

2 Chronicles 11 - The Kingdom Divides; Rehoboam (Judah) Fortifies the Cities; Faithful Jews in North Move to Judah

IV. Judah's Kings (2 Chr 10:1—36:23)

(1) The kingdom is divided (2 Chr 10:1—11:23)

(A) Rehoboam's excessive taxation caused a split in the kingdom (2 Chr 10:1—11:4)

(B) Rehoboam consolidates Judah (11:5-23)

2 Chronicles 11

(A) Rehoboam's excessive taxation caused a split in the kingdom (2 Chr 10:1—11:4)

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1 When Rehoboam returned to Jerusalem, he gathered together 180,000 specially chosen soldiers from the households of Judah and Benjamin to fight against Israel and restore the kingdom to Rehoboam.

1 And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he gathered of the house of Judah and Benjamin an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against Israel, that he might bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam.

- Having failed to preserve unity through diplomacy, Rehoboam sought to restore it by force

— His pride led him further into trouble: he wanted to start a civil war to recapture the throne

— The tribe of Benjamin was Judah's immediate neighbor to the north. The capital city of Jerusalem lay almost on the Judah-Benjamin border. Probably for the sake of their close neighbors and the capital, the Benjamites sided with Judah that this point on (Cf. 2 Sam 19:16-17)

— Together these tribes called up 180,000 soldiers to fight their brothers in the 10 tribes to the north

2 But the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the **man of God**, saying,

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2 But a message from the LORD came to Shemaiah, a man of God:

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- "...man of God" - prophet (Cf. 13:18; 2 Kings 5:8; 2 Chr 12:5)

- His plans were interrupted by the word of the Lord through Shemaiah the prophet, who proclaimed that the rupture of the kingdom was in the plan of God

— Rehoboam nonetheless built defensive outposts in a number of places throughout Judah and Benjamin, the 15 cities listed here forming pretty much a circular defense all around Judah

3 "Tell Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and **all Israel in Judah and Benjamin**, saying,

3 "Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying,

3 "Tell Solomon's son Rehoboam, king of Judah and all of Israel in Judah and Benjamin:

3 Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying,

- "...all Israel in Judah and Benjamin" - God addresses the 12 tribes of the South (Cf. v13-16)

4 'This is what the LORD says: "You shall not go up nor fight against your relatives; return, every man, to his house, for this event is from Me.'" So they listened to the words of the LORD and returned from going against Jeroboam.

4 'Thus says the LORD, "You shall not go up or fight against your relatives; return every man to his house, for this thing is from Me.'" So they listened to the words of the LORD and returned from going against Jeroboam.

4 'This is what the LORD says: "You are not to fight or even to approach your relatives in battle. Every soldier is to return to his own home, for this development comes from me.'" So they listened to what the LORD had to say and called off their attack on Jeroboam.

4 Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren: return every man to his house: for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the words of the LORD, and returned from going against Jeroboam.

- The man of God made a public announcement that civil war was definitely not God's will and he convinced Rehoboam and the people to go back home

— To his credit Rehoboam obeyed the word of the LORD and did not proceed into battle. Again the writer pointed out the overruling hand of God in these affairs (as the LORD had ordered, v24; Cf. v15).

(B) Rehoboam consolidates Judah (11:5-23) (Cf. 1 Kings 14:21-31; 2 Chr 11:5—12:6)

5 Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem and **built** cities for defense in Judah.

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5 Rehoboam continued to live in Jerusalem and built defensive fortification cities throughout Judah,

5 And Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and built cities for defence in Judah.

- "...built" - strengthened, fortified

6 He built Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa,

6 Thus he built Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa,

6 including Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa,

6 He built even Bethlehem, and Etam, and Tekoa,

7 Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam,

7 Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam,

7 Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam,

7 And Bethzur, and Shoco, and Adullam,

8 Gath, Mareshah, Ziph,

8 Gath, Mareshah, Ziph,

8 Gath, Mareshah, Ziph,

8 And Gath, and Mareshah, and Ziph,

9 Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah,

9 Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah,

9 Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah,

9 And Adoraim, and Lachish, and Azekah,

10 Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron, which are fortified cities in Judah and Benjamin.

10 Zorah, Aijalon and Hebron, which are fortified cities in Judah and in Benjamin.

10 Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron. These were all fortified cities throughout Judah and Benjamin.

10 And Zorah, and Aijalon, and Hebron, which are in Judah and in Benjamin fenced cities.

11 He also strengthened the fortresses and put officers in them and supplies of food, oil, and wine.

11 He also strengthened the fortresses and put officers in them and stores of food, oil and wine.

11 He also strengthened the fortified cities, assigned officers to them, and stockpiled food, oil, and wine.

11 And he fortified the strong holds, and put captains in them, and store of victual, and of oil and wine.

12 *He put* shields and spears in every city and strengthened them greatly. So he held Judah and Benjamin.

12 *He put* shields and spears in every city and strengthened them greatly. So he held Judah and Benjamin.

12 He also stockpiled shields and spears in every city and fortified them greatly to secure his rule over Judah and Benjamin.

12 And in every several city he put shields and spears, and made them exceeding strong, having Judah and Benjamin on his side.

Faithful Jews from the Northern Kingdom Migrate to the South

13 Moreover, the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel also stood with him from all their districts.

13 Moreover, the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel stood with him from all their districts.

13 The priests and descendants of Levi throughout Israel also supported him in their districts,

13 And the priests and the Levites that were in all Israel resorted to him out of all their coasts.

14 For the Levites left their pasture lands and their property and went to Judah and Jerusalem, because Jeroboam and his sons had excluded them from serving as priests to the LORD.

14 For the Levites left their pasture lands and their property and came to Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had excluded them from serving as priests to the LORD.

14 because the descendants of Levi left their pasture lands and their property to live in Judah and Jerusalem, since Jeroboam and his sons had excluded them from participating in priestly services to the LORD.

14 For the Levites left their suburbs and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem: for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the LORD:

15 **He** set up priests of his own for the high places, for the **satyrs** and the calves which he had made.

15 He set up priests of his own for the high places, for the satyrs and for the calves which he had made.

15 Jeroboam had appointed his own priests to serve at the high places and to serve the satyrs and calves that he had made.

15 And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made.

- "He" - Jeroboam (northern kingdom)

- "...satyrs" - idols

- The priests and Levites of the North migrated south to join Rehoboam because Jeroboam (1 Kings 12:25—14:16) had removed them from office and replaced them with an illegitimate priesthood (v13-15)

16 Those from **all the tribes of Israel** who set their hearts on seeking the LORD God of Israel followed them to Jerusalem, to sacrifice to the LORD God of their fathers.

16 Those from all the tribes of Israel who set their hearts on seeking the LORD God of Israel followed them to Jerusalem, to sacrifice to the LORD God of their fathers.

16 As a result, anyone from all of the tribes of Israel who was determined to seek the LORD God of Israel followed the descendants of Levi to Jerusalem so they could sacrifice to the LORD God of their ancestors,

16 And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers.

- "...all the tribes of Israel" - Jeroboam's humanly devised form of worship and idolatry resulted in many faithful followers of Yahweh to migrate from the north to Judah so they could continue to worship God as He had specified

— Thus, many faithful worshippers of Yahweh populated Judah, from all 10 northern tribes

— This destroys the myth of the 10 lost tribes

— It appears that during Asa's reign in Judah, many more defected from Israel to Judah "when they saw that the LORD his God was with him (Asa)" (Cf. 15:9)

— "True Israel" was now in Judah (Cf. v3; 12:1)

- See [Myth of the "10 Lost Tribes"](#). The Scripture used to promote the 10 Lost Tribes is 2 Kings 17:6.

Some priests and Levites merely 'sided with Rehoboam' (v13) and remained in Israel, but others gave up their property in Israel and moved permanently to Judah (v14). A third group stayed in Israel but traveled to Jerusalem three times a year for the annual feasts (v16).

17 They strengthened the kingdom of Judah and supported Rehoboam the son of Solomon for three years, for they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years.

17 They strengthened the kingdom of Judah and supported Rehoboam the son of Solomon for three years, for they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years.

17 and they continued to strengthen the kingdom of Judah, supporting Solomon's son Rehoboam for three years, by living the way David and Solomon did for three years.

17 So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong, three years: for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon.

- The faithfulness of these northern Yahweh worshippers only lasted three years

— Rehoboam, like Solomon, was not entirely faithful

— In spite of Rehoboam's foolish decision in the last chapter (to increase the taxation burden on the people, 10:13-15), the Chronicler gave him credit for acting wisely in this one (v23)

— However, the Chronicler was harder on Rehoboam than was the writer of Kings, and the Chronicler regarded the prophets highly

Rehoboam's Wives and Children

18 Then Rehoboam married Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David *and of* Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse,

18 Then Rehoboam took as a wife Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David *and of* Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse,

18 Rehoboam married Mahalath, the daughter of David's son Jerimoth, along with Abihail, the daughter of Jesse's son Eliab,

18 And Rehoboam took him Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David to wife, and Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse;

19 and she bore to him sons: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham.

19 and she bore him sons: Jeush, Shemariah and Zaham.

19 who bore him these sons: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham.

19 Which bare him children; Jeush, and Shamariah, and Zaham.

20 After her he married Maacah the daughter of Absalom, and she bore to him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith.

20 After her he took Maacah the daughter of Absalom, and she bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza and Shelomith.

20 After this he married Absalom's daughter Maacah, who bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith.

20 And after her he took Maachah the daughter of Absalom; which bare him Abijah, and Attai, and Ziza, and Shelomith.

- The chronicler's purpose was to magnify the Davidic dynasty: unlike the author of 1 and 2 Kings, he related that Rehoboam's wife was a descendant of David from two sides (v18-19).

— Her father Jerimoth is otherwise unknown but here is identified as a son of David. Her mother was Abihail, daughter of David's brother Eliab (so Jerimoth married his cousin Abihail).

— Rehoboam's second wife, Maacah, was a daughter of Absalom (v20). This may not be David's son, Absalom, however, for he apparently left no children who achieved adulthood except daughter Tamar (Cf. 2 Sam 14:27; 18:18).

— Moreover, Maacah's father is otherwise named Abishalom (1 Kings 15:10) and Uriel (2 Chr 13:2)

21 Rehoboam loved Maacah the daughter of Absalom more than all his *other* wives and concubines. For he had taken eighteen wives and sixty concubines, and fathered twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters.

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21 Rehoboam loved Absalom's daughter Maacah more than he did all of his wives and mistresses. (He married eighteen wives and 60 concubines, fathering 28 sons and 60 daughters.)

21 And Rehoboam loved Maachah the daughter of Absalom above all his wives and his concubines: (for he took eighteen wives, and threescore concubines; and begat twenty and eight sons, and threescore daughters.)

- By this second wife, Abijah was born. Rehoboam loved his second wife more than any other of his 18 wives and 60 concubines.

- Rehoboam learned his disastrous marital style from his father Solomon; David was also a polygamist

— Polygamy was often practiced by the kings to secure alliances with nearby nations

22 Rehoboam appointed Abijah the son of Maacah as head and leader among his brothers, for he *intended* to make him king.

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22 Later, Rehoboam appointed Abijah, his son from Maacah, as senior family leader among his brothers, since he intended to establish Abijah as king.

22 And Rehoboam made Abijah the son of Maachah the chief, to be ruler among his brethren: for he thought to make him king.

- Abijah was his father's choice to succeed him as king, so Rehoboam made him crown prince (Cf. 13:1).

23 He acted wisely and distributed some of his sons through all the territories of Judah and Benjamin to all the fortified cities, and he gave them plenty of provisions. And he sought many wives *for them*.

23 He acted wisely and distributed some of his sons through all the territories of Judah and Benjamin to all the fortified cities, and he gave them food in abundance. And he sought many wives *for them*.

23 Rehoboam was wise to distribute some of his children throughout all of the territories of Judah and Benjamin, placing them in all of the fortified cities. He allotted them abundant supplies of food and sought many wives for them.

23 And he dealt wisely, and dispersed of all his children throughout all the countries of Judah and Benjamin, unto every fenced city: and he gave them victual in abundance. And he desired many wives.

- To placate his other sons, Rehoboam gave them political appointments, with handsome remunerations