

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES: GAINING DIRECTION OUT OF THE AIMLESSNESS OF APOSTASY

Part IV: Gaining Direction From God's Work In The Reign Of Rehoboam, 2 Chronicles 10-12

A. Learning To Heed God's Painful Discipline To Avoid Idolatry

(2 Chronicles 10:1-11:4)

I. Introduction

- A. An intriguing statement occurs in 1 Corinthians 11:19 that God sometimes allows painful, sinful divisions to occur among His people to make certain spiritual realities sharply obvious to all involved.
- B. This was a lesson king Rehoboam learned in 2 Chronicles 10:1-11:4, for there a division was arranged to occur under God's permissive will to emphasize the great need for God's people to avoid idolatry.
- C. As we Christians can slip into subtle forms of idolatry (1 John 5:21 and Colossians 3:5), we can learn from the painful discipline Rehoboam and Judah faced how *strongly* God wants **US** to *avoid idolatry*:

II. Learning To Accept God's Discipline Of Inescapable Divisions, 2 Chronicles 10:1-11:4.

- A. After Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam went north to Shechem to be crowned king, 2 Chron. 10:1. Rehoboam went there versus all Israel coming down to him as they had to David in Hebron (cf. 1 Chron. 11:1-3) because Rehoboam probably sensed the tribes up north were already estranged from him due to their reaction to the pressures of his father's hard rule, 2 Chron. 10:3-4; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 628.
- B. Jeroboam, a foreman of labor in Ephraim who had fled from Solomon to Egypt, headed a delegation that asked Rehoboam to lighten his father's administrative hand over them, and they would serve him as king, 2 Chronicles 10:2-4. Rehoboam replied that he would give them an answer in three days, 2 Chron. 10:5.
- C. Rehoboam obtained conflicting advice from his father's advisers and from his contemporaries, 10:6-11:
 - 1. First, the elderly advisers of his father, Solomon suggested that Rehoboam heed Jeroboam's suggestion, affirming they would then willingly submit to him, cf. 2 Chronicles 10:6-7.
 - 2. However, Rehoboam's contemporaries suggested that he answer Jeroboam's people roughly, stating he would make his rule harsher than Solomon's rule over them, 2 Chronicles 10:9-11.
- D. Rehoboam chose to reject his father's counselors and to accept the advice of his contemporaries, 10:8.
- E. His voicing of this decision to Jeroboam was in the Lord's permissive will, for it would lead to the division of the kingdom due to Solomon's idolatry in accord with Bible prophecy, 2 Chronicles 10:12-15:
 - 1. When Rehoboam answered Jeroboam and his people roughly, he did not hearken to the wiser, older men as was culturally preferred because the Lord wanted to use his answer to fulfill a prophecy made by His prophet, Ahijah the Shilonite to Rehoboam's father, Solomon, cf. 2 Chronicles 10:12-15.
 - 2. That prophecy, found both in 1 Kings 11:29-37 to Jeroboam and in 1 Kings 11:9-13 to Solomon, predicted God would tear ten of Israel's tribes out of the hand of Solomon's son for his idolatry.
- F. Thus, Rehoboam's answer led the ten northern tribes under Jeroboam to break loyalty to Rehoboam's rule, and Rehoboam was left with the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, 2 Chronicles 10:16-17; 11:1.
- G. Rehoboam initially reacted to this rebellion by mustering 180,000 troops in Judah and Benjamin to fight against and thus to subjugate the ten northern tribes, 2 Chronicles 11:1.
- H. However, God's Word through the prophet, Shemaiah came to Rehoboam, to Judah and to Benjamin to warn them not to fight against Israel, for the national split was permitted by God, 2 Chron. 11:2-4a.

Lesson: *So intense was God's hatred of idolatry that God ALLOWED for the traumatic, lasting RENDING of Israel's ten northern tribes FROM the rule of Solomon's son! This event was meant to SEAR the hearts of God's people that they might take SERIOUSLY their NEED to REPENT from Solomon's errant IDOLATROUS leadership and RETURN to WORSHIP GOD ALONE!*

Application: *(1) Since idolatry is the substitution of any entity other than God as the source of security or happiness, we Christians TODAY are as vulnerable to this sin as was Solomon and Israel of antiquity, and so we must WATCH OUT for it! (2) Know that GOD is VERY STRONGLY OPPOSED to idolatry, and that He will allow for a searing punishment to occur because of it! (3) If such painful events occur, let us first test ourselves to see if we have sinned and repent accordingly! (4) If the Lord allows a searing rift to occur in a relationship with others, we must test ourselves to see if we have replaced Him with some other entity as our God, and, if so, we must immediately REPENT!*