

1 Kings 12

Written by K B Napier
Friday, 19 August 2016 15:00

The sin of Solomon led directly to the sins of Jeroboam! When a leader fails, so do those who are led. Jeroboam was just a continuation of Solomon's grave errors. It seems incredible that a man so blessed and given everything by God should fall in such a spectacular way! But, this is human nature... no matter how much God gives us, we are still pushed off-balance by Satan and do what is sinful, or even wicked.

Do not, then, think you are not capable of these sins, or that you cannot fall. If you think you are invincible you WILL fall! It is Christ Who is invincible, not us. It is *His* love and sinlessness that guarantees we are accepted by the Father, not our own (for we have no such worthiness). Today, we are being ruled by Jeroboam, throughout the world. Only a few leaders resist his reign of evil. And the evil ones do so because the 'young men' do not like to be ruled by God, nor His moral demands. We are allowing a Solomon to rule in wickedness.

We became desensitised to sin and so a worse tyrant emerged (the EU, UN, totalitarian leaders, murderous men, etc.). We learned to live with lies and now get what we deserve. If we tolerate sin in our leaders and MPs, then it will grow like a cancer and take over. This is why Jeroboam existed as king. He was a punishment on the people from God. A son of Solomon, he followed his father's footsteps, bringing havoc to the people.

Verses 1-5

1.

And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.

2.

And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;)

3.

That they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying,

4.

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Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.

5.

And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the people departed.

Rehoboam, a son of Solomon, went to Shechem, to be acknowledged as the next king, but not of all Israel. Only of Judah (and the small tribe of Benjamin). "*All Israel*" (probably meaning tribal leaders and higher representatives, such as princes) went there to enthrone him. Jeroboam came to hear of this when he was still hiding in Egypt, when cohorts travelled there to tell him.

The same leaders of Israel who wanted to enthrone Rehoboam spoke to Jeroboam, saying that Solomon had made their lives a misery (because of his degeneration into idolatry, enslavement and excessive taxation), so if Jeroboam was king, he should lighten their burdens. Then, they would gladly serve him. Jeroboam told them to go away and come back in three days, after he had received consultation.

Verses 6-11

1.

And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people?

2.

And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

3.

But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him:

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4.

And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?

5.

And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins.

6.

And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

Meanwhile, the new king, Rehoboam, called the old men (elders/sages) together to give him counsel. They had also counselled Solomon. 'What should we do to answer the people?' he asked. They gave him the counsel they no doubt gave to Solomon, but which he ignored in his later years – 'If you serve the people well and listen to their requests, and use sound language and ideas, the people will serve you willingly all their days'.

Unfortunately, Rehoboam ignored their counsel based on their combined years as godly sages, and instead called in much younger, inexperienced men, for advice. Sadly, their 'advice' was rooted not in God but in their own sinful appetites. This is a current issue, as the UK Labour party want to give the vote to very young people. It is an error, because young people tend to think only in black and white, and they are prone to deception by so many movements and sinful men. Because of their youth they have no good thing to offer based on life and genuine morality and ethics.

The audacious younger men gave their 'counsel' – 'Tell the people that Solomon made their lives a misery, but your reign will be even greater. You will double their misery and increase their pain.'

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Interestingly, this is what happened in the USA... voters knew Obama was radical and Marxist-Islamic, yet they chose him over reality and easier rule, just as the people of the UK are choosing a Marxist socialist and a 'change' similar to the godless change offered by Obama. The net result is misery and chaos. And this is what the younger men counselled Rehoboam to do! Even in those days men knew that if you divide people you will conquer them. Today, most world governments ignore the wishes of the people and bring disaster and misery upon them.

Verses 12-17

1.

So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day.

2.

And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him;

3.

And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father *also* chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

4.

Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

5.

So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither *have we* inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents.

6.

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But *as for* the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

Three days after the elders and leaders spoke with Jeroboam, Jeroboam and the elders went to Rehoboam, to see if he would return to God's demands, but he spoke harshly to them, telling them bluntly that his rule would bring enslavement and misery. It is likely that his character was warped by sin, but this was not the real cause of his decision to bring tyranny upon the people. The cause was God, because of the sins of Solomon and the people of Israel. Indeed, this is the cause of the misery of western Christians today.

The leaders and the people were astounded and wondered if they now had any link to David and his righteous reign. Unable to seek refuge in their new king, the elders told the people to return to their homes (tents) and wait. These people included the people of Judah in the south, who Rehoboam currently reigned over.

Verses 18-20

1.

Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

2.

So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

3.

And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, 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.

King Rehoboam sent the lord over the tribute, demanding slaves and taxes from the people of

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Israel. But, Israel had had enough and they rebelled. They stoned the tribute master, Adoram, to death and the king hurriedly escaped in his chariot back to Jerusalem. The people heard that Jeroboam was in the area and called upon him to rule Israel: he was considered a far better option than the tyrant king. In this way all Israel, except the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, rejected the house of David and split away from Israel. But, this did not cure their troubles. Far from it!

It is this kind of rough divisiveness we now see in the West, as godless leaders try to impose 'multiculturalism' on a people who do not seek it, and taxation that is unjustified, alongside atheistic laws and policies that harm. The aim is one – to remove God and to erect another tower of Babel.

Verses 21-24

1.

And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

2.

But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying,

3.

Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying,

4.

Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD.

Rehoboam went back to Jerusalem and began his evil reign, taking charge of the southern tribes of Judah and Benjamin, gathering 180,000 fighting men. He wanted them to attack the

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army of Israel so that it would again come under the House of David. But, it was not to be at that time; a prophet, Shemaiah, spoke with Rehoboam: the king and the people of Judah (the 'remnant of the people') must NOT attack Israel, who were their brethren. To do so would be an act of civil war against kin. The men of Judah and Benjamin must go back to their homes. This they did, because it was the word of the Lord.

Verses 25-30

1.

Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Penuel.

2.

And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David:

3.

If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, *even* unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.

4.

Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves *of* gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

5.

And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan.

6.

And this thing became a sin: for the people went *to worship* before the one, *even* unto Dan.

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War averted, Jeroboam in the north rebuilt Shechem and lived there. He also rebuilt Peniel (where Jacob wrestled with God). This, thought Jeroboam, would cause all Israelites to return loyally to the House of David. He hoped that the people of Israel would now worship God outside Jerusalem, because if they went back to the city to worship they may not return to his reign, but might kill him and go back to Rehoboam.

While his reasoning might have been good, he committed huge errors. To hopefully give him strength he built two golden calves! This he did after being counselled to do so... a repeat of the grave sins of the earlier exodus-Hebrews in the desert!

He then advised the people not to go to Jerusalem to worship because it was too far and too strenuous. Instead, he told them, get back to worshipping the gods you had when you left Egypt – the golden calves. He put one calf in Bethel (on the border of the tribes of Benjamin) and the other in Dan (far north of Israel).

There is no mistaking what had happened – *“this thing became a sin”* and the ten tribes were thus encouraged to worship idols in every part of Israel. Time and again we see that when a leader is wicked, the people follow his example.

Verses 31-33

1.

And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.

2.

And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made.

3.

So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense.

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Jeroboam then built more temples/altars on mountain tops. And to add even further to this abomination, he made priests of men who were not of the tribe of Levi, unworthy men with low regard for morality and true worship. These men were the “lowest”, *qatsah*, meaning they were sinners, and came from the extreme ends of the kingdom. The result was clear – Israel was plunged into godlessness by their king. Solomon thus began a movement away from God that shook God’s people. This is why sin must always be eradicated immediately, and not allowed to take root.

Jeroboam even initiated a feast to rival the genuine feast days in Jerusalem, making a mockery of true worship. He wanted to move loyalty from Jerusalem, and for the people to worship God away from that city, but the way he did it was evil. Also, God Himself had declared Jerusalem to be His city and the golden Temple to be His Temple. There could be no other places of true national worship and certainly no worship of images.

He ordered a great feast, again to rival the genuine feast in Jerusalem; the feast of tabernacles, held on the same days so as to attract people to Bethel and Dan. In effect, Jeroboam had set up a kind of cartoon-scenario to mimic true worship, just as witches and spiritualists today often copy Christian worship, but with a twist; this is a satanic way to pour scorn on the real thing.

Jeroboam even acted-out the role of a priest by offering sacrifices himself. Thus, he made Israel to sin grossly and to draw the ire of God. He even changed the calendar, allowing only eleven months in a year, a change that was repeated until the reign of Jehu. In this way eleven years in Judah were twelve in Israel. Satan is very busy, for he knows that the best way to draw people to himself and away from God is to mimic what is genuine but changing it by degrees. In modern times he has done so expertly, as churches and ‘Christians’ are seduced by atheistic ideas and fake religion... and it all begins with a minor infraction.

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