



1 Kings 14-16

Tape #7108
I Kings 14-16
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now in our Bibles to I Kings, chapter fourteen, as we continue our journey, through the word of God. I Kings, fourteen.

At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick. And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, disguise thyself, that you be not known as the wife of Jeroboam; and get to Shiloh: behold, there is Ahijah the prophet, which told me that I should be the king over this people (14:1-2).

The kingdom of Israel has been divided into the northern, and the southern kingdoms. Ten tribes, called Israel, will now comprise the northern kingdom. Two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, will comprise the southern kingdom. There will be I believe it is nine different dynasties in the northern kingdom, while the dynasty of David remains the only dynasty of the southern kingdom. As you look at the history of the northern kingdom, unfortunately they did not have one single good king. They went from bad to worse. Whereas the southern kingdom, had good, and better, and sometimes very good kings reigning over them. The descendants of David. But as the rule in the northern kingdom, they followed the pattern of their first king, Jeroboam.

Now while Solomon was still alive, the prophet Ahijah came to Jeroboam, who was wearing a new robe. He took hold of his robe and he ripped it into twelve pieces. And he gave to Jeroboam ten pieces of the robe, and he said, "So is God gonna tear the kingdom from Solomon, and God is going to give to you ten tribes". At the death of Solomon, and the ascension of his son, Rehoboam, the people of Israel gathered together, and they asked Rehoboam to relieve them from the heavy, oppressive taxes, of his father, Solomon. But, consulting with a young man, Rehoboam said to the people, "My dad was easy on you compared with what I'm going to be". He threatened the people, which caused them to bolt from him. They said, "What have we to do with Judah and with David? To your tents, O Israel!", and they asked Jeroboam to be the king, and thus the prophecy of Ahijah was fulfilled.

However Jeroboam led the people in idolatry. Fearing, lest the hearts of the people be turned away from him, as they would go back to Jerusalem, according to the law, to worship the Lord, in the three major feast days. He established a new religion over Israel, which was copied from the Egyptians, and from the Canaanite religions. He set up in the city of Dan, the northern most city of the kingdom, an altar with a calf upon it, and he did the same in Bethel, which was towards the southern part of the kingdom. And he said, "These are the gods that brought you out of Egypt". He appointed base and vile men, as priests, to offer the sacrifices unto these strange gods, and he, himself, took on the position of a priest in offering the sacrifices to these gods.

While he was offering a sacrifice in Bethel, a young man came at the word of the Lord, from Judah and prophesied against the altar, declaring that a king would come from Judah, whose name would be Josiah, who would destroy and desecrate that altar. This prophecy was fulfilled, some three hundred years later. But interesting that God names, the very name of the king, three hundred years, really before his birth, God names Josiah as the one to do this. In order to give to the king a sign that the words that he spoke were true, he said that the altar would be split, and the ashes would pour out. And, the altar was split, and the ashes poured out, so Jeroboam stretched out his hand, he said, "Arrest that young man!", and as he did, his hand withered. He lost the power of it, and he said to the young prophet, "Please pray to God that He would restore my hand". Which, he did pray, and God restored his hand.

Now, this was a word of warning, from God, to Jeroboam. God's speaking to the king, about his idolatry, about his leading the people in this false worship. However, he did not listen to God, and at the end of chapter thirteen, verse thirty three, "After this thing, (after this young man had come, and prophesied against the altar,) Jeroboam turned not from his evil way, but made again the lowest of the people priests of the high places, whosoever he would, he consecrated him. And became one of the priests of the high places himself."

So they established these places of worship for the various gods. He, himself, led the people in the worship. God had warned him, but he refused to listen to the voice of God.

So now, God is speaking to him again. Only this time, in the illness of his son. His son is, no doubt, the heir apparent to the throne. He is deathly sick. So Jeroboam is wanting to know what is gonna happen to his son. And so he tells his wife, to disguise herself, that is to change her clothes, (literally in the Hebrew), put on a peasant gown, and go down to the city of Shiloh, where this prophet Ahijah was still living. Ahijah at this point, was an old man. So old that he was now blind. Cataracts, no doubt covered his eyes, and he was still living, interestingly enough, in the northern kingdom, there in Shiloh, which was at one time, the center of worship for the northern kingdom. So he said to his wife...

I want you to take ten loaves of bread, and the cracknels, and a cruse of honey, go to him: and he will tell you what is to become of the child. So Jeroboam's wife did so, she arose, went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah could not see; for his eyes were set by reason of age. And the Lord said unto Ahijah, [Though he was blind, he was not deaf. He still could hear the voice of the Lord, and God still spoke to him. "And the Lord spoke to him, and told him that,"] Jeroboam's wife was going to come but she was going to be in a disguise, and the Lord gave to him the word that he was to speak unto her. So when she came up to knock at the door, when he heard her footsteps there on the porch, he called out, and he said, Come in wife of Jeroboam; why have you disguised yourself to look like someone else? [Had she only known the old man was blind. The disguise was sort of useless anyhow. He couldn't see the peasant gown that she had on, but he did indeed see far more than what most people could see. He could see the things of God. So, he said,] I am sent to you with heavy tidings (14:3-6).

Now these are the tidings.

Go tell Jeroboam, your husband, Thus saith Jehovah the God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted you from among the people, and I made you the prince over my people Israel, And I tore the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it to you: and yet you have not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and followed me with all of his heart, to do that only which was right in my eyes; But you've done evil, more than all of those that were before you: for you have gone and made other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and you have cast me behind my back: Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, I will cut off from Jeroboam every man him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will I take away and the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, will be removed, as a person removes dung. He that dies in the city shall the dogs eat; and he that dies in the fields shall the vultures of the air eat: for the Lord hath spoken it (14:7-11).

"So, not only is your son Abijah gonna die, but your whole progeny, the whole, all of your descendants are going to die. They're gonna die fearful deaths. Those that die in the city, the dogs are gonna eat their carcasses, those that die in the fields, the vultures will eat them."

Arise [he said] therefore, go home: and when your feet enter the city, the child will die. And all of Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam. [He was the only one that was decent. And so the Lord will let him die, and be buried. The rest of them will be devoured by the dogs and the vultures.] Moreover the Lord shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: but what? even now. For the Lord shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have made their groves, provoking the Lord to anger (14:12-15).

So the prophecy of Ahijah goes on now, for the future of the nation of Israel, which as we said, only went from bad to worse in turning against God. So it is gonna get worse, and worse, until God will finally take them away from this land, allow them to go into captivity, and to be scattered. This of course was fulfilled, when the nation of Israel was destroyed by the Assyrians, and the people were dispersed, by the Assyrians into the other lands of the world.

And [it shall, and,] he shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and made Israel to sin. And so Jeroboam's wife arose, departed, she came to Tirzah: and when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died; And they buried him; and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the

Lord, which he spake by the hand of his Ahijah the prophet. So the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, his wars, and his reign, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. And the days that Jeroboam reigned were twenty two years: he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his stead (14:16-20).

Now as we move into this next two or three chapters, we're going to be looking at the various kings that are reigning over Israel, the ten northern tribes, and the kings over Judah. We will be relating the periods of their reigns to the kings, and so forth, back and forth. So, you'll have to put on your thinking cap, and stick with us to keep things straight, as we are dealing with the kings, and their reigns. Some of them are very short reigns, some of them are longer reigns. But, it's gonna be popping back and forth and we'll try and keep it straight in your mind, as we pop back and forth between the reigns of the kings of Israel, versus the kings of Judah. When we mention Israel, we're talking about the northern kingdom, when we talk about Judah, we're talking about the southern kingdom. David, from the tribe of Judah, and so the descendants of David ruling over Judah. Various families, at different times, taking the throne of Israel, and ruling.

But, basically, the lesson that we are to learn, is how completely incapable man is of reigning over man. There have been various forms of government that have been tried from the beginning of civilization. All of them have failed. With the nation of Israel, they had their judges, but it was a time of national apostasy and failure. Then God raised up kings, and David was a good king. David reigned, but yet he had problems. As we see the history of the kings, we see a gradual deterioration, until it's just total corruption. This whole endeavor to reign with the king became a corruptive reign.

When our forefathers established our nation, they sought to have within the government, checks and balances. The whole purpose was to have a fool-proof type of government, with the executive branch, and the legislative branches, and the judicial, and these checks and balances. It was ingenious, a whole constitution, and the whole system that was set up was really inspired, it would seem, of God. It was brilliant. But unfortunately, even this form of government, we've found, has its weaknesses, as men have been able to discover, and exploit the weaknesses. We see now the corruption that is choking, really the life of the nation and our government. It is tragic that man is just incapable of reigning over fellow man, without ultimately taking advantage of his position, becoming greedy, and thus corrupt, and more greedy, and more corrupt. That's what we're gonna see. The patterns here, among the kings. We're gonna see the total failure of this form of government, as corruption takes in, and moves over, and man proves that he is incapable of ruling over his fellow man, without becoming greedy, and without becoming corrupt, and without the whole thing ultimately just collapsing in the corruption. There's only one hope for mankind.

Communism of course sought to extol a new form of government, where um, everyone would share equally in the national resources. Idealistically it looked like it would work, and many people, who were idealists, bought into the communist form of government. Those who became involved were for the most part idealists, in the beginning. Now the whole idea was that as things became divided, and equalized among everybody, there would be a gradual reduction of government, until government itself would be eliminated. Because they recognized, the problem lies in trying to govern over others. You're given position, and power, and authority, and you become corrupt, and so you perpetuate yourself, and your corruption. So the idea was, ideally with communism, the ultimate elimination of government, as things became all equalized. Well, that was, that was the principle, and the ideal, but it hasn't worked that way. We find that there has developed, more or less, a caste system in communism, where the upward mobility is almost impossible. At least still, within our form of government, there is a movement in upward, and downward mobility, but that doesn't really exist in the communistic form of government, the almost impossibility of upward mobility. The elite party bosses living even in greater luxury than some of the Czars, and the royalty of the past, and it's just a, you know, it just hasn't worked. It too, has failed.

The only hope is really for Jesus Christ to come, and establish God's kingdom. He will rule, and reign in righteousness. There will be then a total fairness. Man will live in peace, and man will share in the resources of the earth. But that's the only solution. Man cannot rule over himself without corruption. We need to be ruled by God, and Jesus is going to come, to establish God's rule over the earth. Then, and only then, will we see the purpose of God, and how God intended that man should live upon this earth, as we join together,

and share in the glorious kingdom of righteousness and peace, and joy. Until that time, unfortunately we're gonna have to just see the corrupt nature of man, as it is manifested when he is given a little power.

So, we go back now to Rehoboam. We've been dealing with Jeroboam in the northern kingdom, and his immediate corruption, introducing the idolatry. Coming back now, to the southern kingdom...

Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. He was forty one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for seventeen years in Jerusalem, [Which of course, quickly you can figure out, he died when he was fifty eight.] the city which the Lord did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. His mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess. And Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, more than what their fathers had done. For they also built the high places, and they set up images, and Ashtoreths, [That is the images of Ashtoreth.] on every high hill, and under every green tree. And there were also sodomites in the land: [The homosexuals, or literally, male prostitutes.] and they did according to all the abomination of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel. So it came to pass in the fifth year of Rehoboam, that Shishak the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: He took away the treasures out of the house of the Lord, the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all of the shields of gold which Solomon had made. And king Rehoboam made in their stead brass shields, and committed them into the hands of the chief of the guard, which kept the door of the king's house. And it was so, when the king went into the house of the Lord, that the guard bore them, and they brought them back into the guard chamber. Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days. And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. And Abijam his son reigned in his stead (14:21-31).

So, we have in this chapter, the division of the kingdom. The first king of the divided kingdom of the north, Jeroboam. His failure, his death. The first king of the southern king, or the uh, actually of the southern kingdom, as a southern kingdom separate, Rehoboam. You have his failure, and his death. Now in Carnack, in Egypt, the archeologists have discovered a huge, what they call Bas-relief, that has the history from the Egyptian side of the invasion of Israel, by Shishak, and the taking of this vast treasure, and the cities that he conquered, in so doing. That's all there in Egypt, a matter of archeological finds and records, and we find that it corresponds with the story here.

When Jeroboam fled to Egypt, he, Shishak was the king of Egypt at that time. The wealth and the glory of Solomon was known around the world. So, when Solomon died, he realized there was the weakening through the division of the northern and the southern kingdom, he took advantage of the weakness of the split of the nation to make this invasion. In coming to Jerusalem, he sacked the riches of Solomon, that were there in the temple, these gold shields, and all, he took as loot, back to Egypt with him. It is interesting that Rehoboam, in place of the gold shields that his father Solomon had, that were taken, he made the brass shields for these guards, who would have a ceremony when the king came in, marching in with the brass shields, and so forth, as the king would come into his chamber. Then, retiring to their chambers.

It's interesting what they do for royalty and for kings, it's sort of rather interesting, because in reality, you know, what is royalty? They're people just like anybody else, so people clamor, and make over them like the Pope, and things like that. But you know just a person, he has to go to the bathroom just like you. I mean he's a human being, but yet people you know, make over them. We last week, I was speaking at Cliff College, in England, and so it was Tuesday, and we figured that the group that had traveled with us would be visiting the Chatsworth house. It was lunch time, and so I said to Greg, and Gary, "Why don't we run over to the Chatsworth house", it was only about four miles from where we were speaking. I said, "Our group should be there, we might be able to catch up with them". So, we started to drive, Greg was driving, on the wrong side of the road, over towards the Chatsworth house, and in England, you never go straight anywhere. It's, it's weird. They have these circles, you come to the circle, uh and, circles every so often, you come to these circles, and you have to take off at the right angle, when you get to the circle. But, as we came to the circle, there was an English bobbie, who stopped us, and they were stopping all the traffic in the circle. So he said, uh we said, "What's going on?", you know. He says, "Royalty is coming by". We said, "Oh! Princess

Di?”, he said, “I don’t know, they never tell us. Just royalty is coming, you know”. So here they are stopping all the traffic, and then pretty soon this one police car comes by, and we wait, and wait. About five minutes later, here came four police cars, and in the middle of the four, and these four cars were weaving back and forth, and in the middle of them was this maroon Jaguar. Of course we, you know, strained to see if it was Fergie, or some guy we didn’t recognize. I don’t know who it was, but royalty I guess. All this big toodoo! You know, stop traffic, everything else, police escort, royalty going by. It’s been that way, you know but, it’s really sort of interesting when you realize, “Hey, they’re people just like us”. They get the royal treatment, but our day’s coming! So a little insight into the special treatment of Rehoboam. You know, the marching of the uh guard, with the brass shield, and all.

Chapter 15

Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam [Back now to Jeroboam. Eighteenth year of his reign. Remember he reigned for twenty two years, so this is four years till the end of his reign.] *the son of Nebat* [Jeroboam, the son of Nebat.] *Abijam began to reign over Judah.* [So Rehoboam died four years before Jeroboam. The son of Rehoboam, Abijam began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jeroboam’s reign.] *He reigned only for three years in Jerusalem.* [So that means that he died before Jeroboam. Jeroboam still has one year to go. So he died before Jeroboam, and thus he had a very short reign.] *His mother’s name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.* [And, or Abishalom.] *And he walked in all of the sins of his father, Rehoboam which he had done before him: his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father. Nevertheless for David’s sake the Lord his God did give to him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, to establish him in Jerusalem: Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything that the Lord commanded him all the days of his life, [except] save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite (15:1-5).*

Outside of that, David had a pretty excellent reign, outside of the experience with Bathsheba. So, as the Lord looked at David, and looking back at David, He sees his reign as sort of an ideal reign, with the one exception. So for David’s sake, God allowed the descendants to go on, though they were being, they were deteriorating.

There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. And the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, [they are not] are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? [Now we will be studying the chronicles of the kings of Judah. I and II Chronicles. So, we’ll be getting more on these kings. They are the chronicles of the kings of Judah. We do not have the books of the chronicles of the kings of Israel, however they are mentioned in a secondary way, through the chronicles of the kings of Judah, as there was still that relationship between the two kingdoms. Though now divided.] *And Abijam slept with his fathers; they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead (15:6-8).*

Now Asa fortunately, changed the pattern. Where Abijam was a bad king, Rehoboam was a bad king. They established these false, uh, images, these, these places of worship of these false gods, Asa was a good king.

In the twentieth year of Jeroboam Asa began the reign over Judah. He reigned for forty one years in Jerusalem. And his grandmother’s name [Actually, she was still alive, and the queen mother at the time,] *was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom. And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, as did David his father. He took away the sodomites [The male prostitutes, or the homosexuals.] out of the land, he removed the idols that his fathers had made. And also this queen mother Maachah, even she was removed from being the queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron. But the high places were not removed: [That is the places where they had worshiped on the high parts of the hills.] Nevertheless Asa’s heart was perfect with the Lord all of his days. And he brought in the things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the Lord, the silver, and the gold, and the vessels. And there was war between Asa and Baasha the king of Israel all of their days. And Baasha the king of Israel went up against Judah, and built the city of Raman (15:9-17),*

So now we're gonna get civil war, the north against the south. It's interesting to me, and I don't, it seems that there's more divisions north and south, than east and west. You have you know, just why, I don't know. We have north and south Korea, we have the north against the south here. You have the north against the south there. We do have Germany that was divided into the east and west, but the divisions seem to be more in the north and south. So, notice that Baasha is now the king. Jeroboam has died, and Baasha is the king. But we're gonna have a little record here of one in between, that didn't reign as king very long. So this war between Asa and Baasha. Baasha built this fortified city of Ramah, which is just north of Jerusalem. The purpose was to cut Jerusalem off from the supplies that generally came to it from the north. To sort of close off Jerusalem, and to control it with this fortified city. So he was building Ramah...

that he might not allow any to go or to come in to Asa the king of Judah. Then Asa took the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, [That which wasn't taken by Shishak.] and he gave it to his servants: and he sent them to Benhadad, the king of Syria, who was dwelling in Damascus, and he said, We have a treaty between us, between my father and your father: behold, I have sent to you a present of silver and gold; come and break your league with Baasha the king of Israel, that he may depart from me. So Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of the hosts which he had against the cities of Israel, he smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abelbethmaachah, and all of Cinneroth, [Now Cinneroth is the lake of Galilee, or the sea of Galilee.] with the land of Naphtali (15:17-20).

Which is in the area of upper Galilee. So, basically, what's happened here, is that Asa is having war with the king of Israel, Baasha who built this fortified city. So he sent money to the Syrian king, Benhadad, that he might hire the mercenaries to attack Baasha's kingdom from the north, from the area of Syria. Coming down the Golan heights, into the area of Dan, and Ijon, and the upper areas, the upper area of Galilee, on down to the sea of Galilee. It had it's desired effect. When Baasha heard he was being attacked from the north, he withdrew the building of the city of Ramah, in order to defend his northern border against Benhadad. It seems like it was a clever strategy that worked.

It is interesting that here in the book of Kings, it doesn't really deal completely with this, but when we move into the book of Chronicles, we find that king Asa is rebuked by Hananiah, the prophet of the Lord, for this uh bit of strategy. Though it worked, it showed a deterioration in Asa's trust in God. Remember he began his kingdom by cleaning things up, by a spiritual reformation. In Chronicles we will read that at the beginning of his reign, or shortly after he began to reign, there came a huge army from Ethiopia, and he sought the Lord, and God delivered this huge army unto him. God helped him, and was with him in battle, and they were able to defeat the Ethiopians. He became powerful, he became strong, but in the latter portion of his kingdom, rather than trusting in the Lord again, and calling on the Lord for help, he reverted to human strategies. Not seeking the help or the guidance of the Lord, and for this he was rebuked by the Lord severely. Then of course, ultimately he died as the result of not calling upon the Lord. We'll get that when we get to II Chronicles, or I Chronicles, fourteen.

Now we, we read of the ascension of Asa, his reformations, and this bit of strategy in hiring Benhadad.

And it came to pass, [verse twenty one] when Baasha heard that the northern part was being attacked, that he left the building of Ramah. And king Asa made a proclamation throughout all of Judah; no one was exempted: all the men were to come and to take apart this city, to take the stones [and all] that they had cut for the walls, and they made a couple of cities, fortified them, the city of Mizpah, and Geba, were fortified with the supplies that they had brought to build this city. So the rest of the acts of Asa, all of his strength and might, all that he did, the cities which he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? [Yes they are, and we will read them when we get there.] Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet. And he slept with his fathers, [Now, in Chronicles, it tells us that he had this disease of the feet, and then it said, "He sought the aid of physicians and did not seek the Lord, and he died". So, the implication in Chronicles, is had he sought the Lord, God could've healed him, and God would've healed him, and he could've had an extended reign. But, in seeking the help of man, and that became the pattern in the later years. They're fabulous lessons to learn from it, and we will learn them when we get to Chronicles. So remember this, just file it away in that little file thing. We're gonna learn a lot from this guy.]

so his son Jehoshaphat reigned in his stead (15:21-24).

Jehoshaphat as we will find later, had a successful reign. Now back up in Israel, going north again, the northern kingdom.

Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year that Asa was the king of Judah, and he reigned for two years. But he did evil in the sight of the Lord, his father, in the sin wherein he made Israel to sin. [He followed the pattern of his father, Jeroboam.] And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belongs to the Philistines; for Nadab and all of Israel had laid siege to Gibbethon. Even in the third year of Asa the king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and began to reign in his stead. And it came to pass, when he reigned, that he smote all of the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any one that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the Lord, which he spoke by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite (15:25-29):

Now, we have just studied that. When Jeroboam's wife came in the disguise, he said, "Hey God's gonna cut off all of the descendants of Jeroboam". This happened just five years after the prophecy. All of the descendants of Jeroboam were wiped out by this Baasha, who conspired against the son of Jeroboam, Nadab, and destroyed him, and then wiped out all the house.

And there was war between Asa and Baasha the king of Israel all of their days. [And so, the northern and the southern kingdoms are fighting each other.] In the third year of Asa the king of Judah, Baasha began to reign over all of Israel, and he reigned for twenty four years. [So Asa saw his death.] And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, he walked in the way of Jeroboam, in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin (15:32-34).

Chapter 16

So the word of the Lord came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying, Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel; and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam, you've made my people to sin, and you've provoked me to anger with their sins; Behold, I will take away the prosperity of Baasha, [In other words, it's not going to be a continuing dynasty, they're gonna be wiped out, even as Jeroboam.] and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam. And he that dies of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; he that dies in the fields shall the vultures eat (16:1-4).

So the same prophecy, that was given to Jeroboam, is now given to Baasha. Now the interesting thing to me, is that God is still speaking. Though there is the corruption, though there is the deterioration, God is still speaking. That shows really the patience of God, the compassion of God, the mercy of God. That even, as long as God is speaking, there's a chance to turn, there's a chance to change. I'm amazed with the patience of God, continuing to speak to a person, long after they've gone downhill! God doesn't forsake them, He continues to speak. Thus, God is continuing to speak to this corrupted king.

So the rest of the acts that he did, they're written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. He slept with his fathers, was buried in Tirzah: and Elah his son reigned in his stead. And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the Lord against Baasha, even against his house, even for all of the evil that he did in the sight of the Lord, in provoking him to anger the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; because he killed him (16:5-7).

Now this prophet, Jehu, was the son of the prophet Hanani, who prophesied to Asa, in the southern kingdom. We'll get that when we get to Chronicles.

Now, in the twenty sixth year of Asa [the good king] in Judah began Elah who was the son of Baasha to reign in Israel, and he reigned for two years. And his servant Zimri, the captain of his chariots, conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, and he was drinking himself [drinking] until he was drunk in the house of Arza the steward of the house in Tirzah. [And so, while he was in this drunken stupor, the military officer, military coup.] He went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty seventh year of Asa the king of Judah, and he reigned in his stead. And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on the throne, that he killed all of the house of Baasha: [And thus the prophecy was fulfilled.] he didn't leave a single one of the kinfolks, nor of his friends. And thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the Lord. And this was because of the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah, his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, provoking Jehovah God of Israel to anger with their

vanities. Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, they're written in the chronicles of the kings of Israel. And in the twenty seventh year of Asa the king of Judah did Zimri reign, and he only reigned for seven days. [Did a lot of damage! He wiped out all of the household of Baasha, but he had a very short lived reign. It's interesting, this is probably a conspiracy, it was an ambition of his life, you know, "My if we can just take over the throne, what we'll be able to do!", etc. Seven days of glory.] And the people were encamped against Gibbethon, which belongs to the Philistines. And the people that were there heard that Zimri had conspired, and had killed the king: wherefore Israel made Omri, the captain of the host, the king over Israel that day in the camp (16:8-16).

So uh, here was the general, and the people said, "Hey, we want you to be the king".

So Omri went up from [This battle against the Philistines at,] Gibbethon, and all of Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah. And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was being taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and he set the thing on fire, and cremated himself in the house, so that he died. For all of the sins which he sinned in doing the evil in the sight of the Lord, walking in the way of Jeroboam, and his sin which he did, to make Israel to sin. Now the rest of his acts are in the chronicles of the kings of Israel. Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half the people were following Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him the king; and half followed Omri (16:17-21).

So, man! Now you've got a real problem! You've got two divisions in the northern kingdom. But don't worry, it doesn't last long.

In the thirty first year of Asa the king of Judah Omri began to reign over Israel, twelve years: [And uh, for twelve years.] six years he reigned in Tirza. Then he changed the capital from Tirza to Samaria. [He bought the hill of Samaria and that became the capital of the northern kingdom after that.] So Omri did evil in the eyes of the Lord, he did worse than all [That's hard to you know, they were bad, this guy's worse! But hey, the next guy, is even worse yet. So, things are going from bad to worse.] He walked in the way of Jeroboam the sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke God to anger with all of their vanities. And the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, his might that he showed, they're written in the chronicles of the kings of Israel. So Omri slept with his fathers, was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son [One of the most wicked of all.] reigned in his stead. And in the thirty eighth year of Asa the king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel from the capital of Samaria for twenty two years. And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him (16:23-30).

So his dad was the worst, and he outdid his dad.

And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, that he took as his wife [This gal,] Jezebel who was the daughter of Ethbaal the king of the Zidonians, and he went and served Baal, and worshiped him. [So it was through Ahab that the worship of Baal was introduced to the northern kingdom.] And he raised up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke Jehovah God of Israel to anger than all of the kings of Israel that were before him. And in his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in the youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.

So here, the last verse, is an interesting little insight to the fulfillment of the prophecy that was made some five hundred years earlier. In Joshua, chapter six. When they took the city of Jericho, the walls of course were thrown down by the hand of the Lord. As they destroyed the city of Jericho, Joshua uttered a prophecy, cursing the man that would rebuild the city. There in Joshua, six, twenty six, you find the curse that Joshua pronounced against the man, and told actually, how he would begin to build the walls, and his firstborn, and how they would be finished in the latter. Joshua adjured them at that time saying, "Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and builds this city Jericho. He shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son, shall he set up the gates of it". So, just as was predicted by Joshua, some five hundred years earlier, so now the prophecy is being fulfilled.

We had tonight in the lesson, prophecies from this old prophet Ahijah, against the house of Jeroboam. That was literally fulfilled. Then we had the prophecy of Jehu, against the house of Baasha. We saw it

fulfilled. Now we have the prophecy of Joshua, six hundred years earlier, being fulfilled. In our last lesson, the prophet who prophesied against the altar, naming Josiah as the one who would destroy that altar, and desecrate it. It is to be fulfilled in another three hundred years. But interesting, God's sure word of prophecy.

This is one of the strong apologetics, for the scriptures. One of the proofs that the bible is divinely inspired, and one of the proofs of the eternal character, and nature of God. God, being eternal, and God being omniscient, can speak of things before they ever take place, with tremendous accuracy! Here are all these prophecies, that were literally fulfilled. As we go through the Bible, we are bound to notice how much of the bible is devoted to prophecy. Before telling of events, before they ever take place. We are bound to be amazed at the absolute accuracy of prophecy. So that it can be said, "Not one good word has failed, of all that God said". That is, God has completely kept His word, all the way along. Not once has there been one word of God that has failed. The prophecies up to this point, have all been fulfilled.

That is what makes of course, the bible such an interesting book in the days in which we live. Because the bible speaks so implicitly of our days, and as Daniel is prophesying of things that we see now, shaping up in the world, Daniel said, "And these words are true". We can see some twenty five hundred years after Daniel, the words that he spoke, that relate to the day in which we live, we can see them coming to pass. So as we move through now, and we get into the area of prophecy where it really begins to, actually become a ministry in the nation of Israel.

In the next chapter we're introduced to the man Elijah, this tremendous prophet of God, and we begin to see now, how that God is going to begin to speak through His prophets. At this time of Israel's decline and failure, God will continue to speak to the people, raising up prophets to deal with the national issues. The first of them, and one of the most powerful of all of them, is this prophet Elijah.

So now the lessons are gonna shift gears a bit. Where we had to go through this shuffling of the kingdoms, and back and forth, with the north and the south, little hard to handle. But you did well. You came through it. Now, we're gonna get into some pretty exciting areas, as we get into the prophecies of Elijah, and then the subsequent prophecies of Elisha, which of course, will take us through the rest of the book of Kings, and on into II Kings, as we deal with these fascinating prophets of God, who are raised up for this important ministry to speak to the nation of Israel, during their period of spiritual decline.

Again, God's faithfulness in continuing to warn the people, though they were not faithful, God remains faithful. That is always true. We may not be faithful to do all the things that we should do for the Lord. But thank God, He remains faithful! And God will be faithful to keep His word, and His promise to us, as we trust in Him.

Father, help us we pray, to learn the lessons. The lessons of human failure, especially when man turns his back upon you. How we are just courting disaster for our life. Lord, we pray that we would not be guilty of forsaking Your ways. That we would not be guilty of worshiping and serving other gods. That we would not allow Lord, any thing to come between our relationship with you. But O Lord, help, we pray, that you might ever be first, and foremost, in our hearts, and in our lives. Lord, help us, that we might love you with all our heart, our soul, our mind, our strength. God help us to keep a very light touch with the world, realizing Lord, that this world, and the things that are in it, are going to perish. They're going to pass away. May we hold onto that Lord, which cannot perish. Things of the Spirit, that we might live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, be led by the Spirit. Thus Lord, become the persons you want us to be. Draw us Lord, unto yourself this week. May we be sensitive to your voice, as you speak to us in a multitude of various ways. May we hear Your voice, may we respond, may we be obedient Lord. Work in our hearts, cleanse us Lord, from sin, from any evil way. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.