**Words** to look out for.

**Israel / Israelites**

Under King David, who had been chosen by God and anointed by Samuel, the kingdom was established, its borders secured, its worship of YHWH (the sacred name of God) organised centred upon Mount Zion in Jerusalem upon which the Tent of Meeting was pitched and within which the Sacred Box the Ark of the Covenant rested.

On his death his son Solomon reigned, further enriching himself and the kingdom. It was Solomon who replaced the Tent with the first Temple.

When he died his son Rehoboam reigned. He expressed his intention to levy greater tax and ten of the 12 tribes of Israel, united from the Exodus, through David and Solomon, refused to accept Rehoboam as king and broke away forming a separate kingdom to the north which became known as **Israel**.

They appointed Jeroboam as king. Jeroboam was of the tribe of Ephraim and so at times Israel is personified as **Ephraim**.

The remaining two tribes, Judah and Benjamin became as one and were known as the Kingdom of **Judah.**

The two kingdoms were largely hostile towards one another although there was no militarised border.

However Jeroboam had a problem.

The centre of worship of YHWH was within Judah in Jerusalem and if his people were to worship they would of necessity have to travel into Judah. Jeroboam was concerned that if this happened his people might return their allegiance to the house of David the chosen and anointed kingdom.

So Jeroboam decided to pre-empt this by setting up shrines in the north one in Dan and one in or near Bethel. This however was only the start as high-places of worship sprang up everywhere. Gilgal was one such place and will pop up in a few weeks time.

1 Kings 12:25 to 31 tells the sorry story.

Having taken advice, (from whom one asks) he orders that two golden calves are made, one placed in Dan and the other in Bethel, which means House of God, but which Hosea renames, Beth Aven, house of wickedness.

Before we move on did you notice the reference to the Levites? Jeroboam appoints **priests** who were not Levites, as required by God’s direction.

By Hoseas time the kingdom of Israel was led by another Jeroboam.

**Samaria** was the capital of Israel in Hosea’s day.

In passing to note there were two powerful nations in the region **Assyria** to the north and **Egypt** to the south. Both will come into the story later.

