### 1 Kings

## Chapter 12

1Well, King RehoBoam had gone to Sikima (because that’s where all IsraEl went to coronate him), 2and JeroBoam (son of NaBat) heard about it.  
  
At the time, he was still living in Egypt, where he settled after he had to run from Solomon. 3But the people of IsraEl called for him, and JeroBoam came back to them.  
  
For the people had spoken to King RehoBoam and told him:  
  
 4‘Your father oppressed us and kept our necks in a yoke!  
  
 ‘So now, lighten the load of our service to you... For your father was a hard taskmaster and he kept us under a heavy load!  
  
 ‘If you’ll do this, we’ll always serve you!’  
  
5And he replied:  
  
 ‘Give me three days [to think about it]!’  
  
So they left.  
  
  
6Then King RehoBoam went to the elders who used to stand before his father Solomon while he was alive, and he asked for their advice about what he should say to the people.  
  
7And they told him:  
  
 ‘If you wish to serve [as king] over these people today, do as they ask, and they’ll always be your servants.’  
  
8However, he chose not to listen to the advice that the elders had given to him, and he took the advice of some young men whom he’d grown up around and whom he’d selected to be his advisors.  
  
9So when he asked what they recommended he tell the people who came to him and told him to lighten the neck-yoke that his father had put on them, 10these young men (who’d grown up with him) said:  
  
 ‘You should tell those people who said that your father put a heavy yoke on them and that you should lighten it:  
  
 ‘My thinnest part is thicker than the hips of my father!  
  
 11‘Therefore, as my father saddled you to a heavy yoke, I’ll add more weight to it!  
  
 ‘And as my father disciplined you with whips, I’ll discipline you with scorpions!’  
  
12So when all IsraEl came before King RehoBoam on the 3rd day (the king of IsraEl had told them, ‘Return to me on the 3rd day’), 13the king spoke harshly to them and chose not to follow the advice that the older men had given to him.  
  
14Rather, he told them what his young men had told him to say:  
  
 ‘Although my father oppressed you with a neck yoke, I will now add to it!  
  
 ‘And although my father disciplined you with whips, I will discipline you with scorpions!’  
  
15So the king just wouldn’t listen to the people, because Jehovah had moved his heart to allow what He’d said (through the prophet AhiJah the Selonite) concerning JeroBoam (son of NaBat) to come true.  
  
16And when all IsraEl knew that the king wasn’t listening to them, they gave him this reply:  
  
 ‘What do we owe to David?  
  
 ‘We have no inheritance in JesSe’ son [David]!  
  
 ‘So, O IsraEl, run to you tents… Now!  
  
 ‘Let the house of David do its own grazing!’  
  
And with that, all IsraEl went back home to their tents.  
  
17Therefore, RehoBoam only ruled over the sons of IsraEl who lived in the cities of Judah after that... [spurious text; what it says is true, but the words are not in our LXX source manuscript]  
  
  
18Now, when the king sent AdoniRam to collect the tribute from them, all IsraEl stoned him to death… Even King RehoBoam had to get on his chariot and flee to JeruSalem!  
  
19So from that day on, [the 10 tribes of] IsraEl annulled its allegiance to the house of David.  
  
20And when [the people of] IsraEl heard that JeroBoam had returned from Egypt, they called for him to come to a meeting, where they gave him the rulership over IsraEl. So they no longer followed the house of David after that… Only the tribes of Judah and BenJamin continued to do so.  
  
  
21Well, after RehoBoam got back to JeruSalem, he held a meeting with the armies of Judah and the tribe of BenJamin – 120,000 young warriors – and he talked about going to war with the house of IsraEl so as to return them to the kingdom of RehoBoam, son of Solomon.  
  
22However, Jehovah sent word to His servant ShemaiJah… He told him:  
  
 23‘Speak to RehoBoam, son of Solomon, the king of Judah, as well as to the houses of Judah, BenJamin, and the rest of the people, and tell them that 24this is what Jehovah has decreed:  
  
 ‘You must not go to war against your brothers, the sons of IsraEl. Return to your homes, because I’m the One who caused these things to happen.’  
  
So they paid attention to words of Jehovah, for they didn’t want to oppose what He said.  
  
  
25Thereafter, JeroBoam built Sikima in the hills of Ephraim and ruled from there, and then he built PenuEl.  
  
26But later, JeroBoam said this in his heart:  
  
 ‘{Look!} I’m not going to return the kingdom to the house of David; 27but if I let these people go to offer sacrifices at the Temple of Jehovah in JeruSalem, they’ll soon turn their hearts towards Jehovah and to RehoBoam the king of Judah, and then they’ll kill me!’  
  
28So the king held a meeting, and after that, he had two gold heifers made.  
  
Then he said to the people:  
  
 ‘I don’t want you going to JeruSalem anymore!  
  
 ‘Look, here are your gods who led you out of the land of Egypt, O IsraEl!’  
  
29Then he put one [of the idols] in BethEl, and the other in Dan... 30And because of this sin, the people started worshiping the [idol] that he put in Dan, and they no longer went to the Temple of Jehovah.  
  
31The king also had temples built on the hilltops, and he appointed priests from among those who weren’t of the sons of Levi.  
  
32Then JeroBoam appointed the 15th day of the 8th month as a holiday, the same as it had been in the land of Judah.  
  
Thereafter, he went to BethEl, where he built an altar for [his people] to offer sacrifices to his heifers. And it was there in BethEl that he appointed the priests to be in charge of the high places that he’d created.  
  
33And on the 15th day of the 8th month (which was the holiday that he’d created in his own heart for the sons of IsraEl), he went up to the altar that he’d created to offer some sacrifices.