

I Kings 12 – The Rise and Fall of Two Kings: A Penny Dreadful

This story begins about 80 years after David is crowned king.

List of Names and Places:

1. Rehoboam – Solomon's son.
2. Jeroboam – son of Nebat an Ephriamite. Superintendent of building projects in Milo. Learned about discontent over Solomon's extravagances. Began to plan an overthrow. Was discovered. Ran to Egypt. Stayed under the care of the Pharoh Shishak.
3. Schechem – an ancient city in the hill country of Samaria, located between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. (You might want to look up those two places and their significance.) Here are some major events in Israel's history that happened here.
 - a. God first appeared to Abraham and promised the land to him.
 - b. Abraham built an altar to the Lord.
 - c. Jacob settled there after returning from Mesopotamia.
 - d. There he rid is house of foreign Gods.
 - e. Dinah and the massacre of the local men.
 - f. Joseph's bones were buried there.
 - g. Joshua gathered the tribes there before his death to give them his final words.
 - h. Joshua erected an altar on Mount Ebal.

4. Ahijah the Shilonite – A Levite prophet of Shiloh. In the days of Solomon he foretold Jeroboam that he would be king. In 1 Kings 11 he announced the separation of the ten tribes from Solomon's United Kingdom of Israel. A bit later than our study, he will foretell to Jeroboam's wife the death of the king's son and the fall and captivity of Israel beyond the River. The book of Chronicles says he authored he authored a book: "The Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite".
5. Shemaiah - A local prophet.
6. Peniel – definition "face of God". It's the name Jacob gave to this place where he wrestled with a Divine Being all night.
7. The iteration of the Deity used here is Yahweh...the covenant maker. I think it is particularly important to understand the text.

Some Texts:

The one who prophesies speaks to the people for their strengthening, encouragement, and comfort. I Corinthians 14:3

They did not repent of their murders, their sorceries, and their sexual worship of idols. Revelation 9

Questions

1. What do you think of Rehoboam's choice to go to Shechem instead of Jerusalem to be crowned king "for all Israel has gone there to make him king"?
2. Why do you think Rehoboam consulted both the elders and the "young men"?
3. What do you think might be a modern-day equivalent for Jeroboam?

4. There is a subtle note vs. 18: Jeroboam had been in charge of building projects for Solomon. Adoniram was in charge of forced labor. Why do you think Rehoboam sent Adoniram out to Israel?
5. What do you make of verses 22-24? It's a very unusual event.
6. Do you think Shemaiah's use of Yahweh had anything to do with the reaction of the people?

At this point it looks like Yahweh is absolutely with Jeroboam and even Judah and Benjamin will not support Rehoboam.

7. Why do you think Jeroboam went out to build up Peniel?
8. After all that has happened in the previous 25 verses what do you think happened to Jeroboam that he would do this? He knew what happened to the golden calf?

And it goes downhill from here....

9. Jeroboam knew the history of the golden calf. What was he thinking?
10. What do you think of him building shrines on the high places?
11. What do you think of him instituting a festival. Note the others: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kipper, New Moon, Sukkot, Passover.
12. What do you think of him picking priests who were not Levites?

Are there lessons here that are misappropriated by modern day Christianity?

From our perspective....

1. *What qualities do we have that might be somewhat like any of the players in this tale?*
2. *What would we need to do or to be different or have different outcomes.*

I saw things I had not seen before, putting this together for us. I am looking forward to talking them over with you.

Catherine

