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# History and Prophecy

## Part 2

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I have entered into an eight part series in discussing the history of the kingdom of Israel, as it will eventually relate to your understanding of prophecy, because so many people jump right into the middle of a study of the prophets, without an adequate understanding of history and find themselves totally at sea in some cases, not understanding what at all the prophet was talking about and jumping to the wrong conclusions in other cases. One of the more interesting cases in point can be found over in the book of Hosea if you would like to turn over there with me momentarily before we go back to First Kings.

### **Don't Jump to Wrong Conclusions**

In Hosea, an interesting statement is made very early in his prophecy. God is speaking through Hosea to Israel and He says in Hosea 2:11 "I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts."

Now the implication of this, some people look at this and I have actually seen this Scripture quoted as a proof text to show that the Holy Days would one day be done away with and superficially reading across the top of it, you might very well arrive at that conclusion. The problem is that the people who would make that decision and you yourself as a matter of fact, reading through this area without necessarily having the understanding of the history behind this might arrive at a conclusion like that. You might try to say, "When will it be". The context doesn't allow a post-millennial cessation of these festivals. This seems to be a time of Israel's trouble at the very end time.

Well, if you had understood that Hosea was not a prophet writing to Judah, but was a prophet writing to Israel, very late in their history, actually at the time of King Jeroboam the second, not Jeroboam the first that we have been reading about.

If you understood that Jeroboam had changed the Holy Days of God and that the ten northern tribes never observed the Holy Days that you and I are acquainted with from Leviticus 23, you would never arrive at such a conclusion.

For indeed, the instant they divided the kingdom, as soon as Jeroboam had settled himself in the North, he established a different feast on the 15th day of the eighth month, changed the Feast of Tabernacles and implication is, he changed far more than that.

Indications are that they never observed the Holy Days of God from that time forward. And indeed, if you read the context it would help somewhat for in verse 13, he says: "I will visit upon her the feast days of Balaam, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the LORD.

There has been some in the Church of God who have concluded on the basis of verse 11 that Jeroboam changed the Sabbath, which is not that far different from the time when he made the changes in the Holy days. It is the feast days of Balaam that he is talking about, Israel's sabbaths and the new moons, not the Holy Days of God.

### **Jeroboam Ordained His Feast**

This goes back to First Kings chapter 12 and verse 32 "Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So, did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. {33} So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised out of his own heart; and ordained a feast to the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar and burnt incense."

### **How Did God Look At This?**

In part one of this series I asked the question: How did God look at this? What was God's reaction to all of this when He saw what Jeroboam had done, or was in the process of doing? There is an immediate response.

1 Kings 13:1 "Behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense." Now we are not told who this gentleman was.

### **Maps in Your Bible**

I don't know if you have much of a perspective on this, but it would be good if you keep your place here, and if you have maps in the back of your Bible, turn back and take a look and see if you can spot a little town called Bethel. You will have a number of maps in the back of your Bible. Most Bibles will put them in chronological order, and you'll find one in there somewhere that has to do with the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah or, as they call it the divided kingdom, and you'll see a line drawn between the kingdom in the North and the kingdom in the South in this particular division of the kingdoms. If you take your eye and cast it a short distance above that line, you'll find a little place called Bethel.

Now if you are just reading along in the book of Kings you would tend to have the feeling that this prophet came a long way to be here, where in actual fact, he is probably no more than an hour's walk for a young man from the border of Judah to the altar in Bethel. A very short distance, probably 3 miles as the crow flies, consequently you might have to say more like 4 miles up and down hills and around. There is no indication of this man's age, but the chances are

it was no more than half a day for him to get up there and half a day to get back in the process. So it was not that far away.

### **A Prophecy Against the Altar**

1 Kings 13:2 "He cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD". Notice this is not directly addressed to Jeroboam at this point in time, but against the altar.

Continuing in verse 2 "Behold, a child shall be born into the house of David, Josiah by name".

The expression 'house of David' means the physical linear descendants of David, the house or the dynasty of David's sons and his grandsons and his great-grandsons, somewhere down the line out of the house of David, a boy is going to be born, Josiah by name.

Here a long time before this man is ever born, he is actually named by a prophet.

"And upon you (the altar) shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon you, and men's bones shall be burnt upon you."

This was fulfilled in the reign of Josiah.

1 Kings 13:3 "He gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out."

Now this a fascinating confrontation. Jeroboam at this moment was not alone. There were other priests who gathered around, and I have no doubt also, since he was the King, soldiers and a guard.

In the end he stands going about waving the incense burners with all the chanting that is going on and all the priests at this point in time. He stepped into the office of the priest, in which he had no right to have in any case, but of course all of his priests were the lowest of the people we're told. He steps up to the altar in the process of going through the ceremonial killing of an animal and the burning of the animal upon an altar and here wandering into their assembly comes one lone man and he stands up and says "Altar, altar" and makes the pronouncement of his prophecy upon it.

1 Kings 13:4 : "When king Jeroboam heard what he said, he lifted out his hand and said, "Cease that man" and as soon as he did it, his hand dried up, so that he could not pull it in to him again."

I mean everything, all the muscles in his chest and around the outside must have frozen solid. His elbow and all his arm were frozen. Here he is in this posture absolutely frozen. He could not pull his hand in again and in the same split second, there was a shattering sound and this altar that he had built splits right in the middle and the ashes go pouring out over the place with coals of fire and people hopping around to get away from it. It must have been an incredible

spectacular event that took place at that moment of time. It absolutely almost killed Jeroboam at that moment of time from the fear that he experienced.

I don't know what it would have meant to me as a prophet if I had been the one who had made the statement and saw this take place and I saw a man frozen and saw the altar split with my own eyes.

1 Kings 13:6 "The king answered and said unto the man of God, Entreat now the face of the LORD our God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me again. And right there when the man consulted the Lord, the king's hand was restored to him again, and became as it was before". Now I would have to assume at this moment of time that God had everybody's attention. Would you not with this event taking place? The man said it was going to happen and it happens. The man's arm is frozen and when the prophet of God prays, he can drop his hand, and everything is whole, and he can feel his muscles. Everything is like nothing had ever happened before.

### **Buying a Prophet**

1 Kings 13:7 "The king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward".

That in itself is kind of interesting, because it tells us a little bit about the way Jeroboam thought. He thought in terms of preachers being paid. He thought in terms of prophets being in it for the money, that he himself had proceeded to staff his little place of worship at Bethel and the other one in Dan with priests from the lowest of the people and the implication from the account in Chronicles is that it had to do with monetary reward. Anyone who wanted to fill his hand, put something in his hand, that person could actually be a priest. So basically, whoever wanted to be one, could be one. So, Jeroboam thought in terms of buying everybody around him. So to this prophet who had done what he had done, he said come home with me and I will give you a reward.

### **God's Instruction to the Prophet**

1 Kings 13:8 "The man of God said to the king, If you will give me half of your house, I will not go in with you, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: {9} For so it was charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, drink no water, nor turn again by the same way that you came. {10} So he went another way and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel."

This is an interesting thing to have happened. The whole concept of what God is trying to say here I think is fascinating. There're more ways of communicating than with words, every time you are trying to get something across in somebody's mind, and there's a lot of different angles that you can go and it appears that when God decides He's going to send a message to people, He selects a man to take the message. There is ample implication that the choice of the prophet will differ depending upon the message that is to be carried.

This prophet came out of Judah with the message. Ahijah, implications are, actually lived in the north and was a part of and lived in the northern kingdom and was faithful to God. Why didn't God use Ahijah? The answer seems to have been that it had something to do with the message coming out of Judah that he wanted to do. Later on, when He decides to choose a man to be the prophet of bad news for Ahab, He chooses a man who apparently, in physical appearance, can carry the image that He wanted to convey and whose style of communication also fitted. He chose a man named Elijah, a hairy man, given to wearing leather and a man who never used two words when one word would say it. Blunt, direct and to the point.

There is every reason to believe then that in the choice of the message, the choice of the messenger and even the circumstances involved in the message and the symbolism connected with it to this extent, that to this man he not only takes the message up there, He says I've got to get myself out of here, without eating any bread and without drinking any water and God doesn't want me to go back on the same road that I came. Why not?

Why would you ever think that person would not want to get out of the habit of taking the same road. You say I came up this way, but I'll go back that way. Well it is because you don't want anybody to get to know the patterns of your travel and you don't want to give somebody the chance to lie in wait for you when you come back the same way that you went. It is an expression of a lack of confidence in the environment, it is a suggestion that it is becoming a violent community already, and this is a dangerous place to be.

Get yourself up there and get yourself out of there. Now the city wasn't that far. You are not talking about an overnight trip at all. He could be back in Judah, inside the borders of Judah, and where he could drink water, where he could sit, relax and rest in probably no more than two hours of time, from the time he finished this conversation and the time he actually started to get out of there.

Quite a bit is expressed here to Jeroboam and to everyone standing around about how God feels about what is going on in this place at this time.

### **Would a Prophet of God Lie?**

1 Kings 13:11 "Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel", the prophet left, and he is on his way back, "and his sons came and told him all the works of the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken to the king. They told these also to their father. {12} "And their father said unto them, What way did he go? For his sons had seen which way the man of God went, who came up from Judah. {13} And he said to his sons, Saddle me the ass. They did and he rode on down the road, {14} And he went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak".

Naturally you would get tired, you haven't had anything to eat since breakfast and nothing to drink either. There is no way of telling how old this prophet was, he could have very easily been an elderly man. He found him sitting under an oak tree alongside the road. He went up to him and said "Are you the man of God that came from Judah? And he said, I am. {15} Then he said to him, Come home with me, and eat bread. {16} And he said, I may not return with you, nor go

in with you: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place: {17} For it was said to me by the word of the LORD, You shall eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that you came. {18} He said to him, I am a prophet also as you are; and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with you into your house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him."

Now you want to mark that verse and write down a fundamental principle and never let this get away from you. It is possible for a genuine bona fide true prophet of God to lie to you! That is sobering when you think about it, isn't it? Because frankly until I had read this Scripture and had grasped the implication of it, it would never have crossed my mind that a true servant of God would ever lie to me! That man holding the office of the prophet of God would absolutely, knowingly, deliberately lie. This one did!

What would really shock you out of your gourd is that not very long after he'd done this, and told the lie, he actually had the Spirit of God come upon him and he prophesied yet again. That requires a little bit of thought in somebody's mind, and there are some very sobering consequences to what you hear here.

Let's read on and see what takes place. The prophet from Judah went back with him and ate bread in his house and drank water.

### **The Prophet and the Lion**

1 Kings 13:20 "And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came to the prophet that brought him back: {21} And he cried to the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as you have disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and have not kept the commandment which the LORD your God commanded you, {22} But you have come back, and have eaten bread and drank water in the place, of which the LORD did say to you, Eat no bread, and drink no water; your carcass shall not come to the sepulcher of thy fathers. {23} And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to which, the prophet whom he had brought back. {24} And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcass was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also and stood by the carcass."

This wasn't bad luck. This wasn't just one of those things that just happened in that the old man was going home, and he just accidentally got killed by a lion. When the lion had killed him, the lion stood, and the ass stood, and the body lay. The lion did not touch the body, it did not touch the ass, and the ass was not even frightened enough to run away from the lion. This is an absolute miraculous occurrence. It is the divine retribution of God. It is the fulfillment of the prophecy of the man of God, who had lied to the other man of God. Spooky isn't it, when you think of the implications of something like this.

### **Penalty for Disobedience**

Now that is a fairly serious penalty to fall upon a person for disobeying a simple instruction, like not eating bread and not drinking water in a given place, when he was lied to, and there were

extenuating circumstances, Sobering to reflect upon. Maybe when we understand that by not eating any bread and by not drinking any water and by returning by a different way, were a part of God's message, maybe then we can understand a little bit more. For indeed a prophet who is given a message by God to pronounce to other people, you and I would fully understand wouldn't we? If I had a vision from God and God said to tell him A, B, C and D, then I had better not go up there and tell him A, B, D and E. We know, that don't we? We know better than to play around with the verbal part of God's message. Why mess around with any of it then, when you are given instructions, you go do what you're told to do.

Now we have to understand that this man was lied to. He was told by the other man that he was a prophet too and he said that an angel of God told him this. How could this possibly be that much of a factor in this man's life?

It's hard from our perspective to know this, but the implications are that the man had every reason why he should have known better. In the first place he received his original communication from God, who said "with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17), who says "I am the Lord, I change not" (Malachi 3:6). So, from that part, he should've known better.

### **Obey God Rather than the Authority that Represents Him**

Secondly, there is a little distinction that takes place here and it is a subtle one, between receiving a commandment from God or receiving instructions from God and receiving instructions from an authority that claims to represent God.

Now if you think about it a little while, the implications of it are pretty clear, that whenever you open the Bible, now we would agree, that the Bible is a true representation of the words of God to man, of His revelation of Himself and His will of what man is to do.

Now when you have this for generation after generation and you basically know what this book says, where is the status of an authority that claims to represent God, or an authority that really does represent God, who tells you not to do what is in the Book. Well, the results are written here for every generation of man to read for the last 3,000 years. This event took place nearly 3,000 years ago. It was written not long after that, and the story was told and retold in every generation that followed, that everyone should know that the word of God is to be obeyed above and beyond any authority that either claims to be or even really is of God, for indeed a true bona fide genuine prophet of God can and maybe will lie to you, on occasion.

### **The Prophet Failed the Test**

We have an illustration of an old man, a prophet, who for whatever reason, put this man to the supreme test of his life and the man failed it. After his death some men passed, and they saw the carcass cast in the way, and the lion standing by it. They came and told them in the city where the old prophet dwelt.

1 Kings 13:26 "And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the man of God, who was disobedient to the word of the LORD: therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke to him. {27} And he spoke to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled him. {28} And he went and found his carcass cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcass: the lion had not eaten the carcass, nor torn the ass".

What an incredible picture that must have been as this old man mounted the last rise and came cantering down on his little donkey, and to see the body lying there, torn initially, enough to kill it, and a lion not lying down, not feeding but simply standing patiently and the ass not running off, but simply standing patiently as he came up there to claim the body of this man.

1 Kings 13:29 "The prophet took up the carcass of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city, to mourn and to bury him. {30} And he laid his carcass in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, Alas, my brother! {31} And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spoke to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulcher wherein the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones: {32} 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. {33} After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him (the margin says, he filled his hand), and he became one of the priests of the high places. {34} And this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth."

What a sobering thing to see take place and to realize how critical it is to be obedient to the Commandments of God, to the word of God, to the will of God when you know it and not being led aside by some ecclesiastical authority who might try to tell you that God might want you to do something different from what you already know that He wants you to do.

### **Jeroboam's Prophecy from God**

How sobering it is too to see a man like Jeroboam, who had been given a prophecy from God, that he was going to have his kingdom, who then saw the complete fulfillment of the prophecy and he had the kingdom in his hand and still did not have the faith to obey and trust God and to carry out the Law of God. The Law of God specified how God was to be worshiped. This seems to be the initial step of turning away from the worship of God that set the pattern for the years to follow in Israel, for over 200 years as matter of fact, in which period of time there would never be a king that would ever bring the people back to God.

The story continues and there are some additional lessons that we can learn from this.

### **Jeroboam's Son will Die**



1 Kings 14:1 "At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick. {2} And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray you, and disguise yourself, that you be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam; and go to Shiloh: behold, there is Ahijah the prophet".

Shiloh is even further north than Bethel, it is well up into the northern kingdom. Ahijah was not sent with this message as I said before to Jeroboam, but a man of God from Judah was sent up

"Behold, there is Ahijah the prophet, which told me that I should be king over this people. {3} Take with you ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall tell you what shall become of the child. {4} Jeroboam's wife did so, she arose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see; for his eyes were set by reason of his age. {5} And the LORD said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam comes to ask a thing of you for her son; for he is sick: thus, and thus shall you say unto her: for it shall be, when she comes in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman. {6} And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, wife of Jeroboam; why are you feigning yourself to be another? for I am sent to you with heavy tidings. {7} Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted you from among the people, and I made you prince over my people Israel, {8} And I tore the kingdom away from the house of David, and I gave it to you: and yet you have not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in my eyes".

### **David, a Man after God's Own Heart**

I want to stop here for a moment before I go on with the judgment against Jeroboam because this to me is one of the most stunning Scriptures that I've read anywhere in this passage, in this whole segment of history, as I read here, because we all know what kind of a man David was.

We're not strangers to the sins that David experienced. We're not ignorant of the fact that David actually had committed a sort of surrogate murder on one occasion and he arranged the death of another man on another occasion. We're not unaware of the multitude of wives, concubines and illicit arrangements that David made from time to time. How on earth could God say of David, that you have been my servant David who kept My Commandments, who followed Me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in My eyes?

And here's Jeroboam who the only thing we know about, regarding Jeroboam at this point in time in his life, is the fact that he stepped aside from the Commandments of God, that he did away with the festivals of God and substituted a holy day and substituted holy places and he apparently corrupted the ministry.

### **Is How We Worship God Important?**

Now frankly, on the surface of it, an awful lot of people nowadays looking around at various sundry religious organizations, would really not be that concerned about the religious holy days, they would think in terms of Christmas and Easter, and what's the harm in the whole thing. Does it really matter if we switched these things around and these technicalities of liturgy or form in

worship or methodology in worship or the day of worship. These are not critical things. These don't hurt people. We would actually tend to minimize the sins of liturgy or the omission of the correct way to the worship of God and to maximize the sins of the flesh as being much more critical.

We oftentimes have had these things go back and forth for people to discuss. It doesn't matter which Commandments you break; the penalty is death for breaking the Commandments. There is no categorizing of sin, one sin is no worse than another. I am sorry but that's not true. Not really. There are signs that are worse than other sins and all of us feel that way. All of us recognize that and the Bible is full of distinctions that are made and the punishments that are given for different sins at different times. He deals with people in different ways.

Where is the difference that comes along? Well, the violation of the last six of the 10 Commandments, all involve sins against human beings, and you can hurt other people and they are wrong, and you will be punished for the violation of those Commandments, but you can repent of breaking those Commandments. You could change your life and get your life back together. You can sin every day and you can go to your knees in prayer with tears in your eyes at night and ask God to forgive you and then you get up and try more in the morning and all of those sins can be washed away and gotten rid of.

But the violation of the first four Commandments disrupts the avenue of repentance. The way of repentance is no longer so clear as it is when you break one of the last six of the 10 Commandments. If I steal something from somebody and my heart smites me, I can go back and restore that relationship and I can ask the man's forgiveness and I can ask God's forgiveness. I can get that behind me, but if I turn completely away from God, if I deny his existence or if I deny who He is or if I look to another god, or if I go completely away from the way that He has said that he is to be worshiped, those things that are likely to cause me to repent are no longer there.

And so consequently, we have a situation beginning to exist, where Jeroboam doesn't simply make a mistake. He doesn't simply commit a sin. He doesn't simply murder somebody. He doesn't simply steal somebody's things. He changes the direction of the religion of a whole people, and set them off on a course of action, which is going to lead to violence, destruction and death. The violation of all of the Commandments in far greater measure by all of the people. So, it is indeed an extremely serious thing that Jeroboam has done.

### **Breaking the Sabbath**

It isn't that the breaking of the Sabbath is a worse sin than murder. The very idea is hard to grapple with, isn't it, to even suggest that such a thing be so, and yet in the overall scheme of things, the rejection of the Sabbath as an institution, not just the simple breaking of the Sabbath, but the rejection of the Sabbath as an institution can cause the people to lose sight of their God, and can leave not merely to a murder but to the violation of all the Commandments in relation to all of the people and the corruption of a lot more people.

So, what we are dealing with here is a fundamental change in direction of these people. So that you begin to understand again what we are talking about, what Jeroboam did in a sense, was to substitute his authority for the authority of God. What the old prophet did was to come to this man and lie to him, and this prophet accepted the old prophet's authority over the authority of God.

### **Corruption of Authority**

What we are talking about is the corruption of authority, the usurpation of authority, is a violation of the commandment: "Thou shall have no other gods before me", the very First Commandment. This is by far and away the most serious sin that a person could ever commit, because it probably destroys, and it undermines and undercuts and sometimes destroys for all time, the avenue of repentance and return to God.

We can talk about blasphemy, all manner of blasphemy can be forgiven of men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven of man (Matthew 12:31), for there you're dealing again with the avenue of repentance. You're destroying the bridges along the road back when you start dealing with these things.

### **Reforms Come with God's Holy Days**

Judah, although they did not keep God's Holy Days, much of the time during their history, there's no indication that there was ever a substitution of a whole different set of holy days for them. Most of the reforms that took place in Judah through those years took place around the Holy Days. The great reform that took place in Josiah's time led to the fulfillment of the prophet's prophecy on this day. It actually focused on the Passover and the observance of the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. Then Josiah began to turn the people's hearts to God and they all began to turn back and began to go again in the right way. But the rejection of the Sabbath, the rejection of the Holy Days, the rejection of the way in which God says that He is to be worshiped and adored is critical.

Coming back to our prophecy now and picking up the story flow in 1 Kings 14 in which Jeroboam's son Abijah fell sick and Jeroboam sent his wife to Ahijah the prophet.

1 Kings 14:7 Ahijah the prophet said "Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted you from among the people, and made you prince over my people Israel, {8} And I tore the kingdom away from the house of David, and I gave it to you: You have not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in my eyes; {9} But you have done evil above all that were before you: for you have gone and made other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger".

Obviously, God considers the violation of the first two Commandments much more critical than the sins of David.

He continues in verse 10: Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, I will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisses against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel,

and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, like a man takes away dung, till it be all gone."

This is rather crude language that He uses in this particular verse and the unusual phrase that "I'm going to cut off all your males", essentially means that all the males that are able to walk or stand, and who basically had gotten to the place or to a certain age and he says I am going to take them away like you would carry dung away until it is all gone.

1 Kings 14:11 "Him that dies of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dies in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken it. {12} Arise therefore, get you to your own house: and when your feet enter into the city, the child shall die".

This is a particularly violent punishment upon Jeroboam and his wife. For here she is wondering around the countryside realizing that the moment her feet walk across the threshold, her child is going to die. At her own return, which she cannot really avoid will actually bring about the moment of her child's death. How long would you stay out in the streets? How fast would you actually return? Realizing that you will never see your own child alive again.

Continuing in verse 13: "Israel shall mourn for him and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave." The child is the only one of his household that is ever going to be buried in an honorable fashion. "Because in him there is found some good thing toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam". This was a child.

### **He departed not from the sins of Jeroboam who did sin and who made all Israel to sin**

1 Kings 14:14: "Moreover the LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: but what? even now. {15} For the LORD shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have made their groves, provoking the LORD to anger. {16} And he shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin".

Now you are going to read this expression, this little formula, over and over and over again, as you make your way through first and second Kings. For time after time after time as we come to the Kings, from the rottenness of Ahab to the final one that existed in this area, Hoshea, this formula will be repeated. "He departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who did sin and who made all Israel to sin". What was the sin?

### **Form and Substance in Religion**

What is recorded for us? It is categorically and simply laid out for us and in the decision, Jeroboam made to change the method or the form of the worship of God. Much has been made over the years about the difference between form and substance in religion, and that we don't have to worry too much about the form of our religion, it is the substance that counts. To tend to the widows and the fatherless in their affliction. It is taking care of the poor, doing good to your neighbor, it is not stealing and it is not lying. It is not doing all these nasty things that we do to

one another in life, and if we could just be good and love one another then the form of our religion does not matter.

Well, the problem with that is, that the history that is here written in the blood of a lot of people says that NO, the form of your religion is very important. For it is upon this form that the substance of your religion can be built. To many people have form in their religion with no substance. Other people try to have substance in their religion but with the wrong form and seem somehow later on to lose the substance as well.

God makes it very clear that the form of His worship is important to Him, and that we are not to depart from it.

### **Jeroboam's Son Died**

1 Kings 14:17 "Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah: and when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died; {18} And they buried him; and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet. {19} And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. {20} And the days which Jeroboam reigned were twenty-two years: and he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his stead."

We have come to year 22 of the divided kingdom.

### **Chronology of Time Will Vary**

Archbishop Usher in his chronology places the year of the division between Judah and Israel at 975 B.C. The Assyrian chronology places it at about 937 B.C. So, you have a forty-year variance with the two accounts between two different lines of chronology.

I throw these years at you and they don't really mean too much to us. It gets simpler as you study through this section to keep track of the passage of time of this particular segment of Israel's history, and so I'll be referring to it as year 22 or year 38 or year such and such, but that is since the time when Rehoboam and Jeroboam went their separate ways and Jeroboam changed the worship and established his altar. All of the events that we have been going over took place in year one that God made these prophecies to them and Jeroboam went on and reigned for quite some period of time in the northern tribes, and finally he died in year 22.

Now as you are reading along in Kings, you may find a book of the 'Harmony of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles' to be a useful document.

### **Back to the King of Judah**

Beginning in 1 Kings 14:21, we shift away from the 10 northern tribes of Israel back to Jerusalem to the kings of Judah.

We're told in 1 Kings 14:21 "Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty and one years old when he began to reign".

We have come back from year 22 now to year one, and what you are reading now is running parallel to all this that we have been reading before. We really don't know very much about Rehoboam's reign from year one all the way through to year 22.

Rehoboam reigned in Judah. He was 41 when he began to reign, and he reigned for 17 years. So, he died before Jeroboam died.

Continuing in 1 Kings 14:21 "Rehoboam reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. His mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess. {22} Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done. {23} For they also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree. {24} And there were also a gay community in the land".

The Scripture, of course, uses the term sodomites, but now days you are not supposed to say that, you're supposed to refer to them as the gay community, but this is precisely what this is talking about, a homosexual community existed in the land.

Continuing in verse 24: "They did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel. {25} It came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: {26} He took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; ....and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made."

Now as a reminder we're not talking about the northern tribes. We're back in Jerusalem.

### **King Rehoboam Dies**

1 Kings 14:27-31 "King Rehoboam made in their stead brazen shields and committed them unto the hands of the chief of the guard, which kept the door of the king's house. {28} And it was so, when the king went into the house of the LORD, that the guard bare them, and brought them back into the guard chamber. {29} Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? {30} And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days. {31} And Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess. And Abijam his son reigned in his stead."

### **Abijam Now Reigns Over the Southern Kingdom**

1 Kings 15:1 "Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat reigned Abijam over Judah." We are now at year 18 approximately of Jeroboam's reign in the north. This change takes place in the South.

Verse 2: "Three years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom. {3} And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father. {4} Nevertheless for David's sake did the LORD his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem: {5} Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite (Whom David had murdered). {6} And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. {7} Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. {8} And Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead.

### **Asa Reigns Over Judah**

1 Kings 15:9 "In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah." This is year 20 and he has two years to go before his death.

1 Kings 15:9 "And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah. {10} And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem". Asa reigned from year 20 to year 61 of the period of time that we are here studying.

Continuing in verse 10: "His mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom. {11} Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father. {12} He took away the gay community out of the land and removed all the idols that his fathers had made." Now in this little passage here, these two little Scriptures, the gay community is condemned. One of the criticisms that God has against Israel is that they tolerated and allowed homosexuals to exist in the land. In this passage Asa is commended for his removal of the gay community, the homosexual community, out of the land.

Let's continue in 1 Kings 15:13 "Maachah his mother, even her he removed from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol and burnt it by the brook Kidron. {14} But the high places were not removed: nevertheless, Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days." Right there in that simple little statement we get a very important understanding of what it is that God is looking for in a person.

### **Get Me a Taxi**

I remember someone, but I don't remember who it was exactly, one of the preachers of positive thinking, a bootstrap philosopher, talked about his relationship with God and how close he was to God, and how he would walk out and say "Lord, get me a taxi". This was his way of praying as if the Lord was a dispatcher who was supposed to take care of his needs to get a taxi on a particular day.

You walk up to the doorman when you come out of a hotel like one of the big hotels in London and you say to the doorman "Get me a taxi", and the doorman walks out and gets you a taxi and

he opens the door for you and you put a shilling or two or a half crown in his hand, you get into the taxi and drive off.

The Lord is not a doorman who is there to get you a taxi. He is not somebody to give you something that somebody else may need worse than you need. He is the eternal God, the Creator of the universe, and in whose presence, as a human being, you could not even come and live. He would burn you like a cinder.

A certain amount of awe and respect for God seems somehow to be demanded from Him and a recognition of who He is, a respect for His name and a respect for His instructions, whatever they may be, is called for and whenever He says to you "This and this and this, these are the ways that you are to worship means you are not to worship me in the way that other heathen nations worship their gods. I don't want that done. This is the way that I want you to do it".

Doesn't that demand a certain amount of respect from God? When you begin to realize, and some people seem to think that it is a legalistic approach, if I could just get all the laws right, then somehow, I've got all of this right, but the truth of the matter is they make the opposite error.

### **Your Heart Should be Right Before God**

The truth of the matter is, here's a man, Asa, who loves God, knew who he was, held Him in the highest respect and it never crossed his mind to ask God for some trivial thing that he could do for himself. This man had great respect for God, held God in awe and loved Him and was obedient to Him, and even though there were some things in his life that he didn't get right, it says his heart was perfect before God all of his days.

Now that's something for us to think about. That's something for you to put in your little things to pray and talk to God about, to study on, to think on, read your Bible and ponder of just what it means to have your heart right before God. To love Him, to respect Him, to hold Him in awe, to put no other ahead of Him. Not treat Him in the familiar sense, in a flippant style, like some of us in our age have treated our fathers. But to treat Him as our heavenly Father with a great deal of respect. There is so much there to understand and I feel that we may have been a little bit careless in our relationship with God over time.

You may not always have everything right that God wants you to do. There may be times when you make some very serious mistakes where God is concerned. The important thing to realize is that there are all sorts of people represented for us in the Bible, who made extremely serious errors, but when they turned to God with all their heart, when they repent of what they were doing, and when they try their best to do what God wants them to do, their relationship with God is restored, and they are back with Him again and He might even make a statement like He did about David, "You are like David my servant, who kept My Commandments, and did only that which was right in my own eyes" (1 Kings 14:8).

God is perfect. He has a perfect memory and His memory is so perfect that He can take things out of it, if He chooses to do so, and they will never be there again. What is really remarkable is that moment in time as far as God was concerned, David had never done anything wrong. I don't



know how bad you think you've been in your lifetime. You know the mistakes that you think you might have made or the things that God needs to forgive you of, but the fact of the matter is that when He does, and when you've repented, and when you get it right, it will be with Him as though you had never done anything wrong. Keep that in mind the next time you are ready to criticize someone else for their sins, or their faults, or their mistakes. It may well be that person has already repented, has already gone before God and already ask God for forgiveness, and as far as God is concerned, he has never done anything wrong.

### **War Between Asa and Baasha**

1 Kings 15:16 "There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. {17} Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah." (He put a total blockade in.) {18} "Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants: and king Asa sent them to Benhadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying, {19} There is a league between me and you, and between my father and your father: behold, I have sent to you a present of silver and gold; come and break your league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me. {20} So Benhadad hearkened to king Asa and sent the captains of the hosts which he had against the cities of Israel, and smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abelbethmaachah, and all Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali. {21} It came to pass, when Baasha heard thereof, that he left off building of Ramah, and dwelt in Tirzah. {22} Then king Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah; none was exempted: and they took away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had built; and king Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah. {23} The rest of all the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? Nevertheless, in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet."

And that story is told in Second Chronicles 16 and verse 12.

### **Jehoshaphat Reigns over Judah**

1 Kings 15:24 "Asa slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead."

We have come in the scheme of things to year 61. It might be useful to jot some of these chronological references down in the margins of your Bible, so you can keep track of it as you go along and don't lose track of some of the events that backs up and comes over the same time period and in another geographical location as you read along.

### **Nadab Reigns over Northern Kingdom**

Now in 1 Kings 15:25 we shift back to the northern tribes again, and we back up from year 61 to year 22 where we left off before.

"Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah and reigned over Israel two years. {26} He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin."

Here's that statement that will be repeated over and over again that this person committed the sin of Jeroboam and in this case, it was his own father, who did sin where which he made Israel to sin.

1 Kings 15:27 "Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon."

So we have the first assassination that takes place in these northern tribes and as we get down toward the end of it, it seems to be that four of the last five kings died by assassination.

Verse 28 "Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him and reigned in his stead." We now find ourselves at about year 24. Meanwhile, all the things we have been reading about Asa are going on in the South.

1 Kings 15:29 "It came to pass, when he reigned, that he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the LORD, which he spoke by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite: {30} Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger. {31} Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?"

### **Violent Times**

This is a really violent time. It is kind of a frightening thing in a way to read this. The writer of kings goes over this so quickly that you hardly realize the enormity of what was done. This man assassinated the King and then he proceeded to absolutely wipe out every last man, woman and child of Jeroboam's household.

Why in the world did people think that they had to do this is a little bit hard for a Twentieth-First Century mind to understand, but this was common in this time, and it has been common in many years past. You would have to go back and read some of the history the Middle Ages in Italy to realize the political intrigue, the assassinations, the murders by poison, knifings, stabbings and what have you that took place including many that were done at the behest, deliberately by the hand of and in some cases the Pope of Rome. It was over a period of about 200 years and nearly every pope that sat on the Papal throne was himself a murderer.

Let's continue reading this passage in 1 Kings 15:31 "The rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? {32} And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. {33} In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years". This would be from year 24 to year 48.

Verse 34 "And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin."

### **Historical Perspective**

As we go along through this and some of this may seem slow to you and a little tiring, but I want to do it, because I want you to understand the political climate. I want you to have the background for what was going on and to get a little bit of the feeling for the historical perspective of some of the men who are eventually going to come on the scene writing prophecies, very powerful prophecies about the time in which they lived, but which have an application to us which we are only going to understand, if we understand the former things what they be (Isaiah 41:22).

### **Baasha Reigns in the North**

Let's continue in First Kings 16 and verse 1 "Then the word of the LORD came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying, {2} Forasmuch as I exalted you out of the dust, and made you prince over my people Israel; and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins; {3} Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. {4} Him that dies of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dies of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air shall eat."

This is incredible when you think about it. Now first, Baasha, no doubt felt that he was carrying out the will of the Lord in the process as he went through what he did to the house of Jeroboam. He absolutely and meticulously fulfilled the prophecies that had been made against Jeroboam. What is amazing is that he did not realize that he himself was committing the same sins as Jeroboam, continuing right down the same road, and I guess he felt that since he was an instrument in the Lord's hands, to carry out the prophecies of the Lord that he would be exempt for having the same things happen to him. How could it possibly be that a person could be so blind to what would come his way.

1 Kings 16:5 "Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?"

### **Elah Reigns in the North**

1 Kings 16:6 "So Baasha slept with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah: and Elah his son reigned in his stead. {7} And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and because he killed him. {8} In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, two years. {9} And his servant Zimri, captain of half his chariots, conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza steward of his house in Tirzah. {10} And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty seventh year of Asa king of Judah and reigned in his stead."

This is year 47. Another death and end of a reign by assassination and his replacement by yet one more assassin.

### **Zimri Reigns over Northern Kingdom**

1 Kings 16:11 "It came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he slew all the house of Baasha: he left him not one that pissed against a wall, neither of his kinsfolks, nor of his friends. {12} Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke against Baasha by Jehu the prophet, {13} For all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities. {14} Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? {15} In the twenty seventh year (year 47) of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign seven days in Tirzah. And the people were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines. {16} And the people that were encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king: wherefore all Israel made Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp. {17} And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah. {18} And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died,"

This assassin dies by suicide. You should really get a feeling as we go along of the moral climate of this people through the first 47 years with the assassinations and suicide of leaders and the violence that was a way of life with them through this period of time.

They made Omri king and Zimri committed suicide.

1 Kings 16:19 Zimri died, "For his sins which he sinned in doing evil in the sight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, to make Israel to sin. {20} Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and his treason that he wrought, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? {21} Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri. {22} But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned."

This may have been a death in an honorable battle.

### **Omri Reigns Over Israel**

1 Kings 16:23 "In the thirty first year of Asa king of Judah (year 51) began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah".

You are going to notice as we go along little vagaries of chronologies but don't worry about them. They have to do with the way in which different people measured time. They apparently had two different systems of reckoning of years between Israel and Judah and the writer of King's uses both of them and doesn't bother to tell us which one is which.

Verse 24 "He bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria."

### **Samaria**

Here is the beginning of what turns out to be the beginning of a very important city in prophecy. You find Samaria, referred to again, again, and again. It also is the place into which the Assyrians once they had destroyed and taken Israel captive would bring a group of mixed people from the East, who will settle in this land who will be the latter-day Samaritans who will be given a Pentateuch and a priest or two of God and will have created a kind of peculiar syncretism of worship of God, as specified in the Pentateuch, along with certain of the Eastern religions and people who were keeping the Passover, as matter of fact on the mountain of Gerizim until the 1940s. The genealogical descendants, I should say, of these same people who will be brought into this city of Samaria at that time and a very important city historically.

1 Kings 16:25 "But Omri worked evil in the eyes of the LORD and did worse than all that were before him. {26} For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities. {27} Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might that he showed, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? {28} So Omri slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead."

### **Ahab Reigns Over Israel**

It may be that the worst act of Omri's entire life was that he begat a man named Ahab. When you consider what he did, the direction that he went, he turned out to be perhaps the worst of a bad lot in the ten northern tribes of Israel.

1 Kings 16:29 "In the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah (this is year 58 approximately) began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years".

This is from year 58 to year 80 in the history of the divided kingdom.

Verse 30: "Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him."

Notice how often this expression is expressed. It actually gives you an impression of linear development of evil, as not merely as one does evil, but this one does more evil than any one before him, and the one that follows will be worse yet. It seems to be a clear-cut progression, not merely of evil kings, but of evil kings who built on the foundation of the evil of the king that was before him.

1 Kings 16:31 "And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the

Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshiped him. {32} And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. {33} And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him."

The implication is, it took everything that everybody had done before him, and you wrap it up in a big ball and Ahab did far more to provoke God to anger than all of them put together. This will give you the idea of just how bad this man was.

### **Child Sacrifice**

1 Kings 16:34 "In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke by Joshua the son of Nun."

What does that mean? Why is that there? Well interestingly enough, it is an expression of the rottenness to which these people had come. What this man did was to lay his firstborn son into the foundation stone of this city as a human sacrifice and he sacrificed his other son at the completion of the city. This will give you an idea of where this nation had come.

### **The Prophet Elijah**

It is at this point that the archetype of all prophets walks on the scene. His name is Elijah the Tishbite. He was an inhabitant of Gilead and he was to say, at least, an unusual man. He may be the most important of all the prophets who ever lived. It has been necessary for me to take you step-by-step-step through all the history that we have gone through up to this point to bring you up to this man. But for this man we will have to wait for the next message in this series.

We will pick our story flow next part as we continue this series on History and Prophecy.

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*The late Ronald L. Dart was a Christian evangelist whose teachings still inspire thousands of people around the world. His legacy spans decades. For more information about the teachings of Ronald L. Dart, visit [RLDEA.com](http://RLDEA.com) where you will find booklets, articles, sermons, Bible studies, and books by Mr. Dart.*

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### **Discussion Questions**

1. What are your thoughts about the history of Jeroboam?
2. What are your thoughts about the point that Josiah was prophesied by name prior to his existence?
3. How would you react if you had witnessed what occurred to Jeroboam's hand?

4. Is it surprising to you that a true prophet of God can lie to people?
5. What are your thoughts about what happened to the prophet after he was lied to?
6. What do you think of Mr. Dart's point that one very important lesson to learn from the prophet sent to Jeroboam is to "obey God rather than the authority that represents Him"?
7. Have you ever experienced a corruption of authority?
8. How would you answer Mr. Dart's question: "Is how we worship God important?"
9. Do you agree with Mr. Dart that the first four commandments are actually weightier in importance to God than the last six?
10. What do you think it means to have your heart right before God?