

Introduction:

- “*So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don’t get tied up again in slavery to the law.*”“*You were running the race so well. Who has held you back from following the truth?*” (Galatians 5:1,7 NLT) If you start with the Word of God you must finish with the word of God.
- 1 Kings 13:1-ff The theme of this chapter is the Word of the Lord prevails. It is the only thing that begins this chapter and ends this story.
- Stick with what God told you and stay free! God will not take you closer to sin. He will always be moving you further from it. Today we will look at the Word of the Lord to Kings, To Prophets, and That Prevails. 1 Kings 13 is both intense and troubling. Lets begin...

I. The Word of the Lord to Kings

- A. Time of transition: If you do not understand the context it is hard to understand this passage.
1. Solomon is dead. The word of the Lord is coming to pass of the division of Solomon’s kingdom because he did not walk in the way of his father David. 1 Kings 11:4-13. The Word of the Lord prevails.
 2. The Kingdom is divided. The Word of the Lord prevailed. 10 nations go north forming the northern kingdom/ later known as Samaria/Israel.
 3. The Word of the Lord is fulfilled, again! Jeroboam takes the kingship of all but one tribe and this nation is known as Israel. He was the servant of Solomon and again the word of the Lord is fulfilled. One nation, Judah is given by God to Solomon’s son Rehoboam. He is son of Solomon lineage of David.
 4. This is what Jeroboam does as leader of the northern kingdom:
 - a) Drives out all the Levitical priests and they go to Judah.
 - b) He then appoints local ‘spiritual’ people to run the [faith.] ***When truth steps out of position darkness will fill the vacuum.
 - c) Because he fears that his people will go to Jerusalem and worship and never come back. He sets up two golden calves for the people to worship. One in the north (Dan) the other in the south (Bethel). (He wanted to make it convenient for the people to worship. Politically correct. It was a user friendly, politically correct, convenient place of worship)
 - d) The 10 northern tribes became the ‘confederacy’ and said they would never ever submit to a Davidic king. This is an anti-christ spirit. We see it in our nation now.
- B. Transitions: Create Chaos. Chaos makes you look for a way out. Chaos will test what you believe. Transitions destabilize cultures, societies and nations.
- C. The stabilizer of transition is the Word of the Lord! No matter how upsetting it may seem!
1. 13:1 At the Lords command a man of God from Judah. (one nation against 10). One man against a kingdom.
 2. He arrives right when Jeroboam is about to dedicate the altar at Bethel.
 3. He prophecies to the altar! And prophesy’s to the king a sign of a cracked altar.
 4. The king wants him seized and God paralyzes the kings hand. vs. 6 “*Please ask the Lord your God...*” Like Pharaoh he does not repent just wants to be better.
- D. In transition, there is an incredible need for the Word of the Lord.
- E. In transition, there is an incredible need for Godly leadership.
- F. In transition, there is an incredible need for the church to walk in obedience, as we shall see.

G. The Word of the Lord came to this evil king and it was providing him a way out!

II. The Word of the Lord to Prophet

- A. The young prophet experiences a monumental victory! Delivers the word of the Lord, works a sign, heals the evil king, and does not fall into the Kings temptation!
1. He is directed by God to Bethel.
 2. He goes with a purpose-to confront darkness.
 3. He delivers the Word of the Lord.
 4. Moves with conviction in God's word to him; he is under strict orders: "*Do not eat or drink anything while you are there and do not return to Judah the same way you came.*" vs 9, 16,17. He leaves Bethel but he dwells under a tree. Obviously he did not get to far out of town before stopping. Some Bibles translate he rested but the word that is used is that he 'dwelt'. More than a brief stop.
- B. Enter the old prophet. So we have a young prophet and an old prophet.
1. What do we know of this prophet?
 - a) Lives in Bethel...the place of the Gold calf. How do you do that? He may have been a man of God at one time but his time in the land of idolatry has caused him to settle into a life of idolatry tolerating it and not even speaking out against it.
 - b) This old prophet's sin is negligence. His sin is the sin of doing nothing! It is the sin of tolerance! It is the sin of neutrality! He has become comfortable living in sin.
 - (1) God had to get a man from Judah to do the job that he could not count on the old prophet in Bethel to do!
 - (2) He was not present at the dedication of the altar, but his sons were!
 - c) He is not the prophet he once was or he would not be doing what he is about to do. God help the believer who has become a former Christian.
 2. He is jealous of the young prophets position in God. Or, maybe, he thinks he can discredit this man and win favor with Jeroboam. Scripture is not clear on anything other than "HE LIED". The old prophet lied. How do you trust a prophet, a handler of truth, who lies? You don't!
 - a) The young prophet should have been asking, "Why am I up here if you already are here? When did you last confront Jeroboam? How can you stand to dwell in this land?"
 - b) The old prophet ends up having an accurate word.
- C. The Word of the Lord Prevails even in this messy interaction.
1. For what ever reason the old prophet goes after this young prophet. Because he has power? Because he has courage? Because he has the Word of the Lord? We don't know. He wants the young prophet to come to his house...BACK INTO BETHEL. Run away!!!
 2. But as Christians this is why it is important for us to know the Word of the Lord and not be moved from it. Find what God has said, and with conviction stay there!
 3. The old prophet 'pulls the angel card'. Please note: the young prophet had heard from God! Now he wants to listen to some 'here say' from an old prophet who heard from an angel? I'd rather hear from God than an angel.
 4. The young prophet returns to Bethel with the old prophet and eats and drinks with him. ***Sometimes our biggest failure come after our greatest victories.*** Sobering story of someone who had it all and lost it all in one bad decision. Paul said it this way to the

Galatians *"I am shocked that you are turning away so soon from God, who called you to himself through the loving mercy of Christ. You are following a different way that pretends to be the Good News but is not the Good News at all. You are being fooled by those who deliberately twist the truth concerning Christ. Let God's curse fall on anyone, including us or even an angel from heaven, who preaches a different kind of Good News than the one we preached to you."* (Galatians 1:6–8, NLT)

5. The Word of the Lord prevails. vs. 20 *"a command from the Lord came to the old man."* That sounds like verse 1.
6. Note: The young prophets disobedience did not stop the Word of the Lord.

III. The Word of the Lord Prevails

- A. God's word is eternal! It stands forever! Ps 119:89, 111, 152, 160.
 1. Again, it is the surety of God word that gives courage to the believers heart.
 2. In the midst of difficult and trying times, Gods Word prevails.
 3. In the midst of corrupt policies and politicians Gods Word prevails.
 4. God has a plan stick to it!
- B. Jeroboam repairs the pagan altar an continues to sacrifice there for the next 350 years. The media would say, "God is liar. Where is your God now?" Hang on to those questions.
- C. The young man is killed by a lion. The lion and donkey guard the body till the old prophet arrives (Thats supernatural) and once again returns the young prophet to Bethel, never to rest with his fathers. The old prophet then:
 1. Orders that the young prophet be buried in the old prophets tomb.
 2. Declares that the young prophets words will come to pass. vs 32
 3. Orders that when he dies to put his bones real close to the young prophets bones.
 4. He prophesy's that the Word of the Lord given to the young prophet to Jeroboam as well but he does not listen. vs. 33-34
- D. The Word of the Lord prevailed as spoken to Jeroboam! The Word of the Lord prevailed as spoke to the young prophet! The Word of the Lord awakened the old prophets heart (it seems).
- E. So what is it we learn from this chapter?
 1. No matter how hard man may try to mess God up, His Word will prevail!
 2. Disobedience has consequences especially when willful (you intentionally break a conviction)
 3. God's Word will stand in the end no matter how long it takes.
 4. You can trust His word!
 5. You can and should build your life on His word. Mt 7:24-25 Wise build house on rock.
 6. No matter how long keep believe and keep obeying.

Conclusion:

- The Word of the Lord prevails:
 - when people around you are serving other Gods.
 - when things seem unfair.
 - when God's vessels are not what we expect.
 - even when we ourselves may not see them come to pass

- Like Paul Harvey lets hear the rest of the story. The theme of this chapter is the Word of the Lord Prevails. It is the only thing that begins this chapter and ends this story. The end of the story is found in 2 Kings 23:15-17, 356 years later.
- In the end truth always prevails.
 - ““What is that monument over there?” Josiah asked. And the people of the town told him, “**It is the tomb of the man of God** who came from Judah and predicted the very things that you have just done to the altar at Bethel!”” (2 Kings 23:17, NLT) Read 1 Kings 23:15-18
 - Don’t disturb their bones!
- There was lots of history between Jeroboam and Josiah, much of it not good. But in the end the truth prevails.