

The sins of Jereboam

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[0 : 00] Turn with me now to the first book of things chapter 14 at verse 16. First things the 14th chapter with 16th verse and he shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam who did sin and who made Israel to sin.

And we shall think particularly of the sins of Jeroboam. The 66 books of the Bible deal with many subjects.

But when we take the Bible as a whole there can be no doubt that two of its leading themes are sin and salvation.

Until people become deeply impressed with the serious and far-reaching consequences of personal sins they will seldom, if ever, be seriously anxious to obtain salvation.

And therefore the word of God contains many plain warnings about God's hatred of sin and the eternal curse to which it exposes the unforgiven sinner.

[1 : 48] Not only so but the Bible provides conspicuous examples of how sin ruined individual lives and how the lives of others were adversely affected through these persons.

And one such example we have in the career of Jeroboam. A man who might have been a powerful and influential and yet because he did not pay attention to God's warning and did not avail himself of God's help He brought disaster upon himself and upon a whole nation.

And since this is the way in which many heroes of the gospel and many people bring disaster present and eternal upon themselves let us for a little as we may be helped by the spirit consider the career of this man and see what we may learn from.

The first thing to notice is that he had comparative advantages In his youth he was known as a widow's son and that may well have meant that he knew the limitations of poverty the life.

But at the same time he had considerable natural gifts physically he was strong mentally he was alert and he possessed gifts which fitted him for leadership and very soon he was able to find adequate means of livelihoods First it wasn't difficult to come by in the days of Solomon for an able-bodied man and by and by Jeroboam was employed in connection with one of Solomon's building schemes and he was no sluggard to the humble task at which he began to work he gave himself with diligence steadiness and thoroughness and there at least young people studying young people at the beginning of their careers might follow his example and such was the industry which he manifested that one day when the king was on a tour of inspection his attention was attracted by the way this young man went about his work and Jeroboam was promoted to be the former of a considerable body of men and he was preparing himself for greater responsibility in the days that lay ahead

[5 : 04] So far as religion was concerned he enjoyed considerable privileges also For in the days of the newly completed temple we cannot but believe that fresh interest was awakened in its sacrificial worship both its form and its significance he couldn't have been ignorant of them Moreover there were two prophets that worked in the land and with two of these men Jeroboam had memorable meetings Here then was a young man whose advantages seemed to give him a fair start in life of course there were counteracting influences and not least the religious declension of his king but it was with Jeroboam like ourselves we enjoy great privileges temporal and spiritual there are many counteracting influences in our environment but our greatest source of danger is in none of these counteracting influences our greatest source of danger as it was his is in our own hearts the word of god says keep thine heart diligently for out of it are the issues of life and any person who attempts to keep his own or her own heart will soon discover the impossibility of it but some scholars some commentators have linked the words of proverbs keep thine heart diligently with words in john's gospel you know in chapter 7 of verse 37 of john's gospel there is a reference to a scripture which is fulfilled in the words that he who believes in jesus will have rivers of living water issuing from him flowing from the center of his life and john says this he spake of the holy spirit says the writer to the of the proverb keep thine heart diligently for out of it are the issues of life the things which flow out into the life determining its character and destiny well let the holy spirit be there and out of the out of the center of the life will flow transformation of life and character onwards to life eternal life everlasting keep thine heart diligently for out of it are the issues of life pray that that holy spirit that secret agent of whom i was speaking to the children come and take possession of your heart and then you will be saved for life's onward journey in the second place we notice that jeroboam was given a challenging opportunity now i use the term challenging here in a sense he was given an opportunity of doing great things provided he fulfilled certain conditions it happened at an unexpected meeting possibly jeroboam would have called it a chance meeting but it was no such thing we are told that the prophet found him he found him because he was looking for him

just as jesus went out into galilee and found philip because he was looking for him you know that an unexpected meeting may determine the course of a man's or a woman's life let a person of unstable character meet with an evil person and that thou may mark a steady deterioration in that in the life of the person of unstable character but let even the chief of sinners meet with jesus of nazareth and the preaching of the word and oh what how wonderful the issues will be the cat of life rescued from sin the character transfigured the end of the of the being of the man or the woman eternal and everlasting life and glory and at the unexpected meeting there was given a symbolic action a memorable action think of the amazement of jeroboam when he saw this man taking off his obviously new cloak and tearing it carefully until he had 12 pieces and then handing jeroboam 10 but you see these were the days of symbolic action so he probably didn't think the prophet was mad he attended to what he had to say but one effect of this symbolic action would certainly have been to stamp the recollection of that meeting indelibly upon jeroboam's memory following the symbolic action there came a startling explanation now mark the basic things in this explanation because our understanding of jeroboam's character and what happened to him depends on grasping list the explanation he got contained a warning and a promise a warning in that he was told that the great kingdom of solomon the fame of which was spreading throughout the civilized world of the east was to be disrupted and the larger part of it taken away from his successor and more startling still this kingdom was to be given these 10 tribes were to be given to jeroboam and upon condition of obedience to god trust in god and being guided by him his dynasty was to be established upon a throne here then was the startling message that jeroboam received because the great son of david was to suffer for sin there was made to him an incredible offer but my friend david had a greater son than solomon who when he was present here upon the earth said a greater than solomon is here and because he died upon calvary's cross there is made to you an offer before which the splendor before the grandeur of which the splendor of the offer made to jeroboam paled for there is made to you on the basis of jesus death an offer of forgiveness of sins a place of usefulness in the kingdom of grace and a permanent abode in the kingdom of glory have you ever glimpsed the grandeur the far-reaching grandeur the breathtaking grandeur of the author of the gospel of the gospel

but then thirdly there came to jeroboam a crucial temptation the promise mark when it came he was already king of israel and that meant that the obstacles which had arisen between the time of the prophet's words and the day that he was seated on the throne had been overcome events took place in the meantime that made it altogether unlikely that the promise given by the prophet would ever be fulfilled and yet it had been fulfilled and fulfilled without a single battle and well might he have looked back and remembered what the prophet said remembered not only what he promised but the terms on which the continuance of what was given to him had been promised and his heart might have been filled with gratitude to god and with prayerfulness that he would have great to fulfill the conditions by which his tenure of the throne would be secured jesus when he was on earth made a number of predictions concerning himself concerning others and concerning the future he foretold for example peter's fall he foretold his own death and resurrection he foretold the coming destruction of jerusalem and all these things have taken place and what has taken place in the past may give us the assurance that what is what has not taken place is coming again in judgment to judge the unbelieving and pretended followers will yet take place and also if god by his grace has begun to fulfill his promises to you if you have tasted and found that the lord is gracious then you may believe that he who has begun the good work will continue it that his love in the past will not allow you think that he will leave you at last to think in trouble and in despair and destruction now notice the form that the temptation took jeroboam feared himself frightened with love the loss of the loss of his kingdom and the loss of his life because when the kingdom was divided the central place of worship at jerusalem remained the common place of worship and at the stated times appointed in the word of god the people from the ten tribes joined with the people of the other tribes in worshipping god at jerusalem and fear got hold of jeroboam that this would result sooner or later on a desire to be united again under david's descendants we can understand in a way his fear but we cannot so easily understand the way in which he reacted it was open to him to bring the matter before the lord to plead the lord's promise that he would that on condition of obedience the throne would be continued under him in his possession and that of his men he could have gone to the lord and said his promise a hija was still alive and accessible he could have gone and consulted him he could have said now a hija what you told me has come through but i am in this difficulty i have this fear how would you advise me is there any word from the lord to advise me what to do

but he did neither instead he relied upon his own understanding upon his own skill his administrative ability that the word of god says trust in the lord with all thine heart and lean not to thine own understanding particularly for moral questions and spiritual questions are at issue and so this man adopted methods that were completely contrary to the word of god and in doing so he forfeited god's good will he sacrificed the spiritual benefit of his people and he brought disaster upon himself and upon men you see he was he was affected by or attacked by two evils he distrusted god and he was deluding himself into believing that by going on in a sinful way he would secure his happiness and his future better and it be secured by continuing obedience to god that was the sin of our first parents and it is the self these are the self-destroying errors of every sinner who goes down to a lost eternity and of many who are going on in disobedience to the gospel this trust of god failure to believe that he desires our highest good that it is best for us to leave ourselves in his hand and to take his way and the belief that by following the desires of our own heart and relying upon our own wisdom we will better secure our highest interest than by leaving them in the hands of god christ is able to succor the tempted do not forget it and when you are tempted to think that you are to lose certain things material good and worldly interest because you are a follower of christ then remember what a prophet said to a king on one occasion when he was in the same dilemma the lord is able to give you much more than this and now lastly let us glance at the convincing warning which this man had they throw into the foreground the patience of god they highlight his long suffering this man was not immediately cut off but as he stood before one of his corrupt doctors on one occasion a prophet came and foretold how the lord's anger and displeasure would be expressed in days to come and the altar was lent in pieces and his right arm stretched out to arrest the prophet was withered as a sign that the god who withered his arm could there and then have taken away his life and sent him to receive the punishment of his deed but he didn't do it and then a little later the crown prince a promising lad a lad whose character attracted the attention of the people was cut off and a solemn warning given by a hija of what would be the doom of him and his family for his conduct and still he did not repent and at last we read this in chronicles the lord's drachma strange words unusual words in scripture the lord's drachma it surely means that he came to an untimely end now friend perhaps you are here and you have reason to believe that the lord in his providence has given you a warning perhaps more than one seeking to stir up your conscience to consider what will be the end if you go on in unbelief and disobedience

you may take refuge in saying perhaps what happened to jeroboam doesn't happen to everyone who goes on in an ungodly way quite true but listen to this this is what the word of god says in that connection though the sinner do evil a hundred times and his days be prolonged yet surely i know it shall be well with the righteous that it shall not be well with the wicked there is god's warning a warning from the word is not a sharp warning in providence lay it to heart let us pray oh lord our god deliver us from the hard and unresponsive heart deliver us from the heart that is hardened by the deceitfulness of sin and as thou has been pleased to give us solemn warning as thou has also been pleased hitherto to deal with us in patience grant that thy long suffering may lead us all to repentance and grant that we may seek daily grace from thee to depart from ill to do good to seek peace that we may know thy peace and keeping and blessing here and enter into thine eternal rest hereafter we ask it in jesus name amen you