

Who was King Nadab in the Bible?

Nadab was the son of King Jeroboam I of Israel (1 Kings 14:20; 15:25). Jeroboam had been chosen by God to lead Israel after God divided the kingdom due to Solomon's sin (1 Kings 11:11, 38). Jeroboam could have handed a great dynasty to his son Nadab, but he turned away from God and led Israel into deeper wickedness. Because of this, God pronounced judgment rather than blessing on the house of Jeroboam (1 Kings 14:10-11). When his father died, Nadab took his place on Israel's throne while Asa reigned as king in Judah. Nadab only reigned for two years, but he followed in the footsteps of his wicked father, Jeroboam, and led Israel into deeper sin (1 Kings 15:26).

Jeroboam's sin had been idolatry, and when Nadab reigned over Israel, he continued in his father's footsteps. Then Baasha plotted against Nadab, assassinated him in Philistine territory during wartime, and usurped the throne (1 Kings 15:27-28). "As soon as [Baasha] began to reign, he killed Jeroboam's whole family. He did not leave Jeroboam anyone that breathed, but destroyed them all, according to the word of the Lord given through his servant Ahijah the Shilonite" (verse 29). The dire prophecy against the house of Jeroboam had come true.

King Nadab was one failure in a long list of men who tried to rule God's people without God. The books of Kings and Chronicles detail the reigns of these men, and a disturbing pattern emerges. Some began well, but power and wealth turned them aside from following God, and they began to compromise with evil. Idolatry was a perennial problem, especially in the northern kingdom of Israel.

King Nadab and other kings had a chance to rid the land of idolatry and lead the nation in worshiping the Lord. But they failed. If Nadab had turned away from his father's evil

and torn down the idol shrines and the high places, God may have relented and allowed Nadab the dynasty his father had forfeited (see Jeremiah 15:19). But Nadab had watched his father lead while seeking help from false gods, and he continued that wicked practice. Therefore, King Nadab is simply another example of wasted potential because of his rejection of God.