

2 Chronicles Chapter 10

From (10:1 to 36:21), this section records all 20 of the Judean rulers in the divided kingdom from Solomon's son Rehoboam (ca. 931 B.C.), to Zedekiah (ca. 586 B.C.), when the people were taken captive to Babylon.

The righteous kings and the revivals under them are presented, as well as the wicked kings and their disastrous influence.

The northern kingdom is absent, since Chronicles focuses on the Davidic line.

Verses 10:1 – 11:4

For details on this chapter (see notes on 1 Kings 12:1-24).

Rehoboam followed foolish and bad advice from novices rather than the good counsel of wise, seasoned men.

The result was the division of the nation.

Amazingly, with all the strength of Solomon's reign, unity was fragile and one fool in the place of leadership ended it.

Rehoboam tried to unite the people by force, but was not allowed to by God (11:1-4).

Verses 1-2

Once Israel's 12 tribes divided (after Solomon's death), on the throne of Israel (1 Chron. Chapter 17), God left two tribes.

Benjamin and Judah, under the rule of "Rehoboam", one of Solomon's sons, for the sake of His covenant with David.

"Jeroboam" would rule the other 10 tribes.

Jeroboam was an important and trustworthy leader in the king's labor force (1 Kings 11:29-40), but he had "fled" to "Egypt" because Solomon, after hearing the prophecy about the kingdom dividing, tried to kill him in order to keep the kingdom intact for his son.

The reign of Rehoboam (ca. 931 – 913 B.C.; compare 1 Kings chapters 12-14).

2 Chronicles 10:1 "And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for to Shechem were all Israel come to make him king."

For the details relative to Solomon's apostasy and the rising of adversaries to him, see (1 Kings chapter 11).

For the term "all Israel" (see the note on 1 Kings 12:1).

In the last lesson, we learned that Rehoboam followed Solomon as king, at Solomon's death.

Shechem had been the ancient capital, and he went there to be accepted of all Israel.

The mother of Rehoboam was the Ammonite princess, Naamah.

2 Chronicles 10:2 "And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who [was] in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of Solomon the king, heard [it], that Jeroboam returned out of Egypt."

"Jeroboam":

He became the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel (ca. 931 – 910 B.C.).

His story leading to his return from Egypt is told in (1 Kings 11:26-40).

It appears that he heard of the death of Solomon, and also that Rehoboam was about to be crowned king of all Israel.

Jeroboam had fled to Egypt, because he had greatly angered Solomon and he feared for his life.

Jeroboam had been told by Ahijah, that he would be king of ten of the tribes.

He was an Ephraimite.

He now, returned to claim his kingdom.

2 Chronicles 10:3 "And they sent and called him. So Jeroboam and all Israel came and spake to Rehoboam, saying,"

"And they sent ":

Rather, "for they had sent.

This is stated as the reason of Jeroboam's return from Egypt (compare 1 Kings 12:20).

"All Israel":

2 Chronicles omits assembly of.

“Came,” singular; Kings, plural.

And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again out of Egypt The chief men knew of it before, for he had headed them in their approach and address to Rehoboam.

That they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel.

There was none that followed the house of David but the tribe of Judah only.

2 Chronicles 10:4 "Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease thou somewhat the grievous servitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee."

Apparently, Solomon’s building projects had been funded by heavy taxes and built by forced labor (10:1-2).

The people were weary under his “heavy yoke” and begged the new king for a reprieve.

At the beginning of his reign, Rehoboam had a chance to demonstrate whether or not he would be like his father.

Would he be wise, as his father had been when he began his rule, or harsh as he had been later in his rule?

Successes and failures of the past did not determine this son’s future; his choices did.

For the institution of *corvee*, or forced labor, see the notes on 1 Kings 5:13-14 and 12:4.

We see from this where much of the wealth of Solomon came from.

He heavily taxed the people.

We see also, that many of the people were unhappy with this taxing system.

Jeroboam was the leader of the group that rebelled.

2 Chronicles 10:5 "And he said unto them, Come again unto me after three days. And the people departed."

This first reply of Rehoboam was not necessarily inauspicious.

Yet sometimes, as it proved now, the caution that takes time to consider, was a fatal mistake.

This is when either a generous, instinctive impulse, asking an instantaneous obedience, is chilled by some self-regard.

Or yet worse, when the offended Spirit is restrained, and no inner guiding voice is heard, as Saul found, to his ruin.

This showed a weakness in Rehoboam.

He should have been close enough to God to be able to answer this.

The three days he asked for were time enough to get some bad counsel, as well as good.

He should have prayed and met with the high priest.

Verses 6-10

“Rehoboam” turned to “the young men that were brought up with him” but had not sat with Solomon and heard his wise words.

Notice the contrast with his father, Solomon, who had prayed to God for wisdom when he ascended the throne.

2 Chronicles 10:6 "And king Rehoboam took counsel with the old men that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, What counsel give ye [me] to return answer to this people?"

“What counsel give ye me to return answer to this people”:

They advised him to condescend to them and behave in a humble manner towards them.

For this day however, and gratify and oblige them.

Though indeed a king is but a servant to his people, and his administration of government a doing service to them.

The very next best thing that he could have done, was to have taken counsel of these old wise men that had been with Solomon.

2 Chronicles 10:7 "And they spake unto him, saying, If thou be kind to this people, and please them, and speak good words to them, they will be thy servants for ever."

Speak kindly and gently to them, and make them fair promises, and give them reason to expect that their requests will be granted.

Such conduct would win them, and make such an impression upon them, that they would for ever after maintain a high opinion of him, and be strongly affected and attached to him, and readily serve him.

A really good king or a president is good, because he serves the people instead of himself.

He should have allowed his greatness to show through his kindness to those he ruled over.

This was excellent advice the old men gave him.

2 Chronicles 10:8 "But he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men that were brought up with him, that stood before him."

Judging it unworthy of his majesty and authority, and likely to encourage the people in their insolent demands.

And being proud and vain, he scorned to condescend to them and court them in this way.

But would have obedience paid to him as to an absolute monarch.

"The young men that were brought up with him":

And he consulted with the young men, so called compared with the old men.

Otherwise, as they had grown up with him, they must have been near forty years old.

They were however, men who were unexperienced and who understood not the mood of the people they had to deal with.

This is frequently the fault of new kings.

To show their power, and gratify their dependence, they frequently change their counsellors and put in new officers.

Not considering who are wisest and worthiest, but who have been their companions.

It is not needful to suppose that they had been educated with him from their youth up.

They now being his contemporaries were chosen to "stand before him", to be his private counsellors.

This office the older men had held under Solomon (see 1 Kings 12:6).

Rehoboam is like so many of us who seek counsel.

If the counsel lined up with what we wanted to do in the first place, it is good.

If it is not what we want to hear, we are like Rehoboam, we reject it.

He went and found someone who would say what he wanted to hear.

These young men did not have even as much experience as Rehoboam, this was a terrible place to go for advice.

Seek advice from those who know more than you, not less.

Rehoboam was about 41 years old at this time.

He should have known better.

2 Chronicles 10:9 "And he said unto them, What advice give ye that we may return answer to this people, which have spoken to me, saying, Ease somewhat the yoke that thy father did put upon us?"

They were still willing to be part of the larger nation, if he will reduce their taxes.

The nation is ready for change.

The people can stand no more extremely high taxation.

They are about to revolt.

They will serve Rehoboam, if he reduces their taxes.

The forced labor and heavy taxation needed to support the splendor of Solomon's vast enterprises were loathsome to the northern tribes.

See the note on (1 Kings 5:13-14).

“Yoke”:

The hardships that resulted from Solomon's policy of compulsory labor service (1 Kings 5:13; 9:22; 11:28), and excessive taxes (1 Kings 4:7), came because the splendor of his courts, the magnitude of his wealth, and the profits of his enterprises were not enough to sustain his demands.

This shows us that Solomon had taxed the people heavily to support his lavish way of life.

The people had not been satisfied with this heavy tax levied upon them, and they have an opportunity now to revolt.

Had these young men not said what Rehoboam wanted to hear, he would have gone elsewhere.

Rehoboam had never grown up himself.

He had not realized what made David and Solomon great.

They sinned, but they always sought God for advice.

2 Chronicles 10:10 "And the young men that were brought up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou answer the people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou [it] somewhat lighter for us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little [finger] shall be thicker than my father's loins."

“And the young men that were brought up with him spake unto him, saying”:

It is noticeable how Rehoboam identifies these young men with himself.

He employs a different expression when addressing the old men.

“My little finger ... my father’s loins”:

A proverbial manner of saying he was going to come at them with greater force than Solomon had exhibited (1 Kings 12:11-14).

2 Chronicles 10:11 "For whereas my father put a heavy yoke upon you, I will put more to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I [will chastise you] with scorpions."

(See the note on 1 Kings 12:11).

Solomon had been the wealthiest king that had ever lived, but that was not enough, it seemed.

Greed for things of the flesh would destroy Rehoboam.

Solomon had been fair in his justice.

They were telling Rehoboam to tell these people that he would be a tyrant over them.

He would not be fair and just.

He wanted to put these proud Hebrews into total servitude to him.

2 Chronicles 10:12 "So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come again to me on the third day."

(See the note on 2 Kings 20:8).

It appears, from this that Jeroboam was sincere in offering to serve Rehoboam as king, if he would be fair and just and stop the taxation without representation.

2 Chronicles 10:13 "And the king answered them roughly; and king Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men,"

“Answered them roughly”:

It was difficult for the son of so powerful a king as Solomon to realize that there was any necessity for a soft answer.

Solomon had put down Israelite discontent by driving Jeroboam into exile in Egypt.

And David had put down somewhat easily the movement under Sheba son of Bichri (2 Sam. 20:1-22).

Could the good fortune of the House of David fail at this third crisis?

"Forsook the counsel of the old men":

He chose the advice of the young men.

Rehoboam had spoken roughly, instead of speaking softly to these people.

He felt as if they had no choice.

He wanted to be supreme tyrant over his brethren.

He had no compassion at all.

2 Chronicles 10:14 "And answered them after the advice of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add thereto: my father chastised you with whips, but I [will chastise you] with scorpions."

“My father made your yoke heavy”:

I will add to your yoke, i.e. make it heavier and stronger.

Both to punish your attitude, and to curb and restrain you from seditious attempts.

“With scorpions”:

I.e. with such whips as will sting you like scorpions.

If you proceed in these courses, I will most severely punish you for it.

This was the worst thing he could have possibly said to a people who were already discontent.

Verses 15-19:

God used the hard heart of Rehoboam to bring about “the cause” He had ordained and to fulfill the Word He had spoken through His prophet “Ahijah”.

The kingdom would be divided as God’s punishment for Israel’s idolatry.

2 Chronicles 10:15 "So the king hearkened not unto the people: for the cause was of God, that the LORD might perform his word, which he spake by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat."

“For the cause was of God”:

God sovereignly used the foolishness of Rehoboam to fulfill Ahijah’s prophecy (See 1 Kings 11:29-39).

We can see in this, that the LORD was allowing this to happen to break up the twelve tribes into ten and two.

God was so angered with the idolatry that was going on in the land of the ten tribes, that He wanted this break to be made.

Idolatry had begun in Judah as well, but had not progressed as far as in the ten tribes.

God hardened the heart of Rehoboam, as He had Pharaoh's, to accomplish His will in this.

Verses 16-19

Here is recorded the beginning of the divided kingdom.

The tribes followed Jeroboam and were called Israel.

The other two tribes, Benjamin and Judah, stayed loyal to David’s line, accepted Rehoboam’s rule and were called Judah.

However, Benjamin at times demonstrated split loyalties (see note on 1 Kings 12:21).

2 Chronicles 10:16 "And when all Israel [saw] that the king would not hearken unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? and [we have] none inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to your tents, O Israel: [and] now, David, see to thine own house. So all Israel went to their tents."

The name “Israel” is now used for the 10 northern tribes.

For problems relative to the identification of the 10 northern tribes and the two southern tribes “(see the note on 1 Kings 12:20).

Because the northern kingdom was an apostate kingdom, despite the prediction concerning its formation (compare 1 Kings 11:35), Jeroboam’s assumption of the throne (1 Kings 12:20), is not mentioned in the account (in chapter 10).

The chronicler’s interest is with the southern kingdom, which he views as the true remnant of Israel (compare 13:10), over which the sons of “David” were to rule (compare 11:3), and whose capital, Jerusalem, was the rightful place of worship (compare 11:16).

A different view of the “house” of “David” is expressed here versus the sentiment voiced by the leader of men loyal to David even before he became king (1 Chron. 12:18).

And what a contrast to God’s word to David (7:17-18).

This is the same separation there had been in the beginning of David's reign.

David had reigned 7 years over just Judah, before he became king of all Israel.

Rehoboam was now king of Judah, again.

Benjamin was thought of as part of Judah.

Now Israel would be speaking of the ten tribes, and Judah would be the other two.

Ephraim had been always jealous of Judah.

Jeroboam, the leader of the ten tribes, was of Ephraim.

2 Chronicles 10:17 "But [as for] the children of Israel that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them."

“Children of Israel”:

People from the northern tribes who had migrated south and settled in Judah.

Rehoboam continued to reign in Judah and Benjamin.

Everyone living in the area, that would be known of as Judah, would be reigned over by Rehoboam.

The main reason for this was the lineage God had promised to David on the throne of Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 10:18 "Then king Rehoboam sent Hadoram that [was] over the tribute; and the children of Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. But king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to [his] chariot, to flee to Jerusalem."

Although “Hadoram” had supervised the forced labor under Solomon (1 Kings 4:6), he was probably the last person who could bring peace since the people were complaining about their heavy labor.

This was another foolish move by Rehoboam.

2 Chronicles 10:19 "And Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day."

The reign of Rehoboam marked the beginning of the divided kingdom and the end of “all Israel”.

Rehoboam ruled over the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, “the house of David”, in Jerusalem and called his kingdom Judah.

Jeroboam ruled the kingdom of Israel from Shechem (1 Kings 12:20-25), although Samaria later became Israel’s capital city during the reign of Omri (1 Kings 16:24).

Hadoram and Adoniram are the same probably.

This was a tax revolt.

They killed the tax collector and would not pay.

Rehoboam found safety in Jerusalem.

The house of David was now called Judah.

2 Chronicles Chapter 10 Questions

1. Which of Solomon's sons reigned in his stead?
2. Why did he go to Shechem?
3. Why was Jeroboam in Egypt?
4. Who was Jeroboam's father?
5. Who had told Jeroboam that he would rule ten of the tribes?
6. What would cause Jeroboam to accept Rehoboam, as king over all twelve tribes?
7. Where had the wealth of Solomon come from?

8. How did the people feel about the taxing?
9. What showed a weakness in Rehoboam?
10. How many days did he make Jeroboam wait for an answer?
11. Rehoboam should have sought counsel of whom?
12. What good counsel did he get from the old men?
13. Why did he not accept that counsel?
14. About how old was Rehoboam, when this counsel was taken?
15. If these young men's counsel had not pleased Rehoboam, what would he have done?
16. What advice did they give Rehoboam?
17. Whose advice did he take?
18. What one word describes the way Rehoboam spoke to them?
19. In verse 15, we find that this all happened for what purpose?
20. God hardened the heart of Rehoboam, as he had hardened _____ heart.
21. Who did Rehoboam send to collect the tribute?
22. What happened to him?
23. Hadoram and _____ are the same person.
24. This is a _____ revolt.
25. From this time on, who was the house of David?