

# Eternity to Eternity 06 Genesis 1:9

by Joseph Balsan

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*The sermon explores the significance of the six days of creation and how they foreshadow the six ages of human history, emphasizing the importance of faith in God's word for righteousness and salvation.*

**Duration:** 1:02:54

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:9, Isaiah 46:9, Matthew 6:33, Acts 15:18, Acts 20:7, Romans 8:28, 1 Corinthians 16:2

**Topics:** "Genesis"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of completion and the finished work of Jesus on the cross. He shares the story of Hudson Taylor, who initially had doubts about God and the Bible but had a transformative experience while reading a gospel leaflet. The preacher then goes on to explain the six days of reconstruction in Genesis, highlighting how God brought light into the chaotic creation and separated the waters. The sermon emphasizes the significance of Jesus' cry, 'It is finished,' and prompts listeners to reflect on what was truly finished on the cross.

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## Transcript

Let's return to Genesis chapter 1. Genesis chapter 1 and verse 9. Genesis 1 and verse 9. It's nice to see so many out tonight, and I think you've done very well for the week. And they say it usually takes a week or two to get meetings going, so we hope that if we did so well this week, we'll do just that much better next week. So let's remind others of the meetings.

Let us pray for God's blessing upon them, and let us see if we can encourage others to come. I'm sure that God will pour out upon us a blessing. Genesis 1 and verse 9. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear, and it was so.

And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he seeds. And God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb-yielding seed, and the fruit tree, yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth.

And it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, an herb-yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit whose seed was in itself after his kind. And God saw that it was good, and the evening and the morning were the third day.

1 Kings chapter 12. We might read from the 41st verse of the 11th chapter. And the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did in his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon? And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years.

And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead. And Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.

And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, for he was fled from the presence of King Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt, that they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came and spake unto Rehoboam, saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous, now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which ye have put upon us lighter, and we will serve thee. And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the people departed.

And King Rehoboam consulted with the old men that stood before Solomon his father, while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people? And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever. But he forsook the counsel of the old men which they had to him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him. And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter? And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but makest thou it lighter unto us.

Thus shalt thou say unto them, My little fingers shall be thicker than my father's loins. And now, whereas my father did lay you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day. And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him, and spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke. My father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people, for the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying, which the Lord spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat. So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse to your tents, O Israel. Now see to thine own house, David.

So Israel departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Israel, which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. And then we notice in the twenty-fifth verse, Then Jeroboam built Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and dwelt there, and went out from thence, and built Penuel.

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. And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar.

So did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made, and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel, the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart, and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel, and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense. May the Lord bless to us the reading of his word.

Shall we look to the Lord in prayer? Our gracious God and Father, we desire to thank thee tonight that we can come to thee, and we thank thee that thou dost hear us, not because of anything in ourselves, but because of what the Lord Jesus has done for us. We thank thee for his precious blood that he shed to put away our sins, and we thank thee that in him and through him we have access to thee. We thank thee for all who are in the audience tonight, and we pray thy blessing upon each one.

We pray that thou would open thy word to us, and speak to our hearts, enlighten our understanding, touch our consciences, reach our hearts, and move our lives, that we might be more devoted to thyself, and walk in ways that are pleasing to thee. Keep us from being turned aside, and help us, our Father, to see our place, and to act in accordance with it. If there should be any amongst us tonight who are not yet saved, we pray that something may be said, that thou wouldst use to bring them to thyself, that they might know the Lord Jesus.

Remember again our brother Robinson in a special way, wilt thou graciously minister to him, and remember his loved ones, each one. We ask it in the Savior's name. Amen.

Now you remember that last night we were speaking on the matter of God desiring fruit. We have been looking at these six days of reconstruction. We saw how that in the first day, God said, let there be light, and light shone into that chaotic creation which had fallen under the judgment of God.

And into that chaotic creation, God comes in, and the Spirit of God begins to move, and God begins to speak. And the first thing that God brings in is light. He says, let light be, and light was.

And then on the second day, God brought in the atmosphere that separated the waters which were above from the waters which were beneath. As yet everything in that creation was submerged under water. But then on the third day, God says, let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear, and it was so.

And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he seas, and God saw that it was good. Now we have been speaking of these days as prefiguring, or foreshadowing for us, the works of God in the history of man from the 46th chapter of Isaiah as well as the 15th chapter of Acts. In the 15th chapter of Acts, we have that statement.

I don't know whether it's recorded on this chart or not, but that statement in the 15th chapter of Acts of the 18th verse, known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. And if we turn for a moment to the 46th chapter of Isaiah, I think there is a very important verse there that every Christian should know and should retain in his or her mind. The 46th chapter of Isaiah where the Lord is challenging the children of Israel who were beginning to follow after idols, and he compares himself with the idols, and he says in the ninth verse, he says, Remember the former things of old, for I am God and there is none else.

I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Now there we have brought before us that God's dealings, God's counsels are declared to us from the very beginning. God knows from the very beginning exactly what he is going to do, and he declares the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet.

So when we connect this portion with the 15th chapter of Acts, and we also see the similarity in these six days, the events that took place in those six days, how they foreshadow for us the six ages of human history, we see what harmony there is in the word of God. The first day God said, Let there be life, picturing for us the first age from Adam to Noah, a period of about sixteen or seventeen hundred years, when man had life from God. The light of creation, to tell him there was a God.

The light of conscience, to bring before him his sin and his guilt before God. And then the light of promise, which God gave man when he sinned in the Garden of Eden, the promise of a coming Savior. And we saw how that first age ended in a flood.

It was an age in which men were left to themselves and left responsible to act according to the light that they had. It was an age when men were left to themselves. They had no government over them.

They had no control over them. They were just directly responsible to God by means of the light that they had. And we saw how that world was so terrible that God said, The end of all flesh is come before me.

And the Lord sent the flood that wiped out all mankind, except for eight souls who were preserved in the ark. And those eight souls came into the new creation. And then we have the second day when God brought into that earth which was submerged in water and enveloped in vapor, God brought in the atmosphere which separated the waters which were above from the waters which were beneath, bringing before us how in the second age God introduced a new element into the affairs of men.

And that was the element of government, that God gave man the authority to exercise government. And God gave him also his responsibility that he was to scatter abroad upon the face of the earth and he was to replenish the earth. But we see that in time men massed together and in their pride they determined to make a center for themselves, a rallying name.

When they said, Let us make us a name, it does not mean that they wanted to make a name for themselves. Like perhaps the young person wants to make a name for himself in the world. That's not the thought.

The thought was that they wanted a rallying center. They wanted a name around which they could gather and which would unify them and preserve them from being scattered abroad upon the face of the earth. And we saw how God came down and God recognized their pride and said, Nothing will be restrained from them now.

And he confounded their speech and nations were born. The third day we saw pictures for us the earth coming forth out of the waters. And God says, Let the earth bring forth fruit.

And we brought out out of that pictures for us the third age. When God took one man by the name of Abraham who was an idolater and to that man he revealed himself. To that man he spoke.

To that man he gave promises. And that man was persuaded. You know, it's beautiful to notice in the 15th chapter of Genesis it says that when God gave Abram the promise of a seed who would be as numerous as the stars of heaven it said, Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

God gave a tremendous promise to Abraham something that seemed unnatural. Something that seemed absolutely impossible of fulfillment. But he believed what God had to say to him and the result was God counted it unto him for righteousness.

And that is a tremendous verse because when we come to the book of Romans which is an unfolding of the gospel of God and the way of salvation through the gospel in the fourth chapter of Romans it says What shall we say then? What shall we say then? How did God count man righteous? What did God say to Abraham? How was Abraham counted righteous before God? And it said, Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. In other words, Abraham's act becomes an example to you and to me because God speaks to you and me today. God speaks to us through his word.

He does not promise to us like he did to Abraham a seed as numerous as the stars of heaven but God tells us about a work that he has accomplished for us that he sent his son into the world that he commends his love toward us and that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. And when the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross he offered a sufficient and complete sacrifice for sin that God raised him from the dead. God tells us the work is finished.

The work is done. You can't add a single iota to it. There's nothing more needed.

When he cried it is finished on the cross he had completed the work. I remember reading the story of young Hudson Taylor how he was brought up in a Christian home how he heard the gospel and as he went on and became a teenager and went to school his heart was turned against the word of God his heart was turned against the truth of God and he began to imbibe some of the teachings of infidelity. He had doubt about God.

He had doubt about the word of God. He had doubt about the things that heaven taught to him. And his mother was so concerned about him and so burdened about him that it happened that this particular day she was visiting some friends quite a distance away and she felt a deep burden for her 17 year old son that he might be brought to know the Lord.

And so she went into a bedroom and she determined that she was not going to leave that bedroom until she was positively sure that her son was safe. And she got down on her knees and began to pray. At precisely that time while her son who was home on a vacation was from school was home alone and not knowing what to do with himself he came into his father's library and looked around for something to read.

And he noticed an old gospel leaflet on the desk and so he thought to himself I'll read this story and when I come to the application I'll quit. And so he started to read this story and soon he was interested. And this story went right into the sufferings of the Lord Jesus on the cross.

And the writer was speaking about how on the cross Jesus suffered for our sins. And then how as his sufferings came to an end he cried it is finished. And he bowed his head and dismissed his spirit.

And right then and there Hudson Taylor stopped and he thought to himself well what was finished? What did he mean when he said it is finished? What was finished? And the truth came upon him why the work for salvation was finished. The work for atonement of sins was finished. God is satisfied with what the Lord Jesus has done because he has raised him from the dead.

And right then and there Hudson Taylor was saved. He saw that it was all through the work of Christ and his soul was in peace. And precisely at that moment his mother who was in prayer suddenly felt the burden gone had peace within her and she had the assurance that God had either saved or was definitely going to save her son.

And she bowed her head and thanked God for answering her prayer. And it was only a few days later that she heard the good news that her son Hudson had trusted the Lord Jesus Christ and was rejoicing in his salvation. That is what you and I must believe.

We must believe the message that God gives. Abraham believed God. The question is do you and I believe God when he tells us what the Lord Jesus Christ has done on the cross? You know that's what John 5 and 24 really says.

John 5 and 24 really says Verily, verily, I say unto you He that heareth my word and believeth him that sent me hath everlasting life. He that heareth my word and believeth him that sent me. Let me ask you tonight do you believe his word? Do you believe what he says concerning his son? When you and I believe that very moment just like Abraham.

Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. When you and I believe God concerning what his son did for us why you and I are made righteous before God you and I have everlasting life. Verily, verily, I say unto you He that heareth my word and believeth him that sent me hath everlasting life and shall not come into judgment shall not come into judgment but is passed from death unto life.

Abraham believed God and to Abraham God gave the promise as to what he would do that from him he would bring a nation. He would bring forth a seed and he would give that seed a land and that land would be their everlasting possession. We have been seeing how from the time of Abraham until the time of the Lord Jesus that the coming of the Lord Jesus into the world the third age of human history is an age that deals especially with the children of Israel.

They are God's earthly people. Last night we were noticing how that people were slaves in Egypt. How God delivered that people.

How God sheltered them under the blood. God said when I see the blood I will pass over you. In the land of Egypt they became slaves.

In the land of Egypt they became idolaters. In the land of Egypt their lives were bitter because they were under the hard taskmasters of Egypt. There was only one way of deliverance and that was by means of the blood.

God said when I see the blood I will pass over you. God delivered them. God brought them through the Red Sea.

God brought them to Mount Sinai. And there we see why did God bring this nation out? Why did God select the nation of Israel? Because he wanted fruit. He wanted fruit.

And before there could be fruit they had to experience his salvation. And God, they accepted the law as a standard of life but we see also the Old Testament that they failed to keep that law. That law was given to a people who had experienced God's salvation.

God's deliverance. The law can never save and the law can never be a standard of godly life. The law can never give power to the soul to live the kind of life that is pleasing to God.

If we have time to look at some of the details of Israel's history David's time and Solomon's time you know there were three kings who reigned over the people of Israel. Each of these three kings reigned for a period of 40 years each. Saul reigned for 40 years.

David reigned for 40 years. Solomon reigned for 40 years. From the time of Saul through the reign of David and through the reign of Solomon that nation rose to the very height of its greatness.

It was then in those years that they vanquished all the nations around them under David. When much of the land became their possession. And David in the closing days of his life determined to build that beautiful temple for God so that the ark would no longer dwell in tents.

And you remember how God said to David David it's a good thing that it's in your heart. But he says you're not the man that's going to do it. You're a man of war David and you can't build the temple for me.

Your son will build the temple. And so David prepared abundantly for that temple. David provided the material for that temple but it was Solomon who built that temple.

And it was under the reign of Solomon that Israel had its most glorious years. Solomon's wisdom, Solomon's wealth, Solomon's court, Solomon's splendor was sounded abroad throughout the entire world of that day. They came from all parts of the world to hear Solomon's wisdom.

They came from all parts of the world to see Solomon's wealth. But here in this 13th chapter or the 12th chapter of the first book of Kings we have brought before us that though Solomon's time was a time of great wealth and great prosperity nevertheless it was also a time of trial, a time of burden and a time of sorrow. Because no sooner had Solomon died than we find something that when Rehoboam his son was made the king that all Israel came to Shechem to make him king and it came to pass when Jeroboam the son of Nebat who was yet in Israel heard of it that for he was split from the presence of King Solomon and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt that they sent and called him and Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came and spake unto Rehoboam saying thy father made our yoke grievous now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father and his heavy yoke which he hath put upon us lighter and we will serve thee.

You know friends we think that perhaps taxes are something that are new. And we think that perhaps taxes you know they tell us there are two things sure one is debt and the other is taxes. And of course people talk nowadays about taxation and the burden of taxation.

You know this wonderful kingdom of Solomon's it was maintained by means of taxation. His armies were maintained by means of a draft. Whenever Solomon saw anything that was attractive or something that he wanted as the king all he had to do was take possession of it.

And while we read about Solomon's glorious reign nevertheless after Solomon's death why here we hear of undercurrents that were occurring at the very time that Solomon was reigning but when Solomon died these undercurrents came to the surface and the people come to Rehoboam and they're asking for a lightening of their taxes. You know I sometimes think that this country's greatest dangers are not external. It is not the external danger of communism or the external danger of some military power but I sometimes think that the greatest dangers that this country faces are dangers that are from within and it is the dangers from within that are going to bring about just as they did here the dissolution of a civilization like unto which there has been none in many of many a century.

Here we find that they come to Rehoboam and they're asking for a lightening of their taxes and of course Rehoboam says depart yet for three days then come again to me and the king departed and the people departed and the king Rehoboam consulted with the old men that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived and said how do ye advise that I may answer this people and they spake unto him saying if thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day and wilt serve them and answer them and speak good words to them then they will be thy servants forever but he forsook the counsel of the old men which they had given him and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him and which stood before him and he said unto them what counsel give ye? Now you know this was Rehoboam's first mistake. Now it's sad to see that there was a division here between the older and the younger ones. The older ones gave one counsel and the younger ones gave another counsel.

You know it was never the Lord's intention that old people and young people should be segregated one from another. That's why I'm so happy to see so many of the young people sitting in the meeting tonight sitting with those who are older because you know every description that we have of the people of God always brings before us that there is a bringing together. God's people are likened to a flock in one place.

Feed the flock of God which is among you. Did you ever see a flock? I remember a number of years ago when I was having meetings in Fontenelle, Iowa. I was staying at the home of our brother Phil Tanner and his wife.

Our brother Phil Tanner he had a number of sheep grazing on his land. Quite a flock of sheep. And I thought to myself one morning after I've been there a few days, I'm going to see what that flock is like.

And I'm going to see if the words of the Lord are true or not. The Lord said a stranger will they not follow for they know not the voice of strangers. I said to brother Tanner I wonder how close I can get to those sheep.

He says well he says you just go and see how close you can get. So I start walking down toward them. I suppose when I got not too close maybe about a hundred and fifty yards from those sheep I noticed that the young lambs were there with the older sheep.

You know the young lambs weren't all by themselves and saying we're not going to have anything to do with the old sheep. And the old sheep did say well now we don't want anything to do with the young sheep. No they were all grazing together.

And I noticed that on the outskirts of the flock it was the older sheep that were there. And they were the first ones that lifted up their head and looked at me. And when they saw me coming closer without stopping and I started talking to them calling them.

Why you know they all began to perk up their heads. And as they all began to perk up their heads I noticed that the young as well as the old began to run away from me. They ran away from me as a flock.

The young ones took the advice of the older ones no doubt who were watching me as I drew near. And they warned the rest of the sheep and they all fled. You know in the picture of a flock we have the young and the old together.

Now that doesn't mean of course that there are not occasions when young people can get together and have a wonderful season of fellowship or a Bible season. But in the church there is the flock the young and the old. The word of God likens us to a family.

Now you know in a family every family has the older ones and the younger ones. And they dwell together as a family. And it's a good thing when they dwell together in unity.

The older ones need the younger ones. And the younger ones need the older ones. And they should dwell together in harmony.

And in this particular case the counsel of the older ones was sought by Rehoboam. Those men who had been with Solomon his father. He said to them what do you think I should do? The people say that I should lighten the burden.

What do you think I should do? They said well why don't you give in a little bit. Why don't you give in a little bit. You know brethren and sisters sometimes it's a good thing to give in a little bit.

If you give in a little bit if you bend in a little bit. Some people are great sticklers for their own opinions. For their own points.

And they stand up for those things as though the kingdom of God itself was going to stand or fall with that particular point that they're standing up for. And the result is that all too often they precipitate and bring about a division that could be overcome if there was a little more grace. If there was a little more yielding you know there are points upon which the Bible says let your moderation be known unto all men.

What does that mean? Let your yieldingness be known unto all men. You know I think a beautiful principle is brought before us in 1st Peter chapter 5. Notice what it tells us here in 1st Peter chapter 5. Peter the apostle the one who is told by the Lord to feed the lambs to shepherd the sheep to feed the sheep. Notice what he tells us in 1st Peter chapter 5 and verse 5. He says likewise ye younger submit yourselves unto the elder.

Yea all of you be subject one to another and be clothed with humility for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore unto the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time casting all your care upon him for he careth for you. Be sober be vigilant because your adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour.

Now here we have a very important principle. The younger are exhorted to be subject unto the elder but it says even the elder are at points to be subject unto the younger. Yea all of you be subject one to another.

Humble yourselves unto the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you. God gives grace to the humble. He resists the proud.

Now here we find it unbending. Rehoboam had his mind all set. He came to the old men and he asked them what their idea was.

What was their opinion about it? What was their judgment about it? When they gave him a judgment and he didn't like it he turned from it. You know sometimes Christians will go to others for advice. They'll even go to those who are older in the faith for advice and ask them what do you think? What should I do? And when the advice is given they didn't intend to obey the advice or follow it in the first place.

If the advice had been something that would have freed them why then of course they would have been willing to follow it. But you know altogether too often we have our own ideas and our own minds made up as to what we're going to do. Rehoboam got the advice from the old men.

It was good advice but he had no ear for it. He turns to the young men and he says to the young men what is your advice? They say why you just tell them that if they thought their burden was heavy before wait until they feel your burden and see what they're going to see what's going to happen. Why you just assert your authority.

You assert and show them who's king. You show them that you're over them. And so of course he listened to the advice of the young men and the result was that on this chart you see a division take place.

When he gave that knowledge and that information to the tribes of Israel ten of the tribes raised themselves under Jeroboam and they says we have no part in David. See to your own house David. Two tribes they followed Rehoboam.

A few days later Rehoboam thought to himself well this thing it's not very serious. I'll send out my tax collectors and so he sends out their tax collectors but you know when the tax collectors come to the ten tribes they're stoned to death. Rehoboam starts to raise an army to bring these ten tribes into subjection and under his dominion and God says no this thing is for me.

Solomon's sin. Solomon's sin is what has brought this thing around. The sin of Solomon is what brought about this division and then we find that God gives a promise to Jeroboam that if Jeroboam obeys him and does his will God will bless him.

God will perpetuate his family. But you know Jeroboam was a man who was not a man of faith and so we find that when Jeroboam becomes the king he leads those ten tribes astray. How does he do it? How does he do it? He does it by bringing in a false manner of religion.

You know there's nothing that deceives people more than a false religion. It's true today. How does the devil deceive people? Oh I realize that we're living in a materialistic society where more and more people are denying there is a God, there is anything hereafter, that the Bible is true.

But the greatest majority of American people are religious. The greatest majority of American people believe in something. They believe in someone.

But you know what they believe is a counterfeit from that which is really true. What is the first thing that Jeroboam does? He says now if these people go back up to Jerusalem and begin to worship in the way

that God has said they'll leave me and they'll go back to Rehoboam. You know friends there's nothing stronger in the heart of man than religion.

You know it is said that Plato was one time asking a group of his disciples what is a man? How would you describe a man? What is your best description of a man? And one of the men says well I believe that man is a featherless two-legged chicken. I believe that man is like a featherless two-legged chicken. And so when Plato went out got a chicken and while it was alive he plucked off the feathers and he put it in the mix and he says behold so and so is man.

Just because a chicken is without feathers doesn't make it a man. Of course it doesn't. What is a man? Man is a religious creature.

Man is one who has to have something to worship, something to acknowledge, someone to bow down to. Jeroboam realized that and Jeroboam said if I'm going to keep these people I have to have a religion otherwise if they go back to Jerusalem they'll go back to Rehoboam. So he introduces a counterfeit religion.

You know we're living in the day today of counterfeit religion. How many people think they're Christians? And they're not. Well I've been born and raised in a Christian family.

I've been raised in a Christian environment. I fulfill the Christian ordinances. I go to the Christian church.

A Christian? Of course I'm a Christian. What do you think I am? A heathen? Why of course I'm a Christian. How did you become a Christian? Well I've always been a Christian.

I've been raised a Christian. I try to live a Christian life. I try to obey the Christian teachings.

My friends, a Christian is a person who has been born again. A Christian is a person who has had an experience with Christ. A person who is a Christian is one who belongs to Christ because he or she has come as a sinner to the one who died on Calvary's cross.

You notice there are these six points here in which Jeroboam counterfeited Israel's religion in order to keep them in his power. The first thing he does is he substitutes calves for the living God. He has golden calves made and he makes them the object of their worship apart from the living God.

Have you ever wondered why it was calves? Why wasn't it a horse? Or why wasn't it a sheep? I know that sheep were an abomination in Egypt, but why a calf? Because a calf is the animal of labor. A calf is the animal of work. Farmers tell us that the hardest working animal on the farm is a cow.

You say, my, that cow just sitting there, just eating that grass, lying down and re-chewing that gut. You mean to say that that's the hardest working? Yes, my friends. You know that's quite an operation.

To eat green grass and bring forth white milk. Wonderful operation. Quite an operation.

My, it would be interesting to follow the course of that grass until it finally becomes milk. It takes work. It takes work.

The calf is the animal of labor. And what has man substituted for the gospel of our Lord Jesus? He's instituted a message of works. Works.

How can you get to heaven? Do the best you can. Work hard. Pray.

Sacrifice. Deny yourself. Chastise yourself.

Work. What the woman said to the man is true. She said, the difference between your religion and mine is, yours is two letters and mine is four.

Yours is D-O, do. Mine is D-O-N-E, done. Basically and fundamentally, there are only two beliefs in the world.

The true and the false. The false says, you've got to work to get to heaven. Strive.

Pray. Pay. Do the best you can.

Work as hard as you can. And God says, it's not of works lest any man should work. So when Jeroboam raises up the calves as the object of worship, he is really and truly saying, here is a God who wants work from you.

Here is a God who is wanting you to produce something for him. But what does the true religion say? What does the gospel say? The gospel tells us that all was done 1900 years ago. All was finished 1900 years ago.

When Jesus died on the cross, when he died there on the cross, he finished the work. It's done. All you and I have to do is receive it.

Are you working tonight, striving, trying so hard? My friend, that's Jeroboam's religion. The message or theology of works. It's not by works lest any man should vote.

The second thing he did was he instituted another place of worship. God had said they were to meet in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the place where he would place his name.

They, or Jeroboam, he brought in another place, and that place was Bethel and Dan. Bethel in the northern most section of the land, Dan in the southern most. Thereby making it convenient for the people.

Why, those who were toward the north they could go to Dan. Those who were toward the south they could go to Bethel. It wouldn't cost them very much.

You know, we're living in a day today of easygoing religion. Easygoing. It doesn't have to cost us very much.

Men today have substituted other centers for the center that God gave. God, in the words of our Lord Jesus, laid down very plainly how his people were to meet, where the place was that they were to meet. Where was it? He says where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

But men have devised other places. Men have gathered to other names. Names that they themselves have devised.

Names that they themselves propagate and fight for. Names that have no basis in Scripture. Names that have no place in Scripture.

Yet men spend all their energies for these places that they themselves have devised and brought into being. And the third thing we noticed about it was that he says 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 this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan. And he made an house of high places and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi. He made a special class of priests.

Priests for which there was no authority in God's word. You know, we look at Christendom today and what do we find? We find the church divided into clergy and laity. We find a special class who are supposed to be more spiritual and more godly and supposed to have closer access to God than other believers.

It all comes from Roman Catholicism because Roman Catholicism was the one who brought in the priests and made them a special class. Protestantism has followed them by elevating a certain class, giving these classes certain ordinations, giving them certain titles that distinguish them from other Christians and raise them up as supposedly superior to the ordinary run of Christians. They are the ones who pray.

They are the ones who lead the worship. They are the ones who are supposed to be closer to God than others are. Is that so? When we turn to the Bible, we find that all believers are priests.

We find that because all believers are priests, all have special access, privilege of drawing near to God and offering to Him the praise, the worship. How often it has been true that the prayer of a godly sister in quietness is more effectual because she's closer to the Lord than perhaps the manner of standing in the pulpit and preaching, or supposedly leading the people of God. We find the introduction of a special class of priests who were not authorized by God.

Then we find, in the 32nd verse, Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah. He brings in a feast of his own. Not the feast that the Lord had decreed and that the Lord had ordained.

If you and I were to go into Christendom today and see the so-called Lord's Supper and come to the New Testament and compare it with the New Testament, you and I would find very little resemblance. If you and I went into the Roman Catholic Church or Cathedral and we were to see their formal of the Mass and you and I were to come to the New Testament and read about how the Lord instituted the Lord's Supper, we would see no similarity whatsoever. No similarity whatsoever.

Where did this Mass come from? This Mass came from the mind and the heart of man, and Protestantism has something like it. We find that Protestantism is more and more following the path of Rome. What? Devising a feast of their own.

We find that they have the bread cut up into pieces. We find that they have the individual cups, all of these various things. What do we find? We find it's a departure from the Word of God.

Here we have a feast that is brought about by man's own mind. Then notice the 32nd verse. Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month.

He chooses his own day. God said that the feast was to be kept in the fourth month, on the twelfth day of the month. So, what does he do? He changes and makes it the eighth month and the fifteenth day of the month.

When we come to the New Testament, what do we find? We find that on the first day of the week, the disciples gather together to break bread every first day of the week. Not once a month, not once in three months, not once in six months. I always enjoy the story that our brother McCullough told, or tells about the time when he was in Ireland and he was talking with a Baptist preacher and this Baptist preacher says, well, he says, you know, you brethren are always observing the Lord's Supper the first day of the week.

Every first day of the week. Doesn't that get monotonous? Doesn't that become stale? Why carry it out the first day of the week? He says, well, he says, because the word of God says so. Yes, but it becomes so routine, it can become so routine, so monotonous.

Well, he says, you know, I read about how on the first day of the week, the disciples came together to break bread. But if you think it's monotonous, because we do it every first day of the week, let me ask you, why do you always take up your collections on the first day of the week? It says, on the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him and store his waters, prospered him. And when you come together, now he says, I notice that at all your meetings, you're always taking up collections.

Don't you think that gets rather monotonous? Taking up a collection every time you come together and on the first day of the week there was no more argument. There was no more the idea, well, you do it too often. No.

The first day of the week, not once a month, not once in three months, not once in six months, not once in a year, on the first day of the week is God's day. But here we find Jeroboam, he departs from God's order and he institutes his own day. Notice what it tells us.

So did he in Bethel sacrificing unto the calves that he had made, and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart, and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel, and he offered upon the altar and burnt incense. I want you to notice the sixth thing, and that was it was his word, it was his ordination that prevailed over the word of God.

Today, man's condition, man's word prevails over the word of God. Men are following the traditions and the words of men rather than the words of the living God. Today we have creeds that men have devised, we have their church regulations that men have written up, and these are the things which regulate so many churches.

Men, things that have a priority and an authority above the word of God. You read through the book of Kings and you'll find Jeroboam, when he instituted that form of religion, it was Satan's means to keep that people in his power, it was Satan's means to lead that people farther and farther from God, and you can read from the 13th chapter of 1st Kings, and all through the history of Israel, and from Jeroboam, till the time when God became so sick and tired of that people, he delivered them into the hands of the Assyrians, and you read about that in 2nd Kings 17, he delivered them into the hands of the Assyrians, and those ten tribes were taken captive, and they're lost among the Gentiles to this day. Those ten tribes are lost.

There wasn't a single king, not one king, from Jeroboam to the very last king who was taken captive with the people into Assyria, not one king who feared the Lord, not one king who obeyed the Lord. Of every one of those kings it said, he walked after the sin of Jeroboam. He walked after the sin of Jeroboam.

Jeroboam's sin of instituting a false religion to replace the true way of God. Do you and I follow the truth tonight? There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Christ is the truth.

He is the Savior. Christ is the center. Christ is the one who is set forth for us in the feast.

Christ is the one through whom we worship the living God. Christ is the one whose word we take as our guide, as our authority in all that we as people of God are doing and are to do. Which is it? Is it Christ, or is it something or someone else? Only Christ is the truth.

And it's only as you and I follow Christ that you and I are following in the way of truth. I'm going to ask our brother Royal Johnson to close the...

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