

Kingdom Torn in Two

Day One – Big Split

Today's reading: Page 193 through bottom of page 198

This reading covers: 1 Kings 12-13

Summary: Discord sets in and God's people turn against each other.

Consider this:

Israel was on a downturn, having nine dynasties and 19 kings, all of them evil. Judah had one dynasty, David's, which was interrupted only for five years by Queen Athaliah who usurped the throne. Of 20 kings in Judah, only seven were good. Both groups turned away from God. Such statistics should make us more aware of the need for good government. What does God say about the powers that be?

For further reading: Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-16

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I don't always see what is behind the decisions our leaders make. Help me to live up to the laws and ordinances, while always keeping in mind that I am to obey God first, then man. Bless our leaders in government. Help them to make righteous decisions that will protect our nation and help our citizens. Bless those who are leaders in the church. Guide their plans for expansion and outreach. Help me to be an effective part of the ministry. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day Two – Fight to the Bottom

Today's reading: Bottom of page 198 through bottom of page 199

This reading covers: 1 Kings 14-15

Summary: Both Israel (northern tribes) and Judah turn their hearts away from God

Consider this:

Turning away from God can happen in two ways, through sins of "commission" and sins of "omission." What are some sins of "commission?" What is the key to avoiding them? What are sins of "omission?"

For further reading: Matthew 25:41-45; Colossians 3:5-10; 1 John 3:17-18

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, make me aware of the various ways I can sin, either by commission or by omission. Help me to avoid the pitfalls. Give me discernment in areas that are not clear, always keeping me aware of what the Scriptures say about these areas. Give me strength to obey your word, to flee from sin, and make me aware of the needs of my fellow man. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day Three – Good King, Bad King

Today's reading: Top of page 200 through end of chapter

This reading covers: 1 Kings 15-16

Summary: How could two men (Asa of Judah and Ahab of Israel) be so different?

Consider this:

Good King. Bad King. Asa reigned forty-one years over Judah and did right before God, just as his ancestor David had. Next, Ahab became king over Israel for twenty-two years. He built an altar to Baal and took an evil, heathen wife named Jezebel. How did Asa appear before the Lord? What was the Lord's reaction to Ahab? Journal some details about your own walk from your early years, in ten-year increments. Focus only upon your walk with the Lord, whether it was good or evil during those decades. What have you learned from your experiences? What would you like to change?

For further reading: Matthew 7:15-20

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, help me to learn from the lives of Asa and Ahab, so I can make right choices and live righteously before you. Let me be aware of the things that please you. Let me avoid the things that anger you. "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." (Psalm 19:14) In Jesus' name, Amen.