



1 Kings 12-13

Tape #7107
I Kings 12-13
By Chuck Smith

Shall we turn now in our Bibles to I Kings, chapter twelve. King Solomon has died. It's sort of interesting to me that with the seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, there is only listed, one child, of Solomon. Isn't that interesting? You wonder how many he actually had. The scriptures only list one, and he was a jerk. I mean, Solomon, the wisest man, and has for a son to inherit the throne, this kid Rehoboam.

And Rehoboam went to Shechem: that all of Israel were gathered to Shechem to make him king (12:1).

So, Shechem is in the area of the tribe of Ephraim. There has always been a jealousy between the tribe of Ephraim and the tribe of Judah. So, probably to sort of confirm his reign over the whole of Israel, rather than being crowned, or the coronation ceremonies taking place in Jerusalem, that would only exacerbate the um, division that was already there under current, he went to Shechem, in order to be crowned as the king over all of Israel. Shechem lies pretty much in the central part of the country. It is in the area of modern day, Nablus. It is in the place between mount Gerizim, and mount Ebal. It has quite a biblical history, going back to the time of Abraham, one of the first places that Abraham built an altar in this land that God had promised to him, was in Shechem. Later, Jacob stayed in Shechem, sojourned there, and in fact bought property for his own grave in Shechem, and was buried there.

It came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt (12:2):)

Now, Jeroboam was a natural leader. The prophet Ahijah, had come to him, and tore his new robe, and he gave him ten pieces, and he said, "The kingdom of Israel is going to be torn, and ten tribes are to be given to you". And Solomon heard of this prophecy, sought to slay Jeroboam to keep it from fulfillment. Jeroboam fled to Egypt for safety, but now that he hears the death of Solomon, he returns.

And they that were sent [So, went, there were those, there was a group who went down to Egypt,] and called him. And Jeroboam and the congregation of Israel came, and they spoke to Rehoboam, saying, Your father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve you. And he said, Depart, come back in three days, I'll give you an answer (12:3-4).

So there is a legitimate complaint. Solomon had been a great king, as far as bringing the nation in the zenith of glory. They had built a great temple in Jerusalem, they had built the walls around Jerusalem, they had built many marvelous buildings in Jerusalem, they had fortified the cities, and built the cities from Megiddo, and Gezer, and up in the north, Hazor. He had really put the people to work. He had thousands of slaves, and they built these marvelous monuments.

Solomon later, in the book of Ecclesiastes or, not later time wise, but in the book of Ecclesiastes, which we'll get to later, Solomon wrote of his search to find fulfillment in life. He had not found it in wisdom, he had not found it in wealth. So he reasoned that it could be found in building great, lasting monuments. "That after I'm gone, people will be able to look at these great buildings, of these great cities, and all, and say, 'Look what Solomon did!'. So he applied himself unto the building of all these great monuments. When he had finished, he said, "It still did not fulfill me". He was still empty. He still cried out, "Vanity, vanity, all is vanity, and vexation of spirit!". He found out the answers to life did not lie even in the building of great monuments, for your names' sake.

So they are asking for a reprieve. You know, "Lighten up the load, your dad was heavy".

So king Rehoboam consulted with the older men, those men that had been the counselors of his father Solomon, while he was still alive. And he said unto them, How do you advise me to answer these people? [Now it could be that he asked for three days, in order that he might return to Jerusalem. It is about a twelve hour walk from Shechem to Jerusalem. So, he probably wanted to return to Jerusalem, get counsel, spend a

day in counseling, then come back. So, "The third day, I'll talk to you about this". So,] *These older men spoke to him, and they said, If you will be a servant unto this people this day, [In other words, if you'll give in to them today, for just a day,] and will serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, they will be your servants for ever (12:6-7).*

"You can solidify yourself as king over them. Just go ahead and give in to their demands." But he didn't like that counsel. He was impetuous, he was young.

He forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, he consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him: And he said unto them, [Maybe you know some of the young guys that were in the harem with him, when he was growing up. He said,] What counsel do you give that we may answer the people, who have spoke to me, saying, Make the yoke which your father put on us lighter? The young men that were grown up with him spoke to him, and they said, Thus shall you speak to the people that spake unto you saying, Your father made our yoke heavy, make it lighter; thus shall you say to them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins (12:8-10).

"You think you've had it tough man? You haven't seen anything yet!" You know.

And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I'm gonna add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, [Probably, usually with the slave laborers, they were driven to their labor with whips.] but I'm gonna chastise you with scorpions (12:11).

Now this is thought to be, in fact the Romans had a whip with little hooks in it, which they called the scorpio. Because these little hooks were like a sting of a scorpion. When they would lay the lash on them, it was more than just a leather lash. It had these little barbs in it that would really sting you when hit with it. So, you, you know, "My father used you, the whips to chastise you, but hey, I'm gonna use the scorpio, or these barbed whips".

So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had appointed, and so the king answered the people roughly, he forsook the old men's counsel that they gave to him; And he spoke to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, he chastised you with whips, but I'm gonna chastise you with the scorpions. Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying, which the Lord spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat (12:12-15).

So, surface wise, it looks like he's just stupid. Not listening to the advice of the older men, following the hot headed counsel of these young guys, which brought the division of the kingdom. And he brought his kingdom down, with a few words, he wiped out his authority, his, his uh reign over all these people. The division came as a result of this foolish, uh advice, and the words that he spoke to these people. But, looking behind the scene, God was behind it, because it had already been prophesied that Jeroboam was to be given ten tribes. So, in a way, Rehoboam committed folly, but yet he was destined to this end, because of the prophecy that had already been given.

Now, we have a problem often times with something like this, you say, "Ah the poor guy, he didn't have a chance!", you know, if he's destined to be stupid, he's gonna be stupid. What can you do? If God's already set the plan out, you're sort of a victim, of sorts. Why can you fault the guy for what he did, when what he did was already destined to be done? We have a very difficult time with this business of predestination, and trying to balance in our minds, where our responsibility comes in.

If God has already determined a thing that is gonna take place, then how can I change it? Thus, what place does human responsibility have? I'm sort of a victim, or am I not of fate, and of the predestined plans of God? And thus why, and how can you say that I really have a choice, if this has already been established in the mind of God?

This becomes one of those difficult, naughty kind of problems, theological problems, that uh, cause divisions among the churches. For there are those who get over on that predestined, sovereign side, and they begin to logically follow the conclusions that would come from this. If God has predestined something to happen, then there is no way that you can stop it from happening, and if God has predestined that you are the instrument through which it happens, then you are the victim, and you cannot help yourself. Therefore how could God judge you for doing something, when He's already predestined that you're supposed to do, even

though it is wrong?

Where does human responsibility come in? And you can take that sovereignty of God, and that predestination of God, and you can carry it to a logical extreme, or conclusion, and it eliminates man's human responsibility entirely.

On the other hand, the scripture teaches that man is responsible. That God has given to us the capacity of choice, and God demands that we exercise that capacity of choice. On the other side of the coin, there are those that go so far as to say, that God, in giving you the capacity of choice, also doesn't know the choice you're gonna make, until you've made it. And they carry it out unto the extreme on the other side. And they get into the two theological camps, and then they start arguing with each other. And they both can give scriptures to prove their points. Because the scripture does teach the sovereignty of God, and the scripture does teach the responsibility of man.

Now if you carry the sovereignty of God to the extreme, then you get into the idea that Jesus didn't die for everybody. What they call, limited atonement. Jesus only died for those that were predestined to believe. And if you weren't predestined to believe, then He didn't die for you. And they get into what they call irresistible grace. If God has destined you to be a child, and He has predestined that His grace is going to be poured out upon you, you can't resist it. You've got irresistible grace! No way you can reject it or refuse it. So you see, it eliminates the human responsibility. That's carrying it too far. Because the bible does teach that you have to make a choice. The bible does exhort you to make that choice. The bible also says, "Whosoever will may come and drink of the water of life freely. That whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life".

Well you say, "Chuck, how do you reconcile it?", I don't. I can't. I tried for years to, and I found myself just caught in a game of mental gymnastics, and I never came down. I mean, it was just, you could take either side, and just, you get confused and all, trying to reconcile it. One day, I walked out of the room, having read this book on the sovereignty of God, threw the thing down, and I said, "God I can't reconcile these things! You're sovereignty, and my responsibility, I can't reconcile!". God spoke to my heart, and said, "I never asked you to. I only asked you to believe it". I said, "Okay. I can handle that". So, I believe that God is sovereign. I believe in predestination, but I also believe in human responsibility. You say, "Wait a minute, you can't reconcile...", "No, I can't reconcile those". But the bible teaches both. So I believe them both.

Now, faith is believing what you do not understand, and though I cannot bring it together in my mind, as someone said, "They are parallel truths". Our problem is that we're always trying to bring them together. But they run in parallel lines, and it is only in eternity, that they come together. Now, the problem is, my capacity to understand and to think, compared with God's capacity. This is where the difference comes. I have such limited understanding. I don't know what's going to happen, until it happens. Many times when I make a choice, I don't know what the result of that choice is going to be. Maybe it's gonna work out, maybe it's gonna be disastrous. Maybe that was one of the wisest things I ever did, maybe it's one of the dumbest things I ever did. And I've made choices on both sides. I've made some good choices, I've made some bad choices.

God is omniscient. God knows all things, which means that He can't learn anything new. If anything can be known, or will ever be known, God already knows it, because He's omniscient. Thus He is never taken by surprise, thus He always knows the outcome of every choice, before the choice is ever made. Now, when you have omniscience, when you know everything, anything, and everything that can be known, you already know. When you can't learn anything new. When anything that is ever gonna happen, you already know, then how do you think? Do you have to think? So as God is dealing, He is dealing from this realm of omniscience. He already knows the choice that was going to be made, the outcome of that choice. Thus God can speak then, of the things that are going to be, before they ever happen, because He knows they're going to happen, and He also knows the circumstances by which they are gonna be brought to pass.

If God is ever going to know who's going to be saved, He's always known who was going to be saved. As we've said, when you get to heaven, God isn't going to say, "What a surprise! How did you get here?". You're not going to surprise Him! Thus, coming from the base of omniscience, which I can't even fathom. I

can't think in those kind of sets, my mind doesn't work in that set. Now, if I had omniscience, I could reconcile these two truths. If you have omniscience, you can reconcile them. But if you don't have omniscience, don't bother trying. You'll only be wasting your energy and your time. Unless you just want to burn up a few brain calories, and then you can play with it.

So, we see God's plan, working out. Rehoboam listening to the counsel of these fellows. Making this foolish mistake, that's gonna divide the kingdom. But behind the thing, God has already said this was going to happen, because God knew that it was gonna happen. He knew that Rehoboam was gonna be foolish enough to listen to these young counselors, so God already spoke of the thing.

So it is only the acting out, you know there is a song that says, "We spend our lives as a tale that was told". In other words, as far as God is concerned, it's already, you know it's, well it probably the best illustration that we can give of this is, a rerun of a football game. Now when the game is being played, you don't know what's gonna happen this next play. As the guy is going out for the pass, and as he lets go, you don't know the quarterback is gonna get sacked, and the pass is gonna get intercepted, and the guy's gonna run for a touchdown, and that team's gonna win, or whether or not the guy's gonna catch the pass, and his team's gonna make the touchdown, and they're gonna win. So you're excited! You watch, the adrenaline is flowing, you're glued, you know. And you see the thing unfold. You get excited, "He caught it! He made it! We won! We won!", you know, and you're jumping up and down, you're all excited, and, "Whee hee!", and oh boy just, "This is great!", you know, and everybody's slapping everybody on the back, and you're having a great time you know.

Alright the next day, you watch that game again on TV. Now are you tense? "Maybe he'll drop it this time" Ha, ha! "Maybe we'll lose", you know. No. You already know what's gonna happen. You know you don't get nearly as excited. You can, you can play it cool now. You don't need to get worried because you're behind six points. You know that he's gonna make the point after, and you're gonna win. And, and so, it's something that's already happened, you're watching the reenactment of it, and thus as God looks at history unfolding, because of this omniscience of God, it's like watching a rerun. You know the things are gonna transpire, you know the things are gonna be happening, because you know all things.

And so, you see the difficulty of us trying to understand how God thinks, and how God works, because it's in a whole different set. We can't even understand how people of other cultures think or reason. They have a different set of values, a different sets of evaluating situations and all. And we have a hard time understanding people of other cultures. Much less understanding an infinite God. Now faith is believing what I don't understand. I don't understand how God can be sovereign, and yet I have to be responsible, but yet the Bible teaches both, and so I believe that. I just leave it there.

Understanding only what I can reason out in my mind, is not faith. Just believing only that which I can understand is reason, or rationale. Believing what I don't understand takes faith. So God has forced me to a place of faith. Where I have to believe, what in my mind, are irreconcilable positions. Positions that I can't bring together, and reconcile them in my mind, and yet I believe both, and that's the only place I've been able to rest. You know, I used to get on one side of the argument, get on the other side of the argument. I was back and forth, back and forth, and I'd read the guys on the human responsibility, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, boy that's right", and then I'd read the guys on the sovereignty of God, "Yeah, yeah, yeah that's right", you know and I'd follow their logic and all, and I'd say, "Yeah", you know. Here I was trying to bring them together, and I couldn't. It was real wrestling until God spoke to me, and said, "Hey, didn't ask you to reconcile. Just believe it". So we got a deal!

So when all of Israel saw that the king hearkened not to them, they said, [Hey!] What portion do we have with David. we don't have any inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: and you can see to your own house, David. [You know, "You can, you want to play hard ball, go ahead. Play it with your own tribe. You're not gonna rule over us! Come on guys, let's go home!"] And so they all departed to their own homes. But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. And then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was the tax collector [The internal revenue, who was over the taxes, the tribute.] and the tribes of Israel stoned him, and he died. ["Quit cheering!"] Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him a chariot, and flee to Jerusalem (12:16-18).

I mean, Hey insurrection you know. He sends out the guy to collect it, had the audacity to send this guy out to collect taxes, after this kind of a thing.

So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day (12:19).

It was a breach that was never healed. The prophecies of scripture in Ezekiel, God declared that, "When He would gather the people again into their land in the last days, there would not be two nations, but only one nation". Definite prophecy, that God would take the sticks of Joseph and all, and make them one. And so there is one nation of Israel today, they're not divided into the northern and southern, or the ten, and the two tribes, but they've all gathered as one nation today. It took that long for the breach to be healed, and that again, was the fulfillment of prophecy.

So it came to pass when, all of Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him to the congregation, and they made him the king over all of Israel: [Thus the word of God, through Ahijah was fulfilled.] And there was none in the ten tribes that followed the house of David, except the tribe of Judah, and Benjamin. And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, a hundred and eighty thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, and to bring the kingdom back to Rehoboam (12:20-21).

He was going to wage war against Jeroboam. He was gonna force them back.

And the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying, Speak to Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, the king of Judah, to all of the house of Judah to Benjamin, and the remnant of the people, and say, Thus saith the Lord, You shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this is from me. [This whole breach and division.] They hearkened therefore to the word of the Lord, and returned to depart, according to the word of the Lord (12:22-24).

So this civil war was stopped by the word of prophecy.

Then Jeroboam [The king of the northern ten tribes.] built Shechem [That is built up the city of Shechem there,] in mount Ephraim, and he dwelt there; [He made it more or less the capital of the northern kingdom.] and he went out from there, and built another city Penuel. [Which was a fortress city, to guard against invasions from the south.] And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: If the people go to do their sacrifices at the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, [So he started reasoning this thing out. If the people go back to Jerusalem, three times a year, which was required unto the law, the three major feasts to present yourself before God in Jerusalem. When they go down to the temple, and they see the glorious temple, and they see the worship and the sacrifices, and all,] surely their hearts will be brought back [They'll think, "Oh man, we made a mistake setting up the kingdom, you know we should be united. So in order to keep them from this reuniting,] He decided that he would make two calves of gold, and tell the people, [Look] It's really too much for you to go to Jerusalem: these are your gods, O Israel, which brought you out of the land of Egypt (12:25-28).

"Let these represent your gods." And so he sought to make an easy religion for the people. Make it easy for them to worship their gods. "You don't have to go to Jerusalem, that's too hard of a journey, too hard of a trip. We'll make it easy on you. These two golden calves, they are your gods. We'll set one up in Dan, the northern extremity of the kingdom, so that you don't have to come all the way down from the upper Galilee, but all of those in the area of Galilee can go up to Dan to worship. And then we'll set one in Bethel, so that those of Ephraim and in the southern portion, can come to Bethel, and worship the golden calf there."

And so he established these two altars, one in Dan, and one in Bethel. And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even to Dan. And he made a house of the high places, and he made priests of the lowest people, [Most of the Levites went with Rehoboam to Jerusalem, and so he didn't choose the Levites for the priests, but just you know would ordain anybody to the priesthood.] And he ordained a feast in the eighth month, the fifteenth day of the month, [Which was a, traditionally the people were used to the feasts of the tabernacles, as sort of a thanksgiving time of a feast for them, and uh so he copied that feast, only made it a month later. It corresponded with their harvest season, like Thanksgiving corresponds with ours. Because these holidays are traditionally ingrained. You know if they would suddenly announce, you know, "There's not gonna be anymore celebration of Thanksgiving, and Christmas!"] You know the whole country would rebel. It's tradition, it's deeply ingrained, and you don't want these holidays

taken away from you. “The family gets together, we have turkey every Thanksgiving, and pumpkin pie! What do you mean, no pumpkin pie?!”, you know, I mean just, “This is traditional you know!”. So people are bound by these traditions, and they’re deeply ingrained, they’re just a part of our very, you know, whole makeup, the celebrating of these things, and we look forward to them. So, he set it up in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, which would more or less take care of them in the north.] *and it was like the feast that was in Judah, [He copied it.] but he offered it upon the altar that was there. So he did in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: [And so they offered their sacrifices before these golden calves that they had set up, the two of them.] and he placed in Bethel the priests in the high places which he had made. And so he offered up on the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even the month in which he had devised of his own heart; [Religions, easy religions are the invention of man. They are things that a person makes up in his own heart, and um, yet they are a snare unto the people.] he ordained the feast to the children of Israel: he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense (12:29-33).*

Chapter 13

Now, behold, there came a man of God from Judah by the word of the Lord unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. [He was there ready to burn incense, for he made himself a priest in his new religion. And this prophet, young man, he’s unnamed, we don’t know who his name.] But he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and he 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. And this will be the sign by which you know that the Lord has spoken; Behold, this altar is going to be torn, and the ashes are going to be poured out. Now it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of this man of God, who had cried against the altar there in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, and he said, Lay hold on him. [“Grab him!”] and his hand which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he couldn’t pull it back again (13:1-4).

I mean, here he’s, you know, he can’t pull the thing back. Locks.

And the altar was torn, and the ashes poured out, the sign that the prophet said would show that he had spoken from the Lord. And the king answered and said to the man of God, Pray for me before the face of Jehovah your God [Not, “My God, Jehovah your God”.] and pray for me, that my hand may be restored again. And so the man of God besought the Lord, and the king’s hand was restored to him, as it was before (12:5-6).

Now, notice this prophecy, and I think it’s quite fascinating. “A man is going to be born of Judah, his name is Josiah. And he’s going to come, and he’s gonna take your priests and destroy them, and he’s gonna burn bones on this altar.” Now, that is a way of desecrating the altar. Under the law you were not to touch a carcass of a person who was dead, the body, the bones, for then you had to be unclean, ceremonially. You could not come into the temple of God until you’d gone through the cleansing processes, once having touched a dead body. So it was a defilement of the altar, and the altar will be defiled, bones will be burnt upon it. Defiling the altar.

This took place three hundred years before Josiah was born. Interesting isn’t it, that God even names him, three hundred years before his birth. The prophecy is, “A child shall be born in the house of David, Josiah by name”. God knows your name. This is the thing where I say, God knows in advance, and how can you, how can you even try to think in those kind of sets? You can’t. So, his name is Josiah. Now, turn to II Kings, chapter twenty three. This happened now, three hundred and twenty five years later. Josiah was born three hundred years later, and then three hundred and twenty five years later, here in chapter twenty three, verse thirteen. “And the high places that were before Jerusalem, (that is the places of worship for their false gods) which were on the right hand of mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth, and for Chemosh, and for Milcom (Which we told you, was Molech.) did the king defile. And he broke in pieces the images, he cut down the groves, and filled their places with the bones of men. Moreover (here we are) the altar that was at Bethel (This very altar that the young man prophesied against!) and the

high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both the altar and the high place, he broke down and burned the high place, and stamped it into small powder, and he burned the grove. And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and he sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and he polluted it, (Hey this kid was right on! Three hundred and twenty five years later, exactly what he said would happen, did happen. And even named Josiah as the fellow that would do it!) according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.” Now, the man of God, we don’t know his name, but he was a true prophet. “Then he said, What is the title that I see? (So on one of these sepulchres there was a title there.) and he asked, What does that say, and the man of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that you have done against the altar of Bethel. And he said, Let him alone; don’t let any man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria.” And so it tells of Josiah, his reformation, and how it actually went on up to Bethel, he destroyed the altar and so forth. It was three hundred and twenty five years later.

In another place, in Isaiah, the forty fifth chapter, the Lord again, two hundred and fifty years before a man is born, calls him by his name, and uh, tells what he is gonna do. Of course that was king Cyrus, and God said, “You are my prince, and you will come, and you will allow my people to return from their captivity”, and all. This was two hundred and fifty years before Cyrus was born. So, again the foreknowledge of God, “And whom he did foreknow, he did also predestinate”. So the predestination is according to the foreknowledge, prescience of God, and what can you do you know, we’re just, we’re helpless.

So the king then stretched forth his hand, it froze. He said, “Hey pray for me man. Pray to Jehovah your God!”, and he prayed and the king’s hand was healed. But the altar, as he said, as a sign that it would happen, did break, and the ashes poured out.

And so the king said to this man of God, [Hey] Come home with me, and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward. And the man of God said unto the king, If you would give me half of your house, I will not go in with you, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: For it was charged me by the word of the Lord, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that you came. So he went another way home, and he did not return by the way that he had come to Bethel (13:7-10).

So the king is offering now a reward for, “bringing my healing”, and so forth, and the young kid said, “Nope, the one who sent me here told me, don’t stay, don’t drink any water, don’t eat, don’t tarry in this place, in fact I’m not even to go home by the same way”.

Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him of all of the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken to the king, they also told their father. And their father said unto them, Which way did he go? For the sons had seen the way that the man of God had went, which had come from Judah. And he said unto his sons, Saddle my donkey. So they saddled his donkey: and he rode on it, And he went after the man of God, and he found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, Are you the man of God that came from Judah? And he said, I am. Then he said unto him, Come home with me and eat bread. And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place: For it was said to me by the word of the Lord, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that you came. And he said unto him, [“Hey”] I’m a prophet also as you are; and the angel spoke unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with you unto your house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he was lying to him. So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water. And it came to pass, as they were sitting at the table, that the word of the Lord came unto the old prophet that brought him back: And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, and he said, Thus saith the Lord, Inasmuch as you have disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and have not kept the commandment which the Lord your God commanded you, But you came back, and you’ve eaten bread, and drunk water in this place, of which the Lord told you, Eat no bread, drink no water; your carcase will not come unto the sepulchre of your fathers (13:11-22).

“Hey man, you’re not gonna make it home. You’re dead.”

And so it came to pass, that after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the

donkey, that the prophet, might go on back. And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the donkey stood by it, and the lion also stood by the carcase (13:23-24).

So here is an interesting, interesting story. This young man, God sent him up with this message, with the deliberate command, “Do not eat bread, do not drink water, don’t stay in that place, but even come home another way”. And so, he is refusing the edict of the king, the invitation. So the old man, a prophet, no doubt jealous, that God would use another man to come into his territory to prophesy to the king, goes after him. And he says, “Come on home with me. I want you to you know, eat at my house. Eat some bread, and drink some water at my place”. And he said, “No I can’t do it. The word of the Lord came to me, sent me here, told me not to do it”. “Hey man, I’m a prophet too, been around longer than you have.” And an angel of the Lord came and said, you know, “Go get him, and bring him back”. He was lying to him. But the young man consented.

A lot of times God has spoken to us. God has spoken to us in His word, and you have to be careful, because many times people say, “Hey wait a minute, ‘I’ve been studying the scriptures for a long time, and in the Greek, or in the Hebrew’,”. You know, and they start laying these, “Hey I’ve been around a long time man, I know”. You know, and they try to contradict the word of God, or to get you to do something that is opposite of what God has spoken to you.

It’s interesting how many people come to me with a word from the Lord for me! My attitude is one of kindness, because I’m kind. I mean, I’m not, uh you know, I’m not a, rude. I’ve learned to be considerate, especially of the feeble minded. And, as they are giving me this word from the Lord, I will weigh it, I will judge it. I mean, I don’t discount that God, I’m, I don’t say that God can’t speak to me through other people. God has spoken to me through other people. God has spoken to me through other people many times. I don’t discount that, and I, I don’t mean to, if God gives you a word for me, and you’re sure it’s God giving the word for me, then you know, I’m open to listen to it. But, I wonder if He lost my address. You know, am I still open that God can speak to me? I believe that God does speak to me, and I trust in God speaking to me. I look to God for guidance, I ask Him to speak to me, to speak to my heart. I’ve never heard an audible voice, but to speak to my heart, to guide me, and to show me His ways. And I do believe that God does speak to me.

If someone comes, and tells me something other than what God has spoken to my heart, I take what God has spoken to my heart, above what someone else says God said, for them to tell me, to do this, or to do that. Now here the old prophet said, “Hey an angel appeared to me man!”. Paul the apostle, said, “If I or an angel of God come to you and bring any other gospel than what you’ve already received, let him be accursed”. Anathema, cursed to the lowest hell. God has spoken.

The word of God has been given to us. I don’t care who the man may be, or what his credentials are, or even if he be an angel from heaven, if he instructs you something contrary to what God has spoken, you better listen to God’s word. “The Lord has shown me that it’s alright for you to do this. Yours is a special case, and God will make an exception for you.” Look out! You’re treading on dangerous ground! Take the word of God, and abide by the word of God, you’ll never be in trouble. Listen to the revelations of man, and you can be led astray.

When I am really seeking guidance, I go to the word of God. First I judge an issue, by what God’s word says about it. In the new testament, when the gift of prophecy was to be exercised within the new testament church. It said, “Let one prophesy, and let the others judge”. You’re not to just take it face value, because someone said, “Thus saith the Lord...”, you’re not to take it at face value. You’re to judge it, to see if the Lord did say it, or if the guy’s speaking out of his own heart. And how do you judge it? You judge it through the word, and by the word. Because God is not going to contradict himself, and God is not going to tell you something other than He has already told you in His word, something that is conflicting, or contradictory to what He has already said in His word. If someone comes along with a supposed word of God, and it is contradictory to God’s word, spoken here to us, then reject it. Have no qualms about rejecting. Don’t say, “Ooh am I doing the wrong thing?”, you know. You’re not. Stick by the word of God, and you’ll never make a mistake.

This young prophet, listened to him, came back and it cost him his life. Interesting that the lion stood there, rather than running off, didn't seek to devour him, didn't tear him, just left his body there in tact. Again, just to show that it was from the Lord. Didn't bother the donkey, and the donkey stood there with the lion. Now that's unnatural, except God had control of the situation.

So people that were passing by saw this strange thing. There's a dead body there, guy had been killed by the lion, but the lion was just standing there, and the donkey was standing there. So they came in to town, and they said, "Man, we saw the weirdest thing! A donkey and a lion standing by a guy's dead body out there", you know, and so word came to the old prophet, they said, "Hey did you hear about the guy, he's down there on the road towards Jerusalem, and there's a lion and a donkey standing by him, and he's been killed?"

The old prophet said to his son, Saddle my donkey for me, for this is the servant of the Lord. So the old prophet went out and brought back his body, and he laid it in his own tomb, his own sepulchre, [His own grave.] and he mourned over him, saying, Alas, my brother! [Hey great friend isn't he! Comes out and lies to you, and then he buries you at least, and says, "Oh my brother, alas, alas!"]. Ah these false prophets! And so it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spoke to his sons, and he said, ["Now look boys,"] when I'm dead, bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried; ["Hey I want to be close to this guy in death. Bury me close to him. Recognized that indeed, he was a man of God."] lay my bones beside his bones: For the saying which he cried by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass (13:27-32).

He confirms that what this guy has said, will indeed happen, and of course, it did.

Now after this thing [You'd think that Jeroboam would've repented. You'd think that this would've been really a sign to the king, say, "Wait a minute, I've taken a wrong course here!"], you know his hand freezes, and, or his arm and all, and God heals him, and all. You'd think that he would've taken heed. You know God is so good to us. He doesn't let us just go into folly, without first of all warning us. Then we make our choices, and,] Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but he made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: and whosoever would, he consecrated him, [Ordained everybody into the priesthood.] became one of the priests himself of the high places. And this thing became a sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth (13:33-34).

So this sin sort of sealed the fate of Jeroboam, and in our next lesson, and we will take chapter fourteen the next time, uh we get the prophecy against Jeroboam by this old prophet Ahijah. I love this next story, I oh, it is, it's classic, um, the old prophet Ahijah, who first came to him and said, "Hey, you're gonna be king". Ripped his garments, and gave him the ten. This old prophet now, is an old man. In fact, he is so old, that he's blind. His eyes are set, he can't see anymore. But he's still living, and uh, well, you read it, you, and we'll talk about it next week, but it's a great story.