

Unlocking The Mystery & Treasure Of Our Inheritance

#41 Civil War In The Family: A Turning Point

Dispensation of Law covered a period of time from the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai until Christ's death when He declared: "It Is Finished." Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law.

Included in the Dispensation of Law:

The Period of Wilderness Wanderings under Moses

The Period of Conquest under Joshua

The Period of the Judges - Dark time in history - Ruth/Boaz Line to bring Savior

The Period of the Kings

The Period of the Captivities (under Assyria & Babylon)

The Period of Restoration to the Land under Zerubbabel and Ezra and Nehemiah

The Period of History Covered by the Four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John)

I Samuel: Book of great beginnings and tragic endings. It begins with Eli as High Priest during the time of the judges. Tragically, Eli's life ended in ignominy as his sacrilegious sons were judged by God and the sacred Ark of the Covenant fell into enemy hands [I Sam. 4].

God began to solve the Israelite's problem by Sending A Baby who was an answer to prayer from a barren woman, Hannah. She later delivers Samuel to the Lord's house at Shiloh and presents him to Eli the priest for a life of service to God. She ends her prayer in:

I Sam. 2:10 "The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken in pieces;

From heaven He will thunder against them. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth.

"He will give strength to His king, and exalt the horn of His anointed."

1. Anointed = Hebrew is Messiah & Christos in Greek.

Note: The OT Jews anointed people for 2 positions: priest and king.

Jesus was anointed to fulfill both roles. He is the believer's High Priest [Heb. 4:14; 5:5].

He is the King of Kings and Lord of lords. [Rev. 19:16]

2. This is the 1st use of Messiah in the Bible.

3. Hannah rejoices: God's enemies will be shattered. He will move against them from heaven.

4. God will empower his King and exalt His Messiah.

5. God will set up a kingdom and His King and Messiah will rule over it.

6. This prophecy will be fulfilled at the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ.

Samuel, the last judge of Israel, began the school of the prophets and anointed Israel's first two kings.

I Sam. 8:1-5 Now it came to pass when Samuel was old that he made his sons judges over Israel. ² The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah;

they *were* judges in Beersheba. ³ But his sons did not walk in his ways;

they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice.

⁴ Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah,

⁵ and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways.

Now Make Us A King to judge us like all the nations."

Note: Before Israel entered the Promised Land, Moses prophetically counseled them about establishing kings to rule over them. The instructions were clear: if the people ever chose to have a king, they must select someone who met certain criteria. A king had to be:

1. One chosen by the Lord.
2. A member of the house of Israel and not a Gentile.
3. One who did not seek to "multiply horses" (a Hebrew idiom meaning to make extensive preparations for aggressive warfare).
4. One who would not lead Israel back to Egypt (back to their worldly ways).
5. One who would not multiply wives and wealth unto himself.
6. One who followed the law of God in ruling the people.
7. One who kept the statutes of God [Deuteronomy 17:14-20]

Key Point: Israel forgot the LORD'S counsel from centuries before.

I Sam. 8:6-9 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the LORD. ⁷ And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but They Have Rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. ⁸ According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also. ⁹ Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall Solemnly Forewarn Them, and show them the behavior of the king who will reign over them."

Note: Israel had already deviated from faithfulness, but here, she formally rejects God as her Ruler, taking a major step toward being exactly like all the nations around her. Except for brief periods when Israel had a judge or king who did right in the eyes of God, the spiritual harlotry continued unabated until God formally divorced her, sending Israel and Judah into captivity.

The key to understanding the significance of Israel's demand in I Samuel 8:

She Desires A King Just Like The Other Nations. Spiritually, this demand confirms Israel's whorish behavior. This demand occurred between 1100 and 1000 BC or roughly 350 years after the marriage vows at Mt. Sinai. This is a complete rejection of her marriage vows.

1. She wants her Benefactor and Husband—God—to have no say in her life.
2. Declare herself free of Him.
3. Totally a nation of this world - no longer the type of God's Kingdom on earth.

Consider: The Bible has recorded in great detail: Mankind wants to retain his own authority.

Truth: Man cannot retain sovereignty to himself and still have what God offers man: redemption, eternal life.

God tells Samuel to describe the national effects of her demand.

Warnings: I Sam. 8:10-18 So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who asked him for a king. ¹¹ And he said, "This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you:

1. Take your sons as soldiers. Keep some of the sons as long-term army staff.
2. Take your sons for plowing and to reap his harvest.
3. Take 1/10th of your flocks.
4. Require that some of you become his slaves.

5. Take your daughters for perfumers, cooks and bakers.
6. Take the best of your fields, vineyards and olive groves to feed his staff
7. Take 10% of your grain and vineyards to maintain his government.
8. Take your male and female slaves.
9. Take your best young men and donkeys to do his hard labor
10. Take 1/10th of your flocks. Everyone will serve him.
11. You will find hardship due to the king.

I Sam. 8:18 And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not hear you in that day."

I Sam. 8:19-22 Nevertheless the People Refused To Obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."

And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he repeated them in the hearing of the LORD. So the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed their voice, and make them a king."

Old Testament Israel was unified and ruled by a king for only 120 years of its history.

King Saul	Tribe of Benjamin	1050 - 1010 BC	People's Choice
King David	Tribe of Judah	1010 - 970 BC	God's Choice
King Solomon	Tribe of Judah	970 - 930 BC	Built Temple

Civil War erupted when Solomon died in 922 BC. The unified kingdom was divided into two distinct entities with different royal lineages. God had told Solomon the nation would split into two separate pieces because He Caused The People To Worship Many Pagan Gods.

I Kings 11:9-12 And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should Not Go After Other Gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. ¹¹ Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I Will Surely Rend The Kingdom From Thee, and will give it to thy servant. [Jeroboam]

¹² Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of your son. [Rehoboam]

I Kings 11:26-40 Jeroboam, an Ephraimite and son of a widow, was one of Solomon's servants who was a very talented and skillful worker. When Solomon commenced the construction of a terrace and was closing the gap in the wall surrounding his palace, he recognized Jeroboam's abilities and promoted him to leader of the work crew of the tribe of Joseph.

The prophet Ahijah privately took Jeroboam aside and informed him that he would be given ten of the tribes of Israel to lead as king. He underscored this prophecy by tearing his new robe into 12 pieces, and giving Jeroboam 10 of them. He was told that God would leave one tribe, Judah, for Solomon's descendants to rule. [God's unconditional covenant with David to keep one of his descendants on the throne - protected the Messianic line so the Savior could come into the world.] Ahijah made it clear the division of the kingdom was the result of

Solomon's sin in worshipping the foreign gods of his many wives.

He indicated that at some time in the future the nation would once again be reunited (11:39).

God Promised Jeroboam great success as the first king of Israel (10 northern tribes of Israel), but only On The Condition that Jeroboam walked in the steps of David: I Will Be With You and Establish For You a Lasting Dynasty, as I did for David. I WILL GIVE YOU ISRAEL.

What A Promise!

v. 40 - Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but Jeroboam escaped to Egypt and found refuge with King Shishak of Egypt. He stayed in Egypt until Solomon died.

When Solomon died, Rehoboam reigned over unified Israel and Jeroboam returned to Israel.

Israel's Turning Point: When Rehoboam and the Israelites met that fateful day in Shechem, everyone assumed Rehoboam would become Israel's king. The people made a simple and reasonable request of Rehoboam to lighten the greivous yoke of his father, Solomon.

1. Advice of the old men who had served Solomon = Lighten the yoke

2. Advice of young men: I Kings 12:11 ...my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

v. 16: "Down with David and his relatives. Rehoboam can be king of his own family."

Rehoboam's unwillingness to lift the heavy taxation was the ultimate catalyst God used to separate his people Israel.

Note: Rehoboam's Sinful Attitudes: [attitudes of the flesh or old man]

1. PRIDE (or arrogance): Rehoboam was too proud to heed the petition of the people and to lighten the load his father had placed on them.

2. POWER: Rehoboam wanted to be in control, to be "in charge."

He viewed mercy, kindness, and humility as weakness, and he would have none of this.

3. "Godly Counsel." Rehoboam refused to heed the wise counsel of his father's counselors; instead, he listened to his peers.

4. Leadership: Rehoboam abused his position of leadership. He saw it as an opportunity to force others to serve him, rather than as his opportunity to serve others.

Humility and servanthood would have saved his kingdom.

Consider: Rehoboam should have known better.

Deut. 17:18-20 When he sits on the throne as king, he must copy for himself this body of instruction on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests.¹⁹ He must always keep that copy with him and read it daily as long as he lives. That way he will learn to fear the LORD his God by obeying all the terms of these instructions and decrees. ²⁰ This regular reading will prevent him from becoming proud and acting as if he is above his fellow citizens.

It will also PREVENT him from turning away from these commands in the smallest way.

And it will ENSURE that he and his descendants will reign for many generations in Israel.

1. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, ruled over the Southern Kingdom [Judah] which was composed of the territory belonging to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. Jerusalem was the capital and the house of David continued to govern this nation until the fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. to the Babylonians.

2. A newly proclaimed king, Jeroboam, ruled over the Northern Kingdom, Israel [10 tribes] for 22 years. Samaria became its capital. Jeroboam was followed by a series of kings for 200 years who were evil and behaved wickedly. Israel fell to Assyria in 722 BC.

In both the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms, the criteria established by the Lord was largely ignored, and both Israel and Judah reaped the sad result.

Jeroboam's Active Role In The Spiritual Decline Of The Northern Kingdom Of Israel

Recall: God had promised Jeroboam his kingdom would last and he would be very successful, if he only obeyed His commandments: I Will Give You Israel

Consider: Does God ask too much of us to Walk By Faith?

How Can I Make Sure I Get ALL That God Promised Me?

I Kings 12:25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Penuel.

1. Fortified and strengthened several key cities against invaders.

2. Trusted his own defenses and strategy instead of trusting God to be his shield and defender

I Kings 12:26-32 Jeroboam then thought to himself: "Now the Davidic dynasty could regain the kingdom. If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the Lord's Temple In Jerusalem, their loyalty could shift to their former master, King Rehoboam of Judah.

[Deut. 12:5 But you shall seek *the LORD* at the place which the LORD your God will choose from all your tribes, to establish His name there for His dwelling, and there you shall come.] They might kill me and return to King Rehoboam of Judah."

After the king had Consulted With His Advisers, he made two golden calves.

Consider: Jeroboam listened to his advisors rather than believe God's promise.

All he did "flew in the face" of Israel's history and of God's law.

FEAR Consumed Him: Fear is one of the 1st evidences of UNBELIEF!

We take our eyes off the Lord and focus on our circumstances.

1. Afraid he would lose his kingdom and even his life.

2. Feared the divided kingdom would re-unite.

3. People of Israel would go worship in Jerusalem [as God had instructed - 3 feasts/year].

4. People of Israel would shift their loyalty to Rehoboam of Judah.

Solution: Establish a counterfeit religion [similar to the worship God ordained].

Keypoint #1: He was counting on the tendency of the people to turn to idols.

Keypoint #2: Counting on the desire of most people for a religion that is convenient, not too costly and close enough to the authorized faith to be comfortable for the conscience.

Keypoint #3: He doesn't tell them to forget Jehovah but to worship Him in the form of a golden calf.

Note: Pagan religions use statues to "hold up" the invisible forms of the gods.

Recall: What did Jehovah God say at Mt. Sinai?

Israel's Lord Jehovah is a God who would be HEARD but NOT SEEN or TOUCHED.

HEARING HIS WORD is what generates FAITH which enables us to obey Him.

Consider: By royal proclamation, he instituted a "do-it-yourself religion."

1. Made 2 golden calves - 1 in Dan; 1 in Bethel

2. He said to the people, "It is too much trouble for you to go up to Jerusalem.

Look, Israel, here are your gods who brought you up from the land of Egypt." [Ex. 32:7-8]

This Caused Israel To Sin; the people went to Bethel and Dan to worship the calves.

3. He built temples on the high places and appointed as priests people who were not Levites.

4. He instituted feasts designed to replace the divinely appointed Jewish feasts (especially those which required the Israelites to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem)

5. On the altar in Bethel he offered sacrifices to the calves he had made.

6. In Bethel he also appointed priests for the high places he had made.

7. He set up his own religious calendar.

8. Made himself a priest and offered incense and blood sacrifices

Result: His counterfeit religion imitated the Canaanite religions.

It appealed to the people of Israel and turned them away from the worship of the one true God.

The Israelites reached a new level of sin and rebellion against God.

Jeroboam becomes the standard by which other evil kings are measured:

I Kings 33-34 In the third year of Asa's reign over Judah, Baasha son of Ahijah became king over all Israel in Tirzah; he ruled for twenty-four years. He did evil before the Lord; he followed in Jeroboam's footsteps and encouraged Israel to sin.

Even after being rebuked for his sins, Jeroboam persisted in his evil ways, which prompted divine judgment: I Kings 14:7-11 Go, tell Jeroboam, 'This is what the Lord God of Israel says:

"I raised you up from among the people and made you ruler over my people Israel. I tore the kingdom away from the Davidic dynasty and gave it to you. But you are not like my servant David, who kept my commandments and followed me wholeheartedly by doing only what I approve. You have sinned more than all who came before you. You went and angered me by making other gods, formed out of metal; you have completely disregarded me.

So I am ready to bring disaster on the dynasty of Jeroboam. I will cut off every last male belonging to Jeroboam in Israel, including even the weak and incapacitated. I will burn up the dynasty of Jeroboam, just as one burns manure until it is completely consumed. Dogs will eat the ones who die in the city, and the birds of the sky will eat the ones who die in the country."

Indeed the Lord has announced it.

Ahijah's Prophecy: I Kings 14:15-16 For the LORD shall Smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall Root Up Israel Out Of This Good Land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall Scatter Them Beyond The River, because they have made their groves, provoking the LORD to anger. And he shall Give Israel Up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin.

The prophets Elijah and Elisha were called by God to challenge these idolatrous Israelites to worship Yahweh alone. The first of the writing prophets were Amos and Hosea, challenging the apostate northern kings of Israel from Jeroboam II through Hoshea. Because kings and people alike refused to return to Yahweh, in 722 B.C. God allowed the powerful empire of Assyria to overthrow the northern kingdom of Israel. The Assyrians, cruel and merciless, not only destroyed the cities and towns of the land, taking its wealth as booty, but they also took the people captive and dispersed them throughout the empire so that all sense of nationhood would be destroyed forever (II Kings 17:1-23).

Does my life reflect a trust and belief in God's promises regarding my inheritance?

I Peter 1:3-9 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the Trial Of Your Faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory At The Appearing Of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

Phil 3:14 I press on toward the goal to win the [supreme and heavenly] prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling us upward.

Acts 20:32 And now I commend you to God, and to the Word Of His Grace, which is able to build you up, and To Give You The Inheritance Among All Them That Are Sanctified.