

Jeroboam's Counterfeit Religion

1 Kings 12:25-33

Introduction:

- A. Shortly after Solomon died, Israel divided into two kingdoms.
 - 1. Rehoboam succeeds Solomon, listens to bad advice, provokes rebellion.
 - 2. Jeroboam, a rebel exiled to Egypt under Solomon, became leader of ten northern tribes.
 - 3. Jeroboam set up a new religion in the North to keep Israelite away from Jerusalem (v. 27).
- B. Jeroboam's religion had the characteristics typical of most counterfeit religions.

Discussion:

I. Jeroboam's Religion Was *Subtle*.

- A. Counterfeit religion is usually subtle in its propaganda.
 - 1. Jeroboam promoted calves as "gods which brought you out of Egypt." (cf. Ex. 32:4)
 - 2. Promoters of modern religion promote it as old-time religion adapted for new times.
- B. Counterfeit religion is usually similar in its features.
 - 1. Priests, altar, a feast "like the one in Judah" - preachers, services, Bible, etc. like N.T. religion.
 - 2. Differences that made a difference — similarity is not identity:
 - a. Jeroboam's religion had different object, place, priest (v. 31), day (v. 33).
 - b. Modern religion has different worship, church structure, church work.

II. Jeroboam's Religion Was *Sensational*.

- A. False religion characterized by sensationalism and emotionalism.
 - 1. Israel could see and feel Jeroboam's gods — Unlike the Invisible Jehovah.
 - 2. Conversion, preaching, worship, assurance based more on feelings than reason.
- B. True religion is characterized by reasoning from the Scriptures. (Acts 17:2; 18:4; 18:19; 24:25)
 - 1. Feelings are necessary part of religion, but reason must control feelings — not vice versa.
 - 2. First principles, worship, preaching, etc. should be *with* feeling, but *from* a converted mind.

III. Jeroboam's Religion Was *Convenient*. ("It is *too much*.." v. 28)

- A. It is often more convenient to follow denominational teaching.
 - 1. Salvation and church membership: Church of choice, Faith only (Jas. 2:24), sprinkling (Col. 2:12).
 - 2. Worship: Listen to organ or choir (cf. Col 3:16), Lord's supper whenever (cf. Acts 20:7)
- B. It is often more convenient for Christians to sin than to do right.
 - 1. More convenient to conform than to transform. (Rom. 12:2)
 - 2. More convenient not to: Assemble. (Heb. 10:25), teach. (Matt. 28:19), visit. (Jas. 1:27; Matt. 25), study (2 Tim. 2:15), pray (1 Thess. 5:17) give (1 Cor. 16:1,2).

Conclusion:

- A. Jeroboam's religion was also more popular among Jews (10 to 2) — why?
- B. Christians often want church to be as big and popular as denominational neighbors — could be.
- C. Christians need to look to see what makes them so — ask should we do what it takes.