Factors Which Caused Israel To Fall

Intro: Rom. 15:4 “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”; 1 Cor. 10:11-12 “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” During the time of the United Kingdom, Israel was a great nation. However, Solomon married many idolatrous women and they turned his heart from God. God being angry with Solomon and Israel as a means of saving them, rent it asunder. God incorporated ten northern tribes into the nation of Israel under Jeroboam, and the two Southern tribes into the nation of Judah under Rehoboam.

In this lesson I want us to consider the Norther kingdom, Israel, and some factors which caused it to fall.

1. Jeroboam changed the object, place, time and access of worship; 1 Kin. 12:26-33 “And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: 27 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. 28 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. 29 And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. 30 And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan. 31 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. 32 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. 33 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 he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense.”

2. He changed:
   a. The object of worship from God to calves of gold.
   b. The place of worship from Jerusalem to Dan and Bethel.
   c. The access of worship from the Levites to other tribes.
   d. The time of worship from the seventh month for the feast of tabernacles to the eighth month.

3. Eighteen kings succeeded him, it is said or implied (except for the last, Hoshea) that “he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin.”

4. Hosea gives us several reasons why Israel fell.

I. LACK OF KNOWLEDGE.
   A. Hos. 4:6; 8:12 “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.... 8:12 I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing.”
      1. Israel’s ignorance was deliberate.
      2. They counted the law a strange doctrine.
   B. Today, few take Bible study seriously.
      1. 2 Tim. 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
      2. Deu. 6:6-9 “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.”
C. People clamor for and are taught a social gospel of philosophy, psychology, and sociology.
1. 2 Tim. 4:1-4 “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: 2Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”
2. 1 Tim. 4:16 “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”
3. 1 Cor. 1:18, 21, 23 “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.... 21For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.... 23But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;”

II. PRIDE.
A. Hos. 5:5; 7:10 “And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them.... 7:10And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face: and they do not return to the LORD their God, nor seek him for all this.”
1. Pride kept the Israelites from humbly accepting the prophets rebukes and instructions.
2. It made them say they did not need God.
B. Pro. 16:18 “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”
C. Mat. 5:3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”
1. Pride, today will keep people from accepting God.
2. It will keep Christians from recognizing a need to study God’s Word and conforming to it.
D. We must humble ourselves under God.
1. Phi. 2:5, 8 “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:... 8And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”
2. Jam. 4:6-7, 10 “But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. 7Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.... 10Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.”
3. 1 Pet. 5:5-6 “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. 6Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:”
4. Luke 14:11 “For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

III. THE PEOPLE’S GOODNESS WAS AS A MORNING CLOUD.
A. Hos. 6:4 “O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.”
1. A morning cloud gives an anticipation of rain only to discover a few minutes later that the cloud is gone.
2. Israel, with their sacrifices, regularities or worship, and holy days, had a show of righteousness, but at close inspection there was no true righteousness.
B. What about the church today.
1. Do we have true righteousness or only a show of it?
2. Are we just morning clouds?
IV. **HE MIXED HIMSELF AMONG THE PEOPLES.**

A. **Hos. 7:8** “Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned.”
   1. “The people” were the Gentile nations, the idolaters.
   2. Israel had been charged to avoid association and participation with nations about them.

B. **Too often the church mixes itself with peoples.**
   1. Many are promoting the doctrine of open fellowship with the denominations.
   2. Friendship with the world.
      a. 1 Cor. 15:33 “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”
      b. Jam. 4:4 “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”
      c. 1 John 2:15-17 “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

V. **THE PEOPLE EMBRACED AND WORSHIPPED IDOLATROUS GODS.**

A. **Hos. 9:10-11** “I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the firstripe in the fig tree at her first time: but they went to Baalpeor, and separated themselves unto that shame; and their abominations were according as they loved. 11As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception.”
   1. Reference is made to Balaam, after failing to curse God’s people for Balak, counseled him to send seductive women among the Israelites, that as a result they would commit fornication and that God would thus curse Israel
      a. Num. 22-24
      b. Cf., Rev. 2:14 “But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.”
   2. Balak followed Balaam’s counsel and thus Israel became abominable at Baal-Peor;
      Num. 25:1-3 “And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. 2And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. 3And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.”

B. **Hos. 13:2** “And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.”

C. **How many times do we set up false gods.**
   1. Covetousness (the wish to have more).
      a. Eph. 5:5 “For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.”
      b. Col. 3:5 “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:”
      c. Phi. 3:17-19 “Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)”
   2. Self; Mat. 16:24-25 “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.”
3. Science; 1 Tim. 6:20 “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane \emph{and} vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:"

VI. The People Trusted In The Multitude Of Their Mighty Men.

A. Hos. 10:13 “Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men.”

1. The mighty men Israel had trusted in had led the nation to the brink of destruction.
2. They had reached a point of no return. God had determined to completely destroy them.
   a. Assyria had already invaded Israel twice and effected two carrying away.
   b. Assyria would soon come again and the remaining part of the nation would fall.

B. We should beware today.

1. We should not put complete trust in elders, preachers, Bible class teachers, etc.
   a. We should have confidence in them.
   b. We cannot follow them blindly.
2. Our trust should be based on the Word of God.
   a. Thus our need to study God’s Word, for ourselves.
   b. 2 Tim. 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Conclusion: Three observations:

1. These same sins later prevailed in the church and led it into apostasy.
2. These same sins prevailed in bringing about the apostasy in the restoration movement in the latter part of the 19th Century.
3. Christians today need to take warning at every point where the sins’ Israel committed show their face today, and without question, many of those sins are very prevalent among members of the church today.