

Where did they go wrong?

September 27, 2021

PROVERBS 14:12 NKJV – (12) There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

KING MANASSEH - According to Kings, Manasseh reversed the centralizing reforms of his father Hezekiah, and re-established local shrines, possibly for economic reasons. He restored polytheistic worship of Baal and Asherah (**2 Kings 21**) in the Temple, and sponsored the Assyrian astral cult throughout Judah. Hezekiah (His father) had undertaken reforms in Judah to rid the land idolatry. Manasseh, a wicked king, reversed these reforms and did much worse. The first five verses of **2 Kings 21** are a frank and stunning account of Manasseh's apostasy.

KING SOLOMON - He is portrayed as great in wisdom, wealth and power beyond either of the previous kings of the country, but also as a king who sinned. His sins included idolatry, marrying foreign women and, ultimately, turning away from Yahweh, and they led to the kingdoms being torn in two during the reign of his son Rehoboam.

KING JOASH - **2 Kings 12:1-3** says that Joash "reigned in Jerusalem forty years. . . . Joash did what was right in the eyes of the Lord all the years Jehoiada the priest instructed him." He walked in all the way of David his father, and he did not turn aside to the right or to the left." The tragedy of King Joash of Judah is that, after his mentor and guardian, Jehoiada, died, he began listening to wicked advisers. Joash revived Baal and Asherah worship in Judah (**2 Chronicles 24:17-19**). God sent prophets to warn Joash, but he did not listen to them.

KING ASA - Asa was a descendant of David and the third king of the southern kingdom of Judah. He ruled for forty-one years (**1 Kings 15:10**) and "did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God" (**2 Chronicles 14:2**). Unfortunately, in the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign, he made some mistakes. He was chastised for relying on Ben-Hadad instead of God. Rather than repent of his sin, however, Asa became angry; at the same time he began to oppress some of his people (**2 Chronicles 16:10**). The life of King Asa is an example to all of us of how easy it is to drift away from the Lord. Asa began his reign with a strong commitment to God, but as years went by his dedication faltered, bringing unnecessary trouble.

Today I want to talk to the leaders of the church (Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, ministers, deacons). Let's evaluate four kings. Each one started off correctly. They were either raised correctly, experienced leadership under God by their fathers or guardians, or they simply had a heart for God from the beginning. Where did they go wrong? As you read each story, you will discover the problem. The point I want to make is to the leadership today, we **ARE NOT** exempt! Many start off accurately only to take charge of God's people and lead them incorrectly. How do they do this? Power goes to their head, they become greedy, they believe that they are the only ones who have a relationship with God, therefore, you wouldn't know any better and the list goes on and on. They can start out loving, but eventually don't care because it's about their own agenda.

Without a consistent relationship with God a leader will crash! Don't be deceived. The people belong to God. Yes, we are to honor our leaders through obedience, but we are to worship the true and living God only (**EXODUS 20:3-5**)! If a church was unable to pay you would you quit? I will be the first to confess, it isn't easy for leadership, but when you hear and follow God it becomes easier. We (leaders) must guard our tongue. What are we saying about other leaders and not realizing our own faults? If another leader was in fault, are we praying for them? Have we taken the time to talk to them or are we trying to tear them down? Most of the time the answer is no as far as prayer is concerned because we don't really have a prayer life of our own. No prayer life means a relationship is lacking! We are not exempt! God said in James 4:8, "Draw close to me and I to you." If not, we will go wrong.

SCRIPTURE READING: **2 TIMOTHY 3:5** and **JAMES 3:1**

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: The thing worse than rebellion is the thing that causes rebellion.

"A JOURNEY OF THE HEART"