

# 1 Kings 14 Commentary

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Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
[1 Kings Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

## THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

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(NOTE: Many consider Amaziah and Hezekiah as "good" kings)  
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[ESV chart - kings of Israel - more information](#)  
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[Another Chart with Variable Dates for Reigns of Kings](#)

1 Kings 14:1 At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam became sick.

- **that time:** 1Ki 13:33,34
- **the son of Jeroboam :** 1Ki 14:12,13 Ex 20:5 1Sa 4:19,20 31:2 2Sa 12:15
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

## THE HEIR TO THE THRONE IS ILL

**At that time** - What time? After the continued ordination of false priests at the high places (1Ki 13:33-34+) in spite of the sign of the split altar and stiffened arm (healed by the man of God). "*The order of the narrative shews that the writer of Kings connects the sickness of Jeroboam's son with the events which have been narrated in the previous chapter in the nature of a divine judgement.*" (Lumby) So now we see the judgment of God beginning to unfold against Jeroboam by causing his son and potential royal heir to become ill (cf 1Ki 14:10-11+). Jeroboam did have another heir for 1 Kings 15:25+ says "Now Nadab the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years."

**Abijah the son of Jeroboam became sick** - Abijah means "my father is Yah(weh)," suggesting a pretentious claim on the part of Jeroboam. The name **Abijah** can be confusing because it is the name of the son of Jeroboam in the present story and is also the name of Rehoboam's son (also called Abijam - 1Ki 14:31) who succeeded him as King of the Southern Kingdom.

### James Smith - PRAYING IN DISGUISE 1 Kings 14:1–17

"Prayer against His absolute decree  
No more avails than breath against the wind,  
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:  
Therefore to His great bidding I submit."  
—MILTON.

The more deeply we are imbued with the spirit of prayer the more simple and child-like shall we become. "Sublimity always is simple," is how Longfellow puts it. Eloquent prayers may only be the haughtiness of the human heart in disguise. The wife of Jeroboam is not the only one who has put on the mask while making their requests known unto God. Purity of worship was at a very low ebb while King Jeroboam made the "lowest of the people priests" and consecrated "whosoever would" (chap. 13:33), "I want to" is by no means the only qualification for the service of God. The Lord had sent a warning cry against this unholy altar (chap. 13:2). Now the jealous God of Israel visits the iniquity with judgment. This attempt to outwit and delude the prophet of the Lord has its lessons for us. There was a—

#### I. Knowledge of God.

Jeroboam could not be a stranger to the great things Jehovah had wrought for His people Israel; and had not the prophet of the Lord foretold him that he should be "king over this people?" (1Ki 5:2). But the revealed will of God had been set aside. His acts of worship were now according to his own thoughts and convenience, so he made Israel to sin by the substituting of his own ways for the ways of the Lord (1Ki 12:33). There may be a knowledge of the ways and will of God, while the daily life is a presumptuous denial of the divine revelation.

#### II. Feeling a Need. "Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick" (1Ki 14:1).

They were very anxious to know "what shall become of the child" (1Ki 14:3). Our dearest and our best are never beyond the withering touch of God's finger. Every sorrow and disappointment may be to us as goads to drive us nearer our God if our hearts are right with Him. There is bitterness of heart that cannot be spoken into the ears of ordinary mortals; that needs the touch of the Eternal. The yearning of the soul at such times is to know what the will of God is concerning us.

#### III. Disguising of Character.

The wife of Jeroboam changed her appearance and went to inquire of the man of God, "feigning herself to be another woman" (1Ki 14:2–5). Perhaps the king knew that the old prophet Ahijah was blind by reason of age, but both he and his wife seemed to forget that God was not blind. It is utterly needless for any one to come to God feigning themselves to be different from what they are; and yet this disguising of the true character, while making requests known unto God, is a common pious fraud. On our knees we may pretend to believe all that the Lord hath spoken, then among our fellowmen we put on our self-magnifying glasses, and forget the Lord that bought us. God looks on the heart, and as a man thinketh in his heart so is he before Him.

#### IV. Complete Failure.

As soon as she came to the door of the prophet she heard these mask-scathing words, "Come in thou wife of Jeroboam, why feignest thou thyself to be another" (1Ki 14:6). The veil of her disguise was rent from the top to the bottom, and the light of God's presence shone in upon her. Saul had his disguise torn off him while on the way to Damascus. The Pharisee that went up to the temple to pray feigned himself a righteous man, but he went away as he came, with his mask untouched and his soul unblessed (Luke 18:14). Jeroboam and his wife were desirous of knowing the mind of the Lord about their child, but they were afraid to face the will of God concerning themselves and their ungodly lives. The disguise was evidently an attempt to avoid the dreaded prediction of the "man of God" in the preceding chapter. Is there anything in the background of our lives that we are afraid God should deal with, things which make us put on a mask when we venture to seek for divine light or guidance? It will not improve matters to hide them, God will deal with us according to our daily life before Him. Therefore come to the light that the evil deeds may be reprov'd, confessed, and cleansed (John 3:19–21), for be sure your sin will find you out.

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### **John Kitto - The Disguised Princess—I Kings 14:1–18**

This quiet place, apart among the enclosing hills, is Shiloh. It was once the seat of the Lord's tabernacle, his altar, and his ark, and was then replete with holy activities and solemn sounds. But since these departed, it has been well nigh forsaken, and has relapsed into a silent village, or a small rural town. Yet still holy things are here—holy men, who have found here a sort of refuge from the wickedness of the time—a quiet retreat, favorable to sacred memories, and to the nourishment of holy thoughts. Among them is Ahijah, that old prophet who rent the new cloak of Jeroboam, and promised him the largest share of the divided kingdom. He is now blind. Upon the outer world, made foul by man's abominations, he has closed his eyes, and sees and lives by the light that shines within.

Now observe that woman stealing down the street, and seeking the old prophet's house. By her guise she is of the peasantry, and she bears a basket. Yet her gait scarcely befits her garb; and the quick furtive glance she casts around under her coarse hood-veil, betrays some conscious concealment, some fear of recognition, some purpose she would not wish to have known.

This woman, mean as she seems, is the lady of the land; and although her basket contains but a few cakes and biscuits, and a little honey, she might, if she pleased, have filled it with precious and costly things. She is the wife of Jeroboam—as far as we know, his only wife,—the mother of his heir; and therefore, if he had a score of wives, the chief of them all. That heir, by name Abijah, is alarmingly ill; and, at the instance of Jeroboam, and impelled by motherly love, that royal lady has come all the way from Tirzah, in this disguise, that she may learn of the prophet what is to become of her son; and the things in her basket are gifts for the man of God, suited to the condition she had assumed. The disguise was thought necessary to conceal this visit from the people, and partly in the idle hope of obtaining, in the semblance of another, the desired answer, unmixed with the reproof and denunciation, which Jeroboam knew that his conduct had been calculated to draw down, from the prophet who had foretold his exaltation. He thus foolishly thought to cozen the Lord, through his prophet, out of an answer of peace, and slyly to evade the judgment he feared might be connected with it; and he idly calculated that the prophet, whose view could extend into the future, hid in the counsels of God, could not see through a present matter wrapped up only in the thin cover of it woman's hood. "There was never," says Dr. Hall, "a wicked man who was not infatuate, and in nothing more than in those things wherein he hoped most to transcend the reach of others."

All this fine contrivance was blown to pieces the moment the wife of Jeroboam crossed Ahijah's threshold; for then she heard the voice of the blind prophet—"Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings." He then broke forth in a strong tide of denunciation against Jeroboam, because he had sinned and made Israel to sin; and the voice which had proclaimed his rise from a low estate to royal power, now, with still stronger tone, proclaimed the downfall and ruin of his house—quenched in blood—its members to find tombs only in the bowels of beasts and birds. There was one exception—only one. The youth of whom she came to inquire—he only should come to his grave in peace, by dying of his present disease, because in him only was "found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam."

Woeful tidings these for a mother's heart; and scarcely, perhaps, intelligible to her stunned intellect. Here was beginning of judgment upon Jeroboam, and upon her, because she was his. Judgment in taking away the only well-conditioned and worthy son; and judgment stored up in and for the ill-conditioned ones who were suffered to remain. God, when it suits the purposes of his wisdom and his justice, can afflict no less by what he spares than by what he takes.

Yet there was mercy in this judgment; mercy, strange as it seems to say,—to him on whom the sentence of death was passed. It is so stated; and it is more intelligible, than it seems. It was because there was some good thing found in him that he should die. Death was to be for him a reward, a blessing, a deliverance. He should die peaceably upon his bed; for him all Israel should mourn; for him many tears be shed; and he should be brought with honor to his tomb. More than all, he would be taken from his part in the evil that

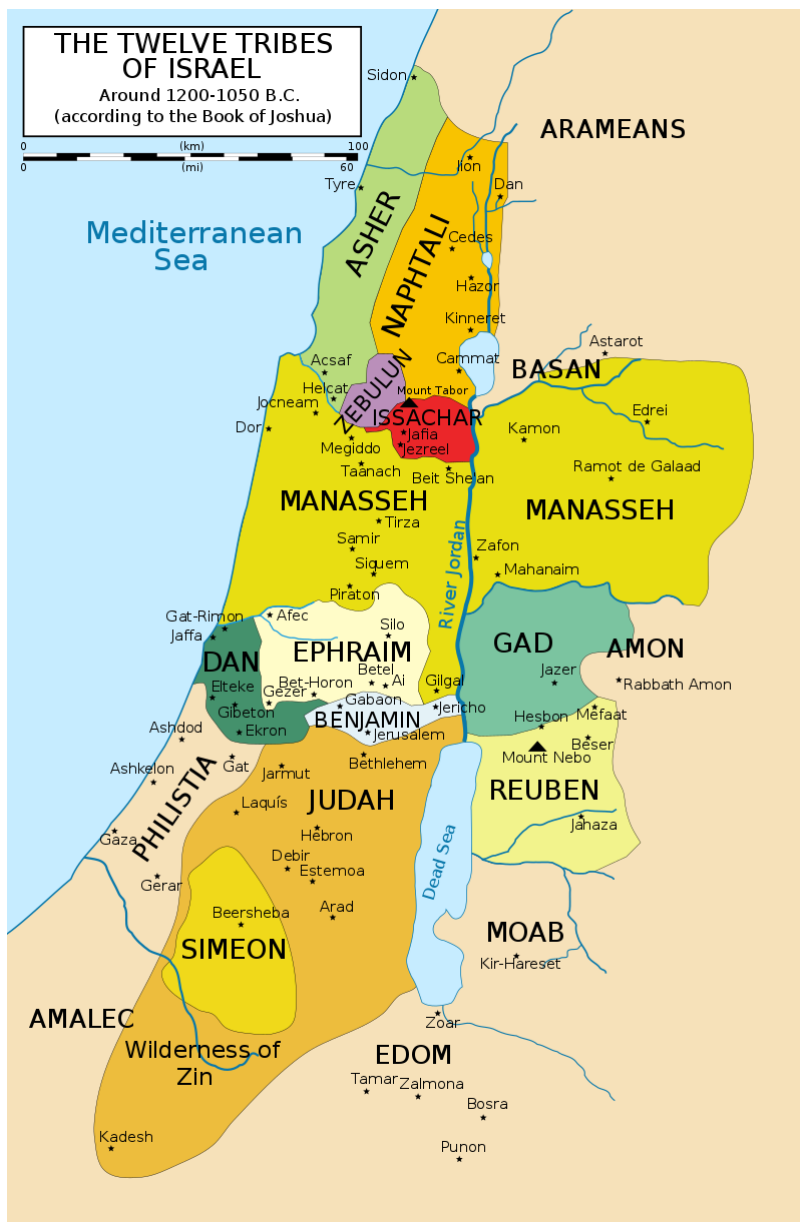
hung over his house; and the Lord's vindictory justice would thus be spared the seeming harshness of bringing ruin upon a righteous king for his father's crimes. Alas! how little do we know the real objects of the various incidents of life and death—of mercy, of punishment, and of trial! In this case the motives were disclosed; and we are suffered to glance upon some of the great secrets of death, which form the trying mysteries of life. Having the instance, we can find the parallels of lives, full of hope and promise, prematurely taken, and that in mercy, as we can judge, to those who depart. The heavenly Husbandman often gathers for his garner the fruit that early ripens, without suffering it to hang needlessly long, beaten by storms, upon the tree. Oh, how often, as many a grieved heart can tell, do the Lord's best beloved die betimes—taken from the evil to come,—while the unripe, the evil, the injurious, live long for mischief to themselves and others! Roses and lilies wither far sooner than thorns and thistles.

Doleful were the tidings the disguised princess had to bear back to the beautiful town of Tirzah. All remoter griefs were probably to her swallowed up in this—which rung continually in her ears in all her homeward way,—“When thy feet enter into the city the child shall die.” It is heavy tidings to a mother that she must lose her well-beloved son; but it is a grievous aggravation of her trouble that she might not see him before he died. They who were about him knew not that he was to die today, and therefore could not estimate the preciousness of his last hours, and the privilege of being then near him, and of receiving his embrace. She knew; and she might not be near, nor pour out upon her dying son the fulness of a mother's heart. Knowing that her son lay on his death-bed, her first impulse must have been to fly home to receive his dying kiss; but her second to linger by the way, as if to protract that dear life which must close the moment she entered the city. Never, surely, before or since, was a distressed mother so woefully torn between the contrary impulses of her affection!

At last her weary steps reached the city; and, as she entered its gate, her son died, and she was only just in time to press to her arms the heart still warm, although it had ceased to beat.

**1 Kings 14:2 Jeroboam said to his wife, “**Arise** now, and disguise yourself so that they will not know that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh; **behold**, Ahijah the prophet is there, who spoke concerning me that I would be king over this people.**

- **disguise:** 1Ki 14:5,6 22:30 1Sa 28:8 2Sa 14:2 2Ch 18:29 Lu 12:2
- **Ahijah:** 1Ki 11:29-38
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries



Shiloh is also called Silo - see just above Ephraim

## JEROBOAM'S WIFE'S CLANDESTINE CONSULTATION

Jeroboam said to his wife, “**Arise** now, and disguise yourself so that they will not know that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh; **behold**, **Ahijah** the prophet is there, who spoke concerning me that I would be king over this people (1Ki 11:29-40+) - Why is Jeroboam's wife being sent on this mystery mission? The context tells us she is sent to inquire about Jeroboam's sick son Abijah. **Shiloh** (Silo) was the site where Joshua divided the tribes by lot, was the site of the temple during the Judges period and was Ahijah's home. **Shiloh** is located in the territory of the tribe of Ephraim, in the central hill country of Israel, about 20 miles (32 km) north of Jerusalem but only a few miles north northeast of Shiloh so that the journey his wife would take would not be a long one. It is interesting that **Ahijah** (clearly a true prophet of God) remained in the Northern Kingdom in spite of Jeroboam's abominable apostasy. It was as if God had him stationed there to provide a lifeline to Jeroboam if he were willing to humble himself.

It is interesting the KJV has "Arise, I **pray** thee, and disguise thyself." (1Ki 14:2KJV) Jeroboam's prayer was misguided!

Regarding the **disguise**, we do not know if the disguise was intended to fool Ahijah or to conceal Jeroboam (via his wife) going to a prophet of the LORD. **L M Grant** makes a good point stating that "Jeroboam was totally insensible of the sovereign omniscience of God. He wanted information from God and thought he could fool God into giving him the information without knowing to whom he was giving it!"

**J. Rawson Lumby** has pointed out Jeroboam's plans "reveal to us a singular condition of mind ... we see the king confident in the prophet's power of foretelling the future even in the case of an individual life, and yet thinking that the queen could go to him with her question and he not know who was making the inquiry." ([First Kings page 90](#))

**Wayne Barber** on why this disguise - Perhaps he did not want the people to know he was seeking help from a prophet of the Lord. Perhaps he was too proud to admit the evil of his ways and humble himself before the Lord and one of His true servants. His actions admitted that he was powerless to bring healing to his son. All his man-made rituals and self-appointed priests were helpless and useless. ([Life Principles from the Kings of the Old Testament](#))

**Dale Ralph Davis:** Ahijah had admonished Jeroboam to function according to the David-standard (1Ki 11:37–38), but he had not done so; Jeroboam had determined that neo-bovinism would do more for royal stability than covenant orthodoxy. Hence his bull cult (12:25–33). He likely knew Ahijah would hold a 'jaundiced' view of his religious innovations. He therefore dare not approach Ahijah directly, nor must his wife in any recognizable form. That would be sure to bring a bad word from the prophet. But if the royal wife appeared simply as an anxious Israelite mother seeking a word from God regarding her stricken son, why, the prophet might well be prone to give her a 'good' word. Certainly a gift (fee for services?, v. 3) wouldn't hurt. In fact, the situation was better than Jeroboam dared hope, for Ahijah could scarcely see a thing anymore (v. 4b)! Here is the king, then, with his magical view of the word of Yahweh. If he can only weasel a positive pronouncement out of the prophet, his son will surely recover. Even a manipulated word will be a certain word. ([1 Kings: The Wisdom and the Folly](#))

**Cyril Barber** - The king was understandably concerned about his son, and he wanted to know if Abijah would recover. On an earlier occasion, Ahijah the prophet had spoken to Jeroboam and predicated that he would become king. This prophecy had come to pass. Now Jeroboam determined to seek out the prophet. He believed that if anyone could tell him if Abijah would get better, Ahijah could. But he was afraid to visit the prophet himself, for he feared that the prophet would denounce him for his sins. So he devised a strategy whereby his wife would go in his place. Did Jeroboam ask for prayer that the lad might recover? Jeroboam had asked for prayer at the feast when his arm had become stuck in an outstretched position. Fear had seized him and he had quickly implored the man of God from Judah to intercede for him that his arm might be restored. The prophet had prayed for him, and the Lord had graciously responded to his request. Now, however, with Abijah so ill, what would this loving father do? Would he humble himself, confess his unworthiness, and ask a gracious God to heal his son? (See [Barber's note below](#)) (See [The Books of Kings, Volume 1: The Righteousness of God ... - Page 412](#))

**Cyril Barber** - It will help us understand Jeroboam's actions if we pause for a moment to consider the effect of insecurity upon certain people. If we draw a horizontal line we will be able to place different styles of response on a continuum.

At the one extreme of insecurity we have people who are fearful. They will most often withdraw from threatening situations and in most instances will avoid challenges. They are resentful of authority, but will generally respond with reluctance when told what to do.

At the other extreme are those whose feelings of insecurity are mingled with pride or arrogance. They are constantly striving to prove that they are capable people. In reality, they are frequently presumptuous and insensitive when it comes to dealing with other people. And because they often sabotage themselves they are denied any real success.

In the middle are those who flip-flop back and forth. Jeroboam fits in this group. There were times when he exhibited arrogance and an "I can do it by myself" attitude, and then there were those instances when he pulled back (as in this chapter when he sent his wife on an errand). His words show his fear of facing Ahijah one-on-one. After determining to send Abijah's mother, his pride asserted itself and he determined, "I won't ask him to pray for my son. I'll just ask him if he is going to recover."

People at both extremes of the continuum are vulnerable to both internal and external pressures. These pressures are most often handled in the wrong way, and so success is often denied them. And those in the middle lack stability, for they vacillate back and forth between the extremes.

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**AHIJAH** - The distinguished prophet of Shiloh, who was interested in Jeroboam I. In Solomon's lifetime Ahijah clothed himself with a new robe, met Jeroboam outside Jerusalem, tore the robe into twelve pieces, and gave him ten, in token that he should become king of the ten tribes (1 Ki 11:29-39). Later, when Jeroboam had proved unfaithful to Yahweh, he sent his wife to Ahijah to ask in regard to their sick son. The prophet received her harshly, foretold the death of the son, and threatened the extermination of the house of Jeroboam (1 Ki 14). The narrative makes the impression that Ahijah was at this time a very old man (1 Ki 14:4). These incidents are differently narrated in the long addition at 1 Ki 12:24 found in some of the Greek copies. In that addition the account of the sick boy precedes that of the rent garment, and both are placed between the account of Jeroboam's return from Egypt and that of the secession of the ten tribes, an order in which it is impossible to think that the events occurred. Further, this addition attributes the incident of the rent garment to Shemaiah and not to Ahijah, and says that Ahijah was 60 years old.

Other notices speak of the fulfillment of the threatening prophecies spoken by Ahijah (2 Ch 10:15; 1 Ki 12:15; 15:29). In 2 Ch "the

prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite" is referred to as a source for the history of Solomon (9:29).

**1 Kings 14:3 "Take ten loaves with you, some cakes and a jar of honey, and go to him. He will tell you what will happen to the boy."**

- **take:** 1Ki 13:7 1Sa 9:7,8 2Ki 4:42 5:5,15 8:7-9
- **He will tell you:** 2Ki 1:2 8:8 Lu 7:2,3 Joh 4:47,48 11:3
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

### **JEROBOAM'S TRUST IN ABIJAH'S PROPHECY**

**Take ten loaves with you, some cakes and a jar of honey, and go to him** - This would seem to be recompense for the prophet's service. Why Jeroboam wants to carry this out in secret is not clear (see discussion in comments on 1Ki 14:2). Rather than taking a gift to Ahijah, Rehoboam would have done better had he sent his wife with a request for Ahijah to pray for his son. But of course general prerequisites for prayer are a sense of need and a willingness to humble oneself, and Jeroboam only had the former!

The KJV has "take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey." J Rawson Lumby explains **cracknels** this way - "The word so rendered is found only here and in Joshua 9:5. In the present passage it must mean a sort of cake, perhaps dry baked. The whole of the present which the queen was to take with her was such as a woman of humble position would bring." ([First Kings page 90](#)) (Jeroboam may have thought [if he even knew this Scripture] he could fool [Ahijah](#) like the Gibeonites had fooled Joshua with their disguise in Joshua 9:3-6+!)

[Bob Utley](#) points out that "It was expected to bring a prophet a gift (NIDOTTE, vol. 4, p. 342) of food when asking a question (cf. 1Sa 9:7; 1Ki 13:7; 2Ki 5:15, 2Ki 5:22-23; 2Ki 8:8-9).

**He will tell you what will happen to the boy** - It makes sense that Jeroboam would trust [Ahijah](#) since his words had proved true regarding Jeroboam's rule over the 10 Northern tribes.

**Warren Wiersbe** reminds us that Jeroboam had asked another prophet (man of God) to pray "for healing for his arm (1Ki 13:6-), and now he asked the prophet Ahijah to heal his son, the crown prince and heir to the throne. It's obvious that physical blessings were more important to him than spiritual blessings. Like many nominal believers and careless church members today, the only time Jeroboam wanted help from God's servant was when he was in trouble." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**August Konkell:** In spite of his divine calling and privileged position as a successor to Solomon, Jeroboam is remembered as the king who brought destruction to himself and to his land. Though Israel has a long history with many wicked kings, the prophetic historians view the fall of Israel as the responsibility of Jeroboam. This king violated three fundamental theological propositions of the kingdom of God: The promise of God belonged to the Davidic dynasty (cf. 1Ki 12:26-27); only the temple could represent the divine presence (1Ki 12:28-29); the worship of God was to take place in Jerusalem (1Ki 12:30-33). Ahijah condemns Jeroboam on each of these three counts.<sup>28</sup> Jeroboam's dynasty ends because he established other symbols of worship so the people would not go to Jerusalem (1Ki 14:9-11). The prophetic interpretation of Israel's history is that Jeroboam has fundamentally undermined loyalty to God and is thus responsible for the nation's destruction. (See [1 and 2 Kings - Page 254](#))

**1 Kings 14:4 Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were dim because of his age.**

- **Shiloh:** 1Ki 11:29 Jos 18:1 1Sa 4:3,4 Jer 7:12-14
- **for his eyes:** Ge 27:1 48:10 De 34:7 1Sa 3:2 4:15 Ps 90:10 Ec 12:3
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

### **AGED AHIJAH IS PHYSICALLY BLIND**

Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of [Ahijah](#). Now [Ahijah](#) could not see, for his



**eyes were dim** (literally "his eyes were set" - used of Eli 1Sa 4:15+) **because of his age** (at 78 my vision was dimming but cataract surgery completely reversed the visual loss) - Perhaps it was Ahijah's old age which kept him from moving to Judah. Ahijah's physical vision was impaired but as we soon see his spiritual vision is "20/20," and God's revelation enables him only by hearing her steps to recognize the disguised wife and to give a deadly prophetic warning regarding Jeroboam's son and his kingdom!

**Cyril Barber** - Ahijah had not bowed before the ever-so-popular golden calves or compromised his convictions to suit the whim of the king. He had retained his integrity, and God was able to use him in spite of his physical infirmities. (What an encouragement this is to those who likewise suffer from some disability or the limitations of old age!) (See [The Books of Kings, Volume 1: The Righteousness of God - Page 414](#))

**Bob Utley** - **his eyes were dim because of his age** - Isaac had this same problem in his old age (cf. Gen. 27:1), as did Jacob/Israel (cf. Gen. 48:10). The priest at Shiloh, Eli, also had eye problems in his old age (1 Sam. 3:3). These problems are common to all humans. God allows age to weaken, even His special servants. Do not let physical or emotional problems cause you to question God's love and care for you! [HUMAN AGING](#)

**1 Kings 14:5 Now the LORD had said to Ahijah, “Behold, the wife of Jeroboam is coming to inquire of you concerning her son, for he is sick. You shall say thus and thus to her, for it will be when she arrives that she will pretend to be another woman.”**

KJV 1 Kings 14:5 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.

NET 1 Kings 14:5 But the LORD had told Ahijah, "Look, Jeroboam's wife is coming to find out from you what will happen to her son, for he is sick. Tell her so-and-so. When she comes, she will be in a disguise."

CSB 1 Kings 14:5 But the LORD had said to Ahijah, "Jeroboam's wife is coming soon to ask you about her son, for he is sick. You are to say such and such to her. When she arrives, she will be disguised."

ESV 1 Kings 14:5 And the LORD said to Ahijah, "Behold, the wife of Jeroboam is coming to inquire of you concerning her son, for he is sick. Thus and thus shall you say to her." When she came, she pretended to be another woman.

NIV 1 Kings 14:5 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."

NLT 1 Kings 14:5 But the LORD had told Ahijah, "Jeroboam's wife will come here, pretending to be someone else. She will ask you about her son, for he is very sick. Give her the answer I give you."

NRS 1 Kings 14:5 But the LORD said to Ahijah, "The wife of Jeroboam is coming to inquire of you concerning her son; for he is sick. Thus and thus you shall say to her." When she came, she pretended to be another woman.

NJB 1 Kings 14:5 Now Ahijah could not see, his eyes were fixed with age, but Yahweh had told him, 'Jeroboam's wife is now on her way to ask you for a prophecy about her son, as he is sick. You will tell her such and such. When she comes, she will pretend to be some other woman.'

- **Now the LORD** 2Ki 4:27 6:8-12 Ps 139:1-4 Pr 21:30 Am 3:7 Ac 10:19,20
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Proverbs 21:30 There is no wisdom and no understanding And no counsel against the LORD.

### AHIJAH RECEIVES WORD FROM YAHWEH

Now the LORD had said to [Ahijah](#), “**Behold**, the wife of Jeroboam is coming to inquire of you concerning her son, for he is sick. You shall say thus and thus to her, for it will be when she arrives that she will pretend to be another woman - The



thrust of her mission was to ask the prophet **ABOUT** her son, not to ask something **FOR** him. How Yahweh communicated (theophany, dream, simply audio, etc) is not known (cf Heb 1:1+). There is a phrase that says "[The jig is up!](#)" which means Jeroboam's wife's deception has been discovered and is coming to an end as she arrives.

**1 Kings 14:6 When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet coming in the doorway, he said, 'Come in, wife of Jeroboam, why do you pretend to be another woman? For I am sent to you with a harsh message.**

- **Come in, wife of Jeroboam:** Job 5:13 Ps 33:10
- **why do you pretend:** 1Ki 14:2,5 Eze 14:3-5,7,8 Lu 20:20-23 Ac 5:3-5,9,10 Heb 4:13
- **For I am:** 1Ki 14:10,11 13:20-22 20:42 21:18-24 22:8 1Sa 15:16,26 28:18 Jer 21:2-7 Eze 2:4,5 Da 4:19-25 4:19-25 5:17-28 Mk 14:21
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

## **ABIJAH UNCOVERS RUSE AND RELATES BAD NEWS**

**When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet coming in the doorway-** Ahijah cannot see but obviously God has given him revelation that the footsteps at his doorway were those of Jeroboam's wife. Note the paradox of a blind seer but no blindness with the all-seeing Lord.

**he said, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam, why do you pretend to be another woman?"** - Good question! You can't fool this prophet.

**For I am sent to you with a harsh message** (Heb. hard tidings) - The prophet explains he has a harsh message, undoubtedly regarding Jeroboam's son.

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**C H Spurgeon - A hearer in disguise** 1 Kings 14:6 (See full sermon [A Hearer in Disguise](#))

Here was an occasional hearer; and we make the observation that this occasional hearer was totally destitute of all true piety. Most occasional hearers are. Those who have true religion are not occasional hearers. You will find that truly gracious persons are diligent in the use of the means. Instead of thinking it a toil to come up to the place of worship, I know there are some of you who wish there were two Sundays in the week; and the happiest times you ever have are when you are sitting in these seats and joining in our sacred songs. There are no words which give you a better idea of heaven as a place than:

'Where congregations ne'er break up,  
And Sabbaths have no end.'

Gracious souls love the place where God's honour dwells, and the assembling of themselves together is always a blessed thing to them; but occasional hearers are generally graceless persons—I know how you spend your Sunday. There is the morning: you are not up very early; it takes a long time to dress on a Sunday morning; then follows the Sunday paper, with the news of the week; that must be gone through. The wife has been toiling hard all the morning with the dinner; what do you care? Then there is the afternoon, when there is a little more lolling about. Then in the evening, there is the walk. But the day, after all, is not very happy and comfortable: and sometimes you have wished there were no Sundays except that they give your body a little rest. You do not fear God, nor do you care for his service.

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**F B Meyer - 1 Kings 14:6 I am sent to thee with heavy tidings.**

How foolish! Jeroboam thought that the old prophet could penetrate the veil that hid the future, but not the disguise in which his wife wished to conceal herself. As we might have expected, the aged prophet's inner sight read her heart. From God no secrets are hid. Immediately on His accosting her by her name there came the dread announcement of inevitable disaster.

We must not hesitate to unfold all the consequences of sin. As watchmen on the walls, we are bound to tell men of the certain fearful looking for of fiery indignation which shall devour the transgressors. None of us should flinch from declaring the whole counsel of God. We should specially insist on the guilt side of sin. Not only that it is a misfortune, a mistake, an error, a disease, a tyranny; but a crime. The sinner is a criminal, who has incurred the just wrath and anger of a holy God: for which he must suffer a due recompense.

Oh for more tenderness that we may with tears warn men of their doom! We are so self-possessed, so stolid; we need to ask that our eyes, like Jeremiah's, should be fountains of tears, that we might weep day and night. If the tidings are heavy, let us first feel

their pressure on our own hearts; let us bend over the regions of despair and darkness, and hear the bitter weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, and come back to warn our brethren, lest they also come to that place of torment. Though it was with fear and much trembling that Paul preached the Gospel, yet he did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. And while we go to men with the good tidings of salvation, we must not withhold the heavy tidings from those who persist in unbelief.

**1 Kings 14:7 “Go, say to Jeroboam, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel, “Because I exalted you from among the people and made you leader over My people Israel,**

- **Because I exalted you:** 1Ki 12:24 16:2 1Sa 2:27-30 15:16 2Sa 12:7,8
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

#### **Related Passage:**

2 Peter 1:21+ for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

### **AHIJAH BEGINS A LENGTHY PROPHECY**

**Go, say to Jeroboam, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel, “Because I exalted you from among the people and made you leader over My people Israel** (context = 10 northern tribes) - God states that it was He who raised up Jeroboam from his humble position as an overseer. The divine indictment was directed directly at Jeroboam. Ahijah's prophecy from Yahweh continues for 10 verses from 1Ki 14:7-16. He begins not with the bad news, but with an explanation of why the news would be bad. As Ahijah will explain, it has to do with divine privileges that were squandered by willful disobedience.

Ahijah's words are Jehovah's words reflecting His omniscience, omnipotence and foreknowledge, truth that can either comfort the afflicted or afflict the comfortable. These are words of prophecy and not written as an addition after the events predicted transpired! Believe it or not!

Was there to be no room for repentance?  
The moving finger writes; and, having writ,  
Moves on; nor all your piety nor wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line;  
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.<sup>13</sup>

**1 Kings 14:8 and tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you—yet you have not been like My servant David, who kept My commandments and who followed Me with all his heart, to do only that which was right in My sight;**

- **tore the kingdom:** 1Ki 11:30,31
- **my servant David:** 1Ki 3:14 11:33-38 15:5 2Ch 17:3 28:1 Ac 13:22,36
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

### **THE CONTRAST BETWEEN JEROBOAM AND DAVID**

**And tore ([qara](#)) the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you-** Jeroboam had received God's gift of the Northern Kingdom by grace and not be anything he did to merit that gift.

**HOUSE OF DAVID** - 25x/25v - **House of David** refers to the dynasty of King David—his royal lineage, descendants, and the covenant promise God made to him. The House of David was central to messianic prophecy for the Messiah (God's anointed one) would come from David's royal line, David's house. 1 Sam. 20:16; 2 Sam. 3:1; 2 Sam. 3:6; 1 Ki. 12:19; 1 Ki. 12:20; 1 Ki. 12:26; 1 Ki. 13:2; 1 Ki. 14:8; 2 Ki. 17:21; 1 Chr. 17:24; 2 Chr. 8:11; 2 Chr. 10:19; 2 Chr. 21:7; Neh. 12:37; Ps. 122:5; Isa. 7:2; Isa. 7:13; Isa. 22:22; Jer. 21:12; Zech. 12:7; Zech. 12:8; Zech. 12:10; Zech. 12:12; Zech. 13:1; Lk. 1:69

**Yet** - The striking contrast. The contrast would be between Jeroboam and David.

**You have not been like My servant (['ebed](#)) David, who kept ([shamar](#)) My commandments ([mitsvah](#)) and who followed ([halak](#)) Me with all his heart ([lebab](#)), to do only that which was right ([yashar](#)) in My sight** - Yahweh compares (and contrasts) Jeroboam's behavior with that of His **servant David**. David was a type and an example to be followed (emulated) by all subsequent kings whether in either north or south. Note the grace and mercy of God to David who clearly was a sinner, but who God says **followed Me with all his heart**.

**THOUGHT** - With David (and with all believers today) God is not looking for perfection, but He is looking for direction. He is looking for a broken and contrite spirit when we sin against Him (because we will!). We should never use this truth as an excuse for our sin, but should continually seek (enabled by God's Spirit) to live sensibly, righteously and godly in this present age (Titus 2:12+).

**1 Kings 14:9 you also have done more evil than all who were before you, and have gone and made for yourself other gods and molten images to provoke Me to anger, and have cast Me behind your back—**

NET 1 Kings 14:9 You have sinned more than all who came before you. You went and angered me by making other gods, formed out of metal; you have completely disregarded me.

CSB 1 Kings 14:9 You behaved more wickedly than all who were before you. In order to provoke Me, you have proceeded to make for yourself other gods and cast images, but you have flung Me behind your back.

ESV 1 Kings 14:9 but you have done evil above all who were before you and have gone and made for yourself other gods and metal images, provoking me to anger, and have cast me behind your back,

NIV 1 Kings 14:9 You have done more evil than all who lived before you. You have made for yourself other gods, idols made of metal; you have provoked me to anger and thrust me behind your back.

NLT 1 Kings 14:9 You have done more evil than all who lived before you. You have made other gods for yourself and have made me furious with your gold calves. And since you have turned your back on me,

NRS 1 Kings 14:9 but you have done evil above all those who were before you and have gone and made for yourself other gods, and cast images, provoking me to anger, and have thrust me behind your back;

NJB 1 Kings 14:9 you have done more evil than all your predecessors, you have gone and made yourself other gods, idols of cast metal, provoking my anger, and you have turned your back on me.

NAB 1 Kings 14:9 You have done worse than all who preceded you: you have gone and made for yourself strange gods and molten images to provoke me; but me you have cast behind your back.

YLT 1 Kings 14:9 and thou dost evil above all who have been before thee, and goest, and makest to thee other gods and molten images to provoke Me to anger, and Me thou hast cast behind thy back:

- **you also have done more evil than all who were before you:** 1Ki 14:16 12:28 13:33,34 15:34 16:31
- **have gone and made for yourself other gods:** De 32:16,17,21 Jdg 5:8 2Ch 11:15 Ps 106:19,20 115:4-8 Isa 44:9-20 Jer 10:14-16
- **to provoke:** 1Ki 14:22 De 9:8-16,24 2Ki 21:3 23:26 2Ch 33:6 Ps 78:40,56 106:29 Jer 7:9,10 Eze 8:3,17 1Co 10:22
- **cast me:** Ne 9:26 Ps 50:17 Eze 23:35
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

#### **Related Passages:**

1 Kings 11:31-33+ He said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces; for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and give you ten tribes 32 (but he will have one tribe, for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel), 33 because they have forsaken Me, and have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the sons of Ammon; and they have not walked in My ways, doing what is right in My sight and observing My statutes and My ordinances, as his father David did.

**TURNING FROM GOD TO IDOLS  
PROVOKING GOD'S ANGER**

**you also have done more evil than all who were before you** - This is a condemning characterization of Jeroboam's wicked reign. **More evil than all who were before you** must refer not only to the kings who had preceded Jeroboam, but to the cases of idolatry in the earlier days, e.g. the period of the Judges. The only significant idolatry prior to Judges was when Aaron made the golden calf.

**Bob Utley** - "**you also have done more evil than all who were before you**" This is a hyperbolic statement since Jeroboam was the first king of Israel. It is similar to the imagery of Eccl. 1:16 (i.e., "more than all who were in Jerusalem before me," only David preceded Solomon in Jerusalem).

**And have gone and made for yourself other gods and molten images ([massekah](#)) to provoke Me to anger ([kāas](#)), and have cast ([shalak/salak](#)) Me behind your back** - Jeroboam's descent into defiling idolatry was inexcusable in light to the fact that Abijah had explained to him that Solomon and his people had forsaken Yahweh and worshiped Ashtoreth, etc (see 1Ki 11:31-33). Somehow this logic failed to compute with Jeroboam. To me this suggests how powerful is the seduction by the fallen flesh to worship anything by God!

**Cast Me behind your back** is an expression indicative of the extreme degree of contempt! Woe! Jeroboam blatantly turned his back on the true and Living God! Little wonder that Yahweh was provoked to anger! See [FERTILITY WORSHIP OF THE ANE](#)

*Jeroboam failed to do  
The things the Lord asked him to.  
He did not walk within God's light;  
He did not rule his kingdom right.  
He did not follow in God's way,  
So things went wrong for him each day.  
Until at last his son was dead,  
The crown was taken from his head.*  
-- E. Fitzgerald,  
The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, Stanza 71

**Bob Utley** - "**provoke Me to anger**" This term (BDB 494, KB 491, *Hiphil* INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT) is used often of YHWH's attitude toward idolatry (cf. Deut. 4:25; 21:29; 32:16,28; 1 Kgs. 14:9,15; 16:16,21,32,36; 22:54; 2 Kgs. 17:11; 23:19; 2 Chr. 28:25; Neh. 3:37; Jer. 7:18-19; 11:17; 32:29,32; 44:3). [ANTHROPOMORPHIC LANGUAGE USED TO DESCRIBE DEITY](#)

**Bob Utley** - "**and have cast Me behind your back**" This and similar idioms (BDB 1020, KB 1527, *Hiphil* PERFECT) denote an act of rejection by ignoring YHWH's law (cf. Neh. 9:26; Ps. 50:17; Jer. 2:27; 32:33; Ezek. 23:35). This idiom is used in a positive sense of YHWH forgiving sins in Isa. 38:17 (i.e., out of sight, out of mind). It is used of YHWH rejecting His covenant people because of their continuing disobedience in Jer. 18:17.

Victor Yap: The king will sink to new low. Dung is mentioned for the first time and only time in the Old Testament (v 10). Dogs (plural) are unclean animals. Burning (v 10), scattering (v 15) and "stirred up/provoked" (v 15) are in the intensive piel form (translated with a "surely"). There was no king as rotten and evil as Jeroboam in the eyes of God during the period of the Kings because he continued, rallied and perpetuated sin besides sinning personally, like no one else before or after.

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**Molten images** (04541) [massekah](#) is from the root nasak mainly used for the "pouring out" of a drink offering or libation, and for the "casting" of metal images. When the word means a libation or drink offering, it is associated with sacrifices that seal a covenant relationship (Isa. 25:7; 28:20; 30:1); however, the word usually signifies an image or molten metal, a cast metal image, molten image, an image of an idol made out of metal. The most glaring use is the **molten** calf in Ex 32:4 and Ex 32:8 (Ps 106:19). God then make it clear " "You shall make for yourself no molten gods." (Ex 34:17, cf Lev 19:4, Dt 27:15). "Later, when God renews his covenant following this early act of idolatry, he first warns them to not worship any other gods and then explicitly forbids them from making "gods of cast metal" (massēkâ; Exod 34:13–17; compare Deut 27:15). Several other times when massēkâ is used, it refers back to the event at Sinai when Israel worshiped this calf (Deut 9:12, 16; Neh 9:18; Psa 106:19). The word may be used to make explicit that a certain idol was overlaid in metal, especially with the phrase pesel umassēkâ (פֶּסֶל וּמַסֵּכָה), which literally means "image and molten image" but functions as a hendiadys meaning "image of cast metal" (Deut 27:15; Jdg 17:3). The word is also used in general contexts condemning idolatry that frequently pile up multiple synonyms for idolatrous images (Isa 30:22; Hos 13:2)." (Lexham Theological Wordbook)

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“Thou hast cast Me behind Thy back” (1 Kings 14:9).

“Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back” (Isaiah 38:17).

What an amazing contrast! In the first God is speaking to a King, in the second a king is speaking to God. In the former a sinner is seen casting God behind his back, whilst in the latter God is seen casting, not the sinner, but the sinner’s sin behind His back. Again we remark, what an amazing contrast! How magnanimous of the Lord to deal so mercifully with the repentant soul! But then, it is just like Him.

Some Scripture texts need a great deal of explanation, but these two are as clear as noonday, and require no interpretation. Yet, though they may be read clearly afar off, we may see additional beauty in them by closer inspection. Note first:

### **I. The Sinner Casting God Behind his Back.**

Our first Scripture formed part of a message addressed by God to Jeroboam, first king of the ten tribes. There are reasons for believing that, before his elevation to the throne, he was a humble follower of Jehovah, for when his eldest son was born he gave him the name of Abijah, which means, “Jehovah is my father,” or “Jehovah is my desire.” However, no sooner did he become king than he made the blunder of his life—erected golden calves for his subjects to worship. Merely worldly policy dictated such a step. He took counsel with himself and not with the Lord (see 1 Kings 12:26). Now his sin seems more heinous when we note that he knew that it was for this very sin God had permitted the revolt (see 1 Kings 11:33). Warnings were sent to him, but to no purpose, and now God permits his eldest son to be smitten with an incurable malady. Anxious about his beloved son, the king bethought himself of the despised and neglected prophet of God; but, not willing to face him himself, like a coward, sent his wife, bidding her to disguise herself, and take only the present of an almost destitute person. But her efforts to disguise herself were all to no purpose, and the Lord gave the prophet this stern message to send to the king by his wife.

Now could there be a more serious and damning charge? To cast behind the back is an act expressive of utter disregard and contempt. It signifies that God had been treated as of no value, and of no consequence, as worthless and useless.

But let us come a little closer. Cannot God lay such a charge at the door of every one of us? Truthfully can He say to thee, dear reader, “Thou hast cast Me behind thy back.” Do you deny it? Well, now, can you say, “I have set the Lord always before me?” That is to say, you have always made Him your model and ideal, have ever kept Him in mind, recognising His presence with you? If you cannot—and who dare say that he has—if He is not before you He must be behind you! And what about God’s law? In the prayer of penitence offered in Neh. 9:26, Israel confessed that their fathers had “cast Thy law behind their backs.” Have you always loved and kept His laws? The fact is, we were born with our backs to God. And whilst some deliberately and wilfully cast Him behind their backs, the vast majority do it unthinkingly and carelessly, yet nevertheless it is done just as certainly.

What a relief it is to turn to our second Scripture.

### **II. God Casting the Sinner’s Sin Behind His Back.**

This is part of good King Hezekiah’s outburst of praise to God on his recovery from a most serious illness. He remembered, and placed on record, that, though in common with his fellows, he had cast God behind his back, yet, on confessing his sin, and seeking mercy, God had cast his sin behind His back. And there are thousands to-day who can, and do, give the same glad and joyous testimony. This is not according to our deserts. If we received our due, He would treat us as we have treated Him. And does He act thus because He thinks lightly of sin? For answer to that question go to Calvary. Jesus, our Lord, suffered in our stead. It is because God cast His beloved Son behind His back that He can now cast the repentant sinner’s sin behind His back.

“My sin is ever before me,” moaned another king in heartbroken sorrow. Ah! that is it; when the sinner sets his sins before his own face and confesses them to the Lord, then it is that the merciful Lord sets them behind His back. Alleluia!

**1 Kings 14:10 therefore behold, I am bringing calamity on the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male person, both bond and free in Israel, and I will make a clean sweep of the house of Jeroboam, as one sweeps away dung until it is all gone.**

NET 1 Kings 14:10 So I am ready to bring disaster on the dynasty of Jeroboam. I will cut off every last male belonging to Jeroboam in Israel, including even the weak and incapacitated. I will burn up the dynasty of Jeroboam, just as one burns manure until it is completely consumed.

CSB 1 Kings 14:10 Because of all this, I am about to bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam: I will eliminate all of Jeroboam's males, both slave and free, in Israel; I will sweep away the house of Jeroboam as one

sweeps away dung until it is all gone!

ESV 1 Kings 14:10 therefore behold, I will bring harm upon the house of Jeroboam and will cut off from Jeroboam every male, both bond and free in Israel, and will burn up the house of Jeroboam, as a man burns up dung until it is all gone.

NIV 1 Kings 14:10 " 'Because of this, I am going to bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam. I will cut off from Jeroboam every last male in Israel--slave or free. I will burn up the house of Jeroboam as one burns dung, until it is all gone.

NLT 1 Kings 14:10 I will bring disaster on your dynasty and will destroy every one of your male descendants, slave and free alike, anywhere in Israel. I will burn up your royal dynasty as one burns up trash until it is all gone.

NRS 1 Kings 14:10 therefore, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam. I will cut off from Jeroboam every male, both bond and free in Israel, and will consume the house of Jeroboam, just as one burns up dung until it is all gone.

NJB 1 Kings 14:10 For this I shall bring disaster on the House of Jeroboam, I shall wipe out every manjack of the family of Jeroboam, fettered or free in Israel, I shall sweep away the House of Jeroboam as a man sweeps dung away till none is left.

NAB 1 Kings 14:10 Therefore, I am bringing evil upon the house of Jeroboam: I will cut off every male in Jeroboam's line, whether slave or freeman in Israel, and will burn up the house of Jeroboam completely, as though dung were being burned.

YLT 1 Kings 14:10 'Therefore, lo, I am bringing in evil unto the house of Jeroboam, and have cut off to Jeroboam those sitting on the wall -- shut up and left -- in Israel, and have put away the posterity of the house of Jeroboam, as one putteth away the dung till its consumption;

GWN 1 Kings 14:10 " 'That is why I will bring disaster on Jeroboam's house. I will destroy every male in his house, whether slave or freeman in Israel. I will burn down Jeroboam's house. It will burn like manure until it is gone.

BBE 1 Kings 14:10 So I will send evil on the line of Jeroboam, cutting off from his family every male child, those who are shut up and those who go free in Israel; the family of Jeroboam will be brushed away like a man brushing away waste till it is all gone.

RSV 1 Kings 14:10 therefore behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male, both bond and free in Israel, and will utterly consume the house of Jeroboam, as a man burns up dung until it is all gone.

- **I will bring:** 1Ki 15:25-30 Am 3:6
- **him that pisseth:** 1Ki 16:11 21:21 1Sa 25:22,34 2Ki 9:8,9
- **him that is shut up:** De 32:36 2Ki 14:26
- **as one sweeps away dung:** 1Sa 2:30 2Ki 9:37 21:13 Job 20:7 Ps 83:10 Isa 5:25 14:19,23 Jer 8:2 Eze 26:4 Zep 1:17 Mal 2:3 Lu 14:34,35
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

## JEHOVAH CLEANS HOUSE OF JEROBOAM

**Therefore** - Term of conclusion. This conclusion is based on the depth and gravity of Jeroboam's evil just described.

**Behold** ([hinneh](#) - the idea is "Listen up!" "Pay attention!"), **I am bringing calamity** (misery, distress, injury) **on the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off** ([karath](#)) **from Jeroboam every** (note this all inclusive adjective) **male person** (Literally - "those who urinate against a wall"), **both bond and free in Israel** - The entire family is to be exterminated. God is sovereign and here is clearly the One Who will orchestrate the total annihilation of Jeroboam's lineage. The consequences of the sins of fathers don't stop with fathers!

**THOUGHT** - It is interesting to note that the prophet gives a short-range prediction (death of his son), a medium-range prediction (calamity of the house of Jeroboam) and a long-range prediction (against the entire nation - 1Ki 14:15). The fulfillment of the short range prophecy underscored the fulfillments of the medium and



long-range prophecies. I see the hand of divine mercy in this pattern, for had Jeroboam responded with repentance after the short-term fulfillment, he might have avoided the fulfillment of the other prophecies. But Jeroboam was so deceived by his sin that he failed to **Behold** or "Listen Up!" and refused to humble himself and repent.

The **KJV** is more literal "that pisseth against the wall" which while a bit crude was an idiom that basically refers to royal descendants. In other words, it refers to the class of males who are privileged to relieve themselves in royal quarters, those who are to be a ruler and deliverer (see similar phrase in 1Ki 16:11, 1Ki 21:21, 2Ki 9:8 - always a reference to the royal family). In this context Yahweh's prophecy is that He would every one of Jeroboam's male descendants.

**And I will make a clean sweep** (NIV, NET = "I will burn up") **of the house of Jeroboam, as** (term of comparison - simile) **one sweeps away dung** (NET = "as one burns manure") **until it is all gone** - This is a vivid term of comparison, for everyone knows how complete is the removal of refuse. So too would be the house of Jeroboam! This is a picture of total annihilation of the **house of Jeroboam**.

**NET NOTE** - Heb "and I will cut off from Jeroboam those who urinate against a wall (including both those who are) restrained and let free (or "abandoned") in Israel." The precise meaning of the idiomatic phrase **עָצוּר וְעָזוּב** ('atsur vé'azuv) is uncertain. For various options see HALOT 871 s.v. **עָצַר** and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, II Kings (AB), 107. The two terms are usually taken as polar opposites ("slaves and freemen" or "minors and adults"), but Cogan and Tadmor, on the basis of contextual considerations (note the usage with **אֵפֶס** [efes], "nothing but") in Deut 32:36 and 2 Kgs 14:26, argue convincingly that the terms are synonyms, meaning "restrained and abandoned," and refer to incapable or incapacitated individuals.

**NET NOTE** on **as one sweeps away dung** - The traditional view understands the verb **בָּעַר** (ba'ar) to mean "burn." Manure was sometimes used as fuel (see Ezek 4:12, 15). However, an alternate view takes **בָּעַר** as a homonym meaning "sweep away" (HALOT 146 s.v. **בָּעַר**). In this case one might translate, "I will sweep away the dynasty of Jeroboam, just as one sweeps away manure it is gone" (cf. ASV, NASB, TEV). Either metaphor emphasizes the thorough and destructive nature of the coming judgment.

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**Cut off** ([03772](#)) (**karath**) literally means to cut, to cut off or to sever an object from its source or cut into parts and implies a violent action. For example, Zipporah "**cut off** her son's foreskin." (Ex 4:25) or the Jews "cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes." (Nu 13:2-24, cf Dt 19:5, 20:19-20, Jdg 9:48-49, 1Sa 5:4, 17:51, 24:4-5, 11, 31:9, 2Sa 10:4, 2Sa 20:22) In another literal use as punishment to Israel for breaking the Mosaic covenant (cf Dt 29:25, 31:16), God says He will "cut down (karath) your incense altars" (Lev 26:30, cf Jdg 6:25-26, cf 1Sa 28:9). A sacrificial animal was not to be offered if it was "cut" (karath) (Lev 22:24). **Karath** means "chewed" (cutting food with teeth) in Nu 11:33.

**KARATH IN KINGS AND CHRONICLES** - 1 Ki. 2:4; 1 Ki. 5:6; 1 Ki. 5:12; 1 Ki. 6:36; 1 Ki. 7:2; 1 Ki. 7:12; 1 Ki. 8:9; 1 Ki. 8:21; 1 Ki. 8:25; 1 Ki. 9:5; 1 Ki. 9:7; 1 Ki. 11:16; 1 Ki. 14:10; 1 Ki. 14:14; 1 Ki. 15:13; 1 Ki. 18:4; 1 Ki. 18:5; 1 Ki. 20:34; 1 Ki. 21:21; 2 Ki. 9:8; 2 Ki. 11:4; 2 Ki. 11:17; 2 Ki. 17:15; 2 Ki. 17:35; 2 Ki. 17:38; 2 Ki. 18:4; 2 Ki. 19:23; 2 Ki. 23:3; 2 Ki. 23:14; 1 Chr. 11:3; 1 Chr. 16:16; 1 Chr. 17:8; 1 Chr. 19:4; 2 Chr. 2:8; 2 Chr. 2:10; 2 Chr. 2:16; 2 Chr. 5:10; 2 Chr. 6:11; 2 Chr. 6:16; 2 Chr. 7:18; 2 Chr. 15:16; 2 Chr. 21:7; 2 Chr. 22:7; 2 Chr. 23:3; 2 Chr. 23:16; 2 Chr. 29:10; 2 Chr. 34:31

**1 Kings 14:11 "Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city the dogs will eat. And he who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat; for the LORD has spoken it."**

- **that dies:** 1Ki 16:4 1Ki 21:19,23,24 Isa 66:24 Jer 15:3 Eze 39:17-19 Rev 19:17,18
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Kings 16:4+ "Anyone of Baasha who dies in the city the dogs will eat, and anyone of his who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat."

1 Kings 21:23+ "Of Jezebel also has the LORD spoken, saying, 'The dogs will eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel.' 24 "The one belonging to Ahab, who dies in the city, the dogs will eat, and the one who dies in the field the birds of heaven will eat."



## CARCASSES FOOD FOR DOGS AND BIRDS

**Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city the dogs will eat. And he who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat** - Both of these divine judgments describe dishonorable burials (in effect no burial at all if carnivores devoured the bodies). It was this circumstance which rendered it so horrible to the Oriental mind to be cast out unburied! The picture of **dogs** devouring carcasses is especially gruesome for ancient dogs were not like our pet dogs but were vicious scavengers that frequented garbage dumps outside cities. And notice that Ahijah is not giving a metaphorical description but a very real description of what would take place as roving gangs of dogs fought over the carcasses of Jeroboam's sons.

**Cyril Barber on birds** - The second image is likewise graphic. Those who would die in battle, or who were assassinated away from a city, would have their eyes plucked out and their flesh picked from their bones by birds that find rotting flesh delectable. (See [The Books of Kings, Volume 1: The Righteousness of God ... - Page 418](#))

**THOUGHT** - Oh beloved, may we never forget that the wages of our sins are very costly to our families!

**For** (term of explanation) **the LORD has spoken it**- The LORD spoke it, thus it would come to pass, as God's Word always does. (cf. Isa. 14:24; 25:10; 40:8; 45:23; 46:10; 55:8-11; 59:21; Matt. 24:35). The specific phrase found here is repeated often in 1 Kings to confirm a prophet's message (cf. 1 Kgs. 13:26 = "the word of the LORD which He spoke"; 1Ki 15:29 = "the word of the LORD, which He spoke"; 1Ki 16:12,34 = "the word of the LORD, which He spoke"; 17:16; 22:38).

**THE WORD OF THE LORD WHICH HE SPOKE** - 1 Ki. 13:26; 1 Ki. 14:18; 1 Ki. 15:29; 1 Ki. 16:12; 1 Ki. 16:34; 1 Ki. 17:16; 1 Ki. 22:38; 2 Ki. 9:36; 2 Ki. 10:17; 2 Ki. 15:12

**1 Kings 14:12 "Now you, arise, go to your house. When your feet enter the city the child will die.**

- **when your feet:** 1Ki 14:3,16,17 2Ki 1:6,16 Joh 4:50-52
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

## JEROBOAM'S JUDGMENT BEGINS - SON DIES

**Now you, arise, go to your house. When your feet enter the city the child will die**- Imagine how she felt as she walked back to the city and was preparing to take that last step into the city! The death of their son served as the sign that God will fulfil the remainder of His promised judgments to wipe out the line of Jeroboam.

**Cyril Barber** - As we consider the prediction of Ahijah, we are confronted with what appears to be a discrepancy. We might be inclined to pass over it, but some people find fault with the Scriptures wherever and whenever they can, and so we need to be prepared to answer them. The issue is, When did Abijah die? Did death occur when his mother entered the city (14:12) or when she crossed the threshold of her home (14:17)? In reality, there is no discrepancy. As Abijah's mother entered the city, her son died. She was probably hoping that the blind prophet was wrong, and so hurried toward the house that served as a palace. This took a few minutes. As she crossed the threshold of her home, she heard the first wail of the mourners. It had taken those attending her son these few minutes to realize what had happened. Then, most likely, they tried to resuscitate the lad. Only when these efforts failed, did they verify his death. By that time, the queen mother had walked the distance from the gate of the city to the entrance of her house. (See [The Books of Kings, Volume 1: The Righteousness of God ... - Page 421](#))

**1 Kings 14:13 "All Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he alone of Jeroboam's family will come to the grave, because in him something good was found toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.**

- **shall mourn:** Nu 20:29 Jer 22:10,18
- **found:** 2Ch 12:12 19:3 Job 19:28 Eze 18:14-32 Phm 1:6 2Pe 2:8,9
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 28:26 (CURSES TO ISRAEL FOR DISOBEYING MOSAIC COVENANT) "Your carcasses will be

food to all birds of the sky and to the beasts of the earth, and there will be no one to frighten them away.

Jeremiah 8:2 "They will spread them out to the sun, the moon and to all the host of heaven, which they have loved and which they have served, and which they have gone after and which they have sought, and which they have worshiped. They will not be gathered or buried; they will be as dung on the face of the ground.

Jeremiah 22:19 "He ( Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah) will be buried with a donkey's burial, Dragged off and thrown out beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

## **THE ONLY GOOD ONE FROM JEROBOAM**

**All Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he alone of Jeroboam's family will come to the grave, because in him something good was found toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam** - Abijah, though called 'a child' in verses 3, 12 and 17 must have been of such an age as to exhibit qualities that made him beloved of the people (and presumably by God). This child is the only person from the house of Jeroboam who will be buried with dignity.

**Something good toward the LORD God** gave rise to a Jewish tradition that Abijah had endeavored, contrary to the wishes of his father, to encourage the people to go up to Jerusalem to worship. This is however speculation.

**Farrar** writes: "The passage about Abijah has a unique preciousness, because it stands alone in Scripture as an expression of the truth that early death is no sign at all of the Divine anger, and that the length or brevity of life are matters of little significance to God, seeing that, at the best, the longest life is but as one tick of the clock in the eternal silence." (See [The Expositor's Bible: The First Book of Kings: Exploring ...](#)) (I would add we are immortal until God's work He gave us before the foundation of the world is accomplished - Acts 13:36+ says "For David, **after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation**, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers, and underwent decay." )

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**C H Spurgeon - Abijah, or Some good thing towards the Lord** 1 Kings 14:13 (See full sermon [Abijah, or Some Good Thing Towards the Lord](#))

This 'good thing' is described to us in the text in a certain measure. It was a 'good thing towards the LORD God of Israel'. The good thing looked towards the living God. In children there often will be found good things towards their parents: let these be cultivated, but these are not sufficient evidences of grace. In children there will sometimes be found good things towards amiability and moral excellence: let all good things be commended and fostered, but they are not sure fruits of grace. It is towards God that the good thing must be that saves the soul. Remember how we read in the New Testament of 'repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.' The way the face of the good thing looks is a main point about it. There is life in a look. If a man is travelling away from God every step he takes increases his distance from him, but if his face is toward the Lord he may be only capable of a child's tottering step, but yet he is moving nearer and nearer every moment. There was 'some good thing' in this child towards God, and that is the most distinguishing mark of a truly good thing. The child had love, and there was in it love to Jehovah. He had faith, but it was faith in Jehovah. His religious fear was the fear of the living God; his childlike thoughts, desires, prayers and hymns went towards the true God. This is what we desire to see not only in children, but in adults: we wish to see their hearts turned to the Lord, and their minds and wills moving towards the Most High. Strange that it should be wonderful for the creature man to look towards his Creator and yet it is so. Indeed there is no surer sign of a renewed heart than when a man exclaims, 'I will arise and go to my father'.

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## **BURIAL PRACTICES**

### **I. Mesopotamia**

- A. Proper burial was very important to a happy afterlife, which was often viewed as an extension of this life (see [WHERE ARE THE DEAD?](#)).
- B. An example of a Mesopotamian curse is, "May the earth not receive your corpses."

### **II. Old Testament**

- A. Proper burial was very important (cf. Eccl. 6:3).
- B. It was done very quickly (cf. Sarah in Genesis 23 and Rachel in Gen. 35:19 and notice Deut. 21:23).
- C. Improper burial was a sign of rejection and sin.

- 1. Deuteronomy 28:26

2. Isaiah 14:20

3. Jeremiah 8:2; 22:19

D. Burial was done, if possible, in family vaults in the home area (i.e., "slept with his fathers").

E. There was no embalming, as in Egypt. Mankind came from dust and must return to dust (e.g., Gen. 3:19; Ps. 103:14; 104:29). Also note [SPECIAL TOPIC: CREMATION](#)

F. In rabbinical Judaism it was difficult to balance a proper respect and handling of the body with the concept of ceremonial defilement connected to dead bodies.

### III. New Testament

A. Burial quickly followed death, usually within twenty-four hours. The Jews often watched the grave for three days, believing that the soul could return to the body within that timeframe (cf. John 11:39).

B. Burial involved cleaning and wrapping of the body with spices (cf. John 11:44; 19:39-40).

C. There were no distinctive Jewish or Christian burial procedures (or items placed in the grave) in first century Palestine.

**1 Kings 14:14 "Moreover, the LORD will raise up for Himself a king over Israel who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this day and from now on."**

- **the LORD will raise up:** 1Ki 15:27-29
- **but what:** Ec 8:11 Eze 7:2-7 12:22-28 Jas 5:9 2Pe 2:3
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

### Related Passages:

1 Kings 15:25-29+ Now [Nadab](#) the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years. 26 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father and in his sin which he made Israel sin. 27 Then Baasha the son of Ahijah of the house of Issachar conspired against him, and Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, while Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon. 28 **So Baasha killed him in the third year of Asa king of Judah and reigned in his place.** 29 It came about as soon as he was king, he struck down all the household of Jeroboam. He did not leave to Jeroboam any persons alive, until he had destroyed them, according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Ahijah the Shilonite,

## YAHWEH RAISES REPLACEMENT FOR JEROBOAM

**Moreover, the LORD will raise up for Himself a king over Israel**(10 northern tribes) **who will cut off** ([karath](#) - can speak of violent death) **the house of Jeroboam this day and from now on-** See the [passages above](#) for the description of [Baasha](#) ("wicked") the son of Ahijah, whom God raised up to **cut off** the house of Jeroboam (his son [Nadab](#)) by assassination.

The phrase **the LORD will raise up** reminds me of the truth that God is in total control of every ruler this world has ever had. After a prayer meeting Daniel affirmed "It is He who changes the times and the epochs; **He removes kings and establishes kings**; He gives wisdom to wise men And knowledge to men of understanding." (Da 2:21+)

**Iain Provan** on **this day and from now on** - This is the day! What? Yes, even now: A better translation is: "This is the day! What more can there be now?" It is a strange line, but it evidently functions to lead us from a description of what will happen in the short term (beginning on the same day, cf. 1Ki 14:17), which might be thought bad enough, to a description of what will happen in the longer term, which is catastrophic. Surely there can be no news worse than the news about son and house—but there is (1Ki 14:15–16)! (See [1 & 2 Kings \(Understanding the Bible Commentary Series\) - Page 73](#))

**NADAB** - Son of Jeroboam I and after him for two years king of Israel (1 Ki 14:20; 15:25). While Nadab was investing Gibbethon, a Philistine stronghold, Baasha, who probably was an officer in the army, as throne-robbers usually were, conspired against him, slew him and seized the throne (1 Ki 15:27-31). With the assassination of Nadab the dynasty of Jeroboam was extirpated, as foretold by

the prophet Ahijah (1 Ki 14). This event is typical of the entire history of the Northern Kingdom, characterized by revolutions and counter-revolutions.

**1 Kings 14:15 “For the LORD will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; and He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the Euphrates River, because they have made their Asherim, provoking the LORD to anger.**

NET 1 Kings 14:15 The LORD will attack Israel, making it like a reed that sways in the water. He will remove Israel from this good land he gave to their ancestors and scatter them beyond the Euphrates River, because they angered the LORD by making Asherah poles.

CSB 1 Kings 14:15 For the LORD will strike Israel and the people will shake as a reed shakes in water. He will uproot Israel from this good soil that He gave to their ancestors. He will scatter them beyond the Euphrates because they made their Asherah poles, provoking the LORD.

ESV 1 Kings 14:15 the LORD will strike Israel as a reed is shaken in the water, and root up Israel out of this good land that he gave to their fathers and scatter them beyond the Euphrates, because they have made their Asherim, provoking the LORD to anger.

NIV 1 Kings 14:15 And the LORD will strike Israel, so that it will be like a reed swaying in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land that he gave to their forefathers and scatter them beyond the River, because they provoked the LORD to anger by making Asherah poles.

NLT 1 Kings 14:15 Then the LORD will shake Israel like a reed whipped about in a stream. He will uproot the people of Israel from this good land that he gave their ancestors and will scatter them beyond the Euphrates River, for they have angered the LORD with the Asherah poles they have set up for worship.

NRS 1 Kings 14:15 "The LORD will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; he will root up Israel out of this good land that he gave to their ancestors, and scatter them beyond the Euphrates, because they have made their sacred poles, provoking the LORD to anger.

NJB 1 Kings 14:15 Yahweh will make Israel shake, till it quivers like a reed in the water; he will uproot Israel from this prosperous land which he gave to their ancestors and scatter them beyond the River for provoking Yahweh to anger by making their sacred poles.

NAB 1 Kings 14:15 The LORD will strike Israel like a reed tossed about in the water and will pluck out Israel from this good land which he gave their fathers, scattering them beyond the River, because they made sacred poles for themselves and thus provoked the LORD.

YLT 1 Kings 14:15 And Jehovah hath smitten Israel as the reed is moved by the waters, and hath plucked Israel from off this good ground that He gave to their fathers, and scattered them beyond the River, because that they made their shrines, provoking Jehovah to anger;

GWN 1 Kings 14:15 "The LORD will strike Israel like cattails which shake in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land which he gave their ancestors. He will scatter them beyond the Euphrates River because they dedicated poles to the goddess Asherah and made the LORD furious.

- **For the LORD will strike** 1Sa 12:25 2Ki 17:6,7
- **as a reed:** Mt 11:7 Lu 7:24
- **uproot Israel** : De 29:28 Ps 52:5 Pr 2:22 Am 2:9 Zep 2:4 Mt 15:13
- **this good land:** Lev 26:32-34,43 De 4:26,27 28:36,63-68 29:24-28 Jos 23:15,16
- **scatter:** 2Ki 15:29 17:6,23 18:11,12 Am 5:27 Ac 7:43
- **Beyond the Euphrates** Ex 34:13,14 De 12:3,4 Isa 1:28,29
- **provoking:** 1Ki 14:9,23,24
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Kings 14:23-24 For they also built for themselves high places and sacred pillars and **Asherim** ([asherah](#)) on every high hill and beneath every luxuriant tree. 24 There were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD dispossessed before the sons of Israel.

Matthew 11:7 As these men were going away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?"

Luke 7:24 When the messengers of John had left, He began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?"

## ISRAEL'S DEFEAT AND EXILE IS PROPHESED

**For the LORD will strike Israel, as** (term of comparison-simile) **a reed is shaken in the water** (LIT - as a reed sways in the water); **and He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them** (in exile) **beyond the** (Euphrates) **River** (see map above) - Note the intense verbs - **STRIKE...UPROOT...SCATTER!** God is angry with His Chosen People who will not forfeit the blessing of the Promised Land because the land is defiled by their idolatry. The sins of Jeroboam would result in Israel forfeiting the Promised Land God had given them. Note the "ripple effect" of the sins of Jeroboam, even though he was completely cut off. His evil seed continued to germinate into rotten spiritual fruit for the duration of the Northern Kingdom! **He will uproot Israel** is of course is a prophecy of Israel's defeat and exile by the Assyrians in 722 BC. The Lord gives (**good land**) and the Lord takes (**uproot Israel**), blessed be the Name of the LORD (Job 1:21)! **The River** speaks of the Euphrates which is added to the text but is not in Hebrew.

**THOUGHT** - In Jeroboam's life we see that **Sin** has short-term effects (Jeroboam's son dies) and long-term effects (Jeroboam's lineage is cut off). **Sin** affects the sinner and others, both now and in the future -- the Northern Tribes were ultimately defeated and exiled because of Jeroboam's sin! Sin is stupid and always leads bondage. You can be sure that this "inanimate object" **Sin** never sleeps, so you cannot fall asleep! I am 78 and can vouch (unfortunately) for the fact that one never gets to an age where temptation is not an ever present problem! (Mt 26:41+) It is a dangerous self-deception to think you will ever reach an age where you can cease fighting your inveterate enemy **Sin**. **Seek** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and seek the King afresh every day (Mt 6:33) and His Sin killing Spirit (Ro 8:13)! There is simply no other path to daily victory beloved!

**As a reed shaken** symbolizes instability and weakness, because a reed is a tall, slender plant that grows in marshes and along riverbanks and bends and sways easily with the wind or water currents, meaning it is not strong or stable. God compares Israel to a reed because they had become spiritually weak, easily swayed by idolatry, and politically unstable. In addition, just as a reed can be uprooted from water, God warns that He will uproot Israel from their land, a prophecy that is fulfilled in 722 BC. As an aside, what a contrast is a godly person who is like a tree firmly planted by water! (cf Ps 1:1-3).

**Mordechai Cogan:** Up until this point, the focus of Ahijah's prophecy has been the personal misconduct of Jeroboam for which he will be punished; now the sinful ways of the entire nation will bring about their scattering beyond the Euphrates. A similar double indictment is found in the concluding peroration on Israel's downfall in 2 Kgs 17:7–23, but in that passage, national responsibility (vv. 7–17) outweighs the blotted record of Jeroboam (v. 21). ([1 Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary](#))

[Click to Enlarge](#)

**Because** (term of explanation) **they have made their Asherim** ([asherah](#)), **provoking the LORD to anger** - **Because** explains why Israel will be exiled. **Asherim** ([asherah](#)) describes a leading deity of the Canaanite pantheon who was "wife/sister" of **El** and was the goddess of fertility. Asherim were commonly worshiped at shrines in or near groves of evergreen trees, or, failing that, at places marked by wooden poles which God had commanded Israel to burn or cut down (Dt 12:3; 16:21; Jdg 6:25, 28, 30; 2Ki 18:4). These abominable sins were beyond "repair" and the only solution was removal from the land which Israel was continually defiling!

**Bob Utley** - "**He will uproot. . . will scatter them**" This is a specific allusion to the Assyrian exile of Israel (cf. Lev. 26:33; Deut. 4:27; 28:64; 29:27-28; Josh. 23:15-16; 2 Kgs. 17:6; Ps. 44:11; Jer. 12:14; Ezek. 20:23). As YHWH took the Canaanites out of Canaan because of their iniquity (cf. Gen. 15:12-21), so now He removes Israel (cf. 2 Kgs. 17:6) because of their idolatry! The Covenant is conditional!

**Konkel** points out that "Jeroboam has introduced the key elements of Canaanite worship that will be a continual sin in Israel, known thereafter as "the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat."" (See [1 and 2 Kings - Page 246](#))

God Condemned the Asherim because of...

- **Idolatry** – Worshiping Asherah meant abandoning Yahweh. (NB: Throughout the bible **Idolatry & Immorality** are frequent "bedfellows" pun intended!)
- **Sexual Immorality** – Pagan fertility rites distorted God's design for sexuality.
- **Moral Corruption** – Cult prostitution degraded individuals and society.

**THOUGHT** - ARE THERE ANY "ASHERIM" IN OUR WORLD TODAY? That's a rhetorical question! The widespread availability of high speed internet and streaming videos has led to spread of the seductive IDOL OF "PORNOGRAPHY" which is ensnaring and destroying Christian men (and to some degree women), their marriages and the moral framework of our society! What do you think God thinks about pornography? That's another rhetorical question of course!

**RECOMMENDED RESOURCE:** I HIGHLY RECOMMEND Steve Gallagher's 252 page book [AT THE ALTAR OF SEXUAL IDOLATRY](#) - you can view the entire book on archive.org. Read the section entitled ["Alarming Trends"](#) and realize that it was written **almost 20 years** prior (last update 2007)!

**Asherim** (0842) [Asherah](#) refers to "poles" representing and/or associated with the goddess Asherah - these poles could be cut down and burned (Jdg. 6:25-26). They were made (1Ki 14:15) and set up (1Ki 14:23) after being carved (2Ki 21:7). In many cases, Asherah clearly refers to the deity and not to an image or symbol (Judg. 3:7, 1 Ki. 18:19 and 2 Ki. 23:4). Not only was her worship sexual and licentious, it was also sadistic.

Asherim (plural of Asherah) had strong sexual connotations in ancient Near Eastern religion, particularly in Canaanite worship. Asherah was a fertility goddess, and the Asherim—wooden poles or carved trees—were used in rituals connected to fertility, sexuality, and prosperity.

**NIDOTTE** - (a) wooden cult-object; pole (Asherah pole); (b) goddess (direct reference not accepted by NIV). Derivation unknown. Ancient Near Eastern - Asherah (Aṣratu/Ašratu/Ašertu) in the second millennium was worshiped from Asia Minor to Mesopotamia. In Ugar. myths she (ʾtṛt) was wife of El and "mother of the gods." She was the goddess (Elat) of Tyre and Sidon. She is ʾtīrat ym: Asherah of the sea. Cf. Akk. ašratum, consort of Amurru (see Lipiński). In the first millennium references to her are found only on the fringes of the culture area, especially in Arabia. It is generally held that the Kuntilet ʾAjrud and Khirbet el-Qôm inscriptions refer to some cultic object associated with Yahweh, and not exclusively—as some still maintain—his consort. Outside of the possible references in the Bible, she is not well attested in the Syria/Palestine region. OT Most scholars accept that the word is used as the name of the goddess in 1 Kgs 15:13 (= 2 Chron 15:16); 1 Kgs 18:19; 2 Kgs 21:7; 23:4 (perhaps 7); and the textually doubtful Judg 3:7 (possibly Astarte). All references in the OT, whether to goddess or to the cult object, are uniformly antagonistic. The אֲשֵׁרָה (pole, Asherah) is also said to be used within the worship of Yahweh, but is never approved. The אֲשֵׁרָה was also at times described as being in the temple, either as a symbol in the worship or as the image of a "guest goddess" (2 Kgs 21:7; 23:6). If an image, she could only be the consort of Yahweh, even if Baal was also a "guest god" there. There is apparently no part of the Bible that accepts the poles (אֲשֵׁרָה) as legitimate cult objects, even though the pillars, מַצֵּבָה, are sometimes accepted (Gen 28:18; perhaps Hos 3:4). LXX translates this word as λσος, sacred grove, which is also the meaning as understood in Jewish literature (cf. Abodah Zarah). This association was unchallenged (cf. AV) until the Babylonian evidence was studied (cf. RV, BDB). (BORROW [NIDOTTE page 568](#))

**W E Vine** - ashērâ refers to a cultic object representing the presence of the Canaanite goddess Asherah. When the people of Israel entered Palestine, they were to have nothing to do with the idolatrous religions of its inhabitants. Rather, God said, "But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves [ʾashērîm]..." (Exod. 34:13). This cult object was manufactured from wood (Judg. 6:26; 1 Kings 14:15) and it could be burned (Deut. 12:3). Some scholars conclude that it was a sacred pole set up near an altar to Baal. Since there was only one goddess with this name, the plural (ʾashērîm) probably represents her several "poles." ʾashērâ signifies the name of the goddess herself: "Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves [ʾashērâ] four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table" (1 Kings 18:19). The Canaanites believed that ʾashērâ ruled the sea, was the mother of all the gods including Baal, and sometimes was his deadly enemy. Apparently, the mythology of Canaan maintained that ʾashērâ was the consort of Baal, who had displaced El as their highest god. Thus her sacred objects (poles) were immediately beside altars to Baal, and she was worshiped along with him. ([Vine's Expository Dictionary](#))

**Victor Hamilton** - To turn to the OT, there is no actual description of an Asherah there. Was it a tree, a pole, some kind of tree symbol, an image? It apparently was not a natural object but one that was constructed by



man, an artifact. It was "made": 1 Kings 16:33; 2 Kings 17:16; 2 Kings 21:3; it was "set up": 2 Kings 17:10; 2 Chron. 33:19; Isaiah 27:9; it was "built": 1 Kings 14:23. Only once is the verb "to plant" used, Deut. 16:21, and here the meaning is "implant." The conclusion then is that in the OT Asherah stands for the Canaanite goddess represented by a carved wooden image implanted into the ground, usually adjacent to an altar dedicated to the god Baal and located on a hilltop under a leafy tree (Patai). It is in the period of the divided monarchy that the Asherah cult flourished both in Israel and Judah, though its existence before is documented by the command in Exodus 34:13, the prohibition of Deut. 16:21, and the incident at the threshold of Gideon's life of service to God, Judges 6:25ff. Rehoboam's career marks the beginning of this in Judah (1 Kings 14:23). In the north the cult received its greatest momentum from the incentive of Jezebel who was responsible for the presence of "four hundred prophets of Asherah" (1 Kings 18:19). Even a reform-minded king such as Asa (1 Kings 15:13) or later Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:4) was unable to liquidate the movement. It was knocked down, but not knocked out. There was an almost inevitable resurrection even in the wake of reform. Compare son Manasseh's policy (2 Kings 21:7, even to the point of placing the image in the temple) on the heels of father Hezekiah's reform (2 Kings 18:4). Apostasy and idolatry just behind revival! What one generation attempts to get rid of a subsequent generation may trot back in, however reprehensible it may be. All too frequently this has been the pattern in the human race. (ONLINE - [Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#))

**ASHERA - 40V - Asherah(18), Asherim(20), Asheroth(2).** Exod. 34:13; Deut. 7:5; Deut. 12:3; Deut. 16:21; Jdg. 3:7; Jdg. 6:25; Jdg. 6:26; Jdg. 6:28; Jdg. 6:30; 1 Ki. 14:15; 1 Ki. 14:23; 1 Ki. 15:13; 1 Ki. 16:33; 1 Ki. 18:19; 2 Ki. 13:6; 2 Ki. 17:10; 2 Ki. 17:16; 2 Ki. 18:4; 2 Ki. 21:3; 2 Ki. 21:7; 2 Ki. 23:4; 2 Ki. 23:6; 2 Ki. 23:7; 2 Ki. 23:14; 2 Ki. 23:15; 2 Chr. 14:3; 2 Chr. 15:16; 2 Chr. 17:6; 2 Chr. 19:3; 2 Chr. 24:18; 2 Chr. 31:1; 2 Chr. 33:3; 2 Chr. 33:19; 2 Chr. 34:3; 2 Chr. 34:4; 2 Chr. 34:7; Isa. 17:8; Isa. 27:9; Jer. 17:2; Mic. 5:14

#### Related Resources:

- [Who was Asherah? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who was Ashtoreth? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is an Asherah pole? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**1 Kings 14:16 "He will give up Israel on account of the sins of Jeroboam, which he committed and with which he made Israel to sin."**

- **He will give up Israel:** Ps 81:12 Isa 40:24 Ho 9:11,12,16,17
- **he made Israel to sin:** 1Ki 12:30 1Ki 13:34 1Ki 15:30,34 1Ki 16:2 Ex 32:21,35 Jer 5:31 Ho 5:11,12 Mic 6:16 Mt 18:7 Ro 14:13
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Kings 13:34 **This event became sin to the house of Jeroboam**, even to blot it out and destroy it from off the face of the earth.

1 Kings 15:30; 34 and because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, because of his provocation with which he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger. (15:34) He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and **walked in the way of Jeroboam** and in his sin which he made Israel sin.

1 Kings 16:2 "Inasmuch as I exalted you from the dust and made you leader over My people Israel, and **you have walked in the way of Jeroboam** and have made My people Israel sin, provoking Me to anger with their sins,

### THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF JEROBOAM'S SINS

**He will give up Israel on account of the sins of Jeroboam, which he committed and with which he made Israel to sin-** The prophet punctuates the warning judgments with re-emphasis on God's reason, sin! Jeroboam became a synonym for national sin and shame for the 10 Northern Tribes as most of the other kings committed similar abominable evils as did their "forefather" Jeroboam. See Scriptures below which used Jeroboam's sin as "benchmarks" for wickedness in the Northern Kingdom. What a legacy to leave!



**John Butler - THE CURSE OF JEROBOAM 1 Kings 14:16** ([Sermon Starters](#))

Sin is not all it says it is. Sin only speaks of its positive results, it never tells you of the negative results. But the Word of God tells us all.

**FIRST—THE INFLICTION ON SIN**

“He shall give Israel up because of the sins.” We note two things about this judgment upon sin by God.

- The character of the infliction. “He shall give Israel up.” When God gives up on a people, that is the ultimate judgment. This verse sounds like Romans 1. When men persist in their sin regardless of the many warnings from their conscience and from the counsel of friends and the Word, God gives up on that person or people and lets them do as they want to do, namely, sin. For sin will destroy the sinner. Sin advertises itself as a blessing, but it is actually a great curse.
- The cause of the infliction. “Because of the sins.” Why does God give up on a person. The answer is in our text. God gave up on Israel (northern kingdom) because of sin. God does not give up on you because you are in financial straits, or because physically you are weak and sickly, or because you lack talent and skills. God gives up on you because of sin. Persistent sinning risks the forsaking of God.

**SECOND—THE INSTIGATOR OF SIN**

“Who did sin.” This speaks of Jeroboam who had much to do with the anathema of God upon Israel, the northern kingdom.

- His position. “Jeroboam.” He was Israel’s (northern kingdom) first king. He was a very wicked king. He became king of the northern split when Rehoboam, Solomon’s son rejected the counsel of wise men to ease up on the nation and not demand so much from it. Jeroboam used his position to corrupt the nation he led the nation evilly just as many politicians are doing today in our land.
- His practice. “Who did sin.” His sin started with the two golden calves for Israel to worship instead of making religious pilgrimages to Jerusalem to worship Jehovah. From this initial sin, Jeroboam kept on sinning more and more.

**THIRD—THE INFLUENCE OF SIN**

“Who made Israel to sin.” Many times in Scripture is this reference to the fact that Jeroboam made Israel to sin. He had an evil influence! Many of our presidents are very concerned about their legacy. They need to be concerned about their character instead. Their wickedness, like the sin of Jeroboam, has influenced many folk to live sinfully. Sin is a great influencer. Your sin will curse many people in its influence. You have more influence that you realize. Your conduct is not limited to yourself but has a great effect upon others. And it can reach out and influence your nation and society. It can cause God to curse the entire land because of your unholy influence. So take heed to your conduct. Influence people to good instead of evil.

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**Another list of References to Sins of Jeroboam**

1 Kings 14:16 “And He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who sinned and who made Israel sin.”

1 Kings 15:26 “He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin.”

1 Kings 15:30 “Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he had sinned and which he had made Israel sin, because of his provocation with which he had provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger.”

1 Kings 15:34 “He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin.”

1 Kings 16:2 “Inasmuch as I lifted you out of the dust and made you ruler over My people Israel, and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam, and have made My people Israel sin, to provoke Me to anger with their sins.”

1 Kings 16:19 “Because of the sins which he had committed in doing evil in the sight of the Lord, in walking in

the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he had committed to make Israel sin.”

1 Kings 16:26 “For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin, provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with their idols.”

1 Kings 16:31 “And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him.”

1 Kings 22:52 “He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin.”

2 Kings 3:3 “Nevertheless he persisted in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin; he did not depart from them.”

2 Kings 10:29 “However Jehu did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin, that is, from the golden calves that were at Bethel and Dan.”

2 Kings 10:31 “But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart; for he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin.”

2 Kings 13:2 “And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. He did not depart from them.”

2 Kings 13:6 “Nevertheless they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin, but walked in them; and the wooden image also remained in Samaria.”

2 Kings 13:11 “And he did evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin, but walked in them.”

2 Kings 14:24 “And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin.”

2 Kings 15:9 “He did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin.”

2 Kings 15:18 “And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin.”

2 Kings 15:24 “And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin.”

2 Kings 15:28 “And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin.”

2 Kings 17:21-22 “For He tore Israel from the house of David, and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel from following the Lord, and made them commit a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them.”

2 Kings 23:15 “Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down; and

**1 Kings 14:17 Then Jeroboam’s wife arose and departed and came to Tirzah. As she was entering the threshold of the house, the child died.**

- **Tirzah:** It seems to have been the royal city, and the seat of government for a long time after the revolt of the ten tribes, till Omri built Samaria. 1Ki 15:21,33 16:6,8,9,15,23 Jos 12:24 Song 6:4
- **As she was entering the threshold of the house** 1Ki 14:12,13 1Sa 2:20-34 4:18-20
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

**SON'S DEATH SIGN OF  
WORSE JUDGMENTS COMING!**

**Then** - Time phrase. Marks progression in the narrative.

**Jeroboam's wife arose and departed and came to Tirzah. As she was entering the threshold of the house, the child died-**  
Imagine what was going through her mind as she entered the city limits of Tirzah! Perhaps she thought this surely would not really come to pass. But every prophecy of Yahweh is always perfectly fulfilled. And the death of Jeroboam's son signaled the death of his line and the death of the Northern Kingdom.

**Dale Ralph Davis:** All three threats are fulfilled:

- 1Ki 14:17–18 Death of son
- 1Ki 15:25–30 Destruction of dynasty
- 2 Kings 17:21–23 Removal from land

Ahijah has been talking from verses 6–16. His prophecy dominates the chapter. And once you see that his word of judgment embraces son, dynasty, and nation, and climaxes in 2 Kings 17, you realize that Ahijah's 1 Kings 14 prophecy is a programmatic piece that controls the whole history of the northern kingdom. That's what the writer(s) of 1–2 Kings intended. ([1 Kings: The Wisdom and the Folly](#) )

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**TIRZAH** - A city of Canaan in of Ephraim, to which tribe Jeroboam belonged.

- Captured by Joshua, Josh. 12:24.
- Becomes the residence of the kings of Israel, 1 Ki 14:17; 15:21, 33; 16:6, 8, 9, 15, 17, 23.
- This was the capital after Shechem (cf 1 Kgs. 15:21,33; 16:6-9,15,23).
- Royal residence moved from, 1 Ki 16:23, 24.
- Base of military operations of Menahem, 2 Ki 15:14, 16.
- Beauty of, Song 6:4.

**1 Kings 14:18 All Israel buried him and mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke through His servant Ahijah the prophet.**

- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

## **ABIJAH BURIED AND MOURNED**

**All Israel buried him and mourned for him (1Ki 14:13<sup>+</sup>), according to the word of the LORD which He spoke through His servant Ahijah the prophet** - The previous passage of Ahijah's prophecy helped understand why all Israel mourned - "All Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he alone of Jeroboam's family will come to the grave, because in him something good was found toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.

**Warren Wiersbe:** Abijah would die, have a dignified burial, and be mourned by the people. The one son of wicked Jeroboam who could have ruled justly would be taken from them, not because he was wicked but because he was good and God wanted to spare him the suffering that lay ahead of the kingdom (Isa. 57:1). As he looked ahead (1Ki 14:14), Ahijah then saw Nadab, Jeroboam's son and heir, reign for two years and then be assassinated by Baasha, a man from the tribe of Issachar (1Ki 15:25-31). Baasha would not only kill Nadab, but he would exterminate the family of Jeroboam, in fulfillment of Ahijah's prophecy (1Ki 15:29). ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

God's words through His prophet to Jeroboam's wife were a warning to the king and the death of his son as predicted was clear evidence that the entire prophecy would be fulfilled. One would have thought that Jeroboam might have paused to ponder this warning knowing that the first prophecy Ahijah gave it had been perfectly fulfilled. And pausing to ponder should have motivated Jeroboam to repent of his wickedness, but by this point he had become totally ensnared and enslaved to his wickedness. Jeroboam by this time had received the just recompense of a seared conscience (cf 1Ti 4:2+ - "seared" is passive voice = effect comes from outside, God giving one over). Such consequences are always the danger of sin persisted in despite repeated warnings, beloved...

*Sin will take you further than you ever wanted to stray,  
keep you longer than you ever wanted to stay and  
cost you more than you ever dreamed you would have to pay!*

**1 Kings 14:19 Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he made war and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.**

NET 1 Kings 14:19 The rest of the events of Jeroboam's reign, including the details of his battles and rule, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

CSB 1 Kings 14:19 As for the rest of the events of Jeroboam's reign, how he waged war and how he reigned, note that they are written in the Historical Record of Israel's Kings.

ESV 1 Kings 14:19 Now 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.

NIV 1 Kings 14:19 The other events of Jeroboam's reign, his wars and how he ruled, are written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel.

NLT 1 Kings 14:19 The rest of the events in Jeroboam's reign, including all his wars and how he ruled, are recorded in The Book of the History of the Kings of Israel.

NRS 1 Kings 14:19 Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred and how he reigned, are written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

NJB 1 Kings 14:19 The rest of the history of Jeroboam, what wars he waged, how he governed, this is recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

NAB 1 Kings 14:19 The rest of the acts of Jeroboam, with his warfare and his reign, are recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

- **how he made war and how he reigned** 1Ki 14:30 2Ch 13:2-20
- **book:** 1Ki 14:29 15:31 16:5,14,20,27 22:39 1Ch 27:24 Es 6:1
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

**Related Passages:**

2 Chronicles 13:1-20+ In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah became king over Judah. He reigned three years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Micaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. **Now there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.** 3 Abijah began the battle with an army of valiant warriors, 400,000 chosen men, while Jeroboam drew up in battle formation against him with 800,000 chosen men who were valiant warriors. 4 Then Abijah stood on Mount Zemaraim, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, and said, "Listen to me, Jeroboam and all Israel: 5 "Do you not know that the LORD God of Israel gave the rule over Israel forever to David and his sons by a covenant of salt? 6 "Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, rose up and rebelled against his master, 7 and worthless men gathered about him, scoundrels, who proved too strong for Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, when he was young and timid and could not hold his own against them. 8 "So now you intend to resist the kingdom of the LORD through the sons of David, being a great multitude and having with you the golden calves which Jeroboam made for gods for you. 9 "Have you not driven out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron and the Levites, and made for yourselves priests like the peoples of other lands? Whoever comes to consecrate himself with a young bull and seven rams, even he may become a priest of what are no gods. 10 "But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken Him; and the sons of Aaron are ministering to the LORD as priests, and the Levites attend to their work. 11 "Every morning and evening they burn to the LORD burnt offerings and fragrant incense, and the showbread is set on the clean table, and the golden lampstand with its lamps is ready to light every evening; for we keep the charge of the LORD our God, but you have forsaken Him. 12 "Now behold, God is with us at our head and His priests with the signal trumpets to sound the alarm against you. O sons of Israel, do not fight against the LORD God of your fathers, for you will not succeed." 13 But Jeroboam had set an ambush to come from the rear, so that Israel was in front of Judah and the ambush was behind them. 14 When Judah turned around, behold, they were attacked both front and rear; so they cried to the LORD, and the priests blew the trumpets. 15 Then the men of Judah raised a war cry, and when the men of Judah raised the war cry, then it was that God routed Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. 16 When the sons of Israel fled before Judah, God gave them into their hand. 17 Abijah and his people defeated them with a great slaughter, so that 500,000 chosen men of Israel fell slain. 18 Thus the sons of Israel were subdued at that

time, and the sons of Judah conquered because they trusted in the LORD, the God of their fathers. 19 Abijah pursued Jeroboam and captured from him several cities, Bethel with its villages, Jeshanah with its villages and Ephron with its villages. 20 Jeroboam did not again recover strength in the days of Abijah; and the LORD struck him and he died.

**Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he made war and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel** - Hebrew literally "As for the rest of the events of Jeroboam, how he fought and how he ruled, are they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Israel?"

*The life of Jeroboam presents to us the tragedy of grace offered and grace foolishly refused.*

-- Wayne Barber

**Bob Utley** - "the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel" This, like "the Book of the Acts of Solomon" (1 Kgs. 11:41) and "the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah" (1 Kgs. 14:29), are all lost to us. They are not the same as Chronicles.

**Wayne Barber** sums up Jeroboam's tragic tale - Jeroboam's life presents to us the tragedy of grace offered and grace foolishly refused. It is the account of a man consumed with himself and the devices of his own heart. Jeroboam had the opportunity to bring healing to a nation weary with the idolatry and harsh labor of the latter days of Solomon's rule, but instead led the people further down the road of idolatry with all its deception, decay, and destruction. He was the headwaters of a river of wickedness that flowed in Israel for the next 210 years and eventually emptied over a precipice into destruction. In 722 BC the nation of Israel was taken captive by the Assyrians, and was never restored. The ways of Jeroboam should be a flashing beacon to us: "**Danger Ahead**," and should guide us back onto the path of following God and His ways. ([Life Principles from the Kings of the Old Testament](#))

**JEROBOAM'S LEGACY** - The root cause of Jeroboam's sin was the problem of his heart for in 1Ki 12:33 we read the fateful words "he had devised in his own heart." Beloved, "The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?" (Jer 17:9) Jeroboam had a terminal cardiac condition and led Israel into greater and greater sin and deeper bondage by his deception and dishonesty. His loathsome legacy left to the Northern Kingdom included...

1. False gods
2. False altars
3. False praise
4. False worship
5. False priests
6. False incense and prayer
7. False feasts

Proverbs 14:12 would make an apt epitaph for Jeroboam...

*There is a way which seems right to a man,  
But its end is the way of death.*

**1 Kings 14:20 The time that Jeroboam reigned was twenty-two years; and he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his place.**

- **slept**: Heb. lay down, 1Ki 2:10 11:43 Job 14:12 Ps 3:5 4:8
- **Nadab**: 1Ki 15:25-31
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

## **NADAB SUCCEEDS JEROBOAM AFTER 22 YEARS**

**The time that Jeroboam reigned was twenty-two years; and he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his place** - What is interesting is that Jeroboam's line was not **cut off** ([karath](#)) with Jeroboam but with assassination of his son **Nadab**. The time 22 years tells us that God was patient before bringing final judgment. The words of Peter describing the "default mode" (so to speak) of Yahweh are appropriate for "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." (2Pe 3:9+).

1 Kings 14:21 Now Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen from all the tribes of Israel to put His name there. And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess.

- **Rehoboam:** 1Ki 11:43 2Ch 12:13 13:7
- **the city:** 1Ki 8:16,44 11:36 Ps 78:68,69 87:1,2 132:13,14 Isa 12:6
- **to put his name:** Ex 20:24 De 12:5,21
- **Naamah:** 1Ki 14:31 De 23:3 2Ch 12:13
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

#### Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 12:13 So King Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem and reigned. Now Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen from all the tribes of Israel, to put His name there. And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess.

2 Chronicles 12:14 He did evil because he did not set his heart to seek the LORD.

1 Kings 11:1 Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, **Ammonite**, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel, "You shall not associate with them, neither shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods." Solomon held fast to these in love.

2 Chronicles 12:1-2+ When the kingdom of Rehoboam was established and strong, he and all Israel with him forsook the law of the LORD. 2 And it came about in King Rehoboam's fifth year, because they had been unfaithful to the LORD, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem



Divided Kingdoms  
[Click to Enlarge](#)

## REHOBOAM HAS A FEW GOOD YEARS

**Now** - This word "NOW" can function like a time phrase and depict a shift in narrative, marking a transition to a new event, scene, or idea. **Now** is often used this way in biblical texts to introduce a new moment. For example, **'Now** the LORD said to Abram, 'Go from your country...' (Ge 12:1) In Genesis the "**now**" marks the introduction of a new event in Abram's life. Keep your eyes "peeled" for "**NOW**" and remember to pause and ponder "*why now?*" (so to speak)!

**TECHNICAL NOTE** - In the writer's treatment of The Divided Kingdom, his pattern is to switch back and forth



between Israel and Judah.

**Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah** (see map above) - We have seen the division of the 12 tribes that came to a climax in 1Ki 12:15-19+, remembering that the "turn of events" was "from the LORD."

**Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king** - As Solomon's reign lasted forty years (1Ki 11:42), this son must have been born a year or more before his father came to the throne, and Solomon must have married this Ammonitish wife, Naamah, before Pharaoh's daughter.

**And he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen from all the tribes of Israel to put His Name there** - From the description in 2 Chronicles 12:1-2+ we can assume **Rehoboam** had at least a few good years of somewhat godly leadership. Of course, a good start does not guarantee a godly finish! Apparently **Rehoboam**, after fortifying certain cities to the south of Jerusalem, believed himself to be secure and inwardly (in his heart) concluded that he no longer needed the Lord. Oh, had Rehoboam only known and applied the words of the old hymn, "**I Need Thee Every Hour**"!

**THOUGHT** - Are you doing well today, feeling established and strong like Rehoboam? O beloved, then you need to be wary and beware lest you begin to think you do not need the Word of God and the Spirit of God to empower you to daily walk like Jesus walked, pleasing His Father (See [The Holy Spirit-Walking Like Jesus Walked!](#)) Take a moment to [Play and prayerfully ponder the powerful words](#) which Rehoboam should have pondered if he had read Psalm 73 (cf. Ps 73:25)

I need Thee ev'ry hour,  
Most gracious Lord;  
No tender voice like Thine  
Can peace afford.

*Refrain:*

*I need Thee, oh, I need Thee;  
Ev'ry hour I need Thee;  
Oh, bless me now, my Savior,  
I come to Thee.*

I need Thee ev'ry hour,  
Stay Thou nearby;  
Temptations lose their pow'r  
When Thou art nigh. [*Refrain*]

I need Thee ev'ry hour,  
In joy or pain;  
Come quickly and abide,  
Or life is vain. [*Refrain*]

I need Thee ev'ry hour,  
Teach me Thy will;  
And Thy rich promises  
In me fulfill. [*Refrain*]

**Donald Wiseman:** He began well under the influence of priests loyal to the Lord (Yahweh) who had been driven out of the north, but he later turned away from them by allowing local cult centres to develop (12:24; 2 Chr. 11:17; 12:1). The historian is not afraid to castigate the favoured house of David. (See [1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary - Page 163](#))

**The city which the LORD had chosen** goes back to the repeated phrases in Deuteronomy (cf. Dt. 12:5,11,14,18,21,26; 14:23-25; 15:20; 16:2,11,15; 17:8,10; 18:6; 26:2; 31:11; 1 Ki 8:29; 11:13,32,36; 14:21). Jerusalem was "David's city," who was a type of the Messiah to come. It was the central worship and sacrifice place of all the tribes and their land allocations.

**And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess** - From 1 Ki 11:1 we see Rehoboam's mother was from nations God had said "You shall not associate with them, neither shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods." Could this have influenced Rehoboam's subsequent course? (see 2Ch 12:1+)

**Lumby** points out that "The high position and great influence of the queen-mother in Oriental courts accounts for the regular mention of the mother's name in the history of each king's reign." ([First Kings page 92](#))



**Iain Provan** points out that "what is noticeable in this brief account of Rehoboam's reign is that there is no prophetic oracle about the end of David's house to match the oracle of 14:7–16 about the end of Jeroboam's. . . Judah will, in fact, have a stable dynasty throughout the period when Israel is "like a reed swaying in the water"; and Asa, the descendant of two wicked Judean kings, will be sitting comfortably on the Judean throne at the very point when Nadab, the descendant of one wicked Israelite king, loses the Israelite throne." (See [1 & 2 Kings \(Understanding the Bible Commentary Series\) - Page 76](#))

**Peter Pett:** And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. With rare exceptions the introductory formulae for the kings of Judah regularly refer to the name of the king's mother, thus confirming that the king's blood line was genuine. It emphasised that he was born of a known wife of the previous Davidic king. Naamah may well have been one of the wives who led Solomon astray. She was no doubt a treaty wife. Rehoboam was thus half Ammonite.

**Constable: quoting Rice** — The narrator introduces a new format and style at this point that enables him to state the essence of a king's reign with an economy of words. The introduction and conclusion of the account of each reign conform to a fixed pattern with only slight variations. The following information is regularly given in the introduction to the reigns of the kings of Judah:

- (1) date of beginning of reign,
- (2) age at beginning of reign (not noted consistently at first),
- (3) length and place of reign,
- (4) name of the queen mother, and
- (5) a theological evaluation.

The pattern for the Israelite kings is the same except that their ages and the names of their mothers are not given. The reign of each king, both Judahite and Israelite, is normally concluded in this manner:

- (1) summary of reign and referral to the royal annals for additional information,
- (2) notice of death and place of burial, and
- (3) name of successor.

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#### QUESTION - Who was King Rehoboam in the Bible?

**ANSWER** - Rehoboam was the son of [King Solomon](#) and king of Judah for seventeen years (931–913 BC). Solomon had turned away from God, and God told Solomon that He would tear the kingdom from him yet leave him one tribe. God also promised, for the sake of David, not to tear the kingdom away during Solomon's lifetime but during that of his son (1 Kings 11:9–13). Shortly after Rehoboam became king, a rebellion placed the ten northern tribes under the rule of [Jeroboam](#) and left Rehoboam with his own tribe (Judah) and the tribe of Benjamin.

Jeroboam started out as a servant of Solomon in charge of forced labor (1 Kings 11:28). A prophet told Jeroboam that he would be king over Israel (1 Kings 11:26–40). At some point, Jeroboam fled from Solomon to Egypt. But when Rehoboam went to Shechem to be installed as king of Israel, Jeroboam returned. The people sent Jeroboam to the new king to ask him to lighten the heavy load of labor and taxes that Solomon had laid on them (1 Kings 12:1–4; 2 Chronicles 10:3–4). The older advisers gave King Rehoboam the wise counsel to honor the people's request and thus win their loyalty (1 Kings 12:6–7; 2 Chronicles 10:6–7). King Rehoboam asked the young men who had grown up with him for advice as well. They foolishly told the new king to threaten even harsher conditions. Rehoboam took the young men's advice, and the people rebelled, abandoning the house of David and ultimately making Jeroboam their king (1 Kings 12:8–20; 2 Chronicles 10:8–19). Rehoboam fled to Jerusalem (1 Kings 12:18; 2 Chronicles 10:18), where he mustered 180,000 warriors from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to mount an attack. But Shemaiah, a prophet of God, delivered God's message to Rehoboam: the troops should go home because the divided kingdom had come from the Lord. The people of Judah wisely listened and did not invade Israel (1 Kings 12:21–24; 2 Chronicles 11:1–4). However, there continued to be warfare between Jeroboam and Rehoboam throughout Rehoboam's reign (1 Kings 14:30; 2 Chronicles 12:15).

In the northern kingdom, Jeroboam promoted idolatry and removed the Levites from service, so the priests and Levites came to Rehoboam and served at the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 11:13–15), along with all those who wanted to seek the one true God (2 Chronicles 11:16). Second Chronicles 11:17 says, "They strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and for three years they made Rehoboam the son of Solomon secure, for they walked for three years in the way of David and Solomon." Rehoboam also built multiple cities for defense, with strong fortresses, commanders, and supplies (2 Chronicles 11:5–12). King Rehoboam "acted wisely" by placing his sons throughout the districts of Judah and Benjamin, supplied ample provisions, and found them wives (2 Chronicles 11:23).

Unfortunately, after King Rehoboam became established in the southern kingdom, he abandoned the ways of God (2 Chronicles 12:1). In the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign, Shishak king of Egypt captured the fortified cities in Judah and set out against Jerusalem. Shemaiah the prophet told Rehoboam, "This is what the Lord says, 'You have abandoned me; therefore, I now abandon you to Shishak'" (2 Chronicles 12:5). "The leaders of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, 'The Lord is just'" (verse 6). Seeing their humility, God said He would not destroy them but would allow them to become subjects of Shishak. The Pharaoh attacked Jerusalem and removed all the treasures from the temple and the palace (1 Kings 14:26; 2 Chronicles 12:9). Rehoboam did make bronze shields to replace the gold ones his father had made (1 Kings 14:27; 2 Chronicles 12:10–11).

Second Chronicles 12:12 says, "Because Rehoboam humbled himself, the Lord's anger turned from him, and he was not totally destroyed. Indeed, there was some good in Judah." "Some good in Judah" seems a fitting way to characterize the reign of Rehoboam. He was unwise and perhaps brash in his treatment of the forced laborers, thus leading to his loss of the kingdom. However, that loss was God-ordained, and Rehoboam proceeded to follow the ways of the Lord for some time. But then he turned from God, and the nation slid into moral and spiritual decay. "Judah did evil in the eyes of the LORD. By the sins they committed they stirred up his jealous anger more than those who were before them had done" (1 Kings 14:22). They set up high places and had male shrine prostitutes in the land, which [King Asa](#), Rehoboam's grandson, would later remove.

From King Rehoboam we learn the importance of wise counselors and maintaining faithfulness to God. When Rehoboam went his own way, things did not go well for his kingdom. When he listened to God, Judah was secure.

**1 Kings 14:22 Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they provoked Him to jealousy more than all that their fathers had done, with the sins which they committed.**

KJV 1 Kings 14:22 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.

BGT 1 Kings 14:22 κα πο ησεν Ροβοαμ τ πονηρ ν ν πιον κυρ ου κα παρεζ λωσεν α τ ν ν π σιν ο ς πο ησαν ο πατ ρες α το κα ν τα ς μαρτ αις α τ ν α ς μαρτον

LXE 1 Kings 14:22 And Roboam did evil in the sight of the Lord; and he provoked him in all the things which their fathers did in their sins which they sinned.

NET 1 Kings 14:22 Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD. They made him more jealous by their sins than their ancestors had done.

CSB 1 Kings 14:22 Judah did what was evil in the LORD's eyes. They provoked Him to jealous anger more than all that their ancestors had done with the sins they committed.

ESV 1 Kings 14:22 And Judah did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins that they committed, more than all that their fathers had done.

NIV 1 Kings 14:22 Judah did evil in the eyes of the LORD. By the sins they committed they stirred up his jealous anger more than their fathers had done.

NLT 1 Kings 14:22 During Rehoboam's reign, the people of Judah did what was evil in the LORD's sight, provoking his anger with their sin, for it was even worse than that of their ancestors.

NRS 1 Kings 14:22 Judah did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; they provoked him to jealousy with their sins that they committed, more than all that their ancestors had done.

NJB 1 Kings 14:22 He did what is displeasing to Yahweh, arousing his resentment more than his ancestors by all the sins which they had committed;

- **Judah:** Jdg 3:7,12 4:1 2Ki 17:19 2Ch 12:1 Jer 3:7-11
- **they provoked:** 1Ki 14:9 De 4:24 Dt 29:28 Dt 32:16-21 Ps 78:58 Isa 65:3,4 1Co 10:22
- **all:** 1Ki 16:30 2Ki 21:11 Eze 16:47,48
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

#### Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 12:1-2+ When the kingdom of Rehoboam was established and strong, he and all Israel with him forsook the law of the LORD. 2 And it came about in King Rehoboam's fifth year, because they had been

unfaithful to the LORD, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem

Deuteronomy 4:24+ "For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, **a jealous God**.

Deuteronomy 32:16-21+ "**They made Him jealous with strange gods; With abominations they provoked Him to anger.** 17 "**They sacrificed to demons who were not God, To gods whom they have not known, New gods who came lately, Whom your fathers did not dread.** 18 "You neglected the Rock who begot you, And forgot the God who gave you birth. 19 "The LORD saw this, and spurned them Because of the provocation of His sons and daughters. 20 "Then He said, 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be; For they are a perverse generation, Sons in whom is no faithfulness. 21 '**They have made Me jealous with what is not God; They have provoked Me to anger with their idols.** So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation,

Psalms 78:58 For they provoked Him with their high places **And aroused His jealousy with their graven images.**

## **JUDAH'S SINS PROVOKE GOD'S JEALOUSY**

**Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they provoked Him to jealousy more than all that their fathers had done, with the sins which they committed** - Jehovah had called Himself a jealous God, when the Law was given on Sinai (Ex 20:5+). Jealousy does not refer to human jealousy (which is often selfish), but rather God's deep desire for His people to remain faithful to Him, just like a husband expects loyalty from his wife. You might be asking but why would God be jealous toward His people for committing these sins? Here is an excerpt from an article I wrote entitled "[Israel, the Wife of Jehovah](#)"

**SUMMARY** - Jehovah was the "**Husband**" of Israel as described in Je 31:31, 32+, Isa 54:5 (cf Ho 2:2, 19, 20). Note that the word "**husband**" is [baal](#) (master, owner - see [baal](#), [ba'al](#), [ba'al](#)) and is the same word used for Israel's "lover" with whom she had an adulterous affair, for these idols were often named "**Baal**!" (cf Jdg 2:11-13+) In the **OT**, under the Old Covenant, Israel formally became Jehovah's "Wife" in the "ceremony" at the foot of Mt. Sinai (Ex 19:1,2+) when God gave Moses the Law and Israel said "**Yes**" (cf marriage ceremony where bride says "I do" - Israel the "bride" of Yahweh said "We will do!" - Ex 24:3,7+) to the vows. Note that the solemn, binding nature of their entrance into this covenant was ratified by the blood of the covenant (Ex 24:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8+, cf Dt 29:25+ and Heb 9:18-21+). Israel was (repeatedly) an unfaithful, adulterous wife and was thus disowned by Jehovah (e.g., see Dt 29:25-28+), but will she will one day in the future repent (cf Zech 12:10-14+) and be restored (Isa 62:4, 5 - where the verb "**married**" = [baal](#)!), a prophecy which will be fulfilled in the Messianic Age.

**With the sins which they committed** - Their **sins** were especially the sins of idolatry which is viewed as "spiritual adultery" (cf. Ex 34:14-16; Lev. 17:7; 20:5-6; Nu 15:39; Dt. 31:16; Jdg 2:17; 8:27,33; 1Ch 5:29; Jer 3:1; Ezek. 20:30; Hos 2:7).

**Bob Utley** - In light of this rebellion, YHWH calls Himself a Jealous God (cf. Exod. 20:5; 34:14; Deut. 4:24; 5:9; 6:14-15; Josh. 24:19). The best place to see this powerful imagery is the book of Hosea, which describes YHWH as a faithful lover and Israel as a faithless wife. In Hosea YHWH's jealousy turns to forgiveness and restoration.

**William Barnes:** Synchronistic History of the Early Divided Monarchy (1 Kgs 14:21–16:34) — We now move into several chapters featuring the "leapfrog" treatment of the northern and southern kings, with their order of presentation apparently based solely on chronological factors. . . Two main observations are made about Rehoboam's time as king: The people sadly grew even more heterodox in their worship (1Ki 14:22–25); and King Shishak attacked Jerusalem early in Rehoboam's reign, ransacking the treasures of palace and Temple, and, in particular, removing Solomon's ceremonial gold shields from the palace (1Ki 14:25–28; cf. 1Ki 10:16–17). (See [1-2 Kings - Page 133](#))

**Dale Ralph Davis:** I think the focus on Judah collectively rather than on Rehoboam individually is deliberate. Verses 22–24 are not meant only for Rehoboam's reign. The writer wants to give a summary of the whole trend of Judah's kingdom, which began with Rehoboam, and of the dark end that kingdom will meet. Verses 22–24 constitute a programmatic text. As 14:15–16 depicts the tragic end of the northern kingdom, beginning with Jeroboam, its first king, so 14:22–24 relates the fatal errors of the southern kingdom, beginning with its initial king, Rehoboam. In both cases, the seeds of demise are there at the beginning. This then is not going to be a happy history that we read. The divided kingdom is a depressing story from the very first. ([1 Kings: The Wisdom and the Folly](#) )

**1 Kings 14:23 For they also built for themselves high places and sacred pillars and Asherim on every high hill and beneath every luxuriant tree.**

KJV 1 Kings 14:23 For they also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree.

BGT 1 Kings 14:23 κα κοδμησαν αυτο ς ψηλ κα στλας κα λση π π ντα βουν ν ψηλ ν κα ποκτω παντ ς ξλου συσκ ου

LXE 1 Kings 14:23 And they built for themselves high places, and pillars, and planted groves on every high hill, and under every shady tree.

NET 1 Kings 14:23 They even built for themselves high places, sacred pillars, and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree.

CSB 1 Kings 14:23 They also built for themselves high places, sacred pillars, and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree;

ESV 1 Kings 14:23 For they also built for themselves high places and pillars and Asherim on every high hill and under every green tree,

NIV 1 Kings 14:23 They also set up for themselves high places, sacred stones and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree.

NLT 1 Kings 14:23 For they also built for themselves pagan shrines and set up sacred pillars and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree.

NRS 1 Kings 14:23 For they also built for themselves high places, pillars, and sacred poles on every high hill and under every green tree;

NJB 1 Kings 14:23 they had built themselves high places, and had set up pillars and sacred poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree.

- built: 1Ki 3:2 De 12:2 Isa 57:5 Eze 16:24,25 20:28,29
- images: or, standing images, or statues, Lev 26:1
- groves: Mic 5:14 De 12:2 2Ki 17:9,10 21:3-7 2Ch 28:4 Jer 17:2
- under every: Isa 57:5 Jer 3:13
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

**Related Passages:**

Psalms 78:58 For they provoked Him with their high places and aroused His jealousy with their graven images.

## **A PROFUSION OF PAGAN PILLARS**

**For** - Term of explanation. The writer is explaining how Judah provoked the jealousy (and anger) of Jehovah.

**They also built for themselves high places ([bamah](#)) and sacred pillars ([matsisebah](#)) and Asherim ([asherah](#)) on every high hill and beneath every luxuriant tree** - This verse is incredible in that it marks the abominable idolatry as not just "here and there," but twice says quantitates it with **every**! It was like a deadly plague of idol worship had affected the people of Judah.

**Every luxuriant (green) tree** - see Isa. 57:5; Jer. 2:20; 3:2,6,13; 7:2; Ezek. 6:13; 20:28; Hosea 4:11-14

While the Bible does not tell us how many towns and villages were in Judah in Rehoboam's reign archaeological and historical estimates suggest that Judah in the 10th century BC (Rehoboam's time) likely had 100 to 200 towns and villages, ranging from small villages to mid-sized towns. It is likely that every town had one or more of these idolatrous manifestations. Clearly this sin of idolatry had permeated the entire population.

**August Konkell:** Most notable about Rehoboam is the way he leads Judah in the sins of Canaanite worship, no less than what Jeroboam does in the north. This includes the erection of sacred stones along with the sacred poles representing Asherah, the

goddess of fertility. It was legitimate to set up stones as a memorial (Gen. 28:18; 35:14), or as a witness (31:45), but it was not permissible to follow the practice of the Canaanites to use such stones for worship (Ex. 23:24). Worship "on every high hill and under every spreading tree" may be a way of referring to the domain of the deity and the associated fertility. Worst of all are the "shrine prostitutes," a collective term that perhaps refers to both males and females. Sexual relations were part of sacrificial rites as a means of achieving fertility and prosperity (Hos. 4:14). Cult practices and prostitution were explicitly forbidden by the covenant (Deut. 23:18). (See [1 and 2 Kings - Page 247](#))

**High places** (01116) **bamah** Six activities seem to be related to high places -- burning of incense, sacrificing, eating of sacrificial meals, praying, prostitution, child sacrifice (cf. bama in the valley, Je7:31). The first use in Lev 26:30 is God's declaration to Israel "I will destroy your high places." In Dt 32:13 speaking of Jacob (Israel) He declared "He made him ride on the **high places** of the earth," so clearly some uses of bamah are not negative. In a similar use God says Israel "you will tread upon their (Israel's enemies') **high places**." Another positive use is Psalm 18:33 where David declared Jehovah "makes my feet like hinds' feet, And sets me upon my **high places**." (cp Hab 3:19 - [NET Note](#) = David "compares his agility in battle to the ability of a deer to negotiate rugged, high terrain without falling or being injured.", cp Isa 58:14) We see the effect of Israel's high places on Jehovah in Ps 78:58 = "For they provoked Him with their high places and aroused His jealousy with their graven images."

**BAMAH - NOTICE THE PREVALENCE IN KINGS AND CHRONICLES** - Over 100x in 91 verses translated in **NAS** as heights(3), high place(19), high places(76), places(1), waves(1). Lev. 26:30; Num. 22:41; Num. 33:52; Deut. 32:13; Deut. 33:29; 1 Sam. 9:12; 1 Sam. 9:13; 1 Sam. 9:14; 1 Sam. 9:19; 1 Sam. 9:25; 1 Sam. 10:5; 1 Sam. 10:13; 2 Sam. 1:19; 2 Sam. 1:25; 2 Sam. 22:34; 1 Ki. 3:2; 1 Ki. 3:3; 1 Ki. 3:4; 1 Ki. 11:7; 1 Ki. 12:31; 1 Ki. 12:32; 1 Ki. 13:2; 1 Ki. 13:32; 1 Ki. 13:33; 1 Ki. 14:23; 1 Ki. 15:14; 1 Ki. 22:43; 2 Ki. 12:3; 2 Ki. 14:4; 2 Ki. 15:4; 2 Ki. 15:35; 2 Ki. 16:4; 2 Ki. 17:9; 2 Ki. 17:11; 2 Ki. 17:29; 2 Ki. 17:32; 2 Ki. 18:4; 2 Ki. 18:22; 2 Ki. 21:3; 2 Ki. 23:5; 2 Ki. 23:8; 2 Ki. 23:9; 2 Ki. 23:13; 2 Ki. 23:15; 2 Ki. 23:19; 2 Ki. 23:20; 1 Chr. 16:39; 1 Chr. 21:29; 2 Chr. 1:3; 2 Chr. 1:13; 2 Chr. 11:15; 2 Chr. 14:3; 2 Chr. 14:5; 2 Chr. 15:17; 2 Chr. 17:6; 2 Chr. 20:33; 2 Chr. 21:11; 2 Chr. 28:4; 2 Chr. 28:25; 2 Chr. 31:1; 2 Chr. 32:12; 2 Chr. 33:3; 2 Chr. 33:17; 2 Chr. 33:19; 2 Chr. 34:3; Job 9:8; Ps. 18:33; Ps. 78:58; Isa. 14:14; Isa. 15:2; Isa. 16:12; Isa. 36:7; Isa. 58:14; Jer. 7:31; Jer. 17:3; Jer. 19:5; Jer. 26:18; Jer. 32:35; Jer. 48:35; Ezek. 6:3; Ezek. 6:6; Ezek. 16:16; Ezek. 20:29; Ezek. 36:2; Hos. 10:8; Amos 4:13; Amos 7:9; Mic. 1:3; Mic. 1:5; Mic. 3:12; Hab. 3:19

A sad phrase that is repeated again and again (speaking of Israel) is "the **high places** were not taken away" (1Ki 15:14, 2Chr 15:17 = King Asa but notice he did remove some of them - 2Chr 14:3, 5, 1Ki 22:43, 2Chr 20:33 = King Jehoshaphat, 2Ki 12:3 = King Jehoash, 2Ki 14:4 = King Amaziah, 2Ki 15:4 = King Azariah, 2Ki 15:35 = King Jotham son of Uzziah and look what his son did in 2Ki 16:1-4!, 2Chr 20:33). In many of these passages the context was of a king doing "spiritual house cleaning" so to speak and yet still failing to remove the high places. Isn't sin that way? We confess one or two sins but we have a little pet sin (better a "venomous viper") that we just don't have the heart to kill! God grant us spiritual eyes and hearts to learn from Israel's mistakes. Amen! Some kings like **Hezekiah** (1Ki 18:4, 2Chr 31:1, Isa 36:7) and **Josiah** (2Ki 23:4,8, 13, 15, 19-20, 2Chr 34:3 cp prophecy about **Josiah** 300 years earlier = 1Ki 13:2) did destroy the high places, but in Hezekiah's case his own son **Manasseh** rebuilt them (2Ki 21:1-2, 3, 2Chr 33:3) and in Josiah's case the people rebuilt them!

We see the spiritual effect of high places on the people when King Jehoram (2Chr 21:5-10) "made **high places** in the mountains of Judah, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot and led Judah astray." (2Chr 21:11)

One of the most incredible (and saddest) verses in the OT (in my opinion) is "Then Solomon built **a high place** for **Chemosh** the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon." (1Ki 11:7, cp 1Ki 3:3 = Solomon had "half a heart" for God!) This was too much for Jehovah and He declared that the 12 tribes would be split as a result of Solomon's sin! Sin is costly. You may think you are getting away with it, but you are not! You may think you are the wisest man in the world (like Solomon) but you are really the most foolish (as Solomon was)! There was one high place that was not idolatrous (at least not at the outset) - "Then Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place which was at Gibeon; for God's tent of meeting was there, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness." (2Chr 1:3, cp 1Chr 16:39-40, 21:29).

**Pillars** (04676) **matstsebah** from **natsab** = to take a stand) means something set upright, most often "a standing, unhewn block of stone utilized for religious and memorial purposes. After a powerful experience of the Lord in a dream, Jacob set up as a pillar the stone on which he had laid his head, in commemoration of the event (Ge 28:18, 22; cf. Ge 31:45; 35:20). Moses set up an altar and also twelve pillars at the base of Mount Sinai to represent the twelve tribes of Israel (Ex. 24:4). These pillars were erected as monuments to God (Hos. 3:4); or, more commonly, to pagan deities (1 Ki. 14:23, Mic. 5:13). Many times in 2 Kings, the term refers to a sacred pillar that aided people in their worship of pagan gods, especially the Canaanite god Baal. In most of these passages, the sacred columns were used by Israelites, contrary to the Lord's prohibition concerning the worship of any other god (2 Ki. 3:2; 10:26, 27; 18:4; 23:14; cf. Hos. 10:1, 2; Mic. 5:13[12])." (Baker)



**Milton Fisher - maṣṣēbâ.** Pillar. The lexicons distinguish between the meanings "pillar," or "column," and (standing) "image," but both ASV and RSV translate the word as "pillar" almost exclusively. (The KJV rendering "garrison" in Ezekiel 26:11 is "pillar" in the other two versions, for example.) Some light has been shed, not yet clearly enough, on the interesting term maṣṣēbâ "pillar," by archaeological discoveries. It has an apparent primary reference to cultic objects, though Absalom's memorial monument (maṣṣebet) to himself (2 Samuel 18:18) may not have been for a specifically religious purpose, as also that set up for Rachel's grave (Genesis 35:20). Many maṣṣēbôt have been found in Palestinian excavations. While the famous ones at Hazor (BA 19, 22) and at Byblos are clearly monumental and cultic, other standing stones were for a time wrongly identified. It is now known that many rough stone columns, initially interpreted as cultic objects, were actually a normal feature of Middle Iron Age Israelite house construction. A suggested relationship or possible development of cultic pillars into actual imagery and idols is also inconclusive.

While the two biblical occurrences cited above do refer to simple memorials, more often the maṣṣēbâ has religious significance. In Genesis 28:18 Jacob's pillow becomes a "pillar," which he anoints with oil, naming the place Beth-el, "the House of God." On his return to that place (Genesis 35:14) he set up another pillar, pouring out both a drink offering and oil, because God talked with him there and changed his name to "Israel." Previous to that, at the time of his agreement with Laban (Genesis 31:45), Jacob set up a stone pillar in addition to the "heap of witness" directly associated with their agreement. In Exodus 24:4 Moses, besides the altar he built, erected twelve stones (pillars) representing the twelve tribes of Israel.

The above were legitimate uses of this object. It must be recognized that quite often the maṣṣēbôt mentioned in the Bible were of pagan cultic significance and as such were not only forbidden to Israel but called for destruction when found. In Exodus 23:24 the expansion upon the Decalogue—near the conclusion of the so-called Book of the Covenant—calls for action: Israel must "not bow down to their gods, . . . but . . . break down their images" (ASV and RSV, "pillars," with a margin "obelisks" in the former). So too, in Deut. 16:21-22, they are told, "Thou shalt not plant thee a grove ('āshērâ) . . . neither shalt thou set thee up any image." Nevertheless, later on in Israel's history we read of Judah's sin, described in such terms as, "they also built them high places, and images, and groves" (1 Kings 14:23).

The LXX uses stēlē to translate maṣṣēbâ in all the cited instances, with the exception of Exodus 24:4, where lithos is employed. Other Hebrew nouns rendered "pillar" in KJV, such as miś'ād, māšûq, and 'amūd, are completely free of the religious or cultic associations described above.

Two instances where the Hebrew text noticeably avoids use of maṣṣēbâ are Joshua's "great stone" placed as a witness to reaffirmation of the covenant between Israel and her God (Joshua 24:26-27) and Samuel's 'eben hā'ēzer, "Stone of Help," which he erected in commemoration of deliverance from the Philistines. (See online Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

**Septuagint** in Ex 23:24 = **stele** = a commemorative stone block or pillar, monument, pillar from the time of Hom. inscribed and used as a grave marker, or for commemoration of events, proclamation of decrees, recognition of personal achievements. Stele is a block or slab, bearing an inscription; and so, 1. a gravestone, Hom., Att. 2. a block or slab, inscribed with record of victories, dedications, treaties, decrees, etc., Hdt., Att.; whether for honour, or for infamy, Hdt., Dem.:—also the record itself, a contract, agreement, kata. th.n sth,lhn according to agreement, 3. a boundary post, Xen.:—the turning-post at the end of the racecourse,

**MATSTSEBAH - 38X/33V - obelisks(1), pillar(19), pillars(16), stump(2).** Gen. 28:18; Gen. 28:22; Gen. 31:13; Gen. 31:45; Gen. 31:51; Gen. 31:52; Gen. 35:14; Gen. 35:20; Exod. 23:24; Exod. 24:4; Exod. 34:13; Lev. 26:1; Deut. 7:5; Deut. 12:3; Deut. 16:22; 2 Sam. 18:18; 1 Ki. 14:23; 2 Ki. 3:2; 2 Ki. 10:26; 2 Ki. 10:27; 2 Ki. 17:10; 2 Ki. 18:4; 2 Ki. 23:14; 2 Chr. 14:3; 2 Chr. 31:1; Isa. 6:13; Isa. 19:19; Jer. 43:13; Ezek. 26:11; Hos. 3:4; Hos. 10:1; Hos. 10:2; Mic. 5:13

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#### QUESTION - [What was wrong with the sacred pillars the Israelites built?](#)

**ANSWER** - God gives His people instructions on how to relate to Him. Because He has created people, He knows best His design for how we know Him, how we should serve Him, and how we ought to worship Him. In 2 Kings 17 we find an account of the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel. It is evident there why the nation fell and what was wrong with the sacred pillars the Israelites built (2 Kings 17:10).

In roughly 721 BC, Israel was defeated and [taken into exile](#) by the kingdom of Assyria (2 Kings 17:6). The writer explains why this happened in 2 Kings 17:7–18. Israel had sinned against God and turned to other gods (2 Kings 17:7). The people began to follow

the customs of other nations rather than those God had put in place for them (2 Kings 17:8). They also sinned secretly against God. It seems they were even trying to make it appear they were following God (2 Kings 17:9). The Israelites had abandoned what God designed for them. They built their own high places in all their cities on which to worship other gods (2 Kings 17:9). This means that they made the worship of false gods a central part of city life in all their towns. They also built sacred pillars and idols including [Asherim](#), which were symbols of the worship of a female deity (2 Kings 17:10). The sacred pillars the Israelites built were part of Israel's adopting other nations' practices for worshiping their false gods. The people of Israel would burn incense at those locations to the gods of the various nations of Canaan (2 Kings 17:11).

Centuries earlier, God had delivered the people of Israel from those nations that lived in the land of Canaan and had given the land to Israel. God had instructed them not to worship the gods that those peoples had worshiped. Instead they were supposed to be holy—set apart. They were supposed to be different, showing the world who the one true God really was. Part of God's clear instructions was a prohibition of setting up sacred pillars to false gods: "You must never set up a wooden Asherah pole beside the altar you build for the Lord your God. And never set up sacred pillars for worship, for the Lord your God hates them" (Deuteronomy 16:21–22, NLT).

Instead of being faithful with the task of holiness, the people of Israel wanted to be like the other nations around them, so they stopped loving and worshiping God, and they failed to obey what He had instructed them to do. They chose to adopt the customs and worship systems of other peoples. They even built sacred pillars as were used in the worship of these false gods. Of course, there was nothing wrong with constructing pillars, but these sacred pillars located and supported places of worship of false gods. God had instructed the people to approach Him in a certain way and in a certain place—Jerusalem, specifically. It was in the [temple in Jerusalem](#) that God would interact with the people. Yet the people rejected God's design and pursued other expressions of spirituality on their own terms.

The sacred pillars the Israelites built provide a cautionary tale for people today. As God is the sovereign Creator, He has determined and designed how we can know Him and how we should worship Him. It would be foolish of us to instead dictate to Him how we will worship (or not worship) Him. The nation of Israel had to learn that lesson the hard way, and, even in their failing, we see that God was patient with the people (2 Kings 17:13). He had an incredible level of mercy on them even though they continually rejected Him. Ultimately, they had to pay the price for their rebellion. We would be wise to learn from that example and remember that God is paying attention to the "sacred pillars" we construct in our own lives.

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### **What are high places, sacred pillars, and asherim, and why are they so terrible (1 Kings 14:23)?**

Even today, we tend to think of heaven as up. After 2,000 years of hearing that God is a spirit, how many of us can honestly say we don't visualize Him in some form surrounded by clouds, looking down on the earth. This mental trick allows us to think of God in a tangible way. We know it's incorrect, but we do it anyway.

The theologically unsophisticated people of Canaan had a similar conception. They too considered the abode of their gods as being up high. That being the case, it was logical for them to build their place of worship on the highest hill. The closer they were to where the gods were, the more effective their worship would be.

Some of the "high places" were not, however, located on the tops of high hills. One of the things that seems to connect all of them, though, is an artificial platform built of stones and earth that raised up the worship place.

The high places were often nothing more than an open air shrine with an altar and a few of the other appliances of sacrificial worship. They were the unauthorized places where the false gods were worshipped or where the true God was worshipped falsely.

The Asherah and the sacred pillars were cult objects. One well-known Israeli archeologist showed a slide of a strangely constructed piece of pottery that he identified as a cult object. He explained that archeologists call anything they don't understand or recognize a cult object. In fact, we don't know with any certainty what these were.

Asherah was the name of the principal female deity of Canaan (1 Kings 18:19). The Asherah were objects erected in her honor (1 Kings 15:13). They seem to have been made of wood, because they could be burned (Deuteronomy 12:3) or cut down (Exodus 34:13). We can't say more with certainty. It's common to describe them as wooden poles set up in honor of the goddess. They may have been carved to resemble her, but none has survived, so we don't really know.

The sacred pillars, on the other hand, were of stone. They had a long and honorable history that went wrong when Israel began to worship Baal. Earlier in patriarchal times they were merely commemorative stones. Our grave markers are a good modern example.

But the sacred pillars condemned by the prophets were symbols of the god Baal. They were apparently unworked stone, which, in their crude strength called to mind Canaan's principal male god. Together they stood in the high places where the cruel and immoral rites of fertility were celebrated. Together, with their religion that called for no commitment, only sacrifice and lasciviousness, they



### **John Kitto - High Places—I Kings 14:22–24**

It seems that king Rehoboam, in Judah, profiting by the chastisement he had received, conducted himself reasonably well for three years, during which he employed himself vigorously in strengthening his kingdom, by collecting arms, and depositing them in a large number of cities which he fortified. "When Rehoboam had established his kingdom and strengthened himself, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel with him." The iniquity into which the Judahites fell, is described as greater than had been in former times committed—perhaps not greater than individuals in authority had committed, Solomon, for instance, but greater than any part of the nation had before concurred in. Indeed, from all that appears, the sin was for the time greater than that of Jeroboam; but there was this essential difference, that Jeroboam's sin was not repented of, and that of Rehoboam was. The form of this great offence is thus described:—"They built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill and under every green tree." We remember the time when we used to be perplexed about these high places and groves. What is the harm in worshipping upon a high place or in a grove? Are they not, on the contrary, very proper places of worship? And, what is more to the purpose, did not the patriarchs worship upon high places and in groves? And the fact of their doing so is mentioned, certainly without blame, if not with approbation; while in later ages we find these practices severely condemned, and calling down divine punishments. The way to get at the cause of this is to consider, that things indifferent, or even good, in themselves, may become evil in the lapse of time, from the considerations that come to be associated with them. If a British consul or governor upon the African coast sets up the union jack over his house on Sundays, there may be no harm in that; but if the barbarous people around come to the conclusion that, since he does this on the day set apart to his worship, this flag is the white man's god, and begin to treat it with superstitious reverence, or assemble to render it worship, the practice of setting it up becomes a sin. But we need not travel out of Scripture for an illustration. What could be more proper and seemly than the feeling which led Moses to preserve in the tabernacle the brazen serpent, which had been lifted up in the wilderness for the healing of the nation? But when the people came to regard it with superstitious reverence, and manifested a disposition to render idolatrous honors thereto, it became an abomination, and as such was most properly destroyed by king Hezekiah.

Now we read in the book of Genesis, that Abraham, on entering the promised land, built an altar upon a mountain between Bethel and Hai. At Beersheba he planted a grove, and called there upon the name of the everlasting God. It was to a mountain (Moriah) that he was directed to go, there to offer up his son Isaac; and it was upon another mountain (in Gilead) that Jacob and Laban offered sacrifices before they parted in peace.<sup>537</sup> So far, therefore, as appears from the book of Genesis, there was no harm in worshipping in high places and in groves. But in a later age, when the Israelites had departed from Egypt, and approached the same land to take possession of it, we find something had arisen to cause high places and groves to be regarded with disfavor. The people are strictly enjoined to cast down and destroy all those belonging to the Canaanites they might find in the land.<sup>538</sup> It might be supposed, that this was because these had been consecrated to the worship of idols; but did not involve any prohibition of high places and groves to the Israelites. But, first, the Israelites by the law of Moses could worship by sacrifice only at one place, that is, at the tabernacle altar; and therefore, because not anywhere else certainly not in high places; and, further, it was expressly enjoined, that near this sole altar no trees should be planted.<sup>539</sup> This last restriction is very remarkable. Apart from that, the limitation of the Israelites to one place of ritual worship, would suggest a perfectly sufficient reason for the destruction of the Canaanitish [altars upon the] high places, and the demolition of the consecrated groves; for there would be a danger that the Israelites, in taking possession of the localities in which they were found, would retain their use as local places of worship. But the intimation, that even at the one altar any approximation to a grove was to be carefully avoided, compels us to look a little further.

One great object of the Mosaical dispensation was to maintain, in the persons of the Israelites, a living testimony against the polytheism which had overspread the nations; and whatever might directly or indirectly tend to worship many gods, or to associate other gods of man's devising with the only real God, Jehovah, the Creator of heaven and earth, was carefully guarded against and discouraged. When, in the process of time, the high places and groves of primitive worship became consecrated to divers idols, the danger was, that, in adopting the use of them, the Israelites should retain some lingering recollection of the god to whom they had been set apart; and this, gathering strength, would insensibly lead them into idolatry, and to the association of other gods with Jehovah.

Before the erection of temples, or before temples became general, groves and high places were the usual places of worship. Hence we do not find any order to the Israelites to destroy the temples of the Canaanites, for there were none to destroy. The order to demolish their groves and high places was, therefore, an order to destroy their places of worship, as well as their objects of worship, if any such materials existed. This was important in an age when the entire tendency of the human mind was towards polytheism—the multiplication of gods; so that the demolition of a place of worship was equivalent to the demolition of an idol, and the setting up one, in its ultimate results, almost equivalent to the setting up of an idol. The result dreaded and guarded against in these directions was the multiplication of gods; and how wisely this was ordered, and how imminent the danger was, is shown by the fact, that the very evil which the law sought by its interdiction to prevent, did arise from the neglect of that interdiction by Rehoboam and

subsequent kings of Judah,—so that, at the time the nation was ripe for the overthrow which it sustained, Jeremiah could exclaim, “According to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah!” Jeremiah 2:28.

But it may be asked, Was not the danger equally imminent at the times when the patriarchs worshipped in groves, and set up their altars upon high places? Perhaps not. There is no indication throughout the book of Genesis that the Canaanites had yet gone far, if at all, into the corruptions of polytheism, and it is expressly stated that their iniquity was “not yet full.” Moral iniquity abounded; but that they had as yet gone into gross idolatry, is more than we know. The only hint we have respecting the religion of the land, sets before us one king (Melchizedek) who was a worshipper, not less than Abraham, of “the Most High God, Creator of heaven and earth.” All mankind were at first His worshippers; and in the different places of their dispersion the nations of men varied in the time and extent of their corruptions of original truth. The country out of which Abraham came seems to have been far more gone in polytheistic error than that into which he entered. There, probably, nothing was found to point out the kind of danger which afterwards became connected with groves and high places; and if there had been something of the sort, the danger, which might be great to a nation composed of people of different habits of mind and varied depth of religious feeling, would be but small in the case of the single family of the faithful Abraham, abiding in one locality. The danger arose when the nation lay dispersed over a wider country,—and if high places and groves were at all tolerated, they would have had many in simultaneous use in different parts of the land.

It is remarkable with what inveteracy the Israelites clung to the worship in high places. Such were even tolerated by monarchs who exerted themselves to root out idolatry, and of whose zeal for the purity of the worship of Jehovah no doubt can be entertained. As they were not for this subjected to any such judgment as that denounced on Rehoboam, it seems as if some peculiar enormity was found in his case. This is discovered in the connection of “images” with them; for these must have been symbolical representations either of Jehovah or of strange gods—most likely the latter; whereas the others were merely sanctioned as places for the local worship of the Lord, and, so far as tolerated, did not present an immediately idolatrous aspect. This toleration of an acknowledged irregularity the sacred historian indicates as the only blot upon the character of some truly right-minded kings, who certainly would not have allowed anything that seemed to them to savor of idolatry. It probably arose from the known indisposition of the people living at a distance from the temple, to be limited to the altar services at that spot, in which they could only at distant intervals participate; while their earnest wish to have places for the chief ritual acts of their religion—sacrifice and offerings—near to their own homes, may have suggested the fear that, unless they were gratified in having in their own neighborhood places of religious assemblage and of offerings to the Lord, they might be led to make their offerings to idols. Under its first aspect, the wish has the appearance of an excess of religious zeal,—which, apart from its latent dangers, may account for the hesitation the kings felt in putting down this abuse, and for winking at an irregularity contrary to one of the first principles of the theocratic institutions. It is worthy of note, in corroboration of this view, that we hear no more of worship in high places and groves, after the establishment of synagogues in the towns afforded an adequate and ready vent to the craving of the people to localize their religion. They were then enabled to have near their homes so much of their religious observances as admitted, without danger, of being separated from the grand ritual solemnities for which the great common center at Jerusalem was still preserved. Besides, the tendency to idolatry had then passed away, and perhaps groves and high places would then not have been refused had they been desired. But so it was, that the people craved to worship upon high places and in groves when it was really dangerous and seducing for them to do so, but ceased to care about them when the danger no longer existed.

**1 Kings 14:24 There were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD dispossessed before the sons of Israel.**

- And there: 1Ki 15:12 22:46 Ge 19:5 De 23:17 Jdg 19:22 2Ki 23:7 Ro 1:24-27 1Co 6:9
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

#### **Related Passages:**

Deuteronomy 23:17+ “None of the daughters of Israel shall be a cult prostitute, and none of the sons of Israel shall be a cult prostitute.”

1 Kings 15:12+ “He [King Asa] put away the **male cult prostitutes** out of the land and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.”

1 Kings 22:46+ “And the remnant of the **male cult prostitutes** who remained in the days of his father Asa, he [Jehoshaphat] expelled from the land.”

2 Kings 23:7 “He [King Josiah] broke down the houses of the **male cult prostitutes** who were in the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for Asherah.”

Leviticus 18:24-25+ 'Do not defile yourselves by any of these things; for by all these the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled. 25 'For the land has become defiled, therefore I have brought its punishment upon it, so the land has spewed out its inhabitants.

1 Corinthians 5:6-7+ Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? 7 Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.

## ABOMINABLE MALE CULT PROSTITUTES

**There were also male cult prostitutes ([qadesh](#)) in the land** - The **male cult prostitutes** were individuals who engaged in ritualized sexual acts as part of pagan worship. These practices were especially associated with Canaanite fertility cults, which sought to invoke the favor of gods and goddesses for agricultural prosperity, fertility, and divine blessing. They engaged in homosexual or heterosexual intercourse as part of religious rites to honor gods like Baal and Asherah. They were often stationed at pagan temples and high places dedicated to pagan deities. Their abominable acts were believed to ensure agricultural success and human fertility. Finally, these defiling practices were tied to the worship of Asherah, the Canaanite fertility goddess.

**They did according to all the abominations ([toebah](#); Lxx - [bdelugma](#) = detestable things) of the nations** (pagan Gentiles) **which the LORD dispossessed ([yarash](#); Lxx - [exairo](#) - expelled, drove out) before the sons of Israel** - God had warned Israel prior to entering the Promised Land that the abominable worship of the Canaanites would be enticing and ensnaring if they "toyed" with it! It only takes a little leaven to leaven the whole loaf. And that leaven effect of perverted pagan worship is exactly what we occurred in both the Northern Kingdom and now in the Southern Kingdom. Recall that in the book of Judges while Israel did eradicate some of the pagans, the eradication was not complete and remained in the Promised Land to fester and eventually destroy worship of the Living God!

**Cyril Barber** - The seductive rites of the heathen were preferred to the simple, yet solemn worship of Yahweh. As in the North, so in the South altars blazed on every high hill, and small statues honoring Baal and Astarte were set up in homes and in shrines throughout the land. Orgies were the preoccupation of the people, and the Temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem was attended only by the faithful few. (See [The Books of Kings, Volume 1: The Righteousness of God ... - Page 425](#))

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**Male cult prostitutes ([06945](#))** ([qadesh](#) from [qodesh](#) = holy, apartness, sacredness) refers to a male temple prostitute. The sad irony is that the root word signifies "holy" or "sacred" and in context of the pagan idolatrous temples the word signifies a man who has been set apart for male prostitution, likely reflecting homosexual and bisexual activities. The name **qadesh** is a sad commentary on the licentiousness of Canaanite worship which infiltrated and destroyed the true worship of Yahweh!

**Complete Biblical Library** A masculine noun, qādhfish indicates a "cult prostitute" dedicated to cultic prostitution, usually at a shrine or temple. The term in the OT comes from a Hebrew root, qāhash (HED #7227), meaning "to set aside" or "to make holy." These persons were formally set aside for cultic prostitution, a feature of many near eastern religions, especially Canaanite and Babylonian, but prohibited in Israel. Such men and women became devotees to their gods and goddesses for the purpose of having sexual relations with the worshipers of their religion. The use of female and male cult prostitutes seems to have been a feature of the religions of the nations that the Lord drove out of the land of Canaan as He gave it to Israel. Israel was not to become embroiled in these abominations.

The contextual usage of these words in the OT gives some insight into their significance. It is clear from the texts available that the male or female prostitutes were tied closely to pagan concepts of fertility religion, which included imitative or sympathetic magic. Through intercourse with the devotees of the gods, the worshipers believed that they influenced the gods to grant them fertility and increase in their families, lands and crops. The female prostitutes may have had other menial tasks to perform around the temple.

When Asa, king in Judah (910-869 b.c.), purged the land of male prostitutes in his day, he also removed his own grandmother, Maacah, who had set up an Asherah pole (1 Ki. 15:12f). Asherah poles were symbols of this fertility goddess (1 Ki. 14:15; 15:12). Asherah was a consort of the Canaanite god Baal, a ubiquitous representative of male fertility symbolized often as a bull. It is, however, possible to interpret some occurrences of "Asherah" in the OT as referring to a place, not a goddess.

In Asa's time, an entire complex of fertility religion had been established. Asa's son, Jehoshaphat (872-848 b.c.), completed his father's removal of male prostitutes (1 Ki. 22:46). Late in Judah's history, Josiah (640-609 b.c.) destroyed the living quarters of the male shrine prostitutes who had moved into the temple area in

Jerusalem. In this case, women were producing various items for Asherah (2 Ki. 23:7). In the earlier reign of Rehoboam (930-913 b.c.), high places, sacred stones, Asherah poles and spreading trees, another symbol of fertility, were part of the system (1 Ki. 14:23).

Male and female prostitutes were only one feature of Canaanite fertility religion, but they were a central feature, one that violated the morality and ethics of the Covenant that the Lord had made with Israel at Sinai. The veneration of other Canaanite goddesses, such as Astarte and Anath, helped foster cultic prostitution.

Male or female cult prostitutes were explicitly outlawed in Israel (with good cause) by the Sinai Covenant (Deut. 23:17). In the time of the patriarchs, Judah, a leading patriarch, was not surprised to encounter a shrine prostitute (his disguised daughter-in-law) on the way to Timnah, since prostitutes were a regular feature of that religious culture and milieu (Gen. 38:21f). Judah's sin haunted him and his descendants for generations.

The religion of Yahweh did not permit the Israelites, male or female, to be set aside for sacred prostitution. Job asserted that the godless died young from frequenting the male prostitutes at the shrines (Job 36:14). As an example of poetic justice, the Lord refused to punish the immoral and irreligious daughters of certain Israelite men who were committing cultic prostitution with female prostitutes (Hos. 4:14).

**QADESH - 11X/9V** - cult prostitute(2), cult prostitutes(2), male cult prostitutes(2), sodomites(1), temple prostitute(3), temple prostitutes(1). Gen. 38:21; Gen. 38:22; Deut. 23:17; 1 Ki. 14:24; 1 Ki. 15:12; 1 Ki. 22:46; 2 Ki. 23:7; Job 36:14; Hos. 4:14

See [FERTILITY WORSHIP OF THE ANE](#)

**1 Kings 14:25** Now it happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, that Shishak the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.

- **Shishak:** 1Ki 11:40 2Ch 12:2-4
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Kings 12:22-24+ (REHOBAM'S FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH [SHEMAIAH](#) WAS POSITIVE) But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying, 23 "Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin and to the rest of the people, saying, 24 'Thus says the LORD, "You must not go up and fight against your relatives the sons of Israel; return every man to his house, for this thing has come from Me.'"" So they listened to the word of the LORD, and returned and went their way according to the word of the LORD.

1 Kings 11:40 Solomon sought therefore to put Jeroboam to death; but Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt to Shishak king of Egypt, and he was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

2 Chronicles 12:2-9+ And it came about in King Rehoboam's fifth year, because they had been unfaithful to the LORD, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem 3 with 1,200 chariots and 60,000 horsemen. And the people who came with him from Egypt were without number: the Lubim, the Sukkiim and the Ethiopians. 4 He captured the fortified cities of Judah and came as far as Jerusalem. 5 Then [SHEMAIAH](#) the prophet came to Rehoboam and the princes of Judah who had gathered at Jerusalem because of Shishak, and he said to them, "**Thus says the LORD, 'You have forsaken Me, so I also have forsaken you to Shishak.'**" 6 So the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, "The LORD is righteous." 7 When the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, "They have humbled themselves so I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some measure of deliverance, and My wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by means of Shishak. 8 "But they will become his slaves so that they may learn the difference between My service and the service of the kingdoms of the countries." 9 So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's palace. He took everything; he even took the golden shields which Solomon had made.

## BRINGS FOREIGN DISCIPLINE

**Now it happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, that Shishak**([note](#)) **the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem-** The parallel account in Chronicles gives the much more background for Shishak's attack (See 2Ch 12:2-9 [above](#))

**Bob Utley** - Shishak (NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 565-566) the king of Egypt, invaded Judah and took all the enormous wealth gathered by Solomon (Josephus, *Antiq.* 8.10.1-3, says Herodotus mentions this but has the wrong name, Sesotris, and it should be Shishak). There is some archaeological evidence that Shishak invaded Israel also, all the way to Megiddo (cf. 2 Chr. 12:1-12). It is possible that the ark and the furnishings and vessels of the temple were also taken to Egypt (cf. 2 Chr. 12:9).

**August Konkell:** One of the main events of the reign of Rehoboam is the invasion of Shoshenq I of Egypt, known to the Hebrews as Shishak (14:25–28). The division of Israel, along with internal union and peace in Egypt, provide opportunity for political and commercial exploitation. A fragmentary victory stela from Thebes (Karnak) provides a description of a border skirmish that may have been the immediate occasion for the invasion. (See [The NIV Application Commentary](#))

See [KINGS OF EGYPT](#)

**George Rawlinson** has summarized Shishak's campaign and the success he achieved: "[Shishak] attacked the cities which Rehoboam had fortified with such care. A poor resistance was made. Afraid to encounter his assailant in the open field, Rehoboam shut himself up within the walls of his capital, and left the provincial towns to defend themselves as they best could. Probably the greater number surrender at their discretion. A few were besieged and taken. Meanwhile a trembling king, awaiting his foe in Jerusalem, was upbraided by the prophet Shemaiah."

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### John Kitto - The Egyptian Invasion—I Kings 14:25–28; II Chronicles 12:2–12

Our own house here, in this "wicked London," is safe, though defenseless, and with small protection of bolts and bars, because there is little in it to tempt the spoiler; whereas the great house of the old lady in Threadneedle street is never deemed to be safe without a company of dreadful bearskin-capped grenadiers within its walls, because of the great riches it contains. Now we should not be over glad to have all that gold down in our own cellars, without the grenadiers also, to keep guard over it. What a perilous life it would be to have it, without adequate means of protecting it from the envious hands ready to clutch at it, and whose endeavors would be excited by our obviously defenseless condition!

This was the case of Rehoboam. The immense treasures in gold which the temple and palace contained—the accumulations of David and Solomon—were known far and wide, and were such as required a strong power to protect from the neighboring princes, who could not but calculate, from time to time, upon the glorious spoil which might be obtained by the rapid pillage of Jerusalem alone, even apart from any views of territorial aggrandizement. Such power Solomon had possessed; and grievously as the strength which Rehoboam inherited from him had been impaired, it was still sufficient, under the judicious measures which had in the early years of his reign been adopted for putting the country in a state of defence, to withstand any attempt of the small neighboring states. Of these, the new kingdom was alone to be seriously dreaded; and the alienation had not yet become such as to render it probable that the ten tribes would dare, even if Jerusalem were in their power, to pillage the temple of the Lord.

There was, however, in the distance, a more powerful and dangerous enemy, not to be restrained by any such considerations, and who had for some time beheld with longing eyes the treasures of the sacred city. This was the king of Egypt. As long as Rehoboam continued in a right course, this powerful prince was restrained by the Lord from the measures he contemplated; but no sooner had the king, with his people, sinned against Jehovah, than the hands of the Egyptian monarch were loosened, and he proceeded to invade the land with a mighty host levied from the different African territories subject to his scepter. This was the first time the Egyptians had appeared in the sacred land with hostile purposes against the Hebrews; and it is probable that so formidable a body of chariots, horsemen, and infantry had never before invaded the country. The appearance of this new enemy, whose power and resources they knew, must have filled the Judahites with dread,—the rather, as their unfaithfulness had disintitled them to the right of looking to the Lord for his protection. Probably, in the first instance, the king placed some hope in the strong fortresses he had built towards the southern frontier; but these fell, one after another, before the might of the invaders,—and the Egyptians, having cleared their rear from obstruction, marched direct upon Jerusalem.

At this juncture, the same prophet Shemaiah, who had before interposed to prevent Rehoboam's army from marching against Jeroboam, again appeared, and delivered to the king and his princes the short but awfully emphatic message,—“Thus saith the Lord, Ye have forsaken me; and therefore have I also left you in the hands of Shishak.” At this they were conscience-stricken, and acted exactly as became them, and as was best suited to turn the Lord's anger aside. They admitted the justice of the punishment they had brought upon themselves, and they humbled themselves, and said,—“The Lord is righteous,”—an admission as brief and significant as the reproof.



This humiliation was graciously received in heaven; and it was intimated that for this they should be spared some portion of the ignominy they had incurred. This seems to have meant that their lives would be spared, and that the city would not be destroyed by the Egyptian host; yet they should for a time feel that these overbearing foreigners were their masters, that they might know the difference between the service of the Lord and that of strange princes.

It was probably as an act of submission to this doom that no defence of Jerusalem was attempted; and He in whose hand is the heart of kings so mollified the stern purposes of Shishak, that he was content with the spoils of the temple and the palace, without molesting the inhabitants, or damaging the city, or attempting to retain the country in subjection. Indeed, recollecting the prodigious quantities of precious metal lavished by Solomon on these buildings, this spoil must have been amply sufficient to fulfill the greedy expectations of the invaders, and satisfy the wishes of then nation. It has indeed been urged that no such spoil could have proved an adequate return for the costs of the expedition, and that it was unlikely that its objects should be satisfied by the plunder of a palace and a temple. But it may be answered, that, under ancient military arrangements, an army was a less costly instrument than—happily for the peace of the world—it has now become; and that the balance of profit and loss, in expeditions furnishing an immediate access of plunder and glory, was less nicely calculated in former times than it is now,—although, indeed, modern history has furnished examples, not few nor far between, of expeditions costing millions of money being employed upon objects not worth as many shillings. Besides, to allege that the plunder of a temple is not an adequate object of military action is against the facts of history, and is to forget that riches equal to the wealth of a nation were often in ancient times lavished upon or treasured up in temples. The reader will call to mind the celebrated temple in Elymais of Persia,—the rich treasures of which were the objects of attention to two of the greatest of the Seleucidian kings of Syria, one of whom (Antiochus the Great) lost his life in a commotion created in the attempt to seize them; and whose son (Antiochus Epiphanes) was engaged in the same distant quarter, quelling the disturbances created by the actual plunder of the temple to recruit his exhausted finances, when he received the news respecting the Jewish successes over his officers, which made him hastily quit the place with horrid purposes of vengeance against the Jews, which he lived not to accomplish.

It may also be observed, that Shishak was not allowed to accomplish all the purposes of his expedition, as is clearly shown by the promise given on the repentance of the king and the princes. What that intention was it is difficult to see. The fact that he did not march into the territory of the ten tribes, coupled with Jeroboam's previous sojourn in Egypt, and his favorable reception there, may suggest that he acted at the instance of Jeroboam, with the view of weakening the rival power, if not of adding the dominions of Rehoboam to those of the sovereign of the ten tribes—or of holding them as a dependency of his own Egypt. The subsequent reflection which led him, under Divine influence, to alter his views, and to be content with the treasures of the palace and temple, may have been found in the consideration that it might not be good policy for Egypt to push its frontier in this direction—thus destroying politically the desert barrier which separated it from other nations,—and still less to reconstruct and render once more formidable the kingdom which had been weakened by separation into two; for although, perhaps, he might count on the subserviency of Jeroboam, he could not know but that the united kingdom might in no long time acquire such strength, and lapse into such hands, as might render its neighborhood inconvenient to Egypt. In old times, as in our own, thinking politicians—and there were thinking politicians even in those days—must have seen the futility of basing political arrangements on personal considerations. Men die, and men change; but political action has permanent effects, which survive the men by whose hands it was wrought.

That the result was not inadequate to the extent and importance of the expedition—that it was, in fact, regarded as a memorable event in Egypt—is shown by the circumstance that the successful results of the campaign are celebrated in a series of sculptures on the north external wall of the temple at Karnak. The king, as usual, presents his prisoners to the deity of the temple; and to each figure is attached an oval, indicating the town or district he represents; one of which is concluded to be Yooda Melchi, or “kingdom of Judah.” It is not to be supposed that Rehoboam was actually carried captive to Egypt, but that the figure is a symbol of the king's triumph over him.

Whether the figure be a portrait or not, is uncertain; but, as the Egyptian artists were used to make as near a likeness as they could of the objects they intended to represent, it doubtless presents a general resemblance, if not of the king, of as much of the Jewish physiognomy and costume as it discloses. We introduce it, together with the head of Shishak himself.

The preservation of this figure is a notable circumstance, especially as the picture is so much mutilated that nothing remains but three captives bound to a stake, which forms, as usual, a sort of title-page at the beginning, and a portion of the triumphal procession at the end, which is so much mutilated that only the names of the captives are legible. This defaced condition of the monument is much to be deplored, as it might very possibly have presented details, not only confirmatory but illustrative of the sacred narrative



everything, even taking all the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

- he took away: 1Ki 7:51 1Ki 15:18 2Ki 24:13 2Ch 12:9-11 Ps 39:6 89:35-45
- the shields of gold: 1Ki 10:16,17 2Ch 9:15,16 Pr 23:5 Ec 2:18,19
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Proverbs 23:5 When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings Like an eagle that flies toward the heavens.

Ecclesiastes 2:18; 19 Thus I hated all the fruit of my labor for which I had labored under the sun, for I must leave it to the man who will come after me. 19 And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the fruit of my labor for which I have labored by acting wisely under the sun. This too is vanity.

1 Kings 7:51 Thus all the work that King Solomon performed in the house of the LORD was finished. And Solomon brought in the things dedicated by his father David, the silver and the gold and the utensils, and he put them in the treasuries of the house of the LORD.

1 Kings 10:16; 17 King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold, using 600 shekels of gold on each large shield. 17 He made 300 shields of beaten gold, using three minas of gold on each shield, and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

### ALL OF THE GOLD GREW "WINGS" & WAS GONE

**He took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house, and he took everything, even taking all the shields of gold which Solomon had made** - Why did the Gold leave? In simple terms because they left God! Only one letter difference between GOLD and GOD! Solomon's golden era was brought to an abrupt termination! Before plentitude of gold had symbolized God's blessing on His people, but now paucity of gold was a harbinger of more curses to come!

This is amazing turnaround sovereignly engineered by Jehovah -- Solomon had left the most abundant wealth of any king to his son and in only 5 years it was largely depleted! Why? They forsook the Law of the LORD! In fact what Solomon had accumulated over many years was gone in a matter of days! Proverbs 23:5 says "When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings Like an eagle that flies toward the heavens." Solomon's gold was gone! Rehoboam, forsaking the way of David and Solomon (2Ch 11:17), has forfeited their divine blessings.

**THOUGHT** - Look out when you set your sights on treasure for you may soon forsake your greatest Treasure, the LORD!

As [Paul Apple](#) says you can mark it down as an immutable, axiomatic principle that **"Apostasy Leaves Us Defenseless!** Human attempts at defense and fortification proved futile in the face of God's agency for judgment" I would add, running willfully into sin produces a very similar state!

**Guzik** on taking of the **shields** - These shields made beautiful displays in the House of the Forest of Lebanon, but they were of no use in battle. Gold was too heavy and too soft to be used as a metal for effective shields. This was an example of the emphasis of image over substance that began in the days of Solomon and worsened in the days of Rehoboam. According to Dilday, each large shield was worth about \$120,000. The smaller shields were worth \$30,000. \$33 million was invested in gold ceremonial shields—and now in the hands of the Egyptians.

**Cyril Barber** - the Chronicler made specific mention of the fact that Shishak took with him the golden shields that Solomon had made. Rehoboam, however, fearing loss of face before his people, made replicas of bronze. In the bright light of the sun, as he walked to the Temple, the shields look the same. In reality, however, they were a poor substitute for the real thing. They projected the impression of wealth, but in reality they merely covered up the true situation in Judah. Ichabod, **"your glory has departed,"** could be written over Rehoboam's reign.

**Spurgeon** - "The temple was always very rich. Shishak came and stripped it. Everything there that was really valuable was taken away. That is generally the way with the devil. God is satisfied with tithes; but Shishak and Satan take all." (Spurgeon)

**Spurgeon** - He did not plunder the people; he was contented with the loot of the temple and the palace. These were comparatively easy terms for the conquered nation, and one wonders how such a powerful king as Shishak should have been thus satisfied in those days; but God has the hearts of all men under his control, and even when he lets a powerful foe go forth against his people, he still restrains him when he pleases. What a mercy it is for us that, when God chastens us, there is an end to it! It is always in measure, he does not let loose the fullness and the fierceness of his wrath, as he will upon the castaways in eternity; but when he lays his rod upon us, he counts every stripe. Forty stripes save one was all that an Israelite might have to endure; and, surely, God often stops far short of that number when he deals with us. However, Shishak humiliated the king and his people by taking away the treasures of the temple and the palace; and, among the rest of his plunder, "he carried away the shields of gold, which Solomon had made."

**Henry Morris** - An Egyptian inscription confirms this invasion by Shishak, a Pharaoh of Egypt's twenty-second dynasty, boasting of his triumphs in both the southern and northern kingdoms of Israel.

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTE:** Shishak's Invasion of Judah. Shishak's own record of this campaign is inscribed on the south wall of the great Temple of Amon at Karnak, in which he is depicted as presenting 150 "cities" of Palestine to his god Amon.

A fragment of a monument he set up in Megiddo has been found.

Although Shishak received tribute from Rehoboam of Jerusalem, the cities he conquered indicate that he was active north of Jerusalem, in Israel, and south of Jerusalem, in the Negev. ([Halley's Bible handbook](#) BORROW)

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#### **Geoffrey Kirkland: Historical Information on Shishak, King of Egypt:**

- Before Shishak, the kingdom of Egypt didn't really seem to be a big factor in the history of Israel once they were settled in Israel
  - Shishak was hugely important in biblical history.
  - He was able to bring UNITY and STRUCTURE and PURPOSE to the Egyptian nation.
  - Shishak was Libyan, not a native Egyptian, THOUGH THIS HELPED HIM create a multinational army. And Shishak unified his army when Rehoboam SPLIT his nation apart
  - In a king's victory report, he even provided us with an inventory of all the towns he conquered during this operation.
  - The INSCRIPTION in which Shishak tells the world of all his accomplishments in this Palestinian campaign, he listed 150! cities that he crushed.
  - Even though he defeated many towns and cities, he acknowledged THAT HE DID NOT conquer — Jerusalem. This harmonizes perfectly with the biblical record. He plundered but didn't destroy Jerusalem.
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**Shishak, Sheshonq I** (945-924 B.C.), was a Libyan who overthrew the Egyptian king and established the twenty-second dynasty. He also provided political asylum to Jeroboam, who fled to Egypt to escape King Solomon's displeasure (1 Ki. 11:40). During the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign (925 B.C.), Shishak plundered Jerusalem and removed the treasures of the temple and the palace which had been placed there by David and Solomon. When restoring the treasures, Rehoboam was unable to replace the gold items in kind, so he resorted to using bronze. The splendor of the golden age was lost in the judgment of the Lord against Rehoboam. When Rehoboam submitted himself in humble repentance (vv. 1-12), he experienced the faithfulness of the Lord to forgive and to restore His people (cf. 7:14-16), confirmation of the message of the chronicler.

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#### **SHISHAK [ISBE] - shi'-shak (shishaq (1 Ki 14:25); Sousakeim):**

##### **1. Shishak, 952-930 BC:**

Sheshonk or Sheshenq I, as he is called on the monuments, the founder of the XXII<sup>nd</sup> Dynasty, was in all probability of Libyan origin. It is possible that his claim to the throne was that of the sword, but it is more likely that he acquired it by marriage with a princess of the dynasty preceding. On the death of Pasebkhane II, the last of the kings of the XXI<sup>st</sup> Dynasty, 952 BC, Shishak ascended the throne, with an efficient army and a well-filled treasury at his command. He was a warlike prince and cherished dreams of Asiatic dominion.

##### **2. Patron of Jeroboam:**

He had not long been seated on the throne when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, of the tribe of Ephraim, whom Solomon had promoted but afterward had cause to suspect, fled from the displeasure of his sovereign to the court of Shishak (1 Ki 11:26 ff). There Jeroboam remained till the death of Solomon, when he returned to Canaan, and, on Rehoboam's returning an unsatisfactory answer

to the people's demands for relief from their burdens, headed the revolt of the Ten Tribes, over whom he was chosen king with his capital at Shechem (1 Ki 12:25 ff). Whether there was not in the XXlst Dynasty some kind of suzerainty of Egypt over Palestine, when Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter and received with her Gezer as a dowry, seems not to be clearly established. It is, however, natural that Jeroboam's patron in the day of adversity should take sides with him against Rehoboam, now that the kingdom was divided. Active support of Jeroboam would be in the line of his dreams of an eastern empire.

### 3. Syrian Campaign:

So it came to pass that in the 5th year of Rehoboam, Shishak came up against Jerusalem with 1,200 chariots, and 60,000 horsemen, and people without number out of Egypt, the Libyans, Sukkiim, and Ethiopians, and took the fenced cities of Judah, and came to Jerusalem. At the preaching of the prophet Shemaiah, Rehoboam and his people repented, and Jerusalem was saved from destruction, though not from plunder nor from servitude, for he became Shishak's servant (2 Ch 12:8). Shishak took away the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house, carrying off among the most precious of the spoils all the shields of gold which Solomon had made (1 Ki 14:25 ff; 2 Ch 12:1-9). From the Scripture narrative it does not appear that there was any occupation of Palestine by the Egyptian forces on this occasion.

### 4. Shishak's Record at Karnak:

There is, however, a remarkable contemporary record of the campaign engraved on the south wall of the Temple of Amon at Karnak by Shishak himself. Not only is the expedition recorded, but there is a list of districts and towns of Palestine granted to his victories by Amon-Ra and the goddess of Thebes engraved there. A number of towns mentioned in the Book of Josh have been identified; and among the names of the list are Rabbath, Taanach, Gibeon, Mahanaim, Beth-horon and other towns both of Israel and Judah. That names of places in the Northern Kingdom are mentioned in the list does not imply that Shishak had directed his armies against Jeroboam and plundered his territories. It was the custom in antiquity for a victorious monarch to include among conquered cities any place that paid tribute or was under subjection, whether captured in war or not; and it was sufficient reason for Shishak to include these Israelite places that Jeroboam, as seems probable, had invited him to come to his aid. Among the names in the list was "Jud-hamalek"--Yudhmalk on the monuments--which was at first believed to represent the king of Judah, with a figure which passed for Rehoboam. Being, however, a place-name, it is now recognized to be the town Yehudah, belonging to the king. On the death of Shishak his successor assumed a nominal suzerainty over the land of Canaan.

LITERATURE. Flinders Petrie, History of Egypt, III, 227 ff; Maspero, Struggle of the Nations, 772 ff; Nicol, Recent Archaeology and the Bible, 222-25.

T. Nicol

**1 Kings 14:27 So King Rehoboam made shields of bronze in their place, and committed them to the care of the commanders of the guard who guarded the doorway of the king's house.**

- made: La 4:1,2
- guard: Heb. runners, 1Ki 14:1,5 18:46 1Sa 8:11 22:17 2Sa 15:1
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

## **GOLD TURNS TO BRONZE REFLECTING MORAL DEGRADATION**

**So King Rehoboam made shields of bronze in their place, and committed them to the care of the commanders of the guard who guarded the doorway of the king's house** This is a very sad verse. Imagine the effect on those who had seen Solomon's gleaming golden shields proudly displayed on the walls and now they look and see the pitiable bronze substitutes! This reminds me of the naming of the boy [Ichabod](#) in 1Sa 4:21+ marking the departure of the glory (the Shekinah glory) when the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant.

[Bob Utley](#) suggests that "Rehoboam was so embarrassed about the loss of all the wealth, he made decorative shields of bronze to hang in the place of Solomon's gold ones (cf. 1 Kgs. 10:17)."

**William MacDonald** has an interesting note that Rehoboam "substituted bronze shields for gold, unwittingly illustrating that God's presence and favor (gold) were being replaced by His judgment (bronze). Gold is widely recognized by Bible students as symbolic of deity, and bronze (KJV, brass) as symbolic of judgment.

**Knapp** - Rehoboam made in their stead shields of bronze, and with these pathetically tried to keep up former appearances. It is like

souls, who, when despoiled of their freshness and power by the enemy, laboriously endeavor to keep up an outward appearance of spiritual prosperity; or, like a fallen church, shorn of its strength, and robbed of its purity, seeking to hide its helplessness, and cover its nakedness, with the tinsel of ritualism, spurious revivalism, union, and anything that promises to give them some appearance.”

**Spurgeon** - That was a come-down indeed, from shield's of gold to shields of copper; that is, I suppose, what is meant here by the brass. This is what the king suffered at the hands of Shishak; and it was an emblem of the condition of his people. The golden kingdom had become a brazen one.

**David Guzik** - 1 Kings 10:16–17 mentions these 500 shields, 200 large and 300 small. These shields made beautiful displays in the House of the Forest of Lebanon, but they were of no use in battle. Gold was too heavy and too soft to be used as a metal for effective shields. This was an example of the emphasis of image over substance that began in the days of Solomon and worsened in the days of Rehoboam....According to Dillard, each large shield was worth about \$120,000. The smaller shields were worth \$30,000. \$33 million was invested in gold ceremonial shields—and now in the hands of the Egyptians.

**J. Barton Payne:** They wished to emphasize how far Rehoboam fell in a mere few years. He had inherited an empire; five years later, master of a small state, he could protect his capital itself only by denuding his palace of its treasures. Solomon's court had despised silver; his son's court had to be content with bronze!

**G. Campbell Morgan:** The picture of Rehoboam's substitution of brass for gold is unutterably pathetic. Yet how often do the people of Jehovah masquerade amid imitations because they have lost the things of pure gold through unfaithfulness and sin.

**Ron Daniel** - Shields Of Gold Replaced With Shields Of Bronze. Solomon had made 500 shields of gold (1Kin. 10:16-17; 2Chr. 9:15-16) for his royal palace. These were all taken by the Egyptians. As replacements, Rehoboam made bronze shields, which were kept in storage and only brought out when Rehoboam was going into the temple.

**THOUGHT - I think this paints an interesting picture for us.** Remember, shields in Scripture tend to be a symbol of faith (Eph. 6:16). Solomon's shields had been on display for all to see, 24 hours a day. But Rehoboam's shields are made out of an inferior material, and are only brought out when he goes to church. Sounds like the faith of many today, doesn't it? (Ron Daniel)

**1 Kings 14:28 Then it happened as often as the king entered the house of the LORD, that the guards would carry them and would bring them back into the guards' room.**

- the guard room: 2Ch 12:11
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

#### **Related Passage:**

2 Chronicles 12:11 As often as the king entered the house of the LORD, the guards came and carried them and then brought them back into the guards' room.

**Then it happened as often as the king entered the house of the LORD, that the guards would carry them and would bring them back into the guards' room**

**Dale Ralph Davis:** Our passage also contains a symbolic representation of Judah's demise. After Shishak hauled off, among other spoil, the ceremonial gold shields Solomon had made (v. 26b), we read that 'King Rehoboam made bronze shields to replace them' (v. 27a). These shields were carried by the royal guard whenever they escorted the king to the temple. Gold shields replaced by bronze. The splendor is fading. But the pomp and ceremony must continue. And if we cannot have shields of department store quality, we shall have ones of discount store variety. The show must go on. We may willingly sacrifice the pure worship of God (vv. 22–24), but we must not give up our sorry attempts to imitate the old glory with our trinkets and tinsel. ([1 Kings: The Wisdom and the Folly](#) )

**1 Kings 14:29 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?**

- **are they not written:** 1Ki 14:19 11:41 15:23 22:45 2Ch 12:15
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

## Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 12:15 Now the acts of Rehoboam, from first to last, are they not written in the records of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer, according to genealogical enrollment? And there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.

**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** - Vv 29-31 is a summary.

### 1 Kings 14:30 There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.

- 1Ki 12:24 15:6,7 2Ch 12:15
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

**There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually** - Although Rehoboam heeded Shemaiah's words from Yahweh and avoided an all out bloody civil war, elements of civil war continually plagued both regimes. So while not an all out war, it was still a "civil war" with brother fighting brother like in the American Civil War but this one did not come to an end as did America's civil war (after 4 years, 1 month and 2 weeks).

**Payne** - "The destiny of any country depends to a great extent on the character of its leaders; and this was particularly the case among the Hebrews, into whose history God chose to intervene more directly than he has for other nations." (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Abridged Edition- Page 50](#))

**Leon Wood:** It is stated that Rehoboam had continual conflict with Jeroboam (1 Kings 14:30). There is no indication that this was in violent open warfare, however; in fact, this manner of conflict had been directly forbidden by God (II Chron. 11:1-4). The strife likely centered in repeated border disputes, especially involving the Benjaminite area. Rehoboam felt that he needed Benjamin as a buffer zone, and Jeroboam naturally would have wanted it too. In that Benjamin does come to be listed with Judah, it follows that Rehoboam won in these disputes more often than Jeroboam. (See [A Survey of Israel's History - Page 286](#) or [BORROW](#))

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### G Campbell Morgan —1 Kings 14.30.

And the supreme tragedy of the situation was that neither the northern nation of Israel, nor the southern one of Judah, was right. In the north, a false system . of worship had been set up in the interests of supposed political expediency, and the people were being swiftly corrupted there-by. In the south, the people were also doing that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and provoking Him to jealousy with their sins. Thus the whole nation was steeped in- idolatry, and utterly failing to bear-to the surrounding nations the testimony to the purity and power of the Divine government, for the bearing of which they had been created. Then God is revealed as acting in judgment. Unenlightened peoples—unenlightened through this very failure on the part of the chosen nation—become a scourge in the hands of God for the punishment of the chosen. This is seen in the invasion and spoliation of Judah by Shishak. Moreover, this long internecine strife was also a method of Divine retribution. When the life of the nation was not employed in fulfilment of Divine purpose, it expended itself in a process which was destructive. To fail to fulfil the Divine purpose is not only to be useless, it is to retard that purpose. Therefore the chosen instrument must itself pass under the destructive power of God.

### 1 Kings 14:31 And Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David; and his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. And Abijam his son became king in his place.

- **Rehoboam:** 1Ki 14:20 11:43 15:3,24 22:50 2Ch 12:16
- **his mother's:** 1Ki 14:21
- **Abijam:** 1Ch 3:10, 2Ch 12:16, Mt 1:7, Abia
- 1 Kings 14 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries

## REHOBAM FALLS ASLEEP WITH FATHERS

**And Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David**- This was an honorable burial, which is surprising given the fact that he led Judah into horrible idolatry. The chronicler summarized his life "He did evil, because he

did not set his heart to seek Yahweh."

**THOUGHT** - What was the heart of Rehoboam's problem (and for us beloved)? He failed to set his heart on heaven! He failed to continually seek the LORD. The OT command is "**Seek** (Lxx - [aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the LORD and His strength; **Seek** His face continually." (1Ch 16:11) The NT parallel is Jesus' command "**Seek** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." (Mt 6:33+) To reiterate, what's the key? Seek Him! What question does it beg? If you look at the pattern of your life, what would you honestly say that you are seeking? And remember, we all blow it from time to time and get sidetracked by one or more of our tireless enemies the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and the [devil](#). The point is confession and repentance brings us back on a heavenly minded track (Col 3:1+, Col 3:2+). It is not about perfection but direction! So forgetting what lies behind, press on and keep seeking Him and the things above.

**and his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess** - This is the second mention in a short span (1Ki 14:21).

**Bob Utley** - The mother of the kings of Judah is always given, but not the kings of Israel. The formula summarizing the reigns are different (usually those of Judah are longer, which symbolizes Judah's superiority and legitimacy).

**Lumby** - The occurrence of these words (**Naamah the Ammonitess**) twice so close together seems to shew that the compiler of 1 Kings was drawing from several sources, and that he copied verses 21 — 24 from one narrative just as they stood, and verses 25 — 31 from another, and that both contained the same piece of information about Rehoboam's mother

**William Barnes**: This is a curious repetition with the accession formula in 14:21b. Cogan (2001:388) takes this as an erroneous duplication, but I wonder if there is more to this notice than that. I have argued that the curious duplications of regnal formulas found in 2 Chr 21:5, 20 for Jehoram; 2 Chr 27:1, 8 for Jotham; and the familiar dual notice concerning Josiah's 18th year (2 Kgs 22:3; 23:23, paralleled in 2 Chr 34:8; 35:19) signify in Chronicles every fifth monarch after Solomon in the Davidic king-list (see Barnes 1991:142–144). In short, repetitions are often intentional, and that may be the case here. (SEE [1-2 Kings - Page 132](#))

**Peter Pett** surmises (avoid dogmatism) that "The repetition of his mother's name, which is unusual in Kings, was probably an indication of the author's unhappiness with the fact that Solomon had married an Ammonitess. The Ammonites were one of the peoples excluded from becoming true worshipping Israelites (Deuteronomy 23:3), and his Ammonite wives had led him astray."

**And Abijam his son became king in his place** - The writer picks up Abijam's story in 1Ki 15:1-8.

**George Rawlinson** has summarized Rehoboam's reign for us: "Rehoboam's character was weak and irresolute. He seems to have had warm affections, and to have been capable of making good resolutions under good advice (2 Chron. 11:4; 12:6); but he had no stability of purpose, and his last counsellor generally determined his actions. We are told that 'he did evil, because he fixed not his heart to seek the Lord' (2 Chron. 12:14). There was no fixity about him." (See [Studies in the Books of Kings page 12](#))

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**Abijah/Abijam - ISBE** - The son and successor of Rehoboam king of Judah (1 Ch 3:10; 2 Ch 11:20-14:1). As to the variant name Abijam (1Ki 14:31; 15:1,7,8) The statements concerning Abijah's mother afford great opportunity for a person who is interested in finding discrepancies in the Bible narrative. She is said to have been [Maacah](#) the daughter of [Absalom](#) (1 Ki 15:2; 2 Ch 11:20,21,22). As more than 50 years elapsed between the adolescence of Absalom and the accession of Rehoboam, the suggestion at once emerges that she may have been Absalom's daughter in the sense of being his granddaughter. But [Maacah](#) the daughter of [Absalom](#) was the mother of Asa, Abijam's son and successor (1 Ki 15:10,13; 2 Ch 15:16). Further we are explicitly told that Absalom had three sons and one daughter (2 Sam 14:27). It is inferred that the three sons died young, inasmuch as Absalom before his death built him a monument because he had no son (2 Sam 18:18). The daughter was distinguished for her beauty, but her name was Tamar, not Maacah. Finally, the narrative tells us that the name of Abijah's mother was "Micaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah" (2 Ch 13:2).

It is less difficult to combine all these statements into a consistent account than it would be to combine some pairs of them if taken by themselves. When all put together they make a luminous narrative, needing no help from conjectural theories of discrepant sources or textual errors. It is natural to understand that [Tamar](#) the daughter of Absalom married [Uriel](#) of Gibeah; that their daughter was [Maacah](#), named for her great-grandmother (2 Sa 3:3; 1 Ch 3:2); that Micaiah is a variant of [Maacah](#), as Abijah is of Abijam. [Maacah](#) married Rehoboam, the parties being second cousins on the father's side; if they had been first cousins perhaps they would not have married. Very likely Solomon, through the marriage, hoped to conciliate an influential party in Israel which still held the name of Absalom in esteem; perhaps also he hoped to supplement the moderate abilities of Rehoboam by the great abilities of his wife. She was a brilliant woman, and Rehoboam's favorite (2 Ch 11:21). On Abijah's accession she held at court the influential position of king's mother; and she was so strong that she continued to hold it, when, after a brief reign, Abijah was succeeded by Asa; though it was a position from which Asa had the authority to depose her (1 Ki 15:13; 2 Ch 15:16).



The account in Chronicles deals mainly with a decisive victory which, it says, Abijah gained over northern Israel (2 Ch 13), he having 400,000 men and Jeroboam 800,000, of whom 500,000 were slain. It is clear that these numbers are artificial, and were so intended, whatever may be the key to their meaning. Abijah's speech before the battle presents the same view of the religious situation which is presented in Kings and Amos and Hosea, though with fuller priestly details. The orthodoxy of Abijah on this one occasion is not in conflict with the representation in Kings that he followed mainly the evil ways of his father Rehoboam. In Chronicles coarse luxury and the multiplying of wives are attributed to both father and son.

**MAACAH** - The daughter of Absalom, the favorite wife of Rehoboam, and mother of Abijah (1 Ki 15:2; 2 Ch 11:20, etc.). Evidently "daughter" must here be understood as "granddaughter," according to a common oriental usage. [Tamar](#) was the only daughter of Absalom. If Tamar married Uriel of Gibeah (2 Ch 13:2), then [Maacah](#) was her daughter. In that case the name Micaiah in this passage would be either a copyist's error or a variant of Maacah. She must have been a woman of strong personality. Unfortunately, her influence was cast upon the side of idolatry. She maintained her position in the palace, however, till the reign of her grandson Asa. Possibly she acted as regent during his minority. Ultimately, she was degraded by him for an act of peculiar infamy (1 Ki 15:13; 2 Ch 15:16). Maachah survived her husband and reigned as queen mother during the reigns of her son, Abijah, and her grandson, Asa (1Ki 15:2, 10, 13. Cf. 2 Chronicles 15:16).

**TAMAR** - Daughter of Absalom, (2 Samuel 14:7) became, by her marriage with Uriah (Uriel) of Gibeah, the mother of Maachah, the future queen of Judah or wife of Abijah. (1 Kings 15:2)

**URIEL** - Uriel of Gibeah was the father of [Maacah](#) or Michaiah the favorite wife of Rehoboam and mother of Abijah. (2 Chronicles 13:2) (B.C. before 973.) In (2 Chronicles 11:20) she is called "Maachah the daughter of Absalom." Probably her mother, Tamar, was the daughter of Absalom.