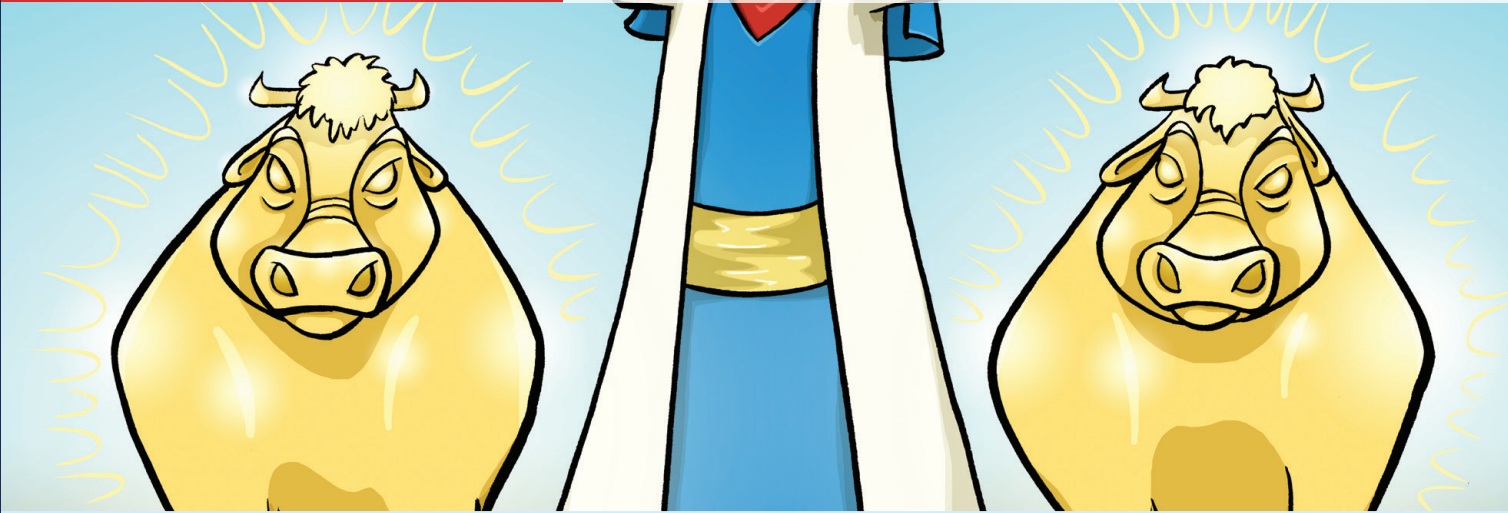


SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

WEEK 27

God punishes Jeroboam

1 Kings 12:1–33; 14:1–18



DAY 1

God was faithful to Jeroboam • 1 Kings 12:1–24

READ

1 Kings 12:1–24

EXPLAIN

The truth of 1 Kings 12:1–24

It is discouraging to see people make foolish decisions, because their foolishness can hurt a lot of people. But we can find comfort knowing that God is in control even over people's folly. That's how it was with Rehoboam. He thought he was being clever when he chose to be Mr. Tough Guy (1 Kgs 12:6–14; cf. 4:7; 5:13), but his foolishness became clear pretty quickly when ten tribes rebelled, killed one of his officers and made Jeroboam their king (12:16–20). But even Rehoboam's foolishness was "a turn of affairs" from God (12:15). Everything happened just as God had promised. Ten tribes followed Jeroboam. One tribe, Judah, followed David's line (11:13). Benjamin's loyalty was split between north and south (12:21), and Levi, which was not counted among the twelve because it had no tribal land, remained faithful to David (2 Chr 11:14). Since God had ordained the north-south split, He stopped Rehoboam from beginning a civil war to try to take the ten tribes back by force (1 Kgs 12:24). Foolishness is never good, but not even this can frustrate God's plan.

ASK

1. What two promises did God make to Jeroboam?
God promised to make him king over 10 tribes of Israel, and He promised to make his descendants kings too if Jeroboam worshiped God (1 Kgs 11:26–39).
2. How did God keep His promise of giving 10 tribes to Jeroboam?
God used the foolishness of Rehoboam and his friends to tear Israel apart
3. How can this encourage you when things around you are going badly?
It reminds us that God is in control of the good and the bad

DISCUSS

1. Whose advice should you listen to? Do you choose to listen to those who are wise or to those who tell you what you like to hear?
2. Do you have any foolish rulers in authority over you? How do you react when you hear about their foolish decisions?

DAY 2

Jeroboam was unfaithful to God • 1 Kings 12:25–33

READ

1 Kings 12:25–33

EXPLAIN

The truth of 1 Kings 12:25–33

Jeroboam had just seen things come true exactly as God had predicted (1 Kings 11:31). So you would think that Jeroboam would have believed the last part of God's message: he would have a lasting dynasty only if he worshiped God (11:38). But like many people today, Jeroboam rejected God's word because he didn't think it was helpful in his specific situation (12:26–27). So he set up a counterfeit religion. He acted like a new Aaron (12:28), and made his new religion look official. But like false religions today, Jeroboam's religion was man-made. God alone is to be worshiped as the invisible God (Exod 20:3–6), but Jeroboam made images to represent God. God chose Jerusalem (2 Chr 6:6), but Jeroboam chose Bethel and Dan. God chose priests from the Levites (Num 3:10), but Jeroboam made a new priesthood from all tribes (1 Kgs 12:31). God ordained the Feast of Tabernacles on the 15th day of the 7th month (Num 29:12), but Jeroboam replaced it with a festival of his own on the 15th day of the 8th month (1 Kgs 12:32–33).

ASK

1. Did Jeroboam worship God?
No. He made two calf idols instead.
2. After Jeroboam became king over the 10 tribes of Israel, what did he make?
He made a false religion, including 2 golden calves, 2 places of worship, lots of other places of worship, a new priesthood, and a new religious festival.
3. Why did Jeroboam make a false religion?
Jeroboam was trying to protect his kingship.

DISCUSS

1. If Jeroboam truly wanted to protect his kingdom, what should he have done?
2. Have you come across any false religions today? Why are false religions so tricky?

DAY 3

God judged Jeroboam • 1 Kings 14:1–20

READ

1 Kings 14:1–20

EXPLAIN

The truth of 1 Kings 14:1–20

Jeroboam thought God was someone he could use, not someone he had to obey. So despite his counterfeit religion, he still hoped for a favorable word from God when his son was sick (1 Kgs 14:1–3). He saw God's prophet as a way to get what he wanted, not as a way to find out what God wanted. But God's prophet was not fooled. Though physically blind, Ahijah saw through the disguise of Jeroboam's wife (14:1–6).

Ahijah condemned Jeroboam for not following God as David had, even though God had proven His grace toward Him (14:5–9). Therefore, God would destroy the line of Jeroboam, cutting off every male descendant (14:10). Also, as Israel's king, Jeroboam's sin brought judgment on Israel as well. Israel would be exiled from the land (14:15–16). God's word came true. The sick son died immediately. And within a few years, the rest of Jeroboam's descendants were slaughtered (15:25–29). Then nearly 200 years later, Israel was driven into exile (2 Kgs 17:23). Because Jeroboam disobeyed God, he lost the blessing of a lasting dynasty and a secure kingdom.

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASK 

1. Why did Jeroboam send his wife to God's prophet?
Not to do what God wanted, but to get what he wanted.
2. Was God's prophet fooled when Jeroboam's wife came to see him?
No. Though physically blind, God allowed him to see through her disguise.
3. Jeroboam sinned to try to secure his kingship, but what did he actually get?
The destruction of his family and the end of his dynasty.
4. How did Jeroboam's sin affect Israel?
Because Israel embraced Jeroboam's false worship, Israel would be exiled from the promised land.

DISCUSS 

1. When you do what is convenient instead of what is right, what happens?
2. Do you go to God often, or just in times of crisis? When you go to God, do you seek His will or try to get Him to do what you want?

DAY 4*The wise receive instruction • Proverbs 15:31–32***READ** 

Proverbs 15:31–33

EXPLAIN **The truth of Proverbs 15:31–33**

Solomon wrote the whole book of Proverbs about wisdom, but Rehoboam ignored his dad's instructions. Don't make the same mistake. Unlike Rehoboam, you should listen "to life-giving reproof" (Prov 15:31). This is how you get wisdom: by being willing to listen to and obey the godly counsel of others (15:32). This explains why so many people reject wisdom: wisdom requires humility. A proud heart refuses to listen to the warnings of others. Do you have a humble, teachable spirit? Rehoboam refused to be taught. He rejected the counsel of his father's experienced advisors in favor of his friends' foolish flattery. Instead of wisdom he chose insolence, resulting in "nothing but strife" (13:10). Rather than turn away the people's wrath with a soft answer, Rehoboam stirred up their anger by his harsh words (1 Kgs 12:13–14; Prov 15:1). So learn from his error, listen to God's advice, and be gentle even with our opponents (2 Tim 2:25). Imitate Jesus, a gentle leader whose burden is light (Matt 11:29–30). Be wise, and embrace humility and gentleness.

ASK 

1. Who wrote most of the book of Proverbs?
Solomon. Sadly, his son didn't pay attention to his father's wisdom.
2. How is wisdom gained?
A teachable spirit; being willing to hear and obey godly counsel.
3. Why do many people reject wisdom?
Pride.
3. Why did Rehoboam refuse to listen to good counsel?
Because his friends' counsel made him feel important and powerful.

DISCUSS 

1. Do you truly listen to others, or are you already preparing what you're going to say in response while they're talking to you?
2. Who would you go to right now if you had a problem and needed advice? Why would you go to this person?

DAY 5

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life • John 14:6

READ

John 14:1-15

EXPLAIN

The truth of John 14:6

Man-made religion is more appealing to sinful people than true religion. To them, Jeroboam's religion felt more "real" because of the visible images. It was more tolerant, welcoming contributions from various religious traditions. It was more inclusive, allowing anyone to become a priest. It was more accessible, opening up two central places of worship as well as shrines throughout the land (1 Kgs 13:32). But like all man-made religion, it was an abomination, for God hates unauthorized worship (Exod 20:3-6; Lev 10:1-3). You can only come to God His way, through Jesus Christ (John 14:6). There are not many paths to God. There is only one. Jesus is the only way. If Jesus is the only way, then worship Him, and worship Him alone! If you do not properly worship God, nothing else you accomplish in your life matters. Rather than worship your own security or make up a religion for your own convenience, turn to "the way, the truth, and the life," and keep His commands (14:6, 15). Unless you do, your end will be worse than that of Jeroboam and his family (Rev 21:8).

ASK

1. Why did Israel like Jeroboam's man-made religion?
Because it felt good to their sinful hearts.
2. Why was Jeroboam's man-made religion an abomination?
Because he created his own way to come to God.
3. How many paths are there to God?
One. We may only come to God through His Son, Jesus Christ (John 14:6).
4. What does false religion produce?
Eternal death and separation from God (Rev 21:8).

DISCUSS

1. Why do people create false religions?
2. How would you respond to someone who said: "We're all on different paths, but we're all heading toward the same God"?

NEXT WEEK

Elijah and the prophets of Baal

1 Kings 16:29-17:1; 18:1-2, 17-46

