Don’t Go with Your Gut

*There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way* [literally, *ways*] *of death* (Proverbs 14:12). We see the danger going with your gut feeling in the account of Jeroboam’s golden calves.

**1. Jeroboam’s first gut reaction**

*To make the golden calves*

**2. Jeroboam’s second gut reaction**

*To arrest the prophet*

**3. Jeroboam’s third gut reaction**

*To invite the prophet to lunch*

**4. The old prophet’s gut reaction**

*To bring back the prophet from Judah*

**5. The first prophet’s gut reaction**

*To accept the invitation to lunch*

**The end of the matter**

A. The prophet loses his *life*

B. Jeroboam loses his *family*

C. God *wins*

**For additional study or family discussion**

1. What did the Lord say to you today through His word? Did you learn some new truth about God or yourself? Did the Lord challenge you, convict you, or encourage you?

2. When have you been tempted to go with your own gut feeling instead of listening to God? What was the result?

3. The prophecy in 1 Kings 13:2 was dramatically fulfilled about 300 years later in 2 Kings 23:15-20. What does God work together “after the counsel of His will” (Ephesians 1:11)?

**An interpretive note**

God gave Jeroboam ten tribes, but He reserved one tribe for David’s descendants (1 Kings 11:26-39). This one tribe was Judah, the tribe of David (1 Kings 12:20). However, there were not 11 tribes, but 12 (counting Ephraim and Manasseh as two tribes) plus the tribe of Levi, which had no separate territory. Further complicating the picture, the tribe of Benjamin remained with Judah (1 Kings 12:21) because the capital, Jerusalem, was in Benjamin (Joshua 18:21-28). Finally, the tribe of Simeon was surrounded by and eventually merged with Judah (Joshua 19:1-9). So at the time Solomon’s kingdom was divided, Judah effectively included three tribes—Judah, Benjamin, and Simeon. Therefore, Jeroboam actually got nine tribes (Reuben, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Manasseh, and Ephraim). These facts were so obvious that it cannot have been a counting error to assign ten tribes to Jeroboam. What is going on? The answer is found in the Hebrew love of ten as representing a good, round number (Gen 18:32; 24:55; 31:7; Amos 5:3; 6:9; Luke 15:8). Most clearly, when Judah brought David back to Jerusalem after the civil war, the men of Israel complained, “We have ten parts in the king, therefore we also have more claim on David than you” (2 Samuel 19:41-43). Again, 10 + 1 = 12 tribes. They weren’t bad at math. They were using ten as a culturally significant approximate number instead of the more exact number nine, which has no symbolic uses in the Bible.