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The Sins of Jeroboam

By Harold Turner

In the latter years of his reign, king Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord. In 1 Kings 11:4 the Bible states that his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord, as was the heart of David his father. Because of this the Lord promised to rend the kingdom from Solomon's house, but not until after his death.

God sent the prophet Ahijah to Jeroboam the son of Nebat, with the promise that the Lord would give the ten northern tribes of Israel to him. God promised Jeroboam that if he would hearken unto all that he commanded him, and walk in the ways of the Lord, God would build him a sure house, as he built for David, and he would give Israel unto him (1 Kings 11:37-38).

After the death of Solomon, all Israel came to Shechem to make Rehoboam, Solomon's son, king. However, the people requested of Rehoboam that he make the grievous service, and heavy yoke, which Solomon placed upon them, lighter. Rehoboam asked that they return in three days. He first consulted with the older men that had stood with his father. They advised him to assure the people that he would serve them, answer them, and speak good words unto them, and that if he would do this Israel would be his servants forever. But Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men and asked advice from the younger men. They advised him to tell the people, "Whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." It was this message that Rehoboam delivered to Israel when they returned, and it was this message that caused Israel to turn from Rehoboam and to select Jeroboam to be their king. Only the tribe of Judah and a part of Benjamin remained with Rehoboam.

Shortly after Jeroboam was appointed king over Israel, he began designing a plan that was far more foolish than the acts of Rehoboam. Jeroboam feared that if the people returned to Jerusalem to sacrifice in the house of the Lord they would return to Rehoboam, and he would be killed. Jeroboam could not trust in God's promise to establish him a sure kingdom, so he began to work things out for himself.

The first part of his plan was to convince the people that "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem." To accomplish this it would be necessary to offer a substitute. The cities of Bethel and Dan were closer, more convenient and centrally located, so Jeroboam placed within these two calves of gold, saying, "Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." This part of his plan worked, Israel went to worship before these idols. Jeroboam then reconstructed the whole system of religion. He made his own house for worship; he ordained priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi, and he authorized a new feast day.

God had given very clear instructions regarding the religious life of his people. Solomon had built the temple in Jerusalem, which the Lord accepted, saying, "I have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice... For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there forever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually." (2 Chron. 7:11-16) God had also commanded that only the sons of Levi, and only those without any blemish, be selected and ordained for the priesthood (Exod. 40:12-15, Lev. 21:17-24). God also had ordained the feast day to be kept on the fifteenth day of the seventh month (Lev. 23:33-34), which Jeroboam changed to the fifteenth day of the eighth month.

The seriousness of Jeroboam's actions is seen in 1 Kings 14:15-16, "For the Lord shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of his good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have made their groves, provoking the Lord to anger. And he shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin."

Jeroboam would have been a man most richly blessed if he had only trusted the promise and plan of God, but instead he designed his own religion, and thereby caused the whole nation of Israel to be lost. And while this story should serve as a great warning and lesson for us today, it is obvious that the principles of Jeroboam's sin is still very much present.

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PROFANITY

By Clovis Ragsdale

One of the great weaknesses of man is the use of profanity in his speech. God has made it clear that cursing and swearing are not pleasing to him. Rom. 12:14, Lev. 24:15, and Matt. 26:74, are only a few of the Scriptures which show God's disapproval of profanity. In James 3:8-12, James taught, "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh."

This plainly teaches that a Christian must not use profanity in his speech. It is not reasonable that a Christian can worship God from the same heart that curses and swears. The world is looking for reasons to criticize the church, and one of the complaints heard most often is concerning the profane speech of the members. We cannot be too careful in our speech.

Why do people swear? Mainly for three reasons. In the mind of many a curse word emphasizes a statement. Curse words are used to cover a weakness in the ability to convey a thought. A second reason is that of anger. Cursing is taking our spite out on others, often on God himself, when we use his name. Another reason we curse is to build our ego. This is especially true among the young people. People should never show approval when a child curses in their presence. It is at an early age that the habit of swearing is usually formed. With many it is a lifetime habit.

It is the duty of the church and every Christian to oppose the use of profanity on all occasions. We must teach against it's use, both by example and in Bible classes and pulpits. Action should be taken in the field of Radio and TV. With profanity blaring forth in song and in conversation through this public media, it is no wonder that our age is becoming the most profane in the history of the world. It is a national disgrace that goes hand in hand in the falling morality of our time, and a sin that takes its place alongside

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A Study of Timothy 2:8-14

By Leon Barns

"I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."

In reality, our study is to be concerning verses eleven and twelve, primarily, but like all other passages, if they are to be understood correctly they must be studied in their content. So, we have given the quotation of verses eight through fourteen. For some reason, which is beyond my comprehension, this passage is usually interpreted to be parallel to 1 Cor. 14:34, 35, which demands that the women keep silence in the churches. That being the case, most have understood this passage to refer solely to the assembly. But, as one searches this passage, it is worthy of note that there is a complete absence of any word or phrase that would limit the application of these verses to the worship services of the New Testament church. It does not say anything about "In the church" or "Publicly." It does not even mention the Bible or religion as being the sole subject under discussion when it refers to a woman's teaching.

May I point out that if the part of these verses which refers to a woman's teaching refers solely to the public worship services then so does every other part of it, which would mean that this passage only teaches that women are to dress modestly when they are in the assembly, and has no reference to how they dress on the streets or any other place. Also, when it says that the woman is not to usurp authority over the man, it would apply only to when they are at the worship services and she would be allowed to have dominion over the man at any other time.

May I suggest that the truth lies in the fact that this passage is not parallel to 1 Cor. 14:34, 35, and that it is not limited in its application to the assembly or to the teaching of religious material, but that it is general in its application. In the very beginning of the passage, in verse eight, Paul's admonition was that men pray "EVERYWHERE". Why would anyone get the idea he is referring just to the assembly? He then goes immediately to tell the women that they are to learn

in silence (or quietness, ASV) with all subjection. Where is the hint here that he has changed the application from "everywhere" to "in the worship services"? The truth is, the application has not changed, but he is talking about the very nature of the woman; that she is to be one of quietness and subjection, that she is not to be boisterous and bossy. It is then that he says that the woman is not to teach, nor to usurp authority "OVER THE MAN", but to be in silence. What is the word or phrase in that verse that makes one think it is limited to the assembly, or that the teaching is speaking solely of the teaching of religious matters? Someone may say that if this is to have a general application it would mean that the woman could never, under any circumstances, teach. But I deny that this is the case. What this passage teaches is that she can never teach under any circumstance, (no matter what the subject) in such a way as to "USURP AUTHORITY OVER THE MAN."

Look at Acts 4:18, a passage which is parallel in its construction to this passage: "And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." Does anyone get the idea from this that Peter and John were being instructed not to ever say another word to anybody on any subject? No! 1 Tim. 2:12 simply means that she must always teach from a standpoint of SUBJECTION and never have dominion "OVER THE MAN."

If this interpretation of 1 Tim. 2:8-14 is correct, and I most assuredly believe that it is, then all the questions that are raised as to whether such and such a place and circumstance is public or private are superfluous for whether it is public or private, the woman is not allowed the place of dominion.

Profanity (Cont.)

that of gambling, drug abuse, adultery, and the high crime rate, which may very well be bringing about the downfall to our nation.

In closing, notice the following statements from the Bible: Eph. 4:29, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Col. 3:8, "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth." Col. 4:6, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Matt. 5:37, "But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

How Busy Are You?

By G. R. Holton

"Rush! Rush! Rush!" Seems to be the three word motto for too many of us. Perhaps the following little story will contain the key to a life of calmness and productivity.

"A farmer told his wife he would plow the south 40 tomorrow. The next morning he went out to lubricate the tractor. He found he needed some oil, so he went to the shop to get it. On the way there he noticed the pigs were not fed. He went to the corn crib to get some corn, where he saw some sacks by the crib. That reminded him that the potatoes needed sprouting. He started for the potato pit to sprout the potatoes, but as he passed the wood pile he remembered that he needed to take some wood to the house."

How many of us are like this farmer? The tractor was probably not oiled, nor the potatoes sprouted; nor the pigs fed; certainly not the south 40 plowed. He was busy about many things but productive in none.

Real activity of service must be directed. There must be some goal, or purpose, or desired end. A person must know where he is going in order to get there.

In any given congregation, the work progresses as the "exercises in futility" are cut down. In redeeming the time a Christian must set levels of value. Some things are just more important than others. Some activities are better left undone. Whatever the case, each must set his levels of priority; then honestly work within those levels. What we do with our time is decided by each of us.

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones." Prov. 17:22

What Makes Infidels?

By Ordell Heavin

In Matthew 7:14 our Lord made plain the truth that there are but two ways to go; a way of "Eternal life," and a way of "Eternal death." This is not the raving or writing of some religious quack in the 20th Century. These are words plainly spoken and penned for our instruction and admonition by the Lord himself. The Bible states that many are going to be lost; that many will walk the broad way, and that few shall be saved. Yet, on the other hand, in Titus 2:11-12, that, "The grace of God which bringeth salvation has appeared unto all men."

Now today, why is it, since the grace of God has been manifested for the entire human race, many will be lost? Have you ever pondered this question? Why is it that the meeting places are not filled to capacity every service? Have you wondered why all are not Christians or believers in Christ? What causes a man to throw up his hands and say, "I am an infidel?" We are not going to deal with that person specifically, who calls himself an infidel or atheist, but just generalize why so many have made the decision to walk in the broad way.

SOME ARE LOST BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF

There are those who are lost in sin because of unbelief. Why? Is it because they have never heard the truth? Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." In Romans 10:17 the Bible states, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Men are saved by faith (Rom. 5:1, Acts 16:31). Faith cannot come into the heart until one has first heard the gospel. Beloved, one reason we don't have people who become disciples of Christ is the lack of teaching the Word of God. It is not my purpose to tell you the percentage of people who would become Christians if everybody heard the gospel, but, my brethren, I do know it ought to be the dream, desire, and goal of every child of God, every congregation, to see that every man and woman on earth hears the gospel of Christ in this generation. Brethren, that is not just about it, that is it! Oh, but some say, everyone has heard the gospel. Have they been taught? I agree that everybody in our nation could have the Bible. You could find one in most any dime store. Because of the environment and society pre-conceived ideas, many have not heard the simple, pure gospel of Christ.

SOME ARE LOST BECAUSE THEY WANT TO BE

Scores and scores are not Christians because they don't want to be. In John 3:19, Jesus shows that these love

darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. These live in darkness because they choose to.

In Rom. 1:21 Paul speaks of some who, "Knew God, but they glorified him not as God." Did they know God by the evidence they had? Yes. But did they believe in him? Did they attempt to serve him? No. They made a choice. In Matt. 13:15 Jesus described the people of that day, and the same is true today, saying, "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." He is showing that some people have blind eyes, closed ears; because they have made their choice. They are lost in the broad way. Why? Because they have never heard? Not so. Because they have refused the truth, and have continued to walk in the love of sin.

SOME ARE LOST BECAUSE OF FALSE TEACHERS

In 2 Cor. 11:13-15 Paul warned, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel: for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness." There are scores and scores of people today who are lost in their sins because they are being led astray by false teachers. Every person who is not teaching the truth of Christ is a fabricator. In 2 John 9 the Bible states, "Whosoever that goeth onward, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." If we remain in the doctrine of Christ, we have both the Father and the Son.

The gospel is not a dead letter, but active and alive. Upon it we can build our hopes. Is it too hard to understand? How difficult is it to understand Mark 16:16? Here Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." If a car agency put an ad on TV stating, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be given a new car free, without any payments," how many people would rush to make their claim by meeting these conditions. Yet scores of people say, "I don't understand that." It is not a matter of understanding, but a matter of belief.

There are millions living now, who will die and go into that vast eternity without one ray of hope, because preachers and religious leaders are perverting the gospel, undermining the confidence of millions, with no respect for the "Authority of God's Word."

He Restrained Them Not

By James Knight

One of the outstanding characters of the Old Testament is Eli, who served as judge of God's people for many years. Under his leadership many great things were accomplished. However, there is one thing in his life that needs to be noted by all of us.

In the third chapter of first Samuel there is recorded an incident in the life of a young boy named Samuel. Samuel, as a lad, had been left at the house of the Lord in Shiloh. One night just as Samuel lay down to sleep, the Lord spoke to him. Samuel thought at first that it was Eli calling him and went to see what he wanted. When this happened three times, Eli told him to go lie down and if it happened again to say, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." When God spoke to Samuel again he did as he had been instructed, and God told him what was going to happen to Eli's house.

God told Samuel that He was going to do a thing in Israel that would make the ears of all who heard tingle. He also told him that a terrible thing was going to happen to Eli's house. He said, "In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity that he knoweth; because his sons made

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We don't need to ponder along on what makes infidels. We can see the hinderances without, but may God help us to see the hinderances within that may be tolerated.

We are to put away the works of the flesh. It seems the line between the church and the world is getting dim in some places. We are to be a peculiar people. Not that we go around with a sign on us, or have our shirt collars on backwards, but by the manner of our life. We are to live "Soberly, righteously and godly." Christ came to seek and to save the lost. He gave his life on calvary. Do you love the lost? Are you trying to teach them? Some congregations are made up of 100% willing people. 10% who are willing to work, and the other 90% who are willing to let them.

What makes infidels? Our failure to teach the lost, false teachers, and our influence. May we awaken to our responsibility as a Christian. Let's begin to "Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (2 Timothy 4:2)

He Restrained Them Not (Cont.)

themselves vile, and he restrained them not." (1 Samuel 3:12-13) I want us to note several things from these passages.

(1) Eli was responsible for what went on in his house. (2) Eli knew that the conduct of his sons was not pleasing to God. (3) Knowing what they were doing, he made no effort to stop them. Now, because he did not restrain his sons in their ungodly conduct his house was soon to be destroyed. The record shows that Eli and his sons were all destroyed in one day, and the Ark of God was captured by the enemy. (1 Samuel 4:1-22)

There is a great lesson in this for us today. We are living in an age of great laxity; a time when there is not enough restraint placed on children by parents. Many allow their children to go places and do things which they know are not right. I have heard many parents say, "I just can't do anything with my son, or my daughter. They just won't listen to me anymore." My response to this is, if we are to escape the same fate as Eli, we must restrain them from doing what we know is not pleasing to God. But someone says, "How can we stop them?"

Let me suggest several things that will help along this line. (1) We can teach them when they are young so that they will not want to do these things when they grow up. (2) We can let our children know that we will not allow such to be done as long as they live in our home. I do not mean to be unkind, but as long as we let them engage in ungodly conduct and be supported by us, we are condoning their ungodliness. (3) We can spend much time in prayer in behalf of our children. Prayer is powerful, and God certainly answers our prayers.

In closing, I want to suggest that we as parents need to know what our children are doing and where they are going. We need to spend more time with our children, and this will serve as a preventative measure in their lives. We need to set the right example before our children. We need to let them know that we are concerned about their spiritual welfare. May it never be said, that we failed to restrain them and thus cause the loss of their soul and ours.

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." Prov. 16:13

"The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things." Prov. 15:28

"Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way." Prov. 15:10

"When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Prov. 16:7

The Sins of Jeroboam (Cont.)

In the New Testament, God has outlined very clearly his plan for those who choose to follow Christ. But the modern-day Jeroboams have decided that God's plan won't work. Jesus prayed that all believers be one; as he and the Father were one (John 17:21). Yet men are convincing multitudes that this is just not possible; that the idea of just one church is absurd. And like Jeroboam, when once the people would accept this idea, they are then ready to completely reconstruct the pattern of religion outlined in the New Testament.

The organization of the church was changed from the congregational system, with each having its own elders to oversee and guide it (Acts 14:23, 20:28), to a structure where an organization outside the local congregation oversees and controls a large number of congregations.

God's simple plan for worship, as outlined in the New Testament, was likewise changed. God's pattern called for Christians meeting upon the first day of the week to keep the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7), to praise God in song (unaccompanied by instruments Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16-17), to study together God's word (Acts 11:26; 20:7), to contribute of their financial income (1 Cor. 16:2, 2 Cor. 9:7), and to pray together (Acts 2:42). But men have decided that if one partakes of the Lord's Supper every week it becomes commonplace and loses its spiritual meaning. And men have decided to help worship have a better feeling. The soft playing of instruments could help. These changes are not changes authorized by the Lord. There is no place where any person can find where either Christ or the apostles authorized using instrumental music, or that the church can decide when it wants to partake of the Lord's Supper. These are changes made by men, and made in violation to the teachings of the Lord.

Men have changed and reconstructed every part of God's plan for the church: the organization, worship, membership, name, plan of salvation, and etc. But, to keep the people abiding by these changes, another great change had to be made. A new set of rules (by-laws, covenants, creeds, etc.) had to be designed to hold the people to each peculiar man designed religion. There is no doubt that if the word of God was the only standard, and every person demanded a "Thus said the Lord" for every practice and belief, in a short time all would be one, because when all abide by the same standard of authority unity will result.

Can we expect God to overlook the work of modern-day Jeroboams anymore than he did in 1 Kings 14:15-16? The Bible states, "Except the Lord build the

house, they labour in vain that build it." Jesus said, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." 2 John 9 warns, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." Men who build their lives upon the works of men will be lost.

God's plan for Jeroboam was so simple, just follow his word and walk in his ways. The same is true for us today. Christ is the author of eternal salvation to all who will obey him. His word is the only guide that can lead us to heaven. Hopefully this lesson can help all of us to give greater diligence to make our calling and election sure.

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