

FOOLED BY THE PROPHET

ser3964 When God Seems Mean, Pt4
August 22, 2020 E & L

I. POINT OF INTRIGUE

A. Our sermon series this month addresses times when God seems mean. Today we're going to look at a fascinating story about two prophets during the reign of King Jeroboam.

HERE'S A LITTLE HISTORY REGARDING JEROBOAM.

Jeroboam was the first king of the northern kingdom known as Israel; the southern kingdom was known as Judah. When King Solomon led Israel astray by worshipping idols and refusing to heed the LORD's warnings, God took ten tribes and gave them to Jeroboam—dividing the nation of Israel into two parts, north and south. [\(show photo\)](#) Jeroboam was hand-picked by God, but he was more concerned about losing his population to Judah when they went to Jerusalem to worship at Temple than he was about obeying God. Consequently, God took the kingdom from him and gave it to another, just as he took the kingdom from King Saul and gave it to David, son of Jesse.



B. Two thoughts here before looking at our text, *I Kings 13:4*. Although at first, these thoughts may seem disconnected to the sermon, they are not.

A recent survey by George Barna and the Arizona Christian University's Cultural Research Center's American Worldview Inventory (That's a mouth full LOL!) revealed that:

1. The majority of Americans no longer believe Jesus is the path to salvation and instead believe that being a good person is sufficient.
2. Slightly over half of the Christian respondents said they believe someone can attain salvation by "being or doing good," a figure that includes 46% of Pentecostals, 44% of mainline Protestants, 41% of evangelicals, 70% of Catholics.
3. In addition to the viewpoint that eternal salvation can be earned, survey results show that 58% of Americans believe that no absolute moral truth exists and that the basis of truth is factors or sources other than God.
4. 77% said that right and wrong are determined by factors other than the Bible. 59% said that the Bible is not God's authoritative and true Word, and 69% said people are basically good.
5. Most people contend that all faiths are of equal value, that entry into God's eternal presence is determined

by one's personal means of choice, and that there are no absolutes to guide or grow us morally.

C. (Second thought.) If this survey is accurate, America is quickly on the road to demise. Man is NOT inherently good; he is inherently sinful and in need of a Savior.

1. **Psalm 51:5** tells us, Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity (Hebrew: immorality), And in sin my mother conceived me.

2. **Romans 3:23** tells us, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and **Romans 3:10** tells us, There is none righteous, no not one.

If being good could take anyone to Heaven, there would be no need for the Cross and Jesus. The two are inseparable because we are ALL in need of pardoning.

D. The article continues stating:

“That philosophy of life contradicts a fundamental basis of what may be the two most significant documents to the longevity and success of America – the **Bible** and the **Constitution of the United States**.

Believers, we need to pray and fight like never before. And, do all we can to educate our young people (the emerging generations) of what looms ahead. They must be the "culture changers" bringing us back to God.

*The results are from a January 2020 survey among a nationally representative sample of 2,000 adults, with a maximum sampling error of approximately plus or minus 2 percentage points, based on the 95% confidence interval. (The Christian Post newsletter)

E. I have a dear friend, a ghostwriter, who wrote this on my social media page addressing this matter.

“The spiritual and moral trajectory, inertia, and momentum are sweeping us into a paradigm that will ultimately reveal itself to be overly hostile to the Word of God and the God of the Word.” He then uses Germany in the late 1800s as an example and closes with this:

“James 4:4 is a sobering dose of reality:

‘You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world means *enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who **chooses** to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God’.”

*hostility, antagonism, hatred

Note that no matter how wicked the world may be, the choice to *live for* and *obey* God remains. The choice is ours!

F. Let us pray!

II. OUR TEXT, **1 KINGS 13**

A. Here’s the story. King Jeroboam was burning incense on the altar at Bethel—a complete act of defiance.

LET’S TALK ABOUT IT! The only people allowed to burn incense on the Altar of God were priests whose lineage traced back to Aaron. Furthermore, the Temple at Jerusalem

was less than 90 miles away. By burning incense, Jeroboam defiantly told God and the people that he could do whatever he pleased. After all, he was king. ([show photo, p5](#))

THINK ABOUT IT! *Power and money* are the two most significant contributors to the sin of pride. Jeroboam, who was appointed by the LORD, corrupted his appointment, like Lucifer did, thinking he was above the law, even the law of God.



PRIDE CAN BE SEEN IN THE YOUNGEST OF CHILDREN, AND DOGS.

1. How many times do you, as a parent, tell your child not to do something, and what do they do, right in front of you? Precisely what they were told not to do. Pride is ugly.



2. We have an Italian Mastiff. She's big, strong, and has a 700 lb bite.

(To put that in perspective, a lion has a 640 lb bite.) ([show video 11 secs](#)) Gemma knows she is not allowed on the living room furniture, but

from time to time, she will challenge that ruling. Sometimes all I have to do is give her a look. At other times I have to say, “Gemma, what are you doing on the living room sofa?” Other times I have to physically move her.

Then there are times when she doesn't like others getting attention, and she'll attack whatever is getting the attention or find something that



will give her the attention. For example, years ago, while snowmobiling in Wyoming, I purchased a black bearskin. (Not the real thing.) ([show photo](#)) Just last week, we were settling in to have our Family Bible Time. She decided she wanted attention. She went into my study, jumped up on the recliner, took the bear, and came out swinging it—in front of all of us.

My point is, defiance, although at times makes for good movies and a good laugh, usually turns into something ugly, whether done righteously or unrighteously. In this narrative, Jeroboam was unrighteously defiant, and God is dropping the anvil.

B. Back to the story. God sent a man of God to tell Jeroboam that on that very altar a king from Judah, Josiah, would burn the bones of Jeroboam's false prophets. (This took place 100 years later.) Here's what follows.

⁴ When King Jeroboam heard what the man of God said about the altar in Bethel, the king raised his hand from the altar and pointed at the man. “Take him!” he said. But when the king said this, his arm was paralyzed, and he could not move it. ⁵ The altar also broke into pieces, and its ashes fell to the ground. This was the sign the LORD had told the man of God to give.

⁶ Then the king said to the man of God, “Please pray to the LORD your God for me, and ask him to heal my arm.” So the man of God prayed to the LORD, and the king’s arm was healed, becoming as it was before.

[Oh, the mercy of God.]

⁷ Then the king said to the man of God, “Please come home and eat with me, and I will give you a gift.”

⁸ But the man of God answered the king, “Even if you gave me half of your kingdom, I would not go with you. I will not eat or drink anything in this place. ⁹ The LORD commanded me not to eat or drink anything nor to return on the same road by which I came.” ¹⁰ So he took a different road and did not return on the same road by which he had come to Bethel.

B. Now a strange turn of events takes place while the man of God returned home from his mission.

The sons of an old prophet living in Bethel tell their father about the events that took place that day. The old prophet tells his sons to saddle his donkey; he ventures forth to find the man of God. He finds him under an oak tree—the man of God’s mission has exhausted him. The old prophet invites the man of God to come back home

with him and eat. The man of God said he had specific instructions from the LORD not to eat or drink in Bethel but go back to Judah. The old prophet tells the man of God that an angel told him that it was okay for the man of God to return with him to Bethel to eat and drink. The text then says, **“But he lied to him.”**

When they arrive at the old prophet’s home, while sitting at table, the old prophet cries out against him saying,

“21 The LORD said you did not obey Him! He said you did not do what [HE] commanded you. 22 The LORD commanded you not to eat or drink anything in this place, but you came back and ate and drank. So your body will not be buried in your family grave.”

On his way home, the man of God is killed by a lion. The lion did not eat the man of God or his donkey. The fact that the lion ate neither man nor donkey was to show that this was an act of God. The old prophet buried the man of God and told his sons that when he died to put his body next to the man of God.

III. THE CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER

A. Does not God’s punishment seem cruel? Have we not all heard from the LORD, known what we were to do, and disobeyed?

1. Follow me! The man of God and the old prophet did not go to hell for their sins.
2. The lesson is a powerful one that cannot be denied: **“The wages of sin is death.” *Romans 6:23***

3. Let's connect the Bible narrative to the Barna study. Whether you're a prophet, priest, king, or commoner, God's word is your final authority. Whether you're Republican or Democrat, rich or poor, black or white, Jew or Greek, free or slave, Christian or non-Christian, believe the Bible or don't believe the Bible, you/we will all bend our knee to the word of God.

B. This is His word.

⁹ ... if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. **Roman 10:9-10** (JBS)

Will you ...

Admitt– your sins have separated you from God.

(Psa 14:1-3; Rom 3: 23); **Believe** – that God did something about your sins through Jesus Christ. (The final Pascal Lamb/Messiah.)

(Lev 17:10; Heb 9: 19-22); **Commit** – yourself to His righteousness by confessing Jesus as Lord and Savior.

(Isa 53:5; Col 1:22); **Do it today!** (Isa 49:8; 2 Cor 6:2).

Father in Heaven, I'm sorry for the things I've done that are wrong: I am a sinner; forgive me. Thank You for loving me and sending your Son, Jesus, to pay the penalty for my sin. Holy Spirit come into my heart; Jesus be my Lord and Savior. I give You my life. Amen.

ser3964, *Fooled by the Old Prophet (When God Seems Mean, Pt4)* 1989 words
(approximately 15.3 minutes with Invitation and no HG detours. ☺)