

1 Kings Chapter 13 Commentary Verses 01-10

1Ki 13:1 ¶ "And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. 2 And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. 3 And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out. 4 And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. 5 The altar also was rent, 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."

God sent a prophet from Judah to reprimand Jeroboam for turning to idolatry. The prophet proclaims that one, born of the lineage of King David, Josiah by name, will burn the priest and men's bones upon this altar of idolatry. This prophesy was fulfilled, according to historians, about three hundred and forty or fifty years later under the reign of Josiah, seen in **2Ki 23:15-20; 15 "Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove. 16 And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchers that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchers, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. 17 Then he said, What title is that that I see? And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulcher of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Bethel. 18 And he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So, they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria. 19 And all the houses also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the LORD to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Bethel. 20 And he slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem."**

Why is all this happening to Jeroboam? Remember what God told Jeroboam in **1Ki 11:37-38; 37 "And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. 38 And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee."** Jeroboam has made no attempt to do what God has commanded, and God is reprimanding him.

There is a great warning for God's people in this. God will do what he says, though it may not come speedily, it will come surely. Also, in application to our own lives, if we do what God has commanded, we will have the blessings of God in our lives. If we do not do as God has commanded, we will not have his blessings in our lives, and we will suffer judicial judgments in our lives.

6 "And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before. 7 And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward. 8 And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: 9 For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. 10 So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel."

Notice, Jeroboam ask the man of God to pray to **"the LORD thy God."** Jeroboam is not claiming God as his God. Yet, God in his mercy, to validate that this was indeed a man of God, answers the prayer and restores Jeroboam's hand. This should have motivated Jeroboam to turn to the Lord, and to turn from idolatry, but it does not, which signifies that Jeroboam is not of God's chosen as King David was.

Notice, that Jeroboam did not ask of the man of God to pray for his forgiveness, only for the restoration of his hand. He does not ask the man of God to pray to God that God would guide him and establish his kingdom. He has already sunk into idolatry and has no care except for his own will and purpose. Jeroboam does not even give thanks to God for his healing, but he tries to bribe the man of God to become a part of his idolatry.

Jeroboam tries to get the man of God to come home with him so he can give him a reward. The man of God told Jeroboam that God had given him specific instructions of how to carry out God's commandment and he would not go with Jeroboam nor take the reward offered to him.

We should always remember the words of God in **1Sa 15:22** *"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."* God also has directed us to not take bribes nor rewards for what God has done. Consider **Jude 1:11-13; 11** *"Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. 12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; 13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever."* This gives us a picture of Jeroboam's life. Likewise, God commanded anyone in a position of a judge to not take gifts which would blind their eyes to true judgments.