaps in the ceiling line... it must be straight from the foundation.

At times you must go back to the foundation and set things right, making it square and level.

- I have seen ceiling molding that has been nailed up and when removed I see the gap that is present from the wall to the joist.
  - Hiding the error, so we don't see it.
  - Many people have a faulty foundation which has created a crooked house.
    - They cover up their errors and spend a life lying and covering it up.
    - Many times, they come to believe their own lies.
    - They change the rules and shift their belief from what God has said to what they want God to say.
    - We want the rules changed to our benefit.... Saying we think it is not justice to arrest or convict a person of a crime.
    - We want the law to change and because we do not want it to be listed among the illegal activities.
    - God does not change HIS laws for our sake.

**2 Kings 21 13** - *I will stretch out over Jerusalem the measuring line used against Samaria and the plumb line used against the house of Ahab.*

### **Isaiah 28:17**

*I will make justice the measuring line  
And righteousness the level;  
Then hail will sweep away the refuge of lies  
And the waters will overflow the secret place.*

### **Zechariah 4:10**

*For who has despised the day of small things? But these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel—these are the eyes of the Lord which range to and fro throughout the earth.*

**As we look at the kings of Judah we must note that:**

If the Deuteronomic **law** is the standard of judgment in 1 and 2 Kings, then the Priests Code is the standard in 1 and 2 Chronicles. It is known as the **holiness** Code – Leviticus 17-26

The Books of Chronicles (one book originally) are sermons, based on the factual history of Israel and Judah.

## A LOOK AT THE KINGS OF JUDAH

### Rehoboam – bad

- 17 years
- Shemaiah was prophet.

**2 Chronicles 12:14** - *He did evil because he had not set his heart on seeking the LORD.*

### Abijah / Abijam - bad

- 3 years
- Defeated Israel in battle and was described as a ruler who "grew strong" (2 Chron. 13:21).
- Azariah and Iddo were prophets.

### Asa – good

- 41 years
- Put away evil and idolatry.
  - Yet he did not tear down high places.
- Later forsook.
  - Hanani, the seer, visited Asa and reminded him of the way God had conquered the Cushites. He chastised Asa for relying on Ben-Hadad instead of God. Rather than repent of his sin.
- Azariah and Hanani were prophets.

**2 Chron 15:14-15** <sup>14</sup> *They took an oath to the LORD with loud acclamation, with shouting and with trumpets and horns. <sup>15</sup> All Judah rejoiced about the oath because they had sworn it wholeheartedly. They sought God eagerly, and he was found by them. So the LORD gave them rest on every side.*

**2 Chron. 15:2** *The LORD is with you when you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you.*

### Jehoshaphat – good

- 25 years
- Contemporary with Ahab of Israel.
- Eliezer, Jahaziel, Jehu were prophets.
- Made an alliance with Israel reopening trade routes from the sea and offering access to the copper mines.
- Made administrative and military changes and reforms.
- Defeated many nations.

**2 Chron. 20:32-33** <sup>32</sup> *He followed the ways of his father Asa and did not stray from them; he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD. <sup>33</sup> The high places, however, were not removed, and the people still had not set their hearts on the God of their ancestors.*

### **Jehoram - bad**

- 8 years
- Killed all of his brothers.
- Jehoram had forsaken the LORD, the God of his ancestors.
- He passed away to no one's regret.
- Turned to Baal worship.
- Elijah and Elisha were prophets to Israel yet crossed over ministries.

### **Ahaziah – Bad**

- 1 year

### **2 Chron. 22:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> He too followed the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother encouraged him to act wickedly. <sup>4</sup> He did evil in the eyes of the LORD

- Slain by Jehu the enemy of the line of Ahab.
- No heir – mother takes over.

### **Athaliah – bad**

- 6 years
- Related to Ahab.
- Female Regent
- Killed all her grandsons.

### **Joash - Good**

- 40 years
- Joel was a prophet.
- King at 7 years old; made repairs to the Temple.

### **Amaziah – Good**

- 29 years
- Waged war with Israel.
- Was subjected by them for a time.
- A Man of God spoke for the Lord to him.

### **Uzziah – Good / Bad**

- 52 years
- Zechariah and Isaiah were prophets.
- Entered the temple and was stricken with leprosy.

### **Jotham – Good**

- 16 years
- Isaiah and Micah were prophets.
- Prepared his ways before the Lord.

### **Ahaz – Bad**

- 16 years
- Isaiah, Obed and Micah were prophets.
- Turned back to idolatry and worship of Baal.

### **Hezekiah – Good**

- 29 years
- Isaiah and Micah were prophets.
- Removed idols, saved Judah from captivity.
- Restored the Passover.
- destroyed brazen serpent that Moses had made. – people were worshipping and relying on it as a ‘source’ of power.
- Invited the remnant of Israel to participate in Temple festivals.
- Isaiah warned him that his reliance on Egypt was an error and that he should rely on God alone.
- Dug a tunnel to establish a water way that would alleviate a siege - In the Siloam Tunnel, which was dug from two different directions in order to speed up the work in the face of the advancing enemy, we find the "Siloam inscription," which commemorates the meeting of the two teams.

### **Mannasseh – Bad / Good (classified as bad)**

- 55 years
- Reestablished idols then repented in later years.

### **2 Chron. 33:2, 12-13, 19**

<sup>2</sup> *He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, following the detestable practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites.*

<sup>12</sup> *In his distress he sought the favor of the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors. <sup>13</sup> And when he prayed to him, the LORD was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea; so he brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD is God.*

<sup>19</sup> *His prayer and how God was moved by his entreaty.*

### **2 Kings 21:13**

*I will stretch out over Jerusalem the measuring line used against Samaria and the plumb line used against the house of Ahab.*

### **Amon – Bad**

- 2 years
- Amon’s officials conspired against him and assassinated him in his palace.

### **2 Chron. 33:22, 23**

<sup>22</sup> *He did evil in the eyes of the LORD...<sup>23</sup> he did not humble himself before the LORD; Amon increased his guilt.*

## **Josiah – Good**

- 31 years
- Zephaniah, Habakkuk and Jerimiah were 3 prophets.
- Destroyed idols, eliminated false religions, one of Judah's best kings.

## **EXILED KINGS:**

### **Jehoahaz – bad**

- 3 months
- Imprisoned by Pharaoh.
- Died in Egypt.
- Jerimiah and Habakkuk were prophets.

### **Jehoiakim – bad**

- 11 years
- Defeated by the Babylonians.
- Jerimiah and Habakkuk were prophets.

### **Jehoiakin – bad**

- 3 months
- Jerusalem besieged.
- Temple treasures stripped and taken.

### **Zedekiah- bad**

- 11 years
- Made vassal king by Nebuchadnezzar then taken into captivity.
- Ezekiel, Daniel, Obadiah, Haggai, and Zechariah were prophets.

## **THE PLUMB LINE OF THE HEART**

- a. David. whole-hearted devotion to God.
- b. Solomon. partial devotion.
- c. Rehoboam had an evil heart (II Chron. 12:1, 14).
- d. Abijah (Abijam). His heart was not wholly true devoted (I Kings 15:3).
- e. Asa. Began well, but ended badly. (II Chron. 14:1; 16:12).
- f. Jehoshaphat. He did not walk in the way of Asa his father (II Chron. 20:32).
- g. Jehoram. He did evil in the sight of the Lord (II Chron. 21:6).
- h. Ahaziah. He too did evil in the sight of the Lord (II Chron. 22:3–4).
- i. Joash. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord (II Chron. 24:2).

**2 Chron 16:9** *For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war.*

## **Partial commitment is no commitment at all!**

### **Luke 9:57–62 –**

- Follow me.
  - First let go and.....
    - No place to lay head.
    - Proclaim the kingdom.
    - “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

### **Luke 14:25–33**

- And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.
- Those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF A DIVIDED HEART**

### **1. A divided heart has divided loves.**

- Such a heart loves God truly and sincerely.
- The problem is not really “hypocrisy” but rather mixed appetites, confused desires, and multiple passions.
- The Great Commandment is to “love the Lord your God with all your heart.”
- The mystery of divine love is that when we love God wholeheartedly we don’t love others less; we love them in the right way.
- A jealous God will not be content with a divided heart; He must be loved first and best. - Author: Charles Haddon Spurgeon

### **2. A divided heart has two (or more) masters.**

- Such a heart is constantly trying to please, appease and satisfy multiple masters.
- Jesus said this was impossible (Matt. 6:24).
- Such a person has spiritual schizophrenia, a split personality.
- Sin gains power over us not by its indomitable force but by our divided heart. - Author: Bryan Chapel

### **3. A divided heart is a tormented heart.**

- Inner division means inner turmoil, a walking civil war, spiritual bi-polar disorder.
- Which part of my heart is going to control my life today?

**Gal. 5:17** *The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things you want to do.*

### **4. A divided heart is an unpredictable heart.**

- *A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.* (James 1:8).
- You never know what such a person is going to do or say.
- When the person with the divided heart is a king (or father, pastor, boss, president, etc.), then the entire nation lives in constant uncertainty.

## 5. A divided heart has great difficulty distinguishing good from evil.

- Such a heart is fertile soil for both good and for evil, thus the person with a divided heart is unable to make moral distinctions, frequently redefining good as evil, and evil as good (Gen. 2:17; 3:1–7; Isa. 5:20).
- This defines the nations and in some regard the Church today.

## 6. A divided heart will eventually destroy you.

- This heart disease is always deadly.
- “The heart is divided into four chambers, two to a side. When one side fails, the other must follow, and the body dies.” -The Book of The Eternal Rose - Author: Fiona Paul

**Matt. 6:22–23** *If your eye is single, your whole body will be full of light, but if your eye is evil, your whole body will be full of darkness. If the light in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!*

## THE CURE FOR THE DIVIDED HEART

### 1. Ask God to give you an undivided heart

- *Give me an undivided heart....* (Ps. 86:11).

**Ps. 86:11** *Teach me your way, Lord, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.*

- It is impossible on your own. Your heart is complicit.

### 2. Believe the Lord will give you a new heart

- Believing is an act of the mind and of the will.
- It takes a cutting away of the things that hold you back from the life you were called to love.
- “No man is excluded from calling upon God, the gate of salvation is set open unto all men: neither is there any other thing which keepeth us back from entering in, save only our own unbelief.” (John Calvin quote)

**Deut. 30:6** *The Lord your God will circumcise your heart so that you will love the Lord with all your heart....*

**Ezek. 36:26** *I will remove the heart of stone and give you a new heart...*

### 3. Receive the Lord’s cleansing and peace in your heart

- Allow the Lord to make the changes in you.
- The Spirit will bear good fruit as you walk in that Spirit that He gives you.

### **1 Thess. 5:23–24**

<sup>23</sup> *May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* <sup>24</sup> *The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.*

## **Setting Things Right: God's Plumb Line**

It is time to set things straight in your life.

It is time to restore the foundation of your life.

It is time to live by God's plumb line.

Give your whole heart and your whole obedience to Him.

### **2 Chron. 16:9**

*For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is whole/entire/blameless/complete/perfect toward him.*



<b>List of the Kings of Judah</b>					
<b>Kings of Judah</b>	<b>Good or Bad</b>	<b>Years of Reign</b>	<b>Books of Kings</b>	<b>II Chronicles</b>	<b>Prophet</b>
Rehoboam	Bad	17 years	I Kings 12:1	II Chronicles 10:1	
Abijah	Bad	3 years	I Kings 15:1	II Chronicles 13:1	
Asa	Good	41 years	I Kings 15:9	II Chronicles 14:1	
Jehoshaphat	Good	25 years	I Kings 22:41	II Chronicles 17:1	
Jehoram	Bad	8 years	I Kings 22:50	II Chronicles 21:1	
Ahaziah	Bad	1 years	II Kings 8:24	II Chronicles 22:1	
Athaliah	Bad / A woman Granddaughter of Omri / related to Ahab	6 years	II Kings 11:1	II Chronicles 22:10	
Joash	Good	40 years	II Kings 11:4	II Chronicles 23:1	Joel
Amaziah	Good	29 years	II Kings 14:1	II Chronicles 25:1	
Uzziah	Good	52 years	II Kings 15:1	II Chronicles 26:1	Isaiah
Jotham	Good	16 years	II Kings 15:32	II Chronicles 27:1	Micah
Ahaz	Bad	16 years	II Kings 15:38	II Chronicles 28:1	
Hezekiah	Good	29 years	II Kings 18:1	II Chronicles 29:1	
Manasseh	Bad	55 years	II Kings 21:1	II Chronicles 33:1	
Amon	Bad	2 years	II Kings 21:19	II Chronicles 33:21	
Josiah	Good	31 years	II Kings 22:1	II Chronicles 34:1	Zephaniah Jeremiah until exile
Jehoahaz	Bad / Egypt	3 months	II Kings 23:31	II Chronicles 36:1	
Jehoiakim	Bad / in Babylon	11 years	II Kings 23:36	II Chronicles 36:4	Habakkuk
Jehoiakin	Bad/ in Babylon	3 months	II Kings 24:6	II Chronicles 36:9	
Zedekiah	Bad / in Babylon	11 years	II Kings 24:17	II Chronicles 36:11	Ezekiel, Daniel
The Babylonian Captivity 586 BC			II Kings 25:1	II Chronicles 36:13	Obadiah (to Edom) Haggai, Zechariah Malachi upon return with Nehemiah
<b>Kings of Judah</b>	<b>8 Good, 11 Bad</b>	387 Years			