

Providing for 88 Children
By Paul R. Blake

When the nation of Israel divided into two kingdoms, Israel in the north and Judah in the south, Rehoboam served as king over the southern kingdom of Judah. It was a time of great turmoil and sorrow among the people of God, but for the most part, Rehoboam was a wise king and successfully guided the nation through it. (2Chronicles 11)

In response to the rebellion of the northern ten tribes led by Jereboam, Rehoboam put together an army of 180,000 soldiers to go north and quash the rebels. God sent Shemaiah the prophet to tell him not to fight against their brothers because this matter was turning out to serve God's purposes. Rehoboam obeyed.

However, this wise king made provisions to protect Judah. He fortified 15 strategic cities throughout Judah and filled them with stores of food and weapons against future attacks against the southern kingdom. He organized the best soldiers Judah and Benjamin had to offer into ranks and placed captains over each of the fortified cities. He even arranged for his sons to be placed in some of these strongholds to ensure his policies for the protection of the land were carried out. He was careful to prepare for his successor as king by placing his son Abijah, born to Maachah his favorite wife, as leader among his brothers, training him to be king. Judah would have a well prepared heir to the throne.

The king imitated his father and took multiple wives. He had 18 wives and 60 concubines who gave him 28 sons and 60 daughters. Nevertheless, Rehoboam was diligent to make provisions for this rather large family. He gave them positions of responsibility throughout the kingdom and gave them supplies in abundance. He was careful to select wives for them to ensure that the royal line would continue. As a good father provides for his children, so Rehoboam set the example before the nation as one who took care of all 88 of his children. He saw to it that they were fed, clothed, housed, educated, occupied, and married.

Rehoboam even made an effort at providing for the spiritual well being of Judah and for his children. He welcomed all of the Levites fleeing religious persecution from the north, as Jereboam replaced the priests of God with pagans. For three years, Rehoboam supported the priests of God and endorsed the worship of Jehovah... for three years... and then...

"Now it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom and had strengthened himself, that he forsook the law of the LORD, and all Israel along with him... So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house; he took everything" (2Chron. 12:1, 9).

Jesus said in Mark 8:36, "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" How many fathers are careful, just like Rehoboam, to provide for the physical, social, education, and economic needs of their children, and then neglect the most important need of the child -- his spiritual growth and development? After Rehoboam saw to it that his 88 children were covered materially, he abandoned his provisions for their ongoing spiritual needs. As a result, God undid all of his material provisions.

Of what value will be all of the food, clothes, shelter, medical care, and education fathers give their children, when the Lord says to them in Judgment, "Depart from me; I never knew you."? Will fathers consider themselves to be good providers when their children are sent into perdition? Will God be moved by their protests: "I saw to it that they never went hungry; I made certain they did their schoolwork; I taught them how to catch a baseball; I instilled a good work ethic in them!"? Rehoboam made provisions for the temporary bodies of his 88 children; he made only three years of provision for their eternal souls. Fathers, how attentive are you to the souls of the children God placed in your care? "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Eph 6:4).

Long Life
By Roy E. Cogdill

The old man had lived to be 95 and was still healthy and active. One day a friend asked how he managed to live that long and still be so strong and energetic. He said that perhaps a number of things contributed to it, but one thing really stood out in his mind. He said that he and his wife had been married for sixty-five years; and when they married, they had a little private agreement to the effect that there would be no fussing and quarreling in their house, and if one of them lost his or her temper and was about to blow his top, the other would get up and walk out of the house. He concluded, "Friend, you have no idea what 50 years out in the fresh air and sunshine will do for a man." (Via The Old Path)

The Parable of the Croaking Frogs

A farmer came to town and asked the owner of a restaurant if he could use a million frog legs. The proprietor asked where he could find so many frogs. "I've got a pond at home just full of them," the farmer replied, "they drive me crazy night and day."

After they made an agreement for several hundred frogs, the farmer went back home. He came back a week later with two scrawny frogs and a foolish grin on his face. "I guess I was wrong," he stammered, "there were just two frogs in the pond, but they sure were making a lot of noise!"

The next time you hear a lot of noise about how bad things are at church, just remember: It may be nothing more than a couple of chronic complainers who have little to do but grouch and croak.

Criticism

A little seed lay in the ground,
And soon began to spout.
"Now which of all the flowers around,"
It mused, "Shall I come out?"

"The lily's face is fair and proud,
But just a trifle cold:

The rose, I think is rather loud,
And then its fashion's old.

“The violet is very well.
But not a flower I'd choose,
Nor yet the Canterbury Bell,
I never cared for blues.”

And so it criticized each flower,
This supercilious seed,
Until it woke one summer hour,
And found itself a weed.
(Via Family Newsletter)

A Moments Wisdom

The real measure of a man's character is what he would do if he knew he would never be caught.
Postponed obedience is disobedience.
Christ will not live in the parlor of our hearts if we entertain the devil in the cellar of our thoughts.