**A MAN OF GOD WARNS JEROBOAM**

1 Kings 13:1-34

Key verse 8

“But the man of God answered the king, “Even if you were to give me half your possessions, I would not go with you, nor would I eat bread or drink water here.””

**Introduction**

God is gracious and patient in serving sinful men and women more than we can possibly imagine. Praise His immense patience for us. In today’s passage God sent a man of God from Judah to Israel so that Jeroboam may turn back to the Lord and his word of warning in chapter 11. But he did not repent of his sins and got worse. But at the same time we may learn how important it is to show reverence to the word of God as God’s servants. May the Lord help us to grow as God’s messengers who can deliver His absolute message in our society no matter how much people compromise. May the Lord help us to learn how to uphold God’s word and His authority above anything else in the world. Amen.

1. Read verses 1-10. What did a man of God prophesy against the altar at Bethel? (1-3) What happened to Jeroboam when he did not accept the word of the Lord? (4-5) What else did he ask him? (6) What can we learn from him who refused the king’s invitation? (7-10)

1-1, Read verses 1-10.

By the word of the Lord a man of God came from Judah to Bethel, as Jeroboam was standing by the altar to make an offering. 2 By the word of the Lord he cried out against the altar: “Altar, altar! This is what the Lord says: ‘A son named Josiah will be born to the house of David. On you he will sacrifice the priests of the high places who make offerings here, and human bones will be burned on you.’” 3 That same day the man of God gave a sign: “This is the sign the Lord has declared: The altar will be split apart and the ashes on it will be poured out.” 4 When King Jeroboam heard what the man of God cried out against the altar at Bethel, he stretched out his hand from the altar and said, “Seize him!” But the hand he stretched out toward the man shriveled up, so that he could not pull it back. 5 Also, the altar was split apart and its ashes poured out according to the sign given by the man of God by the word of the Lord. 6 Then the king said to the man of God, “Intercede with the Lord your God and pray for me that my hand may be restored.” So the man of God interceded with the Lord, and the king’s hand was restored and became as it was before. 7 The king said to the man of God, “Come home with me for a meal, and I will give you a gift.” 8 But the man of God answered the king, “Even if you were to give me half your possessions, I would not go with you, nor would I eat bread or drink water here. 9 For I was commanded by the word of the Lord: ‘You must not eat bread or drink water or return by the way you came.’” 10 So he took another road and did not return by the way he had come to Bethel.

1-2, What did a man of God prophesy against the altar at Bethel? (1-3)

***By the word of the Lord a man of God came from Judah to Bethel, as Jeroboam was standing by the altar to make an offering. 2 By the word of the Lord he cried out against the altar: “Altar, altar! This is what the Lord says: ‘A son named Josiah will be born to the house of David. On you he will sacrifice the priests of the high places who make offerings here, and human bones will be burned on you.’”***

* It seemed that there was no man of God in the northern kingdom who could deliver God’s message. It was a sad condition of Jeroboam’s kingdom.
* But it is no problem at all. If Jeroboam would not have Jehovah's priests, God sends His prophet into his land.
* This man without mentioning his name was used by God. He demonstrates that one does not need to be famous to be significantly used by God.
* This is a remarkable prophecy that would be precisely fulfilled about 350 years later. [2 Kings 23:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2kings/23/15/s_336015)-16 documents the fulfillment of this prophecy in the days of Josiah, King of Judah.

*“Even the altar at Bethel, the high place made by Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin—even that altar and high place he demolished. He burned the high place and ground it to powder, and burned the Asherah pole also.* *Then Josiah looked around, and when he saw the tombs that were there on the hillside, he had the bones removed from them and burned on the altar to defile it, in accordance with the word of the Lord proclaimed by the man of God who foretold these things.”*

***3 That same day the man of God gave a sign: “This is the sign the Lord has declared: The altar will be split apart and the ashes on it will be poured out.”***

* The same day an immediate sign was given to confirm the word to the present-day hearers. Surely the altar shall split apart, and the ashes on it shall be poured out.
* This would be a convincing sign, and a direct rebuke to the idolatrous worship at that altar.

1-3, What happened to Jeroboam when he did not accept the word of the Lord? (4-5)

***4 When King Jeroboam heard what the man of God cried out against the altar at Bethel, he stretched out his hand from the altar and said, “Seize him!” But the hand he stretched out toward the man shriveled up, so that he could not pull it back. 5 Also, the altar was split apart and its ashes poured out according to the sign given by the man of God by the word of the Lord.***

* No sooner had Jeroboam heard the word of God than he sought to silence the messenger rather than respond to the message in repentance.
* The prophecy from the man of God was the warning message of coming judgment and he was invited to repentance. But he did not accept this invitation.
* His hand withered and he could not pull it back to himself. God judged the disobedient king instantly. He also fulfilled the immediate word against the altar The altar also was split apart.

1-4, What else did he ask him? (6)

***6 Then the king said to the man of God, “Intercede with the Lord your God and pray for me that my hand may be restored.” So the man of God interceded with the Lord, and the king’s hand was restored and became as it was before.***

* Jeroboam asked the man of God to intercede with the Lord his God and pray for him that his hand might be restored. He knew that there was his only hope in the Lord and in His representative for the intercession.
* But he did not repent of his sins sincerely. It was only for a moment. Wanting to receive something from God is not the same as repentance.
* So the man of God did interced with the LORD, and the king's hand was restored. This was great mercy from God who answered the prayer as well as the man of God who prayed for his enemy king.

1-5, What can we learn from him who refused the king’s invitation? (7-10)

***7 The king said to the man of God, “Come home with me for a meal, and I will give you a gift.” 8 But the man of God answered the king, “Even if you were to give me half your possessions, I would not go with you, nor would I eat bread or drink water here. 9 For I was commanded by the word of the Lord: ‘You must not eat bread or drink water or return by the way you came.’” 10 So he took another road and did not return by the way he had come to Bethel.***

* Jeroboam wanted to refresh and reward him, without any repentance from his sins based on the fact that he delivered the message of judgment.
* The man of God refused the invitation as well as any gift no matter how handsome it could be, based on a prior warning from God. To accept Jeroboam's invitation would mean the very fellowship with his idolatry.
* We can learn from him and his absolute attitude toward God and the word of God. If he had wanted to be rewarded or become rich, he could have disobeyed God.

1. Read verses 11-25. Describe the incident involving a prophet living in Bethel and a man of God. (11-19, 2 Cor 11:13-15) What can we learn about the man’s disobedience and God’s serious judgment upon him? (20-25, 1 Peter 4:17)

2-1, Read verses 11-25.

11 Now there was a certain old prophet living in Bethel, whose sons came and told him all that the man of God had done there that day. They also told their father what he had said to the king. 12 Their father asked them, “Which way did he go?” And his sons showed him which road the man of God from Judah had taken. 13 So he said to his sons, “Saddle the donkey for me.” And when they had saddled the donkey for him, he mounted it 14 and rode after the man of God. He found him sitting under an oak tree and asked, “Are you the man of God who came from Judah?” “I am,” he replied. 15 So the prophet said to him, “Come home with me and eat.” 16 The man of God said, “I cannot turn back and go with you, nor can I eat bread or drink water with you in this place. 17 I have been told by the word of the Lord: ‘You must not eat bread or drink water there or return by the way you came.’” 18 The old prophet answered, “I too am a prophet, as you are. And an angel said to me by the word of the Lord: ‘Bring him back with you to your house so that he may eat bread and drink water.’” (But he was lying to him.) 19 So the man of God returned with him and ate and drank in his house. 20 While they were sitting at the table, the word of the Lord came to the old prophet who had brought him back. 21 He cried out to the man of God who had come from Judah, “This is what the Lord says: ‘You have defied the word of the Lord and have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you. 22 You came back and ate bread and drank water in the place where he told you not to eat or drink. Therefore your body will not be buried in the tomb of your ancestors.’” 23 When the man of God had finished eating and drinking, the prophet who had brought him back saddled his donkey for him. 24 As he went on his way, a lion met him on the road and killed him, and his body was left lying on the road, with both the donkey and the lion standing beside it. 25 Some people who passed by saw the body lying there, with the lion standing beside the body, and they went and reported it in the city where the old prophet lived.

2-2, Describe the incident involving a prophet living in Bethel and a man of God. (11-19, 2 Cor 11:13-15)

***Now there was a certain old prophet living in Bethel, whose sons came and told him all that the man of God had done there that day. They also told their father what he had said to the king. 12 Their father asked them, “Which way did he go?” And his sons showed him which road the man of God from Judah had taken. 13 So he said to his sons, “Saddle the donkey for me.” And when they had saddled the donkey for him, he mounted it 14 and rode after the man of God. He found him sitting under an oak tree and asked, “Are you the man of God who came from Judah?” “I am,” he replied. 15 So the prophet said to him, “Come home with me and eat.” 16 The man of God said, “I cannot turn back and go with you, nor can I eat bread or drink water with you in this place. 17 I have been told by the word of the Lord: ‘You must not eat bread or drink water there or return by the way you came.’” 18 The old prophet answered, “I too am a prophet, as you are. And an angel said to me by the word of the Lord: ‘Bring him back with you to your house so that he may eat bread and drink water.’” (But he was lying to him.) 19 So the man of God returned with him and ate and drank in his house.***

* This prophet from Bethel invited the man of God to his home, as Jeroboam had invited him. The man of God refused again just as he had done to the king.
* God had specifically told him to return to Judah without accepting hospitality, and to return a different way.
* The prophet from Bethel lies to the man of God from Judah. He said to him, “I am also a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD.”
* The prophet from Bethel gave a false word from God, trying to persuade the man of God from Judah to change his course from doing **exactly** what God told him.
* Perhaps this was true that the angel told him to do so. Then it must be a deceiving angel. Satan and his messengers can appear as angels of light (2 Cor 11:13-15).

*13 For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. 15 It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.*

* The man of God from Judah ended up listening to the lie from the prophet of Bethel.
* No matter how good it might be, it was the duty of the man of God to resist it. He had a direct and personal word from God to guide his actions, and should receive no other word. His failure at this point ended his usefulness as a man of God.
* God never contradicts Himself in His dealings with His servants. Let us be true to His commands, refusing to compromise with the trajectory of disobedience.

2-3, What can we learn about the man’s disobedience and God’s serious judgment upon him? (20-25, 1 Peter 4:17)

***20 While they were sitting at the table, the word of the Lord came to the old prophet who had brought him back. 21 He cried out to the man of God who had come from Judah, “This is what the Lord says: ‘You have defied the word of the Lord and have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you. 22 You came back and ate bread and drank water in the place where he told you not to eat or drink. Therefore your body will not be buried in the tomb of your ancestors.’”***

* The old prophet from Bethel now received a true prophecy while the man of God from Judah ate at his table.
* This is an example of an important principle of the way God works. We think that strict judgment should begin among the most ungodly, but often God begins strict judgment among His own people(Peter 4:17). This is because God knows that the world will not be reached and enlightened when His people are compromising and disobedient. What a warning it is!

*For it is time for judgment to begin with God’s household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?*

***23 When the man of God had finished eating and drinking, the prophet who had brought him back saddled his donkey for him. 24 As he went on his way, a lion met him on the road and killed him, and his body was left lying on the road, with both the donkey and the lion standing beside it. 25 Some people who passed by saw the body lying there, with the lion standing beside the body, and they went and reported it in the city where the old prophet lived.***

* A lion met him on the road and killed him. In this way the word of God through the old prophet from Bethel was fulfilled.
* And there, men passed by and saw the corpse thrown on the road, and the lion standing by the corpse.
* This demonstrates that this was no mere accident, but something unique from God. The lion did not attack the donkey, nor did he attack the men who passed by.
* This lion was on a special mission of judgment from God, and seems to be more obedient than the man of God from Judah was.

1. Read verses 26-34. What did the prophet do for the cursed man? (26-30) What did he ask his sons to do when he died? (31-32) What can we learn from Jeroboam’s lack of repentance and the lesson of the cursed man? (33-34)

3-1, Read verses 26-34.

26 When the prophet who had brought him back from his journey heard of it, he said, “It is the man of God who defied the word of the Lord. The Lord has given him over to the lion, which has mauled him and killed him, as the word of the Lord had warned him.”

27 The prophet said to his sons, “Saddle the donkey for me,” and they did so. 28 Then he went out and found the body lying on the road, with the donkey and the lion standing beside it. The lion had neither eaten the body nor mauled the donkey. 29 So the prophet picked up the body of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back to his own city to mourn for him and bury him. 30 Then he laid the body in his own tomb, and they mourned over him and said, “Alas, my brother!”

31 After burying him, he said to his sons, “When I die, bury me in the grave where the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones. 32 For the message he declared by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel and against all the shrines on the high places in the towns of Samaria will certainly come true.”

33 Even after this, Jeroboam did not change his evil ways, but once more appointed priests for the high places from all sorts of people. Anyone who wanted to become a priest he consecrated for the high places. 34 This was the sin of the house of Jeroboam that led to its downfall and to its destruction from the face of the earth.

3-2, What did the prophet do for the cursed man? (26-30)

***When the prophet who had brought him back from his journey heard of it, he said, “It is the man of God who defied the word of the Lord. The Lord has given him over to the lion, which has mauled him and killed him, as the word of the Lord had warned him.” 27 The prophet said to his sons, “Saddle the donkey for me,” and they did so. 28 Then he went out and found the body lying on the road, with the donkey and the lion standing beside it. The lion had neither eaten the body nor mauled the donkey. 29 So the prophet picked up the body of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back to his own city to mourn for him and bury him. 30 Then he laid the body in his own tomb, and they mourned over him and said, “Alas, my brother!”***

* Though he lied to him, led him into sin, and prophesied judgment against him, the prophet from Bethel still respected the man of God from Judah.

3-3, What did he ask his sons to do when he died? (31-32)

***31 After burying him, he said to his sons, “When I die, bury me in the grave where the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones. 32 For the message he declared by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel and against all the shrines on the high places in the towns of Samaria will certainly come true.”***

* He understood that the word he spoke against the Jeroboam required a courage he did not have. But now he confirmed the word of the man of God against Jeroboam and the altar at Bethel like Nicodemus or Joseph A. who boldly asked the body of Jesus after crucifixion.

3-4, What can we learn from Jeroboam’s lack of repentance and the lesson of the cursed man? (33-34)

***33 Even after this, Jeroboam did not change his evil ways, but once more appointed priests for the high places from all sorts of people. Anyone who wanted to become a priest he consecrated for the high places. 34 This was the sin of the house of Jeroboam that led to its downfall and to its destruction from the face of the earth.***

* Jeroboam had a great opportunity, especially through Ahijah recorded in [1 Kings 11:38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/1kings/11/38/s_302038). But he wasted such a golden opportunity. But it was not too late.
* In today's passage he had ample chance to turn back to God. But he got worse. He became a great curse to every generation of the northern kingdom after that.
* Even at the end of the Kingdom of Israel, Jeroboam's sin was remembered. For He tore Israel from the house of David, and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel from following the LORD, and made them commit a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, until the LORD removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day. ([2 Kings 17:21-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2kings/17/21-23/s_330021))

**Conclusion**

Above all, Jeroboam is an example of sinful failure. He failed despite great blessing and favor from the Lord God. He failed for the sake of mere political advantage. He failed and led an entire nation into idolatry. He failed despite specific warnings to repent. Even the man of God also miserably failed despite initial success when he did not obey God’s word absolutely to the end. May the Lord help us to soften our hearts so that we may be sensitive to our sins and idol worship and repent of our sins before God and be used by Him to the end. Amen.  **One word: Repent!**