

WHAT WAY THE MAN OF GOD WENT

1 KINGS 13:1 – 14:31

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~ Our Spiritual Safari attended the funeral for King Solomon in our previous report from our expedition through the entire Word of God. Thus far in Kings, we have considered the division of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah; learned that Solomon was a terrible example for the kings who would follow him; and we already know most of the kings of Judah and Israel will go into far greater levels of apostasy than Solomon. This is not a good time in the history of the nation Israel; and the record becomes quite complicated at this point. We briefly met Jeroboam, the first king of the ten northern tribes, in our last report. He led the rebellion against Solomon. We also saw how Rehoboam, who didn't have nearly the wisdom or diplomacy of his father Solomon, was ultimately responsible for the splitting of the kingdom because he raised the taxes on the people, and they revolted.

In this report, God will rebuke Jeroboam for having done more evil than anyone before him. We'll also meet the prophet Ahijah who refused to compromise with Jeroboam. A chart of the kings of Israel and Judah is below. It should be extremely helpful for internalizing the structure of Israel and Judah – and lists the prophets who prophesied to which particular king. Honestly, without this chart, one will likely never understand the kings of Israel and Judah correctly. This section of Scripture we are entering will quickly become acutely confusing as we examine king after king. It is easy to immediately lose sight of the northern kings and southern kings, and if they were good or bad. Who is speaking to whom at what time about what subject is absolutely critical to understanding this section of Scripture properly, correctly and completely.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE KINGS OF THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

JUDAH					ISRAEL				
King	Reign	Character	Prophet		King	Reign	Character	Prophet	
1. Rehoboam	931-913 BC	(17 yrs.)	Bad	Shemaiah	1. Jeroboam I	931-910 BC	(22 yrs.)	Bad	Ahijah
2. Abijam	913-911	(3 yrs.)	Bad		2. Nadab	910-909	(2 yrs.)	Bad	
3. Asa	911-870	(41 yrs.)	Good		3. Baasha	909-886	(24 yrs.)	Bad	
					4. Elah	886-885	(2 yrs.)	Bad	
					5. Zimri	885	(7 days)	Bad	
4. Jehoshaphat	870-848*	(25 yrs.)	Good		6. Omri	885-874	(12 yrs.)	Bad	Elijah Micaiah
5. Jehoram	848-841*	(8 yrs.)	Bad	Obadiah	7. Ahab	874-853	(22 yrs.)	Bad	
6. Ahaziah	841	(1 yr.)	Bad		8. Ahaziah	853-852	(2 yrs.)	Bad	
7. Athaliah	841-835	(6 yrs.)	Bad		9. Joram	852-841	(12 yrs.)	Bad	Elisha
8. Joash	835-796	(40 yrs.)	Good	Joel	10. Jehu	841-814	(28 yrs.)	Bad	
9. Amaziah	796-767	(29 yrs.)	Good		11. Jehoahaz	814-798	(17 yrs.)	Bad	Jonah Amos Hosea
10. Azariah (or Uzziah)	767-740*	(52 yrs.)	Good	Isaiah	12. Jehoash	798-782*	(16 yrs.)	Bad	
					13. Jeroboam II	782-753*	(41 yrs.)	Bad	
					14. Zechariah	753-752	(6 mo.)	Bad	
					15. Shallum	752	(1 mo.)	Bad	
					16. Menahem	752-742*	(10 yrs.)	Bad	
					17. Pekahiah	742-740	(2 yrs.)	Bad	
11. Jotham	740-732*	(16 yrs.)	Good	Micah	18. Pekah	740-732*	(20 yrs.)	Bad	
12. Ahaz	732-716*	(16 yrs.)	Bad		19. Hoshea	732-722	(9 yrs.)	Bad	
					<i>(Capture of Samaria and captivity of Israel)</i>				
13. Hezekiah	716-687*	(29 yrs.)	Good						
14. Manasseh	687-642*	(55 yrs.)	Bad	Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Jeremiah					
15. Amon	642-640	(2 yrs.)	Bad						
16. Josiah	640-608	(31 yrs.)	Good						
17. Jehoahaz	608	(3 mo.)	Bad						
18. Jehoiakim	608-597	(11 yrs.)	Bad						
19. Jehoiachin	597	(3 mo.)	Bad						
20. Zedekiah	597-586	(11 yrs.)	Bad						
<i>(Destruction of Jerusalem and captivity of Judah)</i>									

*Co-regency

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Most contemporary Bible courses taught in Bible colleges and seminaries today are fantastically puerile; and that is an understatement. Theological professors perpetually dilute an already anemic doctrine that is passed along to the world for more adulteration! Any so-called "Bible teacher" who cannot run down the list of good and bad kings and make ninety-five percent is just plain ignorant; because there were only eight out of forty-nine kings who were good! That's not very many. In the northern kingdom, every king was a bad king. Most of the kings of the southern kingdom of Judah were also bad kings.

Alright, to be fair, American presidents haven't done so well, either. If you want to name good and bad presidents, I suppose it would depend on your party affiliation. Well, God Himself records the history of good and bad kings for us in this safari. From here forward, we will enter a very dark blot in the history of the nation Israel, and we're going to see some *VERY* bad things in subsequent reports. The problem with the darkness of Israel and Judah is that they had the Holy Light of revelation from God. That makes them responsible, friends! Light creates responsibility; and I wish most so-called Christians today would recognize and come to understand that.

So, with those Scriptural premises established, let's take a brief look back at the life of Solomon. We need to fully understand why the kingdom was rent by God from Solomon's hands. The question I have is: why would such a wise man as Solomon end as the fool he became? Solomon was given a special and direct dispensation of wisdom from God to administer to His chosen people; unfortunately, that wisdom did not enter into Solomon's personal life – not even a little bit – and it didn't enter his spiritual life, either. We're not talking about spiritual wisdom or discernment, because Solomon didn't have those. Solomon did, however, understand government, politics, and certain other basic principles and concepts that enabled him to be the wisest world ruler.

Solomon prayed for and received wisdom very early in life; but we learned he never fully broke with false religion or idolatry in Israel. From the moment he assumed the throne, idol worship was rampant in the land and Solomon closed his eyes to it. He never took a definitive stand against idolatry. The primary reason for that tolerance was the thousand wives. They were all worshiping idols from their homeland. We also saw Solomon engage in gaudy hallmarks of prosperity as he sent out ships and brought back apes, peacocks and ivory. Well, there may not be anything particularly wrong with any of those things, but they are most definitely wrong for the man who has been called to live for God, witness for Him and glorify the True and Living God to the world. If you didn't read our report from first Kings Chapter eight verse forty-four through chapter ten verse twenty-two, then I suggest you go back and do so.

Proverbs reveals the wisdom of Solomon, but Ecclesiastes will spotlight his foolishness. To be fair, we'll not find any failures of Solomon or David recorded in the Book of Chronicles. The two Books of Chronicles cover the same ground we are studying in Kings; but Kings presents *man's* viewpoint while Chronicles presents *God's* viewpoint of the same historical period. We *MUST* understand that aspect in order to grasp the record of the nation Israel properly, correctly and completely. When God forgave David, He blotted out his sins and, therefore, they are not mentioned in Chronicles; but we sure see them in this record. Likewise, God forgave Solomon of his failures, and they are not mentioned in Chronicles, either. Here, we have Solomon's weakness as he multiplied wives and horses. As we stated

before, it bears repeating, God never approved of polygamy in Solomon's – nor in David's – life. We saw the utter condemnation of that practice and the ramifications they brought. *MUCH* suffering in the family was the result of their willful sin and disobedience. God said very clearly His wrath was against them. See, immorality and false religion walk step in step.

1 John 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie ~

Don't kid yourself, friends – you cannot live in sin and serve God or have fellowship with the Father; it's Scripturally impossible. Solomon discovered that to be true. We have an epidemic of people fooling themselves about this today – and they usually become so-called Christian leaders – but they continue to live in sin and reap the consequences of their moral issues. It poisons the church, hurts everyone around them and gives the enemy occasion to blaspheme the cause of Christ. Myriad multitudes support them because they excuse away each other's sins.

On the other hand, the man who believes God and teaches sound doctrine will be ridiculed, ignored, and not well-supported, if at all. The church world at-large only supports false doctrine. The more outlandish and hypocritical the theology, the more attention it will receive, and the larger congregation shall attend. If you begin teaching the Bible as I am, you had better be prepared to sell everything in order to give it away to the poor; because the average self-professing believer isn't interested in studying the Bible. They're interested in everything churchy *EXCEPT* Bible study. Make a note, friends. Now, this doesn't bother me, because I know they're not fooling God, my beloved readers – trust me on this – judgment is quickly coming for them. In the meantime, they have no fellowship with Him.

I rest on that factual premise to say I believe Solomon was a colossal failure overall. There are two men in Scripture who had tremendous potential and opportunity – Samson and Solomon – and they both failed God at critical moments for the nation Israel. They are both the equivalent of shameful Christian Tragedies. So, our safari epitaph for Solomon is not nice. I'll take it from Solomon's own words, since that is all I have to judge by:

Ecclesiastes 2:17 Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit. 18 Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun ~

Whatever glory Solomon had was fleeting and futile. That little flower you pass by each day without notice or regard is arrayed more gloriously than Solomon ever was. That's also the passing glory in this world today; that's what Scripture says about Solomon. If I preached Solomon's funeral service, it wasn't very nice. I'm sure some of the family would have walked out on me. Well, that's too bad, because we are seeing the kingdom rent and divided; and it can all be traced very definitely back to King Solomon's sins and disobedience....

XIII

1 And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.

2 And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.

3 And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

~ We're going to begin to move quickly in our safari through this history because much of it overlaps. As we follow the two kingdoms, we will consider one right after the other – and together. It can be monotonous. Jeroboam comes now to the throne in the northern kingdom, and he is given an opportunity to serve God. He was concerned that the northern tribes would want to return to Jerusalem to worship in the temple. Naturally, if they did that, the kingdom might be reunited; and he wanted to keep it separate to remain in power. That's where the two golden calves in Bethel and in Samaria come into play.

Interestingly, Josiah is mentioned by the prophet in verse two, but Josiah won't come on the scene until almost three hundred years later. Josiah was a good king. He led one of the five great revivals that took place in Israel during the historical period we are studying. Those revivals are not mentioned in Kings, but they are in Chronicles. Revival is always seen from God's perspective. We don't need to count the number of converts when a great spiritual movement takes place in reality, friends. Well, Josiah is one man who will destroy idols in Israel.

As we read on, Jeroboam puts forth his hand to have this prophet executed but becomes paralyzed. That's when he changed his mind really quickly and asks for prayer! This is a remarkable passage as no compromise whatsoever is offered by this prophet against the evil of idolatry. Today, we have so much double-talk and subterfuge in Christian circles I can't even keep track of it all. There is a super-duper piocity and quasi-intellectualism being claimed that is nothing in the world but a sophomoric denial of the things of God. Butter melts when the mouths of the men who give out some statements on this forum on which I teach speak. The compromise in our fundamental theological seminaries that attempt to appear conservative is sickening; and that has now trickled down to the mainstream life of most so-called born-again believers.

Now, I don't think we need to be cantankerous and disagreeable just for the sake of being disagreeable; and I do not think we need to refuse to have fellowship with certain individuals. However, what we *DO* need is to have clear cut statements that make a stand for the Lord Jesus Christ. My Christian friends: many of you support organizations that have no capacity nor ability to give out the Word of God; and you have *NO IDEA* where your giving goes. Your giving may be sinful. God is going to hold us responsible for our giving – you can just write that down. We are living in evil days. The prophet we are considering right now isn't about to stick around for lunch with old man Jeroboam. He turns and goes on his way! You would think this would have changed the life of Jeroboam because it should have – but it didn't....

4 And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him.

5 The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.

6 And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.

7 And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward.

8 And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place:

9 For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.

10 So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel.

11 Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father.

12 And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah.

13 And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon,

14 And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am.

15 Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread.

16 And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place:

17 For it was said to me by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.

18 He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him.

19 So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water.

20 And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back:

21 And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee,

22 But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the LORD did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.

23 And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

24 And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase.

25 And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt.

26 And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the man of God, who was disobedient unto the word of the LORD: therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake unto him.

27 And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled him.

28 And he went and found his carcase cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcase: the lion had not eaten the carcase, nor torn the ass.

29 And the prophet took up the carcase of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city, to mourn and to bury him.

30 And he laid his carcase in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, Alas, my brother!

31 And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones:

32 For the saying which he cried by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.

33 After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places.

34 And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.

~ Friends, when the church gets involved in protests and starts bringing in things like hard rock music and sensational stuffiness claiming it as worship, it is nothing in the world but a stench of compromise in the nostrils of the Almighty God! We're living in days today exactly like the days we are studying; the difference is: the man of God took a very definite stand in Biblical times that is not being taken today. The prophets in the Word of God always revealed clearly where they stood. Today, it's difficult to know where most so-called Christian leaders stand. Most seminary professors won't even make a statement regarding whether they are pre-millennial or not. Those are the ones who always go out of their way to lead prophetic congresses and their ilk. What a tragedy we are experiencing today as so many men who are not chosen by God seem to be in some sort of ministry....

XIV

1 At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick.

2 And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam; and get thee to Shiloh: behold, there is Ahijah the prophet, which told me that I should be king over this people.

3 And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child.

4 And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see; for his eyes were set by reason of his age.

5 And the LORD said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman.

6 And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another ? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings.

7 Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel,

8 And rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee: and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes;

9 But hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back:

10 Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone.

11 Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken it.

12 Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house: and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die.

13 And all 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.

14 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.

15 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.

16 And he shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin.

17 And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah: and when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died;

18 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 servant Ahijah the prophet.

19 And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

20 And the days which Jeroboam reigned were two and twenty years: and he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his stead.

21 And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess.

22 And Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done.

23 For they also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree.

24 And there were also sodomites in the land: and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

25 And it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem:

26 And he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

27 And king Rehoboam made in their stead brasen shields, and committed them unto the hands of the chief of the guard, which kept the door of the king's house.

28 And it was so, when the king went into the house of the LORD, that the guard bare them, and brought them back into the guard chamber.

29 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?

30 And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days.

31 And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess. And Abijam his son reigned in his stead.

~ David is the standard by which God measures all kings in Israel and Judah. When they don't measure up, God sets them aside. Jeroboam died and his child died, too. I hope you read both of these chapters very carefully. Obviously, things are no better down there with Rehoboam in the southern kingdom of Judah. Rehoboam kept up a good front, though. When the golden shields were taken away by the king of Egypt, he made

new ones of brass. That substitute represents judgment; brass always speaks of judgment in the Word of God.

So, our Spiritual Safari ends this report with civil war raging as a direct result of sinful actions by both kings – Rehoboam and Jeroboam. Truly, what a man sows – he reaps! Later generations go on reaping those things, too. We have quite a ways to go in our study of Kings – I hope you’ll stick close with us on this expedition to take the entire Word of God to the entire world. In closing, notice that each one of the kings of Judah have their mother named right along with them. Mothers, you’re responsible for that little monster you have running around. I suggest you learn the Word of God so you can teach it to them properly, correctly and completely ~