SBC Peter Tan Tze Bun

22-April-2021 Message 1 of 2

ESV 15 Minutes

**Presumption Is Deadly!**

***1 Kings 13***

**Topic:** Presumption

**Subject:** What happens when we take God’s word lightly?

**Complement:** Presuming that we know God could destroy us.

**Purpose:** The listeners will not presume to know God’s word but handle it seriously and obey it.

# Introduction

### God told Jeroboam, "And I will take you, and you shall reign over all that your soul desires, and you shall be king over Israel" (1 Kings 11:37 ESV). A chapter later, from Tiffany's 1 Kings 12 message, we know what Jeroboam did. But didn’t God instruct Jeroboam to "reign over all that your soul desires"? He could do what he wanted. Did he misunderstand what God commanded him through the prophet Ahijah?

**Intro:**

1: Arouse interest by story

### When I worked as an air traffic controller in the RSAF many years ago, I was taught to instruct the pilots under my radar control that they must always repeat back whatever instruction that I gave to them. For example, when I say, "Sony 1 (callsign), climb 4000 ft." the pilot must repeat what I said, "Climb 4000 ft, Sony 1." This was to ensure that the pilot understood my instruction to him, and he will follow through. To prevent a disaster from happening, I couldn’t afford to presume that the pilot understood or heard my command.

2: Raise need

### Have you ever made a decision, and only later did you find out that it was a wrong choice due to your presumption of who God is? How can we know if we’re presuming on God?

### In today’s text, 1 Kings 13, we will explore *what happens when we presume on God.* In other words, ***what happens when we take God’s word lightly?*** But before we go into the text, let us look at the geography and the background of chapter 13 (Map of Israel’s Divided Kingdom).

3: Subject R

### Jeroboam set up golden calf worship at Bethel and Dan as alternative worship places, fearing he would lose his kingdom when the people from the north would return to Jerusalem to worship Yahweh there. In Chapter 12, he even set up a new priestly system and national festival that was different from the worship of Yahweh.

4: Bkgrd

### Today, we will look at three mistakes from the passage when he *presumed on God.* If you have your Bible, please turn to 1 Kings 13 and follow the story with me (pause). As it is a long passage, I will not be reading everything in 1 Kings 13.

5: Preview

R, Verse

### Text: 1 Kings 13

T

(What happens when we presume on God by taking his word lightly? First…)

**MPI**

R

# I. Presumption leads us to disobedience (13:1-10).

[Assuming that all that we do is God's will results in us *not* doing what he wants!]

## The man of God prophesied against the pagan altar of Jeroboam (13:1-3).

SP “A”

## The man of God who came from Judah to Bethel gave us a contrast between the true religion vs. the false religion.

## In the books of Kings, the area of focus was on the kings and the prophets who were responsible for leading Israel to keep the covenant of God. The prophetic voice from the prophets played the role of the **conscience** of the kings. In this passage, the man of God played that role to Jeroboam when he came from Judah to Bethel.

Explanation

## The man of God confronted Jeroboam and refused to be associated with him by refusing Jeroboam’s invite (13:4-10).

SP “B”

## He confronted Jeroboam with two miracles. One was the altar in Bethel “shall be torn down, and the ashes that are on it shall be poured out” (**v 5**). And the other was the instantaneous shriveling and healing of Jeroboam’s hand. The sign of what happened to the altar in Bethel confirmed what the man of God pronounced against Bethel. **Deut 18:22** says, “When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him." What the man of God said came true and on top of that, his second miracle confirmed him as a true prophet. That was why Jeroboam had a change of attitude towards the man of God after the healing. Nevertheless, the man of God obeyed God by not associating with him as God's rejection towards Jeroboam.

Explanation

## Jeroboam presumed that since God had anointed him king over Israel, he could do what he wanted to “reign over all that your soul desires” (1 Kings 11:37) but he forgot 1 Kings 11:38.

## A few years ago, I had a promising young adult youth leader who served actively in the youth and church groups. Nevertheless, one year into his university, he was involved in a non-Christian relationship. His parents were against it, and a few of us had to sit down with him to convince him to reconsider, but he did not see any issue at all but argued that God loved her too. He promised that he would actively invite her for service and believed that she would someday come to receive Jesus. A few months later, he and his girlfriend left our church for another church, and the last I heard, they got married and were overwhelmed with work and children; therefore, they did not have time to attend any church.

ILL

(Non-Christian partner)

## We presume on knowing God’s command, leading us to disobedience.

T

(What is the second mistake when we presume on God? )

# II. Presumption leads us to trust ourselves (13:11-25).

**MPII**

R

[Over-confidence in our knowledge of God’s word results in depending on us instead of God.]

## The man of God presumed on God’s command and was judged (13:11-25).

SP “A”

## Now the focus is on the man of God. Verse 11-19 showed how he was being tricked by the old prophet from Bethel when the old prophet claimed he heard from an angel that gave a different command from God. Instead of testing the claim, the man of God presumed he knew and trusted in himself by following the old prophet back without consulting God.

Explanation

## Verse 20-25, because the man of God disobeyed God’s command to him, God used the old prophet to pronounce judgment on him. On the same day, the judgment was being fulfilled when a lion killed the man of God while he was on his way back to Judah.

## As leaders, do we sometimes presume we know better (ILL #3)?

SP “B”

## We will soon lead the church. Since we are being trained to handle and minister people with God's word, naturally, church members will look up to us for guidance and instruction. It is tempting (knowingly or not) to depend on our acquired knowledge and think that we know better. I knew a pastor told by an elder of the church to consider a new idea on how to do ministry. His response to the elder was, "I am the Pastor; I know what to do!" As I reflected on what the pastor said, I must confess that even though I may not have said it out but surely in my heart, I had said it to myself when someone criticized the way I work.

ILL

(Humility)

## We presume on knowing God’s command, leading us to trust ourselves.

T

(And the third mistake when we take God’s word lightly is…)

# III. Presumption leads us to think that God will not fulfill his judgment (13:26-34).

**MPIII**

R

[We think God will not really do what he says, resulting in our continuous sins.]

## The man of God's death convinced the old prophet that God will do what he says (13:26-32).

SP “A”

## When I first read this chapter, one of my questions was, "Why did the old prophet want to trick the man of God and eventually cause his death?" One of the commentaries suggested that the old prophet knew precisely what the man of God could not do. Therefore if he does die for his disobedience, the old prophet will know that he did indeed have authority to denounce the holy altar at Bethel.

Explanation

## That was why the old prophet was convinced that what the man of God said about Bethel and Samaria in verse 32 will surely come to pass.

## In verse 33, Jeroboam did not turn from his evil ways but continued to do what he had set to do. He did not think (he presumed) that God will not fulfill his judgment on him since nothing terrible had happened to him.

## First Kings' author concluded that the house of Jeroboam would be destroyed (vs. 33-34) and God fulfilled this through Baasha in **1 Kings 15:27-30**.

SP “B”

## God also fulfilled through King Josiah 300 years later what the man of God spoke against Bethel and Samaria in 2 Kings 23:15-20.

SP “C”

## We presume that God will not fulfill his judgment, but the truth is God will do what he says, and if we take God's word lightly, we may face a severe consequence.

Big T

(Hence, all the above are to show us that….)

# Conclusion

### Presuming that we know God could destroy us (Main Idea). We may think that we know God and act accordingly, but in the end, when we are wrong, we end up badly.

**MI**

R

### We must recognize the three mistakes if we take God's word lightly, and they are:

#### Presumption leads us to disobedience.

**MPI**

**MPII**

**MPIII**

#### Presumption leads us to trust ourselves.

#### Presumption leads us to think that God will not fulfill his judgment.

### Application: What then should we do to prevent ourselves from presuming on knowing God? We can use the acronym “S.L.O.W.” to help us not to presume on God:

APP

(SLOW)

#### Study the word of God to know His truth.

#### Listen to mature Christians for their advice.

#### Open yourself to receive criticism from others.

#### Wait upon the LORD, by earnestly seeking him through prayer and not rushing into a decision.

### I practiced SLOW in my own life. For example, last year, when I was deciding whether I should do theological studies. It was a nagging question for many years, and I pushed the decision back, as I recognized that my strength is not in the academic. Therefore I did not want to step into it hastily.

Explanation

#### Nevertheless, I began to Study God's Word and realized how little I knew about the Bible, it gave me more motivation. I wanted to do theological studies.

#### So, I started to talk to different mature Christians, like Pastors and elders in the church and Listen to what they have to say.

#### As I shared why I want to study, I was also Open to others correcting and criticizing my ideas and desires.

#### Lastly, I did not rush into making a decision but committed to Wait upon the LORD through prayers. I trusted that if pursuing my studies is from the LORD, I would have the blessing from my church leaders, and they will also approve and support me financially. Now I am here in SBC as it shows that it is God's will for me to be doing my theological studies.

### That is how you can consider using SLOW the next time when you are making an important decision.

End

# Study Questions (Step 1)

A Man of God Confronts Jeroboam

**13**And behold, a man of God came out of Judah by the word of the Lord to Bethel. Jeroboam was standing by the altar to make offerings. **2**And the man cried against the altar by the word of the Lord and said, “O altar, altar, thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name, and he shall sacrifice on you the priests of the high places who make offerings on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.’” **3**And he gave a sign the same day, saying, “This is the sign that the Lord has spoken: ‘Behold, the altar shall be torn down, and the ashes that are on it shall be poured out.’” **4**And when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, “Seize him.” And his hand, which he stretched out against him, dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself. **5**The altar also was torn down, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign that the man of God had given by the word of the Lord. **6**And the king said to the man of God, “Entreat now the favor of the Lord your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me.” And the man of God entreated the Lord, and the king's hand was restored to him and became as it was before. **7**And the king said to the man of God, “Come home with me, and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward.” **8**And the man of God said to the king, “If you give me half your house, I will not go in with you. And I will not eat bread or drink water in this place, **9**for so was it commanded me by the word of the Lord, saying, ‘You shall neither eat bread nor drink water nor return by the way that you came.’” **10**So he went another way and did not return by the way that he came to Bethel.

**11**Now an old prophet lived in Bethel. And his sons[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+King+13&version=ESV#fen-ESV-9196a)] came and told him all that the man of God had done that day in Bethel. They also said to their father the words that he had spoken to the king. **12**And their father said to them, “Which way did he go?” And his sons showed him the way that the man of God who came from Judah had gone. **13**And he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey for him, and he mounted it. **14**And he went after the man of God and found him sitting under an oak. And he said to him, “Are you the man of God who came from Judah?” And he said, “I am.” **15**Then he said to him, “Come home with me and eat bread.” **16**And he said, “I may not return with you, or go in with you, neither will I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place, **17**for it was said to me by the word of the Lord, ‘You shall neither eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by the way that you came.’” **18**And he said to him, “I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord, saying, ‘Bring him back with you into your house that he may eat bread and drink water.’” But he lied to him. **19**So he went back with him and ate bread in his house and drank water.

**20**And as they sat at the table, the word of the Lord came to the prophet who had brought him back. **21**And he cried to the man of God who came from Judah, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Because you have disobeyed the word of the Lord and have not kept the command that the Lord your God commanded you, **22**but have come back and have eaten bread and drunk water in the place of which he said to you, “Eat no bread and drink no water,” your body shall not come to the tomb of your fathers.’” **23**And after he had eaten bread and drunk, he saddled the donkey for the prophet whom he had brought back. **24**And as he went away, a lion met him on the road and killed him. And his body was thrown in the road, and the donkey stood beside it; the lion also stood beside the body. **25**And behold, men passed by and saw the body thrown in the road and the lion standing by the body. And they came and told it in the city where the old prophet lived.

**26**And when the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard of it, he said, “It is the man of God who disobeyed the word of the Lord; therefore the Lord has given him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word that the Lord spoke to him.” **27**And he said to his sons, “Saddle the donkey for me.” And they saddled it. **28**And he went and found his body thrown in the road, and the donkey and the lion standing beside the body. The lion had not eaten the body or torn the donkey. **29**And the prophet took up the body of the man of God and laid it on the donkey and brought it back to the city[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+King+13&version=ESV#fen-ESV-9214b)] to mourn and to bury him. **30**And he laid the body in his own grave. And they mourned over him, saying, “Alas, my brother!” **31**And after he had buried him, he said to his sons, “When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones. **32**For the saying that he called out by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel and against all the houses of the high places that are in the cities of Samaria shall surely come to pass.”

**33**After this thing Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but made priests for the high places again from among all the people. Anywho would, he ordained to be priests of the high places. **34**And this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam, so as to cut it off and to destroy it from the face of the earth.

# Context: What did the author record just before this passage?

### King Rehoboam's foolishness led to the kingdom being divided (12:1-24)

### Jeroboam feared that the people of Israel would return to the house of David because of their worship of God in Jerusalem; therefore, he created the Golden Calves and led the people of Israel to commit idolatry (12:25-30).

### Jeroboam created his priestly system that did not consist of the Levites but anyone in the community to administrate the worship in the different high places and temples he built (12:30-31)

### He appointed religious feasts similar to those in Judah so that the people of Israel can celebrate in Bethel rather than in Jerusalem (12:31-33).

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

### To pronounce God's judgment on the house of Jeroboam because he led the people of Israel astray by deceiving them to worship the Golden Calves rather than the LORD (13:33-34)

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

### According to Hill and Walton, the bull gods that Jeroboam erected at Dan and Bethel's shrines were not originally intended to represent idols of a foreign religious cult. His religious reforms were designed to win the allegiance of the Yahwists in the northern kingdom and thus prevent them from making the annual pilgrimages to the temple in Jerusalem.

# Sources Used

### Barnes, William H. *1-2 Kings*. Edited by Philip W. Comfort. Vol. 4b. Cornerstone Biblical Commentary. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2012.

### Hill, Andrew E., and John H. Walton. *A Survey of the Old Testament*. 3rd edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2009.

### House, Paul R. *1, 2 Kings*. Vol. 8. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995.

### Wiseman, Donald J. *1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary*. Vol. 9. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.

# Questions & Answers (cf. p. 22 #1)

### What is the purpose of the Book of First Kings?

#### The books of Kings relate the history of the Hebrew united and divided monarchies in their "covenant failure." The narratives focus on the figures primarily responsible for covenant-keeping in Israel – the kings and the prophets. The prophetic voice has a prominent place in the story of kingship because those divinely appointed messengers functioned as the conscience of the monarchies.

### What does “man of God” mean?

#### Generally, this expression serves as a synonym for the more typical term “prophet”.

### Which God was Jeroboam worshiping?

#### Jeroboam created the Golden Calf for Israel to worship. This was the bull-god symbol from the Egyptians from the Apis-bull cult of Memphis. It was a fertility deity who gave life, health, and strength to the king and agricultural and reproductive fertility to the kingdom.

#### It seems likely that Jeroboam brought the bull god symbol back to Israel from Egypt due to his exile there until the death of Solomon (1 Kings 11:40).

### What was the purpose of the sign?

#### One of the famous tests of a true prophet (Deut 18:15–22) refers to the accuracy of a future prediction of the would-be prophet as a confidence-inspiring test of his or her orthodoxy. I have come to refer to this phenomenon as "the test of short-term prediction" since such a test would work best in the *short-term* future. This is the case in the present verse: Jeroboam's altar will split apart, and its ashes will be poured out—a prediction that comes to pass that very same day.

### How did the altar get “tore down”?

#### The means is not given; perhaps the altar was *torn down* by an earthquake or by cold water poured on the hot *ashes.*

### Why did God answer his prayer?

#### Wisemen – “The shriveled hand (Heb. *ybš*, ‘dried up’) would be taken as a sign of divine disfavor (Zech. 11:17), just as the healing was a sign that the man of God was an authentic messenger. A prophet was also known for his role as intercessor.”

### What is the significance of going to the king's home to eat and drink?

#### According to Wiseman – “If the man of God were to make an agreement or show fellowship with the king, that would have been equivalent to a withdrawal of judgment. The king's motive could have been 'to link himself in fellowship with him as a form of insurance.’”

### Was the old prophet a prophet of God?

#### The man made no claim to a direct word from the Lord (which came via an angel or messenger, v. 18) and was lying (v. 18), contradicting the true word of God (v. 9). Yet at the same time, he was used to rebuke the man of God (also a prophet, v. 18) for his disobedience. Wiseman did not mention.

#### According to Barnes – “The Judahite prophet is invariably termed ‘the man of God’ and the old Bethelite ‘the prophet.’” – Possibly a false prophet.

### Any significance for the man of God sitting underneath an oak tree?

#### The *oak* (*’ēlâ*, neb ‘terebinth’) need not be the same tree (*’allôn*) as the one beneath which Rachel’s nurse Deborah was buried (Gen. 35:8). It may not have any significance.

### Why did the old prophet want the man of God to come to his house so much so that he needs to lie?

#### Barnes quoted Devries – “Very clearly and emphatically, the Judahite man of God has been instructed [by Yahweh in 13:16–17] what not to do.… If the Judahite actually does die for his disobedience, the Bethel prophet will know that he did indeed have authority to denounce the holy altar at Bethel.”

### What is/are the interpretation/s of the lion, donkey, and dead body?

#### According to Wiseman – “Lions were attested in Palestine until at least the thirteenth-century ad. It would be taken as a sign of the man of God’s status that the lion neither further mauled his body nor touched the donkey.”

# Tentative Subject/Complement Statements

The response of God to Jeroboam leading Israel into idolatry

was the destruction of the house of Jeroboam from the face of the earth.

# Possible Illustrations

### Flying Shoes – During one of my secondary school level camps, Mr. Tan, one of my teachers, was hosting the campfire event, and he boldly proclaimed that he had the gift of prophecy. He could predict what would happen next to any student just by smelling his or her shoe. Mr. Tan asked for three volunteers, and two students quickly volunteered, and he randomly chosen from the camp. He asked the students to take off their right shoes so that he could smell. Mr. Tan predicted what would happen to the first two students, and immediately, things happen according to what he said (actually, the first two people were acting, but the third person was the one who got tricked). Coming to the third person, Mr. Tan smelled his shoes, said, "I predict that you will have a long walk!" and immediately, he threw the 3rd person's right shoe far away from the crowd.

### Non-Christian partner – a few years ago, I had a promising young adult youth leader. He was serving actively in the youth group and the church. Nevertheless, one year into his university, he was involved in a non-Christian relationship. His parent was against it, and a few of us had to sit down with him to convince him to reconsider, but he did not see any issue at all as God love her too. He argued that he would actively invite her for service, and one day she will come to receive Jesus. A few months later, he left our church for another church. The last known, they got married and were overwhelmed with work; therefore, they did not have time to attend church.

### SBC Student - As SBC Students, we will one day take up leadership roles in the church. Since we were trained to handle and minister people with God's word, naturally, church members will look up to us for guidance and instruction. It is tempting (knowingly or not) to depend on our acquired knowledge and think that we know better. I knew a pastor who once was told by an elder of the church to consider a new idea on how to do ministry. His response to the elder was, "I am the Pastor; I know what to do!”

# Possible Applications

### If we continue to sin against God, judgment will inevitably befall those who defy God’s word.

# Older Outlines of This Sermon Text or Outlines by Others (Books, Commentaries, etc.)

### Text

**Presumption Is Deadly**

***1 Kings 13 (ESV)***

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**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# Exegetical Idea (CPT): The result of God judging Jeroboam’s disobedience and the prophet who declared it was that God will certainly bring to pass the destruction on the house of Jeroboam (1 Kings 13).

# I. The purpose for the man of God delivering God’s word of judgment to Jeroboam was so that he would know that God had judged his disobedience (13:1-10).

## The purpose for the man of God going to Bethel was so that he could warn Jeroboam that God would judge his disobedience (13:1-3).

## The response of Jeroboam to God’s word was a greater fear of his shriveled hand than of God’s judgment (13:4-6).

## The response of the man of God to Jeroboam's invitation to eat and drink in Bethel was to physically show God’s rejection of Jeroboam (13:7-10).

# II. The result of the man of God being tricked to disobey God’s word was that he would not be buried in his family tomb (13:11-25).

## The purpose for the old prophet to go after the man of God was so that he could trick the man of God to disobey the word of the LORD (13:11-19).

## The result of not keeping the commands of the LORD was that the man of God would die and not be buried in his family tomb (13:20-25).

# III. The reason the man of God buried in the old prophet's tomb fulfills God’s judgment on him was because God would also destroy the house of Jeroboam (13:26-34).

## The reason for the old prophet to look for the man of God’s body was because he wanted to bury the man of God properly in his own tomb (13:26-30).

## The result of the man of God’s death due to his disobedience was that God would fulfill what He said against the altar of Bethel and all the worship places in Israel (13:31-32).

## The cause for God’s judgment on the house of Jeroboam to be destroyed was he did not turn from his evil ways (13:33-34).

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will not presume to know God’s word but handle it seriously and obey it.

**Sermon Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)—Steps 5-6

# Introduction

### Interest: As an air traffic controller in the RSAF, if I presumed on a situation during controlling, it might lead to a disaster. What more when we presume on God.

### Need: How can we know that we are not presuming on God?

### Subject: What happens when we take God’s word lightly?

### Background: Jeroboam set up the worship of the Golden Calves at Bethel and Dan as alternative worship places, fearing he would lose his kingdom when the people from the north would return to Jerusalem as they worship Yahweh there.

### Preview: Today, we will look at 3 warnings from the passage .

### Text: 1 Kings 13

(What happens when we take God's word lightly? First, ...)

# I. We presume on knowing God's command, leading us to disobedience (vv. 1-10).

[We assume that all that we do is God's will.]

## Jeroboam led Israel in worship that was not of LORD (vv. 1-2).

## The man of God confronted Jeroboam and refused to be associated with him by refusing Jeroboam’s invite. (vv. 3-10).

## Jeroboam presumed that since God had anointed him king over Israel, he could do what he wanted to “reign over all that your soul desires” (1 Kings 11:37) but he forgot 1 Kings 11:38 (ILL #2).

(What is the second way we take God’s word lightly? )

# II. We presume on knowing God's command, leading us to trust ourselves (vv. 11-25).

[Over-confidence in our knowledge of God’s word results in depending on us instead of God.]

## The man of God presumed on God’s command and was judged (vv.11-25).

## As leaders, we presume we know better (ILL #3).

(And the third way that we take God’s word lightly is …)

# III. We presume that God will not fulfill His judgment (vv. 26-34).

[God will not really do what he says resulting in our continuous sins.]

## The man of God's death convinced the old prophet that God will do what He says (vv. 26-32).

## First Kings' author concluded that the House of Jeroboam would be destroyed (vs. 33-34) and God fulfilled through Baasha in 1 Kings 15:27-30.

## God fulfilled through King Josiah 300 years later what the man of God spoke against Bethel and Samaria (2 Kings 23:15-20)

(All this is to show us that….)

# Conclusion

### Presuming that we know God can destroy us (MI).

### Main Points

#### We presume on knowing God’s commands, leading us to disobedience.

#### We presume on knowing God’s commands, leading us to trust ourselves.

#### We presume that God will not fulfill His judgment.

### Application: We can use the acronym “SLOW”

#### Study the word of God to know His truth.

#### Listen to mature Christians for their advice.

#### Open yourself to receive criticism from others.

#### Wait upon the LORD, by earnestly seeking Him through prayer and not rush into a decision.