

Solomon's Disobedience

By Pastor Greg
11-8-09

1 Kings 13:1-6

Bunkertown COB

It's a sad truth that few of us really heed the signs that are around us. And truthfully, they've been put there for our safety. And lest you think this is a current problem, let me point out an incident that happens to the new King of Israel.

Jeroboam, the new king of the Northern tribes, ignores what God had specifically said. Concerned that his people might travel back down to Jerusalem to worship at the Temple, he builds two Gold Calves and tells them that these are the gods who brought them out of Egypt; this, from a man who should have known that how God was angry with Solomon for doing the same thing. After all, did not the prophet Ahijah say, *"For Solomon has abandoned me . . . He has not followed my ways and done what is pleasing in my sight. He has not obeyed my decrees and regulations as David his father did."*¹ (1 Kings 11:33) Jeroboam completely ignores this lesson, and worships some golden calf. And just like Solomon, God has to confront this king for abandoning Him as well.

It seems that Solomon's disobedience begins a trend within both Israel and Judah where the kings and the common folk sway back and forth in their relationship with God. Some honor Him. Most abandon Him. There are far too many times when someone says "The Lord YOUR God". (**Read 1 Kings 13:1-6**)

Jeroboam says in verse 6 "the Lord YOUR God". Do you get the same impression I did? Jeroboam had no relationship with God. Oh, he knew about God, but had no regard for God. There was no love for God in his heart. And the same could be said for the rest of the nation who blindly followed this wicked king (except for all the priests and Levites who move down to Judah). Sure, God sent a man to warn them, but they completely ignored him. Although he spoke truth and displayed the power of God, he could not change their hard and stubborn hearts.

Well, God did not give up. He continued to send men to warn the people about how they have fallen into sin. He sends prophets like Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. They almost beg the people to change. *Repent, and turn from your*

¹Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

sins. Don't let them destroy you! ³¹ *Put all your rebellion behind you, and find yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O people of Israel?* ³² *I don't want you to die, says the Sovereign Lord. Turn back and live!* ² (Ezekiel 18:30-32) God is pleading with them, and yet they continually refuse to listen. Why did their hearts remain so stubborn? What would it take to get through to these people? How frustrating it must be for God when a person knows all about Him, yet their hearts never seem to change.

Here were a group of people who had a history of turning their backs to God, who disregard the commands of God, who would not listen to the men God sent to warn them of their sin, who felt being part of a family made them right with God, and who thought traditions and customs were all that mattered. But few, very few had a heart that was passionate about God, or who desired to live a life that honored God. To overcome this, it appears God finally sent His Son. And yet even He seemed to have limited success.

Was Jesus the answer to changing people's hard hearts? Was He the One who could help these people get God out of their heads and into their hearts? It sure seems like it didn't work because even after countless signs and wonders, they still end up killing the Son (see Matthew 21, for an example).

If Jesus couldn't change the stubborn hearts of the Jews living in New Testament times, why do we think He can change the hearts of people living today? We teach and teach, yet people's hearts remain cold and unchanged. We've filled people's minds with all sorts of knowledge, yet their behavior never seems to change. I know more people than I can count that have Jesus in their head, but He is nowhere in their hearts. Nothing, absolutely nothing has changed . . . except this one thing.

God makes a promise through Jeremiah that has always intrigued me. He says, *"But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel on that day," says the Lord. "I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, 'You should*

²Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

*know the Lord.’ For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already,” says the Lord. “And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins.”*³ (Jeremiah 31:33-34) God says here that He will be the one to move His instructions and laws off the paper and deep into our hearts. It will be through something He does that moves Him from our heads to our hearts.

At the end of John’s Gospel Jesus says that when He leaves, He will send the Helper. *But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don’t, the Advocate won’t come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you.*⁴ (John 16:7) I could spend an entire month talking about God, the Holy Spirit. But let me just summarize that it is the Spirit who transforms our heart. As a matter of fact, you are closer to the Holy Spirit than you are to Christ Jesus. Jesus has ascended to heaven, but the Spirit has come down. In all true believers you will find the Holy Spirit working and changing their stubborn and hard hearts; writing God’s law within them. This is the thing that has changed because of Jesus. It’s because of Him that God will now pour out His Spirit into the hearts of all who believe. And that is what will move God from our heads to our hearts. That’s how He becomes the Lord OUR God.

It is the Holy Spirit which illuminates the teachings of Jesus. It is the Holy Spirit which reveals the power & majesty of God. It is the Holy Spirit that can take stubborn, stiff-necked people like you and me and transform us into people that honor the Father and glorify the Son. That’s why more teaching won’t change us. You don’t need to hear more sermons. You don’t need more Sunday School lessons. You don’t need more inspirational music. You need to stop resisting and simply tear down the walls and break the barriers you’ve placed between yourself and God.

God has never stopped sending people to call us to repentance; to point out our disobedience just as He did with Solomon, and just as He did with Jeroboam. But you and I have been given the Spirit that will help us in this process. God will not force His way into your heart. And it is a sad testimony that the only thing keeping God out of your heart is you.

³Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

⁴Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.