

LESSON 2. Bad Advice

1 Kings 12

MEMORY VERSE: “He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God”
(2 Samuel 23:3).

REHOBOAM WAS TO BE MADE KING

Solomon’s forty-year reign over Israel ended at his death. He was buried in Jerusalem. During that time Solomon’s fame for his wisdom and riches had become known throughout other nations. He began as a young man who asked for and received help from God. In his old age, he had let his wives lead him into worshiping idols. Because of his idolatry, God had told him the kingdom would be divided. Ten of the twelve tribes of Israel would be ruled by those who were not descendants of Solomon.

At Solomon’s death Rehoboam was expected to be made king. Rehoboam was the son of Solomon and his Ammonite wife, Naamah (1 Kings 14:21). The Israelites gathered in Shechem where Rehoboam was to be made their new king.

Jeroboam was living in exile in Egypt where he had fled for his life. He had once been a ruler under Solomon, and was a strong and valiant young man. Ahijah the prophet had told Jeroboam that God was going to make him king over ten of the tribes. When Solomon heard about God’s prophecy, he tried to kill Jeroboam to prevent the kingdom being taken from his heirs. Some who knew Jeroboam heard about the gathering in Shechem, and sent word to Egypt for him to come home.

THE PEOPLE ASK REHOBOAM FOR LESS BURDEN

Solomon had taxed the Israelites heavily to pay for the temple, his houses and to lay up treasures for his kingdom. The people had given willingly, but now those jobs were finished and they were still being taxed heavily. They wanted Rehoboam to reduce the burden of taxes and the forced work for the king. Jeroboam and others stood before Rehoboam and petitioned him to ease



The older men gave wise counsel to Rehoboam.

their lives from Solomon’s heavy yoke. They promised to serve him if he would do this.

Rehoboam asked for three days to consider what they asked. Then he consulted with those who had been advisors to his father. They were old men, but wise in telling Rehoboam that the Israelites would serve him gladly if he would do as Jeroboam and the others asked. They urged him to reduce the burdens his father had placed on them.

Rehoboam then sought out the counsel of the young men who had grown up with him. These young men were very foolish. They advised Solomon to reject

the people's plea and say, "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions" (1 Kings 12:10, 11).

REHOBAM REJECTED THE PEOPLES' PLEA

When the people came back after the three days, Rehoboam had made his decision. He heeded the bad advice given him by the younger men! He told them he would make their burden harsher than even his father Solomon had. Rehoboam had listen to the wrong advisors!

THE PEOPLE REVOLTED

Hearing the decision of Rehoboam, the people said they no longer would serve the house of David and Jesse (David's father). The ten northern tribes rejected Rehoboam as their king, but the tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained faithful to Rehoboam. When Rehoboam sent his tax collector Adoram to collect taxes in the ten northern tribes, they stoned him to death. Rehoboam fled back to Jerusalem in fear for his own life.

THE TWO KINGDOMS

The people in the ten tribes that refused to serve Rehoboam chose Jeroboam as their king. This kingdom became known as **Israel** while the two tribes who continued to serve Rehoboam became known as **Judah**.

Upon returning to Jerusalem, Rehoboam assembled the men of Judah and Benjamin to go to war with the northern kingdom. He intended to subdue those who revolted and bring the whole nation back together again. But God told His prophet Shemiah to go tell Rehoboam and all the fighting men not to go into battle against their brethren. When they heard this, the men of Judah went back home.

GOOD AND BAD ADVICE

From the time we are old enough to understand words until our final hours on earth, we receive advice from many different sources. Advice is what others "**suggest** for a certain kind of action." We can accept or decline it, but the responsibility for our decision still rests on our shoulders. We must always be careful in choosing those to whom we listen.

Advice can be good or bad - wise and unwise. As we mature, we must strive to gain the wisdom to discern what advice is good and what is bad. This comes from experience and training, but when we are young we need to listen to those who are older such as parents, teachers, and others. Rehoboam listen to bad advice. His decision cost him most of his kingdom.

Eve listened to bad advice when she allowed Satan to persuade her to eat the fruit which God had forbidden. You know her penalty. Solomon listened to bad advice from his idolatrous wives, and his kingdom was torn from him. On the other hand, many heard Peter's advice on the day of Pentecost to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins; three thousand accepted his good advice. Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). That's great advice with an eternal reward!

TRUE OR FALSE

- _____ 1. Rehoboam and Jeroboam were sons of Solomon.
- _____ 2. The people gathered in Jerusalem to make Rehoboam king over all Israel.
- _____ 3. Jeroboam had fled to Egypt to escape being killed by Solomon.
- _____ 4. The people sent for Jeroboam to come back to Israel when Rehoboam was about to be made king.
- _____ 5. God had promised Jeroboam he would become ruler over ten of the tribes.
- _____ 6. Rehoboam listened to the advice of the men who had advised his father.
- _____ 7. The young men wanted Rehoboam to make the people's burdens heavier.
- _____ 8. The people in the northern kingdom (Israel) sent Rehoboam's tax collector home without paying any of their taxes.
- _____ 9. The southern kingdom was made up of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.
- _____ 10. Jeroboam was made king of the northern kingdom.
- _____ 11. Rehoboam intended to battle the ten tribes in an effort to unite the kingdom.
- _____ 12. Ahijah the prophet told Rehoboam and his men not to fight their brethren.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH

- 1. "And the king answered the people _____, and forsook the _____ men's counsel that they gave him" (1 Kings 12:13).
- 2. "And when all Israel saw that the king would not _____ unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in _____? and we have none _____ in the son of Jesse" (2 Chronicles 10:16).
- 3. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy _____, and I will give you _____" (Matthew 11:28).
- 4. "Repent, and be _____ every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the _____ of sins" (Acts 2:38).
- 5. "He that is of God _____ God's _____" (John 8:47).
- 6. "Be ye _____ of me, even as I also am of _____" (1 Corinthians 11:1).

POINTS TO PONDER

- 1. Why had Solomon levied a heavy tax on the Israelites?
- 2. How did Jeroboam know that Rehoboam was about to be made king? (1 Kings 12:2, 3).
- 3. Whose advice did Rehoboam accept in making his decision?
- 4. Who is responsible for the decisions you make?
- 5. Did the twelve tribes ever get back together as one united nation? (1 Kings 12:19).
- 6. Discuss: What should you do when a friend advises you to disobey your parents?