

Introduction: Most educators and leaders agree that people remember what they see much longer than what they only hear. For myself, I would say that most of what I only hear today, I will forget by tomorrow. But, if I see something, especially if what I see is dramatic, I will remember what I see for a whole week, or longer. In fact, IF the visual event is powerful enough, it may help me to change the way I live my life. *** I have read books, taken classes, attended working seminars, and served under mentors who all maintain this is true of most people. What people see stays with them much longer than they will retain from what they hear. *** This summer we will consider together nine occasions when a prophet of Israel's God Yahweh acted out the message God wanted to convey to His people because He knew they would be less likely to forget what He demonstrated to them by what His prophet enacted. Taken together, these enactment prophecies seem to indicate that God Himself 'hardwired', or built into people created in His image, the ability to retain and learn wisdom, more from what they see performed before them than they would retain from words they only heard. No one spoke better than Jesus, but it was only after what He did on the Cross and from the Empty Tomb that the apostles believed He was who He said He was – consider Thomas (John 20:26-29). *** Solomon fell deeper into idolatry and sexual sin as he accumulated riches and wives. As a result, the people were sinking into the rebellion of idolatry. Near the end of his life, he appointed a valiant and strong young man to rule over his laborers (1 Kings 11:1-13, 26-28). Yahweh-God sent His prophet, Ahijah, to tell this young man, Jeroboam (they will contend, the people), that when Solomon died, he would rule over ten of the twelve tribes of Israel. Ahijah drove this word home by tearing a new robe he was wearing into twelve pieces and commanding Jeroboam to take ten pieces of the robe. *** Countering this division of God's people into two unequal parts is David's psalm extolling the goodness of unity among brothers.

I. Jeroboam meets the prophet Ahijah who tears his new robe in twelve pieces, and gives ten to Jeroboam saying he will rule ten tribes, but David's line will retain Judah. (1 Kings 11:20-36)

- A. Solomon's valiant young man, Jeroboam, meets the prophet Ahijah outside Jerusalem; Ahijah tears his new robe in twelve pieces, making Jeroboam take ten so he will know God will make him king of ten tribes. (Verses 28-33)
1. It was at that time, Jeroboam went out from Jerusalem and Ahijah, the Shilonite prophet, found him on the way; he had covered himself in a new robe and the two of them (are) alone in the field. (Verse 29)
Jeroboam and prophet: Solomon's young man meets a prophet named 'my brother (is) Yah(weh)' from Shiloh. Shiloh is where the tabernacle was kept before David brought the Ark to Jerusalem. In Jeremiah's day it was a place of cursing because of idolatry (7:12-15; 26:6-9; also: Psalm 78:54-64).
 2. Then Ahijah took hold of the new robe on him and tore it (in) twelve pieces. (Verse 30)
Prophet acts: It would be more difficult to tear a new robe. This would be shocking to Jeroboam.
 3. Then he said to Jeroboam: You must take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel: Behold! I (am) tearing the kingdom from the hand of Solomon and I have given to you ten tribes. (Verse 31)
Meaning: Now Ahijah has Jeroboam's attention, he gives the meaning of the ten torn pieces: because of Solomon's great sins, Yahweh has divided His people by tearing ten tribes from Solomon.

Ahijah demonstrates national division with a robe

4. And he will have one tribe for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city I chose out of all the tribes of Israel (Deuteronomy 12:1-17). (Verse 32)
Concession: Despite Solomon's great sinning, Yahweh will keep His covenant with David to keep someone from his line on the throne in Jerusalem, for now. Because Simeon's inheritance was within Judah (Joshua 19:1-9) it was considered one tribe – not two.
5. Because they have forsaken Me and worshipped Ashoreth (star) goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh (subduer) god of Moab, Milcom (great king) god of the Ammonites; they have not walked in My ways to do what is upright in My eyes, and (do) My rules and My justice as David, his father. (Verse 33)
Rebellion: In every way the people of all Israel have rebelled against their Covenant God because Solomon did not finish his life well, but fell away in the rebellion of idolatry.

Application: We must all heed God's warning through His prophets that all God's people, BOTH Israel AND The Church of Jesus, must worship ONLY Father-Son-Holy Spirit, or else we will lose our place in God's Kingdom due to our rebellion of idolatry.

- B. Then Ahijah says David's line will be given one tribe and Jerusalem as a light before Yahweh. (Verses 34-36)
1. I will not take all the kingdom from his hand but I will make (Solomon) a prince all the days of his life because of David, My servant whom I chose, who kept my commandments and My rules. (Verse 34)
Hope: David's son will still be ruler over all God's people living in the territory of Judah.
 2. And I have taken the kingdom out of the hand of his son and will give to you (Jeroboam) ten tribes. (Verse 35)
Kingdom taken: Solomon's son Rehoboam, 'enlarged (are) the people', fulfilled Ahijah's enactment prophecy to Jeroboam because he was an immature and oppressive leader (1 Kings 11:43-12:20).

Ahijah demonstrates national division with a robe

3. And to (Rehoboam) I will give one tribe to be a lamp to My servant David all the days before Me in Jerusalem, the city I have chosen to Myself to put My Name there. (Verse 36)
Holy city: Jerusalem is the city Yahweh told Moses he would choose for His 'forever' home.
Messiah: His Name will be put there when His chosen king, Messiah, comes there riding on a donkey nine hundred years later (Zechariah 9:9-13). Ahijah did not know the two tribes (Judah and Simeon) left to David after the national division he enacted, would have eternal significance.

Ahijah demonstrates national division with a robe

Application: We must continue to hope in the ‘soon’ return of Messiah-Jesus, whether He returns today or any time in the next nine hundred years. He will surely return in less than nine hundred years!

II. Jeroboam’s line will rule the ten tribes IF they follow David’s obedient faith in Yahweh who inspired him to compare unity of brothers to the anointing of the high priest which pointed to Messiah-Jesus.

(1 Kings 11:37-40 & Psalm 133)

A. Jeroboam’s line will continue to rule the ten tribes IF he and his descendants follow David’s example, and in time, the affliction of David’s descendants will end. *(1 Kings 11:37-40)*

1. I will take you (to) reign over all your soul desires, and you are king over Israel. *(Verse 37)*

Jeroboam: The Covenant God tells Jeroboam He will take him and give him what He knows to be his desire to be king and rule over most of God’s people (about eighty percent), Israel.

2. IF you will hear all that I will command you; and walk in My ways and do what is upright in My eyes to keep My rules and commandments, as did David My servant; I am with you, and have built a firm and sure house (family dynasty), as I built for David; I have given Israel to you. *(Verse 38)*

Tall order: Jeroboam will be established as king of the ten northern tribes as David had been over all twelve tribes, IF he fully and faithfully has a heart to always follow and obey Yahweh’s ways. This is a ‘tall order’ and Jeroboam soon failed it. All nineteen of the northern kings who followed also failed.

2. And, I will afflict the descendants of David on account of this, but not for all eternity. *(Verse 39)*

Short term loss: Only four of the twenty that followed David were compared favorably to David, the rest fell short to varying degrees. The God-ordained division of the nation of Israel that Ahijah delivered through a memorable action was not enough to prevent deterioration of Israel’s devotion to their God.

Restoration would happen only through the Messiah promised to David.

Ahijah demonstrates national division with a robe

3. Then Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam, but Jeroboam rose and fled to Egypt’s king Shishak; he was in Egypt until the death of Solomon. *(Verse 40)*

Solomon: Solomon opposed God’s ways, word and will more and more as he aged.

He did not keep himself in favor with the God who graciously gave him so much wisdom (1 Kings 3:4-14).

Application: Due to Solomon’s failure, we must pray we will follow the example of Paul to finish our race by keeping THE faith of Jesus to obtain from Him the crown of His righteousness (2 Timothy 4:1-8).

B. David writes in a psalm that unity among brothers is good and pleasant, like the oil that anoints the high priest, and ultimately Messiah-Jesus. *(Psalm 133)*

1. { song of ascents, to David } Behold! How good and how pleasant / to dwell brothers also united. *(Verse 1)*

Unity: Unity is defined as a full joining together in purpose and love, motivated by a mutual faithful obedience to God and His ways and His words. As opposed to the great divisions brought about in Israel due to rebellious idolatry, this unity produces pleasant goodness as its fruit!

Unity is good and pleasant

2. As good oil on the head / running down on the beard // the beard of Aaron / which running down (is) on the edge of his garment. *(Verse 2)*

Oil: The first simile David uses to describe the pleasure of unity is the anointing oil used in the ordination of the high priest (Leviticus 21:10-12).

Kings: Kings were also anointed with oil and the Spirit (of God): David (1 Samuel 16:13); the Messiah-King in Isaiah’s prophecy (Isaiah 61:1-3); Jesus said He is the Messiah fulfilling the prophecy (Luke 4:18-21); finally Peter proclaimed to a Roman soldier’s family and friends that Jesus is the Spirit-filled Messiah (Acts 10:34-43).

Application: We must pledge to be like Peter to be willing to proclaim the Spirit-anointed Messiah-Savior to all people of all nations, starting with our neighbors of whatever nationality or vocation.

3. As the dew of (Mount) Hermon / coming down on the mountains of Zion / because there Yahweh commanded the blessing: Life until eternity. *(Verse 3)*

Morning moisture: The second simile on the pleasure of unity is the refreshing moisture of morning dew after a hot summer day as it comes down on God’s Temple on Mount Zion.

Life: One thousand years after David, his great descendant made it possible that all who are in His messianic Kingdom, by His grace through His faith, will have Jesus’ Resurrection Life from now until eternity in the unity of His world-wide Church!

Unity is good and pleasant

Conclusion: Jeroboam meets the prophet Ahijah who tears his new robe in twelve pieces. Then he gives ten to Jeroboam saying he will rule ten tribes, but David’s line will retain Judah. Jeroboam’s line will rule the ten tribes IF they follow David’s obedient faith in Yahweh. Yahweh had inspired David to compare goodness of unity of brothers to the anointing of the high priest, which anointing ultimately pointed to Messiah-Jesus. But nine hundred years before Jesus, in a warning that was not heeded **Ahijah demonstrates national division with a robe.**