

(Through the Bible) 2 Chronicles 10-13

by Chuck Smith

The sermon explores the downfall of the kingdom of Israel and the importance of following God's law and maintaining a healthy relationship with Him.

Duration: 31:11

Scripture: Exodus 20:3, 1 Kings 11:1-4, 2 Chronicles 13:10, 2 Chronicles 13:12, Proverbs 3:5-6, Matthew 26:31

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the history of Israel and their rebellion against God. He mentions how God had made a covenant with David that there would always be a king from his seed on the throne. However, the people of Israel set up Jeroboam as their king and began worshiping golden calves instead of God. The speaker also talks about the decline of the nation under the reign of Rehoboam and expresses concern about the rapid downward trend of their nation. He emphasizes the importance of turning back to God and seeking His forgiveness in order to heal the land.

Transcript

Shall we turn in our Bibles to 2nd Chronicles chapter 10. The children of Israel have been brought out of Egypt by Moses. Through the leadership of Joshua they were brought into the land that God had promised to their fathers, Abraham and Jacob.

For a period of time in the land they were ruled by judges. But there came a time when they began to demand that Samuel would anoint them or appoint them a king. As the other nations around them had kings they also desired a king to rule over them.

Now it was God's purpose that the nation Israel be a unique special nation in the earth. That they would be a theocracy. A people who were governed by God.

And you may say, what is the highest form of human government? It would be a theocracy. Where people are governed by God. But the people were no longer satisfied with the theocracy.

They wanted a king that could lead them into battle. A king that they could look to that would lead the nation. And so they went from a theocracy to a monarchy.

As Saul was anointed first king over Israel. Now it was God's purpose that Saul as a king would be so yielded to God and would rule over the people in such a way as that he was just sort of a mediator

between God and the people. In other words, he would be in tune with God in order to receive the directions and instructions from God and would so lead the nation in the ways of God.

Just the intermediary or intermediary between God and the people. However, Saul became lifted up with pride. And he rejected the command of God.

And in his rejection of God that is submitting himself totally and fully to God. God rejected then him as king. And the dynasty of Saul ceased with him.

But God raised up another king after Saul, David. Took him from the sheep, quote, from following after the sheep and set him on the throne over God's people. And David was a man after God's own heart.

Because David was after the heart of God. Though he was far from perfect. Though he was guilty of terrible sins.

Yet because basically in his heart he was seeking after God and sought to do the will of God. God called David a man after his own heart. And God promised David that from him there would be a ruler that would come that would rule forever.

The eternal kingdom. That actually the Messiah would come out of David. But as long as David's children would follow after the Lord there would never cease one of the children of David sitting on the throne.

Now, that was a conditional covenant that God had made with David. It was conditioned upon David's children continuing to follow after the Lord. As long as they did, there would never cease to be one of David's descendants upon the throne.

However, David's descendants failed to keep the covenant of God and after Zedekiah there were no more kings. Now, there is a fanciful story that is told how that Jeremiah fled to Egypt with one of the princes and later went to England and established the Druid society and all and that from this descendant of David actually comes Queen Elizabeth and all that they are directly descendants. And so the monarchy is in England and thus England is a part of Israel and they have the British Israel kind of religion system.

The Anglo-Israel races and so forth being Israel and so then they interpret all of the Bible prophecies that relate to Israel as being fulfilled by the United States, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, England and so forth. But it's a fanciful story and it does lack truth, not anything else. So David, under his reign, the kingdom was blessed because David sought the Lord and God blessed David and God blessed the kingdom under David.

And David desired to build a temple, a house for the Ark of the Covenant. For David was dwelling himself in a beautiful palace and the Ark of the Covenant was in a tent and David was rejected by God as the builder of the temple because of the fact that he was a man of war and shed a lot of blood but he said I will raise up a son after you who will sit upon the throne and he shall build the house. So David went about and prepared all of the materials, gathered the gold, the silver, the iron, the brass, the timbers, the hewn stone and then he drew up the plans and then he abdicated the throne to his son Solomon, giving him the plans and encouraging him to go ahead and to build this house unto God.

So Solomon set himself at building and for seven years with, oh what is in the first chapter of 2nd Chronicles here, it tells us about 150,000 men who labored. They built this temple there in Jerusalem, the expenditure of millions of dollars. It is estimated that to replace the temple today that Solomon had built

would run into the billions of dollars.

And it was a glorious day. The temple was completed. The day of dedication had come and the glory of the Lord filled the temple as the cloud of God's glory descended upon it.

And there Solomon in a little brass platform that he had built out in the courtyard addressed the people, telling them of the faithfulness of God and then he knelt and prayed, recognizing that the heavens cannot contain God. We haven't built this house, God, for you to live in. We've just built this house that we might offer unto these sacrifices here.

Let your eye always be on this place and your ear always attentive to the prayers that are offered to you from this place. And then he could foresee down the line the tragedy of the people turning away from God and the resultant effect that it would have upon their national life. The disasters that would overcome them as a nation.

Natural disasters such as pestilences, such as weird weather conditions, drought conditions, or the disasters from being turned over into the hands of their enemies, being defeated and their men being taken hostage. And he brought up these various conditions that may result from the people's sin, and always saying, and Lord, if they turn to this place and they cry unto Thee, hear Thou from Thy holy place in heaven, answer their prayer and deliver them. And so God answered Solomon, if my people which are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and I will forgive their sin and I will heal their land.

And so there was this great sacrifice. Thousands of animals sacrificed on the day of dedication in this great celebration and just that neat nation with the consciousness of God at the heart and center of the national life. How beautiful that is.

When God becomes the center of the national life of the people. But this didn't last long. In fact, Solomon himself, before he died, began to worship other gods.

He had disobeyed the voice of God. He had disobeyed the law of God. The law said when you have set up kings, they're not to go down to Egypt to purchase horses, that they might multiply horses, nor are they to multiply wives unto themselves, lest their heart be turned away from me.

God knows human nature better than any of us know it. God knows you better than you know yourself. So many times God warns us of a particular thing and we say, alright, God, that's nice.

I appreciate that. Thank you for the warning, but I don't need it. I can handle it, Lord.

I've got this thing wired and don't worry about me. Like with Peter when Jesus said, all of you are going to be offended tonight because of me. Peter said, Lord, that's alright.

They may all be offended, but I won't ever be offended, Lord. Not me. The Lord said, Peter, before the cock crows, you're going to deny me three times.

Lord, if they would slay me, I would never deny you. Oh, but Jesus knew him better than he knew himself. And that's always the case.

Many times we think, well, this particular verse doesn't apply to me. I'm a special case. I can do it and get by with it.

I can handle it. Now, I can see why God would say that to other people. But I'm special and I can handle myself.

And thus, I don't need to obey this particular injunction. God said, and they are not to multiply wise unto themselves, lest their heart be turned away from me. Solomon multiplied wise unto himself.

Some 700 of them plus the 300 concubines. And what happened? His wives turned his heart away from the Lord. So, by the end of Solomon's reign, there began a deterioration.

And this is just right after the height, the zenith of the kingdom brought into this great position of strength and wealth through David. And then through the wisdom of Solomon in his early years, brought to this place of great glory and prominence. But it lasted so short.

There began that downward trend. So that at the death of Solomon, and here's where we get into chapter 10 tonight, his son Rehoboam began to reign over Jerusalem. And he reigned for 17 years.

And in that 17 years, the kingdom went from this glorious height and deteriorated into just a second-rate nation in power. The slide down is so rapid. And once it gets started, it's hard to reverse.

This is the thing that concerns me so much about our nation today. Once you start that downhill trend, it's so fast and it's so difficult to put on the brakes and to stop. And it would seem to me that our nation at the present time is plunging down into a second-rate status so rapidly.

And I really don't know if it can be reversed or stopped. Once mighty, once glorious, a nation that was established under God, a nation that stood forth in the world as a Christian nation, but has become so totally corrupt, obscene, and has sought to just rule God out of our national life. I am appalled by the rulings of the Supreme Court and by the local courts in the issues that relate to freedom of worship, separation of church and state.

It only works on one side. It doesn't work on both sides. And even by my saying this, I am jeopardizing myself because they've started a new system now.

If ever you speak out against it, then soon you have all kinds of harassment. But the kingdom went down rapidly under Rehoboam. In fact, the kingdom was divided right at the beginning of his reign.

When Rehoboam was anointed king, the northern tribes of Israel came to him. And they said, During the time of your father's reign, the taxes were increased over and over again until the tax burden that we are bearing is really greater than we can handle. Howard Jarvis got an initiative to cut the taxes.

And he presented it to Rehoboam. And so Rehoboam said, Give me three days and I will give you an answer regarding this. They said, Cut the taxes.

We've got to have a tax cut. He said, Give me three days to answer you. So he went to his counselors, the old men that counseled this father Solomon.

And the old men said, You know, these people have a just cause. The taxes are overbearing. We need to relieve them of this tax burden.

It would be wise to go ahead and cut their taxes. And then Rehoboam consulted with the younger guys that he was bringing in to reign with him in his kingdom. And these younger guys advised him, Now look, if

you cut the taxes, this is just the beginning of their complaints.

Next week, they're going to be back with something else and then back with something else and back with something else. And you're just not going to be able to handle it. The older fellow said, Look, if you don't cut their taxes, they're not going to serve you.

They're going to rebel against you. But Rehoboam listened to his younger counselors and he forsook the counsel of the older men. And when the people came back after three days to get his answer, he said, Hey, you think my dad was tough? You haven't seen anything yet.

Where he whipped you with whips, I'm going to whip you with scorpions. Well, my little finger will be thicker than his thigh. And he gave these threats and the people said to your tents, Oh, Israel, what have we to do with David? And so the ten northern kingdoms or ten northern tribes rebelled against Rehoboam.

And they took this fellow Jeroboam and they said, We want you to be king over us. And so Jeroboam became the king over the ten northern tribes. And Rehoboam was now just left with the tribe of Benjamin and the tribe of Judah plus the tribe of Levi.

Because Jeroboam in the north, the kingdom that was known now as Israel, established the calf worship in Israel. And he began to just make priests out of anybody. And there came really a total religious confusion in the northern kingdom.

And the Levites left the northern kingdom. And all of those people who really loved the Lord, they came on down and gave their allegiance unto Rehoboam in the kingdom of Judah. Rehoboam sent a tax collector up to the ten northern tribes and they killed him.

And so Rehoboam gathered his army and he was going to march against the northern kingdom. And the prophet of the Lord came and warned them not to fight against the northern kingdom. And so they returned and they sought to establish the kingdom under Rehoboam.

But it wasn't long after he returned to Jerusalem that he turned from God. Having fortified the kingdom, he then turned his heart against God. It came to pass, chapter 12, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom and had strengthened himself, he forsook the law of the Lord and all Israel with him.

As the king goes, so goes the nation. Having forsaken the Lord, he led them in a path away from God. And there came from Egypt a pharaoh by the name of Shishak who began to invade the land of Judah and take the cities.

Actually, the Lubins and the Ethiopians had come with him with a mighty host. And they came to Jerusalem and began to besiege Jerusalem. And a prophet of the Lord came to Rehoboam and said unto them, Thus saith the Lord, you have forsaken me and therefore I also have left you in the hand of Shishak.

Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves and they said, The Lord is righteous. So as Shishak was now coming towards Jerusalem, the prophet of God says, Hey, you brought this on yourself. You have forsaken the Lord.

Now the Lord has left you. And it is interesting that they acknowledge God is righteous. And they humbled themselves.

And the Lord saw they humbled themselves and he said, Because they have humbled themselves, I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. Nevertheless, they shall be his servants that they may know my service and the service of the kingdoms of the countries. So he came up against Shishak, Shishak came up against Jerusalem and they more or less bought him off.

They took all of the gold that was in the temple, the golden shields and all of these things that Solomon had placed there and they gave them unto Shishak, the king of Egypt, more or less just bought him out and he plundered the city of Jerusalem of all of its gold, returning to Egypt. Now, the archaeologists discovered in 1939 in Egypt and an account of this invasion of Israel or Judah. In the archaeological account there that they have discovered, it declares that they took 169 of the cities of Judah.

They also found the sarcophagus in which Shishak was entombed and it was encased in silver, actually it was a silver sarcophagus, encased in gold, solid gold, probably the same gold that he took from the temple in Jerusalem that Solomon had established there. So it's an interesting sort of confirmation from the archaeologists' spade of what God's word declared did indeed take place. The death of Rehoboam is listed in the latter part of the chapter.

In verse 14, it gives sort of a brief obituary, which is rather sad, and he did evil because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord. On his death, his son, Abiah, began to reign over Judah. And he reigned for three years in Jerusalem.

His mother's name was Micahiah, the daughter of Uriel, of Gibeah. And there was war between Abiah and Jeroboam. Now, Jeroboam, you remember, was the king of the northern tribes.

And Abiah set in battle in array in the army of valiant men of war, 400,000 chosen men. And Jeroboam came against him with 800,000 chosen men, being mighty men of valor. And Abiah stood upon Mount Ephraim.

And he said, Hear me, Jeroboam and all Israel. Ought ye not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David forever, even to him and his sons by a covenant of salt? Yet Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon, the son of David, is risen up and hath rebelled against his lord. And there are gathered under him vain men, the children of Belial, who have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tender-hearted and could not withstand them.

And now you think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the sons of David, and you're being a great multitude, and there are with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made for your gods. And you have cast out the priest of the Lord, the sons of Aaron and the Levites. And if you made yourself priest after the manner of the nations of other lands, so that whosoever comes to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams, the same may be a priest of them that are no gods.

But as for us, Jehovah is our God, and we have not forsaken him. The priests which minister unto Jehovah are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business. And they burn unto the Lord every morning, every evening, burnt sacrifices, sweet incense.

The shewbread also set they in order upon the pure table. The candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof to burn every evening, for we keep the charge of the Lord our God, but you have forsaken him. And

behold, God himself is with us for our captain.

And his priest with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you, O children of Israel. Fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers, for ye shall not prosper. Now here he was actually giving to them a speech, a warning, and more or less rehearsing this period of history.

Again, how that God had made a covenant with David that from his seed there would never cease to be a king on the throne. And they were rebelling against the word of the Lord in setting up Jeroboam as their king. And they had made then these golden calves their gods.

And they were worshiping them and they had forsaken the worship of God. They began to establish a system of priesthood more or less by simony. You could purchase the office of the priest.

And vile men began to be the religious leaders. But he said, we are still worshiping Jehovah. We still have the temple services.

The priest are still offering the morning and evening sacrifices unto God. Who are the sons of Aaron, the Levitical order. And you're rebelling and fighting against the Lord.

But God is our captain. He's on our side. Now while he's making this speech, Jeroboam orders half of his troops to go around and to get behind them to cut them off.

After all, he's outnumbered them two to one. There's 800,000 mighty men of valor with Jeroboam. Only 400,000 of the men of Judah that had come against him.

So this action of sending half the troops around to come from behind. And so when the king is finished with this dynamic speech, suddenly they discover that the enemy is not only in front of them, but behind them too. And they've been encircled by the enemy.

And then the men of Judah, it says, gave a shout. And the men of Judah, and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abiah and Judah. And the children of Israel fled before Judah.

God delivered them into their hand and they were slain. Of the men of Israel, 500,000 of the chosen men. So Israel was brought under the power of Judah at that time.

And Abijah, pursued after Jeroboam, took several cities, the city of Bethel with the surrounding suburbs. And Jeroboam never did again recover the strength of the kingdom during the time of Abiah. The Lord struck him and he died.

And so Abiah waxed mighty. He married 14 wives, had 22 sons and 16 daughters.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/6/SID6362.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/chuck-smith/through-the-bible-2-chronicles-10-13/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net