

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Kings: The Kings Of Israel And Judah From Solomon To The Babylonian Captivity

II. The Divided Kingdom, 1 Kings 12:1-22:53

E. Heeding Scripture Over Influential Women

(1 Kings 14:21-31)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

(1) In today's world, we often hear about the mistreatment and disrespect of women by abusive men: for example, U. S. Representative Elizabeth Esty's (D-Conn.) former "chief of staff Tony Baker" made "threats to kill a female staffer he'd once dated." (Heather Caygle, "Rep. Esty won't seek reelection after mishandling harassment allegations," citing The Washington Post; politico.com, April 2, 2018). Such abuse is too common in the workplace as illustrated by Representative Esty's own recent statement about it "in a Facebook post" when she wrote, "Too many women have been harmed by harassment in the workplace," Ibid.

(2) However, even influential women like Representative Esty can function in bad ways: (a) she "kept her then-chief of staff Tony Baker on the payroll for three months in 2016, even after she learned of Baker's threats" to kill the female staffer he'd once dated, and "Baker left the office in August 2016 but . . . received a \$5,000 severance and a positive letter of recommendation for employment from Esty" according to the Post. (Ibid.)

(b) This occurs locally: a story by Brigitte Ruthman ("No prison for ex-caregiver," Republican-American, March 30, 2018, p. 1B) told how Tara Yard stole "more than \$69,000 from an elderly woman in her care" regardless of Tara's "longtime insistence that missing funds were the result of shoddy bookkeeping or the fault of others." She finally admitted "to stealing funds" by "fund transfers, payments for hours not worked and cash payments," Ibid.

We tend to believe that a woman who would assume the responsibility of caring for an elderly lady would surely be trustworthy in how she handled the elderly lady's money, but such trust can be misplaced!

Need: *So, we ask, "If even influential women we tend to trust can function in bad ways, how are we to handle it?"*

I. **King Rehoboam's pagan Ammonite mother, Naamah, greatly influenced him to worship her false god, Molech, what resulted in the apostasy of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, 1 Kings 14:21-24:**

- A. The author at 1 Kings 14:21 sharply contrasted Judah's God with Rehoboam's Ammonite mother, Naamah:
1. The Hebrew text at 1 Kings 14:21a highlights the fact that Jerusalem where Jeroboam ruled was the city out of all the tribes of Israel where God, **Jahweh**, had chosen to put His **Name**. (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 537)
 2. Yet, the next sentence in the Hebrew text opens with the phrase, "And the **name** of his mother . . .", **clearly contrasting** the **name** of **Jahweh** (v. 21a) with the **name** of Rehoboam's mother, **Naamah** (v. 21b), Ibid.
- B. This **contrast in names** reveals Rehoboam turned from **Jahweh** to his **mother's false god**, 1 Kings 14:22-24:
- a. Naamah's influence over Rehoboam was so great, he followed her god Molech (Milcom KJV), and all Judah departed from God though His Name was uniquely attached to Jerusalem where Rehoboam ruled.
 - b. Consequently, the nation came to worship pagan gods throughout the land more than had their fathers in the era of the Judges, and male shrine prostitutes were introduced in the land, sinking Judah to the level of evil practiced by the Canaanites whom God had called Joshua to destroy from the land, Ibid., p. 517-518.

II. **God thus punished Rehoboam in a way to teach him three lessons -- (1) to abandon Molech and (2) trust in God for financial prosperity and also (3) to heed Scripture above his idolatrous mother's influence:**

- A. First, God punished Rehoboam in a way that critiqued his idolatry with his Ammonite mother's god, Molech:
1. In fulfillment of His Davidic Covenant promise to discipline the Davidic king with the "rod of men," God let Pharaoh Shishak come against Jerusalem not to slay its people, but to seize the treasures of the temple and the king's palace, including Solomon's gold shields, 1 Kings 14:25-26 with 10:16-17; 2 Samuel 7:14.
 2. This seizure of his treasures was God's critique of Rehoboam's worship of his Ammonite mother's god, for the Ammonites would sacrifice their firstborn to Molech (Milcom KJV) to gain financial prosperity for the rest of the family. (gotquestions.com, "Who was Moloch/Molech?"; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 517)
- B. Second, God's punishment aimed to teach Rehoboam to trust in Him, not Molech, for financial prosperity:
1. Rehoboam's loss of the gold shields should have caused him to recall how his father had acquired them.
 2. The obvious answer was that Israel's true God had promised Solomon great riches since Solomon had looked to Him for the wisdom he needed to rule Israel, cf. 1 Kings 3:12-13. The acquisition of these riches and the national security that had enabled Solomon to hang his gold shields up in his palace hall unafraid of their possible seizure by some foreign ruler were all due to God's provision and protection!

3. Thus, Rehoboam's loss of wealth was God's discipline to show him his need to trust in God, not Molech, for financial prosperity so the Lord might fulfill His Deuteronomy 17:14-20 promises to bless him as king!
- C. Third, God also critiqued Rehoboam for heeding his idolatrous mother above Scripture:
1. Adam sinned by heeding his insubordinate wife Eve above God's Word, so God judged Adam to have the ground be fittingly insubordinate to him, Gen. 3:17-19; H. C. Leupold, *Exp. of Genesis*, 1974, v. I, p. 173.
 2. Similarly, by letting Pharaoh seize much of Rehoboam's wealth, the Lord rebuked Rehoboam for heeding his pagan mother's influence to worship her Ammonite god Molech to obtain financial prosperity over Scripture's charge in Exodus 20:1-4 that he worship God alone!
- III. However, Rehoboam failed to heed God's discipline in trying to secure his financial welfare by his own futile efforts while heeding His Ammonite mother's lead to keep following Molech, 1 Kings 14:27-28:**
- A. Instead of wholeheartedly repenting toward God for blessing, Rehoboam tried to bolster his financial welfare by typical pagan self-help through making bronze shields to replace his lost gold ones, 1 Kings 14:27a!
 - B. Then, instead of hanging the bronze shields up on his palace hall walls where they also might be seized by Pharaoh, Rehoboam assigned their care to the officers of the guard who kept them locked up, 1 Kings 14:27b.
 - C. Only when Rehoboam went in formal procession to the temple of the Lord did he direct the guards to bring out the shields, and even then he did not hang the shields up on the palace hall walls, but had them carried under armed guard when his palace soldiers escorted him to and from the temple, 1 Kings 14:27b-28 ESV!
 - D. Rehoboam feared that even his bronze shields were vulnerable to seizure by Pharaoh unlike the security and wealth his father Solomon had enjoyed with his gold shields in divine blessing. Instead of turning to the Lord with a whole heart for financial and national security so as to trust in Him, in typical pagan fashion, king Rehoboam tried to manipulate circumstances around him, still worshiping Molech under his mother's sway while trying to appease God by at times visiting His temple escorted by soldiers who bore his bronze shields!
- IV. 1 Kings 14:29-31 reveals that for the rest of his life, Rehoboam warred against Jeroboam, lacking real blessing. 1 Kings 14:31 SUMS up his life by REPEATING the 1 Kings 14:21b claim that Naamah, his mother, was an Ammonite, AGAIN noting HER HARMFUL IDOLATROUS INFLUENCE OVER HIM!**

Lesson: *By yielding to his influential pagan mother's sway to worship her Ammonite god Molech for financial security, Rehoboam was disciplined by God in accord with the Davidic Covenant to suffer financial loss even of the gold shields his father had hung in his palace hall. However, Rehoboam failed to learn of his need to turn from his influential mother's Molech worship to trust in God alone, so he suffered continued financial lack and national insecurity instead of the wealth and security God had originally designed for him.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation and eternal life, John 3:16. (2) Then, may we look to God's written Word above ALL other sources of influence, including influential women, and obey GOD through His Word for comprehensive blessing. (3) If we are an adult man, we should NOT submit to ANY woman ANYWAY according to God's 1 Timothy 2:12-14 divine order that was set at creation in Genesis 2:21-24!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

The March-April, 2018 *Answers* magazine, p. 47, reported how some "doulas," women who usually volunteer to "provide support to women during labor," now support women who are having an abortion, sitting with them "throughout the procedure" to "reassure them that they are brave for not keeping their baby." (Ibid.)

However, Scripture reveals that these abortion procedures are murder: Exodus 21:22-23 teaches if a pregnant woman gives birth (lit., "sends out her child," *weya'su yeladeha*, NOT "miscarries," what would be *teshakel*, Ibid., Kittel, p. 111; B. D. B., *A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T.*, p. 409, 422-425; 1013) because a man who is fighting another man hits her so as to cause her child to come out **at any trimester**, if a life is lost, the man who hit her must be executed for murder. The life that is lost here cannot be just the mother's life, for the verb is not "miscarry" to mean the fetus is already dead so that we are dealing only with the mother, but it is "give birth," and the murder of a mother was already condemned back in Exodus 20:13. Rather, Exodus 21:22-23 contextually **must** refer **either** to the **mother or to her child who was just born!** If one then causes an unborn child at any trimester to die, he kills a human being!

However, abortion clinic doulas do **not** think or act **biblically** on the issue of abortion -- they do not heed Exodus 21:22-23 so as to view and therefore treat the unborn infant at any trimester as a human being, so they can only give the women they seek to console a false comfort that is not God's true comfort with His blessing.

May we trust in Christ for salvation. Then, may we FOCUS on heeding Scripture ABOVE the sway of prominent and influential women to the contrary, that we thus avoid being misled and gain God's blessing!