

Israel: Drive through History Pt 2

2 Chronicles 11:1-23

- Just as the Lord said civil war has broken out in Israel, and it started because of Solomon's disobedience to the Lord in practicing idolatry, false worship, sexual immorality, and pride. For David's sake the Lord said He wouldn't allow the consequences of his actions to occur in his lifetime, but it would happen during his son's reign and that's what happened > **1Kings 11:9-13**. Rehoboam had the opportunity to avert this disaster but like his father he leaned on his own understanding in listening to the wrong counsel, using the wrong approach, and choosing the wrong mediator, and it's led to him fleeing for his life back to Jerusalem to gather his forces.

V1-23

- **V1** Rehoboam like his father wanted Jeroboam killed so he declares war, in this way he was going to show all of Israel that he was the ruling King and still in control, and so he needed to assert his authority and demonstrate his military strength. He gathers his army to fight but not for the sake of the Kingdom, notice it's really for selfish reasons - to restore the Kingdom to Rehoboam. That's what most wars are all about, at the root most of them come from petty beef between individuals who are in power and make decisions that cost other people their lives, but they'll act as if it was all for the good of the country, but it was really for themselves.
- **V2-4** to his credit Rehoboam listens to the prophet who shares that all this was from the Lord and that he needed to accept and make peace with it. Many people will continue with their plans instead of obeying this hard and yet gracious truth, because the Lord didn't have to tell any of us His plans, He could just let us continue down the path of chaos and pain, but He doesn't, He gives us the opportunity to stop in our tracks, settle down, and be still.
- What's interesting is this is the first time we've heard of "**Shemaiah**" perhaps we'll never read of him again, but he shows up with an important message that brothers shouldn't be fighting brothers. Throughout scripture we see this important message being put to the test > Abraham and Lot were told to separate to avoid bloodshed, Joseph and his brothers constant fighting brought years of pain and separation to their families, and Isaac and Ishmael had a lifelong battle that their descendants continue to this day that the whole world is caught between.
- You see the same thing within the church, battles that cause pain and disconnect, where in and of ourselves were unable to resolve, we need a "**Shemaiah**" to intervene, and remind us that brothers shouldn't be fighting brothers even when there is someone in the wrong. For through Rehoboam's foolishness and Jeroboam's aggressiveness Israel find itself at this juncture, it is God Who overrules the choice to go to war and gives Israel an alternative that leads to peace.

- **V5-12** Rehoboam stays put and then builds up his defenses around the Southern Kingdom, and Jeroboam fortifies the other **10** tribes becoming the Northern Kingdom of Israel, not ideal but at least it saved them from shedding bloodshed, at least for a time! **V13-16** the priests leave their appointed lands and go to Jerusalem in support of Rehoboam, but this wasn't because he was so Godly, it was in response to Jeroboam state sponsored idolatry in > **1Kings 12:26-33**-
- Jeroboam like Rehoboam was selfish and more concerned with keeping the support of the people so he could stay in power, than he was in doing right by the people. So he devises in his heart a way to keep the people from ever having to even visit Jerusalem and so he builds two golden calves and sets one up in Bethel, and one in Dan, then he appointed his own priests without caring about their character to ensure that this worship would truly be fleshly and not Godly, you would think that someone would have said didn't we go down this path before?
- Rehoboam on the other hand receives all those who did have a heart to serve the Lord into the Southern Kingdom, and for that we'll see that the Lord would always despite their rebellion, unbelief, and immorality, give them the opportunity to repent and return to Him. **V17** for the true strength of Judah wasn't who sat on the throne but the Godly men and Women who lived in the cities and villages and prayed for the leaders to follow the counsel of the Lord. It's like that today, it's not who's in the white house, or senate and congress, but the people who live in the country who are praying and seeking the Lord's face interceding on behalf of the leadership.
- **V18-23** just so we know that Rehoboam is not so much better than Jeroboam we get a glimpse into his family life, first he's taking wives from his nieces, and aunts and cousins, and like his father he totally disregards **Deut 17:17**- in multiplying wives and takes **18** of them, but that's not enough to satisfy his lust, so takes on another **60 concubines** or girlfriends on the side, and it produces **88 children**, now you talk about a convoluted mess. This is what you had leading and governing Israel on both sides, just two generations after David, it doesn't take long for man to tear down what God has graciously built for our benefit, and yet we love to blame Him or others.