



Excerpt from "The Ways of Providence" - R. Roberts
Chapter XIX - Jeroboam and the Ten Tribes pg 157-158

How did Jeroboam use his position? In the worst way. He acted with a certain kind of prudence, but of low order. He acted from natural fear and not from a perception of right. He did not give himself to the obedience of the law of Moses. He looked at things as a mere politician, and fearing the effect of Israel's continued observance of the feasts at Jerusalem, he appointed institutions of his own, in opposition to the law of Moses. "If this people go up to 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." He ought to have argued the other way, in view of the divine guarantee he enjoyed. He ought to have said, "So long as I guide this people to walk obediently to the commands of Jehovah, and send them to do sacrifice at the place where He has placed His name, my position will be safe." He evidently lacked faith in the word of Jehovah to him, and was not concerned to be subject to the commandments. Distrusting the effects of obedience, "he made two calves of gold, and said unto the people, 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 he put in 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."

Expediency instead of principle is a poor rule of action. So Jeroboam found. His departure from the commandments of the Lord led to the very destruction of his house which he feared might result from an obedient course. Ahijah the prophet was instructed as follows: "Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel, and rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it to thee: and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes; but hast done evil above all that were before thee...Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam...Moreover the Lord shall raise him up a king over Israel who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam." The history of the fulfilment of this denunciation reveals or illustrates the ways of providence - ways in which God works without appearing to work - in which human actors impelled by human motives, under an invisible guidance, work out results that are divinely-caused results, through apparently results due to chance and human caprice.