

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

Learning From Those Who Walked Before Us

LESSONS FROM A MAN OF GOD

1 Kings 12-14

INTRODUCTION: Solomon never repented of his many marriages to pagan women or of yielding to their desire to propagate the worship of their false gods throughout Israel.

It was the beginning of a great downturn for the nation as God raised up adversaries against both Solomon and Israel.

The son of Solomon he selected to reign in his place was named Rehoboam.

Because of Solomon's sin and the nation's apostasy, God decided to split the kingdom and to give ten of the twelve tribes to a man named Jeroboam, who had been a man who served King Solomon in a position like what we would call the Secretary of Labor.

Don't be confused. Rehoboam and Jeroboam were not the Boam brothers. Rehoboam was a descendant of David. Jeroboam was from a different line and tribe.

When Rehoboam ascended the throne of Israel after Solomon's death, he did not demonstrate the wisdom of his father, which point in his life serves as a word of admonition to all of us, even before we get to the primary text for the day.

- **Wisdom is not inherited.**
- We can be taught by wise parents and wise teachers, and other wise influencers in our lives, but that does not guarantee that we will be wise.
- **Wisdom comes from God.**
- **He sends it through His Word,**
- **Which then we must believe and practice.**
- And that will make us wise!

But Rehoboam was not wise. He continued in the sins of the later years of his father Solomon and led Jerusalem and Judah to worship false gods and to allow perversion to be freely and openly practiced in the land.

Here is another word, this time a word of warning.

- **When a city or a nation allows perversion to persist unabated, God intervenes.**
- Remember what happened to Sodom and Gomorroah.
- In Rehoboam's day, (well, let's read it!)

1 Kings 14:24–26 NKJV 24 And there were also perverted persons in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. 25 It happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. 26 And he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house; he took away everything. ...

And, God took away the ten northern tribes and caused Jeroboam to become their king.

The northern kingdom was called Israel.

The southern kingdom was called Judah, although it included the tribe of Benjamin.

God told Jeroboam that if he would follow the ways of the Lord as David had done, that He would establish his reign for many years.

Sadly, shortly after he was empowered Jeroboam turned against the Lord.

Afraid that the people's trips to the Southern Kingdom of Judah to Jerusalem and the Temple to worship would turn their hearts toward the South, Jeroboam had two golden calves made, similar to the one cast by Aaron at the foot of Mt. Sinai. Like Aaron, Jeroboam declared, this is the god who brought you out of Egypt.

He put each of them in locations far more convenient to people living in the northern kingdom, one at Dan and the other at Bethel, and the people began to frequent these pagan altars to offer their sacrifices and their worship.

ENTER THE MAN OF GOD! We do not know his name, and we know precious little about him except what the Lord wants us to know because of its significance in speaking to our lives.

1 Kings 13:1–10 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. 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.'" 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."

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 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. 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.

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.

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

Let us learn this morning what God wants to teach us from the man of God.

THE MAN, OR WOMAN, OF GOD GOES WHERE GOD SAYS GO.

- The man of God went from Judah to Bethel.
 - Where Jeroboam had set up one of the golden calves.
 - I am sure he did not want to go into this hotbed of paganism.
- **Sometimes God sends us to places we do not want to go.**
 - **A common lie: "God would not want me to be somewhere I was not happy, so I should not go."**

God knows our happiness is more dependent on our obedience and walk with Him than it is on our location.

- **When we obey God, He provides for our happiness where He puts us.**
- **This is true concerning a place of service in the Kingdom of God as well as a physical location.**

If you sense God calling you to a place of service, the question is not whether you think you will be happy doing it.

The fact is, you won't be genuinely happy not doing it.

If you obey God, He will see to your happiness in the midst of your obedience.

The happiest people in the church are those who have obeyed the Lord to go and serve Him in the place and way He commanded.

THE MAN OF GOD SAYS WHAT GOD SAYS SAY. THE WOMAN OF GOD SAYS WHAT GOD SAYS SAY.

Do you think this humble man wanted to declare, with the king standing right there, that where they were offering sacrifices to a pagan god that the Almighty YHWH God was going to burn the bones of the priests who committed such sacrilege?

- **If you are going to be a man or woman of God then or in these days, you've got to say what God says, not what this world wants to hear.**

Although the world says the Bible is full of myths and mistakes, we have to say what God says about this book: "the law of the Lord is perfect..."

When the world says that everyone can just worship their higher power in the way they see fit, and all roads lead to heaven, we have to say that no one comes to the Father except through Jesus:

Though the world says that a woman has the right to choose what to do with a portion of her own body, we've got to say that an unborn child is a person created in the image of God, and no person has the right to end his or her innocent life.

And when the world says that it is OK to practice homosexuality, the man of God and the woman of God will declare that such is an abomination from which the Lord Jesus Christ offers us forgiveness and redemption if we will trust in Him.

- **If we would be a man of God, a woman of God, our lips are not our own. They are bought with a price, and they must say what God says to say.**

THE MAN OF GOD STANDS WHERE GOD SAYS STAND.

- **He or she must stand in the place God says.**

1 Kings 13:4 NKJV 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 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.

- The man of God stood his ground at the altar God had condemned.
- The hand of Jeroboam withered.
- The altar split in two.
- **We must stand where God tells us to stand.**

- Not only must we speak God's Word, we must stand upon it.

And the likelihood is greater today than at any point in our lifetimes of our needing to make a difficult stand that is contrary to the position of the dominant culture and our government.

Here in Florida we have not been forced to disobey man in order to obey God and meet for worship, but some of our American Christian brothers and sisters have had to do so.

But we may have soon before us a demand that we cannot read or preach certain parts of God's Word upon penalty of being put in jail or paying stiff fines.

Our church could be threatened with losing our tax exemption if we do not support the woke mandates of the government.

And when that happens the Lord will reveal who is really a man of God or a woman of God.

THE MAN OF GOD OBEYS THE WORD OF THE LORD.

- God told the man of God not to eat or drink in Bethel.
- The man of God stood on that Word when invited to King's house. In fact, he said

1 Kings 13:8 NKJV 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.

But after the conflict with the King, he let down his guard.

The man of God headed home another way as the Lord commanded, but he was intercepted by a false prophet who invited him to his house to eat and drink.

As the Lord had told him to do, he declined.

But the false prophet said, "An angel brought the word of the Lord to me telling you it's OK. I'm a prophet like you are and you are supposed to come to my house and eat."

And the man of God believed him. When later he left the prophet's house, a lion killed him. Maybe God sent the lion; maybe God removed protection. I don't know.

This tragic end to his life came because he believed the word of the old prophet rather than standing on the Word of the Lord.

We say, "How foolish!" And indeed it was. But we are tempted to do the same all the time.

We know God says to forgive those who sin against you, but we hear some person say, **"Man I wouldn't forgive someone who did me like that."** and we justify our bitterness.

We know God says we are to be storehouse tithers, bringing 10 % of our income to the Lord through our church, but we hear someone say, **"Tithing is O.T.; Jesus never taught tithing."** and we choose to believe the lie rather than God's Word because it is what we want to believe.

And we reap the same results: bitterness consumes our joy and happiness like a devouring lion; and the devourer himself consumes our finances because we have robbed God.

THE MAN OF GOD OBEYS THE WORD OF THE LORD. THE WOMAN OF GOD OBEYS THE WORD OF THE LORD!

I want to be a man of God.

I want to go where God says go.

I want to say what God says say.

I want to be faithful to obey the Word of the Lord.

How about you?