

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Kings: The Kings Of Israel And Judah From Solomon To The Babylonian Captivity

II. The Divided Kingdom, 1 Kings 12:1-22:53

B. Courageous Male Oversight By Trusting God's Word

(1 Kings 12:25-33)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

If ever we needed more courageous male overseers in the world, it would be today:

(1) We need more courageous male overseers in our state legislature: Chris Powell ("Incoherence on money matters," Republican-American, February 23, 2018, p. 6A) expressed alarm that House Speaker Joe Aresimowicz, D-Berlin offered as "his solution for the transportation-infrastructure problem" that the legislature "create an unelected agency to decide transportation matters, letting the legislature cancel the agency's decisions by a two-thirds vote" so the agency and not state legislators might take the heat from voters for unpopular decisions made on transportation!

Mr. Powell complained the same solution was tried with "contract negotiations with government-employee unions," but "(t)he result there has been disastrous" for the state's fiscal health and for taxpayers, *Ibid*.

(2) We need more courageous male overseers locally: many women and some men over the years have expressed concern to me over men who take anti-depressants, eat junk food, delay addressing home repairs, hoard money, play video games long hours apart from family or buy a long list of books all due to fear of some kind.

Need: *So, we ask, "What does God direct that a man do to be a courageous overseer in today's world?!"*

I. When the ten northern tribes of Israel made Jeroboam their king, the hostile reaction toward him by Solomon's son Rehoboam who was left ruling only one tribe in Judah so troubled Jeroboam that he took extensive defensive measures to protect his nation and himself from harm, 1 Kings 12:25-33:

- A. Jeroboam took measures to protect Israel from enemy attacks by fortifying two cities, 1 Kings 12:25:
1. The KJV, NIV and ESV take the *waw* consecutive connected to the first verb "built" (v. 25) as "Then," so that Jeroboam's work on Shechem resulted from the events in verses 21-24; Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 532.
 2. Those 1 Kings 12:21-24 events included Rehoboam's mustering 180,000 soldiers of the Southern Kingdom of Judah to attack the Northern Kingdom of Israel where Jeroboam was now king!
 3. Anxious over such hostility toward him that threatened him with possible future conflict, Jeroboam fortified Shechem where Rehoboam had been crowned and he moved there to rule and live for his protection and claim to rule the ten tribes and for the protection of the tribes in his realm, 1 Kings 12:25a.
 4. However, Jeroboam then crossed the Jordan River east to fortify the city of Penuel and guard his kingdom from sudden attack east of the Jordan that he could not quickly handle from Shechem, 1 Kings 12:25b.
- B. Jeroboam also created a syncretism to preserve his subjects' loyalty and so protect himself, 1 Kings 12:26-33:
1. Jeroboam thought he risked the loss of his subjects' loyalty to Rehoboam were they to go to Rehoboam's realm of Judah to worship the Lord, and that this might in time cost Jeroboam his life, 1 Kings 12:26-27.
 2. He thus took counsel and invented an **alternate syncretism** that had just enough Biblical content to it to make it plausible to his subjects, and he promoted it in contrast to the true worship of God in Jerusalem:
 - a. Jeroboam make two golden calves and put one in Bethel at his southern border and one in Dan in his kingdom's north, telling his people it was too hard for them to travel to Jerusalem to worship, but that they should worship these calves as the gods that brought them up out of Egypt, 1 Kings 12:28-29.
 - b. There was just enough Bible content in this syncretism to make it plausible to Jeroboam's people: (1) his words that the calves were the gods who brought them out of Egypt recall Aaron's words at Mount Sinai when he made a gold calf, Exodus 32:1-4. (2) That was **not total** paganism, but a **syncretism** with paganism, a mingling of the worship of God with pagan idolatry: in the Ancient Near East, one's god often **rode on** a bull, so Aaron in Moses' day and Jeroboam **both** taught Israel that her **God** as a **Spirit rode on a calf** as in the theologies of the pagan nations around them. (Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament, p. 512, citing William F. Albright, From the Stone Age to Christianity, 1957, p. 299).
 - c. Jeroboam's choice of Bethel in Israel's south and Dan in its north as the nation's new worship centers looked plausibly biblical also: (1) Israel's patriarch Abraham had built an altar near Bethel upon first entering the Promised Land (Genesis 12:8) and God had given another patriarch Jacob his famous dream there so that Jacob had named the place, "house of God," or "Beth-el(ohim)," Genesis 28:10-19. (2) Then, Dan was where Moses' grandson Gershom had begun an apostate priesthood with the tribe of Dan (Judges

18:30; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Judges 18:30) The people of Dan may have gone apostate, but Jeroboam could plausibly "sanction" the place since its priests could trace their line back to Moses!

3. The new syncretism certainly achieved Jeroboam's goal: his people ceased going down to Jerusalem and worshiped at the golden calves in Dan and Bethel, apparently not threatening their loyalty to Jeroboam.

II. However, Jeroboam's fear was baseless, for it had risen from his failure to trust God's Word to him:

- A. When the Lord had first sent His prophet Ahijah to tell Jeroboam that he would one day rule ten of Israel's tribes, God's prophet had claimed this rule would come from "the Lord, the God of Israel," 1 Kings 11:31.
- B. Second, Ahijah had **added** that **IF** Jeroboam **heeded GOD** as David had, **GOD** would build him a "sure house [*bayit-ne'eman*, "a house [passively] made firm (by God)," B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 52-53] as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee," giving Jeroboam a durable dynasty, 1 Kings 11:38.

III. Thus, Jeroboam's sinful unbelief in God's Word led to his fear and more sin, sabotaging God's blessing:

- A. God's first directive to Israel's kings had been that they were not to multiply horses to themselves in building up their national defense, implying their need to trust God for that (Deuteronomy 17:16). However, due to his **unbelief** in God's Word to him from Ahijah and a resulting **fear** of war with Judah, Jeroboam had fortified Shechem and Penuel for his nation's security **in violation of the intent** of God's Deuteronomy 17:16 order!
- B. The Lord had also told Israel's kings daily to read and heed Scripture **precisely**, that they **NOT** turn from it to the "right hand or to the left" (Deuteronomy 17:18-20a), that God might establish their reigns. Yet, due to Jeroboam's unbelief in God's Word through Ahijah and his resulting fear, Jeroboam had formed a syncretism that **plausibly looked** Biblical but was indeed **unbiblical** according to Exodus 32:7-10, to his loss of blessing!

Lesson: *Instead of trusting and heeding God's Word, Jeroboam experienced fear of an attack by Rehoboam and fear of losing his people's loyalty and thus of losing his life, sinning against God and missing out on His blessing.*

Application: *If we struggle with fear, (1) may we trust in Christ for salvation to be saved and indwelt by the enabling power of GOD the Holy Spirit, John 3:16; Romans 8:9b; Acts 5:3-4. (2) Then, in relying on GOD the Holy Spirit for the motivation and power to heed Scripture, may we trust the biblical promises God has given unto us, trusting Him to keep His Scriptural promises that we heed His directives to enjoy His blessing.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

By way of the Scripture passage in today's sermon, God is leading me to give you this concluding illustration that involves risk. To explain, I recently obtained information that greatly critiques the views of Christian psychologist Dr. Larry Crabb, Jr., what also then critiques the counseling ministry of a beloved Christian counselor we as a Church know who received his training. However, the information I received calls for a defense of the Christian faith, so I must share it with you now:

(1) In Dr. Larry Crabb's book, Effective Biblical Counseling, 1977, p. 37, he wrote: "'Again, let me insist that psychology does offer real help to the Christian endeavoring to understand and solve personal problems.'" (cited in Martin and Deidre Bobgan, PsychoHeresy, 1987, p. 75) In addition, Dr. Crabb criticized "those who would use solely the Scripture as 'nothing buttery.'" (Ibid., Crabb as cited in Bobgan, Loc. cit.)

(2) However, the Apostle Paul at 2 Timothy 3:16-17 claimed all Scripture is God-inspired and thoroughly equips the man of God to perform every good work, what includes counseling people to solve personal problems.

(3) Thus, Dr. Crabb inadvertently counters the divine inspiration of that passage, and thereby counters the divine inspiration of Paul's epistles, then the Apostle Peter's words since Peter claimed Paul's epistles to be Scripture in 2 Peter 3:15-16 and thus in turn Jesus' words in John 17:20 that implied Peter's words would be canonical! Thus, Jesus is left speaking an untruth, disqualifying Him to be our sinless Savior to the fall of the whole Christian faith!

(4) Also, "(i)n Crabb's system, counselees are to confront and confess the sins of *others* committed against them so that they can re-experience their own pain and disappointments to find the so-called source of their erroneous thinking, which in Crabb's system is the real sin that lies in the unconscious." (John Beardsley, "Larry Crabb: General Teachings/Activities," rapidnet.com; italics included) However, Ezekiel 18:1-32 teaches God holds the sinner, not his victim, accountable for his own sin, and we are not to forgive one who does not repent, Luke 17:3. Besides, for a counselor to urge a victim of abuse to confess the abusive act against him or her as sin is itself a form of abuse! On top of this, "(t)he concept of the 'unconscious' is found nowhere in Scripture," but "in the teachings of Freudian psychology," and "the idea of the 'unconscious' . . . has no scientific support either!" (Ibid., emphasis included)

I thus strongly oppose Larry Crabb's view, and do not sanction one who holds his view to speak in our Church.

May we trust in Christ for salvation and heed God's Biblical directives to obey Him without fear!