

Rehoboam 2 Tribes, Judah and Benjamin, Southern Kingdom, known as Judah, Solomon's son, some good kings

Jeroboam 10 Tribes, Northern Kingdom, known as Israel, Solomon's servant, bad kings

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August memory verse: Romans 6:14-17 (NKJV)

¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

¹⁶ Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness?

¹⁷ But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

Commentary on 1 Kings chapter 12, by Chuck Smith 8.3.22

Now Rehoboam came to Shechem: and all Israel gathered to Shechem ([1Ki 12:1](#))

Which is just about the center of the land, just about the heart of the country. And they gathered

to make him king. And Jeroboam who was in Egypt, heard of the death of Solomon, (for he had fled to Egypt from Solomon). And they sent and called Jeroboam. And all of the congregation of Israel came to Rehoboam, and they said ([1Ki 12:1-3](#)),

Now look, when your dad was alive, he overtaxed us. And we are just tired of this heavy taxation and we want some tax relief. And so Rehoboam said, "Give me three days to think about it."

And they said, All right."

So he went to his older counselors, those men that had counseled his father Solomon.

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And he said, "What shall I do?"

And they said, "You better listen to them and give them some tax relief." What they are saying is correct. The taxes are a burden; they're too high. The people are going to revolt if you don't give them some tax relief. And so he went to his young counselors, the young guys that he grew up with.

And he said, "Look, these guys are wanting tax relief. What shall we do?"

And they said, "Don't give in to their request. If you do, they're going to only come back for more later. So you got to be firm and you just go out and tell them that they haven't seen anything yet. That you're going to even be more severe than your father Solomon." That actually what they saw under your dad was nothing compared with what's coming.

So he went out and spoke roughly to them.

He said, "My father chastised you with whips, I'm going to chastise you with scorpions." And just went on and spoke very roughly to them.

And the people said, "What have we to do with you, house of David?" And they said, "To your tents, O Israel." And so the tribes of Israel at that point revolted and Rehoboam headed down to Jerusalem, to the safety of Jerusalem when he heard that the people were in an uproar. And so he gathered together an army and the Lord spoke to them and told them not to start a war at that time. And so the kingdom was divided. And this is an important point in the history of the nation.

The Northern Kingdom, as I said, was called Israel. Unfortunately they did not have one decent king. Israel was plagued with idolatry from the beginning. Judah had some good kings, some excellent kings and some bad kings. Israel never had any good kings at all. They went from bad to worst. But at least in Judah they did have some decent kings who did bring reforms there in Judah, but the kingdoms were never united again. The Northern Kingdom fell first because of its idolatry and all. It fell first to Assyria. Later on about 500 B.C. the Southern Kingdom fell to Babylon. Later there was a regathering of course after the Babylonian captivity. But the people of Judah never fully accepted the people of

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Samaria as true full brothers because the Samaritans could not really bring out their genealogy to prove that they were Jews all the way back.

And even at the time of Christ, there was sharp division between the Jews and the Samaritans. And they were both claiming that they had the right place to worship God; in Samaria where Abraham first built the altar there at Shechem unto the Lord. And they claim that Mount Gerizim was the only mountain on which to worship God. Whereas the Jews were saying, No, God should be worshipped on Mount Moriah there in Jerusalem. And there was this big conflict between them even at the time of Christ.

Now the prophecy of Ezekiel, when he prophesies the rebirth of the nation Israel which we have been privileged to observe, when he prophesies that God was going to take these bones that were dry and scattered and bring them together and put them in the land again and make a nation of them, he said that he saw one stick for Joseph and one stick for Judah. And that actually there would be no longer two but one. And so what God was prophesying there in Ezekiel is that when the children of Israel became a nation again, which they did in 1948, that they would no longer be a divided kingdom. They would no longer be the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom, but they would be just one nation, one king over them all. And thus, of course, is the case today. Israel is a united nation and one ruler ruling over the whole nation but they don't have the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom. That won't exist again. That is over. That's a part of the past history. That won't be repeated because God promised that there would be just one nation in the land.

And so Jeroboam became the king over Israel and he built Shechem. Now Shechem is already there. It means that he built a wall around Shechem and actually the wall of the city of Shechem its, remnants of it are still there today. And he built Penuel.

But he said to himself, The people are apt to be drawn back to the king of Judah, especially if they go down to Jerusalem for the holy days. They go down for the Passover and so forth, their hearts are going to be drawn back after Rehoboam and I'm going to be in trouble. So he made two golden calves and he built altars, one in Dan, which is way up at the uttermost northern part of the kingdom. It's where the Jordan River comes right out of the ground, beautiful area of Dan. And he set up one of these golden calves in Dan; the other he set up in the southern

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part there at Bethel, which is of course, just fifteen, twenty miles out of Jerusalem, close by Jerusalem. So in both ends of the kingdom, the southern and the northern part of the kingdom of Israel, he set up these idols with these golden calves and he said, "These are the gods which brought you out of Egypt."

Now the worship of the calves was something that came from Egypt. You remember when the children of Israel were in the wilderness and Moses had stayed in the mount for such a long time. The people thought that he wasn't coming back and they came to Aaron and they said, "Make us a God that we might serve it for as what's happened to this Moses, we don't know." And so he had them bring all their golden earrings and all of their gold and they molded this golden calf. And of course, Moses came down from the mountain with the two tables of the law and he heard the dancing and the singing and he saw all these people in their wild orgies as they were worshipping this golden calf. And he took the two tables of stone upon which God had inscribed the Ten Commandments. The first one, "Thou shall have no other gods before me." The second one, "Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image to bow down and worship" and all. And here they were in violation of the first two commandments. They had already broken the law before they even had it. And he threw the stones on the ground and they broke and he then took this golden calf and he ground it into powder, mixed it with water and he made all the people drink it. But he dealt with it very harshly.

But now here is Jeroboam making two golden calves, setting them up with altars and saying, "These are the gods that brought you out of Egypt." And he turned the hearts of the people away from the Lord.