

Transitions in the Kingdom of Israel

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[0:00] But we saw here tonight, as we're going to begin looking here in 1 Kings chapter 12, but just to kind of work through here a little bit, remember that the kingdom that God established through David and Solomon is now on the verge of being divided.

And between Judah, between the house of Judah and the house of Joseph, is one way you can look at that, is to understand the dynamic, but also it's referred to in the Scripture, you have the tribe of Judah and the northern tribes and the southern tribes.

You have these dynamics that we're going to see as we move forward. But we understand that this was caused by God's judgment because of Solomon's decisions.

And the one thing we need to always realize is that all decisions have consequences. You know, the one thing we always keep in mind, there's always consequences to our decisions.

They might be good consequences or they might be bad consequences, but there's always a consequence to your decision. There's always something that impacts that in a great way, and so we need to be thinking through those things.

[1:16] And even though Solomon started well, we learned he did not end well. And it reflected upon his son, Rehoboam. That was Solomon's consequence that he faced was the impact of what it had on the generations to come.

You know, and our decisions do impact those to come. And we find here that Rehoboam, through how he learned from his father, you know, and even though Solomon wrote great wisdom, you know, it's interesting that Rehoboam didn't do much listening.

You know, even though he had everything he needed before him, and, you know, the choice he made in what he was going to get his validation, where was he going to get his information, how was he going to make his decisions, played out.

And so keep your finger there in 1 Kings, but look over into Proverbs chapter 2 for a moment. Because as we think about Rehoboam and the decisions and the things that he's going to make tonight that we're going to be looking at, I want you to consider that Proverbs here was written by Solomon, and it gives you a little good context to what Solomon was writing about here.

Because look here in Proverbs chapter 2, look at verse 1. What's the first words there? He says what? My son. So when you think about this in context of Solomon writing, who was he probably writing towards?

[2:43] Towards Rehoboam. He's giving his son information. He's giving him some wisdom. Look, it says, My son, if thou wilt receive my words and hide my commandments with thee, so thou wilt incline thine ear into wisdom and apply thy heart to understanding.

Yea, if thou criest out of knowledge and lifteth up thy voice for understanding, if thou seekest her as silver and searchest her as for a hid treasure, then thou shalt understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

Now, Solomon here is making that statement, and oftentimes we look and say, Well, Solomon, if he was the wisest guy, why didn't he follow his own advice?

And the only thing I'll tell you is just go home and look in the mirror. Because we can sometimes understand a lot of things, but the applying of that in our lives is a little different, isn't it?

Because sometimes we can ask, How can Solomon have written this and do the decisions he made? The Bible makes it clear that we can know to do good and not do it.

[3:52] We can know what we ought to do and not do it. And so when we're looking at this tonight, I want you to understand that even as Rehoboam, if you remember Rehoboam, one of the problems, think about what his father wrote, but look at what he did, because no place do we find that Rehoboam sought the Lord and what decision he ought to make.

He sought the old men's counsel. He sought the young men's counsel. But you never find one time in here that you find that he sought the Lord's counsel, that he sought after what God wanted. You know, one of the wisest things we can do is to seek after what God wants and to understand that. And we're going to look tonight at the ramifications of that because Rehoboam is here as in has rejected those things.

Let's pick up here in verse 16, here in 1 Kings chapter 12, here tonight, and notice it says here, 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 we have inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel, now see to thine own house David. So Israel departed unto their tents.

[5:15] But as for the children of Israel, which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. Now we're going to see here that there was a rejection that took place.

They rejected Rehoboam as their king. You know, that's the first thing they ever need to understand. There was a rejection, there was a choice that was made. And when he made that choice, it impacted a lot of things because when Rehoboam chose to increase the tribute on the people, it resulted in their rejection of him as king.

You know, when we understand that the separation from Rehoboam was based upon his unwillingness to seek wisdom. His unwillingness to grab a hold of the truth of wisdom that his father Solomon had provided for him.

But we realize here that this conflict that followed was going to be detrimental in that because there was some defiance in their statement.

There was this rejection of Rehoboam. Because look there in verse 16 with me again. Notice the two statements that they say. What portion have we in David?

[6:33] Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse. You know, those are some two powerful questions, aren't they? To think about what they're stating there. What is our portion?

What's our part? Here is Israel making a decision saying that we have no part in David, neither an inheritance in the son of Jesse.

You know, they no longer saw the benefit of standing alongside David and his kingdom. They no longer saw the benefit of what portion they would have because the division here is along those same lines that you find throughout.

You know, take a look over in 2 Samuel for a moment because to understand what's happening here a little bit, we also have to understand a little history. You know, because sometimes we can draw the wrong conclusion or get the wrong idea of what's happening if we don't understand what happened before.

And where some of the sediment came up of these things, this sediment of, of kind of this division. We have no part in you and we see here this dynamic.

[7:43] Look here in 2 Samuel chapter 19. 2 Samuel chapter 19. Look down here in verse 40. It tells us this, And the king went to Gilgal and Chimam and went on with him and all the people of Judah conducted the king and also half the people of Israel.

And behold, all the men of Israel came to the king and said unto the king, Why have thy, our brother and the men of Judah have stolen thee away and have brought the king and his household and all David's men with him over Jordan?

And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel because of the king is near kin to us.

Wherefore, then be angry for this matter. We've eaten at all of the king's cost or have we given us any gift?

And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah and said, We have ten parts in the king. Now that's an important statement when he said here because here when David, this is right after

Absalom, his son had reared up a rebellion against David and David's coming back into Jerusalem, being brought back over the Jordan and here Israel comes and they make a, the ten tribes make a declaration that says, We have what?

Ten parts in this kingdom. We have an investment. We have a portion. We have a part of this. Now we find with Rehoboam they make the exact opposite statement, don't they?

[9:05] What part have we with you? You know, they made a decision in this and they were angry as you find there in 2 Samuel 19 but these words, this statement is also another rebellion that was against David that kind of raised up by the man of the name of Sheba.

You know, look over in 2 Samuel chapter 20 there just right after that because notice the repeat of the words here that were faced with David. Notice what Sheba says here in 2 Samuel chapter 20 and it says, There happened to be a man of Belial whose name was Sheba the son of Berechi, a Benjamite and he blew a trumpet and said, We have no part in David neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse.

Every man to his tent Israel and so every man of Israel went up from after David and followed Sheba the son of Berechi but the men of Judah clave unto their king from Jordan even to Jerusalem.

You know, they were dissatisfied here just like the children of Israel the ten tribes were dissatisfied and rejected what God had established.

You know, one thing we need to be careful of here is because often we find that rejection of the Lord finds its root in the dissatisfaction of what we desire because we'll desire something and what God wants doesn't line up with our wants or our desire of what we think ought to happen doesn't line up with what God allows to happen and we can become dissatisfied which leads to a rejection well God must be wrong on everything.

[10:48] The children of Israel here were saying that they had no part in what God established. They were rejecting the things of God and we're going to see here in this the ten tribes had rejected David before had before rejected David and now openly rejecting Rehoboam.

You know, I want you to understand that when the statements that are being made though are important because this is more of an attitude thing in this rejection it's a way of thinking because the statements here to what part have we in David and the son of Jesse and when they make that declaration there in the scripture notice what it tells them here at the end here in verse 16 it says to your tents O Israel now see to thine own house David so Israel departed unto their tents.

Now I want you to understand this was one of those where you might put it this way they're saying okay guys let's pick up our marbles and go home. I'm dissatisfied I'm not happy with what's going on here let's take my stuff and we're going to go mind our own business and do our own thing.

This is not a call to an open rebellion. Okay? That comes a little later we'll find but I want you to understand rejection rejection is the first step to rebelling.

Is that mindset of rejection is the first step of rebelling against the Lord because it opens the door for those things to say what God wants doesn't match what I want so therefore there must be a problem and we always look at the problem as being God.

[12:34] And to understand what's happening here we see this taking place here but this was not they had not openly put in rebellion against Rehoboam at this point they just kind of went home with their marbles you might say.

But when Rehoboam sees this he's doing exactly what his father Solomon was worried about. Turn to Ecclesiastes for a moment.

Look over in Ecclesiastes chapter 2 Ecclesiastes chapter 2 we see over here that Solomon was concerned about his kids that were going to follow him.

And that's one of those things I don't know if there's a dad that's not concerned about what's going to happen to their kids and anybody in leadership that's working to do things and establish something is not concerned about what's going to follow.

You know who's going to come after me? Who's going to do these things? Notice here in Ecclesiastes chapter 2 and verse 18 notice what it says it says yea I've hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun because I should leave it under the man that shall be after me.

[13:49] Now notice this statement here he says and who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool yet shall he rule over all my labor wherein

I have labored and wherein I have showed myself wise under the sun this also is vanity.

you know in other words Solomon understood that he might do all the right things put all the right things in places but you still can't control what somebody else does. That's an important reality to grab a hold of because we have a responsibility but your responsibility is there to teach and to direct the next generation but it doesn't guarantee what they're going to do.

You know we see here that Rehoboam was definitely not wise I mean we definitely say that he was the fool that his father was worried about. He was definitely the fool that he was worried about and he was not wise in his response to the departure of the ten tribes because take a look at what happens here you know Israel departs to their tents and Rehoboam is left with those even though they might have been of the other tribes if they were under his territory they fell under if they were in Judah they fell under his authority but I want you to see here what takes place because he didn't make a very good decision you might say because notice here in verse 18 of our text here in 1 Kings chapter 12 then King Rehoboam said Adoram who was over the tribute now I want you to stop and consider what's being said here because remember the picture why did all the people depart and go to their own place because they didn't like the levy of people and money that was placed on them and remember what did

Rehoboam tell them when they said hey you need to lighten the load what did Rehoboam tell them I'm going to get more I'm going to take more and they said we're done you ain't taking any more so Rehoboam sends his tax collector who had been around a while it's not the first time this guy had went and collected the levy of money and people and when we see what Adoram has happened to him here because as he goes together the levy which he had done before but this time his reception we might say was a little rocky good dad joke right got to get that one in there but consider what's happening here because seeing that he brought with him not the old tax code but the new tax code and said hey guys

I'm here to collect and you owe me more now needless to say it definitely didn't go over very well because look with how the response of the people was it says and the Israel stoned him with stones that he died you know so he goes to do his duty you know and we see here that now the children of Israel do have a rebellious attitude that sparks up because they do a total rebellious against everything that Rehoboam had commanded he commanded them to collect the levy and they said no you're not that's an open rebellious attitude towards it isn't it and we see here as they rebelled against these things this rebellious attitude results in Adoram being stoned or killed and the news reaches Rehoboam which I imagine came back pretty quick because I imagine he didn't his tax collector didn't go alone so I suspect that somebody came back and told Rehoboam and said hey dude this has not turned out so well so what's he do notice what he does in this because therefore [18:13] King Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot to flee to Jerusalem you know so when the news reaches Rehoboam the departure for safety quickly ensues it says he made speed to get up to his chariot in other words we find it was probably a pretty rough ride back to Jerusalem because I have a feeling the chariot wasn't letting any grass grow under the wheels I mean he was heading back you say why was he heading to Jerusalem because that's where he felt safe remember Jerusalem was a fortified city matter of fact a lot of the levy had went into fortifying Jerusalem and all the things with it and so we see here as a Rehoboam there makes speed to go back and notice verse 19 what it says so Israel rebelled against the house of David and to this day this is when the rebellion the rebellious portion came out and began to manifest itself against the house of

David and while Rehoboam raced back to Jerusalem the ten tribes were busy doing something else the ten tribes notice what the tribes did because they knew there was going to be a problem and there was going to be retaliation I mean I think we pretty much understand what's going to happen when you kill the king's tax collector he's probably going to be a bit upset I mean that's pretty natural so what they do is they go find Jeroboam who's in the area because remember he was at the meeting he was their spokesman he had come back from Egypt he was there and it notices in verse 20 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 and there was none that

followed the house of David but the tribe of Judah only so we see here while Rehoboam is heading back to Jerusalem the tribes are getting together with

Jeroboam and to make him king you know they selected the king and said you're going to be our king the people had given him that authority to place in that position now we know God was working in the background this whole time don't we we understand that God had already foretold that these things were going to happen that this is the kingdom was going to be divided after Solomon's death that these things were going to come about but I want you to understand God allowed those things to happen God knew what was going to happen God's putting judgment upon the house of David because of Solomon's actions but God's also faithful to keep a lineage God had made a promise to David and we looked at that previously a few weeks ago and we see here that the ten tribes gathered to make him king just as Ajjah the

Shilohite had shown to Jeroboam back in 1 Kings chapter 11 all these things are coming to pass all these things are happening directly here now notice with me what takes place because look at verse 21 because now the revolt really happens because you think about they've rebelled they've stoned the tax collector and then they said we're really done with you because we've set and established our own kingdom they put in place a new government it was now open revolt against Rehoboam they said we're just not done with you we want absolutely nothing to do with you to have their own way in the matter and look here in verse 21 it says in Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem he assembled the house of Judah with the tribe of Benjamin 104 score thousand chosen men which were warriors to fight against the house of Israel to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon so we see here when

Rehoboam gets back to Jerusalem we find that the tribes are setting up Jeroboam there's an open revolt happening against him and so what does he do Rehoboam does what any good king would do he rallies the troops now I want you to understand the crowd that he gathered here because he didn't gather just everybody off the street it says he gathered 180,000 chosen men that were warriors in other words he had 180,000 men that had already been in battle who have already proved themselves he was going up to take it back he had the manpower to do it he had the experience to do it you know because we all understand very easily somebody who hasn't faced battle somebody from different than somebody who has he's taking up the guys that already knew what they were getting into they were ready to go there wasn't going to be any delay they were ready to move forward with what

[23:40] Rehoboam had wanted in 180,000 warriors both of Judah and of Benjamin and so we see here this revolt that takes place and their intention was to move against the northern tribes to put down the revolt against the one they saw that was the rightful heir to the kingdom I want you to understand the guys he gathered I think were just doing what they should have been doing but we're going to see what happens here because what happens next is important because Rehoboam was still acting out of his own self-interest wanting to do what he wanted to do Rehoboam was doing the exact thing spiritually that the northern tribes were doing to him physically because he rejected the things of God he rebelled against the things of God and ultimately we're going to see a revolt against the things of God but notice what God intervenes because something happens here that turns the narrative completely around because I want you to see the picture of what's happening because here's Rehoboam he's got 180,000 men ready to go armed up supplied up they're ready to leave town they're ready to leave town ready to go take care of business and God intervenes he intervenes with a man and I want you to see something important here about this individual because look at verse 22 all this is happening and then in verse 22 it says but the word of

God came unto Shemai the man of God saying 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 now I want you to understand here a little bit because I want to look here at Shemai here the man of God because he enters in a very difficult time he entered in some pretty perilous times I mean when everybody's prepared to go to war and here he is he gets the word of God the man of God hears from God and says this is what I want you to do he says I want you to go out in front of 180

thousand soldiers that are ready to go to battle that are upset that their king has been deposed with a king that's mad he's been deposed and your message to him is go home to me that doesn't sound like an easy message to bring

I would say that's probably a pretty hostile crowd to that message that would have been a pretty hostile crowd but it was a man of God enters with the clamor of war all around now I want you to notice something here because Shemaiah here we don't know anything really specific about him but he's got a good attribute that God attaches to him that makes a big statement when it says the man of God we might not know much about where he came from or who he is but it tells us a lot about his character and what he believed because when you look at that phrase of man of God that's directly attached to Moses and his authority the Bible says Moses a man of God that authority that connects with that by following what God would have to say and here

Shemaiah here is simply had to have faith in the word of God but I think he understood something very important that he needed to follow the word of God because look back in Deuteronomy chapter 8 for a moment because this is where this becomes very practical to us today as we're going to look because notice here in Deuteronomy chapter 8 look here in verse 3 because there's something important about that the man of God did something when he heard the word of God because notice here in Deuteronomy chapter 8 look down in verse 3 and he says this and he humbled thee and suffered thee to hunger and fed thee with manna which thou knowest not neither did thy fathers know now notice here that he might make thee to know that man doth not live by bread alone but every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God doth man live now here's your Bible trivia question for Wednesday night where's that quoted in the

New Testament who quoted it and what event when Satan was tempting him that's the verse that Jesus quoted back to the devil man doth not live by bread alone but every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God Shemaiah understood one thing that the word of God had an importance it had a priority he said I don't need to worry so much about what these guys can do I need to worry about what God has held me account to and here's an individual I guarantee he had to be by no doubt a man's man to stand up and a man of God to say I'm willing to trust God at the word of God to go before 180,000 men ready for battle along with a king that's at his heart set on battle to take back and and he goes because the word of

[30:13] God came to him and expressed to him and gave him direction of what he was supposed to do it says the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God I want you to understand that why could he stand up in such a perilous time as this because he was already had trusted God before because he was a man of God being a person of God doesn't happen by flipping a switch it's somebody who's been tested and matured somebody that understands what the conflict is like you might say why the men that Rehoboam gathered were physically battle hardened Shemaiah was a man who was spiritually battle hardened he had stood the test of the battles that take place spiritually now notice here in the

New Testament turn to 2nd Timothy chapter 3 for a moment because here the apostle Paul is talking to Timothy and I want you to see the correlation here between this man of God in the Old Testament and the man of God that we ought to be today because I want you to see here what he brings forth notice here in verse 1 in 2nd Timothy chapter 3 he says and this know also that in the last days perilous times shall come you know I think Shemaiah lived in a pretty perilous time you know we live in some pretty perilous times we understand it says for men shall be lovers of their own self covetous boasters proud blasphemers disobedient to parents unthankful unholy without natural affection truce breakers false accusers incontinent fears despisers of those that are good traitors heady high-minded lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof from such turn away so he's laying the groundwork he says here's what perilous times look like today

Shemaiah lived in perilous times in his day but now look at the end of the chapter go down to verse 14 because Paul says hey if you're in perilous times doesn't mean you can't be a man of God matter of fact he says it calls for us to be notice what it says but continue thou in the things which thou has learned and been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures were able to make thee wise into salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus now notice what he says remember he says all scripture is given by

inspiration of God now all scripture what's he talking about he's talking about the word of God he's talking about the word of God very directly here now notice with me it says given by inspiration God is profitable for doctrine for reproof for correction for instruction in righteousness now look at that next phrase in verse 17 why are all these things there why is the word of God there that the man of God may be what perfect that word perfect means mature means growing up literally means tested thoroughly furnished that means to equip to accomplish has what's needed to accomplish to be a man of God in perilous times to do what's needed is by the word of God unto all good works that means there's some action behind it and we see here when the word of God came to Shemaiah he had to take some action upon what God said he had a responsibility to do something with it didn't he because notice what God told him he said that but the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God saying speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon king of

Judah and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin that's in other words he's supposed to be up in front of the king and all these warriors and all the other people that gathered to send him off it'd been a pretty intimidating crowd you know I don't know about you but facing a couple hundred thousand people it'd probably be a little intimidating as he's there God commands him to go saying now notice what he's supposed to tell he's supposed to tell him 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 hearken therefore to the word of the Lord and return to depart according to the word of the Lord now I want you to understand something important here because God didn't send old counselors the young counselors to talk to Rehoboam who did God send to talk to Rehoboam the man of God why is he a man of God because he was a man that followed and understood the importance of the word of God the two are interconnected because if the word of God equips us to grow up and be mature the only way to be a man of God is to have the word of God the two are interconnected and it gives us authority to speak as God would speak look over back at the New Testament turn over to Titus chapter 2 for a moment

[36:23] Titus chapter 2 look at what the apostle Paul tells Titus in regards to this because Titus was a man of God notice what he tells him here he says these things speak and exhort and rebuke with what all authority let no man despise thee you know the one thing we always have to keep in mind when you speak the word of God you're speaking with authority not your authority but God's authority God is the one that gives and equips us with the authority the problem is that Rehoboam listened to other authorities that were their own authorities instead of listened to the true authority and so as we see here tonight we see here that Shemaiah does exactly that he comes with authority into the presence of the king preparing has prepared his army for battle and you think about his opening statement here that's recorded for us you imagine standing there in front of a couple hundred thousand people and say listen up thus saith the Lord you guys are going to go home yeah tell you what that took a mature person that understood the authority of the word of God to speak with authority he wasn't speaking of himself notice he says this is not what I think he says 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 in other words he says the Lord says go home because what's happening here

I have allowed to happen this is under my authority God brings it very clear he's speaking for the God of Israel as the authority not himself because I want you to notice something here because there's some wording here it's important because he hears the word of God and then he says thus saith the Lord the word Lord there he's directly referencing that the Israelites would have heard he was directly referencing the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob the same authority that Moses the law giver Shemaiah was given this authority and just say hey guys this is the same one who gave you the law and all the things that we're supposed to be doing everything's been laid out this is the same God that's speaking unto you today that you better pay attention to he says thus saith the Lord he's speaking with authority because of the God who sent him and Shemaiah brings the word of God with authority but not knowing the response you know early in the kingdom of Israel you'll

find something that prophets kind of had a you might say an exemption card because you think about well how did

Samuel the prophet address Saul Saul was a king but Samuel was pretty bold just saying Saul you messed up you know Saul didn't respond harshly back to him there was that respect because there's one that was a man of God attached to the word of God think about David Nathan I mean you think about Nathan addressing David after David sinned yeah he enters into the conversation a little softly you might say by using you know somebody took this animal from somebody you know and lays it all out but you imagine the gumption to look at David and say hey the moral of the story is this you're the man in front of the king the one with earthly power of life and death you kind of find there was an exemption exemption there and Shemaiah

I think enjoyed that same godly exemption because Rehoboam still respected he might not have done but he still had a respect for the things of God there was still a respect that was present you know it makes a difference if there's a general respect for the things of God we can even witness that in our own nation you know when the nation as a whole had a general respect for God I'm not talking people who are all believers but when they operated in the understanding there is a God that's going to hold them accountable it changes the whole attitude and spirit of things doesn't it because we live in perilous times where people don't care what God thinks they don't care I'm going to do my own thing I'm going to do what I want to do when I want to do it and how

I want to do it there's no fear and often times it ends there's going to be problems because you look later read through the book of Hebrews chapter 11 it makes reference to some prophets who things didn't end so well but they went anyway because they understood the authority of the word of God if you will be a man of God the word of God has a priority to understand what's taking place and it says they hearkened unto the word of the Lord returning to their place you know that tells me that at least the general population still had a respect for the things of God because remember here's 180,000 battle hardened men all hyped up ready to go into battle and Shemaiah shows up and says thus saith the

[43:03] Lord go home and it says they hearkened unto the word of the Lord in other words they said okay maybe not so much but basically the short sentence of it isn't it says they packed their bags and went back home and said no we're not why because God said that God established those things they had a respect and fear for the authority of the word of God they chose not to rebel against the Lord but to trust his word that this was of the Lord and so we're going to leave off here tonight but next time we're going to be looking at the direction that the two kingdoms now take because we can learn a lot of these initial decisions and things that take place as the kingdoms are divided and the things that take place and so let's go ahead and close in a word of prayer here tonight heavenly fathers we just come before you to