

Royal Lessons from the Kings

By Doug Hamilton

Jeroboam: “The King of the Dirty Politicians”

In the last lesson we covered Rehoboam the divisive king that actually split the nation. In this lesson we will cover the first king of the Northern Kingdom following that split, King Jeroboam. He will affectionately be referred to as the “King of the Dirty Politicians” for the remainder of the lesson.

He stirred up trouble among the populace like a Dirty Politician.

- 1 Kings 11:26 Then Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, Solomon’s servant, whose mother’s name was Zeruah, a widow, also rebelled against the king.
- He was actually a hired servant of Solomon, but decided that he would rebel just like any dirty politician would do.

He capitalized on a crisis like a Dirty Politician.

- 1 Kings 12:2-5 Now when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard *of it*, he was living in Egypt (for he was yet in Egypt, where he had fled from the presence of King Solomon).³ Then they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying,⁴ “Your father made our yoke hard; now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”⁵ Then he said to them, “Depart for three days, then return to me.” So the people departed.
- They say that a dirty politician never wants to waste a good crisis, for it is an opportunity to score political points. Jeroboam was no different, for he knew the mood of the people and happily came back from Egypt.

He was worried about his standings in the polls like a Dirty Politician.

- 1 Kings 12:25-27 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and lived there. And he went out from there and built Penuel.²⁶ Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom will return to the house of David. 27 “If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will return to their lord, *even* to Rehoboam king of Judah; and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah.”
- It seems that your dirtiest politicians won’t stand on principles, but pools. In the last couple decades we are bombarded with every poll under the sun and the results are unflattering.

He sought to control the religion of the people like a Dirty Politician.

- 1 King 12:28-33 So the king consulted, and made two golden calves, and he said to them, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt.”²⁹ He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.³⁰ Now this thing became a sin, for the people went *to worship* before the one as far as Dan.³¹ And he made houses on high places, and made priests from among all the people who were not of the sons of Levi.³² Jeroboam instituted a feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast which is in Judah, and he went up to the altar; thus he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves which he had made. And he stationed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made.³³ Then he went up to the altar

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which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised in his own heart; and he instituted a feast for the sons of Israel and went up to the altar to burn incense.

- It seems like the dirty politicians always want to slap a Jesus bumper sticker on a corrupt life in their attempt to control the masses. There was recently a major pro-abortion, pro-gay marriage politician that was trying to force a church to support an immigration bill. Why are they doing this when they do not hold to certain values of the religion? 2
Timothy 3:5 holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

He was resistant to voices of opposition like a Dirty Politician.

- 1 Kings 13:1-6 Now behold, there came a man of God from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD, while Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense. ² He 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 on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.’ ” ³ Then he gave a sign the same day, saying, “This is the sign which the LORD has spoken, ‘Behold, the altar shall be split apart and the ashes which are on it shall be poured out.’ ” ⁴ Now when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar in Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, “Seize him.” But 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 split apart and the ashes were poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. ⁶ The king said to the man of God, “Please entreat the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me.” So the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king’s hand was restored to him, and it became as it was before.
- A dirty politician will stop at nothing to silence those that might not agree with their position or behavior.

He tried to buy off people of influence like a Dirty Politician.

- 1 Kings 13:7-10 Then the king said to the man of God, “Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward.” ⁸ But the man of God said to the king, “If you were to give me half your house I would not go with you, nor would I eat bread or drink water in this place. ⁹ “For so it was commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, ‘You shall eat no bread, nor drink water, nor return by the way which you came.’ ” ¹⁰ So he went another way and did not return by the way which he came to Bethel.
- If you can’t beat them, buy them off. Jeroboam offered food and shelter to the prophet, but there was no sale.

He engaged in deceitful practices like a Dirty Politician.

- 1 Kings 14:1-4 At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam became sick. ² Jeroboam said to his wife, “Arise now, and disguise yourself so that they will not know that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh; behold, Ahijah the prophet is there, who spoke concerning me *that I would be* king over this people. ³ “Take ten loaves with you, *some* cakes and a jar of honey, and go to him. He will tell you what will happen to the boy.” ⁴

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Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were dim because of his age.

- The dirty politician loves to make the deals behind the scene. They love to work in the dark.

He was remembered in a negative light like a Dirty Politician.

- 1 Kings 14:19-20 Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he made war and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.²⁰ The time that Jeroboam reigned *was* twenty-two years; and he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his place.
- 1 Kings 15:25-28 Now Nadab the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years.²⁶ He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father and in his sin which he made Israel sin.²⁷ Then Baasha...killed him..."
- His memory would be forever associated with idolatry and wickedness. Many times Jeroboam the son of Nebat was referred to a negative precedent concerning the destruction of the nation. He should be remembered as the dirty politician king.