

I KINGS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to I Kings chapter 14 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As we have seen, after the death of Solomon the nation was divided into two kingdoms. The Northern Kingdom of Israel with Jeroboam as their king and the Southern Kingdom of Judah with Rehoboam as their king. And we saw the nation divided because Rehoboam, the son of Solomon refused to reduce the taxes and the burdens on the people and thus, 10 tribes in the north gathered together, leaving Rehoboam with his own tribe, Judah and Benjamin. So with that said, let's begin reading in I Kings chapter 14, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

I KINGS 14**VERSES 1-3**

1. Jeroboam, the king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel is not living for God, and yet, when his son is sick, and it must be bad, he does not go to the false god's for help, but the true and living God. Thus, he sends his wife to Shiloh, disguised so the prophet would not recognize her, to inquire what will happen to Abijah, his son. Notice, he is not praying for his son to be healed, nor is he asking this prophet to pray for his son, but what will the future hold for him. Jeroboam needed to repent of his sin, get right with God and seek the Lord instead of sending his wife disguised to fool this prophet!

I like what Adam Clarke said about this situation. He wrote, “It would have been more pious if he had begged the prophet’s prayers, and cast away his idols from him; then the child might have been restored to him, as his hand was. But most people would rather be told their fortune than their faults or their duty.” How true that is even today, people want to know what the future holds instead of who holds the future!

VERSES 4-6

1. Age had caught up with this prophet and he could not see and thus, for the wife of Jeroboam to disguise herself, now seems foolish, right? Yes, Ahijah the prophet was physically blind but spiritually speaking, God was acting as his eyes and told him that the one coming to see him is the wife of Jeroboam. People think they can hide from God the things that they are doing and yet, the Bible tells us that everything is open and naked before the Lord and we will give an account for what we have done.

We see this played out for us in Psalm 10, starting in verse 1, **“Why do You stand afar off, O Lord? Why do You hide in times of trouble? The wicked in his pride persecutes the poor; Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised. For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire; He blesses the greedy and renounces the Lord. The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts. His ways are always prospering; Your judgments are far above, out of his sight; As for all his enemies, he sneers at them. He has said in his heart, ‘I shall not be moved; I shall never be in adversity.’ His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and oppression; Under his tongue is trouble and iniquity. He sits in the lurking places of the villages; In the secret places he murders the innocent; His eyes are secretly fixed on the helpless. He lies in wait secretly, as a lion in his den; He lies in wait to catch the poor; He catches the poor when he draws him into his net. So he crouches, he lies low, That the helpless may fall by his strength. He has said in his heart, ‘God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see.’ Arise, O Lord! O God, lift up Your hand! Do not forget the humble. Why do the wicked renounce God? He has said in his heart, ‘You will not require an account.’ But You have seen, for You observe trouble and grief, To repay it by Your hand. The helpless commits himself to You; You are the helper of the fatherless. Break the arm of the wicked and the evil man; Seek out his wickedness until You find none. The Lord is King forever and ever; The nations have perished out of His land. Lord, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will prepare their heart; You will cause Your ear to hear, To do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, That the man of the earth may oppress no more.”** Psalm 10:1-18.

Do you see the boldness, the pride, the disregard for God that is in their hearts. They cry out, “**I shall not be moved; I shall never be in adversity.**” And, “**God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see.**” Also, “**You will not require an account.**” And like Jeroboam and his wife, they will find out that they will be moved, that adversity will come, that God sees everything that they are doing and He will require an account for their actions!

VERSES 7-11

1. What a sad story this is because God was going to bless Jeroboam as long as he walked in the ways of God, but he refused and was the worst king so far and is one of the worst kings that will arise in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, except for Ahab! And keep in mind that the kings in both kingdoms will be measured by David, he is the standard for all the kings. Yes, he was not a perfect man but he loved the Lord and when he sinned, he repented of his sin and God is a good judge of character! And for Jeroboam, he did not measure up!

2. Now don't think God was too harsh on Jeroboam and his descendants. He went after other gods, carved images and got the people to follow along. And that phrase, "**have cast Me behind your back**" in verse 9 was a phrase that spoke of contempt, a contempt or disrespect towards God. We see this illustrated for us in Ezekiel 23:35, "**Therefore thus says the Lord God: 'Because you have forgotten Me and cast Me behind your back, Therefore you shall bear the penalty Of your lewdness and your harlotry.'**"

Russell Dilday explains it like this, "The last reason implies a neglect, a scorning of God. It is the same figure of speech used to describe God's forgiveness of our sins. He puts them behind His back, or in other words, He forgets them. That is good news when it describes God's treatment of our sins [Isaiah 38:17], but it is tragically bad news when it describes a person's treatment of God."

3. Thus, judgment was coming upon Jeroboam and his descendants. They were going to die! Dogs will eat his descendants that die in the city. And the birds will eat the ones that die outside the city. There is coming a day of judgment for the wicked and it is not pretty, but it doesn't have to be that way. This is their choice and God, who is holy and righteous must judge sin and apart from Christ, you will die in your sins!

VERSES 12-16

1. Jeroboam wanted to know the fate of his sick son and he got more than he wanted. Ahijah the prophet tells her that when her feet enter the city, the child Abijah will die. Now as you read that it may seem unfair that God is taking out his anger upon this child, but please understand that is not the case. You see, he was the only one who will be buried properly and the rest of Jeroboam's descendants will not! We don't know how old this child was, but that truly is not the point. The main focus here is God saw the heart of this child, He saw that there was some good in him, and thus, God was merciful to him. Now you may wonder what kind of mercy that is when he is going to die when his mother's feet enter the gates of the city but understand this. In death he did not go to hell, eternally separated from God. God did not punish him but delivered him. Thus, God did show him mercy and thus, this judgment was not upon this child, but upon Jeroboam and his wife, as well as his descendants.

2. You see, judgment was coming; in fact it had already begun. It would begin with the death of his son and ultimately we will see the Northern Kingdom of Israel being carried away into captivity by the Assyrians some 300 years down the road. And make no mistake about it, it was not only Jeroboam, but he did lead the way and lead the nation down this path. But this judgment began with the sin of Jeroboam and will continue through the rest of the kings in the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

VERSES 17-18

1. With the death of Jeroboam's son, Abijah, it showed that what God had promised down the road was going to come to pass, it was not just a bunch of empty words! And folk's, we can apply that to our day. What God has spoken in the past, the many prophecies that have been fulfilled down to the tiniest detail, gives to us the assurance that all that God has said will come to pass and I take great comfort in that!

VERSES 19-20

1. We are told in II Chronicles chapter 13 that Abijah king of Judah defeated the men of Jeroboam and killed 500,000 of his choice or best men. It is on the heels of this that we are told in II Chronicles 13:20, **“So Jeroboam did not recover strength again in the days of Abijah; and the Lord struck him, and he died.”** Why did God do this?

Because of his sin and as we will see, there will be no one as bad as Jeroboam in the Northern Kingdom of Israel except for Ahab, and we are told of king Ahab in I Kings 16:31 that, **“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.”**

Ahab was the worst, but Jeroboam was right behind him and each of the subsequent kings in the Northern Kingdom of Israel will be judged by the wickedness of Jeroboam!

2. Keep in mind that when you read I and II Chronicles they are giving us the history of the Southern Kingdom of Judah and not the Northern Kingdom of Israel. We do not have the Chronicles of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. I realize that may surprise some of you and you may wonder why and the reason is really very simple. We only need the history of the lineage of the Messiah and thus, Jesus comes from the tribe of Judah and that was in the Southern Kingdom of Judah! And, as you will see, the kings in the Southern Kingdom of Judah are all from the lineage of David!

3. Jeroboam reigned for 22 years and now his son Nadab will rule in the Northern Kingdom of Israel!

VERSES 21-24

1. The difficulty as you read through I and II Kings is they do go back and forth between the two kingdoms and now we are back in the Southern Kingdom of Judah with Rehoboam as the king. And they were not doing any better. They too turned their back on God and started following the practices of those nations that lived in the land before them. They were into idolatry and it brought the Lord to jealousy and thus, as we will see, judgment is going to come against them because of it.

2. Now in verse 24 of I Kings chapter 14 the Hebrew word for “**perverted persons**” is QADESH, (kaw-dashe’) and it is translated sodomites and has the basic meaning of male temple prostitutes, those that practiced homosexuality! And we are not talking about the temple of God. God would never condone this. This was the practice of the Canaanites and considering the depth of depravity among these nations we can clearly see that Judah was in trouble! This is how far they had moved away from God!

3. Make no mistake about it. Anyone who moves away from God, God will give them over to what is in their heart and it is not good. That is what Paul tells us in Romans chapter 1, “**Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves . . . For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. . . . And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting.**”

Romans 1:24, 26, 28. And when you look at all the evil that is in the world, who gets blamed for it? God does and yet, He calls us not to walk in those ways but if we do reject Him, He will give us over to these evil things and we can’t blame anyone but ourselves!

VERSES 25-26

1. It is amazing how fast a nation or a person can fall as we see here. Only five years into his reign and Shishak king of Egypt came up against the Southern Kingdom of Judah and took away some of the wealth, including the gold shields, 200 large ones and 300 small ones. In II Chronicles we get some more details of what took place, starting in verse 1 of II Chronicles chapter 12, **“Now it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom and had strengthened himself, that he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel along with him. And it happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed against the Lord, with twelve hundred chariots, sixty thousand horsemen, and people without number who came with him out of Egypt — the Lubim and the Sukkiim and the Ethiopians. And he took the fortified cities of Judah and came to Jerusalem. Then Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah, who were gathered together in Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said to them, ‘Thus says the Lord: “You have forsaken Me, and therefore I also have left you in the hand of Shishak.”’ So the leaders of Israel and the king humbled themselves; and they said, ‘The Lord is righteous.’ Now when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, ‘They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance. My wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. Nevertheless they will be his servants, that they may distinguish My service from the service of the kingdoms of the nations.’”** II Chronicles 12:1-8. All the peace and prosperity they enjoyed under Solomon was coming to an end very quickly!

2. Do we have evidence of this invasion by Shishak? Wiseman tells us, “Sheshonq I (Shishak) had founded the Egyptian (Libyan) Dynasty XXII (945-924 B.C.) and his raid into Palestine in this year (925 B.C.) is well attested on the Amon temple reliefs at Thebes (Karnak). From the one hundred and fifty place-names recorded there, his aim seems to have been to reassert Egyptian control over the main trade routes throughout Palestine and the Negeb.” (Wiseman)

VERSES 27-28

1. Notice what is going on here. Gold is a metal of deity and bronze is the metal of judgment. It is interesting that as Shishak, the king of Egypt takes these gold shields from Judah, that Rehoboam replaces them with bronze shields. Judgment was right before his eyes, and yes, it seems that he repented but it was going to be too little too late. The damage was done and his lifestyle was going to affect his children, as we will see, at least his son who will be king! May we understand what Peter tells us in I Peter 4:17, **“For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?”** Yes, the unsaved will be judged, but what about those that say that they love the Lord and yet their lives don’t reflect that? Judgment will come and for believers it will be a chastening and for unbelievers, it will be ultimately the Great White Throne Judgment where they will be punished for their sins in the Lake of Fire eternally separated from God!

2. Notice that in Solomon's day these gold shields hung on display in the House of the Forest of Lebanon, (I Kings 10:16-17) but now, under the reign of Rehoboam, these replacement bronze shields were kept under guard until they were needed for state occasions. What a sad picture that is being painted but it is all because of their turning away from the Lord!

VERSES 29-31

1. Because they were trying to fight to keep what they had, we see Rehoboam and Jeroboam fight all the days of their life, civil war you might say between these two kingdoms!
2. Rehoboam reigned for 17 years in the Southern Kingdom of Judah according to what we are told in II Chronicles 12:13. And as you look at his life you may wonder what went wrong. There are two main things that I see. First of all, Russell Dilday tells us, "The account ends with the note that Rehoboam's mother was Naamah, an Ammoniteess. Is this not the writer's way of reminding us that it was Solomon's marriage to foreign wives that started the precipitous decline in the first place?" You see, Solomon was a poor example to his son and thus, he did follow in his father's footsteps.

Now, please don't blame your parents for where you are at today, because, like Rehoboam, you are responsible for your actions. That is the second point. We are told in II Chronicles 12:14, "**And he did evil, because he did not prepare his heart to seek the Lord.**" He did not take the time to walk with the Lord and thus, because he did not have his walk with the Lord right, his outward actions reflected that. And that is true in our own lives!

3. Now, as we will see, Abijam, the son of Rehoboam will be king in the Southern Kingdom of Judah!

I KINGS 15

VERSES 1-8

1. Again, we are going to be going back and forth between the two kingdoms and here we see the son of Rehoboam, Abijam now become king in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. And his reign was short-lived, it only last 3 years!

2. Abijam also fell into idolatry and his heart was not loyal to the Lord. Basically, he was "double minded" or not wholly devoted to the Lord, as David was. David was not perfect, God points that out, but his heart was sold out to the Lord. And it is interesting to me that God is blessing the great grandson of David, even though he was wicked, because of David's sake. Are the unsaved members of your family being blessed because your heart is right with the Lord? God does bless that way!

Now let me say this. Here in I Kings chapter 15 this king is called Abijam, and it means, “my father is Yam” and as strange as that sounds, it is a strange name for a king in Israel because Yam was a Canaanite Sea god. But, in II Chronicles chapter 12, verse 16 and on into chapter 13 we see him called Abijah. Is that a big deal? I think it is! You see, Abijah means, “Yahweh is my father.” That is appropriate. What happened? We are told in II Chronicles that there was a war between Abijah and Jeroboam and the King of Judah challenged the King of Israel based upon the righteousness and faithfulness of God. When Jeroboam saw what was happening he made a surprise attack and it seemed like Jeroboam and the Northern Kingdom of Israel would be victorious, but Abijah cried out to the Lord and the Lord gave the Southern Kingdom of Judah victory that day.

We are told in II Chronicles chapter 13, **“But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken Him; and the priests who minister to the Lord are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites attend to their duties. . . . Thus the children of Israel were subdued at that time; and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied on the Lord God of their fathers.”** II Chronicles 13:10, 18. Yes, he may have started out as Abijah but he ended up as Abijam, a follower of a false god! Again, the standard is David, and the kings will be evaluated based upon how they match up to David, not a perfect king but one who loved the Lord!

3. As I have said, in three short years the reign of Abijam is over. Back in verse 4 God speaks of a lamp, which is a picturesque way of describing a descendant who will dispel the darkness that has come upon the land. That man is Asa, the son of Abijam, he will bring reform to the Southern Kingdom.

VERSES 9-11

1. As we look at the kings that succeeded David, Solomon started out strong and then backslid big time. It was not till the end of his life that he recognized the folly of his actions. Both Rehoboam and Abijam were wicked kings; they were into idolatry even though Abijam started out well. But now Asa comes on the scene, and we get a brief description of his reign here in I Kings, but a more detailed look will come as we get to II Chronicles. And I like what we are told in verse 4 of I Kings chapter 15, here is the light that came to expose and expel the darkness that had come into the Southern Kingdom of Judah by the previous kings! And he is compared to David and his heart was loyal to the Lord just as David's was! Let's read on and see some of the things he did to get the nation back on track.

VERSES 12-15

1. As we see, Asa began his reform by removing the **“perverted persons”** or sodomites, those practicing homosexuality, from the land. This included a large number of temple prostitutes that were homosexuals and used in pagan worship. “But that is so unloving” right? Wrong! It was the right thing to do and as you look in the Scriptures, when a society allows homosexuality to run wild, to be the norm, that society does not have long to live. Judgment is coming! Asa dealt with the problem and I pray that we too stand up for what is right even if it is not popular!

2. And as you look at all this young king has done, it is amazing. He took a stand and he puts this relationship with the Lord far above family ties. You see, his grandmother, Maacah, was into idolatry and made this Asherah pole, which was nothing more than a phallic symbol that she worshiped. And now here comes her grandson and he removes her from being queen and burns this image to the ground. Probably not a popular thing to do, and yet it was the right thing to do. That should be the desire of our heart. To do what is right before God, be it popular or not. Asa had his priorities right and did what was right, which was so important as the people looked to their king for direction and leadership. Interestingly enough, the name Asa can mean, “healer” and that is what we are seeing in the land, this healing as he cleanses the perversion that has been brought into it by the previous kings!

3. In Matthew chapter 10, verses 34-37, Jesus puts it this way regarding our relationship with the Lord. He said, **“Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to ‘Set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.’ And ‘A man’s foes will be those of his own household.’ He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.”** Matthew 10:34-37. You see, to follow the Lord will bring division, sometimes within your own family. Jesus is asking each of us, is our heart loyal to Him, even more than our own family? Asa’s heart was and he showed it by his actions!

4. Now in I Kings 15:14 we are told, **“But the high places were not removed. Nevertheless Asa's heart was loyal to the Lord all his days.”** But in II Chronicles 14:3 we are told, **“for he removed the altars of the foreign gods and the high places, and broke down the sacred pillars and cut down the wooden images.”** So which is it, did he remove these high places or not? I believe he did remove the high places for these foreign gods, but not the ones that were dedicated to the Lord.

5. Yes, Asa did bring great reform to the land, reform that was badly needed, and yet he did not go far enough. We are going to see some of his struggles but Asa's heart was loyal to the Lord and God honored that.

VERSES 16-17

1. Keep in mind that for the first two years of the reign of Asa, Jeroboam was still king in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Now he has died, Nadab is king for a short time, less than two years and now Baasha is the king in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. And here we see boarder wars between the two kingdoms and the reason for this is simple.

According to II Chronicles chapter 15, many people living in the Northern Kingdom heard of the Godly reforms done by Asa, and they started moving down to the Southern Kingdom. Ramah was located about 5 miles north of Jerusalem and was the dividing line or boarder between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. When Baasha heard that there were defectors from His kingdom, he blocked the way so that no one else could enter the Southern Kingdom, thus, he built Ramah to prevent this defection.

2. Now having these boarder wars can be a problem and what would this godly king, Asa, do? Let's read on and see.

VERSES 18-22

1. When Asa heard that Baasha had moved down to the boarder city of Ramah, he gathered some of his wealth and sent it to the king of Syria. He wanted this Syrian king to break any ties that he had made with Baasha and fight for him. And that is exactly what this king did. He attacked the northern cities of Israel, causing Baasha to leave Ramah, and defend his kingdom. What a great plan and it worked. I bet God was pleased with that! No, the Lord was not pleased with what Asa did. We are told in II Chronicles 16:7-10, **“And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said to him: ‘Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the Lord your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand. Were the Ethiopians and the Lubim not a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the Lord, He delivered them into your hand. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. In this you have done foolishly; therefore from now on you shall have wars.’ Then Asa was angry with the seer, and put him in prison, for he was enraged at him because of this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at that time.”**

Here was a man of God who was not acting like a man of God. The Lord sends Hanani to rebuke Asa for his actions and he reminds Asa about the Ethiopians with their million-man army that had come upon the Southern Kingdom of Judah. They not only outnumbered them 2 to 1, but the Ethiopians had 300 chariots, which were the ultimate offensive weapon in those days. And Asa does the only thing he knows to do, he cries out to the Lord for help. You see, Asa and the Southern Kingdom of Judah had enjoyed 10 years of peace before the Ethiopian invasion came upon them. And in those 10 years Asa developed a strong reliance on the Lord. He built up or fortified the inner man, the spiritual man, and now it was time to put into practice that which he learned and believed.

And God gave Asa and his men a huge victory over the Ethiopians. So much so that they took home with them much spoil from the victory. As they returned home after this great victory, they must have felt good about what had transpired. They must have been on a spiritual high. They must have thought that nothing could stop them or stand in their way. And that is always a dangerous way to feel.

It is out of this, after this victory with the Ethiopians, that God speaks to Asa through the prophet Azariah, and he says “. . . ‘Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.’” II Chronicles 15:2.

Now I'm sure that Asa and the people of Judah and Benjamin thought that this was the most ridiculous thing they could ever hear. God just gave them this great victory, they trusted in the Lord all the way, and now who in their right mind would turn from the Lord? And maybe they thought God wasn't speaking to them, that they were above any failure like that. But if God has taken the time to warn you about something, you would be wise to listen and obey!

And in II Chronicles chapter 16 we are coming towards the end of king Asa's reign. And during those years Asa's kingdom has become strong and wealthy. They enjoyed many years without war. Things were going well for Asa and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. But when trouble comes for Asa and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, we see that he does not turn to the Lord, but to his own resources to deliver him. And yes, he was delivered, but God was not pleased and instead of defeating the enemy, he made a peace treaty with them! And Asa is mad at the rebuke of this man of God and comes against him and put him in prison and oppressed the people who were against his actions. That is how it works when you are not walking with the Lord, you are angry with those who are trying to help you! The key is not to take your eyes off the Lord, trust in Him and He will bring salvation to the situation you are facing! You see, you never make an alliance with an enemy to assist you, no matter how bad the situation is. Asa started out strong, his reforms were good, but he faded at the end of his life. That tells me that it doesn't really matter how long you have walked with the Lord, the enemy never gives up, and thus, we cannot let our guard down, even at the end of our life.

2. So Asa gets this victory and dismantles the city of Ramah and uses those resources to fortify a few other cities!

VERSES 23-24

1. As we come to the end of Asa's life we have here an interesting little footnote about Asa. Towards the end of his life he was diseased in his feet. Now we don't know what was wrong, but according to II Chronicles 16:12-14, he was judged for not seeking the Lord regarding this condition, instead he sought help from physicians, and within 2 years he was dead. Now God is not saying don't go to physicians, for He uses them to help us, but He is saying that we need to bring things to Him first, before you rely on man.

And so, what we see here, at the end of his life, is that Asa was not walking with the Lord and the reason was simple, he was diseased in his feet. In other words, he was not walking with the Lord because he allowed his faith to be replaced by his own strength, his military alliances, his physicians and thus, his walk with the Lord was hampered!

2. So as Asa dies his son, Jehoshaphat was now the king in the Southern Kingdom of Judah and he was another good king in the Southern Kingdom. We will pick up more about him in II Chronicles.

VERSES 25-32

1. Now our focus is on the Northern Kingdom of Israel and its king, Nadab. Nadab was the son of Jeroboam, the first king in the Northern Kingdom and like his father, Nadab was wicked and he led the nation into idolatry. His reign was only two years and the reality is, it was less than two years, probably a little more than 1 year but in the Hebrew time measurement, if it covered some part of that second year, it was considered two years.

So Asa was king when Jeroboam was on the throne in the Northern Kingdom, for those last two years and the little over 1 year that Nadab was on the throne and then into the reign of Baasha, who reigned for twenty-four years in the Northern Kingdom and he was not a good king!

2. Now this Ahijah, spoken of in verse 27, is not the same Ahijah we saw in I Kings chapter 11, who was the prophet of God that told Jeroboam he would be king over 10 tribes in Israel. Also, this prophet was from Ephraim, while the Ahijah here in I Kings 15 is from Issachar.

3. And we are going to see this ruthlessness in the Northern Kingdom of Israel as we see Baasha, the son of Ahijah, become king by killing Nadab. That is what God said would happen to the descendants of Jeroboam back in I Kings 14:7-16 that we have read this evening and here it is being played out for us. All because Jeroboam refused to walk in the ways of the Lord and it destroyed his family!

VERSES 33-34

1. Now I am not sure that the Lord had to tell us that Baasha was wicked, we can come to that conclusion by how he came to power, how he became the king in the Northern Kingdom, through the assassination of the previous king, Nadab! And Baasha's reign was wicked, both spiritually and politically as we can see and will see next time.

2. Now in verse 32 it says that he became king in Tirzah, I thought Shechem was the capital of the Northern Kingdom, and yet, what about Samaria? Let me explain, "Jeroboam chose Shechem (where Rehoboam had been crowned, v. 1) as his capital and began at once to fortify it as his stronghold. During its history the Northern Kingdom had three capitals: Shechem, Tirzah (14:17; 15:33), and Samaria (16:23-24)." (Bible Knowledge Commentary/Old Testament). So these three areas were used as the capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

3. Let me close this evening with this. In Psalm 27:1-5 David wrote, **“The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked came against me To eat up my flesh, My enemies and foes, They stumbled and fell. Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, In this I will be confident. One thing I have desired of the Lord, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord, And to inquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.”**

May that be our desire! To look to the Lord to be the strength of our life and to dwell with Him all the days of our life!