

1 Kings 12-13 – Chapter Study

INTRODUCTION

We ended last week with the death of Solomon & the ascension of his son Rehoboam to the throne.

Because Solomon turned away from God in his later years, God raised up trouble in the form of 3 people who began to harass Israel.

Hadad in Edom & Rezon in Syria nibbled away at the borders while Jeroboam presented a threat from *within* the Kingdom.

Jeroboam was a leader of the tribe of Ephraim who'd been promoted as a main overseer in Solomon's building projects in Jerusalem.

Ahijah the prophet went to Jeroboam with a prophecy that because of Solomon's rebellion against God, the kingdom would be torn from his descendants and Jeroboam would become ruler of the 10 northern tribes.

When word of this reached Solomon, he tried to have Jeroboam killed, but he got away and fled to Egypt until Solomon was out of the picture. Tonight we see his return.

III. The Kingdom Divides • 12:1-24

A. The People's Petition • 12:1-15

1. Rehoboam crowned • v. 1

¹And Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had gone to Shechem to make him king.

Why Shechem? Wasn't Jerusalem the capital?

Indeed it was, & Solomon had made it into the premier city of the time.

So why did they go to Shechem to crown Rehoboam?

Events after this give us a clue: Israel was *still* a confederation of *separate tribes* & they weren't all that enthusiastic about following Rehoboam, who was from the tribe of Judah.

There was tension between Judah & the other tribes over the throne.

In the first 7 years of David's reign, only Judah followed him.

The other tribes wanted to follow one of Saul's descendants – someone from the tribe of Benjamin.

It took 7 years before they finally agreed to accept David as their king.

Solomon then took over quickly and secured their allegiance.

His reign brought tremendous power & prosperity to the kingdom.

But at great cost in terms of taxes & loss of personal freedoms.

When Solomon turned from God in his later years, his regime became oppressive & the old questions about who ought to reign resurfaced.

Rehoboam went to Shechem, *north* of Jerusalem, to be crowned because it was in the heart of the northern tribes.

It was a way to gauge their loyalty & to make a statement that he was *asserting his right to rule*.

The leaders of all the tribes appeared for the ceremony.

And though they've come with the intent of crowning Rehoboam, they aren't without conditions.

2. Jeroboam's return • vs. 2-3

²So it happened, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard it (he was still in Egypt, for he had fled from the presence of King Solomon and had been dwelling in Egypt), ³that they sent and called him. Then Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying,

Word was sent to Jeroboam that Solomon had died.

He returns from his exile in Egypt and becomes part of the official delegation that goes in petition of Rehoboam.

3. The request • v. 4

⁴“Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”

Just as God had warned them through Samuel (1 Sam. 8:10-19), Solomon had placed a heavy burden on the people.

It wasn't just the taxes he charged, he conscripted the young men of all the tribes but Judah to serve in his various work projects.

What made this such an onerous burden was that the economy of Israel was agricultural & every available hand was needed in tending the fields & flocks.

So at the same time the people had to pay more in taxes, there were fewer workers to help with the work.

Now that Solomon's gone & his projects are complete, the people ask for a lightening of the load.

There's no reason the taxes can't be cut & the draft can't be ended.

Their interest is *purely economic*.

There's no mention of the *spiritual needs* of the people – that Rehoboam will remove the wretched idols & altars Solomon had erected.

4. Rehoboam's reply • vs. 5-15

⁵So he said to them, “Depart for three days, then come back to me.” And the people departed.

Rehoboam wanted some time to mull this over.

He was wise enough to realize he ought to consult with others, so he did.

⁶Then King Rehoboam consulted the U who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, and he said, “How do you advise me to answer these people?” ⁷And they spoke to him, saying, “If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.”

The first group Rehoboam consulted with the royal counselors who'd advised his father.

These men had seen it all & knew what the people were asking was just.

They understood that a king IS a servant & the quickest way to win loyalty is through humility & service.

This was sound counsel, but it wasn't what Rehoboam *wanted* to hear.

He was king now & was itching to use his newfound authority, so he went to the next group of advisors.

⁸But he rejected the advice which the elders had given him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. ⁹And he said to them, "What advice do you give? How should we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, 'Lighten the yoke which your father put on us?'" ¹⁰Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, "Thus you should speak to this people who have spoken to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make *it* lighter on us'—thus you shall say to them: 'My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father's waist! ¹¹And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!' "

The counsel of the younger advisors was this – Rehoboam, if you give an inch now, at the outset of your reign, they'll take it as a sign of weakness & will be forever pestering you with requests for this & that until you have no authority left.

So – they've asked for relief – tell them, "Not only will there be no relief, but just because you asked, I'm increasing the demands!"

These guys make a mistake all too common to youth – they think *idealistically* instead of *realistically*.

People grow up looking at the world seeing all the problems & thinking, if people would only do this, it would all be better.

Then, when they get in to those positions, they realize the nice, neat theories they learned in school rarely work without a hitch in the real world.

Life is messy, and the best laid plans of mice & men usually go awry because of unforeseen factors & complications.

These young advisors spoke out of their political theories about how to rule.

The elder counselors spoke from first-hand experience & the wisdom that comes from seeing what happens when you actually put theories to work.

There's an important lesson here – Be careful about who you seek advice from.

There's an endless supply of *professional theorists* who've spent their lives in a lab or classroom reading books & professional journals.

They claim to be *experts* & issue what look like authoritative findings on how to live.

But they've never really put those theories to work in real life.

Seek out those who've proven through their lifestyle & personal success that they know what they're talking about.

¹²So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had directed, saying, "Come back to me the third day."

¹³Then the king answered the people roughly, and rejected the advice which the elders had given him; ¹⁴and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke

heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!”¹⁵ So the king did not listen to the people; for the turn of events was from the LORD, that He might fulfill His word, which the LORD had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

God had said Jeroboam would become king over the northern tribes.

In v. 15, when it says “the turn of events was from the Lord,” that doesn’t mean God *forced* Rehoboam to follow the foolish advice of the young men.

The Hebrew means all of this occurred just as God said it would.

Rehoboam’s choice was his own, & God move quickly to *use it* to accomplish His will.

If Rehoboam had answered *differently* here & *lightened* their load, there would have been some *later* crisis that would result in the nation’s split.

The point is this → Once God says a thing is going to happen = it **IS** going to happen!

B. The People’s Response • 12:16-20

¹⁶Now when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying: “What share have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Now, see to your own house, O David!” So Israel departed to their tents.

¹⁷But Rehoboam reigned over the children of Israel who dwelt in the cities of Judah. ¹⁸Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was in charge of the revenue; but all Israel stoned him with stones, and he died. Therefore King Rehoboam mounted his chariot in haste to flee to Jerusalem. ¹⁹So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

The people told Rehoboam they no longer honored him as king & returned to their tents pitched all around Shechem.

Rehoboam decided to *test* them by sending out Adoram, the chief over the forced labor, to collect the tribute they’d brought to the coronation ceremony.

Instead of paying, they stoned Adoram to death.

Rehoboam realized it was unsafe for him to stay at Shechem and retreated as fast as he could to Jer.

He continued to rule over the tribe of Judah, but the northern tribes split off into their own nation

²⁰Now it came to pass when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had come back, they sent for him and called him to the congregation, and made him king over all Israel. There was none who followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

They’d gone to Shechem to crown a king and now that Rehoboam’s fled, they put Jeroboam in his place, fulfilling the prophecy of Ahijah.

C. Rehoboam’s Reaction • 12:21-29

²¹ And when Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled all the

house of Judah with the tribe of Benjamin, one hundred and eighty thousand chosen men who were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, that he might restore the kingdom to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

We have an apparent contradiction here because v. 20 says Rehoboam ruled over ONLY Judah.

Then in the next verse it says he assembled a force from Judah & Benjamin.

The territory of Benjamin was a small sliver of land sandwiched between Judah to the south & the other tribes to the north.

It was region that had been dominated by the Philistines until the time of David, so as a result, the Benjamites scattered into the surrounding tribes and the territory of Benjamin was absorbed by the other tribes.

While most of the Benjamites were living now among the northern tribes, the few families who lived in Judah became part of this call up.

Rehoboam's going to use force to keep the north from seceding.

22But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying,

23“Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, saying,

24“Thus says the LORD: “You shall not go up nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel. Let every man return to his house, for this thing is from Me.” ’ ” Therefore they obeyed the word of the LORD, and turned back, according to the word of the LORD.

Shemaiah was given a word to speak to Rehoboam & the leaders of Judah that they were not try try & stop this secession; it was God's will.

To their credit, they obeyed the voice of God.

IV. Jeroboam (Israel) • 12:25-14:20

A. The Golden Calves • 12:25-33

25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and dwelt there. Also he went out from there and built Penuel.

Shechem became the capital; Penuel was a fortress refuge, a place to flee to in time of war.

26And Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom may return to the house of David: **27**If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah.”

Once Jeroboam got power, he did what almost everyone does; started scheming *how to hang on to it.*

As king, he wanted to make sure the throne would pass to his descendants.

He saw an immediate problem in the fickle loyalty of the people.

They'd been more than ready to bail on Rehoboam & Jeroboam knew it wouldn't take much for them to turn against him.

What most troubled him was the fact that when his subjects went to the temple at Jerusalem every year for Passover, they'd see Jerusalem's glory & might

feel some nostalgia for their glory days under David's throne.
So he came up with an idea and ran it by some of his buds.

28Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, "It is too much [hard] for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!" 29And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.

Jeroboam dug into Israel's past and found a likely candidate for his plan in the image of a golden calf.

He made 2 of them and put one in Bethel, a city in the south that had deep religious significance as the place where their patriarchs had worshiped a& encountered God,

And in the far north at Dan, another religiously significant place, although for all the wrong reasons; it was the birthplace of idolatry in Israel.
Jeroboam didn't say these images were *other* gods, they were representations of *Yahweh*.

The calf was what Aaron had fashioned during the Exodus.

So Jeroboam tapped into religious stirrings deep in the collective soul of the people & made up a new religion, one he presented as *more convenient* than traveling all the way to Jerusalem.

Why make that long, arduous trip to Jerusalem to jump through the difficult religious hoops there, when you can go someplace near home & participate in a form of worship that's a lot easier & far more fun.

Why at the temple in Jerusalem they don't even have an image to look at to help focus your worship!

We have a calf to help our worship be more real & rewarding.

There's so much here for us to learn from.

Jeroboam's fears were unfounded!

Ahijah told him if he was faithful to the Lord, God would secure his throne & dynasty.

His success as king rested in one thing – his dependence on the Lord.

If he wanted to secure the loyalty of the people, he *could have* by being loyal to God.

His first failure was in not heeding the Word & promise of God.

And as usually happens, when we stop trusting in God, we start scheming how we're going to make it work ourselves. That's what Jeroboam did.

Instead of *waiting on God*, he began conniving & came up with a plan that brought untold misery & sorrow to millions.

Abraham & Sarah made the same error & came up with the plan to conceive a son through the use of a surrogate. The world is *still* paying for that failure to trust in & wait on God.

It was fear of losing his *political position* that moved him to make these *religious idols*.

History is filled with the tragic stories of those who've *used religion* for personal gain.

The church has often been used as a ladder for some man or woman's self-serving ambition.

A closer look reveals they've departed from the faith & have set up a **doctrinal golden calf** around which they've convinced others to bow. For many of these modern-day Jeroboams, faithfulness to the Word wasn't drawing a big enough crowd.

People were leaving their church & going to other churches so they came up with a "new & improved" message, something more **appealing**.

That's how the *Faith Movement* got started.

EW Kenyon was a Methodist minister who couldn't draw a crowd so he became a Baptist because their churches were more popular.

When Kenyon saw a dip in the growth curve of Baptist churches in the early 1900's he looked for how to spice up the message.

In his college years he had been influenced by the metaphysical cults & what was called *New Thought*. Today we call it *religious science*.

Kenyon borrowed a lot of the more **appealing** ideas of New Thought & wrapped them up in Christian jargon.

The response was pretty good, especially among those in the new Pentecostal movement.

A few years later, Kenneth Hagin brought Kenyon's ideas & writings into the mainstream of Pentecostalism.

Let's be wise whenever someone has a new & improved way of following the Lord.

Jude 3 says, "We must contend for the faith **once for all** delivered to the saints."

³⁰Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. ³¹He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi.

Once you start down the path of religious innovation, where does it end?

If your goal is to make religion **easier** & more convenient, & you're no longer bound by God's Word, **why not** keep coming up with new ways to accommodate your religion to your schedule & lifestyle?

Jeroboam said, "It's too far & hard to travel to Jerusalem, so here, go to Dan or Bethel."

But the people said, "Well, why go there, that's still a bit of a distance, so hey King, why don't you build an altar on this hilltop next to my house?"

Jeroboam said, "Okay!"

As for priests – we don't need to select guys God singled out for that – anyone who wants a career in the promising new field of religious innovation can apply.

³²Jeroboam ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the feast that was in Judah, and offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And at

**Bethel he installed the priests of the high places which he had made.
33So he made offerings on the altar which he had made at Bethel on
the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month which he had
devised in his own heart. And he ordained a feast for the children of
Israel, and offered sacrifices on the altar and burned incense.**

The Day of Atonement was on the 15th day of the 7th month. Jeroboam made a comparable holiday 1 month later & adorned it with ceremony that made it more attractive & appealing than Yom Kippur.

His aim was to entice people away from going to Jerusalem, so he included elements that would be more entertaining.

Look what he did – He took the religion of Israel, the worship of Yahweh, & turned it into something completely different, though it retained the same name.

It was in fact, *nothing* like the real thing.

It looked & sounded good.

It was democratic & equal opportunity.

It was more convenient & certainly more entertaining.

In a word, it was more *appealing* – and it was also dead wrong! It counted for nothing.

God was not in it.

There's one phrase here that sums it up – in v. 33 –

. . . in the month which he had devised in his own heart.

Ever talk to someone about spiritual things & they say, “I think God is like . . .”

Then they describe some amorphous mass of cosmic goo.

Their God is a wax nose they can bend to fit today's liking.

It's a random, undefined, abstract extension of their own desires.

In the book *Habits of the Heart*, there's a revealing interview with a young nurse named Sheila.

The author describes her as representing many Americans' views on religion.

Speaking about faith & how it operates in her life, Sheila said: “I believe in God but I'm not a religious fanatic. I can't remember the last time I went to church. My faith has carried me a long way. It's '*Sheilatism*.' Just my own little voice.”

This “inner-voice” approach to faith is Jeroboam's religion, and it's utterly empty.

It may make a person *feel good* because it scratches their religious itch – but it's doing nothing for their soul except blinding them to the truth.

The goal of faith ought not be to *make us feel good about ourselves* but to *make us be right with God*.

To that end, we can't come to Him as our heart *devises* but as He's made clear.

We're going to go somewhat more quickly now.

B. An Unnamed Man of God • 13:1-32

1. A prophecy of judgment on Jeroboam • 13:1-3

1And 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. 2Then 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.’ ” ³And 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 was a heavy pronouncement of doom on Jeroboam’s false religion.

The prophet, who remains unnamed throughout this story, gives 2 amazing prophecies –

- 1) The king that shall destroy the altar is named – Josiah, a king who did exactly that was foretold, some 3½ centuries later!
- 2) As proof the yet distant destruction would surely come, the altar would face imminent judgment by being cracked & the ashes inside would spill out.

All this was said as Jeroboam stood right there officiating as high priest. Bold!

2. Jeroboam smitten & restored • 13:4-6

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. ⁵The 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.

This is the first challenge to Jeroboam’s authority and he doesn’t like it.

This upstart can’t just go around rebuking him like this.

So Jeroboam orders his arrest, & as he does, the arm pointing at the guy goes limp & shrivels as the muscles atrophy in a second.

At the same moment, the altar cracks wide open and the ashes spill out, exactly as the prophet said.

What will Jeroboam do now?

⁶Then 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.

God showed incredible grace to Jeroboam – and this grace coupled with the obvious manifestation of God’s displeasure with what Jeroboam’s done will certainly result in his removal of his man-made religion from Israel.

Sadly, that’s not to be. Jeroboam goes on in his sin & rebellion against God.

3. He rejects the king’s invitation • 13:7-10

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

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.”

Look how Jeroboam’s turned spiritual things into just one more a marketplace

industry.

Instead of offering to pay this prophet, he ought to have been asking him what he should do to return to God's favor.

⁸But 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. ⁹For 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.' " **¹⁰So 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*.

Though Jeroboam was king & possessed great authority, the man of God was not swayed to stay.

People's heads are often turned by a show of great power & wealth.

Charles Colson tells about when he worked for the Nixon White House.

When visitors arrived, they were escorted by all the "power centers" & impressive sites of the White House.

People who often come all fired-up with their cause, determined to give the President a piece of their mind.

But by the time the tour was over they were so awed by the power of the Presidency by the time they were ushered into the Oval Office they were reduced to meek sheep content to shake his hand, have their photo taken & leave.

God didn't want this man co-opted by Jeroboam's false system, so he'd been given strict instructions – "Deliver your message and split!"

4. His failure & death • 13:11-32

¹¹Now 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.

¹²And 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.

¹³Then he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey for him; and he rode on it, ¹⁴and 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." ¹⁵Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat bread."

¹⁶And 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. ¹⁷For 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.' "

What moved the old prophet to go after the man of God we aren't told, but it may have been simple jealousy.

God had brought someone all the way from Judah to his hometown when he'd been there all along!

“Why didn't God use me? After all, I live here.”

The answer to that is simple: The old prophet from Bethel didn't *need* a special prophetic word from the Lord.

God's word was quite clear on the issue of idolatry – it was utterly, totally forbidden!

If it was really his desire to be used of God, then why didn't he get up, go out, & rebuke Jeroboam when these altars were first built?

Friends, we never need a special word from God to do what is right!

And we mustn't wait for God to give us some special word of prophecy or perform a miracle as a sign that we're to do something or do something He's already said we're to do.

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.

Whatever his motivation for going after the prophet from Judah, he *lied* about the angel appearing to him.

But the younger man yielded & returned with him.

Though he'd said no to Jeroboam, he caved in to the older prophet; probably convinced by his reputation as a past servant of the Lord & his talk of having seen an angel.

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*. ²⁸Then 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. ²⁹And 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. ³⁰Then he laid the corpse in his own tomb; and they mourned over him, saying, “Alas, my brother!” ³¹So 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. ³²For 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.”

This old prophet who’d not heard from God for a while tricked the younger man into coming back to Bethel with him.

Then, the older prophet was shocked to discover God had given him a Word for the man from Judah – it was the announcement of judgment!

Sure enough, on the way home a lion attacked & killed him but then didn’t eat the man or attack the donkey.

The 2 animals just stood over the corpse as though guarding it.

It didn’t take long for the news to get back to Bethel, where the old prophet knew right away it was the man from Judah and went out to see.

He took him home and buried him and gave instructions to his sons they were to bury him in the same tomb when his time came.

Okay, this is just plain strange! What is going on here?

Just this – this passage teaches us an important lesson – We must obey what God has told us, *regardless* of what anyone else says.

The reason he’s left nameless throughout this story is to add to the weight that this is a lesson for all of us.

This young prophet from Judah had heard a distinct, clear & specific Word from God.

Go announce judgment on the false religion of Israel.

He did, and the signs given came to pass exactly as foretold.

Jeroboam’s hand withered, and was made whole again – all miracles!

There’s absolutely no doubt as to this man’s anointing & power.

So God’s direction about not eating or drinking or returning the same way were clear & specific.

He knew that so when the king invited him, he declined.

When the older prophet invited him, he declined again.

But when the elder started his God-talk, the resolve of the younger man weakened and he consented.

But wait – God’s Word was still clear. He was NOT to stay & eat or drink.

How does someone else’s claim to revelation alter what this man from Judah KNEW to be true?

If God meant something different now, He would have told him.

Here’s the lesson—When you know God has spoken to you, don’t heed the voices

of those who say something else.
Even if they're a respected Christian leader, pastor, or prophet.
Even if they claim to have had visions & dreams and special messages from
the Spirit.

C. Jeroboam Rebellion Persists • 13:33-34

³³After 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. ³⁴And this thing was the sin of the house of Jeroboam, so as to exterminate and destroy *it* from the face of the earth.

After all the amazing evidence of God's power & grace, Jeroboam refused to change.

He got *worse*, which is usually the story of people who have amazing evidences of God's grace but refused to repent.

For this, God determined to eradicate his dynasty.