

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to 1 Kings 13

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through 1 Kings

And in our study last week, we began to look at some of the consequences were the result of King Solomon drifting away from the Lord and turning to idolatry.

We saw God tear away 10 of the tribes away from Rehoboam and He gave them over to Jeroboam -

However, we also saw that Jeroboam did not heed the conditional promise of God – and instead of walking in His statutes – Jeroboam, because he was worried that he might lose control over the people, he came up with an alternative religious system – so the people didn't have to travel to Jerusalem.

In our study this evening, we are going to see the Lord demonstrate grace and mercy toward Jeroboam – as He brings a word of rebuke to him.

So we will see how he responds -

Let's pray...

[1Ki 13:1-34 NKJV] 1 And behold, a man of God went from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD, and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.

Couple of things to point out here in the opening verse –

We have this man of God – we are never given his name.

He goes from Judah – the Southern Kingdom to Bethel – which is part of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

And this tells us a few things –

It tells us that God was still active in the lives of the people (Northern Kingdom) despite their unfaithfulness – and the reason that we know that He was still active is because of the message that He is speaking through this prophet (man of God).

It is not going to be a pleasant word –

But the thing we must understand is that,

The Lord's rebuke is still evidence for His compassion for us.

When He speaks a stern word to people – it is still evidence of His love.

He is trying to call people to repentance.

He remains faithful when we are faithless

God seems to intervene – even when we least deserve

[2Ti 2:13 NKJV] 13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

The other thing that this tells us – is that gives us an indication on how terrible the spiritual condition of the Northern Kingdom was –

God had to send a prophet from the Southern Kingdom to the Northern Kingdom to deliver this message because there was nobody in the Northern Kingdom to do it.

That men and women were not serving the Lord in the Northern Kingdom.

The Southern Kingdom was in bad shape – but the Northern Kingdom was worse.

Yes, there were still believers in the Northern Kingdom – but they were unusable.

So the man of God gets to Bethel and he finds Jeroboam partaking in the false system of worship that he had set up.

2 Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, "O altar, altar! Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men's bones shall be burned on you.' "

The prophet declares that this system of false worship which Jeroboam had established will eventually be destroyed by God

And what we have here in verse two is one of the most remarkable prophecies that we find in scriptures because it is so precise.

Josiah – a king from Judah – almost 300 years in the future – he was going to come up to Bethel and destroy these altars – exactly how the prophet said that he would.

You can mark down (2 Kings 23)

But I want you to turn to Leviticus 26

Because in Leviticus 26 –

God had warned the people what would happen if they started worshipping false idols.

[Lev 26:30 NKJV] 30 I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars, and cast your carcasses on the lifeless forms of your idols; and My soul shall abhor you.

And that is exactly what is going to happen when Josiah comes – they are literally going to burn the bones on the altar to desecrate it

So Josiah comes to fulfill the prophesy but also the law.

3 And he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This [is] the sign which the LORD has spoken: Surely the altar shall split apart, and the ashes on it shall be poured out."

So the prophetic word of the man of God was not going to be fulfilled for 300 years –

But he is telling them that an immediate sign is going to be given to them to confirm what God was going to do.

He is telling them – God is going to give you a glimpse of what He is going to do.

4 So it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, who cried out against the altar in Bethel, that he immediately repented – is that what it says? No

Did Jeroboam fall on his face before the Lord and ask for forgiveness? No

That's not what the scriptures say –

The scriptures say -

that he stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Arrest him!" Then his hand, which he stretched out toward him, withered, so that he could not pull it back to himself.

Jeroboam doesn't repent, he doesn't receive the word of God from this prophet – he rejects God's word.

He orders his men to arrest the man of God – I had you make a note (which he stretched)

Now, in the scriptures there are 17 different references to God's outstretched arm.

[Deu 26:8 NKJV] 8 'So the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders.

God's outstretched arm is in reference to His authority and sovereignty over everything.

For Jeroboam and all earthly kings – an outstretched arm indicated authority

But by the Lord shriveling up his arm – the Lord is saying, “My authority is greater than yours, I gave you the authority to outstretch your arm – I can take it away”

And his authority was taken away just like that.

You see – what is happening to Jeroboam is the same thing that happens today when we share the word of God to those that God has put in our lives – and they chose not to receive it. There solution in many times is to come after us –

Get rid of the messenger – you get rid of the message

And what they are doing in the process is rejecting the Lord's love for them.

Because He wants them to turn from their sin

5 The altar also was split apart, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.

So, just as the man of God had told Jeroboam moments earlier –

God splits apart the altar – confirming the word of the Lord.

So in a few seconds, God has taken away Jeroboam's authority, and destroyed this altar of false religion that Jeroboam had set up. Surely Jeroboam would repent now = right?

6 Then the king answered and said to the man of God, "Please entreat the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me."

So the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king's hand was restored to him, and became as before.

If Jeroboam had been a Canaanite or an Egyptian or any of the other nations around Israel – it would not be shocking to hear him say, Lord your God.

But remember, Jeroboam was an Israelite.

He can't even call God, His God.

By the way – Jeroboam is not repenting here –

He simply wants a fix to the problem – his shriveled hand.

So we see incredible grace from the Lord in restoring Jeroboam hand – even after he rejected the word that was brought to him.

7 Then the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward."

At first – this verse seems like Jeroboam has a change of heart.

Initially he wanted the man of God arrested and now after having his hand restored – it seems like he wants to embrace this man of God.

That is not what is going on -

What Jeroboam was saying was, “Let me pay you for your religious services.

You prayed for my healing & it happened – so let me pay you.”

There is no acknowledgement of wrongdoing on the part of Jeroboam – there is no repentance of sin.

Instead of paying for what the man of God had done – he should have been asking the man of God what the Lord wants from him as a king or seeking to get write with the Lord.

Jeroboam is simply trying to manipulate the man of God.

And the man of God sees this – look at verse 8

8 But the man of God said to the king, "If you were to give me half your house, I would not go in with you; nor would I eat bread nor drink water in this place. 9

"For so it was commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'You shall not eat bread, nor drink water, nor return by the same way you came.' " 10 So he went another way and did not return by the way he came to Bethel.

The prophet had been warned by God not to do anything other than deliver his message.

After that he was to immediately return home.

The command of God has been clear and specific.

“Deliver your message and split!”

And in the first 10 verses of this chapter – we see the man of God do simply that.

God commanded – the man of God did exactly what God commanded.

He has done what he was supposed to do – and now he is going to leave.

11 Now an old prophet dwelt in Bethel, and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; they also told their father the words which he had spoken to the king. 12 And their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" For his sons had seen which way the man of God went who came from Judah.

Now – we are introduced here to an old prophet that lived in Bethel.

Remember what I said at the beginning of the study – way back in verse 1

God sends a prophet from Judah to Bethel because there was nobody in Bethel that could do the job –

That means that this old prophet guy – his walk with the Lord is not right.

If it was right – he would have done something about the idolatry that was rampant in the Northern Kingdom –

At some point in his life he was used by God – but he had become complacent and unusable by the Lord.

Also, notice that his children are the ones who come to him and tell him about the man of God and what happened at the place of the altar.

Question –

What were the old prophet's children doing at Jeroboam's altar? – they were worshipping this false religion that Jeroboam had set up.

13 Then he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey for him; and he rode on it, 14 and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak. Then he said to him, "[Are] you the man of God who came from Judah?" And he said, "I [am]." 15 Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat bread." 16 And he said, "I cannot return with you nor go in with you; neither can I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place. 17 "For I have been told by the word of the LORD, 'You shall not eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by going the way you came.' "

The old prophet – he wants the same thing that King Jeroboam wanted

His interest is himself

He goes searching for the man of God and invites him over for some fellowship.

And the man of God responds the same way that he responded toward Jeroboam –

I am on strict orders from God – deliver my message and go home.

18 He said to him, "I too [am] a prophet as you [are], and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.' " (He was lying to him.) 19 So he went back with him, and ate bread in his house, and drank water.

'You shall not eat bread nor drink water there – that was the command of the Lord – crystal clear.

Why did the man of God give into the invitation of the old prophet and not the king?

Because with his interactions with the king – he had his guard up

But with his interactions with the old prophet – he let his guard down.

This guy says that he is a prophet like me

Plus, he says an angel spoke to him

So it must be true.

I had you make note that the scriptures tell us that the old prophet was clearly lying.

So we see the clear spiritual nature and character of the old prophet.

[Luk 6:43-45 NKJV] 43 “For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. 44 “For every tree is known by its own fruit. For [men] do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. 45 “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

So what does it say if what is coming out of his mouth is lies?

It says that this guy is not walking with the Lord

20 Now it happened, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back; 21 and he cried out to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, "Thus says the LORD: 'Because you have disobeyed the word of the LORD, and have not kept the commandment which the LORD your God commanded you, 22 'but you came back, ate bread, and drank water in the place of which [the LORD] said to you, "Eat no bread and drink no water," **your corpse shall not come to the tomb of your fathers.'"**

This is God’s judgment directed at the man of God

Not that he was going to die

But that his body was not going to be buried with his fathers.

Now – why the harsh judgment against the man of God?

Why not against the old prophet?

Here is the reason why –

A prophet's job was to communicate God's words to the people fully and completely, often using their own actions as a live demonstration, even at the cost of their own comfort.

By fellowshiping with an idolator – the man of God was endorsing their behavior.

Paul tells the believer the same thing in

[1Co 5:11 NKJV] 11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

When the man of God disobeyed the LORD by eating and drinking with the old prophet in Bethel, his life and actions no-longer demonstrated the totality of condemnation he was told to communicate.

By swiftly bringing judgement upon him for his sin, the LORD made it clear to all who would hear this tale, the severity of disobeying a Holy God.

23 So it was, after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, that he saddled the donkey for him, the prophet whom he had brought back. 24 When he was gone, a

lion met him on the road and killed him. And his corpse was thrown on the road, and the donkey stood by it. The lion also stood by the corpse.

You have the body of the man of God lying on the road, you have his donkey standing next to the body and you have the lion who killed the man of God standing next to the body as well – not eating the body or eating the donkey or dragging them away.

And this was done so that people would know that God was behind this.

It was no coincidence that a lion attacked the man of God on the way home.

25 And there, men passed by and saw the corpse thrown on the road, and the lion standing by the corpse. Then they went and told [it] in the city where the old prophet dwelt. 26 Now when the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard [it], he said, "It [is] the man of God who was disobedient to the word of the LORD. Therefore the LORD has delivered him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to him."

27 And he spoke to his sons, saying, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled [it]. 28 Then he went and found his corpse thrown on the road, and the donkey and the lion standing by the corpse. The lion had not eaten the corpse nor torn the donkey. 29 And the prophet took up the corpse of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back. So the old prophet came to the city to mourn, and to bury him. 30 Then he laid the corpse in his own tomb; and they

mourned over him, [saying], "Alas, my brother!" 31 So it was, after he had buried him, that he spoke to his sons, saying, "When I am dead, then bury me in the tomb where the man of God [is] buried; lay my bones beside his bones. 32 "For the saying which he cried out by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel, and against all the shrines on the high places which [are] in the cities of Samaria, will surely come to pass."

I want you to notice a few things in the response of the old prophet –

Notice first that he takes no responsibility or culpability in what happened to the man of God – whatsoever.

Yes, he feels sorry for what happened to him

Yes he recognized that the God sent him and that God was going to judge the Northern Kingdom for their idolatry – but he shows a lack of spiritual responsibility.

And that is the problem with complacency.

33 After this event Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but again he made priests from every class of people for the high places; whoever wished, he consecrated him, and he became [one] of the priests of the high places. 34 And this thing was the sin of the house of Jeroboam, so as to exterminate and destroy [it] from the face of the earth.

Jeroboam still rejected the word of the Lord.

Jeroboam experienced a warning, mercy, and grace but nothing changed.

He still did not do what God said.

Church

We cannot take the grace of God and reject what God has told us to do.

God's grace is to cause that submissive heart in us. Otherwise, we are no different than Jeroboam, taking God's grace and rejecting it.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.!



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