

## The Weekly Word

August 11-17, 2014

As a Baseball fan we often call these days the “Dog Days of August.” Many a penant is won by hanging on in the heat of August. Happy reading and take the Bible with you if you get to go on vacation...

Grace and Peace, Bill

To hear the Bible read click this link... <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/>.

### **Monday, August 11: 2Kings 11- Gave him a copy of the covenant...**

I was fascinated by a small detail in the story. As Jehoiada the priest is crowning Joash king, the text says in verse 12, that Jehoiada *put the crown on him; he presented him with a copy of the covenant and proclaimed him king.*

A crown and the covenant were what set him apart.

The idea that they gave him a personal copy of the covenant God made with Israel hit me. In modern day language they gave the new king a crown and a Bible. The message is clear; the king is to build his life and his kingdom on God's Covenant.

This is a powerful thought for all of us. Like Joash, we should build our lives, our families, our careers on God's Word.

That simple image is captivating me...

We are to build our lives on God's Word. This is not a new thought, but the symbolism of marking the new king with a crown and personal copy of the covenant is powerful for me...

I keep thinking, when our children reach landmark ages, maybe we should give them something emblematic of the new life stage and a Bible.

*Lord, I pray that I build my life on Your Word, Your Truth... and Lord, I pray that I can find ways to memorialize not only my building my life on Your Word, but also connecting others with this truth. Help me, Lord... I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

### **Tuesday, August 12: 2Kings 12- Maintaining the house of God...**

Maintenance is not fun or glamorous but it is necessary. Joash recognized that the Temple needed maintenance so he created a plan to see that it was done. In so doing he honored God.

Maintenance... I found myself thinking about maintenance and how important it is.

About a month ago I returned from a trip to Nigeria. As I understand it, Hausa, the first language of many Nigerians that I know, has no word for maintenance. The word, and apparently the concept, does not exist for them. And you see that in the disrepair of buildings all over the place.

Yet, being a wise and faithful steward of the things God gives us requires that we do appropriate maintenance. Farmers rotate crops as a means of maintaining the fields so that they don't deplete the nutrient base. Houses and building need basic maintenance to keep them in good condition, which means they will last many years. Well maintained vehicles will run for hundreds of thousands of miles.

Maintenance is important. And as it is with the material things of life, so it is with the spiritual things of life. I need to do the best I can to maintain my health and wellbeing. Eating wisely, exercise, and adequate rest are all important! And so is regular time with the Lord.

Feeding my inner life with prayer, Bible reading and meditation is part of the regular maintenance I need to do to keep my spiritual life healthy and strong.

Maintenance is important. ... maintenance of what God has given us is important. Think about it.

*Lord, I pray that I am an able steward of the life You have given me. Lord, may I take care of my health, my life, my relationship with You. And Lord, I pray for godly attitudes as I care for the life You have given me. Lord, I pray that I take care of my health so that I am healthy and vigorous to serve You and not for vanity reasons and motivations.*

*Lord, I pray that my heart delights in maintaining my connection and relationship with You. Lord, that prayer, study of Your Word, and meditation will be a delight for me and not a chore or duty.*

*I praise and bless you, Lord... through Jesus, my Lord and Savior, I pray. Amen.*

### **Wednesday, August 13: 2Kings 13- Generational sins...**

I have read and heard the phrase before but today something in the phrase grabbed hold of me and launched me into my meditations. Verse 2: *He did evil in the eyes of the LORD by following the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit, and he did not turn away from them.*

Many times I have read that the kings of Israel persisted in the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nebat. Jeroboam's sins seemed to stay alive in each succeeding generation. Israel was never able to shake the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nebat. They haunted and controlled Israel until God sent His judgment through Assyria.

Some sins seem to live in a family or generational line and a phrase I have heard and used to describe this type of sin is 'generational sin'. Some generational sins seem to have hereditary linkages... alcoholism and addictive issues often seem to have generational links. Many of us know a family who generation after generation struggle with alcoholism or substance abuse. Hereditary or genetic link, possibly?

Then other family sin traits like abusive males or women who choose abusive men seem to perpetuate father to son to son or mother to daughter to daughter. These may not be hereditary but one generation seems to pass it on to the next...

It seems to me that this is what could be going on in Israel... the sin of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, seems to be passed on to the kings that follow.

We are complex people and many of our complexities are not good!

Are we stuck suffering with any generational issues in our family line? Is there anything we can do?

I cannot point to a particular scripture –maybe the binding and loosing words by Jesus (see Matthew 18:18 for example), but I have prayed with people and in the power of the Spirit and through Jesus' name, we have cut ties with their generational sins. And by God's grace, healing has come to those areas in their life.

Prayer is a powerful gift and there are many ways we can take advantage of God's gift of prayer!

If you have questions about this, drop me an email....

*Lord, God, thank You for the gift and power of prayer. You tell us to pray for our 'daily bread.' You instruct us to seek forgiveness from our sins and You offer to set the captives free. Thank You... I trust and believe in You and I believe You answer our prayers...*

*Praise be to You, Lord, God –Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

#### **Thursday, August 14: 2Kings 14- Pride...**

Reading the account of Amaziah reminded me of Proverbs 16:18 *Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.* Pride can get us into deep trouble and it certainly did that to Amaziah.

After defeating Edom, he decided to take on Israel. Big mistake. The king of Israel even gave him an out before the war started. But Amaziah, puffed up from the defeat of Edom (a small country with a fairly weak army), he wouldn't back down and was soundly defeated by the much larger Israel.

Pride gets us into all kinds of trouble. Where he could have saved face, if he just put his ego aside, Amaziah got in over his head and lost everything.

As the Proverb says: *Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.*

I began to ponder pride... asking myself where it still lives in my life.

Can I ask for help when I need it?

Can I stop mid-situation when I realize I don't have the ability to succeed or finish?

Do I think more highly of myself or my skills than I should?

If I cannot do these things, it is likely an indication that pride is living within me. And this kind of pride is NOT good! This is the kind of pride that brought Amaziah to his knees!

*Lord, it is hard, near impossible, for me see pride in me... Please, Holy Spirit, search me and know me and see if there is any wickedness, particularly pride, in me. And, Lord, then please clean out this wickedness that I might reflect more and more on Jesus, my Lord and Savior. In His name, I pray. Amen.*

#### **Friday, August 15: 2Kings 15- Material blessing is not an indicator of God's blessing...**

During this parade of kings, I met Azariah. His story got me thinking...

*In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah began to reign. He ... reigned in Jerusalem fifty-two years. ... He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, ... The LORD afflicted the king with leprosy until the day he died, and he lived in a separate house. (1-5).*

"God, I thought You blessed us when we were faithful?" I thought, "Here Azariah did what was right in your eyes yet he contracted leprosy and had to live in a separate house. Lord, that hardly seems fair."

And so I thought about the ways of God which are often much different than I would do it. In Africa I see people who love the Lord but are impoverished. "Lord, this doesn't seem fair." At Adam's Garden I meet people who love Jesus but are on the very low end of the economic scale. It doesn't seem fair.

Material blessing is not an indicator of God's blessing is the only conclusion I could come to. Material blessings and God's blessings are not proportionate.

I have to chew on this more...

*Lord, I thank You and I praise You for life. I am so blessed to have had my eyes opened by Your grace so that I can see You and know You and love You and serve You.*

*Help me, Lord, to stop looking at what I have and do not have. Instead, Lord, I bless You because I have You and You hold me. Thank You and praise You, through Jesus, I pray. Amen.*

#### **Saturday, August 16: 2Kings 16- Who do we obey...**

*Then King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria. He saw an altar in Damascus and sent to Uriah the priest a sketch of the altar, with detailed plans for its construction. So Uriah the priest built an altar in accordance with all the plans that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus ... King Ahaz then gave these orders to Uriah the priest: "On the large new altar, offer the morning burnt offering and the evening grain offering, the king's burnt offering and his grain offering, and the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their grain offering and their drink offering. Sprinkle on the altar all the blood of the burnt offerings and sacrifices. But I will use the bronze altar for seeking guidance." And Uriah the priest did just as King Ahaz had ordered (10-11,15-16).*

I was disappointed by the priest, Uriah, who obeyed the king instead of obeying the law of God, which as priest he was ordained to do. The priests were supposed to teach and lead the people in the ways of God. They were to administer the sacrifices in accordance with the law of God. This was a sacred trust and glorious honor. And here Uriah was desecrating the temple and defiling the things of God. This was not Samaria and the northern nation of Israel, which long ago had established a rival sanctuary to the temple in Jerusalem. This was the Aaronic priesthood serving in Jerusalem!

Sadness grew over me and so did conviction. Conviction because it seems my own denomination is going the way of Ahaz, disregarding the Word of God to accommodate the way of the world.

As I pondered and meditated today, I remembered Peter and the apostles in Acts who when questioned by the Jewish leaders replied, *"We must obey God rather than men!" (Acts 5:29).*

Peter's statement is simple and clear... *"We must obey God rather than men!"*

*Lord, how would you have me live that out in my life and in my world and in my leadership of the church I serve in Your name? Help me, Lord. Help me.*

## **Sunday, August 17, 2014, Sunday Worship**

*If any of my thoughts or the Bible readings spark questions send an email reply and I will do my best to answer all questions from people on the list... I will answer personal questions privately; general questions will be answered in a subsequent email installment.*

*If you are reading along with me from the PCOG website you can send questions or request being placed on the weekly email list by emailing Lisa at [office@pcogonline.org](mailto:office@pcogonline.org).*

Click here for a link to my sermons on the web. Sermons are generally posted within 2 days.