

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Aug. 6

MONDAY

The old prophet who lied, heard the news of the man killed by a lion, and he knew right away who it was. He rode out to see for himself. He took the body back to Bethel to bury him there.

READ: I Kings 13:26-29

One of the words in this story is especially significant. It's the word that is translated "disobeyed". The Hebrew word means rebelled. The prophet who was killed by the lion did more than get deceived by the lie of the second prophet. He did more than simply disobey the Lord. He rebelled against him. Very likely, in his heart he was rebelling against God already and that's why he was so easily persuaded to disobey what God had said. Rebellion starts in a heart that is not completely satisfied with the Lord. It starts in the heart of the one who hopes for bigger and better things for himself. So what we need to do is to be satisfied with what God has for us today.

TUESDAY

The old prophet buried the man whom the lion had killed and gave instructions that when he himself died, he would be buried with him in the same spot. Then he announced that the things which that first prophet had declared would surely come to pass. He's talking about the pronouncements against the idolatry of Jeroboam and the ten Tribes who are following him.

READ: I Kings 13:30-32

The old prophet seems to have learned a great lesson from all this about the sovereignty of God. When God says something, it will surely happen. That's a lesson we must all learn. It's the basis for our hope: the Lord said He will come again, and we know He will. The Lord said He will strengthen our faith to live for Him, and we know He will. He said it – He will do it!

WEDNESDAY

The withered hand, the miraculous healing God granted him, the killing of the prophet - none of these things impacted Jeroboam at all. He appointed priests who were not from the Tribe of Levi. The fact that Jeroboam failed to respond to God's demonstration of His power and grace was a great sin.

READ: I Kings 13:33-34

The old prophet had learned a great lesson (re-read yesterday's section if you have forgotten that) but King Jeroboam had not, and his sins found him out. God wants us to look at the circumstances of life by asking ourselves, "What is God teaching me here? What's He showing me? What's He saying to me?" The lessons are important. They are plain enough, if only we would look for them. Let us stay clear of Jeroboam's sin. Let us today open our eyes and hearts to learn what God has for us!

THURSDAY

When his son Abijah became sick, Jeroboam put his wife in a disguise, gave her some gifts, and sent her to consult with Ahijah, the prophet who lived in Shiloh and who was now old and blind. He was the one who had prophesied years ago that Jeroboam would one day be king. The idea was that the king wanted to know whether his son would recover or not.

READ: I Kings 14:1-4

Jeroboam must have had some reason for putting his wife in disguise, but it's hard to know what that was since the prophet was blind anyway. It's possible that he didn't want others to recognize her and to know that the king's wife was going to see a prophet. That would not have looked good. In other words, Jeroboam is really concerned with appearance. He wants to look good. He'd like everyone to think that he's in control of his own life and his own destiny. So he puts on a mask. (rather, puts one on his wife) Don't be fooled by the masks people wear. Behind every mask, they need the Lord!

FRIDAY

King Jeroboam disguises his wife and sends her to consult with the prophet Ahijah. But God reveals to the prophet exactly what deceit is going on, and gives him the words that he will speak to the king's wife when she shows up.

READ: I Kings 14:5-8

Do you see the way God speaks of the standards he has set for man? He says that we must keep his commandments and follow him with all our heart. The two go hand in hand: the first is action-based, and the second, attitude-based. Both are important. God also says that we can imitate the lives of others who keep his commandments and follow Him with all their heart. In this passage, he uses David as an example. Who would that example be, say, in your neighborhood, or place of business? Should it not be you?

SATURDAY

God lists the sins of Jeroboam, and then announces the consequences of that behavior: severe consequences, for sure! Then he informs Jeroboam that his child shall die. But the child's death is a blessing from God. He alone, in all his family, has in his heart, some good thing in God's sight. He alone, out of all the family, will be buried with Israel mourning for him.

READ: I Kings 14:9-13

Are you not a little surprised that the death of a young child is treated in this text as an act of mercy from God? The Lord found some good in that child towards God. I'm not too certain what that means, but I know that when God talks about goodness, it's the real thing. It's the goodness that He gives to those who trust Him, so evidently, this child believed and although the world defines death as a horrible thing, God views it as a victorious homecoming!