

We will look this morning at the 13th chapter of 1 Kings. First we want to note the background of this chapter which is found at the end of the previous chapter. The kingdom of Israel had been divided. God had told Jeroboam that he would give him most of the tribes and that if he would be true to the Lord God would make a permanent dynasty. But as soon as the division was made we find that Jeroboam turned away from trying to follow God with his whole heart.

We'll look at ch. 12:26-30. "And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David. If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam, king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam, king of Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin; for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan."

So we find here Jeroboam has made a change and gone back on the command God had given to Moses. There are some who think that this was an introduction of worship of other gods and was breaking the first commandment. Many think it was the second commandment that was here being broken, that Jeroboam and those associated with him claimed that they were still worshipping the Lord God who had brought them up out of Egypt, but they imagined the invisible god as standing upon the pedestal formed by the molten calves just as it was done in certain other countries in the near east that have been excavated in modern times.. We are not sure between those two which is true. But at any rate Jeroboam was turning away from God's command. In this crisis situation God sent a prophet..

So we read in 13:1 And behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the Lord unto Bethel. "And you notice this man of God is not named. It simply says, a man of God. He was a good man. He was a man whom God called, a man who truly served the Lord. But a man who made a very serious mistake and lost his life as a result. Therefore the Holy Spirit caused that his name should not be put here, and I think there is something there that is meaningful to us. I have heard students preaching, ~~xi~~ giving sermons or talks in which they have told of experiences they have had in their lives and have mentioned the specific names of individuals involved. Sometimes there were people there who knew these individuals. I think you should be very careful on that. When we have to oppose wickedness we do not hesitate to use names, but when we are just giving an illustration or when we are telling about a flaw in someone who is generally good, I think it is wise to do as the Holy Spirit led the writer of Kings to do and not use the specific name.