**A Heart Like David’s!**

**I Kings 14:1 – 15:24 (Lesson #12)**

***14:1 At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick. 2 And Jeroboam said to his wife, "Arise, and disguise yourself, that it not be known that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh. Behold, Ahijah the prophet is there, who said of me that I should be king over this people. 3 Take with you ten loaves, some cakes, and a jar of honey, and go to him. He will tell you what shall happen to the child." 4 Jeroboam’s wife did so. She 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. 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. 6 But when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, he said, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why do you pretend to be another? For I am charged with unbearable news for you. 7 ¶ Go, tell Jeroboam, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: "Because I exalted you from among the people and made you leader over my people Israel 8 and tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you, and yet you have not been like my servant David, who kept my commandments and followed me with all his heart, doing only that which was right in my eyes, 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, 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. 11 Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city the dogs shall eat, and anyone who dies in the open country the birds of the heavens shall eat, for the LORD has spoken it."’***

**Vs 1 –** Abijah’s name means “Yahweh is my Father.” This illness is serious, Abijah is the heir to the throne, the crown prince, the future leader of the kingdom.

**Vs 2 -** Jeroboam directs his wife to arise, put on a disguise, go to Shiloh (that is where Ahijah lives). Jeroboam has a very diminished view of God, if he believes he can hide the truth from Yahweh.

**APPLICATION:** As I thought about this it reminded me of what Jesus said would happen at the end:

*“21 ¶ "Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ 23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’” (Mt 7:21-23 ESV)*

**Vs 3 –** Take with you some gifts, some food. He will tell you what shall happen to the child. This is interesting, nothing about asking the prophet or even let’s you and I pray. Only he will be able to tell you what will happen.

As you consider this, even her gifts are disguised, made it to appear that she is the wife of a farmer. It seems Jeroboam believes she will get a “good prognosis” if the prophet does not know who she is.

One commentator said this:*“Jeroboam wants the help of the word in the emergencies of life, but not the rule of the word over the course of his life.”*

**APPLICATION:** At the base level, in the stillness of their own hearts, there are no true atheists:

*“****18*** *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.* ***19*** *¶ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.* ***20*** *For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.* ***21*** *For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.” (Ro 1:18-21 ESV)*

**Vs 4 –** So Mrs. Jeroboam, plays her part, dresses up, and heads to Shiloh, to the house of Ahijah. On the face it seems like she has gotten a break for Ahijah ***“could not see, for his eyes were dim because of his age.”*** It seems he is much like Isaac, who unwittingly gave his blessing to the unintended son.

**APPLICATION:** our physical limitations, do not limit the Holy Spirit of God’s ability to use us for God’s work and God’s glory!

**Vs 5 –** This does not surprise us. Jeroboam has dispatched his wife, Yahweh has dispatched his prophet!

# Vs 6 – Yahweh allowed the blind prophet to see through her disguise.

# Abraham Lincoln said: *“You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.”*

# The statement has a theological corollary: You can never fool God, and if you think you can, you are only fooling yourself.

**APPLICATION:** The bad news is God knows the news about our sins. The good news is that if we will confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe in our hearts that God raised him from the dead, we will be saved.

**Beginning in verse 7, we see God’s indictment against the King!**

Thisbreaks into a **few key points:**

1. **Vs 6b -** I have unbearable news.
2. This is what God says:
	1. **Vs 7 - God exalted you** and made you leader over Israel
	2. **Vs 8 – God tore the northern kingdoms** from the house of David
	3. **Vs 8 –** Yet, you have **failed to follow Yahweh** as he commanded you
	4. **Vs 9 -** You have **done evil, “above all who were before you!”** Then expounds:
		1. You have made other gods of metal
		2. Golden images at Bethel and Dan
		3. You have cast Yahweh, behind your back – You turned your back to God.

**Every court trial must have a verdict and now God is going to announce the sentence, the veridct against the house of Jeroboam:**

* 1. **Vs 10 -** Therefore Yahweh will bring **harm (disaster)** upon the house of Jeroboam. He will:
		1. **Cut off** every male from Jeroboam
			1. The Hebrew word for **“every male”** literally means **“those who urinate against the wall”**
		2. He will **burn the house of Jeroboam** as a man burns dung until there is nothing left!
		3. **Vs 11 - *Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city the dogs shall eat, and anyone who dies in the open country the birds of the heavens shall eat, for the LORD has spoken it."’***

**\*\*\* Remember this prophecy \*\*\***

**APPLICATION:** This is a preview of final judgment. This is a preview of what awaits all who reject God. They will be “cut off” they will be judged and cast into hell.

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***12 Arise therefore, go to your house. When your feet enter the city, the child shall die. 13 And all Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found something pleasing to the LORD, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam. 14 Moreover, the LORD will raise up for himself a king over Israel who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam today. And henceforth, 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.***

**Vs 12 -** Jeroboam had dispatched Mrs. Jeroboam to the Ahijah. Ahijah now dispatches Mrs. Jeroboam to go back home. **Go home, when your feat enter the city, the child shall die.**

**Vs 13 –** Everyone will mourn for him and you will bury him. He is the only one from the entire line of Jeroboam, who had something in him that was **pleasing to Yahweh**.

The rest of the men from this family will face a much harsher end. This child has been spared the horrific death that awaits the rest of the family.

**Think for a moment the peace that David secured for his family, the peace that Solomon enjoyed, now and the horror that Jeroboam has secured for his family!**

**How should be understand that statement about Abijah?** I would recommend in light of the Bible:

*“And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” (Heb 11:6 ESV)*

We should assume he trusted in God.

**APPLICATION:** It may seem unfair that the only one who believed in God is the one who suffered illness. This should not surprise us. Abijah was the only one in his family who was actually ready to die.

**Vs 14 –** The Lord, will raise up a king who will: ***cut off the house of Jeroboam.***We will see this play out in real time in just a few verses. So keep this tucked away.

**Vs 15 -** Here the **prophecy looks beyond the house of Jeroboam**, to the nation of Israel to the **10 northern tribes**:

1. The Lord will **strike** (the word is **נכה** *naw-kaw’ – it means to* **hit, beat, slay,** or **kill**) Israel, and Israel will be like a **reed is shaken by the water**.
2. The Lord **will root up Israel**, out of the good land (promised land) that was given to the fathers.
3. The Lord will **scatter Israel**, beyond the Euphrates.

**BECAUSE!** They have continued to worship and serve Ashrah, making their Asherim and thus provoking God to respond in anger!

This is a prophecy, that God intends to uproot the 10 northern tribes, from their land, and deposit them to the east of the Euphrates. **God did just that in 721BC!**

**But it is here, 200 years earlier that the seeds of destruction were sown!**

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***16 And he will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, which he sinned and made Israel to sin." 17 Then Jeroboam’s wife arose and departed and came to Tirzah. And as she came to the threshold of the house, the child died. 18 And all Israel buried him and mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke by his servant Ahijah the prophet. 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. 20 And the time that Jeroboam reigned was twenty-two years. And he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his place.***

**Vs 16 –** Reiterated – God will give up Israel, because of the sins of Jeroboam which he led the nation into and which they sinned against God. **This is the continuous story of bad to worse.**

**Vs 17 -** Then Jeroboam’s wife arose and departed and came to Tirzah. It appears, that Jeroboam had moved his palace to Tirzah.

Why did she not plead for mercy? Why did she not cry out for help?

When she arrived at the door, the child, as was prophesized, died.

**APPLICATION:** I do not care how bad it is. If you are still breathing there is still time to call out, that per adventure, God may will show grace.

**Vs 18 –** We see it happened as the prophet predicted it would.

Beginning in verse 19, you will see a couple of things that become very common for the writer of Kings.

1. A summary statement: (Vs -19-20a).
2. His successor: (Vs 20b) and Nadab his son reigned in his place.

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***21 Now Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city that the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. His mother’s name was Naamah the Ammonite. 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. 23 For they also built for themselves high places and pillars and Asherim on every high hill and under every green tree, 24 and there were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations that the LORD drove out before the people of Israel.***

Notice the writer, abruptly and without warning clicks the channel changer, he surfs to a different website and all of a sudden, and with no prior warning, starts talking about the king in the other empire:

Vs 21 – We just shifted to the southern empire andSolomon’s son, Rehoboam.

* 41 years old when he became king
* Reigned 17 years in Jerusalem
* His mom’s name and the fact she was an Ammonite

**Rehoboam had the massive opportunity to sit on David’s throne. With opportunity comes responsibility.**

Now the writer begins to expand the story of Rehoboam. The writer left him last in Jerusalem, when Shemaiah (prophet of God, who was directed by God), singlehandedly shut down the planned offensive against the northern empire (I Kin 12:21-24).

**Vs 22 -** Notice, it is not just that Rehobaom has done evil, but here we read these shocking words: **Judah did what was evil in the sight of the LORD.**

Then further still, that they **provoked Yahweh to Jealousy** with their sins that they committed. It was more than all of their faithers under Saul, under David, and even under Solomon had done.

The theme of **bad to worse** is occurring here in the southern kingdom as well. The writer provides additional details:

**Vs 23–24 -** They built high places, pillars (these were likely poles dedicated to the sex goddess Asherah).

**There were male cult prostitutes in the land.** I am not sure what enters your mind, but this would mean ritual sodomy was practiced!

The summary statement causes our heart to sink: ***They did according to all the abominations of the nations that the LORD drove out before the people of Israel.***

False gods, sex goddess shrines, male cult prostitutes, all the abominations of the nations. We can assume this includes even offering their children in the fire to Molech.

From a spiritual standpoint, we would all conclude that Rehoboam’s kingship was a massive failure! And as went the king, so went the kingdom.

**The nation has been commanded, multiple times:**

*“1 "These are the statutes and rules that you shall be careful to do in the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth. 2 You shall surely destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. 3 You shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire. You shall chop down the carved images of their gods and destroy their name out of that place. 4 You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way.” (De 12:1-4 ESV)*

Instead: Vs 24b - ***They did according to all the abominations of the nations that the LORD drove out before the people of Israel.***

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***25 In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. 26 He took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king’s house. He took away everything. He also took away all the shields of gold that Solomon had made, 27 and King Rehoboam made in their place shields of bronze, and committed them to the hands of the officers of the guard, who kept the door of the king’s house. 28 And as often as the king went into the house of the LORD, the guard carried them and brought them back to the guardroom. 29 Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? 30 And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. 31 And Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. His mother’s name was Naamah the Ammonite. And Abijam his son reigned in his place.”***

Next, we are told what happened five short years after Rehoboam took the throne from Solomon. Before we read this, reflect back to the time of Solomon, he made silver like stones in Jerusalem, remember all the trade with Ophir for gold and Tarshish in Spain.

**Vs 25 -** The peace that Solomon enjoyed is long gone. Now just five years after Solomons death, Shishak, the king of Egypt comes against Jerusalem. **How the mighty have fallen!**

Most scholars believe that ***“Shishak”*** is Pharaoh Sheshonq (945-924 BC).A relief at the Karnak temple catalogs, town by town, Shishak’s (Sheshonq’s) military invasion into Israel and Judah.

Reminder… *“Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled into Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.” (1Ki 11:40 ESV)*

**Vs 26 -** Notice he “took away the treasures of the house of the Lord.” Notice too, he took away the treasures of the king’s house. Notice, what the writer of kings says: ***He took away everything.*** Further, he states that he ***“also took away all the shields of gold that Solomon had made…”***

This is a complete and utter stripping of the wealth from Jerusalem.

This is a reversal of what happened when the nation of Israel left Egypt:

*“21 And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and when you go, you shall not go empty, 22 but each woman shall ask of her neighbor, and any woman who lives in her house, for silver and gold jewelry, and for clothing. You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians."” (Ex 3:21-22 ESV)*

**The Egyptians are now plundering Judah, they are plundering the Jews,** although this term will not start to be used, as best we can tell until around 586 BC, so another 350 years or so.

**Why would Egypt be attacking Jerusalem?**

*“1 When the rule of Rehoboam was established and he was strong, he abandoned the law of the LORD, and all Israel with him. 2 In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, because they had been unfaithful to the LORD, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem” (2Ch 12:1-2 ESV)*

**APPLICATION:** *“The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.” (Pr 21:1 ESV)*

**Vs 27 -** So the wealth is gone, **but the show must go on**. The glory and the wealth have departed, and the nation is in a downward slide, but **Rehoboam is keeping up the pretenses**.

The 500 golden shields that were kept in the House of the Forest of Lebanon are replaced with Bronze (Ki 10:16-17).

**Vs 28 -** So once Rehoboam had gone by, the guards would put the bronze shields back under lock and key!

**Vs 29-30 -** The Summary:

* Continual wars between the two kingdoms
* Rehoboam died
* Abijam reigns in his place!

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***15:1 Now in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam the son of Nebat, Abijam began to reign over Judah. 2 He reigned for three years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. 3 And he walked in all the sins that his father did before him, and his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father. 4 Nevertheless, for David’s sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, setting up his son after him, and establishing Jerusalem, 5 because David did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and did not turn aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. 6 Now there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. 7 The rest of the acts of Abijam and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. 8 And Abijam slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David. And Asa his son reigned in his place.***

**Vs 1 -** So he measures time against the other kingdom, going back and forth between kingdoms. We learn that the man who will follow Rehoboam, on the throne of David, over the southern kingdom is **Abijam**.

**Vs 2 -** This captures our attention for his reign was so short, only three years. **We are told his mother’s name was Maacah and that she was a daughter of Abishalom.**

**Vs 3 -** These two points will become extremely familiar:

1. Walked in the sins of his father, this will be the testimony for the majority of the kings.
2. Heart was not wholly true to Yahweh, like David.

**Vs 4-5 -** Once again, we see that for David’s sake, God extends mercy.

**APPLICATION:** Due not miss the larger point, the reason God can continue to show mercy to you and I is because of the ultimate David, the Lord Jesus Christ has come and died so that we might have life!

**Vs 6 -** We will also get accustomed to this sad commentary as well. The splitting of the kingdom was disastrous for both kingdoms. More so of course for the northern kingdom, for they sunk into full out idolatry, but disastrous for both none the less!

**Vs 7 -** The two specific kings whose kingdoms overlapped and more war.

**Vs 8 -** Here we are introduced to the next king who will reign Asa.

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***9 In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa began to reign over Judah, 10 and he reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. 11 And Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as David his father had done. 12 He put away the male cult prostitutes out of the land and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. 13 He also removed Maacah his mother from being queen mother because she had made an abominable image for Asherah. And Asa cut down her image and burned it at the brook Kidron. 14 But the high places were not taken away. Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was wholly true to the LORD all his days. 15 And he brought into the house of the LORD the sacred gifts of his father and his own sacred gifts, silver, and gold, and vessels.***

**Vs 9-10 -** Once again, the channel clicker clicks, and another Judean king comes into focus. Hs name is **Asa**. He had a reign slightly longer than David and Solomon at **41 years**.

OK, notice that Maacah, is also listed as the mother. Most commentators believe she is actually the grandmother. **But it is weird that the actual mother is not listed like all other cases.**

A few things to point out. Asa is the great-grandson of Solomon, the grandson of Rehoboam, the son of Abijam, we have no reason to suspect he will be very different. He comes from a line of foolish men. We kind of doubt he has any chance at being any better.

**Vs 11 -** Yet in spite of coming from a **line of fools.** Asa did what was **right in the sight of the Lord!**

Asa, obtained the **“gold standard”**. He did what was right in the sight of Yahweh **as David his father** (his great-great grandfather) **had done. Halelujah!** One who will follow Yahweh!

**APPLICATION:** God is not looking for pedigree, He is calling for followers. It does not matter how long the line of fools in our family tree. Each of us are one step away from changing the trajectory!

**APPLICATION:** What is the explanation for young Asa turning to Yahweh. Was it intelligence, was it some life changing event. No, I would argue it was grace. In spite of the family’s sins, God was still calling out for a relationship. The same is true for you and I.

**Vs 12** - The writer of Kings now begins telling us some of the details of this young godly man’s life. His dad, Abijam, had established male cult prostitutes. He put those away. He put an end to the detestable practice of ritual sodomy as a form of worship and drove them “out of the land.”

He started with trying to stamp out false religion and idolatry. He went after **“all the idols that his fathers had made**.**”** He left no idol standing!

**APPLICATION:** Let’s pause for just a moment and ask. Are there any idols in our lives that are standing in the way of complete obedience to God? If so, I recommend we follow Asa and destroy them right here and right now.

**Vs 13 – Mother or grandmother,** she was evil, and she worshiped Asherah, and had build an abominable image of Asherah. He removed Maacah, from being the queen mother and cut down the image and burned it at the brook Kidron.

**\*\* This highlights an important principle about discipleship. Following Christ often comes at a cost. The first cost we see for young Asa, was in relationship to his immediate family, in particular his mom.**

Asa’s mother, a **leading figure in the harem** and within the **political and cultural life of Judah**. Probably the **second most influential person** in the nation behind her son. Yet, **she was leading the nation to sin.** She was a worshipper of pagan deities, in particular the vulgar **Canaanite sex goddess Asherah**.

Asa was forced to choose between honoring God or allowing his mom’s sins to pull down the nation.

Asa chose honoring God above all, and he removed her from being the queen mother and he **cut down the Asherah image** that she had constructed **and burned it by the brook Kidron.**

Additional details from Chronicles: *“and commanded Judah to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, and to keep the law and the commandment.” (2Ch 14:4 ESV)*

**APPLICATION:** Our commitment to God must go ahead of all personal relationships. But we must keep in tension all scriptures about we conduct ourselves.

**This is not a call to dishonor your parents:**

*“****2*** *"Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise),* ***3*** *"that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."” (Eph 6:2-3 ESV)*

**APPLICATION:** Discipleship often comes at a cost.

*“****26*** *"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.* ***27*** *Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.” (Lu 14:26-27 ESV)*

**Vs 14-15 -** BUT… In spite of many reforms, he did not remove all the high places. He continued to allow men and women to worship Yahweh from the high places, although God has strictly forbade that activity:

**Nevertheless**, his heart was wholly true to Yahweh all his days!

**APPLICATION:** This is good news for you and I. God is not looking for perfection, that is only possible in Christ. He is looking for men and women to give their hearts to Him and then follow Him.

I suspect, for every one of us, there are still some “nevertheless(es)” in our lives. That reminds us of grace.

**\*\* Next we see another example, another cost of his discipleship.**

**Vs 15 -** We see him brining into the temple, sacred gifts of his father as well as his own gifts. His kingdom had suffered great loss of treasure when Shishak, the King of Egypt, plundered the treasuries of Jerusalem (I Kin 14:25-26). Asa offered his treasures to God and they were used by God to restore the tarnished image of the temple.

**APPLICATION:** Giving money may not be the most important way to serve God, but its spiritual significance should not be overlooked or underestimated.

When we give costly gifts to kingdom work, it is one indicator of a healthy relationship with God and with our possessions. Keep in mind, giving does not make us saved, nor earn God’s favor. God cannot be purchased.

Additional details from Chronicles:

*“****9*** *¶ Zerah the Ethiopian came out against them with an army of a million men and 300 chariots, and came as far as Mareshah.* ***10*** *And Asa went out to meet him, and they drew up their lines of battle in the Valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.* ***11*** *And Asa cried to the LORD his God, "O LORD, there is none like you to help, between the mighty and the weak. Help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this multitude. O LORD, you are our God; let not man prevail against you."* ***12*** *So the LORD defeated the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled.” (2Ch 14:9-12 ESV)*

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***16 And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. 17 Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. 18 Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king’s house and gave them into the hands of his servants. And King Asa sent them to Ben-hadad the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, who lived in Damascus, saying, 19 "Let there be a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Behold, I am sending to you a present of silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me." 20 And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel and conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah, and all Chinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali. 21 And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah, and he lived in Tirzah. 22 Then King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah, none was exempt, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them King Asa built Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah. 23 Now the rest of all the acts of Asa, all his might, and all that he did, and the cities that he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? But in his old age he was diseased in his feet. 24 And Asa slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place.***

**Vs 17 -** Then we are told something specific, Baasha, went up against Judah and built Ramah. We see that people were going between the kingdoms and he wanted to stop people from the northern empire going to the southern empire and vice versa.

**Vs 18 -** Here we find another area, where Asa made mistakes. In spite of early great decisions involving the Ethiopians. Here, rather than trusting in Yahweh, he trusts in what he can purchase and secure with money.

He takes all the silver and gold that were left ***in the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king’s house.*** He places it all into the hands of some of his servants. He sends them to the **King of Syria** a man named **Ben-hadad**. A Gentile, a pagan.

**Vs 19 -** He gives the money, with a proposition that they make a covenant, one like the one that existed between their fathers. Some trust in horses, some trust in Egypt, **others is Syria.**

**Vs 20 -** Ben-hadah listened to Asa, he breaks his covenant with Israel and then **launches an offensive against some of the cities of the northern empire.** Namely, Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah, and all Chinneroth (in the land of Naphtali).

**Vs 21 -** This caused Baasha to shift his focus away from building and fortifying Ramah. He lived in Tirzah and in fact made it the capital. It would remain the capital until Omri moved it to Samaria. **Now from a political perspective** this turned about to be a masterful move.

But, there are a number of problems here:

1. He trusted in the army of Syria rather than the armies of heaven
2. Solomon received treasures from pagan kings, Asa gave his treasures away to the king of Syria
3. Asa plunder the nation’s treasuries, which led to a pagan army capturing cites in the Promised Land and killing fellow Israelites.

God’s thoughts:

*“****6*** *Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them he built Geba and Mizpah.* ***7*** *¶ At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped you.” (2Ch 16:6-7 ESV)*

**Vs 22 -** King Asa called the entire nation to a building project. They carried away all the timber and stones that Baasha had brought to Ramah and toted it all to Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah.

**Vs 23-24 -** He died, was laid to rest with his fathers, and his Son Jehoshaphat, reigned in his place.

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