

1 Kings 12:25 – 33 / 1 Kings 13:1 – 10

Jeroboam chose Shechem to be the capital of Israel so he built it up and put his palace there. Then Jeroboam said to himself, “If the people continue to go to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices, they may very well return to the house of David. They might kill me and turn to King Rehoboam of Judah.”

So, Jeroboam decided to make two golden calves. He presented them to the people and said, “You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.” He then set one calf in Bethel and the other he set in Dan. And this became a sin because the people of Israel worshipped before these idols.

Jeroboam also built houses on high places, and appointed priests from among all the people, who were not of the tribe of Levi. He then established annual festivals on the same day as festivals in Judah so that the people would not go there. And Jeroboam went to the altar in Bethel to offer incense.

While Jeroboam was standing by the altar, a man of God came out of Judah and proclaimed against the altar by the word of the Lord. “Altar, O Altar, thus says the Lord, ‘A son will be born to the house of David, Josiah by name, and he shall sacrifice on this altar the priests of the high places who offer incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.’”

Then he gave a sign from the Lord. “The altar shall be torn down, and the ashes that are on it shall be poured out.”

When Jeroboam heard all this, he stretched out his hand from the altar and shouted, "Seize him!" But his hand immediately withered so that he could not draw it back to himself. The altar also was torn down and ashes poured out from the altar, all according to the sign that the man of God had given by the word of the Lord.

Jeroboam now begged the man of God, "Ask the favor of the Lord your God; pray for me that my hand might be restored to me."

And so, the man of God prayed and the king's hand was restored to him.

The king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and dine, and I will give you a gift."

But the man of God replied, "If you were to give me half your kingdom, I would not go with you, nor will I eat food or drink water in this place. For thus I was commanded by the word of the Lord; You shall not eat food, or drink water, or return by the way that you came."

So, he went another way and did not return by the way that he had come to Bethel.