

Great Commission



Baptist Church

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The Rise and Decline of the Kingdom

**I Kings
Life Group Curriculum
January 2025 – March 2025**

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Lesson I

Date: January 5, 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 11:1-13

The Cause of Solomon's Decline

Lesson Aim: To teach the student that sin should not be rationalized or excused. It must be confessed and turned away from if we want to stay in right fellowship with God.

Open It

1. How do the relationships in your life influence your faith and values?

Explore It

1. Who did Solomon love, and why was this problematic?

2. What did God specifically command the Israelites regarding marriages with foreign women?

3. How many wives and concubines did Solomon have, and what was the result?

4. Which gods did Solomon worship?

Cultural Concept:

Syncretism - the blending of different religious beliefs and practices, was common in the ancient world. However, it was strictly forbidden in Israelite religion, which required exclusive worship of Yahweh.

In ancient Israel, a king's legacy and the continuation of his lineage were of utmost importance. The continuity of David's line was a significant promise from God, tied to the future hope of Israel.

Summary: 1 Kings 11:1-13 was written about a specific time during the monarchy in ancient Israel, which places it under the genre of history and/or narrative. The original audience of this passage were the Hebrews after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 or 586 B.C. God's people, during this time, were in exile and both books of Kings record the events that led up to their circumstances. I Kings 11:1-13 gives the account of Solomon's failure to uphold the divine covenant, which was originally made between God and his father David (2 Sam.7:9-16). This passage must be understood with the Davidic covenant in mind, which was extended to Solomon (I Kings 3:14; I Kings 4:9). Considering this, then, the original intended meaning of this passage to the Hebrews was that because of their king, "Solomon", who turned away from the Lord and began worshiping other gods, the kingdom split, which eventually led to their exile. In other words, because of their unfaithfulness, the Hebrews were experiencing the curses of the covenant and not the blessings. King Solomon was forbidden by God to increase the number of horses (Deut.17:16), he was also forbidden by God to marry foreign wives, "or his heart would be led astray" (Deut. 17:17). Yet, he had 700 wives and 300 concubines. Solomon's pagan wives led him into idolatry just like God had warned. Solomon did not abandon God, "Yahweh", but he did worship other gods. His heart was NOT fully devoted to the One True God. Solomon, compromised his affections for God. Apparently, he concluded that since he was a great king, he should live like other great kings of the world even though it meant disobeying God's Word.

With all his wisdom, Solomon had some weak spots. He could not say "no" to compromise or to lustful desires. Whether he married to strengthen political alliances or to gain personal pleasure, these foreign wives led him astray. They led him right into idolatry. Although Solomon had clear instructions from God not to marry foreign women, he chose to disregard God's commands. Solomon resisted the pressures at first, but little by little he gave in and began a more widespread practice of idolatry until finally he became fully involved in it, rationalizing away the potential danger to himself and to his kingdom. God knows our strengths and weaknesses, and His commands are always for our good. When we ignore God's commands, negative consequences inevitably result. It is not enough to know God's Word or even to believe it; we must follow it and apply it to our daily activities and decisions. Solomon handled great pressures in running the government, but he could not handle the pressures from his wives who wanted him to worship their gods. In marriages and close friendships, it is difficult to resist pressure to compromise. Our love leads us to identify with the desires of those we care about. Solomon didn't turn away from God all at once or in a brief moment. His spiritual decline started with a minor departure from God's laws. Over the years, that little sin grew until it resulted in his downfall. A little sin can be the first step in turning away from God. It is not the sins we don't know about, but the sin that we excuse, that causes us the greatest trouble. Amen, Somebody!

Lesson aim and summary written by Glendoria P. Boyd

Lesson II

Date: January 12, 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 11:14-26

The Consequences of Solomon's Sin

Lesson Aim: To teach the student that there are consequences for the sin in our lives and we must take immediate action to ask God to help us to remove it.

Open It

1. How do you handle adversity in your own life?

2. What strategies can you adopt to remain steadfast in your faith and principles when confronted with difficult situations or opposition?

Explore It

1. Who did the Lord raise up as an adversary against Solomon?

2. How was Hadad received in Egypt, and what did Pharaoh give him?

3. What prompted Hadad to return to his own country?

4. Who else rebelled against Solomon, and what was his position?

Cultural Concept:

Political Alliances and Refuge:

In the ancient Near East, political alliances were often forged through marriage and the granting of asylum to exiled nobles. These alliances were strategic, aimed at securing mutual benefits and protection.

Summary: In these verses, we see Solomon's adversaries. We learn how God raised up a couple of old enemies, and Jeroboam, one of Solomon's subordinates, to tear the kingdom right out of Solomon's hands for his disobedience. It was Jeroboam who tore the kingdom from Solomon's son. Solomon's main folly is stated when the author writes "the God of Israel, who appeared to him twice and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods" (1 Kings 11:9-10). This is God's first commandment; "that you shall have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3), yet, this is exactly what Solomon does.

Christians today are to honor and uphold this great commandment that Christ affirms in all three synoptic gospels. We are surrounded by false gods, some of which are obvious while others are not so obvious. When we fall prey to these false gods, we are initially committing the same treason against God as Solomon did. The extent may not be as extreme as Solomon's and it may not lead to an entire nation's exile, but nevertheless, the principle is the same, that is, Christians, first and foremost, must love God with their entire beings because He is the One and Only God.

Solomon's powerful and glorious kingdom could have been blessed for all times, but instead, it was approaching its end. Solomon had God's promise, guidance, and answers to prayer yet he allowed sin to remain around him. Eventually, it corrupted him so much that he was no longer interested in God.

Solomon said it all when he wrote Psalm 127; "unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain." Solomon began his construction by laying the foundation with God, but he did not follow through in his later years, and as a result, he lost everything. It is not enough to get off to a right start in building our marriages, careers, or churches on God's principles; we must remain faithful to God to the end (Mark 13:13). God must be in control of our lives from start to finish.

This passage not only reveals Solomon's disobedience to God but it also reveals our sins as well. Let's recall that "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23). Yes, Solomon worshiped both God and false gods, but if we are honest, we too have placed the things of this world in front of God, and reflecting on this passage is a reminder of our shortcomings. This passage should deepen our emotional responses to God because, through Jesus Christ, God has given us a share in this very kingdom that was originally promised through the line of David, for this, Christians are to be forever grateful.

Lesson aim and summary written by Glendoria P. Boyd

Lesson III

Date: January 19, 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 11:27-43

The Covenant with Jeroboam

Lesson Aim: To teach the students that there are always consequences for breaking the laws and commands of God.

Open It

1. How can you trust in God's sovereignty and plan for your future, especially when it seems uncertain or difficult?
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Explore It

1. What was the reason for Jeroboam's rebellion against Solomon?

2. Who was Jeroboam, and what was his position before his rebellion?

3. What condition did God give Jeroboam for establishing a lasting dynasty?

4. How long did Solomon reign in Jerusalem, and what happened after his death?

Cultural Concept:

Divine Retribution and Covenant:

The concept of divine retribution was central in Israelite theology. Obedience to God's covenant brought blessings, while disobedience brought punishment.

Summary: Jeroboam was different from Solomon's two previously mentioned adversaries because he was a fellow Israelite. He was from Ephraim, the leading tribe of Israel's Northern Kingdom. And, he had worked for Solomon when he built the supporting terrace and filled in the gap in the wall of the City of David. Tradition says he rebels against Solomon because he opposed the oppressive forced labor in these building projects. In this acted-out prophecy, Ahijah showed Jeroboam that he would lead ten tribes of a divided Israel after the death of Solomon.

God promised to divide Israel and put ten of the twelve tribes under Jeroboam as judgment for the sin of idolatry of Solomon. God would keep one tribe under the house of David, in faithfulness to His promise to David. The one tribe to be left with Solomon was Judah, and Benjamin which were often regarded as one tribe and referred to as Judah. Ahijah demonstrated what God had said earlier to Solomon, (Vs. 11-13). And, not only Solomon, but to the people of Israel, that they had forsaken Yahweh, by worshiping idols.

Rehoboam was Solomon's son, to whom he would be given one tribe. Judah was to be a perpetual light or testimony to God's choice of David, who was of the tribe of Judah. (2 Sam.21:17; 2 Kings 8:19). It is remarkable that God's conditional promise to establish Jeroboam's line was like His unconditional promise to establish David's line. However, Jeroboam did not value the promise and forfeited it. God prophesied that He would humble David's descendants, but not forever. This ending of the promise was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ. All that Ahijah prophesied came to pass.

Finally, After Solomon died, he was given an honorable burial in the City of David. Solomon's life ended in tragedy. God greatly blessed him, but he allowed God's gifts to dominate his affections. The fault lay not with God for giving him so much, but with Solomon who, though he had the wisdom to deal with such temptations, chose to set his affections on the gifts and not the Giver. Success in life in the eyes of God does not come automatically with the possession of wisdom but with the application of wisdom to one's life.

Spiritual success depends not only on one's insight but also on choices. Amen, Somebody!

Lesson aim and summary written by Glendoria P. Boyd

Lesson IV

Date: January 26, 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 12:1-14

The Coronation of Rehoboam and the Revolt Against Him

Lesson Aim: Students will learn the consequences of the following the wrong advice, poor leadership and disregard for the needs of the others.

Open It

1. Reflect on a time when you had to make an important decision. How did you seek advice?
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Explore It

1. What request did the assembly of Israel make to Rehoboam?
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2. How long did Rehoboam ask for to consider the people's request?
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3. Who did Rehoboam first consult for advice, and what did they suggest?
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4. Who did Rehoboam consult next, and what was their advice?
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Cultural Concept:

Labor and Taxation:

Heavy labor and taxation were common methods used by ancient monarchs to fund their building projects and maintain their kingdoms. However, these practices often led to discontent among the populace.

Youthful Inexperience and Peer Influence:

In many cultures, the influence of peers can significantly impact decision-making, especially among younger leaders who may lack experience.

Summary: Our lesson focuses on the reigns of Rehoboam. 1 Kings 12 is a chapter that tells the story of the division of the kingdom of the United Monarchy of Israel and Judah into two separate kingdoms after the death of King Solomon. This split was the beginning of the divided kingdom. At Solomon's death, his son, Rehoboam inherits the kingdom. The people of the nation gathered in Shechem for Rehoboam's coronation. Solomon had asked a lot of the people in the form of taxes, labor, etc. Many in Israel were enslaved under Solomon's rule. They had a request for their new king. The people have some demands for this new king before they will submit to his rule. They wanted Rehoboam to lighten their burden. The northern tribes say they will serve under Rehoboam if he meets their demand. The burden the people are talking about refers to two situations. First, the tax burden levied is likely to pay for the building of God's temple. Second, Solomon drafted forced labor from the people of Israel (1 Kings 5:13), and Jeroboam, a servant of King Solomon, was put in charge of the forced labor (1 Kings 11:28). The northern ten tribes called for Rehoboam to lighten the load and they will honor Rehoboam as king and serve him. Rehoboam tells them that he will have an answer for them in three days. He is going to take some time to think about this decision.

Rehoboam asks for counsel from two sets of advisors. He first asked the elders, the profoundly wise man, who were advisors of his father, for advice on the people's request. They advised Rehoboam to do what the northern tribes were asking of him. Notice the wise counsel they give in verse 7, "If you will be a servant to the people today...then they will be your servants forever." Be a servant today and your rule will be established over the people for your whole life. Rehoboam does not like this answer. However, he rejects the counsel's recommendation and goes to the young men who had grown up with him. He unwisely took the advice of his peers and chose to follow the counsel of his peers over the elders. The young men tell Rehoboam to answer the people in this way. "My little finger is thicker than my father's thighs. And now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions." (1 Kings 12:10-11) These are two completely different answers advised to Rehoboam. Rehoboam hears the answer he wants to hear from those who had grown up with him. It is important to keep in mind the age of Rehoboam at this time. When we read the story about the contrasting advice of the older men and the young men, we might think of Rehoboam as a young twenty-year-old. Yet, Rehoboam was 41 years old when he ascended to the throne. Verse 13 tells us that Rehoboam spoke to the northern tribes three days later and answered the people harshly. He spoke the very counsel that the young men had given him. Like Pharaoh, Solomon's son responds to this threat by increasing the workload (1 Kings 12:14, Exodus 5:9). So, why is he going to those he grew up with and make a foolish decision by going with the advice of his peers? This is what we tend to do whenever we don't want to follow the path God has for us. We search until we find someone or anyone, who will be on our side, agreeing with whatever wrong decision we want to take. Rehoboam, responds to the people's grievances with harshness. The king listened to catastrophic advice and it proved how utterly uncaring he was about the people. Our greatest concern should be serving faithfully in the role God has placed us in.

Lesson aim and summary written by Brenda F. Moore

Lesson V

Date: February 2, 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 12:15-24

Conflict and Division

Lesson Aim: Students will learn that God can accomplish his will with or without us and that life goes better when we live in obedience to Lord. They will also learn that unwillingness to consider the needs of others can result in significant societal fractures (division in society) and loss of unity.

Open It

1. What steps can you take to listen to God's guidance in times of conflict?
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Explore It

1. What was the reason behind Rehoboam's harsh decision?

2. What did Rehoboam do in response to the rebellion of Israel?

3. What was the outcome of Rehoboam's attempt to assert control over Israel?

4. What did Rehoboam do when he returned to Jerusalem?

Cultural Concept:

Tribal Loyalties and Identity:

Tribal identities were strong in ancient Israel, and loyalty to one's tribe could sometimes supersede loyalty to the central monarchy. Each tribe had its own leaders and sense of identity.

Summary: In summarizing today's lesson, we recall last week's lesson, that the people asked King Rehoboam to ease the burdens, placed on them by his father, King Solomon; but he ignored their plea and chose not to follow the wise advice of the elders. Instead, he followed the advice of his peers who told him to make the yoke even heavier on the people than his father. Rehoboam answered the people harshly, saying he would make their yoke even heavier and whip them with scorpions. In our lesson today, his harsh answer leads to revolt. The northern tribes say they no longer have a portion of the house of David. This effectively marked the division of the kingdom due to their feeling of being abandoned and mistreated by the new king, who refused to listen to their pleas for lighter burdens; it essentially means they didn't consider themselves part of David's lineage and would not be governed by Rehoboam. The tribes rebelled against the house of David and withdrew their allegiance to Rehoboam. They no longer belong together as one nation under one rule. The people's frustration and anger cause division and strife and they tell the house of David to fend for itself. Angered by Rehoboam's refusal to lighten their burdens, they reject his rule and declare Jeroboam as their king, Rehoboam attempts to put an end to the rebellion, but it results in the death of his tax collector, Adorniam. A division occurs after the people angrily stone Adorniam to death, signifying their complete break from the Davidic dynasty and their choice to establish a new leadership under Jeroboam. Israel revolts, effectively splitting the United Kingdom into two, Judah in the south under Rehoboam and Israel in the north under Jeroboam. Like Moses, Jeroboam leads Israel's tribes out of slavery and into the wilderness north of Jerusalem. This marked the split of the Israelite kingdom, with Judah remaining loyal to the Davidic line and the rest of the tribes forming the northern kingdom of Israel. The sending of Adorniam to collect the taxes, when the public mind was in such a state of hostility, was another proof of Rehoboam's lack of good sense and inability to govern. Therefore, Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day. We see Rehoboam's poor decision-making as the catalyst for the division. Note that the text implies that God's sovereign hand in this event had a consequence of Solomon's previous sins and God's predetermined plan. When Rehoboam mobilized troops to fight against the northern tribes, the prophet Shemaiah intervened, and delivered God's message, stating that the division was from the Lord and they should not go to war against their own people, so they returned home without engaging in battle. This was great humble submission, both in Rehoboam and his officers, to relinquish, at the demand of the prophet, a war which they thought they had good grounds to undertake. When we carefully read verse 15, we see this was a turn of affairs caused by the Lord that He might fulfill his word. This is not some random accident. This is not the kingdom going off the rails. This event was brought about by the Lord so that he could fulfill an earlier prophecy regarding the division of Israel. The focus of this text is not on Rehoboam's stupidity but on God's sovereignty. In 1 Kings 12:15, the turn of events was from the Lord and signifies that while the division of the Israelite kingdom was a direct result of King Rehoboam's poor decision-making, in a mysterious way in which we are to believe without hesitation, God was in it all. God was ultimately in control of the situation, allowing the events to unfold as a fulfillment of prophecy and a consequence of Rehoboam's pride and refusal to listen to the people's pleas and Solomon's sins; essentially, God used human foolishness to bring about His predetermined plan.

Lesson aim and summary written by Brenda F. Moore

Lesson VI

Date: February 9, 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 12:25-33

Corruption of Worship Practices

Lesson Aim: God uses our sins for His glory and His purpose. This does not mean that we should actively engage in sin because God can accomplish his will with or without us.

Open It

1. How can you ensure that your actions are motivated by faith and integrity rather than fear and insecurity?
-

Explore It

1. What was the first city Jeroboam fortified after becoming king?

2. What solution did Jeroboam implement to prevent the people from going to Jerusalem?

3. Where did Jeroboam place the golden calves?

4. What did Jeroboam do to establish a new religious system in Israel?

Word Study:

Fortified (Verse 25):

Hebrew Word: בָּנָה (banah)

Meaning: To build, establish, or fortify.

Shrines (Verse 31):

Hebrew Word: בָּמָה (bamah)

Meaning: High place, shrine, or place of worship.

Summary: We see in today's lesson Jeroboam reign, after the division of the Israelite kingdom. He fears if the people in his ten tribes of Israel go to the temple of the Lord to offer sacrifices which is in Rehoboam's rule of Judah, he will lose control and the heart of the people will return to Rehoboam as their king and he will be killed. This is a case of absolutely no trust in God's promises. He does not believe that God will make a dynasty through him or that the Lord will be with him. When there is fear and lack of trust we fall apart and begin to take all matters into our own hands. Remember that going to Jerusalem, to the temple of the Lord, was commanded by the Lord. This is what the people were supposed to do. But he does not trust the Lord and immediately is afraid of what the people will do if he does not do something to keep them from going to Jerusalem. Due to Rehoboam's insecurities, he develops a new form of worship and ends up committing idolatry when he established two golden calves, one in Bethel, on the southern border of his kingdom, which belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, and another in Dan, in the northern part of the kingdom for the people to worship. Dan and Bethel are at the top and the bottom of the nation. This way everyone will have a much easier time worshipping God because they do not have to travel so far. They do not have to go all the way to Judah. They can stay where they are, travel a much shorter distance, and worship God in this way.

Jeroboam consolidate his power by telling the people it would be too much of an inconvenience for them to travel to the temple in Jerusalem. Notice that Jeroboam does not declare that they are casting away the Lord or the worship of him. Rather, this will be the new and better way to worship the Lord. This created a false religion to prevent his people from traveling to Jerusalem to worship at the temple of the Lord. In fact, Jeroboam borrows the words that Aaron, the high priest, gave when he fashioned the golden calf at Mount Sinai. He says in verse 28, "Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt," Exodus 32:4. They are not saying that we are leaving the Lord and turning to other gods. Rather, this will be the way we will worship the Lord. It's amazing that the people do not go against Jeroboam or rejected what Jeroboam is doing. They don't complain or say that they do not care about convenience. We want to worship the Lord! The way God demands. So, in verse 30 we see the people of Israel go ahead and worship at the more convenient locations. We must remember that easy is not always best, or the Lord's way. If we make decisions based on convenience, then we are going to drift away from what God wants for worship. Of course, this act is a major turning point in Israel's history that leads to further spiritual decline and disobedience toward God. As if this was not enough, Jeroboam committed further corruption by abandonment of customs and beliefs. He installs non-Levitical priests. He exiled the Levites, the priestly tribe established by God, and installed in their place a priesthood of his own choosing. In establishing a new priesthood, Jeroboam appointed priests who were not Levites, who would attend to and administer the new religion. His actions were motivated by a fear of losing the loyalty of the tribes to Rehoboam and in his desire for power he creates a new feast day and changed the holy day by moving it from the seventh month to the eighth; establishing a feast day on the 15th day of the eighth month to compete with the Feast of Tabernacles, and leads the worship himself, directly violating God's commands. The Bible makes it clear that Jeroboam bears heavy accountability for deliberately initiating a counterfeit religion and setting such an evil precedent for succeeding kings of Israel. Jeroboam remained infamous long after his death, Scripture repeatedly branding him as one who "made Israel sin". Such gradual changes are typically the pattern of apostasy—and we must always be on guard against it. This is not to say that we should never change or grow in understanding as God makes biblical truth clearer to us. We absolutely must. But we must be extremely careful to "prove all things" according to God's Word and "hold fast" to what we recognize to be His clearly revealed truth and will for our lives.

Lesson aim and summary written by Brenda F. Moore

Lesson VII

Date: February 16, 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 13:1-10

Command from the Man of God

Lesson Aim: To emphasize the importance of obeying God's commands and the consequences of disobedience.

Open It

1. In what ways can you practice integrity in your daily life, especially when faced with temptations or offers that may lead you away from your values?
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Explore It

1. Who sent the man of God to Bethel, and what was his mission?

2. What prophecy did the man of God declare against the altar in Bethel?

3. How did King Jeroboam react to the man of God's prophecy, and what happened to him?

4. What happened to the altar after the man of God's prophecy?

Word Study:

Shriveled (Verse 4):

Hebrew Word: יָבֵשׁ (yabesh)

Meaning**: To dry up, wither, or become paralyzed.

Intercede (Verse 6):

Hebrew Word: חָלָה (chalah)

Meaning: To entreat, plead, or pray.

Summary: We encounter a dramatic narrative involving a prophet from Judah who delivers a prophecy from King Jeroboam's altar at Beth-el. The man of God announces that a future king named Josiah will desecrate this altar by burning human bones on it. To confirm the authenticity of his prophecy, he declares that the altar will split apart, and the ashes will pour out. When King Jeroboam reacts by ordering the prophets' arrest, his hand withers and becomes unusable. This miraculous event followed by the splitting of the altar demonstrates God's power, along with validating the prophet's message. In a moment of desperation, Jeroboam asks the prophet to pray for the restoration of his hand, which is granted showing God's mercy. Despite the king's invitation and offer of reward, the prophet refuses to dine with him because he is strictly adhering to God's command to not eat or drink in Beth-el and to return by a different route.

God's power and authority remain paramount, validating true prophecy through miraculous signs. His willingness to show mercy when genuinely sought can be seen in the healing of Jeroboam's hand. These lessons remind us to remain faithful and obedient to God's word, trust in His ultimate authority, and seek His mercy with sincerity. This lesson also serves as a potent reminder that our actions and choices should align with God's commands reflecting integrity and commitment in our daily lives.

Lesson aim and summary written by Victor Kirkpatrick

Lesson VIII

Date: February 23, 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 13:11-22

Deception By the Old Prophet

Lesson Aim: To highlight the importance of discerning true messages from God and the dangers of being led astray by false prophets.

Open It

1. What measures can you take to avoid misleading others, and how can you encourage them to follow God's path faithfully?
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Explore It

1. Who heard about the man of God's actions in Bethel and decided to meet him?

2. What invitation did the old prophet extend to the man of God, and what was the initial response?

3. How did the old prophet convince the man of God to come back with him?

4. What did the man of God do after being deceived by the old prophet?

Cultural Concept:

Hospitality and Social Norms:

Hospitality was a significant cultural value in ancient Near Eastern societies. Inviting someone to one's home for a meal was a common practice to show respect and build relationships.

The old prophet's invitation to the man of God to eat and drink at his home reflects this cultural norm. However, the man of God's refusal based on God's command demonstrates the tension between cultural expectations and divine instructions.

Summary: It is crucial to verify messages and guidance even if they seemingly come from trustworthy sources. This is extremely important especially when aligning any guidance with God's word. Adhering to God's instructions is paramount, even in the face of convincing arguments that have the potential to lead us astray. When we stray from God's commands, the consequences of our actions can lead to serious and significant repercussions. Staying vigilant and faithful in following God's guidance is essential. The most assured way for us, as believers, to do this is to study and read His word that He has provided for us. We as believers are encouraged to be discerning, steadfast, and faithful in our obedience to God. This lesson's narrative reminds us of the potential pitfalls of deception and the importance of unwavering faith that comes from reading, studying, and relying on God and His word.

A second prophet was living in Beth-el and was old. In some cases, old age can make one lazy and complacent. His complacency is suggested by his willingness to reside in the territory of the apostate king. Even though the old prophet had sinned in his deceit of the young prophet, the word of the Lord came to him again to announce the fate of the younger prophet. This is a lesson for us, letting us know that even if we fall to sin, the Lord is not done with us. He will and can still use us. Maintaining integrity and accountability in our actions is essential. The story encourages believers to hold firm to their convictions and the instructions they receive from God, rather than succumbing to external pressures or deceit.

Lesson aim and summary written by Victor Kirkpatrick

Lesson IX

Date: March 2, 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 13:23-34

Disobedience and Its Consequences

Lesson Aim: To show the serious consequences of disobedience and the importance of adhering to God's commands, even after being deceived.

Open It

1. How can you ensure that you remain faithful to God's commands even when it is difficult or when others try to persuade you otherwise?

Explore It

1. What happened to the man of God after he left the old prophet's house?

2. How did people react when they saw the man of God's body and the lion standing beside it?

3. What did the old prophet do when he heard about the man of God's death?

4. What reason did the old prophet give for wanting to be buried next to the man of God?

Cultural Concept:

Symbolism of Burial Sites:

Burial sites often held symbolic significance, representing family lineage, honor, and remembrance. Being buried in the same tomb as another person could symbolize a connection or shared legacy.

Summary: After the man of God disobeys God's command by eating and drinking in Beth-el, he sets out on his journey home. On the way, he is killed by a lion. The death of the man of God by a lion is a direct consequence of his disobedience to God's command. Despite the deception, the man of God's failure to adhere to God's instruction resulted in his death. This demonstrates the seriousness of God's commands and the importance of strict obedience. The lion, often seen as a symbol of power and judgment in biblical literature, acts as God's instrument to carry out the punishment. The fact that the lion did not eat the body or attack the donkey signifies that this was not a natural occurrence but a deliberate act of divine judgment. The presence of the lion and the donkey standing beside the dead body, untouched, served as a sign to the passersby and the broader community. This unusual scene underscored the gravity of the man's disobedience and served as a public testament to the consequences of not following God's commands. This event provided a powerful warning to others about the importance of obedience to God's word and the potential consequences of being misled or disobeying divine instructions. It reinforced the need for discernment and faithfulness.

The man of God was sent with a specific mission, much like Jesus was sent with a divine mission. The importance of obedience to God's commands parallels Jesus' perfect obedience to the Father's will, even unto death. The man of God's disobedience led to his death, serving as a reminder that Jesus bore the judgment for humanity's disobedience and sins on the cross (Isaiah 53:5). The lion as an instrument of judgment can be seen in Christological terms as a symbol of divine judgment. Jesus is referred to as the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:5), who executes judgment but also brings redemption. The lion standing by the body without devouring it shows control and authority, pointing to Jesus' authority over life and death (John 10:17-18). The man of God's death was a public event, witnessed by others, highlighting the consequence of disobedience. Similarly, Jesus' crucifixion was a public event, witnessed by many, signifying the consequence of sin and the provision of salvation (Luke 23:48).

Lesson aim and summary written by Victor Kirkpatrick

Lesson X

Date: March 9, 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 14:1-9

Jeroboam's Deceptive Plot

Lesson Aim: To understand the consequences of disobedience to God and to recognize the importance of remaining faithful to God in our lives.

Open It

1. What steps can you take to seek repentance and make amends for any wrongdoings, knowing that God desires a heart turned towards Him?
-

Explore It

1. Who became ill in Jeroboam's household, prompting him to seek guidance from the prophet Ahijah?
-

2. What did Jeroboam instruct his wife to do in order to seek a prophecy from Ahijah?
-

3. What items did Jeroboam's wife take with her to present to Ahijah?
-

4. What specific sins did Ahijah accuse Jeroboam of committing?
-

Cultural Concept:

Gifts and Offerings: The bringing of bread and other items as gifts to the prophet reflects cultural practices of showing respect and seeking favor. It also indicates the seriousness with which Jeroboam approached the situation.

Summary: Jeroboam the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel faces a crisis. His son Abijah falls gravely ill, so Jeroboam seeks a prophetic word regarding his son's fate. Jeroboam instructs his wife to disguise herself and visit the prophet Ahijah in Shiloh, who had previously prophesied Jeroboam's rise to power. Despite her disguise, Ahijah, now old and blind, is forewarned by the Lord about her visit. When she arrives, Ahijah delivers a dire prophecy from God. He rebukes Jeroboam for his grievous sins, including leading Israel into idolatry and abandoning the ways of the Lord. Unlike David, who followed God's commands, Jeroboam had made other gods and images, provoking God's anger. Ahijah declares that God will bring disaster upon Jeroboam's house, eradicating his descendants and ensuring that his dynasty does not endure. This passage underscores the themes of divine omniscience, the consequences of disobedience, and the severe repercussions of leading a nation into idolatry and sin. It serves as a stern reminder that true leadership in the biblical sense demands faithfulness and adherence to God's commandments. Jeroboam's failure to uphold these principles leads to his downfall, illustrating the inevitable judgment that follows unfaithfulness to God.

This passage holds Christological significance, as it highlights themes of prophetic insight and divine judgment that resonate with the role of Christ. Like Ahijah, Jesus possesses perfect knowledge and discerns the truth in all circumstances (John 2:24-25). The judgment pronounced against Jeroboam's house parallels Christ's role as the righteous judge who condemns sin (John 5:22-27). The contrast between Jeroboam's unfaithfulness and Christ's perfect obedience underscores the ideal of faithful leadership (John 10:14-15), emphasizing the call to worship God in spirit and truth (John 4:23-24). This passage serves as a powerful reminder of the consequences of disobedience and the fulfillment of God's judgment through Christ.

Lesson aim and summary written by Victor Kirkpatrick

Lesson XI

Date: March 16, 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 14:10-20

Doom of Jeroboam's Household

Lesson Aim: The student will learn about the Sovereignty of the Almighty God.

Open It

1. What kind of legacy do you want to leave behind for future generations?
-

Explore It

1. What did the Lord say would happen to Jeroboam's household because of his sins?
-

2. What would happen to those belonging to Jeroboam who die in the city and those who die in the country?
-

3. What sign did Ahijah give to Jeroboam's wife to confirm his prophecy?
-

4. What did Ahijah say about Jeroboam's son, Abijah, in terms of his relationship with the Lord?
-

Word Study:

Cut Off (Hikhrati):

Hebrew: הִכְרַתִּי (Hikhrati)

Meaning: To cut off, destroy, or eliminate. It implies a complete removal or eradication.

Context: God promised to cut off every male in Jeroboam's family, signifying total destruction.

Summary: This week's lesson focuses on the Sovereignty of the Almighty God. Often, believers minimize the judgments of God due to being in a current state of peace and prosperity. Sin has major consequences before the Creator of the heavens and earth. It is a mistake to believe that the LORD will not judge sin. Jeroboam was a wicked King. In fact, all the kings for the Northern Kingdom were wicked. Idolatrous worship was the chief sin. Jeroboam secretly sent his wife to the prophet Ahijah to ask him about the fate of their ill son Abijah. The names are very similar between the prophet and Jeroboam's son. Jeroboam's wife was instructed to disguise herself and bring with her ten loaves of bread, some cakes, and jar of honey to give to Ahijah. Unknown to Jeroboam was the Sovereignty of the Almighty God. The writer writes in verse 5, "But the Lord had told Ahijah, "Jeroboam's wife is coming to ask you about her son, for he is ill, and you are to give her such and such an answer. When she arrives, she will pretend to be someone else." Therefore, Ahijah was expecting her and gave her the following judgments from the Almighty God:

- The Lord will bring disaster to the house of Jeroboam.
- Every last male in Israel – slave or free will be cut off. Dogs will eat those belonging to Jeroboam who die in the city, and birds will feed on those who die in the country.
- Abijah, Jeroboam's son will die as his wife sets foot back in her city. This son's death is a biblical dying for the unrighteous.
- The people will mourn the death of the child.
- The LORD will raise up himself a king over Israel that will cut off the family of Jeroboam.
- The LORD will strike Israel and they will be uprooted for this good land that he gave their ancestors.

All this took place because of their idolatrous worship of the Canaanites' god (Asherah poles). The prophet's words to Jeroboam's wife happened exactly as God Almighty decreed. The lesson for this week is that the LORD is sovereign over his creations. All sin will be judged. Even for the believer in Christ, our sin will be judged at the Bema Seat Judgment (2 Cor. 5:10). This judgment is not about salvation, but about the rewards. Sin in the believer's life results in loss of rewards.

Lesson aim and summary written by Joseph Ellzey, Jr., PhD

Lesson XII

Date: March 23 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 14:21-31

Judah's Decline Under Rehoboam

Lesson Aim: The student will learn about the dreadful consequences of sin.

Open It

1. How can you ensure that your leadership is faithful to God's principles?
-

Explore It

1. How old was Rehoboam when he began to reign, and how long did he reign in Jerusalem?

2. What was the name of Rehoboam's mother, and what was her nationality?

3. What specific immoral practice is mentioned that was present in the land during Rehoboam's reign?

4. What did Rehoboam do after Shishak took the gold shields, and where were the new shields kept?

Word Study:

Moral Corruption: The presence of "male shrine prostitutes" highlights the moral and spiritual degradation of Judah under Rehoboam's reign. This term underscores the extent to which the people had adopted the detestable practices of the surrounding nations.

Summary: This week's lesson focuses on Rehoboam, Solomon's son. He is the king of the two southern tribes, Judah and Benjamin located in Jerusalem. The southern kingdom did evil in the eyes of the LORD which stirred up his jealous anger. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me (Exodus 20:5). The tribes of Judah and Benjamin were guilty of the idolatrous worship of the Canaanites' god. They set up Asherah poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree. To make it worse, they began to engage in detestable sexual acts as a form of worship. The writer writes in verse 24, "There were even male shrine prostitutes in the land; the people engaged in all the detestable practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites." The chief sins were idolatrous worship and men lying with men. These acts are an abomination before the LORD. As a result, the LORD allowed Shishak, king of Egypt, to attack Jerusalem. He succeeded in carrying off treasures of the temple of the LORD, and the treasures of the Holy Places. Among the items was the gold shield Solomon had made. Rehoboam replaced Solomon's gold shields with bronze shields. These shields were used to arm Rehoboam's guards who were at the entrance of the royal palace.

The writer writes in verse 28, "Whenever the king went to the Lord's temple, the guards bore the shields, and afterward they returned them to the guardroom." One can quickly see the consequences of idolatrous worship and detestable sin. The LORD punishes sin. No one is exempt. This is why God the Father sent his Son, Jesus Christ. He has paid the penalty for our sins. Christ sacrificially laid down his life for the world (John 3:16, 10:18; 1 John 3:16; Gal. 1:4; Rom. 5:8).

The rest of the events are written in the book of annals of the kings of Judah. For the believer in Christ, the Book of Annals are the books of 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles. In addition, extra-biblical literature may be included. These books reference the history of Israel (10 Northern tribes) and Judah (2 Southern tribes). Simply stated, the fact that Israel and Judah were judged by the Almighty God was no secret. There was continual warfare between the Northern and Southern tribes. Rehoboam rested with his ancestors and was succeeded by his son Abijah. This Abijah should not be confused with Jeroboam's son who died earlier in this chapter. The lesson to learn in this chapter is that all sin will be judged by the Almighty God. This is why it is important for us to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. This is the only way to be liberated from idolatrous worship and a sinful life.

Lesson aim and summary written by Joseph Ellzey Jr., PhD

Lesson XIII

Date: March 30, 2025

Lesson Scriptures: 1 Kings 15:1-8

The Evil Reign of Abijah

Lesson Aim: The student will study about the consequences of our sins and the potential impact on future generations.

Open It

1. What steps can you take to break negative cycles and ensure that your heart is fully devoted to the Lord?
-

Explore It

1. Who became king of Judah after Rehoboam, and how long did he reign?
-

2. How did Abijah walk in his life, according to the scripture?
-

3. What exception is mentioned regarding David's faithfulness to the Lord?
-

4. Where can the rest of the acts of Abijah be found, according to the scripture?
-

Cultural Concept:

Historical Records and Annals: The mention of official records provides insight into the administrative practices of ancient kingdoms and the importance of documenting historical events.

Political and Military Conflict: The ongoing warfare between Judah and Israel reflects the broader context of regional power struggles and the challenges faced by the divided kingdom.

Summary: This week's lesson focuses on King Abijam's reign of Judah. He is the son of Rehoboam, Solomon's son. Abijam only reigned for three years. The New International Version Bible incorrectly translates the Hebrew name to Abijah. The King James Version correctly translated the proper name Abijam from the Hebrew word אֲבִיָּאָם which is transliterated in English to Abiyam or Abijam. He committed all the sins of his father. The writer writes in 1 Kings 15:3, "And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father."

King David is mentioned in verses 4 – 5. The writer writes, " **4**Nevertheless for David's sake did the LORD his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem: **5**Because David did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from *anything* that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite." Even though David was a man after God's own heart, his sin with Bathsheba had severe consequences. The biblical principle presented in this passage teaches that sin can have consequences for future generations. Paul Carter, a Christian author writes, "Sins does not get passed to the next generation, but the after-effects of our sin can affect future generations." The after-effects of David's sins are the strife between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. Because of David's sin, the prophet Nathan told him that the sword will never depart from his house. This began with his own sons and lasted through the lives of his grandchildren, who reigned as Judah's kings and did wrong in the eyes of the Almighty God. All throughout King Abijam's three years of his reign in Judah, he was in conflict with Jeroboam (Northern Kingdom).

Abijam was succeeded by Asa. His reign lasted for forty-one years. Asa did right in the eyes of the LORD. The lesson to be learned this week is on obedience to the word of God no matter the cost. The LORD has empowered every believer in Christ with the Holy Spirit. The believer is equipped and empowered to do what is pleasing to the Almighty God. Sin has grave consequences, and will not go unpunished. This is why the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ was necessary. The blood of Christ gives us unlimited hope, mercy, grace, and eternal life with our Triune God.

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Resources:

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary faculty.
The Preachers Outline & Sermon Bible, King James Version, New King James Version Bible
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