

1 Kings 13 - Thursday, November 8th, 2015

1 Kings 13:1 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.'"

- Couple of thoughts here, the first of which has to do with the accuracy of this prophecy coming from this unnamed man of God.
- This prophecy will be fulfilled with an astonishing accuracy in 290 years when Josiah who would become King of Judah, is born.
- Actually, 2 Kings 23:14-16 records the account of this prophecy being fulfilled when Josiah burns these alters to the false gods.

2 Kings 23:14-16 (NKJV) — 14 And he broke in pieces the sacred pillars and cut down the wooden images, and filled their places with the bones of men. 15 Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down; and he burned the high place and crushed it to powder, and burned the wooden image. 16 As Josiah turned, he saw the tombs that were there on the mountain. And he sent and took the bones out of the tombs and burned them on the altar, and defiled it according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

- The second thought has to do with this man of God, who proclaimed these prophetic words, which came to pass as God said.
- More specifically, that we're not told his name. This is a nobody, who just comes out of nowhere and gives them this prophecy.
- The reason I point this out is that God can use ordinary nobody's who are nothing, to do the extraordinary, which is something.

1 Corinthians 1:26–29 (NKJV) — 26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. 27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; 28 and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, 29 that no flesh should glory in His presence.

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."

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that God is proving to them the accuracy of this prophecy.
- The sign that this was God is the altar splits apart and the ashes on it poured out on the same day that the prophecy was given.
- The significance of this is that often times God will give us a sign that confirms His word is true and as such will come to pass.

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.

- One has suggested God specifically withered his outstretched hand as a precise judgment because his hand was against God.
- I suppose in a sense, there could now be no doubt about the accuracy of the prophecy that was spoken of by this man of God.
- This because of the sign that the altar would split apart and ashes be poured out from the altar exactly as the man of God said.

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.

- Don't think Jeroboam is truly repenting here because as we'll see in the chapters that follow, there will be no evidence of that.
- I find it interesting that Jeroboam arrests the very man that God is using in his life to get his attention, only to then release him.
- The reason I find it interesting is the very people God may using in someone's life can often times be faced with a similar fate.

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.

- This brings up an important question of why the man of God was so adamant in refusing to go to the king's house for a reward.
- I'm of the belief that the reason was because he knew if he went it could be seen as complicity with Jeroboam's sin of idolatry.
- I would suggest that there is an important lesson to be learned here as it relates to our fleeing any and all appearances of evil.

1 Thessalonians 5:21–22 21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. 22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

Romans 13:14 (NKJV) — 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

- One more thing before we move on to verse eleven and it has to do with the man of God discerning there was no repentance.
- There are two kinds of sorrow in the Bible one of which is the sorrow of being caught and the other leads to sincere repentance.
- I would submit that Jeroboam's sorry was due to being caught and with him so too had his powerless false God been found out.

2 Corinthians 7:8–11 (NIV) — 8 Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while—9 yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. 10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. 11 See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.

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. 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.’ ” 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.

- There's something here that we would do well to notice here concerning this lying prophet and his deceiving of the man of God.
- Notice in verse 17 where we're told that the man of God knew the word of God that he should not eat bread nor drink the water.
- As such, this man of God was deceived because he went against the Word of God, and as we'll see next, it costs him his life.

Galatians 1:8–9 (NIV) — 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse! 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse!

F.B. Meyer - “When we have received a direct command fresh from the lips of Christ, we must act on it, and not be turned aside by a different suggestion, made to us through the lips of professing Christians ... Deal with God at first-hand.”

G. Campbell Morgan - “God never contradicts Himself in His dealings with His servants. Let us be true to His commands, refusing to be deflected from the path of obedience, even by an angel from heaven.”

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.’ ” 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. 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.

- If you're anything like me and I suspect you are, this seems very unfair to the man of God especially in light of the false prophet.
- The truth of the matter is there are no easy answers as to why God mete's out judgment on the righteous over the unrighteous.
- The closest I can come to an explanation is 1 Peter 4:17, where we're told that judgment begins with the household of God.

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.” 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's life is a powerful and profound example of how it is that someone with tremendous potential can end up doing evil.
- It's somewhat difficult to imagine that God had promised him a dynasty like that of David if he would have only obeyed the Lord.
- Perhaps the take away in closing is the paramount importance of obedience, which is the only thing that God does not have.