

In the second place, Josiah is to be of the house of David. That was a prediction that the house of David would go on and on until the time when this altar is wrecked here by Josiah of the house of David. Now in the northern kingdom Jeroboam was succeeded by his son, then a usurper seized the throne and he had the throne for a time, and then all his descendants were killed and another one started a third dynasty and eventually all his descendants were killed. You have a series of dynasties in the northern kingdom, but in the southern kingdom ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ the descendants of David, some good, some bad. They went right along through these 300 years. No human being could intentionally bring that to pass.

God predicted in this ch. that God would continue the house of David until the time when this altar would be destroyed and no one can just set out to fulfill prophecy that way.

Then you ask another question. How could Josiah do this? Suppose Rehoboam had wanted to come up and destroy that altar. He could not possibly have done that, because Jeroboam's kingdom was 3 times as big as Rehoboam's and twice as many people. Rehoboam tried to reconquer it and utterly failed. This predicts there will be a time when the southern kingdom will be able to come up here and do this. And they would not have been able to do it except that the Assyrian conquered the Northern kingdom, and then they could not have done this until this time when the Assyrian power was waning and they were becoming weaker and weaker.

Thus there are all sorts of future circumstances that no one could intentionally have brought to pass. Then after all that Josiah was willing to fulfill prophecy if he did it intentionally. You can't predict ahead of time a man is going to be willing to predict (?) fulfill prophecy. One of the early emperors after Constantine deliberately set to work to go against prophecy. He tried to prove the OT was false by making one of its great predictions not come to pass, and he failed. God would not let him succeed. So we have all these reasons for being sure that this was a marvellous prediction of showing God's anger against this awful altar Jeroboam had put up.

Yet you can imagine Jeroboam saying, "The king of the southern kingdom isn't called Josiah, and none of the children are called Josiah. This is looking way off to the future; who knows about anything that far off! What does this mean to us?" So we find that the prophet who had given this prediction to encourage the godly through the next 300 years proceeded to give another prediction to give immediate encouragement. So we read (v.3): He gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the Lord hath spoken: Behold, the altar shall be torn down, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out." This "torn down" is changed in this Bible. The KJV says "rent". Perhaps just the word "torn" would be better. The altar would be torn or rent, and the ashes on it will be poured out.