The Danger of Unwise Counsel

1 Kings 12:1–15

November 8, 2026

Introduction

- We continue our study in 1 Kings.
- Last time we left off with Solomon's death and his son Rehoboam becoming king (1 Kgs. 11:41–43).
- This week we will see the danger of receiving unwise counsel.
- We will also see the importance of a humble heart — a servant's heart.

Key Truth:

The counsel we follow reveals the condition of our heart and can determine the direction of our life, our family, and even a nation.

1 Kings 12:1–15 — Study and Explanation

Verses 1–2

A New King and a Growing Unrest

Rehoboam becomes the fourth king of Israel (Saul, David, Solomon, Rehoboam). This was a coronation, but unrest was already in the nation. It was a gradual decline — a losing focus on God's call.

Verses 3–4

The People's Request

Jeroboam returns, and the leaders ask Rehoboam to lighten the heavy burden of taxes and labor. The people were weary, likely from unnecessary projects, misspending, and even the building of pagan temples.

Verses 5–8

Wise Counsel Given

Rehoboam seeks advice from the older, godly advisers. They encourage him to be humble, listen to the people, and speak kindly. This was wise and God-honoring counsel.

Verses 9–11

Unwise Counsel Chosen

Rehoboam rejects the wise counsel and listens to his younger friends. They advise him to be even harsher, to rule with greater strength, and increase the people's burden.

Verses 12–15

The Cost of Wrong Advice

Rehoboam follows the wrong advice, and the people reject his rule. As a result, the kingdom divides: ten tribes follow Jeroboam, and only Judah and Benjamin remain with Rehoboam. The wrong counsel brought division, conflict, and lasting consequences.

"The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice."

Proverbs 12:15 (NIV)

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Lessons and Applications

1. **Guard Your Heart from the World**
   (1 Kings 11:1–8)
   Solomon's divided heart opened the door to foreign gods, which weakened the nation. We are in this world, but not of this world (John 17:14–16).

2. **Seek Godly Counsel**
   (Proverbs 11:14; 15:22)
   Godly counsel brings wisdom, stability, and life, while unwise counsel leads to trouble and division.

3. **Cultivate Humility and a Servant's Heart**
   (Matthew 11:28–30; John 13:1–17)
   Unlike earthly leaders, Jesus is the King who serves. A humble heart listens, learns, and puts others before self.

4. **Remember the Consequences**
   (1 Kings 12:14–15)
   The wrong advice not only cost Rehoboam loyalty, but it split the kingdom and damaged the nation for generations.

It's better to Seek God's wisdom than the advice of the world.



Key Takeaways

- ✓ The heart you cultivate today will influence what you have behind.
- ✓ Not all counsel is equal — seek God's wisdom first.
- ✓ Humility and a servant's heart reflect the heart of Jesus.
- ✓ Unwise counsel can bring lasting and painful consequences.

Supporting Scriptures

- **Proverbs 12:15** – *Listen to wise counsel.*
- **Proverbs 19:20** – *Receive instruction and be wise.*
- **Proverbs 13:10** – *Counsel leads to success.*
- **Matthew 11:28–30** – *Jesus gives rest from heavy burdens.*
- **John 13:1–17** – *Jesus, the King, serves with humility.*

Fill in the Blanks

1. Rehoboam rejected the _____ counsel of the older advisers and followed the _____ counsel of his younger friends.
2. Jesus is the _____ who not only protects His people, but also _____ them.

Challenging Question

Whose counsel are you currently allowing to influence your decisions — the world's, your own, or God's?

