

# What's the Big Idea? Sin and the Devolution of Culture

1 Kings 12: 25-33

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- Introduction:**
- \* 18<sup>th</sup> Century France and the French Revolution – secularization
  - \* 19<sup>th</sup> Century France and Louis Philippe
  - \* Alexis de Toqueville and Gustave de Beaumont
  - \* Democracy in America
  - \* De Toqueville quotes (see attached page)
  - \* “a strange melancholy haunts the inhabitants of America in the midst of abundance”
  - “the incomplete joys of this world will never satisfy [the human] heart
- I. The Back Story**
- a. Jacob and his 12 sons
  - b. Moses and his leadership out of Egypt
  - c. Israel and their partial obedience
  - d. David and a unified nation
  - e. Solomon and a geographical expansive nation
  - f. Rehoboam and Jereboam and a divided Kingdom
    - i. Jereboam and 10 tribes in an illegitimate Kingdom
    - ii. Rehoboam and two tribes and an inconsiderate Kingdom
- II. Jereboam's Situation**
- a. Rehoboam anointed king at Shechem
  - b. Rehoboam returns to Jerusalem
  - c. Jereboam rebuilds Shechem and Penuel
  - d. Jereboam has himself anointed king over the 10 northern tribes
  - e. A nation built with a wicked foundation
  - f. Jereboam concerned that if he allows worshippers to go to the temple in Jerusalem, his kingdom would slip away
- III. Jereboam's Solution**
- a. Create two idols of Canaanite calves to replace temple worship of Jehovah
    - i. The bull (calf) was a Canaanite symbol of fertility and prosperity
  - b. Establish own priesthood other than God's Levitical priesthood.
    - i. Levites had been helpful in establishing David as king and
    - ii. Levitical priesthood would lead the people back to the unified kingdom under Rehoboam
  - iii. Change the place and time of worship to differentiate Israel from Judah
    - 1. This is a secularization of “religion” in that it has to do with the devices of man over the ordinance of God
    - 2. This secularization contributed to the devolution of culture and the ultimate demise of the northern kingdom 220 years later
  - iv. Jereboam's legacy
- IV. Takeaway**
- a. Don't look at other's sin – look at your own
  - b. Leaders are important – choose carefully and intelligently
  - c. Jereboam reminds us that one day a perfect king would come who would not be thinking of Himself – but only of His people and getting them connected with God
  - d. Do not be conformed to this world

**Other Relevant Quotes**  
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**De Toqueville quotes:**

- **The American Republic will endure until the day congress discovers that it can bribe the public with the public's money**
- **In other words, a democratic government is the only one in which those who vote for a tax can escape the obligation to pay it.**
- **The Americans combine the notions of religion and liberty so intimately in their minds, that it is impossible to make them conceive of one without the other**
- **I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and ample rivers and it was not there. . . in her fertile fields and boundless forests and it was not there . . in her rich mines and her vast world commerce and it was not there . . . in her democratic congress and her matchless constitution and it was not there . . . Not until I went into the churches of American and hear her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great."**
- **A strange melancholy that haunts the inhabitants [of America] in the midst of abundance**
- **The incomplete joy of this world will never satisfy [the human] heart.**

**1 Kings 12: 25-27 - 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."**

**1 Kings 12: 28-32 - 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.[b] 31 He also made temples on high places and appointed priests from among all the people, who were not of the Levites. 32 And Jeroboam appointed a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month like the feast that was in Judah, and he offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he made. And he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made.**

**1 Kings 13: 33 - 33 After this thing Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way**

**1 Kings 16: 26 - 26 For [Omri] walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in the sins that he made Israel to sin, provoking the Lord, the God of Israel**

**2 Kings 14: 24 - And [Amaziah] did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam**

**2 Kings 15: 9 - And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam**

**2 Chronicles 7: 14 -if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.**

**Romans 12: 2 - Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind**