

How to make wise Choices (1 Kings 12)

Over the years I've always been thankful for people who have given me good advice. Advice can be a wonderful thing, or it can be an absolute disaster.

The world is filled with those who would like to give us advice and the Bible SAYS it's good to listen when good advice is given. For example:

Proverbs 12:15 "The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice."

Proverbs 15:22 "Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."

Prov 19:20-21 "Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise. Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails."

All these proverbs were written by Solomon, who was trying to help his sons make wise decisions. Over and over, Solomon would say, "Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching." Proverbs 1:8

Rehoboam was the grandson of David and the son of Solomon. His story can be found in 1 Kings 12, as well as 11 Chron 10, where he seeks advice for a specific problem.

Let's examine 1 Kings 12 and see how the promise of God to divide the Kingdom became fulfilled. Along the way we will look at some applications on how to make good choices.

I. Seek Advice from the Right People:

Solomon achieved many great things and built many great buildings. But in order to build those buildings and keep everything running, Solomon demanded heavy taxes. When Solomon died, his throne was passed down to his son Rehoboam and he was approached by his people saying that they needed relief from the high taxes that Sol demanded.

Wisely, Rehoboam asked for 3 days so that he could consult with his advisors. First, he goes to his father's advisors... older men whom Solomon trusted for council.

Here we have a good lesson on how to make wise decisions. Who are the people we go to for advice? Do they have experience and skill in the area of our need?

II. Seek advice from God:

To see how badly Rehoboam failed in this area turn to 2 Chron 12:

Verse 1, "And it happened when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had made himself strong, he departed from the law of the LORD, and all Israel with him."

Verse 14, "Rehoboam did evil because he did not prepare his heart to seek the LORD."

In this entire story we do not find one example where Rehoboam tries to find out what God wants. He never consulted the priests at the Temple. He never spoke to any of the Prophets, God used to reveal His will. He never read what the scriptures said about the subject.

Even when he consulted with the Elders, Rehoboam wasn't really looking for God's will. Rehoboam was looking for someone who would agree with what he'd already decided to do.

What do we do when we find ourselves at a crossroad and we ask God, "Which road should I take?" Do we really want to know the Lord's answer? Or are we like Rehoboam, where we've already decided, "This is what I am going to do no matter what anybody else says."

III. Seek Advice from people who are Spiritual:

Proverbs 12:5, The plans of the righteous are just, but the advice of the wicked is deceitful."

Psalm 1 says, "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers."

Why is it never a good idea to good advice from the wicked? One reason is, "They don't think the way we do." Like the friends of Rehoboam, the advice of the wicked is often selfish and if I spend enough time with these people eventually, I'll think like them.

Rehoboam's friends didn't want to help others. They enjoyed dominating others.

When you listen to the counsel of fellow Christians, you at least stand a good chance of getting Biblical advice. One of the great resources God has given the church are Elders. They are here to give you and I Godly advice when we need it. They can be counted on to give good advice because they are good fathers, they are good husbands and they are men you can trust will stand with God's Word. When you need advice... look to God's people. If you don't, you may end up listening to foolish people – whose advice may cost you everything you hold precious.

Close:

If we could find a proverb that sums up the life of Rehoboam, Proverbs 29 is the one I would pick.

Verse 2 says, "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked rule, the people groan."

The life of Rehoboam teaches us to be very careful about the advice we receive. The greatest counselor that's ever lived on this earth was Jesus. Isa 9:6 describes him as our counselor.

I believe most of our problems we face can be resolved if we simply turn to Jesus and live the life God has prescribed.