

NOON BIBLE STUDY: 1 KINGS 12

1 KINGS 12:1-5 - REHOBOAM BECOMES KING

1 KINGS 12:6-11 - TWO VOICES OF ADVICE

V. 4 - THERE APPEARS TO BE SOME HOPE THAT THE NEW "ADMINISTRATION" UNDER REHOBOAM WILL RELIEVE THE NATION OF THE BURDEN OF SOLOMON'S REIGN. PERHAPS THERE IS A HOPE THAT THINGS WILL GET BETTER - AND SO THE PEOPLE GATHER TO APPEAL FOR JUST THAT.

V. 6-7 - "THE ELDERS WHO HAD SERVED HIS FATHER SOLOMON" - SERVE THE PEOPLE AND THEY WILL SERVE YOU FOREVER.

V. 8 - "THE YOUNG MEN WHO GREW UP WITH HIM..." - SHOW THEM WHO'S BOSS!

1 KINGS 12:12-15 - REHOBOAM'S REPLY

Q - WHAT ARE THE DANGERS OF IGNORING THE ADVICE OF THE "ELDERS" IN OUR LIVES?

Q - WHAT IS THE TEMPTATION OF LISTENING TO OUR "BUDDIES"?

TEAM OF RIVALS: "IN 1860, PRAIRIE LAWYER AND FORMER ONE-TERM CONGRESSMAN ABRAHAM LINCOLN STUNNED THE COUNTRY BY PREVAILING OVER THREE PROMINENT RIVALS—WILLIAM H. SEWARD, SALMON P. CHASE, AND EDWARD BATES—TO WIN THE REPUBLICAN NOMINATION FOR PRESIDENT. PERHAPS EQUALLY SURPRISING WAS WHAT LINCOLN DID AFTER BEING ELECTED PRESIDENT: HE APPOINTED ALL THREE RIVALS TO HIS CABINET—SEWARD AS SECRETARY OF STATE, CHASE AS SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, AND BATES AS ATTORNEY GENERAL. HIS EXPLANATION AT THE TIME WAS THAT THESE WERE THE STRONGEST MEN IN THE COUNTRY. HE DECLARED THAT AT A TIME OF PERIL, THE COUNTRY NEEDED TO HAVE THE STRONGEST MEN, AND THAT HE COULDN'T DEPRIVE IT OF THOSE TALENTS.

IT WAS VERY LIKE LINCOLN: HE WAS TAKING THE LONG VIEW, BUT HE WAS ALSO THINKING OF HIMSELF, AND BOTH OF THOSE THINGS CAME TOGETHER. BUT IT TOOK AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF SELF-CONFIDENCE. WHAT HE DID WAS UNPRECEDENTED AT THAT TIME. THE IDEA WAS THAT YOU SHOULD APPOINT PEOPLE WHO THINK THE WAY YOU DO.

A SET OF EMOTIONAL STRENGTHS WAS THE FOUNDATION OF LINCOLN'S POLITICAL GENIUS. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT HUMAN RELATIONS ARE AT THE CORE OF POLITICS AND THAT IF YOU DEAL WITH PEOPLE IN THE RIGHT MANNER, YOU ARE GOING TO BE ABLE TO WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH THEM. THE QUALITIES WE ASSOCIATE WITH HUMAN GREATNESS—SUCH AS SENSITIVITY, EMPATHY, COMPASSION, KINDNESS, HONESTY—ARE ALSO KEYS TO POLITICAL SUCCESS.

WHEN SOMETHING WENT WELL, LINCOLN ALWAYS SHARED THE CREDIT. WHEN SOMETHING WENT WRONG, HE SHOULDERED HIS SHARE OF THE BLAME. WHEN HE HIMSELF MADE A MISTAKE, HE ACKNOWLEDGED IT IMMEDIATELY. HE MADE TIME FOR EACH OF HIS CABINET MEMBERS, SO THAT THEY ALL FELT THEY HAD ACCESS TO HIM. HE TREATED THEM ALL RESPECTFULLY AND FAIRLY. - DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN, (AUTHOR "TEAM OF RIVALS: THE POLITICAL GENIUS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN, VIA INTERVIEW IN PROLOGUE MAGAZINE, SPRING 2006, VOL. 38, NO. 1) VIA [HTTPS://WWW.ARCHIVES.GOV/PUBLICATIONS/PROLOGUE/2006/SPRING/INTERVIEW.HTML](https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2006/spring/interview.html)

Q - WHO IS IN OUR CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE? WHO DO WE NOT ALLOW IN THAT CIRCLE? HOW DO WE RESPOND TO A MESSAGE, VIA SERMON OR CONVERSATION THAT SPEAKS AGAINST WHAT WE PLAN, THINK OR WANT?

1 KINGS 12:16-19 - THE PEOPLE REBEL AND REJECT REHOBOAM

RECOGNIZING THEIR VOICES ARE IGNORED, THE NATION REJECTS REHOBOAM. IN HIS ATTEMPT TO BE "FEARED" OR "HONORED" BY HIS SUBJECTS, HE ENDS UP LOOKING LIKE A JOKE. IN FACT AFTER THEY REJECT HIM, HE TRIES TO AMP UP HIS POWER OVER THEM (V. 18) AND THEY KILL HIS REPRESENTATIVE. NOW HE RUNS AWAY BACK HOME.

AS A RESULT, THE LOCAL TRIBES OF JUDAH (AND BENJAMIN) REMAIN (RELUCTANTLY) UNDER HIS AUTHORITY AND THE TRIBES OF "ISRAEL" (AKA NORTHERN 10 TRIBES) SECEDE AND MAKE JEROBOAM THEIR NEW KING (V. 20)

1 KINGS 12:21-24 - JUDAH PREPARES TO FIGHT FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM - THE LORD SAYS: "DON'T DO IT!"

REHOBOAM ASSEMBLES HIS ARMY TO FIGHT FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM - AND A PROPHET (V. 22 - 'MAN OF GOD') NAMED SHEMAIAH BRINGS THE WORD OF THE LORD. GOD SAYS "DON'T GO AND FIGHT AGAINST YOUR RELATIVES. EVERYONE GO HOME. THIS IS HAPPENING BECAUSE I'M CAUSING IT TO HAPPEN." NASB: "THIS THING HAS COME FROM ME"

AND THE PEOPLE (NOT NECESSARILY REHOBOAM) "LISTENED TO THE WORD OF THE LORD" (V. 24).

REMEMBER, FOR ANYONE IN JERUSALEM THAT IS 80 YEARS OLD - THEY WOULD HAVE ONLY KNOWN WHAT LIFE IS LIKE UNDER THE REIGN OF DAVID AND SOLOMON. FOR ANYONE 40 YEARS AND OLDER, ONLY SOLOMON'S KINGDOM. THERE WAS AN ASSUMPTION IN THOSE DAYS THAT THE LORD WAS WITH THE KING AND BEHIND HIS ACTIONS AND DECISIONS (BECAUSE HE WAS!). NOW, THEY HAVE TO RECEIVE A SPECIAL WORD TO GO AGAINST WHAT THE KING HAS PLANNED, BECAUSE HE IS GOING HIS OWN WAY.

1 KINGS 12:25-33 - JEROBOAM'S FIRST ACTS AS KING

WHAT A TIME TO BE ALIVE! (AND NOT IN THE GOOD SENSE OF THE PHRASE!). THE NEW KING OF THE NORTHERN, DIVIDED KINGDOM OF GOD'S COVENANT PEOPLE, WITH HIS FIRST ACTS AS KING, MAKES, NOT ONE BUT TWO GOLDEN CALVES (V. 28)! DAVID'S FIRST ACT AS KING WAS TO TAKE JERUSALEM AND RETURN THE ARK OF THE COVENANT! SOLOMON'S EARLY ACTS INCLUDED ASKING THE LORD FOR WISDOM AND BUILDING THE TEMPLE!! JEROBOAM BUILDS TWO GOLDEN CALVES AND APPOINTS NON-LEVITICAL PRIESTS TO WORK THE NEW WORSHIP AREAS THAT HE BUILDS FOR THESE IDOLS (V. 31)! THEN HE CREATES HIS OWN FEAST OF TABERNACLES-LIKE FESTIVAL SO THAT HIS SUBJECTS WILL BE HAPPY AND NOT FEEL LIKE THEY ARE MISSING OUT. HE PLACES ONE IDOL IN THE NORTH AND ONE IN THE SOUTH OF ISRAEL (SEE MAP).

AND WHY DOES HE DO IT?



"1 KINGS 12:26-28 (NLT) - JEROBOAM THOUGHT TO HIMSELF, "UNLESS I AM CAREFUL, THE KINGDOM WILL RETURN TO THE DYNASTY OF DAVID. 27 WHEN THESE PEOPLE GO TO JERUSALEM TO OFFER SACRIFICES AT THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD, THEY WILL AGAIN GIVE THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO KING REHOBOAM OF JUDAH. THEY WILL KILL ME AND MAKE HIM THEIR KING INSTEAD." 28 SO ON THE ADVICE OF HIS COUNSELORS, THE KING MADE TWO GOLD CALVES. HE SAID TO THE PEOPLE, "IT IS TOO MUCH TROUBLE FOR YOU TO WORSHIP IN JERUSALEM. LOOK, ISRAEL, THESE ARE THE GODS WHO BROUGHT YOU OUT OF EGYPT!"

TO KEEP THE KINGDOM FOR HIMSELF, HE MADE IT EASY FOR THE PEOPLE TO SEEK AFTER FALSE GODS. HE MADE IT LEGAL AND CONVENIENT. AND THE CONVENIENCE MADE IT EASIER FOR THEM TO COMMIT IDOLATRY. THE NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL WAS STILL WORSHIPPING - AND PERHAPS EVEN CALLING THEIR GOD BY THE NAME OF "YAHWEH" FOR THEY WERE IDENTIFYING THESE GOLDEN CALVES AS "THE GODS WHO BROUGHT YOU OUT OF EGYPT" - BUT THEY WERE BREAKING THE FIRST AND SECOND COMMANDMENTS OF YAHWEH! AND THE NATION OF ISRAEL WILL NEVER RECOVER.

WHAT A TIME TO BE ALIVE, INDEED.

WE LIVE IN THE AGE OF CONVENIENCE. WE CAN HAVE FAST FOOD, GROCERIES DELIVERED, FLY TO LA IN HOURS, GET MASSAGES, FACETIME WITH LOVED ONES AROUND THE WORLD AND ON AND ON AND ON. WHILE CONVENIENCE BRINGS GREAT ADVANTAGE TO OUR LIVES IN OUR MODERN ERA, IT IS NOT A VIRTUE WHEN IT COMES TO OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

THIS ENTIRE CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS THE SLIPPERY SLOPE TOWARDS DISASTER THAN "CONVENIENCE" BRINGS. IT'S CONVENIENT TO ONLY LISTEN TO THE VOICES WHICH TELL YOU WHAT YOU WANT TO HEAR. IT'S CONVENIENT TO REVISE THE WAY YOU WORSHIP TO FIT AROUND YOUR LIFE OR SCHEDULE. IT'S CONVENIENT TO IMPROVISE. IT'S CONVENIENT TO MAKE A "NEW" WAY TO HONOR GOD THAT REQUIRES LESS SACRIFICE. BUT WHILE CONVENIENCE MAY LEAD TO THE ILLUSION OF FAITHFULNESS AND DEVOTION, CONVENIENCE ALSO LEADS TO REBELLION AND RUIN. TRUE OBEDIENCE AND ALLEGIANCE TO THE WAY OF GOD, EVEN WHEN SACRIFICE IS REQUIRED AND IT'S INCONVENIENT, LEADS TO LIFE AND SAFETY AND HIS PRESENCE. CHOOSE WHICH IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU.