

Royal Lessons for Life

Rehoboam

(Judah)

Rehoboam's Biography

- Though (in)famously having 700 wives and 300 concubines, we only have record of three children of Solomon: son Rehoboam (mother is Naamah the Ammonite, I Kings 14:21) and daughters Taphath (I Kings 4:11) and Basemath (I Kings 4:15).
- He is 41 years old when he takes the throne and reigns for 17 years - II Chronicles 12:13
- The kingdom he is to inherit is in decline and disarray, with enemies risen without and divisions spreading within – I Kings 11
 - This includes the marking of Jeroboam as a future king of ten tribes of Israel – I Kings 11:26-40
- In 975 B.C., the twelve tribes gathered to acclaim Rehoboam as king, but things do not go well – I Kings 12:1-24
 - Led by Jeroboam, the ten Northern Tribes demanded relief from the burden of taxation and service that Solomon had required of them – I Kings 12:4
 - Rehoboam heeds the counsel of his young peers and threatens that his rule will be even harsher than his father's – I Kings 12:10-11
 - The Northern Tribes rebel and proclaim Jeroboam as their king – I Kings 12:20
 - Rehoboam is left with the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and eventually much of Levi – II Chronicles 11:1,13-14
- Shemaiah the prophet stops Rehoboam from attacking the rebellious tribes, so he instead builds up the fortifications of his own kingdom – II Chronicles 11:1-12
- He did not seek the Lord like his father and grandfather – I Kings 14:22-24
- Perhaps to solidify his claim to the throne, he marries two of his cousins (it's complicated) along with 16 other wives and 60 concubines – II Chronicles 11:18-23
- During his reign Shishak of Egypt spoils Jerusalem and there was continued conflicts with the Northern Tribes – I Kings 14:21-30, II Chronicles 12:2-12
- He dies at age 58 and his son Abijam/Abijah inherits the throne of Judah.

Lessons from the Life of Rehoboam

- Having grown up in the Golden Age of Israel, Rehoboam was unprepared for the responsibilities he acquired – II Chronicles 12:14
- Rehoboam spurned the wise advice of his father (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes) and his generation to follow that of his peers – Proverbs 11:14, 15:22, 24:6
- I think the defining attribute of Rehoboam is selfishness – Philippians 2:3