

Story: Rehoboam is Humbled

Theme: Repentance

Text: 2 Chronicles 12

Approximate Story Time: 4 – 5 minutes

Discussion Questions: 3

PBA Questions from Story: 7

Total PBA Questions: 16

Rehoboam is Humbled

Travis King

Oh, not now, thought King Rehoboam when he saw the messenger run in. He had enough on his plate already without another problem. Someone was always bursting in and disrupting his day over some trivial political problem. But when he saw the fear in his messenger's eyes, he realized that this was worse than he had thought.

"My Lord," gasped the messenger. He took only a brief moment to catch his breath. "My Lord, Shishak, the king of Egypt - he is coming to attack us. I saw it myself. There were probably around twelve hundred chariots, and at least sixty thousand horsemen. And besides that, there were thousands of other people traveling on foot. He's already started taking the fortified cities of Judah, and when he's finished with them he'll come here."

It took a few moments for the seriousness of the situation to sink into the king, and when it had he was immediately filled with dread. "When will Shishak come here?"

"Most likely within the week; he's only taken a few cities so far."

Just what I needed, thought Rehoboam. *What should I do? I'll need more than advice; I need a prophet or something. But do we have any prophets here?*

Jerusalem began to fill up with the leaders of Judah, driven out of their cities by Shishak and his army. It wasn't long before Rehoboam heard that the prophet Shemaiah was coming. He was relieved that God's messenger was coming, but also afraid of what he would say. He had fallen further from God in the last few years of his reign than he had even been before. What if the prophet didn't want to help him? What if God didn't want to help him? He found out soon enough.

Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah had met together and were waiting for the prophet to come. Some were talking excitedly about God's deliverance, while some were fearfully whispering about Jerusalem's demise. Suddenly, Shemaiah walked into the room. Everyone immediately stopped talking and there was a chilling silence. Rehoboam looked nervously at Shemaiah, who looked back directly into his king's eyes. The prophet did not speak for a moment, only staring deeply into Rehoboam's eyes, where his false confidence could not cover his fear and guilt.

Shemaiah finally opened his mouth and spoke. "Thus says the Lord: 'You have forsaken Me, and therefore I also have left you in the hand of Shishak.'" He looked at the Rehoboam once more and then turned and walked from the room.

The long silence following was eventually broken by a leader from Aijalon. "We have sinned by forsaking the Lord." The rest of the men agreed, and even Rehoboam realized how grave their mistake was. Because they had forgotten their Creator, they were going to be destroyed by their enemies.

Within hours, Shemaiah was back in the same room, but this time he was not facing proud and pious men, but humble men wearing expensive clothes that they had torn in shame. In tears, they said to the prophet, "The Lord is righteous!"

Shemaiah had another message from God. "The Lord says: 'They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance. My wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. Nevertheless they will be his servants, that they may distinguish My service from the service of the kingdoms of the nations.'"

Shemaiah's message filled Rehoboam not only with relief but with joy. God really did love him.

Rehoboam watched Shishak's army leave Jerusalem. While relieved that Shishak had not destroyed Jerusalem, he was sad that Shishak had taken his own valuable treasures. But what troubled the king even more was that Shishak had taken the treasures from the temple that his father, Solomon, had built, including the golden shields that Solomon had made. He immediately ordered his men to make new shields out of bronze and put them in a special, secure room. He put guards in charge of the shields, and whenever Rehoboam visited the temple, the guards brought out the shields, and when Rehoboam left, the guards took the shields back into their room.

Rehoboam reigned over Judah for twelve more years. After the threat of Shishak's army was gone, he forgot God again, and eventually died when he was 58 years old. He was buried in Jerusalem, and then his son Abijah became king.

Discussion questions:

1. What do we usually tend to do when faced with a big problem that is brought on by mistakes we have made? (like Rehoboam faced when invaded by Shishak) Do we repent and humble ourselves immediately or do we wait till there is no other option?
 - a. Rehoboam's first instinct was not to rely on God. Since he didn't rely on God day to day, when trouble came his first instinct was to rely on himself.
 - b. As king, the responsibility of leadership made him think he had to come up with the answers to problems.
 - c. We tend to rely on our strength instead of God's strength
2. What got the attention of Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah and led them to humble themselves? What does God have to do to get our attention when we stray from Him?
 - a. God sent Shemaiah the prophet with a direct message to them of God's punishment for their sins.
 - b. God told them there was nothing they could do to solve their problem.
 - c. God gives us messages through His Word
 - d. God sends parents, teachers, friends, and others to counsel us
3. Once Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah humbled themselves and repented, did everything go perfectly for them? Will God make our problems always go away if we repent?
 - a. Shishak still defeated Jerusalem.
 - b. Shishak took the treasures of the king and the LORD's house and the gold shields of Solomon.
 - c. There are consequences to decisions that often remain even when we repent and God helps us.
 - d. God uses the trials we go through to strengthen our characters

PBA Questions: (Do as many as there is time for, at least one or two.) (The first seven can be answered from the story as told above.)

1. According to 2 Chronicles 12:6, what did Rehoboam and the leaders of Israel say when they humbled themselves?

ANS: "The LORD is righteous."

2. According to 2 Chronicles 12:2, who came up against Jerusalem in the fifth year of King Rehoboam?
ANS: Shishak king of Egypt
3. According to 2 Chronicles 12:5, what prophet came to Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah, who were gathered together in Jerusalem because of Shishak?
ANS: Shemaiah
4. According to 2 Chronicles 12:16, when Rehoboam rested with his fathers, who reigned in his place?
ANS: Abijah
5. According to 2 Chronicles 12:4, what did Shishak take before he came to Jerusalem?
ANS: the fortified cities of Judah
6. According to 2 Chronicles 12:10, what kind of shields did Rehoboam make to replace the gold shields Solomon had made which Shishak carried away?
ANS: bronze shields
7. According to 2 Chronicles 12:7-8, the word of the LORD to Shemaiah said that since they (the leaders of Israel and the king) had humbled themselves, they would not be destroyed, but would be Shishak's what?
ANS: his (Shishak's) servants
8. 2 points. According to 2 Chronicles 12:15, in what two books were the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, written?
ANS: the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and of Iddo the seer concerning genealogies
9. 3 points. According to 2 Chronicles 12:3, what three peoples did Shishak bring up with him when he attacked Jerusalem in the fifth year of Rehoboam.
ANS: the Lubim and the Sukkiim and the Ethiopians
10. According to 2 Chronicles 12:13, how old was Rehoboam when he became king?
ANS: 41 (forty-one years old and reigned seventeen years)
11. According to 2 Chronicles 12:12, when Rehoboam humbled himself, what turned from him?
ANS: **the wrath of the LORD**, so as not to destroy him completely; and things also went well in Judah
12. According to 2 Chronicles 12:10-11, when were the bronze shields taken from the guardroom?
ANS: whenever the king entered the house of the LORD
13. 3 points. According to 2 Chronicles 12:9, what three things did Shishak take away from Jerusalem? Be specific.
ANS: the treasures of the house of the LORD, the treasures of the king's house, the gold shields which Solomon had made
14. According to 2 Chronicles 12:1, what did Rehoboam do after he had established the kingdom and strengthened himself?

ANS: forsook the law of the LORD (and all Israel along with him)

15. According to 2 Chronicles 12:6-7, who saw that the leaders of Israel and the king had humbled themselves?

ANS: the LORD

16. According to 2 Chronicles 12:14, why did Rehoboam do evil?

ANS: because he did not prepare his heart to seek the LORD