

Dumb and Dumber

1 Kings 12:1-24

Basic truth: God's sovereign plan always trumps the foolishness of man.

Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. ⁴³Then he rested with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father. And Rehoboam his son succeeded him as king. 1 Kings 11:42-43 (New International Version)

- **GOD'S SOVEREIGN PLAN WORKS OUT IN AND THROUGH HUMAN FOOLISHNESS.**

Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all the Israelites had gone there to make him king. ²When Jeroboam son of Nebat heard this (he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon), he returned from Egypt. ³So they sent for Jeroboam, and he and the whole assembly of Israel went to Rehoboam and said to him: ⁴"Your father put a heavy yoke on us, but now lighten the harsh labor and the heavy yoke he put on us, and we will serve you." ⁵Rehoboam answered, "Go away for three days and then come back to me." So the people went away. 1 Kings 12:1-5 (NIV)

But Rehoboam rejected the advice the elders gave him and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were serving him. 1 Kings 12:8 NIV)

The king answered the people harshly. Rejecting the advice given him by the elders, ¹⁴he followed the advice of the young men and said, "My father made your yoke heavy; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions." 1 Kings 12:13-14 (NIV)

So the king did not listen to the people, for this turn of events was from the LORD, to fulfill the word the LORD had spoken to Jeroboam son of Nebat through Ahijah the Shilonite. 1 Kings 12:15 (NIV)

God's Providence = God is continually involved with all created things and directs them to fulfill His purposes.

He makes nations great, and he destroys them; he enlarges nations, and leads them away. Job 12:23 (English Standard Version)

For kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations. Psalm 22:28 (ESV)

And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, . . . Acts 17:26 (ESV)

(See Daniel 4:34-35; Acts 17:28; Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 20:24; 16:9; Psalm 75:6-7)

The king's heart is like a stream of water directed by the LORD; he guides it wherever he pleases. Proverbs 21:1 (New Living Translation)

- **THOUGH HUMAN FOOLISHNESS CAN'T NULLIFY GOD'S PLAN, IT CAN TARNISH IT.**

King Rehoboam sent Adoniram, who was in charge of the labor force, to restore order, but the people of Israel stoned him to death. When this news reached King Rehoboam, he quickly jumped into his chariot and fled to Jerusalem. ¹⁹And to this day the northern tribes of Israel have refused to be ruled by a descendant of David. ²⁰When the people of Israel learned of Jeroboam's return from Egypt, they called an assembly and made him king over all Israel. So only the tribe of Judah remained loyal to the family of David. 1 Kings 12:18-20 (NLT)

"You will always have descendants, and I will make your kingdom last for ever. Your dynasty will never end." 2 Samuel 7:16 (Good News Translation)

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. Romans 8:28 (NLT)

Not "everything that happens is good," but "God works in all things."

- **BELIEVERS BENEFIT FROM HUMILITY BEFORE GOD'S WORD.**

When Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he mustered the whole house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin—a hundred and eighty thousand fighting men—to make war against the house of Israel and to regain the kingdom for Rehoboam son of Solomon. ²²But this word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God: ²³"Say to Rehoboam son of Solomon king of Judah, to the whole house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, ²⁴"This is what the LORD says: Do not go up to fight against your brothers, the Israelites. Go home, every one of you, for this is my doing.'" So they obeyed the word of the LORD and went home again, as the LORD had ordered. 1 Kings 12:21-24 (NIV)

At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation.
³⁵*All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"* Daniel 4:34-35 (NIV)

"For in him we live and move and have our being." . . . Acts 17:28 (NIV)

I know, O LORD, that a man's life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps.
Jeremiah 10:23 (NIV)

A man's steps are directed by the LORD. . . . Proverbs 20:24 (NIV)

In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps. Proverbs 16:9 (NIV)

No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt a man. ⁷But it is God who judges: He brings one down, he exalts another. Psalm 75:6-7 (NIV)