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The Second Prophecy of Ahijah
First Kings 14: 1-20

The second prophecy of Ahijah DIG: Why did God choose Jeroboam in the first place? Why was his sin so grievous? Why did Jeroboam send his wife to Ahijah in disguise? What is ironic about that? Would Ahijah's message have been any different if Jeroboam or his wife came without disguise? What is so disgraceful about not being buried? Why is Abijah the exception? Why does the author record nothing about Jeroboam's response to the bad news?

REFLECT: What feelings do conflict stories, especially your own, bring out in you? Do you tend to avoid or create conflict? Why? Like Jeroboam, most people sense great potential as they start their lives and careers, but sometimes that glitter fades. Why? How do old feelings of potential and promise stay fresh? And refreshed? Do you want to be buried or cremated? Why? How many times does God have to forgive you before you will repent?

The author wanted the Israelites to know the sin caused their downfall, that not even Josiah could save Jerusalem, and that the prophets spoke God's Word.

We don't read in Scripture that **Jeroboam** sought the help of **ADONAI**, prayed for spiritual discernment, or asked **the LORD** to make **him** a more godly man. **He** asked for the healing of **his** hand, and now **he** asked **the prophet Ahijah** to heal **his son**, **the** crown **prince** and their to the throne. It's obvious that physical blessings were more important to **him** than spiritual blessings. Like many in the congregations of **God** today, the only time **Jeroboam** wanted help from **God** or **God's prophet** was when **he** was in trouble. **Jeroboam** made **three serious mistakes** during **his twenty-two-year** reign. **One, he didn't believe in God's promises** (**to see link click Dd – Golden Calves at Dan and Bethel**); **two, he didn't heed God's warnings, and three, he didn't receive God's help.**[344]

*Dear Heavenly Father,Thank **You** for being such a loving and wise ruler of the world. **You** wisely guide situations to bring people back to the joy you have for those who love and follow **You**. **You** are not a hard master who only corrects by discipline, but **You** are a loving **Father** who reaches out **Your** hand of mercy to gently bring people back to **Your** love. Sometimes **You** use hardships and trials to get people's attention, for **You** are more concerned with a person's character than with their comfort. Godly character is valuable. Comforts will be over in a moment, but a godly character will reap eternal rewards **(First Corinthians 3:11-15)**.*

***You** graciously may use a trial as **Your** tool to refine and purify me. **These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. (First Peter 1:7).** Thank **You** for guiding the events in my life to bring me closer to **You**, which is the greatest joy I can ever know. **You** leave the choice up to me to wisely choose eternal joy and peace in heaven by loving **You**, or to foolishly pick fleeting and temporary pleasures of this world. **For our trouble, light and momentary, is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison (Second Corinthians 4:17).** Thank **You** for warning us to stay away from **sin**. We love to stay close to **You**, walking in **Your** ways. In **Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*

At this time, Abijah the son of Jeroboam became ill. Now, **Abijah** wasn't a little child at this time. **He** was old enough to be approved by **the LORD (14:13)** and appreciated by **the people**, for **they** mourned over **him** when **he died (14:18)**. No doubt the people of the North had pinned their hopes on **the** young **prince**, but **Ha'Shem** judged the royal family and the apostate citizens by calling **the young man** away from the cesspool of **sin** that was called **Isra'el**. **The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil (Isaiah 57:1). Abijah** means *ADONAI is my father*, so the fact that **Jeroboam** gave **his son** this name means that **he** viewed the worship of **the golden calf** as **his** religion. This was not the introduction of a new religion, but a counterfeit of the original worship of **the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.** This was what led to the downfall of the nation.[345]

The pretending wife: **The king** wanted help from **the prophet**, but **he** was too proud to admit it or face **Ahijah** personally. **Jeroboam said to his wife, "Please come, and disguise yourself, so that you won't be recognized as**

Jeroboam's wife, and go to Shiloh. The prophet still lived in **Shiloh** because **he** was too old and infirm to relocate to **Judah**, and **he** wanted to be faithful to the very end and warn **Jeroboam** of the consequences of **his sins**. **Jeroboam** didn't want **his wife** to visit **Ahijah** openly because it would show a lack of faith in **the idols** at **Dan** and **Bethel.** And **Jeroboam** knew that **the** old **prophet** was opposed to the religious deviations **he** had made. In the TaNaKh there are five examples of when a king or a queen **disguised** themselves, or were in a story that contains **a disguise**. This is the first example, and the word **disguise** is from the Hebrew root *shanh*. The other four examples use a different Hebrew root, *kaps*, and they are found of **Sha'ul** (see the commentary on **the Life of David Bv – Sha'ul and the Medium at Endor**), of the prophet **Ahab** (see the commentary on **Elijha and Elisha Ay – The Prophet's Rebuke**), of **Ahab** again (see **Elijah and Elisha Bf – The Death of Ahab**), and **Josiah** in **Second Chronicles 35:22.**

Ahijah (meaning, *ADONAI is my brother*) **the prophet is there, the one who said that I would be king over these people.** The irony is that **Jeroboam** was seeking help from the very **prophet** who prophesied about **his** rise to power and also warned **him** to keep the mitzvot of **ADONAI**. It is also ironic that **he** tried to **disguise his wife's** identity from **the man** whom **he** expects to divulge whether **his son** will live or **die**![346] **The king** said: **Take with you ten loaves of bread, some cakes and a jug of honey; and go to him. The gifts** were those of a common laborer because **he** didn't want to reveal **they** came from **a king**. **He will tell you what will happen to the boy" (First Kings 14:1-3). A** true **prophet** will tell a true prophecy.[347] Did **the king** think **a disguise** would fool the godly **prophet**, blind as **he** was? **Ahijah** could see more in blindness than **Jeroboam** and **his wife** could see with **their** gift of sight.

The discerning prophet: Jeroboam's wife did this; she set out, went to Shiloh and arrived at the house of Ahijah. It was about twenty miles from Tirzah to **Shiloh**, but **the prophet** knew **she** was coming before **she** even arrived in **the city**. **Now Ahijah could not see, because his eyes were dim with age.** This is why **Jeroboam** thought **he** could deceive **him**. **But ADONAI had told Ahijah, "Jeroboam's wife is on her way to you to ask about her son, who is ill. You are to tell her thus and thus; moreover, when she comes, she will be pretending she is another woman" (14:4-5).**



The revealing message: When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet as she came in the door, he said, "Enter, wife of Jeroboam! Why pretend you are someone else? She was immediately recognized. **I've been given bad news for you. Jeroboam** sent **his wife** to **Ahijah**, but **Ahijah** said that **he** was sent to **her**! **He** gave **her** a message **she** was to tell to **her husband** . . . and it wasn't a very happy one. First, **the prophet** reminded **Jeroboam** of **God's** grace *in the past*. **Go, tell Jeroboam that this is what ADONAI** says: **I raised you up from among the people, made you prince over my people Isra'el, tore the kingdom away from the dynasty of David and gave it to you (14:7-8a).**

But then, **Ahijah** revealed **Jeroboam's sins** *in the present*. **In spite of this, you have not been like my servant David, who obeyed my mitzvot and followed me with all his heart, so that he could do only what I regarded as right. Rather, you have committed more evil than Sha'ul, David** and **Solomon** put together**! You went and made** false **gods for yourself and images of cast metal to make Me angry, but Me you shoved behind your back (14:8b-9)!** And **you** allowed **the people** of northern tribes to worship **them**! **He** had organized a counterfeit religion, provoking **Ha'Shem** to **anger**, and refused to listen to **the prophets** who were sent to warn **him**. This led to **Ahijah's** revelation about **Jeroboam's** *future*.

To begin with, unlike King **David, Jeroboam** would not establish a dynasty, even though **God** had promised to bless **him** with **a lasting dynasty** if **he** would **observe YHVH's regulations and mitzvot (11:38)**. **Therefore, I will now bring disaster to your house.** All of **Jeroboam's** male descendants would be cut off. **I will cut off every male of Jeroboam's line, whether a slave or free in Isra'el. The LORD** would make a "clean sweep" of **Jeroboam's** family and take away every potential heir, just **as completely as when servants sweep away dung until it's all gone.** But even worse, none of them except **Abijah**, **the** ailing crown **prince**, would have a decent, dignified burial. **If someone from the line of**

Jeroboam dies in the city, the dogs will eat him; if he dies in the countryside, the vultures will eat him. Their corpses would be devoured and never be buried, a terrible humiliation for **a Jew**. **For ADONAI has said it (14:10-11).**[348]

The divine judgment: Then **Abijah** got to the matter at hand, the future of **the sick heir** to the throne. **So, get up and go home; when your feet enter the city, the boy will die. All Isra'el will mourn him, and they will bury him; he is the only one of Jeroboam's line who will lie in a grave, because he alone in the house of Jeroboam has in him an element of good toward ADONAI the God of Isra'el.** The one **son** of **the** wicked **king** who could have ruled justly would be taken from them, not because **he** was wicked . . . but because **he** was **good**. **God** wanted to spare **him** the suffering that lay ahead of the northern Kingdom. As **he** looked ahead, **Ahijah** then saw **Nadab**, **Jeroboam's** second son, reign for two years and then be assassinated by **Baasha**, a man from the tribe of **Issachar (15:25-31). Baasha** would not only kill **Nadab**, but **he** would also exterminate the family of **Jeroboam** in fulfillment of **Ahijah's** prophecy. **Moreover, ADONAI will raise up for himself a king over Isra'el who at that time will cut off the house of Jeroboam. This is the day! What? Yes, even now (14:12-14).**

Then **the** blind **prophet** looked even further ahead and saw the entire kingdom of **Isra'el** defeated by an enemy and **rooted out** of **the Land**. **ADONAI will strike Isra'el until it shakes like a reed in the water; He will uproot Isra'el from this good land, which he gave to their ancestors, and scatter them beyond the [Euphrates] River** in the future Assyrian captivity. This would not happen for about another 200 years, but just as **Ahijah's** near prophecies had been fulfilled, authenticated **him** as **a prophet**, so then **his** distant prophecies could then be trusted. Obviously, the exilic readers already knew about the devastation of **Isra'el** and about **Josiah's** reign. What the author wanted them to know was that **sin** caused the fall, that not even **Josiah** could save Jerusalem, and that **the prophets** spoke **God's Word**, which was the truth, from the start of **Isra'el's** history.[349]

The kingdom of **Isra'el** had a new religious system, but **she** was still under the Covenant with **YHVH** (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy FI – Summary of the Covenant Demand**). That covenant warned that **her** disobedience to **the Torah** would bring military defeat and national dispersion **(Deuteronomy 28:25-26** and **49-52; Leviticus 26:17, 25,** and **33-39; Deut 7:5** and **12:3-4).** What would be the cause of this terrible judgment? **Because they made** wooden

asherah poles, representing the Canaanite mother-goddess of fertility, consort of Ba'al,[350] **for themselves, thus making ADONAI angry. He will give up on Isra'el because of the sins of Jeroboam, which he committed himself, and with which he made Isra'el sin as well (14:15-16).**

The distressing fulfillment: Jeroboam's wife got up, left and went to Tirzah. Jeroboam had apparently moved his court to **Tirzah** as well as having a palace in Shechem, and it must have been on the edge of **the city**. **Ahijah** had told **Jeroboam's wife** that **their son** would **die as soon as she entered the city (14:12). The moment she reached the threshold of the house, the boy died. All Isra'el buried him and mourned him, in keeping with the word of ADONAI spoken through his servant Ahijah the prophet (14:17-18). The king's hand** had been **healed** and **his altar destroyed (13:1-16)**, and now **his son** was **dead**. **His** army would be defeated by **the king of Judah**, also known as **Abijah (Second Chronicles 13)**. How many times did **God** have to warn **him** before **he** would repent?[351]

The death of the king: Other activities of Jeroboam, how he fought and how he ruled are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Isra'el. Jeroboam reign lasted twenty-two years; then he slept with his ancestors, and Nadab his son became king in his place (14:19-20). Jeroboam is a tremendously important character in **First** and **Second Kings**. Indeed, one could argue that **he** is more significant for the story than **Solomon**, **Hezekiah** or **Josiah**. After all, it was **Jeroboam** who was **God's** instrument for punishing **Solomon's sins**, which also ended the **Davidic** rule over all **Isra'el**. **Jeroboam's** counterfeit religion had such a negative impact on both **Isra'el** and **Judah** that it was a major factor in both country's demise. Finally, this clever yet unfaithful man's life helped to demonstrate the significance of **the prophets**, who now emerge as the only reliable bearers of **God's Word** knowing the future, and therefore, should be consulted before any important decisions were to be made.[352]