

We will begin the 12th lecture on “An Introduction to the Old Testament.” /During our last lecture, we learned about how Solomon succeeded David to become king, how he built the temple, and how he ruled the kingdom.

/The story of King Solomon teaches a lesson to the people of Israel who are in captivity. / It explains why they have left their nation and why they are taken away to the foreign land of Babylon.

/The story after Solomon, in other words, the details on the other kings, is related to the lesson that comes from the message about Solomon. /Because Israel’s people did not listen to God’s warnings given through the prophets, God judges them, destroys them, and sends them away as captives.

/The books of Kings not only teach the people why they receive God’s judgment, but they also teach them that God does not forget them. God still remembers David and Solomon, and he remembers the people of Israel.

/1 Kings 11:36 says that God will always prepare a king from David’s descendants. /Because of Solomon’s apostasy, God judges the nation and divides it, but because of the eternal covenant made with David, God says he will protect David’s dynasty.

/Thus another lesson from the books of Kings is God, even in his judgment, does not forget his promise with David, and he continues to show Israel mercy by delivering them.

/We will now look at the message from 1 Kings 12. /First, from 1 Kings 12, God raises up Jeroboam and gives him the ten tribes of Israel to create the kingdom of North Israel. God raises up Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, as king of South Judah. In this way, Solomon’s kingdom is divided into two.

/Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, a foolish man, does not listen to the people, and because of his greed for power, he loses the ten tribes of North Israel. /Eventually, Rehoboam rules over the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

/Jeroboam reigns over the other ten tribes. /He reigns over the North Israel, which has ten tribes, but he encounters a problem.

/The problem is three times a year, everyone from the nation gathers in the temple of Jerusalem to worship God and remember the feasts. /God selected Jerusalem as the place for worshiping God, and it is the place where everyone from all parts of the nation gather to remember the feasts. Thus even though the kingdom is divided, the people of North Israel must go to Jerusalem to worship.

/Jeroboam starts to believe that if his people go to the temple of Jerusalem, then they will abandon him. /He comes up with a plan to build an altar with a golden calf at Dan in the north and an altar with a golden calf at Bethel in the south, making his people worship these things. 12:29.

/Now, these golden calves are not new gods, but they are a combination of the LORD that they believe in and these golden calves. Thus the golden calves are believed to be the LORD. These people are worshiping the golden calves.

/Early on in the book of Exodus, we saw Aaron and the Israelites make a golden calf. /Why did Aaron and the Israelites make the golden calf? /The reason is God was not visible in their eyes, and Moses, who had gone up Mount Sinai to receive the law, was not there with them.

/The people, who had nothing in the wilderness, were afraid, and they needed another god to guide them. /That is why they made the golden calf and called it the LORD who rescued them from Egypt.

/The people's sin was creating an image of God to find consolation in something that is visible. They did it to try to secure their safety. This is a great sin. /Jeroboam is committing the same sin.

/He was afraid his people would leave him if they went to Jerusalem three times a year to remember the feasts. In order to secure his safety, he made these golden calves.

/Jeroboam, instead of having priests from the Levites, had priests from regular tribes. Furthermore, Jeroboam moved the Feast of Tabernacles, which is on the 15th day of the 7th month, to the 15th day of the 8th month. /He served these physically observable golden calves, but he made them in such a way that resembles the way of worshiping God. He was worshiping the golden calves. 12:31,32.

/What is the most notable thing of the worship of the golden calves? /It is not believing that God protects them, but trying to secure their own personal safety. This is having unbelief.

/We also need to receive the guidance of the word of God and the Holy Spirit to find security there. But if we try to rely on the things of the world, whatever it is we rely on is a golden calf.

/God sends a prophet from Judah to Jeroboam and rebukes him. /In 1 Kings 13:2, the prophet tells Jeroboam that a king named Josiah will do away with the altar and defile it.

/As the prophet from Judah speaks the prophecy and is on his way to returning, an old prophet living in Bethel wants to meet with him. /This old prophet of Bethel invites the prophet from Judah to come to his home and eat with him.

/However, the prophet from Judah rejects the man, saying that God had told him not to eat bread or drink water, nor return by the way that he came, that he must go the way God leads him. /But the prophet of Bethel deceives the prophet from Judah.

/He says that God's word was upon him, and the word was that the prophet from Judah is to go to the man's house and eat with him. /The old prophet deceived the prophet from Judah.

/The prophet from Judah listens to the man and eats with him, when God speaks his word of judgment through the old prophet. /It means the prophet of Judah is to die.

/As God had said, the man is killed on the road by a beast. /This is a foreshadowing of what will happen to North Israel and South Judah in the future.

/North Israel perishes because of Jeroboam's sin of worshiping the golden calves. /South Judah, following North Israel's footsteps, rebels against God and perishes as well.

/We learn these things in the books of Kings. /In Israel's history after King Jeroboam, the other kings repeat Jeroboam's sin.

/Jeroboam gets sick and dies, and his dynasty ends with his son Nadab. /Baasha starts a rebellion and destroys Jeroboam's dynasty to begin Israel's new dynasty. 15:27.

/Baasha's dynasty continues only until his son, and Zimri starts a new line of kings. /Zimri perishes because of Omri, and Omri's dynasty begins. Omri's son is the famous King Ahab. 16:16,28.

/North Israel's kings, the first being Jeroboam, keep changing, and as uprisings happen, the kingdom is imperfect. /North Israel does not depart from its sin of serving the golden calves, and it receives the judgment of God.

/The dynasty of South Judah, the first of which was Solomon's son, King Rehoboam, also did evil before God, but a new dynasty did not rise up. /Abijam becomes king after Rehoboam, and Asa becomes king after Abijam. 15:9.

/Let us compare the dynasties of North Israel and South Judah. North Israel's dynasty is not secure. In comparison, South Judah's dynasty does not change, but it continues. /Why is this so? In 1 Kings 15:15, God keeps the covenant he made with David about David's dynasty.

/In this way, North Israel suffers the hardships resulting from these uprisings. However, Judah's dynasty does not change, but it goes on. South Judah receives God's mercy and grace.

/The books of Kings devote a large portion to Omri's dynasty, and the reason for this is this dynasty had a large impact on Israel. /Samaria was chosen as North Israel's capital because of King Omri.

/Omri dies and his son Ahab becomes king. Ahab is the one who officially brought the religion of Baal into Israel. /By marrying Jezebel, the daughter of the king of Sidon, he came to worship Baal, the god of the Sidonians. 16:31.

/God used a prophet to rebuke Jeroboam, who worshiped the golden calves. This time, God raises up Elijah through whom he rebukes and judges Ahab for worshiping Baal.

/God says he will not give rain to the land for several years. /After making this declaration, Elijah moves to a different place and lives there. /He goes to Zarephath in Sidon, the place where people believe in Baal, and he looks after widows and their families. 17:9.

/God saves the foreigners of Sidon by giving them life and food to eat. /Elijah also saves the son of a widow of Zarephath. /Through Elijah, we learn that God sometimes sends famine, but he also feeds and saves.

/While the Israelites reject God, God sends Elijah to a foreign land to save foreigners. /Jesus came to save his people, but when they reject him, God accepts foreign people as his own.

/We are not Jews. However, by believing in Jesus, we become true Jews, Abraham's descendants, and people of God. /God does not leave the people alone, but he plans to send them rain.

/Before giving them rain, he makes them repent. /On Mount Carmel, God wants the people to see if he is the real God or if Baal, the god that Ahab and the people worship, is the real god.

/With an offering prepared on Mount Carmel, the prophets of Baal are told first to have their god burn the offering. /However, they could not light the offering on fire, no matter what they did. /Elijah tells the people to fill the offering he has prepared with water. Elijah prays to God to send a fire. He prays, "Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back." 18:36,37.

/God sends down a fire and burns up the offering, revealing to the people that he is the true God and turning back the hearts of the people. /Next, God kills the prophets of Baal who had tempted the people, and he sends rain on the land.

/However, this wasn't the end. /Jezebel, hearing this news, says she will kill Elijah. /Threatened by Jezebel, Elijah goes down to Beersheba to God's mountain, Mount Sinai. 19:1.

/God appears to Elijah who is in a cave in Mount Sinai. /God whispers to Elijah, asking him why he is there. /Elijah says there is no one left but him, that the people of Israel are still turned away from God.

/God tells Elijah to anoint Hazael as king of Aram, Jehu as king of Israel, and Elisha as his successor as prophet. 19:15. /God will judge King Ahab through these people. /Additionally, God says he will spare seven thousand people and show them mercy. 19:18.

/Moving forward, God will judge. He will also spare the people for whom he has mercy. /God is a king who sometimes judges, but he also shows his mercy.

/While this is happening, Ahab takes Naboth's vineyard for himself. 21:1. /Ahab frames Naboth to have him killed, and he takes his vineyard. /God once again sends Elijah to Ahab, telling him that he will judge his dynasty. 21:24.

/When Ahab, hearing about the judgment that is to come, humbly goes before God, God says he will not destroy his generation. /Ahab momentarily is humble, but he believes in a false spirit and dies fighting in battle. 22:35.

/There was another king who was with Ahab. /He is King Jehoshaphat of Judah. 22:2. /By being with Ahab, Jehoshaphat faces difficulties. We can see this in 2 Kings.

/If we study 2 Kings, we learn about the death of Ahab's sons. /Ahab's son, Ahaziah, dies from sickness, and Elisha becomes prophet to take Elijah's place. /Elisha took the place of Elijah as prophet to judge Ahab's dynasty. But from 2 Kings 3, we learn about Elisha's works of saving people.

/God, amidst his judgment, shows the Israelites mercy and delivers them from the war with Moab. /God also gives a son to the Shunnamite woman, a woman who honors Elisha, and he raises her dead son. 4:8.

/God helps the sons of prophets, and he heals the foreigner Naaman. 5:1. /Elisha did the work of saving the Israelites, but he also carried out God's judgment.

/Elisha raises up Hazael as king of Aram. He also anoints Jehu as king. 8:12; 9:2. /God kills Ahab's second son in the hands of Jehu, and he also kills Ahab's son-in-law, Ahaziah. 9:27.

/Jezebel, the one who had brought the worship of Baal into North Israel, is finally killed by Jehu. 9:30. /As God had said, Ahab's dynasty was put to an end. /However, God preserved and protected the dynasty of Judah's king.

/Though Athaliah has the royal family killed, God protects Joash in the temple and keeps him alive. 11:20,21. /In this way, God protects the Davidic dynasty.

/Jehu removed the religion of Baal, but he could not stop from worshiping the golden calves of Jeroboam. /We learn in 2 Kings 17 that North Israel, with Hoshea as its last king, falls to Assyria.

/2 Kings 17 explains in detail why Israel perishes. /The reason is the people abandoned God and worshiped idols. God warned them through the prophets, but because they didn't listen, God destroys Israel.

/We see in 2 Kings 17:19 that Judah, not keeping God's commands, perishes like Israel. /From 2 Kings 18, we learn about how Judah betrays God and meets its downfall.

/Before Judah's fall, there is a great king, a reformer, by the name of King Hezekiah. /Hezekiah prays to God whenever he is ill or is in trouble, and God answers his prayers. 19:1.

/In his last days, Hezekiah becomes proud before God, and through the prophet Isaiah, he learns of the upcoming destruction and judgment. /Hezekiah's son Manasseh is considered to be the most evil of all kings. During his time, God again speaks of Judah's fall.

/Afterwards, a great king by the name of Josiah emerges. 22:1. /Josiah loves God, and as king, he eliminates all idols. /However, he could not reverse God's anger, so he dies at a young age.

/Josiah's sons walk down a road of evil, and with King Zedekiah as the last king, Judah perishes.

/Judah falls in the hands of Babylon, but from 2 Kings 25:27, we learn that God shows mercy to King Jehoiachin of Judah, who is taken as captive. /God continues to show mercy and grace to the people of Israel.

/Thank you.