



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1890 ~ Shishak Raids the Temple.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

Rehoboam, the new king of Judah, knew that God Almighty didn't want him and his army to attack the 10 northern tribes of Israel, which had just established its own kingdom under the rulership of Jeroboam. A prophet of God had told Rehoboam and his soldiers that God was instructing them to return home, and this they obeyed. Rehoboam's loss of the northern tribes from his previous kingdom of 12 tribes came as a result of his refusal to make any concessions to the slavery-type demands that the common people were under. While he might have been living in good times with his superrich peers and nobles, most his people weren't.

The division between the northern and southern tribes developed from the unfaithfulness of the Israelite leaders and people to the Lord their God. The tragic result of their collective disobedience occurred just as God had foretold through Moses that it would. Under the terms of God's covenant with the people, obedience to God would bring them abundant blessing, but disobedience would bring terrible trouble. Now that the Israelite nation had been divided into two kingdoms, God chose to continue His redemptive purpose for all sinful people of the world through King David's line from the kingdom of Judah.

Yet God's plan didn't end His claims on all the tribes in the nation. Through faithful prophets and priests, God continued to challenge the people in all tribes about the idol worship that the kings had reintroduced into both kingdoms. And He condemned the low moral standards and unfaithfulness that came from their idolatry.

In Judah, Rehoboam set his 28 sons to work on fortifying the cities of Judah and to make his much smaller kingdom strong. Today's *Bible Adventure* drama starts towards the end of the 14th chapter in 1st Kings of the Bible.

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During most of Rehoboam's 17-year reign, the people of Judah behaved almost as badly as the people of the 10 northern tribes of Israel. They too engaged in the detestable practices of the Canaanites by setting up pagan shrines and altars on every high hill to practise shrine prostitution. According to 2nd Chronicles, Chapter 11, for the first three years of Rehoboam's reign, the people of Judah remained faithful to God Almighty. But after that, the people of Judah began to turn from the Lord and continued to do so.

As a result of Judah's sins against God, God used the Egyptian king, Shishak, to come and punish them. Shishak wasn't related to the Egyptian princess that King Solomon had married, but he was the king who had given sanctuary to Jeroboam when fleeing for his life from Solomon during Solomon's last years of reign. Shishak came and invaded Judah with a huge army and soon captured Rehoboam's fortified cities, before then moving onto Jerusalem. There Shishak plundered the Temple of God and royal palace, and took with him many valuable items, including the gold shields that King Solomon had made.

During Shishak's invasion, the people of Judah immediately became distressed and humbled themselves before the Lord. As a result, the Lord saved them from total destruction. Despite God's warning to Rehoboam at the beginning of his reign that he wasn't to go war with his fellow Israelites, it's recorded in the Bible that there was a continual warfare between Judah and Israel during both the reigns of Rehoboam and Jeroboam.

What can we learn from the life of Rehoboam? Many of us would have liked to be born into a rich family and had everything that we could have dreamed of. But Rehoboam's life is proof that riches don't necessarily build good character, integrity or leadership qualities. Rehoboam was 41 years old when he came to the throne, in about 930 BC. He'd lived through the good years when his father Solomon had followed the Lord God's instructions faithfully. He had also seen the slow decline of the nation towards the end of his father's reign. So why didn't he resolve to do better for his kingdom than his father had as Solomon approached his death? Following in his father's footsteps is no excuse for a leader not to make important changes to restore what was entitled to God and needing altering. In those days, the king's word was law, so it wasn't as though Rehoboam didn't have the authority to change the culture of Judah while he had the opportunity to do so.

Because none of us is perfect, let's turn our attention to the leadership style of the Lord Jesus Christ. In a survey done with Christians of varying ages, the participants were asked about Jesus' life dealing with other people. The results showed that over half the answers gave Jesus' most highly valued traits as being compassion and love. How is compassion a leadership trait? It's an attitude of kind consideration that a Christian can't do without. Without love, we may claim to be Christians, but in reality, we're nothing. Love and compassion must lead the way. Our souls are drawn to the compassionate nature of Jesus because love was His motivating factor behind all He did. These days, Jesus remains as a compassionate intercessor of our prayers with His Father in heaven.

One of the survey people said: "When everything else is said and done, only love will last." Love is the infrastructure of everything and anything worthwhile. Jesus summed up His teachings in just one sentence: "Love God with all your heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and your neighbour as yourself." Jesus could lead people because, quite simply, He genuinely loved them. In 1st Corinthians, Chapter 13, Verse 13, it says: "Meanwhile these three remain: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love."

The second most identified leadership qualities of Jesus were power and authority. The source of Jesus' authority came from His Father in heaven and this enabled Him to have the power to teach, forgive, love and change lives. Because of Christ's complete reliance on God, He's been given by His Father the power to bring anything He wills to pass. Yet Jesus Himself said that He came to earth to do His Father's will, and not His own.

Leadership is largely about authority, whether it be acquiring it, using it or investing it in others. Leadership isn't about issuing orders. Instead, leaders should encourage followers to copy them through their conduct and the values which they hold dear, so that trained followers can act on their own to advance Christ's cause. Jesus primarily used His authority on earth to teach and inspire those around Him to act in His name and for His sake. This is a brilliant strategy, as millions of people around the world some 2,000 years later still serve Him for His sake.

Jesus taught His disciples as they shared life together and He succeeded in building them into future leaders of His church yet to be established. The Gospels in the New Testament confirm that Jesus shared His power with His 12 disciples and gave them "... power to heal all kinds of diseases, including authority over demons."

Jesus' prayer life was also identified as another significant leadership quality. Prayer is where the battles of life are won and lost. Prayer still separates Christian leaders from all other types of leadership. We must remember that Jesus spent significant amounts of time praying to His Father. And we too can't be effective without significant time being spent in prayer.

Jesus' personality gave transformational power among the people as they were drawn to Him. Although many didn't understand what Jesus was always talking about, they still wanted to be near Him. Jesus could have no quiet devotional time during the day, because large crowds followed Him wherever He went. The Holy Spirit remained fully evident in Christ's life and can be in ours too for the asking. The Holy Spirit brings a sense of peace and joyful communion into our hearts, despite our particular circumstances. We're glad to talk with Christ in prayer and we live in hope that one day, Christ's promise to bring all of His people to Himself will be fulfilled forever.

Humility was the fifth most identified leadership characteristic of Jesus in the survey. There's no doubt that Jesus was a humble servant. We all need humility. It's hard to even think of Jesus without thinking of humility. He lived it, spoke of it and taught all about it. Humility is a must in our Christian lives. We cannot reach our potential until we have Christ's humility evident within us, but it certainly doesn't come naturally or in our own ability. We are all selfish human beings, and the only way we can learn selflessness and humility is by copying the life of Jesus and following the Holy Spirit's leading, teaching and correction. Jesus certainly didn't seek to be a front-page celebrity or a widely known figurehead; but only to be humble in doing His Father's Will. He never became too full of Himself or spoke of His great self-importance in heaven or on earth. It was Christ's humbleness that made Him such a great leader. Jesus defined greatness by the humble way that He served others.

It's no easy calling to follow Jesus. Jesus said in Luke: "But I tell you who hear Me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you and pray for those who mistreat you." As far as you are able, share with others what you have learnt about Jesus Christ.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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