

## **WHO ARE YOU LORD? (part 2)**

After the days of King Solomon, the twelve tribes of Israel divided into two kingdoms. King Jeroboam was the leader of the Northern Kingdom.

**In 1 Kings 11:38** we read that Jeroboam had been promised great blessings and a continuing dynasty if he would follow the Lord, but he quickly became more interested in holding onto power than honouring the God who gave it to him.

**38 If you listen to what I tell you and follow my ways and do whatever I consider to be right, and if you obey my decrees and commands, as my servant David did, then I will always be with you. I will establish an enduring dynasty for you as I did for David, and I will give Israel to you. 1 Kings 11:38 (NLT)**

The city of Jerusalem was in the South and It was there that all the people of Israel were commanded to bring their sacrifices and offerings to God. But Jeroboam was afraid to allow his people to go to Jerusalem.

So, what does Jeroboam do?

**“Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi...So he made offerings on the altar which he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month which he had devised in his own heart. And he ordained a feast for the children of Israel and offered sacrifices on the altar and burned incense.” 1 Kings 12:30-31, 33**

Jeroboam decides to set up his own altars and a shrine of the golden calf at the cities of Dan and Bethel so people wouldn't have to go south to Jerusalem to worship God. He also abolished the priesthood that God commanded, and he made priests from every class of people who were not of the sons of Levi.

Jeroboam also arranged for a special feast to be held “in the month which he had devised in his own heart.”

This is a good summary of Jeroboam's religion – it was devised in his own heart, it was his own invention.

For the most part, the world today believes in the religion of Jeroboam. Not necessarily his particular expression of golden calves and high places, but a religion created according to its own taste. Nowadays and more than ever, everyone seems to have an **opinion** on who God is.

The tendency to do the same as Jeroboam is in us all. Christians also come up with different ideas and beliefs of who God is based on their own understanding or life experiences.

Thankfully, God has revealed to us what He is like in the pages of the Bible.

If we discard the description of who God is in the Bible, we can end up making Him whatever we think He is, and that may not be who God is, after all.

In Samuel chapter 2 we read about Eli and his sons Hophni and Phinehas. Eli's sons helped their father in the temple.

### **1 Samuel 2:12**

**Now the sons of Eli were corrupt; they did not know the Lord.**

We are told that Eli's sons were taking for themselves all the prime cuts of the meat for the sacrifices, not the portions that were allocated for the priests, and even getting meat for themselves first, before sacrificing to God!

They were also committing immoral acts with the women who served at the doorway to the tent of meeting. **1 Samuel 2:22; 29**

Eli their father was aware of their behaviour, but he turned a blind eye to it and ultimately did not stop them or remove them from their office. So, unfortunately the actions of this family had significant consequences.

Eli's sons did not know the Lord. In fact, some translations say: they did not have any regard for the Lord.

Exactly like Jeroboam, Eli's sons came up with a god of their own making, they broke all the rules and probably thought that God was fine with it.

### **The story of Moses and how God had rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.**

On one occasion Moses went up to mount Sinai to be with God but sometime later the Lord told him to go back because the people had corrupted themselves.

**Exodus 32:7 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt.**

Moses found the people worshipping a different god. And Aaron who was the high priest and was supposed to represent God was the one who made a golden calf for them to worship.

**5 Then the people said: "These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, "Tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord." Exodus 32:5**

To 'know the Lord' is much more important than we may realise.

How do we get to know the Lord?

By reading the Bible and by having a relationship with Him.

### **1. WE NEED TO PURSUE THE KNOWLEDGE OF WHO GOD IS.**

**Hosea 6:3 Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord. (...)**

**Colossians 1:10**

**that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;**

The apostle Paul at the end of his life wrote to the Philippian Church:

**(...) “that I may know Him” (...) Philippians 3:10**

When we read the Gospels, we can see how Jesus wanted His disciples to know Him. And several times He had to challenge their perception and understanding of who He was.

**13 When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”**

**14 So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”**

**15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”**

**Matthew 16:13-15**

Closer to the crucifixion Jesus was still helping His disciples to get to know Him:

**5 Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”**

**6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.**

**7 “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”**

**8 Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.”**

**9 Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip?”**  
**John 14:5-9**

When Jesus was praying for His disciples and for all who would believe in Him in future generations like us, He said:

**3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. John 17:3**

**I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep and am known by My own.**

**John 10:14**

## **2. THE MORE WE KNOW GOD THE BETTER WE UNDERSTAND WHO WE ARE IN HIM**

**12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: John 1:12**

Don't be surprised or upset if the world does not understand Christianity or who Jesus is. They do not know the Lord yet.

Jesus said:

**John 14:17**

**17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.**

**1 John 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore, the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.**

We are not only children of God we are also His ambassadors and the light in this world.

**2 Corinthians 5:20**

**20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.**

**Matthew 5:14,16**

**14 "You are the light of the world. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.**

**Do you know why it was so vitally necessary for the disciples to understand who Jesus was?**

Because if they did not know the Lord Jesus or had wrong ideas about who He was, they would have not been good representatives of God on this earth.

The apostle Paul was well aware of this danger when he wrote:

**2 Corinthians 11:3-4**

**3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 4 For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!**

### **3. THE BETTER WE UNDERSTAND WHO WE ARE THE MORE WE KNOW WHAT WE ARE SUPPOSED TO DO.**

The more we know the Lord the more effective we will be as His ambassadors.

After Jesus rose from the dead, He left clear instructions to all His followers:

**15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptised will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." Mark 16:15-18**

**Daniel 11:32 (...) but the people who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits.**