

# The Kings of Israel

A Kingdom Divided – 1 Kings 12:1 – 19



## Sermon Discussion Guide

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### STUDY NOTES

**We will serve you (12:4).** In later years, Solomon's reign had become oppressive. He had weighted the Israelites down with heavy taxes and pressed them into labor gangs (4:27 – 28; 5:13 – 16). Despite this, northern tribes were still willing to accept Solomon's son as their king – with this condition: less work, more time off.

**The young men (12:8).** Rehoboam was 41 when he became king (14:21). He and his friends were young compared to the elders. **Were Serving Him.** Rehoboam had not been crowned, yet he had already removed older, wiser officials from their positions and installed inexperienced friends in their places.

**I will make it even heavier (12:11).** Rehoboam and his advisors were arrogant and out of touch with the people's suffering. Rehoboam was not willing to lighten the heavy

Throughout our lives we are faced with making decisions. How do you typically react to an unexpected decision that requires an immediate response?

In this week's message Matt explained Rehoboam's inheritance as "precarious" due to the judgement that was placed on his father, Solomon, so he predictably began his reign under a lot of discontent and an urgent need to make some decisions.

### Read 1 Kings 12: 1-19

1. Where did Rehoboam go?
2. What was his purpose for going there?
3. Who did the assembly send for? What was their purpose for requesting his presence?
4. After hearing the request of Jeroboam, Rehoboam turned to the elders who had served his father and asked them for advice. The elders directed him to "be a servant...." (vs 7) to the people. What do you believe the elders meant when they made this statement?
  - Make a good first impression
  - Treat the people better than Solomon had
  - Show the people you care
  - Do something nice to win the loyalty of the people
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
5. Rehoboam rejected the advice of the elders and consulted with the young men he had grown up with. What was the attitude behind the advice of his friends? (vs 10-11)
  - Who do they think they are?
  - You're the king – do as you please
  - Play hardball
  - Compromise is for wimps
6. Rehoboam elected to follow the advice of his friends (vs 12-15) resulting in the separation of The Tribe of Judah from Israel (vs 16). Who do you believe was most responsible for Israel breaking apart?

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## STUDY NOTES

taxes and see his revenues drop. If anything, he would increase taxes. He met the people's complaints by speaking to them harshly (v.13).

**Turn of events (12:15).** When Solomon turned from God to worship idols, God declared that Solomon's sins would cost him most of the kingdom (11:9 – 13). The prophet Ahijah then promised Jeroboam that God would make him king over the northern tribes (11:29 – 39). That day had come. God did not approve of Rehoboam's harshness and pride, nor of the northern tribes' rebellion, but he used these events to fulfill his word.

**In charge of forced labor (12:18).** Adoniram, the man in charge of Solomon's forced labor gangs, was a hated man of oppression. The crowd was in an ugly mood, so when he tried to enforce obedience, they killed him.

- Rehoboam
  - Jeroboam
  - Solomon
  - Rehoboam's friends
  - The Northern tribes
  - The tribe of Judah
  - God
  - No one
7. Rehoboam had the opportunity to follow the direction of the elders and potentially bring the nation of Israel back into harmony but elected to proceed in a manner that separated the nation. This decision forever impacted God's chosen. Who was Rehoboam thinking about when he made his decision?
  8. Has this scripture provided any insight for you with future decision making?
  9. Why is it important to thoroughly understand all of our options when making a decision?
  10. Why should we consider the far-reaching effects our decisions can make on others?
  11. Think of an upcoming important decision you will have to make?
    - Who will you turn to for advice?
    - What were some of the things that will probably influence your decision?
    - What steps will you take in making your decision?