

CURSE OF ALTAR AT BETHEL. 1 KN. 13:1-10. 11/27/22. #35.

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13 And behold, a man of God went from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD, and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. ²Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, "O altar, altar! Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men's bones shall be burned on you.'" ³And he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign which the LORD has spoken: Surely the altar shall split apart, and the ashes on it shall be poured out." ⁴So it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, who cried out against the altar in Bethel, that he stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Arrest him!" Then his hand, which he stretched out toward him, withered, so that he could not pull it back to himself. ⁵The altar also was split apart, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. ⁶Then the king answered and said to the man of God, "Please entreat the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me." So the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king's hand was restored to him, and became as before. ⁷Then the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward." ⁸But the man of God said to the king, "If you were to give me half your house, I would not go in with you; nor would I eat bread nor drink water in this place. ⁹For so it was commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'You shall not eat bread, nor drink water, nor return by the same way you came.'" ¹⁰So he went another way and did not return by the way he came to Bethel.

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1. Idol worship at Bethel

- a. Jeroboam follows the sin of Solomon**
 - a1. Even after Jer. received the kingdom due to Sol.'s sin, he follows in his path**
 - a2. Jer. set up a golden calf in Bethel & in Dan**
- b. The idol worship has the height of blasphemy**
 - a1. Jer. declared that the calves were the actual gods that led Israel out of Egypt (stealing glory from the true God)**
 - a2. Jer. uses non-Levite priests**
 - a3. Jer. leads worship at the altar**

2. Message from God

- a. Just like God warned Sol., so he sent warning to Jeroboam by way of a prophet in Judah**
- b. The prophet is left unnamed**
 - a1. Apparently, no prophets in Israel**
 - a2. The prophet has a message from God**
 - a3. Arrival is timed to come when Jer. is at the altar at Bethel**
- c. The prophecy against the altar:**
 - a1. A child, king of Judah, shall come to this altar & burn its priests on it and the bones of the previous priests (Josiah reigns 300 years after Jeroboam)**

- a2. As a sign that the message will be fulfilled, the prophet states that the altar would split & spill ashes**

3. Jeroboam's response

- a. Jer. points to the prophet & orders him arrested**
- b. Judgment falls immediately**
 - a1. Jer.'s right hand instantly withers & he could not even retract it to himself**
 - a2. The altar immediately splits & spills ashes**
- c. Jer. takes a softer tone**
 - a1. Asks that the prophet pray of his God to restore his hand whole (Jer. doesn't say *my, our, or the God*)**
 - a2. The prophet prays & the hand is restored**
 - a3. Jer. does not repent or amend at all**
- d. It is stunning to see such arrogance in the face of proven power (Jn. 11 Pharisees saw Lazarus rise)**
- e. Jer. invites the prophet to the palace for refreshments, but he refuses**
 - a1. He has orders to return to Judah without eating or drinking in Israel**
 - a2. The prophet was not done until he returned**
- f. Jer. also offers a reward, but the prophet did not perform the miracle (Balaam, Elisha, Moses) – all the glory must go to God (1 Cor. 1:29)**

4. Prophet on course

- a. The prophet was not allowed to leave Israel by the same route he had entered**
 - a1. This is symbolism of the pollution of Isr.**
 - a2. Each action was to show God's discuss**
- b. God was not interested in punishing either Jer. or Israel, but to bring them to repentance**
- c. The prophet leaves & heads south**
- d. Jer. not only knew what had happened to Sol., but he also experienced God's power first hand**
 - a1. He ignores the lesson, shows no fear of the Lord, & moves on with his plans**
 - a2. Repentance requires a change of heart**
- e. The prophet believes he is done, but he is not**