

How God builds his Kingdom

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[0 : 00] Yeah, thank you so much for those two readings, and I'll advise you to just keep those readings in front of us. Let me start by telling you that it is always very hard to accept the outcome of an event turning in a way that the majority of people did not expect.

It is difficult to see God as being in charge of the turn of such events, and it is also tempting to think that God maybe has lost control of what is going on.

And one event that best illustrates what I'm just from saying and telling you right now is the transition of power which happened recently in Zimbabwe from Robert Mugabe to one of his subordinates, Emerson Mnagagwa, who is now the president in Zimbabwe.

This development was a huge development, not only in the politics of Zimbabwe, but in the politics of Africa as a whole.

And the way it happened, it happened in a way that was really unexpected. Most people did not expect to see the turn of events in Zimbabwe the way it really happened.

[1 : 16] But nevertheless, the change of power in Zimbabwe has always been a prayer and a cry for many people in Africa and also the Zimbabwean people themselves.

So much that when the turn of events happened in Zimbabwe, it was easier for the vast majority of people to see the hand of God in such events.

It was much easier for everyone to exclaim and say, this is God doing. It's a bit like what is going on in the text that we've just read, especially the one Nick has read for us in chapter 12, where we see the splits of the kingdom of Israel in two, the northern and the southern kingdom.

This came as a shock, a terrible shock, especially to Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, and to all the Judeans and all the Israelites at large.

It was not something like the case of Zimbabwe, where people were crying and also praying that there should be a change of events in Zimbabwe.

[2 : 25] The vast majority of the Israelites were not praying for the kingdom to be split. The vast majority of the people in Israel did not pray or seek that there should be a division.

They were all happy to see a unified, a united kingdom. As you know, the first king in Israel, King Saul, who reigned over the entire kingdom.

The kingdom was united under one king, all the twelve tribes. And the second king, King David, came also and he reigned over the unified and united kingdom.

And the third king is King Solomon. It is after the reign of King Solomon that we see an event turning in a way that no one was really expecting.

Because what started as a political discussion at Shechem and a press conference, you know, became a huge problem. Later on, as a result of that, the kingdom was actually divided into two.

[3 : 28] This was a huge development in the whole history of the Israelites. And when an event like this happens in a way that we don't really expect, because in the case of Zimbabwe, it was easier for people to see God doing something like that, because most people were actually praying for the change of power.

But it was not a case for the spirit of the kingdom. When something happens in a way that most people did not expect, the natural questions that may come and rise in our minds is questions like, where is God in the middle of all this?

Questions like, is God still in charge of the turn of such events? Questions like, is God still in control? And is there one directing history?

These are the natural questions that we ask most of the time when something happens in a way that we don't really expect. But central to the text that we have this morning, there are more critical questions that we need to ask more than the ones that I've just raised now.

Questions like, what does it take to build a successful human kingdom? Because we're going to see through here how Rehoboam is trying to sustain and establish his kingdom.

[4 : 50] What does it take to build a successful human kingdom? And on the other hand, what does it take to build a kingdom of God? What kind of wisdom does the world require to establish and strengthen their kingdoms?

And what kind of wisdom do we need as a church to build and advance the kingdom of God? These are critical questions that I would like us to look at as we look at this passage that we've just read, chapter 11 of 1 Kings and chapter 12.

So to answer these questions, we will go through three major points. The first one, straightforward, I may answer the questions by saying, it takes the word of God to build his kingdom.

And here we're going to see how the word of God is so sovereign, the sovereignty of the word of God over human stupidity. Because there's too much foolishness going on in chapter 12 of 1 Kings, especially with the coming of the son of Solomon, Rehoboam on power.

And we'll look at how the word of God is sovereign over the stupidity of mankind. God uses his words to build his kingdom. He is the one in charge of building the kingdom, and he uses the word of God, a powerful word, to actually build a kingdom.

[6 : 20] That's my first point. Now we can go back to chapter 11 and see exactly how the word of God is so powerful. The word of God is in control of the ten of events.

Nothing catches God by surprise. God is not saying something like, oops, things have gone out of my control. Nothing like that. The word of God is in charge, in the control of everything that is going on there.

In chapter 11, the writer begins by telling us the end of the life of King Solomon. And he tells us how King Solomon fell in love with so many, many wives.

When you just get verse 11, and you isolate from the rest of the text, you might conclude that Solomon was just a womanizer. He was just a man who was, you know, full of love with women, something like that.

But when you follow through the text so carefully, you understand that it was actually out of wisdom that Solomon did that. Solomon went, especially verse 3, tells us where these women originate from.

[7 : 27] They are not just women that he fell in love, but they are women of royal birth. They are women from royal families. And it was actually out of wisdom that Solomon went and married 700 of them from different other nations.

And you ask me what kind of wisdom of that. In ancient Near Eastern, it was actually something wise. If you want to strengthen your kingdom so much that you may avoid an invasion and any attack, you have to establish alliances with nations around you through international marriages.

So by marrying these other women, Solomon was looking forward to securing his kingdom and making it so stable and so strong, so much that none of the kingdoms around will come and attack him.

It was actually King Solomon's wisdom to do so. And his kingdom seemed to be so established and so strong because of these intermarriages with these other women.

But unfortunately, that was not the wisdom that God requires to build his kingdom. Because we just thought in the text in front of us that eventually these women, they turned Solomon's heart away from the Lord.

[8 : 46] His heart was no longer fully devoted to Yahweh. His heart was now divided between the worship of the true God, Yahweh, and the worship of other foreign gods.

What was like wisdom became stupidity altogether. What he thought he was going to use as wisdom to establish his kingdom, it is actually that happens to be used to divide the kingdom.

Just like Solomon's heart was divided between the true worship of Yahweh and the worship of other foreign gods, because this is how the kingdom of God, the kingdom that was under his care, is going to be divided as well.

Because God is going to use that as a judgment against Solomon. But I want you to notice, now these ten of events are not actually out of God's control. The word of God is so powerful, and the word of God is directing history that is going on here.

Here in verse 11, we see that when God became angry with Solomon, and then he comes to him and he tells him, since this attitude, since this is your attitude, and you have not kept my covenant and my decree, which I commanded you, I will almost certainly tear the kingdom away from you, and give it to one of your subordinates.

[10 : 08] This is God in charge. This is what I am going to do. And God is using his powerful word to say, I am going to tear away the kingdom, and I am going to give it to one of your subordinates.

We see God in charge, fully charged of history, and we see God in charge of the ten of events, and he is deciding and determining what history is going to hold.

God is coming up so powerfully using his word, this is what I am going to do. I am going to tear away the kingdom, and I am going to give it to one of your subordinates. This is the word of God in action. God is using his powerful word to build, actually, his kingdom.

And later on, when you read the rest of the text, and then you wonder, how did God go about, by accomplishing, and also fulfilling, what he just told Solomon, that he is going to tear away the kingdom from him.

And then from verse 14 onward, God raised what we call three satraps, three opponents, three rebellious people against the kingdom of Solomon.

[11 : 12] And one of them is one of his subordinates, just like in Zimbabwe, the one who took over was the subordinate of Mugabe. One of them was his subordinate by the name of Jeroboam. And Jeroboam, we see again how the word of God came to him in chapter 11, and we go through verse 31.

Jeroboam was on his way, out of the hill, out of the country, and here comes the prophet of God. The prophet comes, Ahijah, with the word of God.

And in verse 30, he says, he was wearing a brand new garment, he tore the garment in actually 12 pieces, and in verse 31, he tells him, take 10 pieces, telling Jeroboam, 10 pieces for yourselves, for this is what the Lord, the God of Israel says, see, I am going to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hand, and give you 10 tribes.

Again, here we see God is actually confirming what he said to Solomon in chapter 11, verse 11 there, that I'm going to tear the kingdom away from you, and now he's speaking through the man of God, the prophet Ahijah, speaking to Jeroboam, who is going to take over when the kingdom is split.

This is what I'm going to do. Take 10 pieces. You're going to be in charge. You're going to be the king of 10 pieces. The kingdom is going to be divided into two. The northern tribes, about 10 tribes of them, they will be under you, Jeroboam, as a king, and the other tribes will be under one of Solomon's sons, King Solomon, King Rehoboam.

[12 : 45] So there you can notice that this is God's doing. Nothing catches God by surprise. There's nothing that has gone out of God's control.

God is in charge and is using his powerful words to actually build his kingdom. He's the one who is in charge of everything that is going on here. And we're going to see throughout, up to chapter 12 there, you see how God is actually in charge of the 10 of events, and God is determining how the kingdom of God will look like by actually using his powerful words.

But when you go through this now in chapter 12, you see that God is moving and fulfilling the judgment that he has pronounced against Solomon.

In chapter 12, it begins with a press conference, a political discussion. This is where we see now man's stupidity on display. We see the son of Solomon by the name of Rehoboam, and he invites the whole Israelites, and he brings a press conference to them.

But here we see now people coming to him and asking him to say, this is what your father was doing. Again, it starts to your father, even though he looked to be successful, but his kingdom was more heavier on us.

[14 : 08] So we ask you if you can lighten the heavy yoke on us. He asked them, go in three days, and come back, and I'll be able to give you the answer.

Now, here now, he goes on to look for wisdom. The first group of people, the Bible tells us, they are the elders. They come to him, and he asked the elders, why do you think I may answer these people?

Even the way he's calling them, there's a little bit of some distance there. It's not like calling them the people of God. People are, he actually enjoys the relationship with them. What am I going to answer these people?

And the elders, they brought a wise counsel to him. And we find that exactly in verse 7. They replied, if today you will be a servant to these people, and serve them, and give them a favorable answer, they will always be your servants.

If you notice how, about three times, the whole idea of service, comes in verse 7 there. If today you will be a servant, and you will serve these people, they will always be your servant.

[15 : 17] So the wisdom that the elders are bringing to Solomon, is the idea of saying, it takes the wisdom of being a shepherd, the wisdom of being a king, who is a servant, to actually build and establish the kingdom of God.

But what does he do with that kind of wisdom? Two times in the story we have in front of us, we are told that Rehoboam decided to reject this counsel.

In verse 8, Rehoboam rejected the advice of the elders, the elders gave him, and he consulted the young men who had grown up with him, and we are saving him.

In verse 13, the king answered the people, actually rejecting the advice given him by the elders. Two times he rejected the wise counsel, what it takes to build the kingdom of God.

Because this is what it takes, to build the kingdom of God, one has to show the heart of service. We have to be servants, if we are to build the kingdom of God.

[16 : 23] But he rejected completely. And the reason why the narrator tells us twice, that he rejected, is to emphasize what it takes to build the kingdom of God.

And Rehoboam did not want to use the wisdom that God has actually given him through the counsel of the elders. He rejected. And two times in the story, in verse 15, we are told that the king did not listen to the people.

In verse 15, the king did not listen to the people, for this turn of event was from Yahweh. And in verse 16, when all Israel saw that the king refused to listen, twice he refused to listen.

So we can simply see that Rehoboam did not want to follow the wisdom that it takes to build the kingdom of God. Because the wisdom that it takes to build the kingdom of God is when we exhibit all qualities of leadership in terms of service.

When we become servants, when we show how much we are able to look after the interests and the needs of others, this is what it takes to build the kingdom of God. Unfortunately, Rehoboam did not want to be that kind of a king.

[17 : 37] The king was ready to show the wisdom of God. Instead, he went and followed the ideas and advices of his youngsters. And he identified himself with these ones.

He went to them, what should we tell these people? And they told him what it takes to build a successful human kingdom. That was a very wise wisdom from the human point of view.

If you are to be a strong king, if you are to establish a strong kingdom of yours, the young ones, they advise them to be so intimidating.

You have to show, you have to intimidate these people. You have to be very harsh on them. You have to manipulate them. You have to impose yourself on these people.

Otherwise, you are not going to make it. Go and tell them what my father did to you. If he scourged you with whip, I am going to scourge you with scorpions.

[18 : 35] This is what you must do if you want to establish a successful human kingdom. Go and tell them that my little finger is thicker than my father's words. We don't know what these words mean.

But what he wanted to mean is to say, I am going to be so tougher than my father. So, and it is going to be something that is going to help me to establish the kingdom.

This, as you can see here, we have got two types of wisdom here. The wisdom of God, which encourages Rehoboam to be a servant king, to be a shepherd.

And the wisdom from the human point of view, which encourages him to be so tough on people, to be a master on the people, and to intimidate them, and to impose himself on the people by using threats, and so forth, and so on.

This is what he chose to be. This is what I want to be. This is the kind of wisdom I want to use to establish my kingdom. He went with this idea. He rejected the whole idea of becoming a servant king.

[19 : 38] In fact, when you read one king and second kings together, you will see that the Israelites were expecting to have a shepherd king.

A king who is a servant. But surprisingly, when you read the whole narrative, first king and second kings, none of the kings of the Israelites is called shepherd.

None of the kings of the Israelites is actually called a servant king. This is very surprising. In fact, in king, they were all expecting to be good shepherd, but they didn't.

The most surprising thing is even the most incomparable kings, none of them is actually called a shepherd king. None of them is actually called a king who is a servant.

Kings like King Solomon, with his whole wisdom, he has failed to become a shepherd of God's people. In all his wisdom, he has failed to be a servant king.

[20 : 39] King like King Ezekiah, who is known as the most faithful king, he is not actually called a shepherd king in kings.

He failed. King like Josiah, who is known as the obedient king, all the kings of the Israelites, they all failed to become what God intended them to be in order to build a successful kingdom.

A successful kingdom of God takes a servant king. A successful kingdom of God takes a shepherd, somebody who is ready to tend the flock of God.

Unfortunately, all the kings, northern kings and southern kings, all of them failed to exhibit the kind of wisdom that God was looking for in order to build and establish a strong and successful kingdom of God.

If you look back in history, the history of humanity, you will see that the wisdom that Jeroboam, God from the youngsters, is exactly what most leaders would use in the world to establish themselves to be so powerful and prominent.

[21 : 46] They use threats, intimidation, imposing themselves on people. They are not servant kings or servant leaders on the people. And this is what people call wisdom today to establish their so-called kingdom.

But it's not that that we read in Kings 12. the wisdom of God is that we become servants to others.

We show how much we can show the heart of being a shepherd. And this fell in the whole history of the Israelites. It takes the word of God to build the kingdom of God and it takes the idea of becoming wise enough as a servant.

Now when you get to the New Testament, you will see that the hopes of the Israelites looking for a servant king did not materialize up until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

Because he claims himself in Mark, he claims himself that he came to save. In Mark chapter 10, when the two disciples came to meet Jesus, the two brothers, they came to Jesus and they wanted the position of authority in the kingdom of God.

[23 : 04] And then Jesus answered them in verse 41, he addresses now all the disciples. When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John because James and John were looking for a position of impotence in the kingdom of God, like becoming like masters, the kind of wisdom that Rehoboam chose.

But Jesus answered to them in verse 41, when the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. In verse 42, Jesus called them together and said, you know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them and their high officials exercise authority over them.

Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become a great among you must be your servants. And whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.

for even the son of man did not come to be saved, but to save and give his life as a ransom for many. Here we have Jesus as the servant king.

Jesus is the fulfillment of all what the kings of Israel failed to be. He is the servant and is actually calling the disciples to say, you are in the business of building God's kingdom, then you must join me.

[24 : 25] Then you must be servants. You don't have to look for the position of being lord over people and being a master and intimidating people and threatening people. You must save the people because even the son of man, he came actually not to be saved, but to save.

And we see in the story that we've just read that this is what Rehoboam refused. He refused to be a servant king. He wanted to be a master of people. people. And when you get to John, here we see now Jesus makes a very strong claim that he is the shepherd.

In chapter 10 verse 11, I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep.

So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. the man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

Verse 14, I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me. Just as the father knows me, I know the father. Jesus claims to be the shepherd.

[25 : 39] The shepherd who has come to fulfill everything that the Israelites kings have failed to be, even the most incomparable ones. So brothers and sisters, we are all involved in the building and establishing and advancement of the kingdom of God.

Because we are involved in such a kind of a glorious work, it takes the wisdom of God to build it. And the wisdom of God requires everyone to be a servant.

We ought to be a servant. We don't have to be masters or intimidating people. So I do ministry in Africa and what I see especially in churches, you find that the pastor who is called the man of God, he becomes the master of the people.

He forgets completely that he is just a servant like any other. And they use most of them manipulations and threats in order to actually advance what they call the kingdom of God.

So whenever we have such kind of ideas of trying to use our own opinions and threats and becoming lords of other people, we must know that we are not building God's kingdom.

[26 : 52] We are establishing our small kingdoms. And the kingdom of God is the one that we are all called as brothers and sisters to uplift. And it takes the wisdom of God.

We need to be servants. We need to save others. We need to look at the interests of others. We need to look at ourselves and the word servants actually in Greek has a connotation of somebody who is lower, saving those who are more important than him.

So to save God's people, you must consider them as more important than yourself. If you fail to consider them as more important than yourself, you fail to exhibit the kind of wisdom God is looking for to establish his kingdom becoming a servant.

This is what we see clearly in chapter 12. King Rehoboam rejecting the kingdom of God which is being built with the wisdom of being servant and the word of God.

And the other thing that we need to look at is here properly just in my first point there is how the word of God is so powerful in establishing his kingdom. and we know we really have to take it so seriously because God as a king is not using any other tool to establish his kingdom and to advance it.

[28 : 07] He uses his words. Therefore we need to be so serious about the word of God and that's one of the reasons that takes me in Africa and I go around and make sure that the pastors get the word of God correctly.

Because God is not using our opinions no matter how clever our opinions may seem to be they don't establish, they don't advance the kingdom of God. God has promised to stand behind the word of God in his words in order to accomplish it.

His word is more powerful. No wonder the apostle Paul says I am not ashamed of the gospel. So we share the gospel in its simplicity because that's the only tool that God is using to advance his kingdom.

And we need to get it so seriously and then we need to engage in it. You may not have the talent or the eloquence it takes to preach the word of God but you may get involved in one way or another.

So much the word of God is preached to every creature because God is using that word of God to establish his kingdom. The word of God is more important and we need to get it right so that the kingdom of God may be established.

[29 : 13] This is my first point that it takes the wisdom of God. And when you look at what happens in chapter 12, you see here comes Rehoboam with his stupidity trying to establish what he thinks he's going to establish there.

And God in his sovereignty, he uses that same stupidity to accomplish his word. Because God had already spoken to King Solomon to say he's going to split the kingdom into two.

and he also spoke to Jeroboam to say I'm going to give you ten tribes. Now how did God do that? In his sovereignty, God used the stupidity of Rehoboam.

Because Rehoboam accepted the counsel of the young ones, that of becoming a lord over people and imposing over people, and God used that same stupidity to split the kingdom.

What does that mean? It doesn't mean that God was responsible for the stupid actions of King Rehoboam. Rehoboam is stupid and Rehoboam is responsible for his actions, but nevertheless what it means is that even foolishness and stupidity will not stop God from building his kingdom.

[30 : 35] God does use even the human stupidity to accomplish his powerful word. And that should give us confidence and rest that the word of God is sovereign.

God is sovereign even over human stupidity. What is going on in our churches? Whenever I go in Africa, I see a lot of stupid things happening in church, and I wonder what is going on?

Is God going to still establish his kingdom? I'm reminded that God's word is sovereign. God is in the business of building his kingdom with or without the stupidity of human beings.

He's going to make sure that what God has said is going to come to pass. In one of the churches that are in Zambia, there's what they call anointing broom.

So because people are afraid of witchcraft and evil spirits, you bring your brooms to the man of God, the man of God pray for them, and you buy them, actually expensive from him.

[31 : 36] That's a way of manipulating people. It's actually your broom, you bring it to him, he prays for the broom, and you buy it again from him. And they've gone as far as buying underwear.

They get underwear, they pray for them, they say, you want marriage? Come and buy an underwear from us. This is another stupid thing that is happening, and I'm asking my question, look at how stupid people are doing in church.

Is God still in charge of the event that is going on in the world? I'm reminded in 1 Kings chapter 12 that even human stupidity will not stop God from building his kingdom.

God is in the business of building his kingdom, is building it, and we are to be so faithful to the word of God so that we can see how God is building people's lives and advancing his kingdom.

The second thing that we see in chapter 12 is that it takes the promise of God to sustain his kingdom. It takes the promise of God to sustain his kingdom.

[32 : 43] How will God is going to sustain his kingdom? God promised. And you can see that in this text now we are reminded the promise that God made to David in chapter 7 of Samuel.

God promised David that he is not going to leave the throne without one of his descendants. This is what we call the Davidic promise, the Davidic covenant.

Even if there is human tragedy happening here, God keeps his word, keeps his promises. He said for the sake of David, for the sake of King David, I am not going to tear down completely the kingdom.

I am going to live part of the kingdom. Why? Because God is faithful to his promise. The Davidic kingdom will not be destroyed simply because God has promised that he is not going to be destroyed.

So God uses his promise to sustain what he has already established. And it is very clear there, when you look at chapter 11, what God is telling King Solomon in verse 12, God, nevertheless for the sake of David, your father, I will not do it during your lifetime.

[34 : 03] I will tear it out of the hand of your son. Yet I will not tear the whole kingdom from him, but I will give him one tribe for the sake of David, my servant, and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen.

This is a promise that God has made to David and is going to keep it. Even if there is human tragedy, God is going to keep his promise. even when prophet Ahijah met Jeroboam, he repeated the same promise again.

Look at chapter 11, and you see there in verse 32, but for the sake of my servant David and the city of Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israelites, he will not have, he will have only one tribe.

I will do this because they have forsaken me and worshipped Ashtoreth and the goddess of the Sidonians, Kermush, the god of the Moabites, Molech, the god of Ammonites, and they have not worked in obedience to me, nor done what is right in my eyes, and not kept the vicaries, and the Lord David Solomon fathers did.

Here we see again God is reminding Jeroboam that God is going to keep his promise. Even in the midst of human tragedy, he is going to keep his promise.

[35 : 21] So what sustains his kingdom, even the Davidic kingdom, is the promise of God. And God is faithful to keep his promises very clear in there. This is good news because there is nothing that will overthrow the Davidic kingdom.

The kingdom that God has given to David, nothing, even human tragedy, nothing can falsify the Davidic promise, nothing can actually prevent even the coming of the greater David, Jesus, who is going to come.

Even in the midst of all human tragedy, God is still faithful to keep his promise. And this should give us confidence and to rest in the promises of God.

Because what is sustaining the kingdom of God is not our abilities. Of course, we may have our money and so forth which is important to involve in the kingdom of God, but what keeps the kingdom of God so strong is his promise.

He has promised that he will keep his church strong. Remember the words that Jesus spoke to Peter, he said, you Peter, you are Peter and on this rock, I am going to build my church, even the gates of hell, who never prevail against it.

[36 : 33] That is a powerful promise. Nothing, nothing will actually overthrow the kingdom of God. God is in the business of building his kingdom and the kingdom is so strong, kept and sustained by the promise of God.

As believers, we may ask ourselves, so what? So we can have confidence in the promise of God. So we can rest confidently in what God has promised.

No matter what is happening in the world, no matter the tragedies that we see here and there, we are truly confident that the kingdom of God will be established and will move because God has promised to actually sustain his kingdom.

This is something that gives us confidence and rest in the kingdom of God that God is actually doing. And my last point is to see how much the word of God and his kingdom will definitely prevail.

It will prevail. And we see that in the rest of chapter 12. That when King Rehoboam tried to redeem things and he couldn't, he tried by all in the saints, one of his servants to go and negotiate the terms and conditions because the northern tribes, they decided to split, they decided not to have any share in the Davidic kingdom.

[38 : 01] And Rehoboam tried by all means to make sure that everything comes okay. He couldn't because these ten of events were coming from Yahweh himself, from God himself. And his kingdom is going to prevail.

And here we see now for the first time King Rehoboam exhibits the kind of humility. He humbles himself because we see the prophet of God comes to him and said, don't go and fight against your brothers there because what is going on here is actually what God is doing.

And he humbles himself. We see how the word of God meets with the humility of human beings in actually to build the kingdom of God. And this is what we are supposed to do, is to cooperate with the word of God.

If we are to see the kingdom of God being established, the kingdom of God being advanced, is to cooperate with what God has actually established here in his word. So those three things are very important to remember in the text here that it takes the word of God to build his kingdom.

It takes the promise of God to sustain his own kingdom. And the kingdom of God, no matter what is happening, will prevail. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much that we are in the business of building your kingdom.

[39 : 15] What a privilege. All the brothers and sisters around here, Lord, you have called us to one way or another to advance your kingdom. Give us the wisdom that it takes to build your kingdom, that we may be servants, just like you were.

You are the servant king. And help us, Lord, to avoid all sorts of manipulations, all sorts of threats, because they don't build your kingdom at all.

But help us to rest in the unchanging promises of your words. You promise that you are going to advance your kingdom, and God, you're going to keep that promise.

Help us to have confidence and trust in you, and see the kingdom of God established. In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen.