

1st Week of May
The Greatest Sin Before God

- **Text:** 1 Kings 12:25~30 (May 3 passage)
- **Bottom line:** God hates us making idols or worshipping idols.

≡ **1. Praise**

To be Pleasing You

≡ **2. Prayer**

God, who is the owner of our home, we put behind our busy lives and gathered before you at this time. Please accept our worship and be glorified in our family's worship.

≡ **3. The Word**

Read 1 Kings 12:25~30 together (read the verse 3 times).

* Reading the Word over and over again in different translations will help you to deepen your understanding of the material.

<ESV>

25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim and lived there. And he went out from there and built Penuel. 26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom will turn back to the house of David. 27 If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah." 28 So the king took counsel and made two calves of gold. And he said to the people, "You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt." 29 And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. 30 Then this thing became a sin, for the people went as far as Dan to be before one.

<NASB>

25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and lived there. And he went out from there and built Penuel. 26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom will return to the house of David. 27 If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will return to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah; and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah." 28 So the king consulted, and he made two golden calves; and he said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt." 29 And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. 30 Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan.

Understanding Text

After Solomon's death, Israel was divided, with Judah in the south ruled by Rehoboam and Israel in the north ruled by Jeroboam. Jeroboam was afraid that his people would travel to and from the temple in Jerusalem and fall over to the king of Judah. So they made an idol of the golden calf and placed it in Bethel and on the altar to worship. This was a great sin before God.

Understanding the text for leaders

After Solomon's death, Israel was divided into Judah in the south and Israel in the north. Southern Judah, centered on the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, was ruled by Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, and Jeroboam ruled the northern part of Israel, which was made up of the other ten tribes that had turned away from Rehoboam. Jeroboam was anxious that his people would go to worship at the temple in Jerusalem in Judah. He feared that the people would come and go and assimilate into the orthodoxy and nostalgia of the Davidic dynasty and betray him. The temple in Jerusalem, built by Solomon, is an important place of worship where the promise of God's presence was given, and there was the Covenant Orb containing the two stone tablets that Moses received on Mount Sinai. Jeroboam came up with a plan that would save his people from having to go to the temple in Jerusalem. The idea was that if they built a sanctuary in Israel and let them worship there, they would not go to Judah. So he made two golden calves and placed them in Bethel and Dan, deceiving them that the golden calves were the gods who had delivered the Israelites from Egypt. The northern Israelites no longer went to the temple in Jerusalem, but went to the sanctuary built by Jeroboam and worshipped the golden calf. When Jeroboam made an idol of a golden calf and made all the people worship the idol, it was a great sin against God. In the book of Kings, when the text refers to the kings of Israel, "they did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam." (1 Kings 13:33~34; 15:34; 16:26; 2 Kings 15:28, etc.). Jeroboam turned the worship of God into a political tool in order to preserve his throne, and his sin would have a devastating effect on the entire northern dynasty of Israel.

4. Sharing

1) Why did Jeroboam, the king of northern Israel, make a golden calf to serve his people? (Verses 26~27)

Upper Grades

Did Jeroboam make a golden calf and introduce it to the people? (verse 28).

Lower Grades

Who did Jeroboam say it was when he made the golden calf? (verse 28).

Question Guide

Jeroboam made two idols of golden calves to preserve his throne and prevent the northern Israelites from falling to Judah. Then he placed the golden calf in Bethel and Dan and proclaimed that it was the God who led Israel out of Egypt and worshipped it. He caused the northern Israelites to commit a deadly sin before God.

Comments for Leaders

Jeroboam's fatal mistake was that he made an idol instead of God and had the people worship it, thinking only of his own safety. He was not conscious of the living God at all, and he did not believe in God's promises to him (1 Kings 11:38). Jeroboam's sin of deceiving the people into worshipping idols in order to stabilize the unstable regime was passed down from generation to generation in the northern kingdom of Israel, and eventually led to its destruction. The most important thing we need to keep in mind is that worshipping idols is a great sin before God.

2) What do I like or rely on more than God? Why do I value it?

Upper Grades

What do you love more than God?

Lower Grades

When you worship God, do you ever think about something else? What would God be like at that time?

□ Question Guide

Putting other things more important than God is idolatry. Share what you think is more important than God (work, friends, celebrities, money, games, etc. for adults, or celebrities, money, games, etc.). Then share what is in your mind that makes you cling to it and rely on it. There may be feelings of avoidance, laziness, loneliness, etc., but let them know that unraveling these feelings in a human way without worrying about them in God can be the beginning of idolatry.

□ Comments for Leaders

What is one thing that you think is more important than God, or that you love so much that you forget Him? What is it that makes you feel uncomfortable that God is alive and makes you turn away from Him without realizing it? If you can't give up the benefits of yourself and your family in order to gain more profits, to get better grades, and if you don't hesitate to do things that God doesn't like, then that's idolatry. Take the time to stop and reflect on whether you have a heart that fully worships God.

≡ 5. Thanksgiving

Confess God as your God and give thanks to Him for making your home a place to worship Him.

≡ 6. Prayer

God! Thank you for letting me know that the object I love more than You, the one I value more than You, is an idol. No matter where our family is, please help us never forsake You and worship You with all our hearts and soul.

- End the family worship service with the Lord's Prayer.
