

Apply The Word

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KINGS & KINGDOMS

Message Info

Title:

Beacon of Hope

Speaker:

Peter Privitera

Date:

July 31, 2022

Scriptures:

2 Kings 15:13-17:4

Theme: Look closely because even in the darkest of times God's beacon of hope shines.

Introduction: Just as a lighthouse is a welcome sign for weary sailors seeking safe harbor, so also we find glimmers of gospel hope in the midst of even some of the darkest narratives in Scripture. As Israel and Judah have been broken in two, and as Israel slides toward apostasy and judgment, still we find that the Lord is at work and there is hope for his people in the midst of the devastation.

This text shows us both great darkness and redeeming hope in 3 points:

1. Darkest times for Israel (15:13-31; 17:1-4)

Israel goes through 4 kings over 32 years—not exactly a time of peace and stability. Shallum ruled first, having assassinated Zechariah. He reigned 1 month before being assassinated by Menahem. Shallum thought treachery would bring power, but if we reject the Lord, we will not prosper.

Menahem brutalized and terrorized his enemies. He also taxed the wealthy to buy off the king of Assyria.

His son, Pekahiah, ruled for 2 years before being assassinated by his captain, Pekah.

Under Pekah, Tiglath-pileser of Assyria took over parts of Israel and took away captives. Hoshea assassinated Pekah, but became a vassal to Shalmaneser of Assyria. When he disobeyed, he was imprisoned, thus essentially ending the nation of Israel. There is no hope to be seen for Israel.

2. Darkening times for Judah (15:32-16:19)

Though Judah was not as far gone as Israel, things were getting worse. Jotham is king, and though he "does what is right," he does not remove the high places. Evil is always seeking to advance, and if we do not battle against it, it will eventually triumph.

Evil for Judah comes through Jotham's son, Ahaz, who throws himself into paganism. He burns his son as an offering and makes offerings on the high places.

No doubt, Ahaz thought his devotion was noble. Rebellion to the Lord is often couched as reasonable and noble. But it always leads to death and darkness.

Ahaz also desecrated the temple and made an alliance with the king of Assyria. There is no hope to be seen here for Judah.

3. But a beacon still shines (16:20)

2 Kings 16:20: "And Ahaz slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Hezekiah his son reigned in his place."

Hezekiah provides hope, as there is a bit of renewal under his reign. But there is a greater hope in view: the mercy of God in the promise he made to David (2 Sam 7:16). Though Judah deserves wrath for their sins, the Lord is being patient and merciful.

Most of all, hope is seen in the ultimate descendant of David, Jesus, who fulfilled all of God's promises of redemption.

Questions:

1. Are you struggling to find hope?
2. What are your temptations in times of darkness and struggle?
3. How is the Lord at work in you to produce faithfulness through hard times?