

I. What Is Wrong with This Altar (1)

A. God didn't assign the place of this altar - "... a man of God came out of Judah by the word of the LORD to Bethel."

1 Kings 12:28-29 - So the king took counsel and made two calves of gold. And he said to the people, "You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. 29 And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.

B. God did not call the man leading at this altar - "...Jeroboam was standing by the altar..."

C. God did not endorse the activities planned at this altar - "...Jeroboam was standing by the altar to make offerings."

II. What Opposed This Altar (2-5)

A. The man of God opposed it (2a) - "And the man cried against the altar by the word of the LORD and said..."

B. The message of God opposed it (2b-3) - "O altar, altar, thus says the LORD: 'Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name, and he shall sacrifice on you the priests of the high places who make offerings on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.'" [3] And he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign that the LORD has spoken: 'Behold, the altar shall be torn down, and the ashes that are on it shall be poured out.'"

C. The might of God opposed it (4-5) - "And when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Seize him." And his hand, which he stretched out against him, dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself. [5] The altar also was torn down, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign that the man of God had given by the word of the LORD."

III. Who Fled This Altar (6-10)

A. God offered surprising mercy (6) - "And the king said to the man of God, "Entreat now the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me." And the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king's hand was restored to him and became as it was before."

B. The government offered a tempting compromise (7) - "And the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me, and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward." **The government pledges a reward attached to compromise**

C. The believer offered a swift refusal (8) - "And the man of God said to the king, "If you give me half your house, I will not go in with you. And I will not eat bread or drink water in this place."

D. The conviction offered a clear pathway (9-10) - "...for so was it commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'You shall neither eat bread nor drink water nor return by the way that you came.'" [10] So he went another way and did not return by the way that he came to Bethel."