

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

July 9

MONDAY

Suddenly, the focus is on Jeroboam, one of Solomon's servants, we read. (In our minds, we are instantly reminded of God's words, that He would take the kingdom from Solomon and give it to one of his servants. I wonder if this is that guy?) We're told Jeroboam's story - how he came to be a rebel.

READ: I Kings 11:26-29

Solomon recognized good leadership skills in Jeroboam and appointed him to be in charge of laborers at Millo, a fortress on the Israeli border. Unknow-ingly, Solomon put Jeroboam into a place where he could bring great trouble to the kingdom. He should have been more selective. We must be! For there are those who would pull us away from the Lord. There are those who would war against our souls. We must not be un-equally yoked with them. Those whom we choose to align with most closely, must be those who love the Lord and who will help us to follow Him well.

TUESDAY

The prophet Ahijah tears his new coat into 12 pieces, and tells Jeroboam to take ten of them. He explains that God will do that to Israel, and give 10 tribes to Jeroboam! The other 2 parts will stay with David's family.

READ: I Kings 11:30-33

This story is a picture of grace. The coat wasn't Jeroboam's to start with. He had absolutely no claim upon the throne! But God is the God of all grace! As the prophet gave Jeroboam ten pieces of the coat, so God gives to us the measure of His grace that we need. It was grace that taught my heart to fear God; and then it was grace that relieved those fears, as I came to know God thru the pages of His Word. God's grace is coming to you this very day! It is grace that will carry me thru this day.

WEDNESDAY

The prophet Ahijah tells Jeroboam what God has revealed: that He will give him ten parts of the kingdom but will allow Solomon's son to keep one (besides his own) so that David (and descendants) will always have a lamp before God, he informs him.

READ: I Kings 11:34-36

The goodness of God reaches to the next generation, David once wrote. He didn't know it, but he was writing about God's goodness to himself. God says clearly that it because of David's obedience to His commandments that He will allow Solomon to live out his life as king. In what way or ways might God chose to bless your children or grandchildren, or the kids you teach? We don't know and may never know. But God has been known to do that - to bless future generations of a faithful man or woman. If that's not a call to faithfulness, I don't know what is!

THURSDAY

God continues to tell Jeroboam of His plans for him and for the nation. If Jeroboam walks according to God's Word as David did, then God will bless his rule and allow

his family to follow him to the throne. He will, at least temporarily, push David's family line off to the side.

READ: I Kings 11:37-39

The standard doesn't change. Not even for kings. Or even for Jersey-ites! Do you want the Lord's blessing on your life? Do you seek His pleasure? Is your desire that He would delight in you? Then, walk in His ways and do what is right. Do that, and He will be with you, and will make your life count for something great and lasting!

FRIDAY

Learning of all that God had predicted for Jeroboam, Solomon tried to kill him, but he fled to Egypt and stayed there until Solomon died. Solomon had ruled for forty years, and when he died, he was buried in Jerusalem. His son, Rehoboam, took over the Kingdom.

READ: I Kings 11:40-43

Rehoboam's exile in Egypt is a shadow of our own lives. We have been given a great a sure promise: that we shall dwell forever in God's eternal home, and that we shall, in some way, rule with Him there. Yet, for the present, here we are. We're not really in exile, but are in a land which is not our home. And we are awaiting the day when Jesus will come again, to take us home to be with Him. Let us wait patiently, but with an ever increasing sense of anticipation for that great day! It's coming.

SATURDAY

Rehoboam went to Shechem to prepare for his coronation ceremony. At that same time, Jeroboam returned from Egypt and went to Shechem, leading a delegation of Israelites, demanding to speak to Rehoboam.

READ: I Kings 12:1-3

Why Shechem? Why not Jerusalem, where Saul, David, and Solomon had lived and reigned? I suspect it's because Rehoboam had heard the same news that his father Solomon had heard about the prophet telling Jeroboam that he would rule over ten of the tribes. Jerusalem was too closely associated with the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin. But Shechem was a place where historically all twelve tribes, and especially the northern ones, had come together. Rehoboam is trying to manipulate things his own way so that he can keep the other ten tribes. The wisest man who ever lived has a foolish son! He is a fool who thinks that he can undo the plans and purposes of God. What joy is ours - for we know the Word of the Lord is sure and will stand though the world may crumble. Let us build our lives on its firm foundation!

#89