



THE STORY *continues...*

*Join us each week as God weaves His Story into the fabric
of our daily lives.*

Chapter 14 A Kingdom Torn in Two

Listen to *The Story*

Read **Chapter 14** of *The Story* this week.

This chapter is about division in God's people: both spiritual and political. Read the exchange between Rehoboam and his elders and the young men ("advisors").

What word characterizes Rehoboam's leadership of the people? Compare Rehoboam's response to what Jesus says in Matthew 11:25-30.

What word characterizes Jesus' leadership of the people? Return to page 135 and read God's warning about Israelite kings.

As we've read through these last three chapters, what has become apparent about God's rule over His people verses the rule of human kings?

Learn *The Story*

*Look for ways in which God's story and your story
connect this week.*

Proverbs 13:20 says, "Keep company with the wise and you will become wise. If you make friends with stupid people, you will be ruined." (*Good News Translation*) Well said, Solomon! Apparently, Solomon's son, Rehoboam didn't think his father was so wise.

- Could the split between Judah and Israel have been prevented? Explain.
- How important is the counsel of our friends and family?
- What roll does your faith play when you experience conflict in your family or with a close friend?

Love *The Story*

Intentionally take a step forward in faith.

You don't run into a lot of golden cow worshipers at church these days. But the problem of idols still plagues God's followers. Anything that comes before God in your life could be an idol...especially if it becomes your source for comfort or satisfaction.

- What area in your life do you think has the greatest possibility of becoming an idol?
- What changes could you make to make sure this does not happen or continue?

Luther's Explanation

No doubt you've heard these words before: "Listen to your elders!" What a shame that Rehoboam, Solomon's son, didn't follow this advice. This is what the elders said: "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 forever."

From the very beginning, God wishes his leaders to be, first and foremost, servants themselves. Jesus is the greatest servant leader of them all. Sadly, Rehoboam listens to his friends he had grown up with who advise him to be ever harsher to the people in the northern tribes.

This is what Martin Luther says about Rehoboam's mistake: "Rehoboam ruined everything, and his kingdom was cut into two parts. But this does not happen only in external and political affairs...but also in religion and in the Word of God. The descendants always neglect the purity of doctrine handed down to them by the fathers and look for something new. This is what is now being done by those who, after the Gospel has once more become known, are not content with the purity of faith and the doctrine of the Gospel but are stirring up new controversies." (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 15, p. 43)



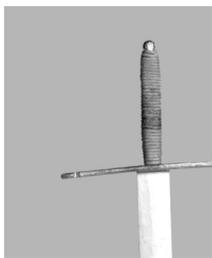
Thank God for the elders in our midst!

PROMISE

This week, cling to God's promise for you:

"I will call you back again and again.
I, your God, will never stop trying."

The EXTRA Mile



King Solomon opened the door to idol worship, and then Judah and Israel followed suit.

Go to www.youtube.com. Type "I Will Worship You by Matthew Ward" in the search box. Make a list of all the characteristics of God mentioned in the song. Post where you will see it everyday!