

Solidifying the Kingdom

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[0:00] 1 Kings, 1 Kings chapter 12 tonight as we continue looking at our series here talking about transitions. And as the children of Israel we're experiencing a transition in leadership and as the kingdom has been divided. And we see here that the people last week had made a decision about who they were going to follow whether it was going to be Rehoboam or it was going to be Jeroboam.

And we saw that as they made that separation there we know that Rehoboam the king of Judah, Solomon's son, had taken refuge there in Jerusalem and began to build his defenses. And the Bible tells us that he fortified 15 cities throughout Judah and also used his wealth that his father had left him because Solomon we know had great wealth and great means. And so Rehoboam had all sorts of means to deal with that. And you can make a little note and read over in 2 Chronicles chapter 11 talks about those cities and what he did. But this evening we're going to look at Jeroboam because Jeroboam goes about things on a little smaller scale. And we're going to see that the opportunity here though before Jeroboam we're going to find was really a pretty remarkable offering that God made to him.

I mean when you consider what God did and what God said to him and what God declared, Jeroboam was at a pivotal point of making a decision what was he going to do? What direction was he going to take? And how was he going to do that? Because as we know Jeroboam here does some fortification but only in two cities, Shechem and Penel. And we find here that God had made a promise if you remember back in chapter 11 we talked about that, that God made a promise to him that he would establish him a sure house, a sure lineage just like he had for David. I mean that's, when you look in the scripture that's a pretty powerful promise from God. When God said that David, and he's going to establish what he told David about an everlasting kingdom to say, I'm going to put something and give you a kingdom much like it. That's a pretty powerful statement, pretty powerful opportunity that he had before him. To make a decision of what direction he was going to go. And it was contingent though on one thing and that was very clearly his willingness to walk in the ways of the Lord right in God's sight. You know, the same is true for us today. If we expect God's blessing we need to be doing the same. You know, we need to be following his commands and doing what's right in the sight of the Lord and not others. So really it's the same command even to us, you know. If you want God's blessing you need to do what God has instructed to get that blessing. And so we're going to see here

Jeroboam had great, quite a blessing available to him. And upon the establishment here of the northern kingdom as Israel, he faced those normal decisions as a leader. You know, becomes a new nation. There were some things that every nation needs. And you know, even if you watch that display last night, you know, there's two things that they always kind of mention. And the two things every nation will talk about, one is security. You know, how secure is the nation? And you talk about the economy. You know, those are two physical needs of every nation. And we're going to find here that that's exactly what Jeroboam focuses upon first, is establishing. Because these two cities, as we're going to be looking here tonight, he wanted that protection, that security, and then the economy. Because those are the two things that help open the door for a place to be successful. You know, when people feel secure and have a means of resources, it leads to security and just feeling like you can make progress and that you move forward.

And so as we see Jeroboam was preparing for these things, the physical needs of the kingdom, we're going to find that he also understood the importance of a religious and worship within a kingdom or a nation. You know, and we're going to look at that a little bit tonight. Take a look over here in 1 Kings chapter 12. Look down at verse 25. We're going to start here tonight in verse 25.

And it says, then Jeroboam built Shechem in Mount Ephraim and dwelt therein and went out from thence and built Penel. And so we see here, the first thing is the physical needs of the kingdom. You know, he needed some things established to be able to move forward. The physical needs are that of any nation. Like I said, economy and security. You know, you have to have a means of production, a means of taking care of people, and a way to do it safely. And so he's, and to meet the needs of the people in that. And so as we look here, Jeroboam recognized this importance. And that's the reason he established and looked at these first in his kingdom. You know, we're told first that he built Shechem as his capital city. You know, Shechem was a very strategic city along a major trade route through which the economy things of the northern tribes would pass. But it was also a place where the military traffic would flow. It was a means of getting military and security where it might need to be in a quick format. And so as we see him working on that, but we notice also it was located in Ephraim, and which made logical sense because what tribe was Jeroboam from?

[6:04] Who's awake? From Ephraim. You know, so it kind of makes sense. You're going to, a king is going to get around where he's going to have the most security for himself too. And so we're going to see here this city that he built here. And but the other thing, city he built is Penel, located on the east side of the Jordan. Now if we remember, if you remember back in Numbers chapter 32, you'll find it there in Numbers 32, that the other side of the Jordan, there was two and a half tribes that stayed on the east side of the Jordan. You had Gad and Reuben and half the tribe of Manasseh, and those were part of the ten that went with Jeroboam. And so Penel is located over there. It was a city that served the same purpose. It was on an economic and a place of military that he could defend for the people. It was that same thing, an economy and security for the people on the other side of Jordan. So these two cities made sense for this. And, you know, it was a gesture towards those on the other side of the

Jordan. But the fortification of these two cities solidified the tribes together in the new kingdom. You know, remember I said earlier that how many cities did Rehoboam fortify? He did what? Fifteen. Jeroboam does two. Now that goes back, I think, to what happened earlier. Because remember, what caused the kingdom to split? What was the argument that led to the division? Taxes. So I think he only fortified two cities because he didn't want to do what? Put a heavy levy or tax on the people to do the rest. It's, you know, if you just saw a revolt because of it, it's probably pretty smart not to say, hey guys, I know you just revolted for this, but I'm going to do the same thing and increase the levy. You know, probably not a good move politically or even physically for him to be able to do that. So I think he did the two cities as what was the minimum that was needed to do this. And so Solomon would have left Rehoboam all these things to be able to do so much more there. And so we see those physical needs of the nation. But you know, more importantly, even though those are things are very important to have economy and to have security, the religious dynamic of a nation has a great impact on both the economy and the security of a nation.

[8:52] Because, you know, when we realize that God is the one who promises to provide for our needs, God's the one that promises to take care of us. We need to understand the importance here as we're going to look at the religious needs of the nation. Because every nation will have a religious system that it gives, that it has to give direction and connection among the people. You know, one person basically said it this way, he says, religiously unified people are politically unified.

What somebody believes religiously will impact how they connect with somebody else politically. I think we see that in our nation today too, don't we?

You see that directly dynamic of what somebody thinks of God or who they worship or what they worship impacts the political dynamic. And so we're going to see here that Rehoboam understood this, the importance of the who and the what and the how a nation worships along with where they worship will draw people together. And so we're going to see here this evening, we're going to look at Jeroboam because Jeroboam had some considerations that he had to do. You know, Jeroboam's consideration, we're going to look at first. What did he have to consider in this when it

came to the religious dynamic within Israel?

You know, look here at verse 26. And Jeroboam said in his heart, now shall the kingdom return to the house of David?

If this people go up and do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their Lord, even unto Rehoboam, king of Judah, and they shall kill me and go again to Rehoboam, king of Judah. And so I want you to see here, he began making some consideration.

[10:53] And he made this consideration, I want you to see here first within itself. Because as we look here, remember we talked about God's promise that God had sent the prophet to Jeroboam and told him, God said, I will give you these 10 tribes and establish you. He had a direct promise from God of what God said he was going to do. In light of all these other elements and factors, Jeroboam had a promise from God to say, this is what God said he would do if I'll follow him and walk with him.

That was the consideration that God had given. But now Jeroboam here, when he's in the position, the responsibility of this position had set in causing what we might say, we refer to today as Jeroboam's here and he has some insecurities that are coming to the surface.

You know, all this stuff had been happening and all these things had established him. The kingdom was starting to be established. The cities were getting built. And now he had some insecurities about what was happening.

You know, I want you to understand today, sometimes we can let our insecurities that come up in life begin to direct us instead of what God has said direct us. And we're going to see this in Jeroboam here tonight because when we understand earlier, the prophet Ahijah there in 1 Kings chapter 11 had revealed that Jeroboam would roll over those 10 tribes and liberty was given to him over there in 1 Kings chapter 11.

Look over there in verse 37. There in chapter 11, notice what it says, I want you to see here, God basically gave him a blank check of direction as long as he followed the Lord.

[12:52] He gave him a lot of liberty of leadership, a lot of liberty of things as long as he put those things under the context of following the Lord.

He said, according to all your soul desires. That's a pretty big blank check. God gave him and offered him so much, but the direction it would take was placed upon him as king.

And we notice here that while his kingdom would not be the one through which Christ would come, God had promised him a great kingdom and lineage if he hearkened under the Lord's commands. You know, the Lord of God, he was to walk in the Lord's ways and do right in his sight. This would be his choice as to the outcome. You know, the same choice we have today about what God has told us to do.

God gives us a choice in the outcome. He says, if you do this, Jeroboam and Israel were not bound to turn from the Lord, but I want you to see here that they made a conscious choice to do so.

[14:04] As we're going to look here a little later, you're going to find that some, as the choices were made, some of the tribe, ten tribes, actually went to Judah because they said, these people are not following the Lord.

They made a choice in the direction of where they were going. And we're going to see what led to that, but notice here with me that Jeroboam's problem was in his heart.

Notice back over here in verse 26, and Jeroboam said in where? His heart. Now, when the Bible talks about your heart, it's the center of feelings and emotion and who you are.

And I want you to see here and understand because we do the same thing sometimes because in our heart, those feelings come up. You know, we have feelings and fears that come about in life as we walk through life.

There's things that scare you, things that cause fears and insecurities. You have feelings there of different things. And oftentimes we're going to see here as he said in his heart, now God knows because God gave us emotions.

[15:20] But I want you to understand, we're going to see here tonight the dangers of letting how you feel outweigh what God has said get you in trouble. Because our reliance is not upon how we feel, but it's by faith

in what God has promised to us.

To understand the importance because as you read through the prophet Jeremiah later on, you'll find that Jeremiah talks a lot about the heart. You know, look over in Jeremiah chapter 9 for a moment.

Jeremiah chapter 9. As we look here in Jeremiah 9, look down at verse 13. Because you'll see here that Jeremiah, if you do a word search on heart, it comes up a lot in the book of Jeremiah.

Talking about the heart and referencing the things of a person's heart, their center of feeling and emotion. It says in verse 13, the Lord saith, because they have forsaken my law, which I set before them and not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein, but notice verse 14, but they have walked after the what?

Imagination of what? Their own heart. And after Balaam, which their fathers taught them. You know, I want you to see here, his heart was a problem because you say, why did he fear?

[16:43] He feared the people would leave him and go back to Rehoboam. He had a fear that the people were going to not only go back to Rehoboam, but they were going to kill him. When they did it, if he allowed them to continue to go to Jerusalem to worship.

And so we're going to see here that Jeroboam here, he allowed his fears and his feelings to direct his choice, you know. And tonight, I want you to consider how often do we let those things direct our choices?

Our fears and feelings sometimes overpower trusting by faith what God has said. Instead of seeking out and holding on to the promises of God, he let his fear and his feelings overwhelm and he began to take counsel.

And we find here that Jeroboam seeks counsel, you know. We talked about that before. You know, counsel's a good thing. As long as you're getting the right counsel. Because sometimes we need to be careful because just like Rehoboam, if you remember, he sought counsel, didn't like the counsel, so he went and sought out the counsel that he wanted to hear.

You know? When you seek counsel, I encourage you to go to somebody who you know are going to tell you the truth and not just what you want to hear to affirm your choices.

[18:08] You might be making the right choice, but you want to know that person's telling you that yes, this is the right, proper choice going this direction not because they're trying to make you feel good but because it is the right direction.

To understand, and we see this picture of the counsel, Jeroboam's counsel. Look here at verse 28. It says, Whereupon the king took counsel and so we see here instead of listening to the counsel he'd received from the prophet, remember the prophet, Ahijah had come and told him what God was going to do, how God was going to secure his kingdom.

All he had to do was make a choice to follow God. To say, I'm going to put God and his way as a priority. To do the things of God. But the counsel he received was definitely from those who desired something different from what God wanted.

He wanted to look and instead he wanted a secular decision instead of a divine decision. You know, oftentimes we can get caught up in that. We want what the world wants instead of what God wants. To follow what God would have and we see here and understand, you know, think about Psalm 1. I mean, the psalmist starts off in Psalm 1 verse 1. He says, Blessed is the man that walketh not in what?

[19:29] The counsel of who? The ungodly. The two type of counsel you'll receive will either be godly counsel or ungodly counsel.

There's not a whole, the Bible doesn't make any other distinctions. We need to understand the importance of godly counsel because godly counsel is what's going to bring about the right things in your life.

Turn over to Psalm 33 for a moment. Psalm 33, we look here at Psalm 33 in verse 10. It says, The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to naught.

He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord does what? Standeth forever. the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

You know, the counsel he received was to keep the people from the heritage that God had given to them to form a new or modified religion to take its place.

[20:50] You know, one of the things we have today that you'll hear about, you'll see a term floated around today called deconstruction. And you have Christians, I'm deconstructing my faith.

It's a very popular thing right now. There's a lot of people chasing after that. This mindset of deconstruction, it's a modern movement that really, I want you to understand that the first premise of it is not necessarily bad, but the devil is in the details.

Because I firmly believe you ought to break down and say, why do I believe what I believe? That's a good godly thing. The problem is those that deconstruct tear down everything and reject everything and they look at the world's interpretation instead of what God says.

That's where they get in trouble. They're trying to filter their faith through the world instead of filtering their faith through the word of God. And we see this, it's a movement though that seeks to draw people away from the Lord by presenting a new or modified truth to follow.

In other words, they kind of make things up as they go along if this is what God really wants. This is direction God really wants you to be here. Those people are oppressive by telling you what God has said.

[22:18] You know, you'll find people in this, they go Bible shopping. Find a verse that agrees with me. You know, the problem is we ought to just take the book we have and say, do I agree with it?

That's the difference and here we find Jeroboam, he's shopping to say, how do I remake, how do I break down what we've known and make something new that's different that I can now be in control of?

And deconstructionist, a lot of that is I want to be in control of who I am. Instead of saying I want God to be in control, His Spirit to control who I am. And so we see here, it's not just rethinking but we need to understand that we need to rethink things through the lens of Scripture and not through the lens of feelings and fears.

Because oftentimes that's where it gets brought. We let our heart dictate instead of the Word of God. To understand the choice because look at what he did, Jeroboam's choice here that he makes.

Look here at verse 28. It says, whereon the king took counsel and notice what he did after following the counsel. And it says, he made two calves of gold and said unto them, it is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem.

[23:43] Behold thy gods, so is, he brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel and the other he put in Dan.

I want you to see the decision here was to prevent the people from going up to Jerusalem. Now what did God command them? At this time, Solomon built what in Jerusalem?

The temple. The temple. Where was all the focus of the temple or all the focus of God's worship supposed to be from that point? In Jerusalem, in the temple.

It's where every Jewish male was to go up three times a year. To worship the Lord, to honor the Lord. So what does Jeroboam do?

His decision was to prevent the people from going up because he said if they go up, they're going to turn against me. That's a fear he had. But remember what God told him?

[24:49] God said, if you serve me, God basically said, don't worry about that because if they're worshipping me and you're serving the Lord, I'm the one that's giving security.

I'm the one that's going to take care of that. It's not going to be a problem. But oftentimes, we get caught up in our fears and our feelings just like Jeroboam and it gets us in trouble.

And so we see here that he makes this decision to go up there. Jeroboam's choice was just that, to prevent the people to go and it would require complete reworking of the people's understanding of God and worship.

And we find this same thing happening throughout history. We see it happening today. People reconstructing what they want God to be and how they want to worship and where they want to worship because Jeroboam's choice, first he changed the focus of worship because our focus of worship is supposed to be on who?

On Jesus. On Christ. On God himself. What's he do? He changes the focus of worship because the focus had been centered around the temple where there was mercy seat between the cherubs

there in the tabernacle.

[26:15] That was the focus. When you go to the tabernacle or you go to the temple, the focus of worship was on the mercy seat that had the two angels over it. That was the seat of judgment.

It was a place on the day of atonement that the high priest would come in and make atonement for sin. That was the focal point. That sin would be covered.

That sin would be taken care of. It was the focal point of those things. But notice what's the new focal point? Two calves.

Turn back with me over to the book of Exodus for a moment. Exodus chapter 32. Some of you might already know what's there.

Exodus 32, 24. Excuse me, verse 4. I fat fingered that one.

[27:23] Verse 4. Verse 4. Stand up and read that. Joe, you got that? Exodus 32, verse... No, go down to 24.

I think 24 is the one I want. Verse 24. Verse 24. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. This is back when Moses and Joshua were up on the mountain and Aaron was left in charge.

This is one of the greatest tales you ever find in the Bible.

that Aaron says, we just put the gold in and the calf jumped out. You know? But we find here that Jeroboam had two calves, gold, as their gods, just as Aaron declared.

Now read verse 4 for me. Since you already got it. Huh. Does that sound familiar?

[28:47] Scripture? It's interesting that Jeroboam used the exact same. He quotes Scripture. Now, it's recorded Scripture, but it was definitely not the right Scripture to be quoting.

Because he was telling them what they did. He was quoting what they did wrong, not what they did right. You know? The one thing you'll learn, the devil always deceives people by Scripture out of context.

So we need to be careful. We must be careful not to be deceived by another gospel. What was Jeroboam presenting to them?

He was presenting to them another gospel, another Jesus, another Savior, another way of redemption. He was presenting them a falsehood that countered the one that God would have.

Think over in the New Testament for a minute. Look over to 2 Corinthians chapter 11. 2 Corinthians chapter 11 verse 3.

[29:53] We see over this, it says, But I fear lest by any means as a serpent be godly Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

For if he that cometh preaches, notice this, what? Another Jesus. You know, there's a lot of false religions that preach another Jesus. It's not the Jesus from the Bible.

You'll find a lot of people today, they promote a Jesus that's a climate Jesus. You know, you find him that he's a Jesus that just loves everybody and just accepts everybody.

You'll find all sorts of strange Jesuses presented. notice what it says. He says, For if he that cometh preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive another spirit which you have not received, or another gospel which you have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

So understand what he's talking about here. He's talking about that we can be deceived if we're not careful. We live in the world that people get deceived by a false gospel, and you have people like Jeroboam run around trying to control, because I want you to understand, the devil loves religion because religion controls people.

[31:21] That's the reason that religion that is of the scripture, remember Jesus gives liberty. The world likes a religion that keeps control.

There's a difference. we are set free in Christ. Not to be entangled again, you know, look over to 1 John for a moment, 1 John chapter 4.

1 John chapter 4, John here writes here, he says this, beloved, believe not every spirit. You know? Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Hereby we know the spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God.

And this is that spirit of Antichrist, and you have heard that it should come, and even now already is in the world. world. You know, I want you to understand that this spirit that worketh in the world is one that can deceive people very easily.

[32:41] The devil's subtle. Notice what Jeroboam did. He took this and said, here's your two new gods, people. Here's the gods that we have.

He changed the focus. A calf or bull is symbolic of the gods that they worshipped in Egypt. Now remember, where was Jeroboam before he came back up?

In Egypt. He came back up with this Egyptian idea, but also that was within the land because a bull also was one that they used a symbol to worship Baal.

The symbol of the bull was a symbol of strength and fertility. That's the reason you'll find, as we talked about earlier, what did Solomon get in trouble for?

Because he was worshipping Baal. And Ashtoreth. It was a symbol here, and we see here, so the first thing he did, he said, we need to change the focus.

[33:55] We need to understand as believers, and if you understand the word of God, Jesus is the focus. He is the one. But notice the second thing they did here, because they changed the place of worship.

Changed the place of worship. Jeroboam was afraid that the people would go up to Jerusalem to worship, that they'd be drawn back to Rehoboam. So he establishes two places of worship, one in Bethel and the other in Dan.

Now, I want you to understand here, it's important to note that these two places, why did he choose them? Well, both of them are places of historical places of religion taking place.

Bethel, we know for sure, if you look in Genesis, Bethel has a lot of things happen there that were good things. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob worshiped the Lord in Bethel.

But I want you to understand that there were no longer, that was not the, Bethel was not the central part or the central place. Where was the place? Jerusalem in the temple.

[35:12] But Dan was also interesting. If you study that, you can look a little later, you can read there in Judges chapter 18 and read about Dan because Dan is where an individual set up his own priest and his own idol and had his own little, hired a couple of priests to come in, you know, the priests of God for hire and come in and set up his own little worship center.

You know? You might say he was the first TV preacher, you know, to get people drawn in. You know, it's nothing new.

Notice what he tells us here in our text though, as we go back here to chapter 12. Notice what he says and he says in verse 29, and he said, You know, the place of worship.

I want you to understand today people do the same thing. False religions take people from the place they ought to be. Take a look over in 1 Timothy for a moment.

Because the place, as a believer, we ought to be to worship is very specific in the scripture. When we understand what God says, look here in 1 Timothy chapter 3, look down at verse 15.

[36:39] Notice what the word of God tells us here. He says, But if I take long, that thou mayest know how they ought to behave thyself, where? In the house of God, which is the church of the living God.

Now, I want you to understand because sometimes whenever we read that, our mind goes to our modern context of church. Wherever you see the word church, one thing that will help you if you replace it with the word assembly.

It's ecclesia. It's a physical called out assembly. It's a presence of people. Church is not mystical. Church is physical.

Church is physical. Church is physical. It's a gathering of people. It's not the building. It's not the fancy. It's the gathering of baptized believers together, serving God where they are.

But notice what it says. The church of who? The living God. Because you have assemblies for a lot of reasons. The pillar and ground of the truth.

[37:45] You know, consider what Hebrews chapter 10 tells us. Verse 24 says this, Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another so much more as you see the day

approaching.

The closer it comes to the Lord's return, the more important it is that we gather together because not only does it keep us focused on Christ, but it encourages one another. There's enough discouragement out there already.

You know, there's enough things to cause fear and feelings all over the place. But when we come together, we can encourage and strengthen one another. Get our focus on the right things.

But notice that the third thing that he did, he changed the priesthood. The next change, look here in verse 31. It says that he made the house of high places and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.

He changed the priesthood. He made the priesthood out of those that were not qualified by blood to do so because the Levites being the priests was kind of a blood issue because it had to do with them being born into that tribe.

[39:10] It was a family lineage. You might say it's a good illustration of a blood lineage. You had to be born of one to carry down that. We often refer to that as a bloodline of people.

And Jeroboam said, I don't care about that. I'm going to set up my own. We see here that the Levites also could not worship the Lord.

Notice this same parallel passage you'll find over in 2 Chronicles chapter 11. Take a look over there for a moment, 2 Chronicles chapter 11. Because I want you to understand that chronicles and kings run parallel with each other.

And one thing that will help you is oftentimes when you read the book of Kings, it's kind of looking from man's view of what's happening. Because you'll find things in Chronicles is kind of like God's view of what's happening.

You get different details. If you want to see the picture of that, you can read through and you'll understand. It's interesting that in Chronicles, never mentions the sin of David.

[40:22] In Kings, it's mentioned as man see it, but it's not seen in Chronicles. I think a good reason for that, because Jesus said he's in God's eyes, that sin's been covered.

Right. He says he doesn't bring those things up. He moves as far as the east is from the west. Chronicles kind of gives you, if you want to understand, gives us God's what God is seeing and how God's measuring.

This is God's measurement. Look here in chapter 11. Look at verse 14. It says, For the Levites left their suburbs and their possessions and came to Judah and Jerusalem.

Now, why did all the Levites leave out of the places that God had put them? Because remember, their heritage was the cities of refuge within the tribes.

That was what their whole heritage was. And they said, I don't care what my physical heritage is. There's a spiritual heritage that's more important. Why did they leave?

[41:23] Notice what it says. It says, For Jeroboam and his son cast them off from what? From executing the priest's office unto the Lord.

He wanted to put in his own. He wanted to put in those that were not qualified to be there. The devil's no different today.

You know, if he wants to set up a new religion, he wants to set up those that aren't qualified for places that God has put, that God has established. You know, it's amazing as you read and look, people talk about different religious circles.

Even in America today, they are ordaining people that are nowhere as even close to what you would call qualified. Totally contrary. Half of them don't even believe in Jesus as their Savior. You know, when you start looking at different things and what people say, you have people that qualify as chaplains today in different organizations that don't even believe in Jesus.

[42:35] But they say they're Christian chaplains. It's like, there's a disconnect. People ordaining women for ministry.

You know, that's another one that's causing all sorts of issues with people. And God says it's just settled. Just what God's Word says. They're unqualified of those things.

You know, many people follow all sorts of strange doctrines. But I want you to see, look at the next verse in 2 Chronicles chapter 11. Because remember, this is kind of God's perspective recorded for us.

It says, and he ordained him priests of the high places and for the devils and for the calves which he made. Jeroboam had made himself priest to his new gods.

We see this being played out. Even Jeroboam, he says, well, I can be a priest. So he made himself a priest. You know, kind of patterned himself after the Egyptian Pharaoh. Look in verse 33.

[43:51] What it tells us here, he says this, and so he offered upon the altar which he had made at Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart and contained a feast unto the children of Israel and he offered upon the altar and burnt incense.

The fourth thing that he did is he changed the practice. He changed the practice. He established new feasts to partake in.

He changed what God had said about. Remember that the feasts were given by God, each representing an important picture and the process of God's deliverance.

You have the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread. You have the Feast of Firstfruits. You have the Feast of Weeks, also known as Pentecost.

Those are four that happened in the spring on a set time. God established particularly, exactly when those things were supposed to happen.

[44:55] On the fourteenth day of Nisan, it established that the Passover was to take place. He put forth, that was the standard of what it was supposed to be.

Jeroboam made his own. You can read about those in Leviticus chapter 23. But then you also have the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of the Tote, and the Feast of Tabernacle, which are the fall feasts. And three of those, the Feast of Passover, the Feast of Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacle, the Jewish men were supposed to go up to Jerusalem to worship on each of those feasts. They were to be there, and that's what Jeroboam didn't want, so he changed the practice.

He began a new system that happened in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month, offering a sacrifice and feast to his new false gods. Now I want you to understand, we see the same picture today because the devil loves to get things that look religious and look similar to distract people from what it really is.

we need to be careful that we don't lose sight of what God has said because Jeroboam is a good morning.

[46:12] You've got to remember, God sent a prophet, a man of God, to speak directly to him and tell him and give him a promise. Have you ever heard somebody say, well, if God spoke to me or sent me a sign directly, you know, I would do it.

You're lying because if you don't trust what he has to say now, you're not going to trust even if an angel appeared to you. But the devil always wants to mimic God's way and God's plan and changing the picture away from God.

You know, let me just give, as we get ready to close, let me just give you a good illustration today.

To the local church, God gives two ordinances. He gives baptism and the Lord's Supper.

We partake in those orders, in that order, because somebody is saved. That's when they become a member of God's family. They then are obedient because baptism is a picture, an outward picture of what already happened inwardly.

But some today say, well, you get baptized and that's when you get saved or that washes away your sin. What are they doing? The devil's taking a picture that God has and modifying it.

[47:37] Making people feel religious but lost. Making them feel good makes them settle in their heart well but it doesn't change the reality.

They're letting what's in their heart drive what they want. You take the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Many twist it today, you know, you find you'll talk to people and, oh, I have to, what, you know, why don't you do the Lord's Supper all the time?

Well, the problem is is that people get a wrong idea and a wrong thing. They say, I need to partake. I want to tell you something, just like baptism, baptism of the Lord's Supper, neither one of them gets you to heaven.

The reason we do them is because they're a picture. There's people today, there's people who claim to be Baptists that say you get spiritual nourishment from the Lord's Supper.

Talk about a little deception weaving in. There's no spiritual nourishment. It's an honor to help us. It's a something we do to help remember what Christ has done for us.

[48:57] Just like today's Patriots Day and we took time as a nation, you'll see all the remembrances and the reading of the names. Why do they do that? Because they don't want you to forget. You might say the Lord's Supper, the same thing, it's something God gave to us to help remind us of what He's done for us.

You don't need to do it all the time because that's not the purpose of it. You know, around here we do it once a year. I think that's a biblical pattern. How often did they do the feasts?

Once a year. We'll have more on that later sometime, but I just want you to understand why do we do that? Because we see a picture in Scripture and following the pattern of Scripture is important in that.

Now I'm going to undo some things here just because I know what people hear sometimes. If somebody does it different, I want you to understand that's between them and the Lord. But when you see something and God has laid it out and given you a pattern, you need to follow what God has convicted you of and to have a reason for why you do it.

Let me throw this out there just as interesting because how many people can tell you why you celebrate the Lord's Supper and what's the biblical pattern? Most people you talk to have no idea.

[50:30] They say, well, it's often as. That's the phrase you always hear. Well, often as doesn't give you a pattern. Paul's just saying when you do it.

But we do have a biblical pattern for the other that we can follow. If somebody else does it different, that's between them and the Lord. So I want you to just understand that's a picture that we have and we have a reason why because it's from God's Word that we have His pattern and His picture and God's purpose behind it.

But people twist it into a false worship because notice what false worship does. We'll end here.

Look back at verse 30 for a moment. And this thing became what?

A sin. Why was it a sin? Because, yeah, because it was against what God had instructed them.

we need to be careful as we go through and we see how the devil loves to use religion instead of a relationship with the Savior.

[51:45] Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we come before you tonight, Lord, we just thank you. Amen.