

GLEANINGS

Article GE- 115

IT DID NOT LAST VERY LONG

Before the people of the nation of Israel became a true theocracy (*Exodus 19:1 through 20:17*), their form of government was an oligarchy. An oligarchy is a form of government in which the ruling power belongs to a few, elite people. They usually think of themselves as superior to those they control.

We described a true theocracy in the last two articles. If you do not have a copy of the articles, you may obtain them from the paper office or on the World Wide Web at <http://www.bayourouge.net>. Even after the people of the nation of Israel agreed their form of government would be a true theocracy they still retained a form of the patriarchal system.

"¹And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, ²Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, everyone a ruler among them. ³And Moses by the commandment of the LORD sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were heads of the children of Israel." Numbers 13:1-3 King James Version

When those twelve heads of the children of Israel (patriarchs) returned from spying out the land of Canaan, only two had faith that the Lord could and would give them the land as He had promised. The other ten had so much influence (because of their elite, leadership position) that they were able to discourage the congregation. The people refused to follow the leadership and the direction of the Lord as the people of a true theocracy should and would have done. They chose to follow the advice of the ten faithless patriarchs instead (*Numbers chapters 13 and 14*).

This reminds us of what some congregations are doing today. They are making two fatal mistakes. First, they do not study the Bible thoroughly from cover to cover so that God can speak to their heart and make His will for their lives evident. Second, they often follow the advice of men or women in their congregation just because that person has assumed an impressive position of leadership within their church.