

I. INTRODUCTION: THE INTENDED AUDIENCE**A. "MY SON" – PROVERBS AS ROYAL CURRICULUM**

- Repeated direct address: "my son" (PROV. 1:8; 3:1; 4:1)
- The intended heir: Rehoboam, son of Solomon (1 KINGS 14:21)
- Proverbs' stated goal:

"To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion." (Prov. 1:4–5)

- Proverbs is practical Torah guidance for the king:
 - Follow Proverbs → follow Torah → receive Torah's blessings
 - Proverbs as condensed form of Torah's promises and commands

B. WHO WAS REHOBOAM?

- Son of Solomon and Naamah the Ammonitess (1 KINGS 14:21)
- Crowned king at age 41, a mature adult
- Solomon's uncertainty about successor (ECCLESIASTES 2:18–19)
- Reigned 17 years in Jerusalem over Judah (1 KINGS 14:21)
 - Oversaw kingdom division, continuous civil war (1 KINGS 14:30)

II. REHOBOAM'S RISE AND FIRST TEST: A CRISIS IN LEADERSHIP (1 Kings 12:1–20; 2 Chronicles 10)**A. THE PEOPLE'S APPEAL: A CALL FOR RELIEF**

- Israel's request: lighten heavy burdens (1 KINGS 12:4)
- Solomon's demanding reign: forced labor, heavy taxation (1 KINGS 4:7–28; 5:13–18)
- Samuel's earlier warning of royal burdens (1 SAMUEL 8:11–18)
- Relevant proverb:

"Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it." (Prov. 3:27–28)

B. REHOBOAM'S COUNSEL

- Elders advised gentle service:

"If thou wilt be a servant unto this people...they will be thy servants for ever." (1 Kings 12:7)

- Proverbs connection:

"A soft answer turneth away wrath." (Prov. 15:1)

- Young men advised harsh dominance:

"My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins... I will chastise you with scorpions." (1 Kings 12:10–11)

- Proverbs warning:

“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes.” (Prov. 12:15)

C. HIS DECISION: REJECTING THE WISDOM OF THE WISE

- Rehoboam answered roughly and arrogantly (1 KINGS 12:13–14)
- Violated direct proverb:

“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.” (Prov. 16:18)

A WORD ALREADY IN MOTION: UNDERSTANDING THE PROPHECY

- Prophecy of division given to Solomon (1 KINGS 11:11–13)
- Ahijah’s prophecy about Jeroboam’s rise (1 KINGS 11:29–39)
- Prophecy as recognition of trajectory already underway:
 - Solomon’s idolatry and heavy burdens (1 KINGS 11:4–8)
 - Prophecy not deterministic but descriptive

III. FALLOUT: THE KINGDOM SPLITS – A FOOLISH SON BRINGS RUIN

A. TEN TRIBES REBEL

- Northern tribes reject Rehoboam’s rule (1 KINGS 12:16)
- Only Judah and Benjamin remain loyal
- Proverb fulfilled:

“Where no counsel is, the people fall.” (Prov. 11:14)

B. ATTEMPT TO RETALIATE

- Rehoboam assembled 180,000 soldiers to fight Israel (1 KINGS 12:21)
- Intervention by prophet Shemaiah prevented war (1 KINGS 12:22–24)
- Proverbs counsel ignored initially:

“Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.” (Prov. 20:18)

IV. REHOBOAM’S REIGN: A LIFE OF HALF-HEARTEDNESS

A. SPIRITUAL DECLINE

- Rehoboam forsook God’s law after strengthening his position (2 CHRON. 12:1)
- Direct contrast with Solomon’s teaching:

“My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments.” (Prov. 3:1)

B. INVASION OF SHISHAK (EGYPT)

- Egyptian invasion as divine consequence (2 CHRON. 12:2–4)

- Temple treasures and golden shields seized (2 CHRON. 12:9)
- Loss symbolized God's removed favor and royal dishonor

C. SUPERFICIAL REPENTANCE

- Temporary humility after invasion (2 CHRON. 12:6–12)
- Legacy summarized negatively:

“He did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord.” (2 Chron. 12:14)

- Violation of Proverbs warning:

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.” (Prov. 4:23)

V. LESSONS FROM REHOBOAM: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A SON IGNORES WISDOM

A. A TRAGIC ILLUSTRATION OF PROVERBS

- Rehoboam's life as practical caution against ignoring instruction
- Key Proverbs illustrating his failure:

“He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul.” (Prov. 15:32)

“The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.” (Prov. 29:15)

B. A BROKEN HOUSE, A DIVIDED NATION

- United kingdom shattered permanently
- Judah survived, northern tribes (Israel) fell into idolatry and destruction
- Division directly linked to Rehoboam's disregard of Proverbs-based instruction from Solomon