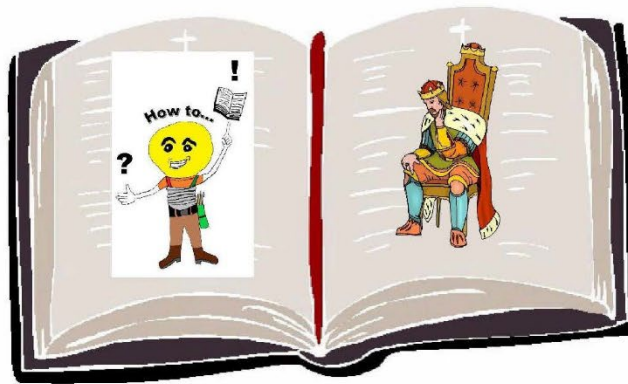


From the
Blessing of God
to the
JUDGEMENT OF GOD

A Commentary on
II Chronicles



II Chronicles

Chapter 5



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Lessons from the Reign of King Rehoboam

II Chronicles 9:31 – II Chronicles 12:15

King Rehoboam reigned for seventeen years. See *II Chronicles*

12:13

God's comment on his life and work is

2 Chronicles 12:14 “And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD.”

King Rehoboam received the kingdom at its very height. Kings David and Solomon had built the kingdom up and it was a very prosperous nation. It is at its peak and goes downhill from there! Many of the mistakes of Rehoboam are repeated today. By learning from Rehoboam’s strengths, weaknesses, successes, and failures, a leader can learn how to maintain success in any endeavor or challenge. It is sometimes harder to make good leadership decisions during times of success than it is during times of crisis. It is a great mistake to put off making leadership decisions until the crisis comes. Many leaders are good at handling crisis and use and function better when they are under pressure. The good shepherd leader must make tough leadership decisions when things are God is blessing to continue the blessing!

Occasionally, I will hear this false conclusion. **“When you are on top, the only direction is down!”** This is not true. The direction to go is up! It is **always** up. You must lead the people because the next generation will have to learn the lessons to keep prosperity going! What many leaders fail to do, and what King Rehoboam failed to do, was to seek God’s desire and maintain and grow the Kingdom! This is the same advice that was given to Adam and Eve in **Genesis 1:28** and later in the garden: **“...Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth...”** **“Dress it and keep it.”**

Rehoboam started out by making a bad leadership mistake that many fail at. He was presented with a challenge and he at first did the right thing.

The challenge was how to come across as a leader. Today it is called PR. PR stands for **“Public Relations”**. It is a way to get your ideas and message across to a lot of people quickly. It is so important, that it is guaranteed in the U. S. constitution as freedom

of speech. Today, in its somewhat twisted form, it is known as “*spin*”. The problem with the desire to spin the information to make you look good when you are making a bad decision is also called “*fake news*”. It is also a way to make a person doing the right thing appear evil. Twisting the facts to make you look good is a recipe for failure!

King Rehoboam didn’t know how to handle leadership, so he got advice. It is important to get counsel on matters of great importance that you know little about. In fact, the Bible tells someone to not start a war without good counsel. Wars sometimes are necessary, and the Christian is in a spiritual battle. A good leader will not fight battles, he has no business fighting! Wars are expensive in lives, as well as resources!

A Bible reader will notice that before a war is started counsel is needed.

Proverbs 20:18 “Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.”

Proverbs 24:6 “For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety.”

Rehoboam sought advice from two groups of counselors.

One group was the older men that had stood before his father, Solomon. They had seen what King Solomon had done and had gained some wisdom. They gave him good advice. They weren't just giving him a story to tell the people but good leadership advice on how to lead the country effectively.

2 Chronicles 10:6, 7 “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?

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.”

The advice was to serve the people as a leader. Remember the boss is there to make the employees better workers. The good leader is the servant of the people. I have learned that if you take care of them, they will take care of you! It is not about you! It is about them and their service to God!

The solution that is sometimes used today by good leaders was to lift the burdens off the people and let the people solve their own problems. It is done by two things that are effective: Cutting taxes and decreasing regulation! Can you see how relevant, up-to-date, and important these Bible principles are? That is the solution for a nation. The solution for a church or smaller organization is to give the people liberty to follow God. When individuals find the perfect will of God for their lives, they can please God. Most of the time that will lead them to be part of a good Bible believing local church. God's desire is to guide the individual to help others through the local church.

Rehoboam rejected this good advice and took the advice of a different sort.

2 Chronicles 10:8-14 “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.

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?

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.

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.

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.

And the king answered them roughly; and king Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men,

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.”

Again, the lessons to be learned here are multitudinous. Often people your own age don't have the experience or the understanding of history to give good advice. The leader is there to serve the people. It is important to know that the leader is not trying to “give the people what they want!” Many times, the majority is wrong! What he is to do is to educate them by letting them know his desire is to help them prosper. It is important for the leader to get the people behind him. He does this by speaking “kind” to them and by not “answering roughly”. A good leadership skill is

communication. It is extremely important to effectively get the message across. It is also important to learn from the elderly. The only thing men learn from history is that men don't learn from history!

Now it is not wise to reject all the counsel of people your age. Sometimes they have a great understanding on how to reach people in your generation. The way to evaluate the advice of others is to add the third source of counsel, which should be the first source!

Absent in Rehoboam's search for counsel was him seeking

God's will in the matter! Sometimes turning to God is the last resort when it should be the first thing that a leader does. As a result, even the good things that he did cause God to comment on him in **2 Chronicles 12:14** **“And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD.”**

Because of this bad leadership decision, ten of the tribes rebel and the kingdom splits into two kingdoms. The book of *II Chronicles* is the history of the Southern kingdom called Judah.

One of the amazing things not taught or observed from the life of Rehoboam is that besides this bad decision, he makes some pretty good decisions later. He recovered from a bad leadership mistake but missed the most important thing a leader needs to do. That is to seek God and His help. A leader that puts himself under the service of God and **“prepares his heart to seek the LORD”** will find great success. Good leadership is just making good decisions. Great leadership is doing God’s will! A great leader realizes he is there to serve the people by serving God!

It must be emphasized here, that using “crisis leadership” when things are going well is foolish and will lead to failure. “Crisis leadership” is essential when things are falling apart. However, if you wait for things to fall apart and do not prepare for the crisis

beforehand, you find that it is much costlier, not only in money, but also in lives, and in time and effort. Good leadership skills are needed in times of success to maintain the success. What is needed is “Success Leadership”! That is what this study is all about.

In this leadership study of 2 Chronicles, you will find the way to maintain success. These actions delineated through the examples of these kings are as follows:

1. Seek the Lord. If you are young, start early depending on God and get to know Him. Whatever age you are, when put into leadership, start seeking God.
2. Get good advice. You are not alone at the top. You are not smarter than others, but you should be closer to God than others. Study the life and leadership lessons Moses learned. Learn from his mistakes and success!

3. Lighten the load. Reduce taxes and regulations. Allow people the liberty to find the will of God and develop the responsibility to take care of themselves.
4. Build and maintain. Do the physical part and make room for God to do the spiritual part.
5. Teach and train others, especially, your children and successors. There is another generation following you. As one very astute missionary told me, ***“The Christian life is not just a marathon it is a relay race!”*** At some point you will be ***“passing the baton”*** to another!
6. Prepare for Battle. Develop weapons. Train men in battle. Prepare for defense.
7. Don't waste time partnering with wicked leaders. They will lead you to failure.
8. Don't fight battles, you have no business fighting.

9. Don't make the mistake of multiplying wives. 2 Chronicles

11:18-23.

A great lesson, sometimes missed by leaders, is that they will often try to imitate the person that trained them or that they looked up to. God doesn't want you to imitate anyone. Not even Jesus! Or the Apostle Paul! You don't have the same job as these others. You don't live at the same time. God has something purposeful for you to do. Many times, when you imitate others, you pick up their sins and faults, mistaking them for good traits. Learn from others. Learn from their mistakes and failures. Learn from their successes. We use the expression to ***“eat the meat and throw away the bones!”*** Rehoboam imitated David and Solomon by multiplying wives when God told the kings specifically not to. Deuteronomy 17:14 and 17
“When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me;” “Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn

not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.”

His big mistake was wanting to look like a good king, when in fact, he was not.

Good and bad things Rehoboam did that can be learned from:

1. Built cities for defense. *2 Chronicles 11:5-12*. God told him not to attack the Northern kingdom. So, he built cities to defend from them attacking him. As a Christian, many times you don't attack other Christians. You turn them over to God, but you set up a defense against them so that they don't affect you!
2. Accepted those that were cast off and became a leader of them. *2 Chronicles 11:13-17*. This is one of the great leadership skills of King David (*1 Samuel 22:2*). He took these “cast off” losers and turned them into a formidable army! Find ways to lead and train those that God sends your

way. Become a captain over them and help them succeed.

Their success will be your success!

3. Made the mistake of multiplying wives. 2 Chronicles 11:18-

23

4. Made the mistake, when things were going well and he had

overcome his earlier mistake, to forsake the LORD! 2

Chronicles 12:1. Not only did he forsake the law of the

LORD, he led others to do the same.

5. When the man of God, Shemaiah, pronounced God's

judgement, the King and his counsellors humbled

themselves and got right. It is important to know that often

the pronouncement of judgement is the first step to revival.

God had mercy on them. However, like all sin, there was a

lot of reaping. See 2 Chronicles 12:2-9.

6. Notice how the shields of gold are taken away. I heard a

great message one time that was entitled "**Brass for Gold**".

The gist of the message was that many times because of our willful sin, the best things are taken away from us. What we do is replace them with inferior things.

7. King Rehoboam's major mistake is given in 2 Chronicles

12:14 **“And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD.”**

Even though Rehoboam did some good things, His big mistake was that his heart was not seeking God. Compare this comment with other kings that made mistakes, yet God commended them because they sought His counsel and approval!

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