

The Man of God

One of the most intriguing stories in the Old Testament is found in 1 Kings 13:1-25. After the kingdom of Israel divided under the leadership of King Rehoboam, God gave Jeroboam ten of the tribes (1 Kings 12:16-25). These ten tribes would form the northern kingdom of Israel.

Almost as soon as Jeroboam became king, he began disobeying God. Due to his fear that his citizens would kill him and return to Rehoboam, he set up a false system of worship (1 Kings 12:25-33). Golden calves were constructed in Dan and Bethel, and a new priesthood was invented.

The Man of God

- A prophet known as “the man of God” was sent by God to rebuke Jeroboam. When he arrived, Jeroboam was offering burning incense on the altar. The prophet foretold how Josiah (300 years later) would burn the bones of the priests of the altar (1 Kings 13:1-2). He also predicted that the altar would be split and that the ashes would be poured out (1 Kings 13:3).
- Jeroboam was angered by the words of the man of God. He called for the prophet to be seized, but his hand started drying up (1 Kings 13:4). This was an act of God!
- The altar was then split, and the ashes were poured out (1 Kings 13:5).
- Jeroboam pleaded with the man of God to pray to the Lord for him to be healed (1 Kings 13:6).
- The man of God prayed, and Jeroboam’s hand is restored (1 Kings 13:6).
- Jeroboam asked for the man of God to enter his home. He wanted to reward him, but the prophet declined. He said that God told him not to eat and drink in Bethel or even return home the same way he came (1 Kings 13:7-10).
- Some sons of an old prophet told their father about these events (1 Kings 13:11). The old prophet found the man of God and invited him into his home. He lied by telling the man of God that God was okay with him doing so (1 Kings 13:12-18).
- The man of God believed the old prophet’s lie. As a result, he would not make it back to Judah (1 Kings 13:19-23).
- As the man of God made his way back home, he was killed by a lion (1 Kings 13:24-25).

The Lessons

- Be careful who you listen to (1 Kings 13:1-3, 9, 18). Everything went well for the man of God when he listened to God. His problems came when he believed a lie! Will we also blindly believe what others say or investigate the truth ourselves (1 John 4:1)?
- Take sin seriously. In the eyes of God, the man of God’s disobedience wasn’t a trivial matter. It was so serious to the Lord that He punished him with death!
- Obedience matters. King Saul learned this lesson the hard way (1 Samuel 15:8-11, 22-23). There will always be negative consequences when God’s will is disobeyed.

Conclusion:

Will you learn from the mistakes of the foolish prophet?

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