

## ENGAGING GOSPEL DOCTRINE 102.2

### Lesson 27 (Study Notes): [The Influence of Wicked and Righteous Leaders](#)

**Class Member Reading:** 1 Kings 12; 13; 14; 2 Chronicles 10:7; 17; 20

#### **The Northern Tribes Secede**

**12** Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. <sup>2</sup>When Jeroboam son of Nebat heard of it (for he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon), then Jeroboam returned from Egypt. <sup>3</sup>And they sent and called him; and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and said to Rehoboam, <sup>4</sup>‘Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke that he placed on us, and we will serve you.’ <sup>5</sup>He said to them, ‘Go away for three days, then come again to me.’ So the people went away. (How we respond to concerns expressed by those we lead constitutes one of the most essential elements of leadership)

On a “challenge and be challenged by” note, it is important to keep in mind that there are strong agendas and even polemics at play in these chapters. That said, we will focus on what we learn about leadership from these narratives.

**6** Then King Rehoboam **took counsel** with the **older men** who had attended his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying, ‘**How do you advise me** to answer this people?’ <sup>7</sup>They answered him, ‘**If you will be a servant to this people today and serve them, and speak good words to them when you answer them**, then they will be your servants for ever.’ (Great answer with important life application) <sup>8</sup>But he **disregarded the advice** (Another key quality: Be humble enough to both ask for advice and listen to it) that the older men gave him, and **consulted the young men who had grown up with him and now attended him**. (So easy to read into this!) <sup>9</sup>He said to them, ‘What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, “Lighten the yoke that your father put on us”?’ <sup>10</sup>The young men who had grown up with him (Note repetition) said to him, ‘Thus you should say to this people who

spoke to you, “Your father made our yoke heavy, but you must lighten it for us”; thus you should say to them, “My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins. <sup>11</sup> Now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.” ’

12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had said, ‘Come to me again on the third day.’ <sup>13</sup> The king answered the people harshly. He **disregarded the advice** that the older men had given him <sup>14</sup> and spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, ‘My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.’ <sup>15</sup> **So the king did not listen to the people, (key leadership failing)** because it was a turn of affairs brought about by the LORD that he might fulfil his word, which the LORD had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat.

16 When all Israel saw that the king would not listen to them, the people answered the king,

‘What share do we have in David?

We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse.

To your tents, O Israel!

Look now to your own house, O David.’

So Israel went away to their tents. <sup>17</sup> But Rehoboam reigned over the Israelites who were living in the towns of Judah. <sup>18</sup> When King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was **taskmaster over the forced labour, (leadership failing: lack of sensitivity)** all Israel stoned him to death. King Rehoboam then hurriedly mounted his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. <sup>19</sup> So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

### **First Dynasty: Jeroboam Reigns over Israel**

20 When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. There was no one who followed the house of David, except the tribe of Judah alone. **(Thorough failing of united monarchy)**

21 When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, one hundred and eighty thousand chosen troops to fight against the house of Israel, to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam son of Solomon. <sup>22</sup> But the **word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God:** <sup>23</sup> Say to King Rehoboam of Judah,

son of Solomon, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, <sup>24</sup>‘Thus says the LORD, You shall not go up or fight against your kindred the people of Israel. Let everyone go home, for this thing is from me.’ So they heeded the word of the LORD and went home again, according to the word of the LORD. (at least Rehoboam listened to the prophet and avoided a disastrous civil war)

### Jeroboam’s Golden Calves

25 Then Jeroboam **built Shechem** in the hill country of Ephraim, and resided there; he went out from there and **built Penuel**. <sup>26</sup>Then Jeroboam said to himself, ‘Now the kingdom may well revert to the house of David. <sup>27</sup>If this people continues to go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, the heart of this people will turn again to their master, (obviously very strong bias here) King Rehoboam of Judah; they will kill me and return to King Rehoboam of Judah.’ <sup>28</sup>So the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold. He said to the people, ‘You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Here are your gods, O Israel, who **brought you up out of the land of Egypt**.’ (Talk a bit about Jeroboam as a Moses figure himself) <sup>29</sup>He set one in **Bethel**, and the other he put in **Dan**. <sup>30</sup>And this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one at Bethel and before the other as far as Dan. <sup>31</sup>He also made **houses on high places**, and **appointed priests from among all the people**, who were not Levites. <sup>32</sup>Jeroboam appointed a festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth month like the festival that was in Judah, and he offered sacrifices on the altar; so he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made. <sup>33</sup>He went up to the altar that he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, in the month that he alone had prescribed; he appointed a festival for the people of Israel, and he went up to the altar to offer incense.

### A Man of God from Judah

**13** We are getting into some pretty strange stories now. While Jeroboam was standing by the altar to offer incense, a man of God came out of Judah by the word of the LORD to Bethel <sup>2</sup>and **proclaimed against the altar** by the word of the LORD, and said, ‘O altar, altar, thus says the LORD: “A son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and he shall sacrifice on you the priests of the high places who offer incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.” ’ <sup>3</sup>He gave a sign the

same day, saying, 'This is the sign that the LORD has spoken: "The altar shall be torn down, and the ashes that are on it shall be poured out." ' <sup>4</sup>When the king heard what the man of God cried out against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, 'Seize him!' But the hand that he stretched out against him withered so that he could not draw it back to himself. <sup>5</sup>The altar also was torn down, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign that the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. <sup>6</sup>The king said to the man of God, 'Entreat now the favour of the LORD your God, and pray for me, so that my hand may be restored to me.' So the man of God entreated the LORD; and the king's hand was restored to him, and became as it was before. <sup>7</sup>Then the king said to the man of God, 'Come home with me and dine, and I will give you a gift.' <sup>8</sup>But the man of God said to the king, 'If you give me half your kingdom, I will not go in with you; nor will I eat food or drink water in this place. <sup>9</sup>**For thus I was commanded by the word of the LORD: You shall not eat food, or drink water, or return by the way that you came.**' (Unwavering faithfulness to God's commands, no matter how minute or insignificant seeming, is a theme in the OT) <sup>10</sup>So he went another way, and did not return by the way that he had come to Bethel.

11 Now there lived an old prophet in Bethel. One of his sons came and told him all that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; the words also that he had spoken to the king, they told to their father. <sup>12</sup>Their father said to them, 'Which way did he go?' And his sons showed him the way that the man of God who came from Judah had gone. <sup>13</sup>Then he said to his sons, 'Saddle a donkey for me.' So they saddled a donkey for him, and he mounted it. <sup>14</sup>He went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak tree. He said to him, 'Are you the man of God who came from Judah?' He answered, 'I am.' <sup>15</sup>Then he said to him, 'Come home with me and eat some food.' <sup>16</sup>But he said, 'I cannot return with you, or go in with you; nor will I eat food or drink water with you in this place; <sup>17</sup>for it was said to me by the word of the LORD: You shall not eat food or drink water there, or return by the way that you came.' <sup>18</sup>Then the other said to him, 'I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD: Bring him back with you into your house so that he may eat food and drink water.' But he was deceiving him. <sup>19</sup>Then the man of God went back with him, and ate food and drank water in his house. Why this prophet contest and deceit? The emphasis of these bizarre stories is that God's will is fulfilled.

20 As they were sitting at the table, the word of the LORD came to the prophet who

had brought him back (so a valid prophet despite the deceit? How do we respond to contrasting prophetic words? This was a reality in ancient Israel [see Jer. 38 for another example] The Church statement on race and the priesthood provides a modern instance);<sup>21</sup> and he proclaimed to the man of God who came from Judah, 'Thus says the LORD: Because you have disobeyed the word of the LORD, and have not kept the commandment that the LORD your God commanded you,<sup>22</sup> but have come back and have eaten food and drunk water in the place of which he said to you, "Eat no food, and drink no water", your body shall not come to your ancestral tomb.'<sup>23</sup> After the man of God had eaten food and had drunk, they saddled for him a donkey belonging to the prophet who had brought him back.<sup>24</sup> Then as he went away, a lion met him on the road and killed him. His body was thrown in the road, and the donkey stood beside it; the lion also stood beside the body.<sup>25</sup> People passed by and saw the body thrown in the road, with the lion standing by the body. And they came and told it in the town where the old prophet lived.

26 When the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard of it, he said, 'It is the man of God who disobeyed the word of the LORD; therefore the LORD has given him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him according to the word that the LORD spoke to him.'<sup>27</sup> Then he said to his sons, 'Saddle a donkey for me.' So they saddled one,<sup>28</sup> and he went and found the body thrown in the road, with the donkey and the lion standing beside the body. The lion had not eaten the body or attacked the donkey.<sup>29</sup> The prophet took up the body of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back to the city, to mourn and to bury him (mourn the prophet he got killed?).<sup>30</sup> He laid the body in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, 'Alas, my brother!'<sup>31</sup> After he had buried him, he said to his sons, 'When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones.'<sup>32</sup> For the saying that he proclaimed by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places that are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.'

33 Even after this event Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but made priests for the high places again from among all the people; any who wanted to be priests he consecrated for the high places.<sup>34</sup> This matter became sin to the house of Jeroboam, so as to cut it off and to destroy it from the face of the earth.

### **Judgement on the House of Jeroboam**

**14**At that time Abijah son of Jeroboam fell sick. <sup>2</sup>Jeroboam said to his wife, ‘Go, disguise yourself, so that it will not be known that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh; for the prophet Ahijah is there, who said of me that I should be king over this people. <sup>3</sup>Take with you ten loaves, some cakes, and a jar of honey, and go to him; he will tell you what shall happen to the child.’

<sup>4</sup> Jeroboam’s wife did so; she set out and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were dim because of his age. <sup>5</sup>But the LORD said to Ahijah, ‘The wife of Jeroboam is coming to inquire of you concerning her son; for he is sick. Thus and thus you shall say to her.’

When she came, she pretended to be another woman. <sup>6</sup>But when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, he said, ‘Come in, wife of Jeroboam; why do you pretend to be another? For **I am charged** with heavy tidings for you. <sup>7</sup>Go, tell Jeroboam, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Because I exalted you from among the people, made you leader over my people Israel, <sup>8</sup>and tore the kingdom away from the house of David to give it to you; yet you have not been like my servant David, who kept my commandments and followed me with all his heart, doing only that which was right in my sight, <sup>9</sup>but you have done evil above all those who were before you and have gone and made for yourself other gods, and cast images, provoking me to anger, and have thrust me behind your back; ([Application: living up to our opportunities that God gives us](#)) <sup>10</sup>therefore, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam. I will cut off from Jeroboam every male, both bond and free, in Israel and will consume the house of Jeroboam, just as one burns up dung until it is all gone. <sup>11</sup>Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city, the dogs shall eat; and anyone who dies in the open country, the birds of the air shall eat; for the LORD has spoken.”

<sup>12</sup>Therefore set out, go to your house. When your feet enter the city, the child shall die. <sup>13</sup>All Israel shall mourn for him and bury him; for he alone of Jeroboam’s family shall come to the grave, because in him there is found something pleasing to the LORD, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam. <sup>14</sup>Moreover, the LORD will raise up for himself a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam today, even now!

**15** ‘The LORD will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; he will root up Israel

out of this good land that he gave to their ancestors, and scatter them beyond the Euphrates, because they have made their sacred poles, provoking the LORD to anger. <sup>16</sup> He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, which he sinned and which he caused Israel to commit.' [This prophecy is fulfilled with the destruction of Israel in 722](#)

17 Then Jeroboam's wife got up and went away, and she came to Tirzah. As she came to the threshold of the house, the child died. <sup>18</sup> All Israel buried him and mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke by his servant the prophet Ahijah.

### **Death of Jeroboam**

19 Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred and how he reigned, are written in the **Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel**. <sup>20</sup> The time that Jeroboam reigned was twenty-two years; then he slept with his ancestors, and his son Nadab succeeded him.

### **Rehoboam Reigns over Judah**

21 Now Rehoboam son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city that the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite. <sup>22</sup> Judah did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; they provoked him to jealousy with their sins that they committed, more than all that their ancestors had done. <sup>23</sup> For they also built for themselves high places, pillars, and sacred poles on every high hill and under every green tree; <sup>24</sup> there were also male temple prostitutes in the land. They committed all the abominations of the nations that the LORD drove out before the people of Israel.

25 In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, King Shishak of Egypt came up against Jerusalem; <sup>26</sup> he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house; he took everything. He also took away all the shields of gold that Solomon had made; <sup>27</sup> so King Rehoboam made shields of bronze instead, and committed them to the hands of the officers of the guard, who kept the door of the king's house. <sup>28</sup> As often as the king went into the house of the LORD, the guard carried them and brought them back to the guardroom.

29 Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the **Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah**? <sup>30</sup>There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. <sup>31</sup>Rehoboam slept with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David. His mother's name was Naamah the **Ammonite**. His son Abijam succeeded him.

## 2 Chronicles 10:7

They answered him, 'If you will **be kind** to this people and **please them**, and **speak good words to them**, then they will be your servants for ever.' [Sound principles](#).

## Jehoshaphat's Reign

**17** His son Jehoshaphat ([Jehoshaphat is our example in this assigned reading of how to be a good, wise leader](#)) succeeded him [[Asa](#)], and strengthened himself against Israel. <sup>2</sup>He placed forces in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim that his father Asa had taken. ([Preparation, foresight](#)) <sup>3</sup>The **LORD was with Jehoshaphat**, because he walked in the earlier ways of his father; he did not seek the Baals, <sup>4</sup>but **sought the God of his father and walked in his commandments**, and not according to the ways of Israel. <sup>5</sup>Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand. All Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honour. <sup>6</sup>His heart was courageous in the ways of the LORD; and furthermore he removed the high places and the sacred poles from Judah.

7 In the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, ([Note these are prophets whose books we have in the Bible](#)) Nethanel, and Micaiah, to **teach** in the cities of Judah. <sup>8</sup>With them were the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah; and with these Levites, the priests Elishama and Jehoram. <sup>9</sup>They taught in Judah, having the book of the law of the LORD with them; they went around through all the cities of Judah and taught among the people. ([Another important leadership point: teaching true principles](#))

**10** The **fear of the LORD** fell on all the kingdoms of the lands around Judah, and they did not make war against Jehoshaphat. <sup>11</sup>Some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and silver for tribute; and the Arabs also brought him seven



thousand seven hundred rams and seven thousand seven hundred male goats. <sup>12</sup>Jehoshaphat grew steadily greater. He built **fortresses and storage cities** in Judah. <sup>13</sup>He carried out **great works** in the cities of Judah. He had soldiers, mighty warriors, in Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>This was the muster of them by ancestral houses: Of Judah, the commanders of the thousands: Adnah the commander, with three hundred thousand mighty warriors, <sup>15</sup>and next to him Jehohanan the commander, with two hundred and eighty thousand, <sup>16</sup>and next to him Amasiah son of Zichri, a volunteer for the service of the LORD, with two hundred thousand mighty warriors. <sup>17</sup>Of Benjamin: Eliada, a mighty warrior, with two hundred thousand armed with bow and shield, <sup>18</sup>and next to him Jehozabad with one hundred and eighty thousand armed for war. <sup>19</sup>These were in the service of the king, besides those whom the king had placed in the fortified cities throughout all Judah. (Does this description make anyone else think of Captain Moroni? 😊 )

### **Invasion from the East**

**20**After this the Moabites and Ammonites, and with them some of the Meunites, came against Jehoshaphat for battle. <sup>2</sup>Messengers came and told Jehoshaphat, ‘A great multitude is coming against you from Edom, from beyond the sea; already they are at Hazazon-tamar’ (that is, En-gedi). <sup>3</sup>Jehoshaphat was **afraid**; he **set himself to seek the LORD**, and **proclaimed a fast** throughout all Judah (Note how he responded to danger! More good examples). <sup>4</sup>**Judah assembled to seek help from the LORD**; from all the towns of Judah they **came to seek the LORD**.

### **Jehoshaphat’s Prayer and Victory**

<sup>5</sup>Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, <sup>6</sup>and said, ‘O LORD, God of our ancestors, are you not God in heaven? Do you not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations? In your hand are power and might, so that no one is able to withstand you. <sup>7</sup>Did you not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel, and give it for ever to the descendants of your friend Abraham? <sup>8</sup>They have lived in it, and in it have built you a sanctuary for your name, saying, <sup>9</sup>“If disaster comes upon us, the sword, judgement, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house, and before you, for your name is in this house, and cry to you in our distress, and you will hear and save.” <sup>10</sup>See now, the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, whom you would

not let Israel invade when they came from the land of Egypt, and whom they avoided and did not destroy— <sup>11</sup>they reward us by coming to drive us out of your possession that you have given us to inherit. <sup>12</sup>O our God, will you not execute judgement upon them? For we are powerless against this great multitude that is coming against us. **We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.**’ (Humility, faith)

13 Meanwhile **all Judah stood before the LORD**, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. <sup>14</sup>Then the spirit of the LORD came upon **Jahaziel son of Zechariah**, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the middle of the assembly. <sup>15</sup>He said, ‘Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the LORD to you: “Do not fear or be dismayed at this great multitude; for the battle is not yours but God’s. <sup>16</sup>Tomorrow go down against them; they will come up by the ascent of Ziz; you will find them at the end of the valley, before the wilderness of Jeruel. <sup>17</sup>This battle is not for you to fight; take your position, **stand still, and see the victory of the LORD on your behalf**, O Judah and Jerusalem.” **Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, and the LORD will be with you.**’

18 Then Jehoshaphat **bowed down with his face to the ground**, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, **worshipping the LORD**. <sup>19</sup>And the Levites, of the Kohathites and the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice. (faith, piety, devotion)

20 They **rose early** in the morning and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, ‘Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! **Believe in the LORD your God and you will be established; believe his prophets.**’ <sup>21</sup>**When he had taken counsel with the people**, he appointed those who were to sing to the LORD and praise him in holy splendour, as they went before the army, saying,  
‘Give thanks to the LORD,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever.’

<sup>22</sup>As they began to **sing and praise**, the LORD set an ambush against the Ammonites, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, so that they were routed. <sup>23</sup>For the Ammonites and Moab attacked the inhabitants of Mount Seir, destroying them utterly; and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they all helped to destroy one another.

24 When Judah came to the watch-tower of the wilderness, they looked towards the

multitude; they were corpses lying on the ground; no one had escaped.<sup>25</sup> When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take the booty from them, they found livestock in great numbers, goods, clothing, and precious things, which they took for themselves until they could carry no more. They spent three days taking the booty, because of its abundance.<sup>26</sup> On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Beracah, for there they blessed the LORD; therefore that place has been called the Valley of Beracah to this day.<sup>27</sup> Then all the people of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat at their head, **returned to Jerusalem with joy**, for the LORD had enabled them to rejoice over their enemies.<sup>28</sup> They came to Jerusalem, with harps and lyres and trumpets, to the house of the LORD.<sup>29</sup> The fear of God came on all the kingdoms of the countries when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel.<sup>30</sup> And the realm of Jehoshaphat was **quiet**, for his God **gave him rest** all around. [Peace is the result of his wise leadership](#)

### **The End of Jehoshaphat's Reign**

31 So Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned for twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah daughter of Shilhi.<sup>32</sup> He walked in the way of his father Asa and did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the sight of the LORD.<sup>33</sup> Yet the high places were not removed; the people had not yet set their hearts upon the God of their ancestors.

34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, from first to last, are written in the **Annals of Jehu son of Hanani**, which are recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel.

35 After this King Jehoshaphat of Judah joined with King Ahaziah of Israel, who did wickedly.<sup>36</sup> He joined him in building ships to go to Tarshish; they built the ships in Ezion-geber.<sup>37</sup> Then Eliezer son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, 'Because you have joined with Ahaziah, the LORD will destroy what you have made.' And the ships were wrecked and were not able to go to Tarshish.

Additional Reading: 1 Kings 11:26-40

**1 Kings 11:26-40**

## Jeroboam's Rebellion

26 (This story makes me think a bit of Moses. Quite sympathetic towards Jeroboam)

Jeroboam son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, rebelled against the king.<sup>27</sup> The following was the reason he rebelled against the king. Solomon built the Millo, and closed up the gap in the wall of the city of his father David.<sup>28</sup> The man Jeroboam was very able, and when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious **he gave him charge over all the forced labour of the house of Joseph.**<sup>29</sup> About that time, when Jeroboam was leaving Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Ahijah had clothed himself with a new garment. The two of them were alone in the open country<sup>30</sup> when Ahijah laid hold of the new garment he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces.<sup>31</sup> He then said to Jeroboam: Take for yourself ten pieces; for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'See, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon, and will give you ten tribes.'<sup>32</sup> One tribe will remain his, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel.<sup>33</sup> **This is because he has forsaken me,** worshipped Astarte the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites, and has not walked in my ways, doing what is right in my sight and keeping my statutes and my ordinances, as his father David did.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, I will not take the whole kingdom away from him but will make him ruler all the days of his life, for the sake of my servant David whom I chose and who did keep my commandments and my statutes;<sup>35</sup> **but I will take the kingdom away from his son and give it to you—that is, the ten tribes.**<sup>36</sup> Yet to his son I will give one tribe, so that my servant David may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen to put my name.<sup>37</sup> I will take you, and you shall reign over all that your soul desires; you shall be king over Israel.<sup>38</sup> **If you will listen to all that I command you, walk in my ways, and do what is right in my sight by keeping my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, I will be with you, and will build you an enduring house, as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you.**<sup>39</sup> For this reason I will punish the descendants of David, but not for ever.'<sup>40</sup> Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam; but Jeroboam promptly fled to Egypt, to King Shishak of Egypt, and remained in Egypt until the death of Solomon. *This is a touching positive note—the portrayal of Jeroboam in these chapters is complex and mixed.*

Other Reading: Luke 22:24-27; Mark 9:33-37; 10:42-44; D&C 121

Luke 22:24-27

## The Dispute about Greatness

We are fortunate to have Jesus' words about leadership and status. <sup>24</sup> A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. <sup>25</sup> But he said to them, 'The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. <sup>26</sup> But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. <sup>27</sup> For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But **I am among you as one who serves.**

Mark 9:33-37; 10:42-44

## Who Is the Greatest?

<sup>33</sup> Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the way?' <sup>34</sup> But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. <sup>35</sup> He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, '**Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.**' <sup>36</sup> Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, <sup>37</sup> 'Whoever **welcomes** one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.' <sup>42</sup> So Jesus called them and said to them, 'You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. <sup>43</sup> But **it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant,** <sup>44</sup> **and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all.**

D&C 121

1 O God, where art thou? And where is the pavilion that covereth thy hiding place?

2 How long shall thy hand be stayed, and thine eye, yea thy pure eye, behold from the eternal heavens the wrongs of thy people and of thy servants, and thine ear be penetrated with their

cries?

3 Yea, O Lord, how long shall they suffer these wrongs and unlawful oppressions, before thine heart shall be softened toward them, and thy bowels be moved with compassion toward them?

4 O Lord God Almighty, maker of heaven, earth, and seas, and of all things that in them are, and who controllest and subjectest the devil, and the dark and benighted dominion of Sheol— stretch forth thy hand; let thine eye pierce; let thy pavilion be taken up; let thy hiding place no longer be covered; let thine ear be inclined; let thine heart be softened, and thy bowels moved with compassion toward us.

5 Let thine anger be kindled against our enemies; and, in the fury of thine heart, with thy sword avenge us of our wrongs.

6 Remember thy suffering saints, O our God; and thy servants will rejoice in thy name forever.

7 My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

8 And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes.

9 Thy friends do stand by thee, and they shall hail thee again with warm hearts and friendly hands.

10 Thou art not yet as Job; thy friends do not contend against thee, neither charge thee with transgression, as they did Job.

11 And they who do charge thee with transgression, their hope shall be blasted, and their prospects shall melt away as the hoar frost melteth before the burning rays of the rising sun;

12 And also that God hath set his hand and seal to change the times and seasons, and to blind their minds, that they may not understand his marvelous workings; that he may prove them also and take them in their own craftiness;

13 Also because their hearts are corrupted, and the things which they are willing to bring upon others, and love to have others suffer, may come upon themselves to the very uttermost;

14 That they may be disappointed also, and their hopes may be cut off;

15 And not many years hence, that they and their posterity shall be swept from under heaven, saith God, that not one of them is left to stand by the wall.

16 Cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord, and cry they have sinned when they have not sinned before me, saith the Lord, but have done that which was meet in mine eyes, and which I commanded them.

17 But those who cry transgression do it because they are the servants of sin, and are the children of disobedience themselves.

18 And those who swear falsely against my servants, that they might bring them into bondage and death—

19 Wo unto them; because they have offended my little ones they shall be severed from the ordinances of mine house.

20 Their basket shall not be full, their houses and their barns shall perish, and they themselves shall be despised by those that flattered them.

21 They shall not have right to the priesthood, nor their posterity after them from generation to generation.

22 It had been better for them that a millstone had been hanged about their necks, and they drowned in the depth of the sea.

23 Wo unto all those that discomfort my people, and drive, and murder, and testify against them, saith the Lord of Hosts; a generation of vipers shall not escape the damnation of hell.

24 Behold, mine eyes see and know all their works, and I have in reserve a swift judgment in the season thereof, for them all;

25 For there is a time appointed for every man, according as his works shall be.

26 God shall give unto you knowledge by his Holy Spirit, yea, by the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost, that has not been revealed since the world was until now;

27 Which our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation to be revealed in the last times, which their minds were pointed to by the angels, as held in reserve for the fulness of their glory;

28 A time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld, whether there be one God or many gods, they shall be manifest.

29 All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

30 And also, if there be bounds set to the heavens or to the seas, or to the dry land, or to the sun, moon, or stars—

31 All the times of their revolutions, all the appointed days, months, and years, and all the days of their days, months, and years, and all their glories, laws, and set times, shall be revealed in the days of the dispensation of the fulness of times—

32 According to that which was ordained in the midst of the Council of the Eternal God of all other gods before this world was, that should be reserved unto the finishing and the end thereof, when every man shall enter into his eternal presence and into his immortal rest.

33 How long can rolling waters remain impure? What power shall stay the heavens? As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it up stream, as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints.

Carefully examine the points in the rest of the section:

**34** Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

**35** Because their hearts are **set so much upon the things of this world**, and **aspire to the honors of men**, that they do not learn this one lesson—

**36** That the rights of the priesthood are **inseparably connected with the powers of heaven**, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only (*Very important point: this “only” means “except”*) upon the principles of righteousness.

**37** That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to **cover our sins**, or to **gratify our pride, our vain ambition**, or to **exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness**, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, **Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man**.

**38** Behold, ere he is aware, he is **left unto himself**, to kick against the pricks, to persecute the saints, and to fight against God.

**39** **We have learned by sad experience** that it is the **nature and disposition of almost all men**, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion. (*This is why it is critical to keep this in mind and have checks and balances so it doesn't happen, and have ways of addressing this “unrighteous dominion” when*



it happens. Is that the case in our own lives and stewardship?)

**40** Hence many are called, but few are chosen.

**41** No power or influence **can or ought** to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by **persuasion**, by **long-suffering**, by **gentleness** and **meekness**, and by **love unfeigned**;

**42** By **kindness**, and **pure knowledge**, which shall **greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—**

**43** Reproving betimes (this “betimes” means “early”) with sharpness (as in surgical precision, focusing on precisely the issue at hand), **when moved upon by the Holy Ghost**; (not when moved upon by anger or frustration) and **then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved**, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy;

**44** That he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death.

**45** Let thy **bowels also be full of charity** towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let **virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly**; then shall thy **confidence** wax strong in the presence of God; and the **doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.**

**46** The **Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth**; and thy **dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever.** (As I have said before, I love the idea that this describes Godhood. God forces or compels nothing, but waits for all of Creation to follow them of their own free will and ability)