

THE KING

IMAGINE THE POWER



GROUP/FAMILY

Session 9

- Watch the sermon “Autopsy of a Nation” on The Redemption Church YouTube Channel.
- Apply your life to the Bible alongside your group or family with the honest questions in this lesson.



This Week's Sermon exposit 2 Kings 15 and 17, placing this session in the middle
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Context

Second Kings 16 occurred during the reign of King Ahaz of Judah in the eighth century BC. The dominant political power in the region was the Assyrian Empire under King Tiglath-pileser III. Judah faced military pressure from the alliance of Aram (Syria) and the northern kingdom of Israel, often called the Syro-Ephraimite crisis (cf. Isaiah 7). Instead of trusting the Lord's covenant promises, Ahaz sought protection from Assyria, becoming a vassal king. His spiritual compromise accompanied his political compromise. He embraced pagan worship practices, sacrificed according to foreign customs, and altered the temple furnishings in Jerusalem, demonstrating how unbelief often leads to increasing corruption in worship and obedience.

The Big Idea of the Text

Ahaz rejected God's ways, trusted Assyria, corrupted temple worship, and led Judah deeper into covenant unfaithfulness.

Second Kings 16 serves as a prelude to many themes that dominate 2 Kings 17. Both chapters emphasize covenant unfaithfulness, idolatry, and the rejection of God's revealed truth. Ahaz imported pagan religious practices into Judah, while 2 Kings 17 explains how the northern kingdom ultimately fell because it continually embraced idolatry and refused prophetic warnings. In both chapters political alliances replaced trust in God. The kings and people looked to foreign powers and foreign gods rather than to the Lord. Both passages demonstrate that spiritual compromise rarely remains isolated; it spreads, deepens, and eventually brings divine judgment. Together they show that God's patience is great, but persistent rebellion carries serious consequences.

Biblical Text (CSB) - 2 Kings 14:1-14

In the second year of Israel's King Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, Amaziah son of Joash became king of Judah. ²He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan; she was from Jerusalem. ³He did what was right in the Lord's sight, but not like his ancestor David. He did everything his father Joash had done. ⁴Yet the high places were not taken away, and the people continued sacrificing and burning incense on the high places.

⁵As soon as the kingdom was firmly in his grasp, Amaziah killed his servants who had killed his father the king. ⁶However, he did not put the children of the killers to death, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses where the Lord commanded, "Fathers are not to be put to death because of children, and children are not to be put to death because of fathers; instead, each one will be put to death for his own sin."

⁷Amaziah killed ten thousand Edomites in Salt Valley. He took Sela in battle and called it Joktheel, which is still its name today. ⁸Amaziah then sent messengers to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, king of Israel, and challenged him: "Come, let's meet face to face."

⁹King Jehoash of Israel sent word to King Amaziah of Judah, saying, "The thistle in Lebanon once sent a message to the cedar in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son as a wife.' Then a wild animal in Lebanon passed by and trampled the thistle. ¹⁰You have indeed defeated Edom, and you have become overconfident. Enjoy your glory and stay at home. Why should you stir up such trouble that you fall—you and Judah with you?"

¹¹But Amaziah would not listen, so King Jehoash of Israel advanced. He and King Amaziah of Judah met face to face at Beth-shemesh that belonged to Judah. ¹²Judah was routed before Israel, and each man fled to his own tent. ¹³King Jehoash of Israel captured Judah's King Amaziah son of Joash, son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh. Then Jehoash went to Jerusalem and broke down two hundred yards of Jerusalem's wall from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. ¹⁴He took all the gold and silver, all the articles found in the Lord's temple and in the treasuries of the king's palace, and some hostages. Then he returned to Samaria.

Applying Our Lives to the Text

- In verses 1-4, what specific actions revealed Ahaz's departure from faithful worship, and how did those actions violate God's covenant commands?
- Looking at verses 5-9, why did Ahaz choose Assyria for deliverance, and what does his decision reveal about trust?
- According to verses 10-16, what details show Ahaz's fascination with the Damascus altar, and why was imitation spiritually dangerous?
- In verses 10-18, how did Ahaz alter God's temple furnishings, and what motivations may have driven those changes?
- Reviewing the entire chapter, where do you see political compromise leading directly to spiritual compromise and eventual corruption?
- After reading verses 1-20 carefully, what warnings should believers heed concerning worldly solutions that appear effective but dishonor God?



The Takeaway: So What Church?

Second Kings 16 reminds us that humanity desperately needs a better King than Ahaz, because sinful rulers and sinful people repeatedly fail to trust God and obey His Word. Ahaz looked to Assyria for salvation and security, but Jesus is the true King who alone provides the deliverance that God's people need. Ahaz corrupted the worship of God by importing pagan practices, but Jesus came as the perfectly obedient Son who honored the Father completely and became the true Temple where God dwells with His people (John 2:19-21). The spiritual failures of Ahaz highlight the faithfulness of Christ, the greater Son of David, who succeeded where every earthly king failed. Therefore, believers should place their confidence entirely in Jesus, trusting His perfect righteousness, His saving work on the cross, and His eternal reign rather than any worldly source of security.

For Parents:

SHOW YOUR KIDS JESUS IN THIS PASSAGE

This chapter tells us about a king named Ahaz who was afraid of his enemies. Instead of trusting God, he trusted a powerful foreign king and copied the false worship he saw in other nations. Ahaz thought human strength could save him, but God wanted him to trust the Lord. The story helps us see why God's people needed a better King. Many kings in David's family failed, sinned, and led people away from God. But God promised to send Jesus, the perfect King. Jesus always obeyed His Father, never worshiped idols, and came to save His people forever. Jesus is the King Ahaz should have been.

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- Letters to My Sons: The Pastoral Epistles
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ABOUT JCM

Dr. Jesse Campbell is the founder and head Pastor of The Redemption Church, located on the outskirts of Seattle, WA. Jesse has a strong calling to preach the Bible as it is written. In the midst of a socially and religiously starving culture, his biblical foundation for understanding and preaching the gospel in a strong, clear, and concise manner has earned him a large following in a short amount of time. He's grown the JCM platform quickly, has been featured on national radio shows, and has been a guest speaker across the nation at many churches and large events.

Originally from the Pensacola, FL area, Jesse moved with his family to Nashville and worked at Lifeway Publishing for a while before completing his pastoral education. He was led to launch his own biblically-based church, The Redemption Church, in 2020.

Jesse is married to his wife, Jessi, and they have 4 children. Together they also run a conference for bereaved parents, in memory of their son, Aiden, called Aiden's Hope. When Jesse and Jessi aren't investing their time in JCM or The Redemption Church, you can find them on the bleachers cheering on many baseball and football games or mountain biking and snowboarding in the beautiful Pacific Northwest.