



## The Sins of Jeroboam



***The sins of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit.***

I am in the process of reading through the Old Testament for a correspondence course called “Old Testament Foundations”. Last week as I was plowing through 1 and 2 Kings, I came across the phrase “the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit” fourteen times. Sheer repetition imprinted this phrase on my mind, but as the week went on, it also became more and more apparent that phrase has a particular

message for me at this moment, so I thought I'd share it with you too. I'll give you a brief summary of Jeroboam's story, and then explain my reflections.

During King Solomon's reign the following events took place ...

**1 Kings 11:28** Now Jeroboam was a man of standing, and when Solomon saw how well the young man did his work, he put him in charge of the whole labor force of the tribes of Joseph. **29** About that time Jeroboam was going out of Jerusalem, and Ahijah the prophet of Shiloh met him on the way... Ahijah ... said to Jeroboam, "...this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says...I will take you, and you will rule over all that your heart desires; you will be king over Israel. **38** If you do whatever I command you and walk in obedience to me and do what is right in my eyes by obeying my decrees and commands, as David my servant did, I will be with you. I will build you a dynasty as enduring as the one I built for David and will give Israel to you...

Some time later, Solomon dies and **(1 Kings 12:20)** When all the Israelites heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel... **26 Jeroboam thought to himself, "The kingdom will now likely revert to the house of David. 27 If these people go up to offer sacrifices at the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem, they will again give their allegiance to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah. They will kill me and return to King Rehoboam."** **28** After seeking advice, the king made two golden calves. He said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." **29** One he set up in Bethel, and the other in Dan. **30** And this thing became a sin.

So what does this story have to do with you and me? As I read it, I was struck by the following facts. Jeroboam was just going about life, trying to be diligent and faithful. As he was out and about one day, completely unsuspecting, God gave him the task of ruling his Kingdom, and offered to establish a long lasting covenant with him. It is probable that this possibility had never entered his mind before, but as soon as it DID, Jeroboam grabbed onto the promise and it began to define him. He couldn't imagine the thought of losing the position that had been given to him as a GIFT from God. As soon as he was crowned King, paranoia took over, and he turned people away from God in order to maintain control over them. In doing so, he lost sight of both God's promises and God's ability to KEEP his promises. Because of his choices, he was referenced fourteen times as an example of sinfulness throughout the remainder of 1 and 2 Kings.

That is scary, isn't it? I'm sure all of you can think of a time that God has given you an unexpected gift and, as soon as He did, you grabbed onto it and held it so tightly that His purposes could no longer be accomplished by it.

I can think of several times this has happened in my own life, but this story seems particularly applicable to me this week as I am transitioning into a role of greater leadership within the Women's Ministry department at Northview. I have been given this opportunity as a GIFT, and I better make sure that I don't lose sight of the GIVER of the gift as I step into the future. The minute it becomes about "me" is the minute that I lose His perspective on what He wants me to be and to do for HIS glory.

So I lay this story before you this week as a piece of both accountability and confession. If you ever sense me going off the rails, I give you full permission to shout out, "Remember the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit!"

Blessings to you today,

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