

BIBLE WOMEN – Lesson 12

Solomon's Wives – Queen of Sheba - Jezebel

I. Solomon was anointed king of Israel just before David died to prevent Adonijah from usurping David as king.

A. David gave Solomon a charge before his death.

1. **I Kings 2:2** – *"Be strong and prove yourself a man."*
2. **Vs. 3** – *"Keep the charge of the Lord your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn."*
3. **Vs. 4** – *"Then the Lord may fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,' He said, 'you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'"*

B. Almost immediately Solomon went against his father's advice. **I Kings 3**

1. Solomon made a treaty with Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and married Pharaoh's daughter.
2. This marriage was for political advantage to ensure peace between Israel and Egypt.
3. However, Solomon transgressed the Law of Moses in doing so.
Deuteronomy 7:1-5 – *"When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, ² and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. ³ Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. ⁴ For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly. ⁵ But thus you shall deal with them: you shall destroy their altars, and break down their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire.*
4. Solomon took his wife to Bethlehem until he could finish building his own house and the house of the Lord.
5. **I Kings 3:3** – *"Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places."*

C. While Solomon was offering sacrifices at the great high place in Gibeon, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and God said, "Ask! What shall I give you.?"

1. Solomon said, because he was young, he wanted God to give him an understanding heart to judge the people of God and that he would be able to discern between good and evil.
 2. God was very pleased with Solomon's request and said:
I Kings 3:11-14 – *"Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, ¹² behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. ¹³ And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days. ¹⁴ So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."*
- D. The nation of Israel, during Solomon's reign, was expanded to include Syria, Ammon, Moab and Edom following wars that conquered these lands. **(see map at the end of the lesson)**
1. Solomon had twelve governors over all Israel, who provided food for the king and his household; each one made provision for one month of the year.
 2. Solomon received six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold each year in tribute (taxes) from Israel, besides the gold he received from traveling merchants and foreigner dignitaries. **I Kings 10:14**
 3. Solomon's wealth surpassed all of the kings of the earth. **Vs. 23**
 4. Gold and silver were as common in Jerusalem as stones.
I Chronicles 2:15
- E. The first test of Solomon's wisdom came almost immediately.
1. **I Kings 3:16-28** – Two harlots came to the king and presented their case.
 2. One woman said: *"O my lord, this woman and I dwell in the same house; and I gave birth while she was in the house. ¹⁸ Then it happened, the third day after I had given birth, that this woman also gave birth. And we were together; no one was with us in the house, except the two of us in the house. ¹⁹ And this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. ²⁰ So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from my side, while your maidservant slept, and laid him in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. ²¹ And when I rose in the morning to nurse my son, there he was, dead. But when I had examined him in the morning, indeed, he was not my son whom I had borne."*
 3. The other woman said, "No! But the living one *is* my son, and the dead one *is* your son."
 4. The first woman argued that the dead son was not hers.

5. Solomon considered their arguments and said, *"Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword before the king. ²⁵ And the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to one, and half to the other."*
6. Upon hearing this the first woman said, *"Give her the living child, and by no means kill him."*
7. But the second woman said, *"Let him be neither mine nor yours, but divide him."*
8. When Solomon saw the reaction of both mothers, he knew that the first woman was the real mother of the living child because she would rather give him up than to have him killed.
9. Solomon ordered that the child be given to the first woman.
10. When all of Israel heard about this judgment, they feared the king because they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.

F. Israel experienced peace from all of their enemies. **I Kings 4**

1. This allowed Solomon to spend eleven years building the Temple in Jerusalem. **I Kings 6:38**
2. He also spent thirteen years building his own palace. **I Kings 7:1**
3. Solomon used all the heathen nations who were left in Canaan as a labor force to build the temple, his palace, walls around Jerusalem, storage cities for his chariots and his cavalry.
4. Solomon dedicated the Temple and blessed the people, instructing them to remain loyal to God and to keep his statutes and commandments.
5. After this, God appeared to Solomon again in a dream, **I Kings 9:3-7** – God said that Solomon and his sons must:
 - a. walk before the Lord in integrity of heart and keep the commandments and statutes and judgments, then there would always be a descendant of David and Solomon on the throne.
 - b. However, **if** Solomon or his sons turned from God and failed to keep His commandments and statutes; **if** they serve other gods and worship them, **THEN** Israel would be cut off from the land they received from God.
6. Solomon took his Egyptian wife from Bethlehem, where she lived while his palace was being build, and brought her to the new Palace. **2 Chronicles 8:11**
7. Approximately 20 years had passed during all of this building and only one wife is mentioned for Solomon.

II. The Queen of Sheba – I Kings 10

- A. When the Queen of Sheba heard of his fame and his wisdom which was given to him from God, she came to test Solomon with hard questions.
 1. Sheba was located in the southwest corner of what is now called Saudi Arabia. **(see map attached)**
 2. She brought great wealth with her as well:

- a. Spices
- b. Gold
- c. Precious stones
3. Solomon answered all of her questions and there was nothing too hard that he could not explain to her.
4. When she heard Solomon's great wisdom and saw his great wealth she said, *"It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. However I did not believe it until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half has not been told."*
5. She gave Solomon one hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great quantity, and precious stones.
 - a. A talent was a weight measurement. It equaled 75 pounds. So 120 talents would be equal to 9,000 pounds of gold, which would be equal to about two million dollars today.
 - b. Solomon also gave the Queen of Sheba gifts, whatever she asked for.
6. Then she went back to her own country.

III. Power and wealth corrupted Solomon, even though he was blessed with great wisdom to "judge the people of Israel", he did not use wisdom in own personal life.

- A. **I Kings 11:1** – *"But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites."* All of these were heathen nations who worshipped idols.
1. Solomon had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines. **Vs. 3**
 - a. Solomon took the practice of polygamy to the most outrageous extremes ever imagined.
 - b. Since they were called "princesses", it is likely that they were taken for political advantage or economic advantage to Israel.
 - c. However, since he was wiser than any who lived before or after him, and his wealth was known throughout the world, it is hard to believe that he could have gained many advantages that he did not already have.
 - d. **Vs. 2b** says that *"Solomon clung to these in love."*
 - 1) It is difficult to believe that he "truly loved" these women.
 - 2) We are talking about one thousand women.
 - 3) If he spent one day with each woman, he could only see each wife once every two years and nine months.
 - 4) How do you develop a marriage relationship in that time frame?
 - 5) We have seen how other Bible men have had difficulty trying to manage two wives; 1,000 wives is truly an insult to the God who created marriage to be between one man and one woman for life.

- e. Solomon took his wives from the very people that God had forbidden the Israelites to marry because God knew these women would be very bad influences on the Israelites, leading them to worship idols. **Vs. 2**
 2. Just as God had warned, Solomon's wives turned his heart after other gods. **Vs. 4** -- *"his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David."*
 3. Solomon worshipped the Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.
 4. Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord by building high places for Chemosh, the god of Moab and for Molech, the god of the Ammonites (who sacrificed their own children to their god).
 5. Solomon built high places for the gods of all of his foreign wives. **Vs. 8**
- B. The Lord became angry with Solomon because of his idolatry.
1. The Lord spoke to Solomon for the third time saying: **I Kings 11:11-13** – *"Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant."¹² Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son."¹³ However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."*
 2. The names of women in Solomon's life are not even mentioned, yet their influence was corrupting and deadly.
 - a. Remember when Solomon was born, Nathan, the prophet called him Jedidiah, which means "beloved of God".
 - b. We learn from this that even the most beloved of God is still required to obey the commandments of God or pay the consequences.
 - c. That lesson still applies today:
 - 1) **I John 5:3** – *"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome."*
 - 2) **I John 5:21** – *"Little children, keep yourselves from idols."*
 - 3) **John 14:15** – Jesus said *"If you love Me, keep My commandments."*
 3. How sad that, as the "beloved of God", Solomon was given a life of great privilege, wealth, wisdom, honor and power yet he allowed himself to forget the source of all of those gifts, which opened the door to the corrupting influence of his idolatrous wives.

IV. Israel becomes a divided kingdom.

- A. God had raised up adversaries against Israel because of Solomon's idolatry. One of those adversaries was Jeroboam, Solomon's servant.
 1. The prophet Ahijah met Jeroboam in a field and Ahijah took hold of Jeroboam's garment and tore it into twelve pieces

2. Abijah said to Jeroboam, **I Kings 11:31** – *"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 will give ten tribes to you.'"*
 3. Abijah also told Jeroboam that the tribe of Judah would be left for Solomon's son, Rehoboam for the sake of David who had been faithful to God.
 4. The twelfth tribe was Levi, but they were not given a single portion of land; instead they were given cities in each of the tribes.
 5. Abijah also told Jeroboam that God would preserve his kingdom **IF** he followed God's statutes and commandments as David had done.
 6. When Solomon heard the prophecy regarding Jeroboam, he sought to kill Jeroboam, so Jeroboam ran away to Egypt until Solomon died.
- B. When Solomon died, Rehoboam prepared to go to Shechem where all of Israel was gathered to make him king. **I Kings 12**
1. When Jeroboam heard this, he left Egypt and returned. Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel spoke to Rehoboam saying: **I Kings 12:4** – *"Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you."*
 - a. Rehoboam said he would decide in three days.
 - b. Rehoboam consulted the elders of Israel who had been advisors for Solomon and they advised him to listen to the people, be kind to them and they would be his servants forever.
 - c. Then Rehoboam rejected their advice and consulted the young men who had grown up with him. They said, **Vs. 10-11** – *"Thus you should speak to this people who have spoken to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter on us'—thus you shall say to them: 'My little finger shall be thicker than my father's waist!'¹¹ And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!"*
 - d. When the people returned for Rehoboam's decision, he told them that he would make their burden even heavier (because this was part of God's plan to fulfill the prophecy of Ahijah given to Jeroboam).
Vs. 15
 - e. When Rehoboam sent his tax collector out to get the revenue from the tribes, they stoned the tax collector.
 2. The ten tribes made Jeroboam king over Israel, while Rehoboam was king only over Judah.
 - a. Rehoboam gathered fighting men to go to war against Israel, but God sent him a message saying, **I Kings 12:24** – *"You shall not go up nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel. Let every man return to his house, for this thing is from Me."*

- b. So instead, Rehoboam built fortified strongholds throughout Judah and made shields and spears. The tribe of Benjamin also joined Rehoboam.
 3. All of the priests and Levites in Israel took their possessions and went to Judah because Jeroboam had set up idols in Israel.
- C. Jeroboam was afraid that he would lose his kingdom if the people of Israel went back to Jerusalem for their special feast days and sacrifices.
 1. Jeroboam had two golden calves created and set one up in Bethel and another in Dan. **I Kings 12:25-33**
 2. He told the people of Israel that it was “too much to expect the people to go all the way back to Jerusalem to worship”, so he said the golden calves would be their gods and he set up the high places.
 3. The messenger of God went to Bethel where Jeroboam was offering sacrifices on the altar he build before the golden calf. **I Kings 13**
 - a. The prophet said that a child named Josiah would be born to the house of David and he would sacrifice the priests of the high places on that very altar.
 - b. Jeroboam had the prophet arrested but when Jeroboam stretched out his hand, it withered, and the altar split as a sign that the prophets words were true.
 - c. Jeroboam begged the prophet to pray to God for him that his hand would be restored.
 - d. But Jeroboam did not turn from his evil ways and he made priests from every group in Israel (not the Levites) and he set new feast days to worship (not the same ones commanded in the law of Moses).
- D. Jeroboam’s son, Abijah became sick. **I Kings 14**
 1. Jeroboam asked his wife to go to Shiloh to see Ahijah, the prophet to ask what would happen to his son, Abijah.
 2. The prophet recognized her and gave her a message for Jeroboam: **I Kings 14:7-13** – *“Because I exalted you from among the people, and made you ruler 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 as My servant David, who kept My commandments and who followed Me with all his heart, to do only what was right in My eyes; ⁹ but you have done more evil than all who were before you, for you have gone and made for yourself other gods and molded images to provoke Me to anger, and have cast Me behind your back—¹⁰ therefore behold! I will bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male in Israel, bond and free; I will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as one takes away refuse until it is all gone. ¹¹ The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Jeroboam and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field; for the LORD has*

spoken!"¹² Arise therefore, go to your own house. When your feet enter the city, the child shall die."

- E. Rehoboam married eighteen wives: **I Chronicles 11:18-21**
1. That was to be expected since his father, Solomon, had set such a poor example of respecting the marriage bond as God designed it.
 2. Rehoboam also forsook the law of the Lord and all Israel with him, so God allowed the Egyptians to conquer them.
 3. When Rehoboam finally humbled himself before the Lord, the wrath of the Lord turned from him so all things went well in Judah.
 4. Rehoboam reigned in Judah forty-one years.

V. JEZEBEL

- A. Five kings followed Jeroboam, each more evil than the other, until Ahab became king in Israel. **1 Kings 16**
1. Ahab was more evil than all who were before him. **Vs. 30**
 2. Ahab took a wife who was the daughter of the king of Sidon whose name was Jezebel.
 - a. Sidon was a heathen nation north of Israel whose citizens were worshippers of Baal.
 - b. Tyre was its capital city and this nation provided much of the lumber for the temple built by Solomon.
 3. Ahab built a temple for Baal and set up an altar there to please Jezebel.
 - a. He also made a wooden image (known as an Ashtera), which was an idol in honor of Baal's wife.
 - b. Ahab also turned the hearts of the people of Israel to worship Baal.
 - c. **I Kings 16:33** – *"...Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him."*
- B. Jezebel was not only an idolator, she could not tolerate those who worshipped the God of Israel.
1. Obadiah was in charge of Ahab's household, and he was faithful to God.
 2. When Jezebel massacred the prophets of the Lord, Obadiah hid one hundred of them in a cave and took them food and water.
 3. Elijah was the prophet of God during Ahab's reign.
 - a. Ahab hated Elijah because he condemned Ahab's evil ways.
 - b. Jezebel hated Elijah more than Ahab.
 4. Elijah challenged the 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah to a contest to prove whose God was real. **I Kings 18:20-40**
 - a. Elijah met Obadiah in a field and told Obadiah to tell Ahab to gather all of Israel along with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah on Mount Carmel
 - b. Elijah said to the people of Israel: *"How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him."*

- c. The prophets of Baal were given a bull and Elijah was given a bull to offer as a burnt offerings.
- 1) Elijah told the prophets of Baal to call on the name of their god, to see if he would light a fire under the offering.
 - a) The prophets of Baal chanted "O Baal, hear us!" and they leapt about the altar until noon with no results.
 - b) Elijah mocked them saying "*Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.*" **I Kings 18:27**
 - c) The prophets of Baal cried louder and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until blood gushed from them.
 - d) They continued this practice until evening but they received no answer from their god.
 - 2) Then Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down, using twelve stones, one for each tribe.
 - a) Elijah dug a trench around the altar, put the wood in order, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood.
 - b) Elijah ordered four water pots filled with water to be poured on the offering and the wood three times until the water filled the trench.
 - c) Then Elijah prayed to God saying, "*LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. ³⁷ Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.*" **I Kings 18:36**
 - d) Immediately fire fell from the Lord and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it dried up the water in the trench.
 - e) When the people saw this, they fell on their faces and said, "The Lord, He is God."
 - f) Elijah had the prophets of Baal executed.
5. When Ahab told Jezebel that Elijah had executed all of the prophets, Jezebel sent a message to Elijah saying that she would kill him within twenty-four hours.
- a. Elijah became afraid for his life and he ran a day's journey into the wilderness.
 - b. He sat down under a tree and prayed that he could die.
 - c. How could one who had just witnessed an exhibition of the power of God be so frightened by a simple threat from Jezebel?

- d. Then Elijah went to Mount Horeb (the mountain of God, Sinai) and he found a cave where he spent the night.
 - e. The Lord spoke to him there saying, *"What are you doing here?"*
 - f. By this time Elijah was really feeling sorry for himself and he said, *"I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life."* **I Kings 19:10**
 - g. The voice of the Lord said, *"I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."* **Vs. 18**
- C. Sometime later Ahab went to a man named Naboth and said, *"Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near, next to my house; and for it I will give you a vineyard better than it. Or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its worth in money."* **I Kings 21**
1. But Naboth refused because this land was his inheritance from his forefathers and their land was not to be sold permanently to anyone.
 2. Ahab went home and was very unhappy and refused to eat.
 3. Jezebel came to Ahab and when she found out why Ahab was so unhappy, she said: *"Arise, eat food, and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."*
 - a. Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab's name and seal them with the king's seal.
 - b. She sent the letters to the elders and nobles in the city where Naboth lived. The letters said: *"Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth with high honor among the people;¹⁰ and seat two men, scoundrels, before him to bear witness against him, saying, "You have blasphemed God and the king." Then take him out, and stone him, that he may die."* **I Kings 21:9**
 - 1) When Jezebel heard that Naboth was dead, she said to Ahab: *"Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead."*
 - c. The Lord then sent Elijah to pronounce judgment on Ahab. **1 Kings 21:28**
 - 1) Elijah was to say, *"Thus says the LORD: "Have you murdered and also taken possession? In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours. Behold, I will bring calamity on you. I will take away your posterity, and will cut off from Ahab every male in Israel, both bond and free.²² I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked Me to anger, and*

*made Israel sin.*²³ *And concerning Jezebel the LORD also spoke, saying, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.'*²⁴ *The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field."* **I Kings 21:19 & 21-24**

- 2) When Ahab heard the judgment, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and fasted and went about mourning.
 - 3) When the Lord saw that Ahab humbled himself before God, the Lord said "*Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the calamity in his days. In the days of his son I will bring the calamity on his house.*"
- d. Three years later, Israel was involved in a war with Syria. **I Kings 22**
- 1) The king of Syria ordered his army not to fight with the soldiers or common people, but to seek out the king of Israel and kill him.
 - 2) Ahab wore a disguise in the battle so they wouldn't recognize him, but one of the Syrian soldiers shot an arrow at random and it struck Ahab between the joints of his armor. **Vs. 34**
 - 3) While the battle continued, Ahab was propped up in his chariot, facing the Syrians. He died that evening and his blood ran onto the floor of the chariot
 - 4) When the battle was over Ahab was taken to Samaria and buried there.
 - 5) Someone washed the chariot at the pool in Samaria and the dogs licked up his blood, according to the judgment God had placed on Ahab.
- D. Ahab's son, Ahaziah became king after Ahab died and he was evil as was his father, Ahab.
1. In the second year of his reign, he fell through a lattice in an upper room of his palace and he died within a few days.
 2. This was the fulfillment of God's judgment against Ahab for killing Naboth when God said the judgment would not occur in Ahab's life, but it would happen to his son. **1 Kings 21:28**
 3. Ahab's second son, Joram became king of Israel after Ahaziah, because Ahaziah had no sons when he died. **2 Kings 1:17**
 4. In the fifth year of Joram's reign in Israel, Jehoshaphat, king of Judah died and his son Jehoram became king of Judah at the age of thirty-two. **2 Kings 8:16**
 - a. While Jehoram's father and grandfather had been very good kings, Jehoram followed the ways of Israel into idolatry.
 - b. He was greatly influenced by his wife, who was the daughter of the evil king Ahab. Her name was Athaliah. (We will talk about her next week.) **Vs. 18 & 26-27**
 5. Both Joram and Jehoram were influenced by evil women:

- a. Joram, king of Israel was evil, though not as evil as his evil parents, Ahab and Jezebel.
 - 1) His mother Jezebel was willing to murder to get her way.
 - 2) She had Naboth killed for a piece of land.
 - 3) She hunted and killed the prophets of God in order to promote worship to the idol Baal.
- b. Jehoram, king of Judah, the son of Jehoshaphat (a very good king), followed the example of Israel, because he married the daughter of Ahab. He reigned eight years.
 - 1) His reign was so evil, he received a letter from Elijah the prophet saying: **2 Chronicles 21:12-13** – *"You have not followed the ways of your father, Jehoshaphat. You have followed the ways of the kings of Israel and led the people of Judah to prostitute themselves, just as Ahab did. You have murdered your own brothers, members of your own family, men who were better than you."*
 - 2) God pronounced judgment on Jehoram's whole household. **Vs. 14-15**
"¹⁴ So now the LORD is about to strike your people, your sons, your wives and everything that is yours, with a heavy blow. ¹⁵ You yourself will be very ill with a lingering disease of the bowels, until the disease causes your bowels to come out."
 - 3) God aroused the hostility of the Philistines and the Arabs who lived near the Cushites against Judah.
 - 4) They attacked Judah and carried off all of the valuable things in the king's palace along with his sons and his wives, except for his youngest son.
 - 5) Following this, the Lord afflicted Jehoram with an incurable disease of the bowels for two years and then he died in agony.
 - a) The people of Judah did not honor his death as they had previous kings.
 - b) The saddest epitaph ever written for anyone was written for Jehoram in **2 Chronicles 21:20** – *"Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years. He passed away, to no one's regret, and was buried in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings."*
6. Jehoram's son, Ahaziah became king of Judah at the age of twenty-two. (Not to be confused with Ahaziah, son of Ahab, in I Kings 21)
 - a. His mother was Athaliah, and he followed the ways of Ahab, who was his grandfather, for his father married Ahab's daughter. **2 Kings 8:16-18**
 - b. Ahaziah joined his army with Joram's, king of Israel, in a war against Aram.

- 1) Joram was wounded in the battle and was taken in a chariot to Jezreel.
 - 2) Ahaziah went to Jezreel to see how Joram, since he was wounded.
- c. God brought about Ahaziah's downfall in Jezreel.
- 1) Remember that God pronounced judgment upon the entire family of Ahab in **I Kings 21:19 & 21-24**, however because Ahab humbled himself before God, the judgment was to be postponed to occur during Ahab's son's reign. This is that judgment.
 - 2) God had already chosen the one who would become king after Ahab's son, Joram. So Elisha, the prophet anointed Jehu, son of Nimshi, as king of Israel, (just as David was anointed king before Saul was deposed). **I Kings 19:16-17**
 - a) Not only would Jehu become the next king of Israel, he was commanded by God to kill everyone in Ahab's family, his chief advisors, his close friends and his priests, leaving him no survivor. **2 Kings 10:11**
 - 3) While Joram and Ahaziah were in Jezreel, Jehu was carrying out his duty to kill all of Ahab's family.
 - a) He had already found the official of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's relatives, who had been attending Ahaziah and he killed them all. **2 Chronicles 22:8**
 - b) Then Jehu went in search of Ahaziah with his company of soldiers, which led them to Jezreel.
 - c) When the guard standing on the tower in Jezreel saw Jehu's troops coming, he told king Joram and king Ahaziah. **I Kings 22:17**
 - d) They decided to send a horseman out to ask Jehu if he was coming in peace, but Jehu simply offered the messenger an opportunity to join his forces, which he did.
 - e) When the guard on the tower saw that the messenger was not coming back, they sent another messenger, but he joined Jehu also.
 - f) Finally Joram and Ahaziah rode out to meet Jehu, each in his own chariot.
 - i. They met at the plot of ground that had belonged to Naboth, who was killed by Jezebel's men so Ahab could have his vineyard.
 - ii. This was fulfillment of the words of Elisha, the prophet, to Ahab saying that his judgment would occur in the same place where Naboth was murdered. **I Kings 21:21**
 - g) King Joram asked Jehu if he was coming in peace and Jehu replied: *"How can there be peace as long as all the idolatry and witchcraft of your mother Jezebel abounds."* **2 Kings 9:22**

- h) Immediately Joram turned around and ran back toward the city, calling out to Ahaziah, "*Treachery!*"
- i) Then Jehu drew his bow and shot Joram through the heart. His body was left in Naboth's field.
- j) When Ahaziah, king of Judah, saw what happened to Joram, he fled and Jehu chased after him and killed him. His servants took him by chariot to Jerusalem where he was buried with his ancestors. **2 Kings 9:28-29**
- d. But Jehu was not finished in Jezreel. Jezebel was still there.
 - 1) When Jezebel heard he was coming, she put on eye makeup, arranged her hair and looked out of a window. (Vain to the very end.)
 - 2) She called out to Jehu saying: "*Have you come in peace, you who murdered your master?*" **2 Kings 9:31**
 - 3) Jehu called to the servants with Jezebel: "*Who is on my side?*"
 - a) Two or three eunuchs looked down at him and Jehu told them to throw Jezebel out the window; so they threw her out.
 - b) Some of her blood splattered on the wall and the horses as they trampled her underfoot. **Vs. 33**
 - 4) Jehu went in and ate and drank, then he ordered men to go and bury Jezebel because she was the daughter of a king. Jehu respected her position even though he did not respect her. **Vs. 34**
 - a) When the men went out to bury her, they found nothing left except her skull, her feet and her hands.
 - b) This fulfilled the judgment God placed on Ahab's family when Elisha the prophet said: "*And concerning Jezebel the LORD also spoke, saying, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.'*"²⁴ *The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field.*" **I Kings 21:19 & 21-24**
 - c) Jezebel's death was a grisly end for one of the most evil women in the Bible.

VI. The history of Israel has shown that when the home decays, the nation leads toward destruction.

- A. God gave Moses the instruction that would make a strong and mighty nation in **Deuteronomy 6:4-7** – *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one."*⁵ *Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*⁶ *These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.*⁷ *Impress them on your children.* *Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."*
 - 1. When Israel was split into two nations and Jeroboam became king of Israel, the nation began its decline.

2. The very reason the nation split was because they had stopped following the commandments of God, which would have insured their success both physically and spiritually.
 - a. Jeroboam had been an official when Solomon ruled.
 - b. While he obviously had leadership skills, he did not have the spiritual strength to lead Israel in serving God.
 - c. In fact, he encouraged the worship of worthless idols.
 - d. He introduced “new” places of worship to prevent the people from going back to Jerusalem to celebrate the major religious feast days.
 - e. Each king after was more evil than the last.
3. Jezebel was evil personified so it was no surprise that her son Ahaziah would follow the lead of his evil parents.
 - a. Jezebel was openly rebellious against the God of Israel.
 - b. She killed God’s prophets to promote idolatry.
 - c. Obviously, neither Ahab nor Jezebel made an attempt to teach their children about God.
- B. The positive influence of the family (as God planned it) is quickly disappearing in the United States today.
 1. Are we doing all we can to teach our children to love and serve God?
 2. Is it too late to make a difference in our country?
 3. We must renew our commitment to helping the children develop their faith in God above all else.
 4. This is what will save our nation from destruction.

The boundaries of Israel during Solomn’s reign.



The location of “Sheba”

The Queen of Sheba visited Solomon because she heard of his great wisdom and his enormous wealth.

