



## BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

**A2310 ~ Jeroboam and the Prophet.**

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*Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.*

Jeroboam, the king of the 10 northern tribes of Israel, feared losing his throne so instead of trusting in God's promises to him, he set up a new system of worship to encourage the people of his kingdom to worship locally and not go down to Jerusalem in Judah for the Israelite annual feasts. King Jeroboam was afraid that his people might again join with King Rehoboam and the rest of the people of Judah, and if this happened, then he would lose his life.

At the dedication of Jeroboam's false worship centre at Bethel, God sent a prophet from Judah to speak against what Jeroboam was doing while he stood beside the altar acting in a priestly role. Jeroboam wasn't eligible to do priestly duties because he came from the tribe of Ephraim. This account is recorded in 1<sup>st</sup> Kings, Chapter 13, of the Bible.

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When the prophet from Judah made a long-term prophecy about the birth of Josiah, a future king of Judah, who would sacrifice the false priests of Israel on the very altar that Jeroboam had set up in Bethel, this prophecy from God came true 300 years later.

The prophet also made a very short-term prophecy that the altar Jeroboam was then making an offering on, would be split in two that very day. The fulfilment of this short-term prophecy would confirm the truth of the long-term one. It also indicated that the worship system that Jeroboam had set up was not acceptable to the Lord. Like Cain in Genesis, which is the 1<sup>st</sup> book in the Bible, Jeroboam ignored the fact that God Himself decides how people must worship Him.

An old prophet of Bethel went after the prophet from Judah and deceived him into returning to Bethel to eat with him. The old prophet falsely claimed that the Lord had told him to bring the man of Judah back to his own house to eat and drink. Sadly, the prophet from Judah believed the old prophet's false claims. We aren't told why the old prophet was so eager to bring the man of God to his house. But while they were eating, a true word from the Lord came to the old prophet. He said that because the prophet from Judah had disobeyed the Lord's command, he would be killed and his body would not be buried in his family tomb.

And that's exactly what happened to the prophet from Judah; on his way home, he was killed by a lion. This was clearly a divine judgment and not a chance accident, as the lion didn't act like a normal lion. Instead, after killing the prophet, the beast just stood there without eating either the man or his donkey. When the old prophet heard what had happened to the man of God from Judah, he was filled with remorse. He went to the place and brought the prophet's body back to the city and he buried it there in his own tomb. Then he instructed his sons that when he died, he should be buried next to the man of God; he wanted to be identified with this true prophet and his message, which he was now completely convinced would come true.

What are we to learn from this difficult incident? The Lord never contradicts Himself. The man of God should **not** have believed the old prophet because his message contradicted what the Lord had already told him. We must never allow other people to determine what God's will is for our lives. Although we may listen to their advice, we must **never** follow it if it goes against our own conscience or against what God has already revealed to us.

Disobedience to the Lord's word always brings consequences, with the ultimate result being death. The death of the man of God from Judah was one more warning to the people of Israel; their sin would also lead to death and it would be the death of their entire nation.

Shortly after this, Jeroboam's eldest son became sick. So Jeroboam sent his wife to the prophet Ahijah, who lived about 10 miles away at Shiloh, to ask if the child would get well again. Ahijah was the prophet who had told Jeroboam that the Lord had giving him the northern tribes to rule. It was customary in those days for people to consult prophets of God to obtain information. But it would have been better if Jeroboam had asked for healing prayer instead of predictions; if he'd confessed his sins his son might have been restored to health, just as his own hand had been.

Jeroboam's wife went in disguise because Jeroboam felt that the prophet would be against his family because of his evil deeds. Ahijah the prophet by then was old and blind but he was told by the Lord that Jeroboam's wife was coming to see him. When she arrived, Ahijah passed onto her what the Lord had told him concerning Jeroboam and his son: that despite the blessing and privilege of being made king of the northern tribes by God, Jeroboam had disobeyed God and done more evil than anyone else before him. By ignoring the covenant requirements God had laid out, Jeroboam had forfeited God's covenant blessings.

The prophet then gave the Lord's punishment for Jeroboam: his house would quickly come to an end; his male heirs would soon die violent deaths and their bodies would be left outside the gates to be eaten by animals and birds, instead of being given a proper burial; and his son would die as soon as his wife arrived back home in her city. God would now raise up another king who would bring Jeroboam's dynasty to an end. Jeroboam reigned for 22 years, yet those who wanted to stay true to God's covenantal promises on worshipping Him correctly, had moved south to live in Judah early in Jeroboam's reign.

The message we take out of Jeroboam's life is a very sobering one. Jeroboam in his early life had lived in Jerusalem and knew the right way to worship at Solomon's Temple of God, as well as the right way to live by putting God first. He didn't do anything out of ignorance. Yet when he was in charge of his own kingdom in the north, he decided not to trust God's promise to bless him if he kept walking in God's ways. Instead, he turned his back on God and selfishly introduced a system of idol worship that caused many people to sin and turn against God.

For a person who knows the truth yet deliberately goes into sin and chooses to continue sinning, there isn't anything else to offer them that will convince them to repent of their sin. This doesn't mean such people can't or won't leave their sinful ways. God still wants them to repent and turn to Him for freedom from the power of sin. But the sinner has to believe in who Christ says He is and what He has done to be the only way to God in Heaven. Satan knows that the longer a person remains in their sinful state and hardens their heart against God, the more difficult it becomes for them to repent and return to former ways of honouring God.

In Hebrews, Chapter 10, the writer of this Bible book says that if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth in Christ, there no longer remains a sacrifice available to cover our sins. Jesus has done everything that we need to commit our lives to Him, but He warns us that we must remain in Him and turn away from sin. Verse 29 says: "How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?"

In Romans, Chapter 6, the Apostle Paul asks Christians, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?" A person cannot be saved while wilfully continuing to live in sin. Following Christ is about Him removing our sinful nature from our lives; not for us to delight in sinning without the thought of consequence. Paul further says: "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin."

Such references as these are not referring to a Christian who sins accidentally, or in a moment of weakness, deliberately going against what he knows to be right. God has provided an avenue of forgiveness for these: in 1st John, Chapter 1, Verse 9, it says: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

But when a person deliberately stays in their sin, despite knowing that it is wrong, it becomes an entirely different matter. For example, there are people involved in various sexual sins. When it's pointed out to them that what they're doing is sinful, a common response is: "I know it's wrong, but I'm sure God would want me to be happy and He'll overlook this." This is the type of person that God is saying is in deep trouble, just as Jeroboam was when Israel's king.

*The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.*

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