



2 Chronicles 10-12

Tape #7133
II Chronicles 10-12
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn in our Bibles now to II Chronicles, chapter ten. Solomon had reigned over Judah, or over Israel actually, the whole twelve tribes for forty years. "Solomon slept with his fathers, was buried in the city of David, and Rehoboam his son, reigned in his stead." During the latter end of Solomon's reign, there was a little dissension brewing, because of Solomon's heavy taxation. You remember he built the temple, he built his palace, he built the city of Jerusalem, fortified the walls, and all of these took a lot of labor, a lot of money. Solomon had made slaves, in a sense, out of all of the strangers dwelling in the land. It took a lot of money to support this kind of a labor force, and the taxes were pretty heavy.

There was a young man from Ephraim, the tribe of Ephraim, who was very popular and he was a man of valour, and Solomon saw in him a threat. So he fled from Solomon to Egypt. His name was Jeroboam. Now, at the death of Solomon, this dissension still existed, and it was probably because of this dissension, that Rehoboam went to the city of Shechem, which was more or less the major city, at that time of the tribe of Ephraim. It is today called, Nablus. It is an ancient city, existed at the time of Jacob, when he came into the land. He sojourned in the area of Shechem for a time, but...

Rehoboam went to Shechem [Probably just to reinforce his reign over the northern kingdom. And the people came from the northern kingdom to more or less, give their loyal to him, loyalty to him as king.] so all of Israel had come to make him king. Now it came to pass when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of Solomon, when he heard it, [That Solomon was dead.] Jeroboam returned out of the land of Egypt. [And he sent and called.] And they sent and called him. So Jeroboam and all of Israel came and spake to Rehoboam, saying, Your father made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease somewhat the grievous servitude of your father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve you. And he said, Come again after three days. So the people departed (10:1-5).

So Jeroboam led this emissary of people from the northern tribes to ask for a relief from some of the heavy burdens, the heavy taxation that had been placed upon them by Solomon. And, it says...

King Rehoboam took counsel with the old men that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, What counsel do you give me to return an answer to these people? They spoke to him and said, If you are kind to these people, and please them, and speak good words to them, they will be your servants for ever. But he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and he took counsel with the young men that were brought up with him, that stood before him. And he said unto them, What advice do you give me that we may return an answer to these people, which have spoken to me, saying, Ease somewhat the yoke that your father put on us? And the young men that were brought up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shall you answer the people that spoke unto you, saying, That your father made their yoke heavy, [But you're gonna make it,] but they're asking you to make it somewhat lighter for us; thus shalt thou say to them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. For whereas my father put a heavy yoke upon you, I will put more to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, I, with scorpions (10:6-11).

So, diverse counsel. The older men saying, "Yield a bit. Their cause is right. Just show kindness to them, they'll serve you forever". The younger guy's saying, "Hang tough. If you give in here, they're just gonna be back for something else later. So just hang tough".

Interesting he sought counsel of the old men, he sought counsel of the young men, **but it said nothing of his seeking counsel of the Lord.** Now the whole tact of David, his grandfather was to seek the Lord, and to seek the counsel of the Lord. So already we see signs of spiritual deterioration in this fellow Rehoboam. Seeking only the counsel from men, not seeking the counsel of God in the matter. He took the counsel of the young men.

So on the third day Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam, as the king had said, And the king answered them roughly; and king Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men, He answered them after the

advice of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, I'm going to add thereto: my father chastised you with whips, but I with scorpions. 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 (10:12-15).

The father of Rehoboam in the book of Proverbs had written, “A soft answer turneth away wrath”. Too bad Rehoboam didn't listen to his dad or take heed to that which his dad had written.

When Solomon was still king, and Jeroboam was a rising star in the northern portion of the kingdom, which sort of created the jealousy with Solomon, a prophet by the name of Ahijah took hold of Jeroboam's coat, and the prophet ripped the coat into twelve pieces. And he said to Jeroboam, as he gave him ten of the pieces, that God was going to make him a ruler over ten of the tribes. For David's sake, He was going to reserve two tribes that would be ruled by David's seed. Benjamin and Judah.

But the Lord was going to give unto Jeroboam, ten of the tribes. He prophesied to him, that if he would walk in the way of the Lord, the Lord would establish his dynasty over the northern kingdom, even as He established David over the southern kingdom. So the reference here to Ahijah the Shilonite, the prophecy that he had given to him, the Lord is performing the word now of this prophecy.

And when all of Israel saw that the king would not hearken to them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? we have no inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to your tents, O Israel: and now, David, see to your own house. And so all of Israel went to their tents. [So there was a general desertion of the northern tribes, the ten of them, away from the house of David, away from Rehoboam.] But as for the children of Israel that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. Then the king sent Hadoram that was over the tribute; [He was the tax collector.] to the children of Israel and they stoned him with stones, that he died. But king Rehoboam made speed to get him his chariot, and to flee to Jerusalem. And Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day (10:16-19).

So the tragic results of the folly of not seeking the Lord was the division of the nation of Israel. Now you have the northern ten tribes, which will from this point be referred to as, “Israel”, and the two southern tribes, that will be referred to as, “Judah”.

Chapter 11

And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he gathered from the house of Judah and Benjamin a hundred and eighty thousand chosen men, who were warriors, to fight against Israel, that he might bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam (11:1).

So he armed the men, gathered his army together. He was going to invade the north, the civil war.

But the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying, Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all of Israel in Judah and Benjamin saying, Thus saith the Lord, You shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren: return every man to his house: for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the words of the Lord, and returned from going against Jeroboam (11:2-4).

So civil war, averted at that point because of this prophet who came, and gave to them the word of the Lord.

Now Rehoboam set about the task of fortifying the southern kingdom, and basically these cities that he fortified are these cities towards the south from where Edom and Moab might attack and from where the Egyptians might attack. So it lists the cities they already existed but,

He just built the walls and defenses for these cities (11:5).

You can get a Bible map and you can follow the cities. It starts out with Bethlehem just six miles from Jerusalem, goes to Etam which is another three miles down to Tekoa, which is just south from the Herodian. Another six, it's six miles from Bethlehem, and these cities sort of towards the south that were fortified. Lastly...

Hebron, which is in Judah and then in Benjamin also fenced cities. [Which would protect them from the north.] He fortified the strong holds, he put captains in them, and stores of victuals of oil and wine. And every several city he put shields and spears, and made them exceeding strong, having Judah and Benjamin on his side. And the priests and the Levites that were in all of Israel resorted to him from all of their coasts

(11:10-13).

The division of the nation brought also those from the north who wanted to remain true to David. They moved on into Judah, and became a part of the kingdom. Especially the Levites. Jeroboam, rather than following the word of the prophet Ahijah, when he became the king of the northern tribes, he led them immediately into idolatry. Realizing that the people were going back to Jerusalem, observing the feasts, seeing the glory of the temple, the glory of the city of Jerusalem and all, they were being drawn in an allegiance back towards the Davidic kingdom.

So Jeroboam, to protect his own interests, figured that the only way to keep them from being drawn back to Jerusalem is to create worship centers in the north. Thus he established in Bethel, which would be on the southern end of the northern kingdom, and in Dan, which would be up at the northern end, just before you get to mount Hennon. He established in these cities the calf worship. He put golden calves, and said, "These are the gods that brought you out of Egypt". And he instituted idolatrous calf worship among the people. He fired all of the Levites. He would not allow the Levites to minister to the people, and so the verse here indicates there was a general exodus of the Levites, from the cities of refuge that were in the northern kingdom, and they came on down into Judah, because of the temple, and because of the worship there. So they, the Levites pretty well deserted that northern area.

When Jeroboam had fled to Egypt, he found favor in the eyes of Shishak the king of Egypt, who he lived there comfortably until he was called back by the people at the death of Solomon. I think that probably has something to do with what we will read in the next chapter. Verse fourteen...

The Levites left their suburbs [The houses where they were living and the area, the territories that had been given to them in the north.] and they left their possessions and they came to Judah and Jerusalem: for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the Lord: And he [Jeroboam] ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made (14-15).

So instantly, the people of the north were led by the king into idolatrous worship. Now it should be noted that they could not be led there unless they wanted to go. In other words, the king, if they had a real commitment unto the Lord, the king could not have led them away. So it indicates really the fact that there was a general apostasy among the people in the northern tribe, that they would so quickly, and so easily forsake the Lord, and to follow after these idolatrous gods that Jeroboam had set up.

There is always that enigma of why people would leave the true and the living God, to worship other gods. An enigma unless you understand human nature, and what the worship of the other gods entail. Basically, the teaching of the Bible, and the teaching of Jesus Christ, opposes the fleshly nature of man. The bible teaches that the real life is the life of the spirit, and the life of the spirit is superior to the life of the flesh. The Bible teaches that to really find life, real spiritual life, you've got to deny yourself, and take up your cross, and follow Jesus.

Now the other religious systems appeal to man's flesh. They are centered around man's flesh. They are centered around man's fleshly desires. They encourage man to indulge himself in his sexual passions, and in just his plain desires of the flesh, whatever they may be. When you look at the contrast, you can realize why the pagan religions would be so popular. They basically tell you, "Do your thing. Eat, drink, and be merry, and indulge yourself in every fleshly kind of excitement that you may desire". So the gods of pleasure, the gods, the goddesses of fertility, and, and all of these, they appeal to the flesh of man.

Jesus definitely pointed out that if you seek to live after the flesh, you're gonna die. You've got to be born again, you've got to come into a spiritual life, and the life of the spirit. "If you seek to save your life, you'll lose it, if you lose your life for His sake, you'll find it." And, He pointed out again, and again the superiority of the life of the spirit, over the life of the flesh. The big difference being, the life of the flesh, and the pleasures of the flesh, are so short lived. The life of the Spirit is eternal. So to live after the Spirit, deny the flesh, deny self, and the superiority of the walk in the Spirit over the walk in the flesh. Because it did make these kinds of demands. Because it was opposed to the fleshly nature of man, the fallen fleshly nature of man. People were willing to gravitate towards a religion that would be appealing towards their flesh.

I see a problem today, even within the church, of the church attempting to create a religion that is

appealing to man's flesh. That would be entertaining for man, one that is enjoyable. One where you can go and just enjoy the marvelous production. Appealing to the flesh. It's strange that so often times when a church is trying to build its attendance, it seeks to develop programs that would be appealing to the flesh.

But we must remember that to walk after the Lord is to walk after the Spirit. "God is a spirit, they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." God has laid down the restrictions concerning a fleshly life. I'm not to live after the flesh, I'm not to covet my neighbor's wife, house, the fleshly things that he has. I'm not to commit adultery. I am to walk in holiness before the Lord. I'm to walk in purity. Man's flesh rebels against the restrictions that God has placed, and yet, these rules that God has given to us are rules that will bring you into a satisfying, happy life! God is saying that monogamy is the best way to go. That every man should have his wife, one wife, and that they should create the home where they can raise their children in a loving environment, and this is what life is all about.

But the world of the flesh would have you to believe that life is promiscuity. It's weekend stands, and thus in the United States today, we had what was called the, "sexual revolution", and Orange County seemed to be more or less the capital of that sexual revolution. All of these disco clubs and all, where you would go to find your weekend partner. Interesting how God put a sudden halt to the whole revolution. But those who had engaged in that revolution were not finding meaningful relationships. There was sort of a sad, tragic emptiness to it all.

I do not believe that you can have a more fulfilling and blessed experience than to take your grandkids to the beach, or any place. Any place with them is great! It is so fulfilling, it is so wonderful to have that family time, to be with the children, to be with the grandchildren even after the children are grown. I only wish that we had a compound, a Smith compound someplace. Ha, ha! Where all of the kids would live together on the compound, so that the grandkids, when they had a rough time at home, could just come over to grandpa. If they didn't like what their mom thinks, they could come over and tell me what they wanted. God probably has not arranged that because He knows I'd spoil them absolutely rotten! But, I would enjoy it.

But oh what fulfillment, what joy, what blessings as you obey the rules that God has set, as you walk in the Spirit! What a joy it is to hear my little grandkids reciting scriptures. My little grandson Charlo, he's a chip off of the old block. He took scissors the other day, and tried to cut his hair so he could look like grandpa. He's gonna be the preacher in the family. But oh, to hear him quote the scriptures and all, oh it's just a thrill! To hear them pray. To answer their questions about God, and to see the heritage going down to our children's children. It's beautiful, fulfilling, it's rich. I wouldn't trade it for anything, for all of the pleasures that the world may offer in the indulging of the flesh, none of them can compare with the joy and the pleasure of seeing the family walking with Jesus.

The people turned after the gods that Jeroboam set up, because they were gods by which they could indulge their fleshly appetites. Interesting he says, that they had set up and ordained priests for the high places, and devil worship. So quickly they reverted back to the flesh. The calves which he had made.

And after them out of all of the tribes of Israel those that had set their hearts to seek Jehovah God of Israel came to Jerusalem, [So there was a general desertion out of the northern kingdom, by the people who really wanted to serve the Lord. They couldn't handle what was going on, and they came to Jerusalem,] to sacrifice unto Jehovah God of their fathers. And so they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong, for three years: and for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon (11:16-17).

The inference was during that time, they became strong, powerful. Now Rehoboam begins to follow the pattern of his father Solomon, not to the same extent, but yet as the law concerning the kings in Deuteronomy, as we were studying Solomon. In the seventeenth chapter of Deuteronomy, it says, "The king is not to multiply wives unto himself". Rehoboam started following the example of Solomon.

He took Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David to wife, Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse; Which bare him children; Jeush, Shamariah, and Zaham. And after her he took Maachah [Now you have to say that he loved her most.] who was the granddaughter of Absalom; and she bare him Abijah, [Who became the king in his stead, and the three other sons.] Rehoboam loved Maachah the daughter of Absalom above all of his wives and concubines: (for he took eighteen wives and sixty concubines; and had

twenty eight sons, and sixty daughters.) [I think that's just too much. Ha, ha! How could you keep track of em' all?] And Rehoboam made Abijah the son of Maachah the chief, to be the ruler among his brethren: for he planned to make him king. [Which he ultimately did.] And he dealt wisely, and he dispersed all of his children throughout all the countries of Judah, and Benjamin, unto every fenced city: he gave them victuals in abundance. And he desired many wives (11:18-23).

So Rehoboam himself began to walk after the ways of the flesh.

Chapter 12

So it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all of Israel with him (12:1).

So not only was there apostasy in the northern kingdom, now there develops the apostasy in the southern kingdom, and tragic, tragic. Turning away from God, the nation now is forsaking the Lord.

And it came to pass, that in the fifth year of the reign of king Rehoboam, that Shishak the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed against the Lord (12:2),

So, the chronicler is careful to point out that the real reason for this invasion. The problems that began to arise was the fact that they are turned against the Lord. He came with quite a powerful force.

Twelve hundred chariots, and sixty thousand horsemen: plus infantry troops without number ; the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians. [Had joined his forces in this invasion.] And he took these fenced cities that Rehoboam had built, [Where his children had been dispersed.] and he came to Jerusalem. [Began the siege of Jerusalem.] Then came [this same] prophet Shemaiah [which had earlier told them not to go to war against Jeroboam in the northern kingdom.] And he came to Rehoboam, and to the princes of Judah, that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord, You have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak (12:3-5).

All the way through the history of God's relationship with man, there is that covenant that God makes where if you will seek the Lord, He will be found of you, if you forsake the Lord, He will forsake you. Over and over, God sent this message to the people. God sent this message to the king. "The Lord is with you while you be with Him. And if you seek Him, He'll be found of you. But if you forsake Him, He will forsake you." In spite of the warnings, and in spite of the many vivid examples of the truth, still, they would forsake the Lord. God would forsake them, they would be oppressed and go into captivity, to their enemies. In the time of oppression under their enemies, they would seek the Lord, God would be merciful, God would deliver them, they would serve the Lord for a period of time, and then, in the process of time, they would forsake the Lord, and the whole thing was repeated.

That's not just the history of Israel. That is also the history of the church. Throughout the history of the church, there have been periods of revival. Where God would breathe new life into the church. From the revivals would usually spring forth a new denomination. In the process of time, the denomination that was born in revival, born in the powerful move of the Spirit, they would get organized, they would develop leadership, they would develop their seminaries, and they would become controlled by man and they would try to continue to develop by methodology, rather than by seeking the Spirit. The denomination would become dead, and God would write Ichabod over it, and then God would start a new work of His Spirit, and there would be a whole new movement.

You can follow the history and most of the leaders from which the denominations sprang, would be run out of their denomination, should they return today. There would be absolutely no place for Wesley in the Methodist church today, his preaching, his ministry, would not be accepted. Knox would not be allowed in a Presbyterian pulpit, most of them. Sad, but it seems to be a recurring pattern. We are in a fresh move of the Spirit of God, but then as God so often does, He goes outside of the denomination, and begins a new, fresh move and work of His Spirit.

This past week I was up at Lake Tahoe with the pastors from the central California, some from Oregon, Washington, some from Nevada, in a conference with them. Great time together there at Lake Tahoe. Beautiful, beautiful weather and just a great time. But as I was talking with these young men, and God is blessing their churches, their churches are growing, expanding by leaps and bounds. But I was talking to

them concerning Paul's letter to the Galatians, where he said, "Oh foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you that you should so soon turn away from the truth? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now going to be made perfect in the flesh?"

That seems to be the story of every denomination. Begun in the Spirit, and then somehow they seek to become perfect in the flesh. They get into fleshly programs, and ultimately there is a spiritual dearth, a spiritual death, and God begins a new work. I was pleading with these young men. I sort of feel like Peter, when he wrote his second epistle, saying, "Knowing that I'm going to be putting off this tabernacle one of these days, I feel it necessary to write these things to you, though you already know them". The young guys came up to me afterwards, and said, "Is that a prophecy?", and I said, "No. I don't think so".

But in reality, let's face facts, you know I am getting older. I do not know, you know, I'm sixty, I, ten years? Seventy years old, I'd be so decrepit by then that I won't be able to, I don't know what the future holds! I do know I can look back a lot further than I can look ahead! But it's all in God's hands. My life is in God's hands, but I do know, I'm a realist, I do know that I'm coming towards those golden years that I've heard so much about. And that there is, down the road, in God's time, that place where I'm going to have to turn the ministry over to someone else. When that time comes, it is my prayer, my earnest prayer, that, that which God wrought and began in the Spirit, will continue in the Spirit. That there will not be an endeavor to say, "Well, now that Chuck is gone we'd better get things organized".

We talked concerning David's following the methods of the Philistines, in moving the ark of the covenant from Kirjath Jearim Jerusalem. Because the Philistines that used a cart, David decided to use a cart, rather than seeking the Lord, and seeking the word, to find out how that ark was to be moved. When the oxen that were pulling the cart stumbled, and Uzza reached his hand to steady the ark, when he touched it, God smote him dead, and that whole, gala experience, suddenly became very somber. And, David became frightened, and they quit singing, they quit dancing, and they all just went home. Left the ark there at the house of Obadiah. How that instead of seeking the Lord in doing this right thing, he just you know, followed the Philistines, and how that so often we, in the church, just don't seek the Lord, and we follow the manner of the Philistines. One of the fellas afterwards pointed out to me, when David used the cart and followed the method of the Philistines, he said, "What are carts made out of? Boards, and big wheels". Ha, ha! So, when we follow the methods of the Philistines, we develop boards, and big wheels to try and move the church of God. Rehoboam, sad, forsook the Lord and the prophet said, "And this is why Shishak came into the land".

Whereupon when the princes of Israel heard this they humbled themselves; and they said, The Lord is righteous (12:6).

Oh what a proper attitude when rebuked by God! It's just to acknowledge, the Lord is righteous. I mean what is said is correct. They had forsaken the Lord. They had turned their backs upon Him, and thus God allowed Shishak to invade and take the land. So they just acknowledged the righteousness of the Lord. We're not always willing to do that. When our calamity comes, we so often times question God. "And why would God allow this!", but they just said, "The Lord is righteous".

And when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak (12:7).

So, because of this humbling of themselves before the Lord, the Lord gave them a reprieve. "They'll not be destroyed by Shishak, there will be a degree of deliverance given to them."

Nevertheless they shall be his servants; [He will give them over to the servitude of Shishak.] that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries (12:8).

This is what we dealt with this morning in the message. Of how, if you don't want to serve God, God will let you serve those other gods that you may have chosen, in order that you might see just what it entails to give yourself over to the worship of your own passions. Or give yourself over to the desire to be rich, or you give yourself over to be a slave to fashion.

So Shishak the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house (12:9);

All of this tremendous wealth that Solomon had gathered, is now taken by Shishak. When Jeroboam went to Egypt fleeing from Solomon, Jeroboam probably told Shishak about all of the wealth that was there in Jerusalem. Silver as common as stones. Tons of gold. This probably was the thing that motivated Shishak for this invasion. The fact that he'd heard of the tremendous wealth and now under Rehoboam this nation has been split, and thus weakened, and thus he feels embolden to make this invasion, gathering together the other nations around him. This huge army in order that they might take the spoils from Jerusalem, and thus the wealth is transferred now from Jerusalem, to Egypt.

It's interesting then, as soon as you get the wealth, then you become the prey, and everybody's figuring out the way then, how to rip you off. I have a friend who was in the Mafia, and uh, he was telling me how there is this pile of money that just moves in a circle. He took me to a safe and opened it, and showed me these, just, you know, I don't know how many, over a hundred thousand dollars in hundred dollar bills. He says, "Right now, I've got it". He says, "But there's twenty guys out there that are scheming and are developing scams to take it away from me. I'm gonna be a sucker for one of them, and I'm gonna lose it, but as soon as I do, then all of us will be after that guy to scam him out of it. So you get to hold it for a little while. You're king of the mountain for a while". But he says, "One of these days I'll lose it and it'll go to someone else, and then we'll all be preying on him". And he said, "It just moves in a circle among us. We just have this bundle of money, and we each hold it for a while. You know, until we get scammed out of it". So Shishak takes the treasure, now he becomes the victim.

He carried away the shields of gold which Solomon had made. Instead of those shields of gold, king Rehoboam made shields of brass, [Now interestingly enough, in the scripture, brass is always a metal that is symbolic of judgement. It was the brazen altar upon which the burnt offerings, and the sin offerings were made. Judgement. Always a symbol of judgement. When Moses made the brazen serpent, and put it in the wilderness, the symbol of judgement. The fact that the gold shields are now replaced by brass shields, as they see those brass shields, there is that acknowledgment, "This is judgement of God upon us, because we forsook the Lord." They become a visible reminder of their consequences, of fate, of, of forsaking God in looking at the brass shields that he made instead of the gold.] he committed them to the chief guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house. And when the king entered into the house of the Lord, the guard came and fetched these brass shields, and brought them again into the guard chamber. And when he humbled himself, the wrath of God turned from him, that he would not destroy him altogether: and also in Judah things went well (12:9-12).

They had their treasures stolen and all, but they weren't destroyed. There was not a mass destruction, and an annihilation of the people.

So king Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem, and he reigned: for Rehoboam was forty one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city the Lord had chosen out of all of the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess (12:13).

Now, Solomon loved his mother. He built a temple for her. She was a pagan, worshiped a pagan god, he built a temple for her, on the mount of Olives, across from the city of Offal. So Rehoboam had sort of a mixture, growing up in Jerusalem, the worship of Jehovah, but also his mother, an Ammonitess who had a temple built for her by her husband Solomon, and so under the influence, of his pagan mother. No wonder the guy is, is a little wavering in his commitment, total commitment to the Lord.

And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord (12:14).

Interesting scripture. As we go now through the kings, when we come to the end of their lives, we are going to find this phrase. One of two. As they give the summation of the king, when he comes to the end of his reign, the summation is usually this, "And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord", or, "And he did evil before the Lord", or "in the sight of the Lord. And he did evil...". What a terrible epitaph to put upon a person's life. "He did evil." The interesting thing, it says, "He did evil, because he did not prepare his heart to seek the Lord".

There is something to the preparation of my heart. There is something to the purposing of my life. The establishing of the purpose of life. "I'm going to seek the Lord." The setting my heart to that end. I think it's

a very important thing. I think that too many people just sort of free fall through life. Just sort of float. Sort of “Comatose’, comosa’, whatever”, and they sort of just move with the tide. Rather than purposing in their heart that, “I’m going to seek the Lord. I’m going to serve the Lord”. Daniel, when he was taken captive to Babylon, he purposed in his heart that he was not going to defile himself. And, I think it’s so important, that we prepare our hearts, that we purpose in our hearts to seek the Lord. He failed to do that, thus it was never a strong relationship with the Lord. It was always vacillating. The end result, as you sum up his life, he did evil.

And the last acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the book of Shemaiah [Now Shemaiah is this prophet that came to him on these two occasions that we know of. But Shemaiah wrote a book, and no doubt in that book had other prophesies that God had given him, for the nation at this time of the beginning, well, actually no, it began with Solomon, but the continuation of the spiritual decline that had begun with Solomon. We don’t have the book of Shemaiah. It would be interesting if somewhere they would find the scrolls of Shemaiah. It’d give us a little further insight on this period of history. It would, I would really um, love to see the scrolls of Shemaiah] and also of Iddo the seer concerning genealogies? Now there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. [Always border skirmishes going on between the south and the north, on their borders.] Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David: and Abijah his son reigned in his stead (12:15-16).

So next week we enter then into the reign of Abijah. A lot of lessons for us to learn in the study tonight. A lot of things that we need to take to heart. The danger of forsaking God. If we choose not to serve God, God will allow us to serve the other gods that we might see what the service of God really is, how good you had it, as you realize how enslaving the worship of other gods can be.

Then this preparation of the heart to seek the Lord. Just setting my heart that I’m going to seek the Lord, I’m gonna serve the Lord, I’m not gonna defile myself, and setting that as your purpose. Something in your heart, steadfast.

God bless you as you take the word of God, and as the Spirit makes the application to your heart, and to your life this week, as you set your heart to seek the Lord. He has promised that if we seek Him, He will be found of us. It says, “He will be found of you the day that you seek Him with all of your heart”. So lets not only just set our hearts to seek the Lord, let’s seek the Lord with all of our heart, that we might walk in the ways of the Lord. Rehoboam made a very serious mistake at the beginning. Sought the young counselors, sought the old counselors, he did not seek the counsel of God, thus made a tragic mistake. “A soft answer turneth away wrath.” He gave them a harsh answer, created the division. Lot to learn. God help us.

May the Lord be with you, may He keep you in His love, may He watch over you, and may He fill you with His Spirit. May the joy of the Lord be your strength, as you walk with Him.