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Sowing and Reaping

CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

*monthly (interim) schedule
first Tuesday of the month*

TUESDAY, 3 MAY 2016

12 NOON in 123 CAP

Capitol Commission (interim) Bible Studies are held **the first Tuesday of each month at 12 Noon**, in accord with the Public Service Commission devotional at 9:55am. **The monthly Bible study is nonpartisan and non-denominational.** We are continuing our Bible study (chapter-by-chapter, verse-by-verse) in the book of First Kings, which we began with the 2016 General Assembly.

I pray that this study will be edifying to you. My sole intent in this ministry is to serve you, and to be a resource to you for pastoral care, counsel, and prayer. **Please accept my study in the Word of God, as evidence of my desire to serve you.**

– Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission (interim) Bible Study

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Tuesday, 3 May 2016

First Kings 14:1—15:24 – “Sowing and Reaping”

Making good decisions in response to difficult circumstances is one of the most essential skills that a leader must possess. History is replete with decision-making blunders. One of the most compelling examples of flawed decision-making is the 1996 Mount Everest tragedy, which was the result of overconfidence bias, the recency effect (availability bias), and the sunk-cost effect.

In this regard, one could ask, why, in 1986, did NASA decide to launch the *Challenger* space shuttle when the engineers expressed their concern regarding possible O-ring erosion due to the cold temperatures expected on the day of the launch? Why did Coca-Cola determine to introduce New Coke in 1985, which changed the enormously successful formula of the company's most important beverage? When such decidedly flawed decision-making occurs, one often wonders how could those in leadership have been so foolish? The answer is that leaders falter in their decision-making as the result of emotional, ethical, political, and social dynamics. Errors are also made as the consequence of particular cognitive entanglements that affect everyone, and those mistakes occur without regard for one's expertise or intellect in a particular field.

Why was the original Polaroid Corporation compelled to declare bankruptcy in 2001? What devastated Polaroid was a refusal to consider all facts in regard to the digital future, even though they knew changes were coming and even worked to develop many digital projects. Setbacks always occurred when someone feared a decline in film sales or poorer quality of digital pictures in comparison to those on analog film. Nobody at Polaroid was willing to consider that if they were not successful with the digital challenge, someone else would, and they would no longer be in business. Polaroid, therefore, continued to be even more tenacious with instant film in the early 1990s; and, due to their immense investments in film manufacturing (and such high profit margins involved), they could not envision doing anything else.

Conditions within Polaroid prevented the company from adapting to new conditions, and thus the decay was not immediate, but it was incurable. The same can occur with churches, families, and governments. Demise may be protracted, yet it is inevitable. By the time we read 1 Kings 14—16 in the histories of Judah and Israel, it is evident that both nations were in a state of decay.

WHAT WE SOW IN OUR LIVES WILL DETERMINE WHAT WE REAP.

The glorious days of the united kingdom seemed distant in the past, even though only a few decades had transpired. The telling histories of Judah and Israel reveal a disturbing precedent. With the exception of Asa, the kings of both nations perpetuated the sins of Solomon, Jeroboam, and Rehoboam, in spite of the clear warnings from God given through the prophets. The nations were reaping the consequences of their sins, and thus were in a state of decay.

Galatians 6:7 – Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

The leaders of both nations – Judah and Israel – appear to be locked into a disastrous precedent that involves repeating the same sinful actions with a relentless determination. Almost nobody was willing to adopt the drastic actions that would introduce abrupt and unexpected changes, yet were necessary to halt the decaying conditions and thereby begin the process of restoration. The consequences for both nations were acrimonious, yet inevitable. The most relevant biblical text regarding these times is Galatians 6:7, revealing what we sow in our lives will determine what we reap.

MATTERS OF INFIDELITY

(1 Kgs 14:1-20) First Kings 13 recounted how God sent an unnamed prophet to Jeroboam's shrine to denounce the king's actions, for his apostasy from the Lord. Jeroboam did not heed the warning from God. Consequently, as 1 Kings 14 reveals, the Lord judged Jeroboam's household and his child died. The prophet also was condemned for not entirely heeding God's instructions. Obviously, the matter of obedience and faithfulness to God is quite solemn. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23), yet the Lord continues to draw people to Himself (John 6:44-51).

Capitol Commission (interim) Bible Study

Tuesday (3rd of May) from 12 Noon - 12:45pm, 123 CAP

lunch provided from sponsorship by Coastal Bible Fellowship (BMW), Rincon



Enhancing Trust

Jeroboam was well aware that he was a considerably unflattering individual among the true prophets in Israel, yet the king also knew that only they had genuine access to God, especially when matters of life and death arose. Consequently, when his son Abijah became sick, the king did not consult one of the false gods that he worshipped; yet, one wonders why he did not go to the Lord's prophet in a personal and transparent manner. Apparently, the cowardly Jeroboam did not want to weaken his religious institution by identifying publicly with the true worship of the Lord God, even though he knew that his religious leaders could not aid his son.

The prophet Ahijah conveyed bittersweet news with regard to Jeroboam's son Abijah, yet prophesied negatively concerning everyone else among the royal family. Jeroboam's sin would devastate the family: (1) his legacy would be destroyed (1 Kgs 14:10-11; 15:25-30); and, (2) his son would not recover from the sickness (the bitter news) yet his death would be different because Abijah would be mourned (14:12-13), and he alone of Jeroboam's descendents would be buried (the sweet news). God witnessed genuine devotion in Abijah, and thus would not permit him to be reared in such a wicked home (v. 13; cf. v. 18). Ultimately, the sin of Jeroboam would damage the nation (vv. 14-16).

**ONE WONDERS WHY HE DID NOT GO TO THE LORD'S PROPHET
IN A PERSONAL AND TRANSPARENT MANNER.**

True to the prophetic word, Jeroboam's son died when his wife returned home (vv. 17-18). Events occurred precisely "according to the word of the LORD," which proved that God's word was determining all occurrences. Whereas secular historians may regard Jeroboam's career as a success, the biblical writer portrayed his reign as an utter failure. Jeroboam was one of the nation's most important kings, yet his influence was entirely negative. Every king of the northern kingdom perpetuated the sin of Jeroboam until God, by necessity, allowed the disaster of the Assyrian captivity to occur as judgment because Israel persisted in idolatry (cf. 2 Kgs 17).

The prophet condemned Jeroboam because he did not keep God's revealed Word (1 Kgs 14:8). God exalted the king among the people and made him leader over them (v. 7), yet Jeroboam led the people astray. His life was a poignant account of what might have been, yet was not, as a consequence of rampant sin. Jeroboam's example provides a graphic illustration that God's leaders, which includes all governing authorities (cf. Rom 13:1-7), cannot please the Lord and attract others to Him, if they are disloyal themselves.

MATTERS OF FIDELITY

(1 Kgs 14:21—15:24) Verse 21 begins a precedent that will become familiar throughout much of the remaining chapters of 1 Kings. The writer of 1 Kings will alternate between accounts relating to the kings of Israel and those concerning the kings of Judah. With the death of Jeroboam, the history of Israel is presently halted, and events occurring in Judah will be the focus of attention until 15:24.

Rehoboam's reign witnessed great losses from Solomon's kingdom: both quantitatively (the 10 tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel) and qualitatively (the Temple treasures). Shields of bronze (14:25-28; cf. 2 Chron 12:1-12) replaced the valuable golden shields (1 Kgs 10:16-17), yet by practicing the same ceremonies the guards and the king acted as though nothing changed. The account is an accurate depiction of some legacies and lives that can appear to be the same, yet the worth has disappeared; therefore, one relentlessly maintains superficial appearances of uniformity (cf. Mt 23).

First Kings 15 continues narration of the line of the southern kingdom of Judah, and traces it through Asa. Rehoboam was succeeded by his son Abijah (vv. 1-2), who receives scant attention except to contrast his infidelity to God with the example of David who was "wholly devoted to the LORD his God" (v. 3), "except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite" (v. 5). David sinned greatly yet was restored by God's grace and so became a blessing to others. God blessed the kingdom of Judah for David's sake (vv. 4-5), just as He blesses his people today for the sake of his beloved Son (Eph 1:3).

Abijah's son Asa succeeded him (1 Kgs 15:9-10). Asa began his reign superbly (vv. 11-15), yet was not always consistent in his actions (vv. 14, 18-19; cf. 1 Sam 13:14; 16:7). His primary military and political concerns involved the border with Israel. Asa robbed the palace and Temple in order to bribe a pagan king to assist him in war. His actions violated his commitment to God (2 Chron 16:7-10).

Asa was the first of several courageous kings who attempted to reform the religious practices of his people in a manner that conformed to the biblical commands (cf. 2 Kgs 12:1-16; 22:1—23:27; 2 Chron 29:1-36). Loyalty to God does not always remove obstacles, yet those who turn to the Lord God – *in faith* – in their most earnest distress will find perfect strength (cf. Ps 21:1, 7; 2 Cor 12:9).

Thank you for allowing Capitol Commission the nobility to provide Bible studies to you. If you have any questions, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.

About Capitol Commission

The mission of Capitol Commission is to accomplish the Great Commission in the capitol arena. Scripture calls the church to pray for the salvation of our leaders, resulting in them having knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:1-4). As churches are faithful in prayer and proclaiming the gospel of God's grace, our society and government *will be impacted*. Capitol Commission, in partnership with local churches, is committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ and promoting the biblical mandate to pray for those in authority in the capitol communities throughout the United States and the world.

Romans 10:14-15 affirms, "How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent. . . ?" Please notice the reverse progression. If we desire anyone, including our government leaders, to (5) *call* upon the Lord and to seek Him and his Word for life decisions, they must (4) *believe* in Him, which means they must previously have (3) *heard* the Word of God, which means prior to that someone needs to (2) *preach* to them, which requires that others have first (1) *sent* someone to preach.

Capitol Commission is committed to the second part: *preaching* the good news of salvation. Of course, that cannot occur without someone doing the first part: *sending*. All funding and prayer for this work comes from people who want the light of the gospel of God's grace brought into capitol communities. As you do #1 (*send*) and we do #2 (*preach*), we can rejoice together as the Lord accomplishes what only He can produce in someone: #3, #4, and #5.

What an exciting co-mission! Please join us in this ministry!

Bible study luncheon sponsored by:



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NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION (INTERIM) BIBLE STUDY:
Tuesday, 7th of June @ 12 Noon in 123 CAP
(the 1st Tuesday of each month, during interim)