

BOOK OF 2 KINGS
GOD'S SPACE OF GRACE AND MERCY FOR ISRAEL
2 KINGS 14:23-29

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Introduction

Tonight we briefly swing back to the northern kingdom of **ISRAEL** to take a look one more king in the north by the name of King **JEROBOAM**.

If that name sounds familiar, it should. This King is actually the second King to go by the name **JEROBOAM** in **ISRAEL**.

Remember the first King **JEROBOAM** that we saw was back at the time when the kingdom first split in King **REHOBOAM'S** days. The southern two tribes of **JUDAH** and **BENJAMIN** formed the southern kingdom of **JUDAH** under **REHOBOAM** while the balance of the northern ten tribes were under the rule of **JEROBOAM I** or **JEROBOAM Version 1.0!**

Read 2 Kings 14:23-29.

So, what about **JEROBOAM 2**? Well, he was much like the original! When something “*new*” comes out with the same name, we generally hope for and maybe even expect an improvement in the new version of it! But that’s not always the case, is it?

(e.g. My wife and I have had personal computers all the way back to when they first came out and the standard operating system was called DOS. When the WINDOWS operating systems came out we were hesitant to change. When we were basically forced to change to WINDOWS they kept changing every year or so and sometimes the changes were not for the better!)

(e.g. Remember when the Coca Cola Company came out with the NEW COKE — that was a bust!)

Verse 24 of our text tells us that this **new** or second King **JEROBOAM** (*let’s call him JEROBOAM 2*) actually walked in the very same sins as the first King **JEROBOAM**— **with the primary sin being IDOLATRY!**

Even so, we see that he was allowed to reign for 41 years by the grace of God! (That is longer than any of the other kings of **ISRAEL**!)

His reign wasn’t cut off quickly like some of the northern kings we have seen! In fact, the **LORD** showed **His GRACE**, **His MERCY**, and **His LONG-SUFFERING** to the disobedient nation of **ISRAEL** and her king during the time of **JEROBOAM 2** reign!

JEROBOAM 2 was the **3rd successor of JEHU**, coming after his father **JEHOASH**, the King of **ISRAEL** who successfully fought against **JUDAH’S** King **AMAZIAH** in the first part of **2 Kings 14** that we saw last week in our Bible study both here and in **2 Chronicles 25**.

What we just read in our text wasn’t really so much about **JEROBOAM’S** deeds as it was more of the **LORD’S** acts of **KINDNESS** for His people. Let’s look at **GOD’S SPACE OF GRACE AND MERCY FOR ISRAEL:**

I. WE SEE THAT THE LORD GOD USED JEROBOAM 2 TO RESTORE THE BOUNDARIES OF ISRAEL! (Vs 25)

The **LORD** God had spoken to **JEROBOAM 2** here through His servant, the Prophet **JONAH**, who prophesied of a restoration of Israel’s boundaries!

JEROBOAM 2 was used here to restore **ISRAEL’S** land back to its former limits in the days of **SOLOMON**.

Now, it says here that **JONAH** was the one who gave this prophesy, but this is the only record we have of it in the Scriptures. We know **JONAH** from the **BOOK OF JONAH**. He was the reluctant prophet whom the **LORD** sent to **NINEVEH**, who tried to flee to Tarshish, but finally went to **NINEVEH** after a three-day journey in the belly of a whale!

II. WE SEE THAT THE LORD GOD SHOWED HIS GRACE AND MERCY TO ISRAEL BECAUSE HE SAW THEIR PAIN! (Vs 26)

Understand that we cannot necessarily measure men’s character by the length of their lives or by their outward prosperity!

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JEROBOAM 2'S character was pretty much the same as that of the rest of the kings of Israel who came before him!
He did that which was evil (*vs. 24*), especially in the area of idolatry!
(*i.e. He kept up the worship of the calves, thinking there was no harm in it, because it had been the way practiced by those before him!*)

But **JEROBOAM 2'S** sins and **ISRAEL'S** sins were still evil in God's sight even though we see here that the **LORD** used **JEROBOAM 2** for His own divine purposes!

The **LORD** had seen how bitterly everyone in Israel was suffering and there was no one to help them. This goes back to the time when **JEHOAHAZ** was King. (*2 Kings 13:4-6*)

The **LORD** saw how severely they were oppressed being oppressed by the Syrians and sent them a deliverer! (Actually the **LORD** was **ISRAEL'S** Deliverer, but He used **JEREBOAM 2** to bring it about!)

The **LORD** was moved with compassion by what He saw. He saw their oppression even when they weren't all they should be! And the **LORD** chose to help them anyway!

III. WE SEE THE LORD GOD SAVED ISRAEL THROUGH KING JEROBOAM! (Vs 27-28)

The author seems to be surprised that the **LORD** did not judge **ISRAEL** for their evil ways, even though that is what they deserved. Well, at least He chose not to judge them yet! He gave them, if you will, a **SPACE OF GRACE AND MERCY!**
(*Grace = Unmerited Favor or getting what is NOT deserved!*)
(*Mercy = NOT getting what IS deserved!*)

In that **SPACE OF GRACE AND MERCY**, the **LORD** helped **JEROBOAM 2** overcome the Syrians and conquer its capital of Damascus. *Verse 28* mentions **JEROBOAM'S** military achievements and how he recovered the lands for Israel. But without the **LORD**, he could not have accomplished anything!

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The **LORD** had been good to Israel. **HE** spoke through **HIS** prophets and gave them **HIS WORD**. The **LORD** saw their suffering and came to their rescue. **HE** enabled them to overcome their enemies!

From available historical and archaeological records, we know that **JEROBOAM 2'S** reign was **ISRAEL'S most stable and prosperous time**.

But it wasn't because of **JEROBOAM'S** great **skill** or **leadership** or **ISRAEL'S** **goodness** or **meriting** it in any way! It was because the **LORD** chose to give them a **SPACE OF GRACE AND MERCY!**

Did **ISRAEL** see the hand of the **LORD** in all of this? Did they recognize the **LORD'S** blessings? Did they turn from their idolatry and return to the One Who cared for them? No!

IV. WE SEE THE PROPHECIES OF AMOS AND HOSEA AGAINST ISRAEL!

There were two other prophets who ministered during this time Besides **JONAH**, we have the Prophets **AMOS** and **HOSEA**.

A. The Prophecy Of Amos! (Amos 1:1)

If your Bible has subtitles, you can flip through the pages of **AMOS** and get a sense of its theme.

AMOS warned Israel of the **LORD'S** impending judgment for their continued disobedience, their pride, and their unwillingness to repent and return to Him.

Amos 5:4-6

The people's response was to continue to ignore God's warnings.

Amos 7:10-17

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Eventually the Assyrians would invade Israel and take the people as captives. *Amos 6:14*

All the land that they took back would soon be taken away again! They would lose whatever the LORD had given them. *Assyria* would overrun Israel! (*Was this the reason Jonah was wanting God to destroy Nineveh, the Assyrian capital?*)

B. The Prophecy Of Hosea. (*Hosea 1:1; 14:1-3*)

When would Assyria invade? Well, we will see it when we get to *2 Kings 17* under King **HOSHEA**, the last King of **ISRAEL**, some 42 years away, after **JEROBOAM'S** death.

Jeroboam 2 reigned 41 years, died, he was Jehu's 3rd

Zechariah reigned 6 mos., killed by Shallum, he was Jehu's 4th

Shallum reigned 1 month, killed by Menahem

Menahem reigned 10 years, died

Pekahiah reigned 2 years Killed by Pekah

Pekah reigned 20 years Killed by Hoshea

Hoshea reigned 9 years ASSYRIA attacked Samaria, ends Israel (721BC).

Amazingly both of these Minor Prophets did not end their prophecies with doom. Both ended with HOPE – God will restore Israel and their repentance will bring God's blessing.

God did not destroy Israel for good; that was not His intention. God's will was not to annihilate them but to discipline them.

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When Israel repents and returns, they will find God's grace. God will restore them.

Conclusion

Back to *2 Kings 14* and **JEROBOAM 2**, what do we see here?

We see **GOD'S SPACE OF GRACE AND MERCY FOR ISRAEL!**

This was despite their **stubbornness** and **continuance** in their **rebellious sins!**

God gave them time to repent! God gave them warnings of judgment to come if they did not repent!

In God's **LONGSUFFERING**, He sent in His prophets to urge His people to return to Him! That is the heart of God!

Our own dear nation has benefitted from God's **LONGSUFFERING!** Has our nation **repented** from her sins? No, if anything, our nation is more **hardened in her sins!**

God does not delight in **judgment**, but the only remedies for **apostasy** are **either repentance** or **judgment!**

Well, God could give us a **SPACE OF GRACE AND MERCY!** He could, I personally think that He already has and we squandered it! When is it too late to repent? That's an answer for God alone!

(*e.g. Nineveh*)