

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

B. Learning To KEEP HEEDING God As He Rewards Us With SUPPORTERS

(2 Chronicles 11:1-4, 5-12:16)

I. Introduction

- A. God will discipline us for sin (Hebrews 12:6-8) and bless us for obeying Him (Deuteronomy 28:1-2)!
- B. The Lord used both approaches in the life of Judah's king Rehoboam, for he sadly **failed** to *continue* to heed the Lord when he neglected to recall God had strengthened him for his initial obedience to the Lord.
- C. We view Rehoboam's life to see how crucial it is to **continue** heeding God to enjoy *sustained* blessings:

II. Learning To KEEP HEEDING God As He Rewards Us With SUPPORTERS.

- A. For **initial obedience** in a difficult trial, God blessed Judah's king Rehoboam with the influx of the godly Levites from the ten northern who strengthened him by their support of him, 2 Chronicles 11:1-4, 5-23:
 1. Rehoboam properly heeded the Lord in the difficult trial of refraining himself from warring against the ten northern tribes of Israel when they rebelled against his rule, 2 Chronicles 11:1-4a,b.
 2. Accordingly, God initially blessed Rehoboam and his nation of Judah by providing an influx of very supportive, influential Levites from the ten northern tribes, 2 Chronicles 11:5-23:
 - a. When king Jeroboam of the northern kingdom of Israel created a false religion to keep his subjects from returning to Rehoboam's Jerusalem to worship God, he replaced the godly Levites with his own false priests to religious posts of influence and service, 2 Chron. 11:14-15; 1 Kings 12:26-31.
 - b. Accordingly, Rehoboam enjoyed a huge influx of Levites who left their towns and possessions in Israel up north to immigrate south to Jerusalem in Judah, Levites who were highly motivated expatriates in their support of Rehoboam due to his initial obedience to God, cf. 2 Chron. 11:16, 4b.
 - c. Thus, these helpful godly people influenced Rehoboam's subjects to support his reign, 11:17.
 - d. Consequently, blessings abounded for Rehoboam and Judah: (1) he was able to establish cities of defense (2 Chron. 11:5-12); (2) Rehoboam also expanded his family, and dispersed supportive sons throughout his kingdom to make his political influence even greater, 2 Chronicles 11:18-22, 23.
- B. Yet, instead of recalling it was **God** Who had rewarded him with strength for his initial obedience, Rehoboam then **CEASED following GOD**, so God disciplined him to suffer weakness as a king, 12:1-16:
 1. After Rehoboam was established and strong, he with his subjects ceased heeding God's Law, forgetting it was God's blessing for his initial obedience to the Lord that had made him a strong king, 12:1.
 2. For this reason, the Lord applied the judgment promised in Deuteronomy 28:15, 25a (as follows):
 - a. Within two years after forsaking the Law (cf. 2 Chronicles 11:17 with 12:2), Rehoboam suffered military defeats of his defense cities before Egypt's invading king Shishak, 2 Chronicles 12:2-4.
 - b. When Shishak's army reached the walls of Jerusalem, God's prophet, Shemaiah came to Rehoboam and Judah's princes to tell them they faced war because they had forsaken the Lord; accordingly, the Lord was judging them to be forsaken to be destroyed by Egypt's king Shishak, 2 Chronicles 12:5.
 - c. Rehoboam and his princes then repented (2 Chronicles 12:6), so God promised not to destroy them completely, but to grant them a measure of deliverance, 2 Chronicles 12:7; God would make them serve Shishak so that they would understand how much better it was to obey God and serve Him than to serve the pagan kings around them under divine discipline, 2 Chronicles 12:8 NIV.
 - d. Accordingly, Shishak subdued Rehoboam, taking the treasures of the temple and the king's palace. He also took the gold shields of Solomon, leaving Rehoboam to make bronze replicas, 12:9-11!
 - e. Thus, Rehoboam's strength as king sadly waned as he failed to keep obeying God, and he knew continual war with Jeroboam as a result, 2 Chronicles 12:12-16; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 630.

Lesson: When Rehoboam **INITIALLY HEADED** God, the Lord **STRENGTHENED** him with **GODLY SUPPORTERS**, but when Rehoboam **THEN DISOBEYED** God, He **WEAKENED** Rehoboam as a king by way of an **UNGODLY OPPRESSOR** in Egypt's king Shishak, and by continual war with Jeroboam.

Application: If God **REWARDS** us with **GODLY SUPPORTERS** for **INITIALLY OBEYING** Him, we must **KEEP HEEDING** Him lest we become arrogant and disobey Him so that He **REVERSES** the **SUPPORT** we have and allows us to suffer resulting painful **OPPRESSION** by **OPPRESSORS**!