

Destroyed in a Moment

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[0 : 00] 1 Kings chapter 12, we read verses 13 and 14. And the king answered the people roughly, and pursued the old man's counsel that they gave him, and spake to them after the counsel of the young man, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke.

My father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. And in the passage that we read, we see what the outcome of that is.

How the entire kingdom of this, still at that moment, united Israel is lost, is destroyed in a moment. A moment of shallow vanity, and it all disintegrates. And we might wonder to ourselves, how? How can it all have been lost, and seemingly thrown away so easily?

Just look at what Solomon had accumulated. Look at the wealth and the military power that was now in the hand of his son Rehoboam.

[1 : 05] If you turn back a couple of pages with me to chapter 10, you see in verses 26 and 27, Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen, and he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king of Jerusalem.

And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones and cedars, made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale for abundance. In other words, his cavalry alone, his chariots alone, ought to have been able to have quelled any would-be rebellion.

This is a vast military power such as no king of Israel had ever enjoyed before. Go back a little to verse 14, and we see the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 600, three score and six talents of gold.

Beside that, he had the merchant men, had of the merchant men and of the traffic of spice merchants and of all the kings of Arabia and of governors of the country. And King Solomon made 200 targets of beaten gold, 600 shekels of gold went to one target, and he made 300 shields of beaten gold, three pound of gold went to one shield, and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

Then it goes on to describe the grandeur of his throne itself. And in verse 21, King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold. All the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold.

[2 : 35] None were of silver. It was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon. For the king had at sea a navy of Tarshish with the navy of Hiram. Once in three years came the navy of Tarshish, bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks.

So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom. And all the earth sought to Solomon to hear his wisdom which God had put upon his heart.

And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver and vessels of gold and garments and armor and spices, horses and mules, a rake year by year.

And Solomon was king for 40 years. If every three years you've got a navy coming with all this wealth and glory and gifts and so on, then that's an awful lot of returns, an awful lot of power.

This was a massive to Solomon's glory. Now Rehoboam, however, and just by way of the sight, the name Rehoboam means room, room for or extension of the people.

[3 : 41] Room for the people or extension of the people. It's the same route that's way back in Genesis 26 where Isaac is digging his wells and the Philistine herdmen strive for them and try to take them back.

And then his men dig one at a place he calls Rehoboam because he says the Lord has made room for us. And it's the same route from Rehoboam to Rehoboam, room for the people, extension of the people.

So Jeroboam, his rival means struggler for the people. But leave that aside. Let's think back about Rehoboam again. He has perhaps, we might say, been dazzled by all the glory of his father's court. It may be that all that Solomon had acquired and accumulated was half of the problem. We read in chapter 14 at verse 21, if you want to look it up.

Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, reigned in Judah. He was 41 years old when he began to reign. Now his father Solomon had reigned for 40 years. We see that in chapter 11 at verse 42.

[4 : 47] The time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was 40 years. Now that means that Rehoboam was one year old when his father came to the throne. When old King David handed him over the kingdom of Solomon, Rehoboam was one year old.

He was a baby. He didn't know anything else. He had never experienced anything else except his father's increasing glory and power and wealth and might and all that, the extension of his influence and the glory of Solomon.

That was all that Rehoboam had ever known. He had seen his father's glory and his empire just getting bigger and bigger and his wealth just accumulating and accumulating.

He had never known anything else except this royal magnificence on an unprecedented, remember that, unprecedented and never to be repeated scale.

Now he had not his father's exceptional and divinely gifted wisdom. He can't be blamed for that. Remember that the Lord had specially endowed Solomon with virtually divine wisdom, certainly divinely gifted wisdom.

[5 : 58] Now anybody who followed that was going to look like a dullard and an imbecile by comparison. So in some ways it's not really fair. However much brains or common sense Rehoboam had, it was always going to look puny compared to the divinely gifted wisdom of his father Solomon, who was unique in that regard and in many other respects.

But he did not have the ability to recognize that his father's royal power and glory had taken a lifetime to accumulate.

All that we read of in chapter 11 there, in chapter 10 of Solomon's glory, this is the pinnacle of what he had. This is how it was coming to be at the end with all the world now and heard of Solomon's glory and wisdom and all came to hear it.

And how wise he would be at unlocking all their problems. And they would all bring their presents. They would all bring their tributes. And he had levies of workmen out in the quarries and in the forests.

And he built magnificent cities. And he built the temple of the Lord and his own palace. And everything was glorious. And yes, there was taxation. And that's probably what the people are referring to in this chapter.

[7 : 12] They want the taxation to be lightened. But it's taxation at a time when people have got more wealth than they'd ever had. And they've got more peace than they'd ever had in which to enjoy it.

And this is another thing that Leher Boehm and perhaps the people themselves just don't get. It had taken a lifetime of exceptional wisdom and diplomacy and skill to accumulate all this wealth and glory.

It was only possible because of the unique, and I stress that, unique meaning one-off, unique circumstances of long peace, 40 years of peace, 40 years of prosperity and no war.

And the kingdom of Israel just getting stronger and richer and more glorious. It had never happened before. And it would never happen again. Now, think in terms of King Saul's reign.

Where he was always having to be fighting against somebody, whether the Ammonites or the Philistines or whatever. There was endless battles. He was a warrior king. Think of King David.

[8 : 20] And all the battles he had to fight. And all the rebellions he had to deal with. And, you know, Israel here, ready to break away from the house of David. They did that enough times during his own lifetime.

It's only in the lifetime of Solomon that we've got this unprecedented unity and peace and wealth accumulating. And so Rehoboam has never known anything else.

He hasn't got the wit to recognize that what Solomon had achieved, what his father had gained, and what he had grown up imbibing and experiencing was not normal.

It was not the norm for the kingship. It was not the norm for Israel. It was unique by the blessing of God in unprecedented abundance.

This abundance of blessing, of course, tends naturally to make us not more thankful and appreciative of what God does, but rather less.

[9 : 20] It makes us less thankful because we're less aware of how special these circumstances are. But I'm sure I've used the example in the past that some years ago, of course, we get some work done in the manse.

And as a result, there was plumbing and work being done. And so all the radiators were turned off. And because workmen were going in and out, the doors were open the whole time. And as a result, of course, the house was freezing.

It's not because it was the middle of winter. It's just because the doors were all open, the radiators were all off, and workmen coming in going, and there was nowhere you could get warm. You couldn't turn anything up.

You could perhaps light a fire in the grate. But the house was cold because it was simply open and exposed to the elements. As one of our children remarked at the time, you don't realise that what you think of in the house as just normal temperature, you know, you don't come in the house and think, oh, it's lovely and warm.

You don't come in the house normally and think, oh my, it's freezing in here. You just come in the house and think it's normal. Normal temperature. The normal ambience of a house temperature is only possible because the radiators are chucking out the heat in order to keep it at that sort of temperate, normal level.

[10 : 32] And when that's not happening, it soon begins to cool down. And when the doors are open and it's exposed to all the normal cold and wind and so on, even not on a winter's day, you soon notice the difference.

But you don't notice it until and unless it is taken away. Or take something super, like water, for example. We often talk about how the rain just comes down from heaven.

We might think, well, we could manage without water for a wee while. Again, I remember a few years ago when after one of the storms and we were still in locks and we had no electricity, of course that would happen from time to time.

You would get a storm, you'd get a couple of days without electricity. But on this occasion, we didn't have water either. You know whether some pipes had frozen further up the system or whatever, but we had no water.

And I remember going out and scooping out big bowlfuls of snow and emptying it into the system just so that we could flush the toilet and so on. And all these things I could do because there was no water, nothing in the tap, nothing.

[11 : 32] Now you might think, well, I could manage okay for a while without water. People might jokingly say, well, as long as I've got my tea and coffee, as long as I've got a soft drink in the fridge, I'm fine without water for a wee while.

I don't drink that much water anyway. You maybe don't think you do. But imagine somebody, you say, well, let's have coffee and somebody just gives you coffee beans. Well, you can grind them up and you've got no water to make the coffee with.

Somebody gives you a tea bag or tea leaves. You've got nothing to boil the kettle with. You've got no water. You've got nothing to make it with. Yes, you've got your kinds of soft drinks or whatever. But once they're run out, what are you going to replace them with?

There's no water. There's no nothing. And you don't realise. We don't realise. Nothing to flush the toilet with. Nothing in the showers. Nothing in the taps. We don't come to realise how long would we manage.

No, we talked about radiators in the house. Well, you think radiators function with hot water coming through there. And that would cease to function. Everything would become freezing. We'd experience dehydration of the body.

[12 : 33] An adult body is 60% water. In the case of a newborn baby, it's like 75%. We use water in the body for absolutely every function you can imagine.

You blink your eyes. That needs moisture. That needs water in the body to do it. Every function from digestion and circulation of the blood to temperature control.

And removal, of course, of our natural waste products. Everything you do. Everything needs water just to keep everything functioning. And that water constantly needs to replace.

If we say, like we've often said in the past, where does the water come from? Well, in our case, of course, it just literally drops down out of the sky. Does that make us grateful? Or does it make us more inclined to say, oh, no, it's raining again.

Thank God it rains as much as it does. Because you see what happens in countries and in places where the rain stops. And where there is no water.

[13 : 37] But it doesn't make us grateful. It makes us less so. The more blessing and the more abundance God gives of the things we need, the less inclined we are to be grateful.

And that's us. And that's human nature. And that was the case with Rehoboam. He had never known anything except the glory of his father's kingdom.

And perhaps he felt he had waited a long time to inherit it. And perhaps he was impatient to do so. Now, it may be that having witnessed his father's wealth and power for a lifetime, he perhaps wanted to show himself to be strong and a worthy successor to his powerful father.

But those who had actually grown up with his father, those who had served with Solomon in his court and who knew him and who had observed him closely and worked with him.

And they knew his faults as well as his virtues. And as well as recognizing that, realizing this vast accumulation of power and wealth was unique.

[14 : 42] It wasn't the norm. It wasn't what Israel knew in the normal way of things. They counseled Rehoboam to steer away from his father's vices and faults and adopt humility and virtue before the people.

Now, perhaps they were spoiling for a fight. And perhaps they would have gone anyway. Indeed, it says in our passage, it was of the Lord that they would break away the way that he had promised and so on.

But that doesn't mean that he needed to give them an excuse. Rehoboam didn't need to give them an excuse. But, of course, he walks right into it. You know, we think, OK, they're being taxed.

You know, they've got the wealth to pay. They've got unprecedented wealth. They've got unprecedented peace. They're not actually complaining about Solomon's idolatry.

That would have been a legitimate complaint. They're not complaining about all the falsehoods being set up in the temple. They're only concerned with their own material wealth. This is the level of godlessness to which Israel has descended.

[15 : 46] He could have taken away their excuse. He could have returned them a gentle answer. But Rehoboam chose instead to interpret his father's vices and faults as virtues, as strengths.

And whilst he obviously desired to inherit the kingdom, he had not the wits or knowledge to understand that kingship is a sacred calling.

Both in the Bible and, properly speaking, in the world. It is a sacred calling. One for which, like the prophets of God of old, like the high priests in the temple and the tabernacle, the subject in question was anointed.

They were anointed of the Lord to the priesthood or to the prophet's room or to the kingship. It was a special calling, a sacred, a holy calling.

Kingship carries with it solemn and sacred responsibilities. And Rehoboam was almost certainly impatient, not for the kingship, per se, with its responsibilities and burdens of government and state and leadership, for example.

[16 : 55] So much is for the trappings, for the benefits of him. He wanted the power. He wanted the wealth. He wanted the grandeur. He wanted to command his armies and people to tremble before him. But he wasn't quite so prepared to be a servant of the people.

He wasn't quite so prepared for duty and service and responsibility and leadership. An example. He wasn't prepared for the solemn calling, for the anointed responsibility.

It's like an infant child. He's maybe one or two or whatever. Sitting on the floor. It's his birthday. It's her birthday. And everybody's all making a fuss of them.

And there they are all gathered round. And they put one present after another in front of it. And he takes off the wrapping paper. And these expensive and carefully chosen toys and things. And so it pushes them aside.

And the lights in the wrapping paper. It's shiny. And maybe it's different brightly coloured. It makes a nice noise when you crunch it up. And the wrapping paper is really exciting.

[17 : 53] And the toy itself is just forgotten about. And that's what it's like a wee bit with the infantile attitude to the trappings and the outward glory of kingship.

It's the wrapping paper that Rehoboam is concerned with rather than the actual item itself. Rather than the actual calling of the kingship here.

Rehoboam was so determined to assert his own personal power and authority that he lost it all in a moment. It was destroyed. It was destroyed.

All the glory and wealth and splendour of Solomon was destroyed in a moment of shallow and short-sighted vanity. On the one hand it should have been a no-brainer.

When they come to him and say, Well look, if you lighten the load, if you reduce our taxes, you know, you've got the wealth to do it. If you reduce our taxes, then of course we will serve you. And he says, Well come back in three days.

[18:53] Why didn't he three days think about it? It's a bit of a no-brainer. Yeah, okay, fine, right. We can afford to reduce the taxes. That's okay. Let's keep the kingdom together. Let's keep everybody pulling together. But he said, Well go away for three days and come back again.

And he consults. It's a good thing to do. He takes advice. Good thing to do. And he speaks to the old men who have served with Solomon. Who have actually worked with his father.

Who know his vices and his virtues. His faults and his failures. And they give him some advice. And the other ones that grew up with him. Who have only ever known the privilege and the wealth of Isaac.

Oh no, you just show these people who he's boss. And he even put it in kind of crude terms.

Solomon, as you know, had 700 wives and 300 concubines. He was supposedly extremely active in that particular department.

And yet they used a slightly off-colour kind of response. My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. And whereas my father chastised you with whips, I'll chastise you with scorpions.

[19:58] I'll be rough. I'll be a real hard king. And hoping, no doubt, everybody would just tremble and be terrified. And say, oh well, then of course we'll serve you. No, it just had the exact opposite effect.

He is not speaking to people who are cowed and frightened slaves. He is speaking to people who have grown strong and wealthy. On 40 years of independent peace and prosperity.

Who are not inclined to take orders from anyone. And his forefathers were ready to split even from David. And rose up in rebellion against him. So, I mean, this is a people that makes completely misjudge.

And he's lost it all in a moment. Now, this, friends, is not simply a long-ago story about a foolish and far-off king of Israel. Much that takes long to acquire may be lost in a moment.

We think of examples from nature. You know, a house that may have all your valuables and possessions in it. And things of sentimental value. And things of economic value and so on. It can be, if there's an accidental fire, it can burn to the ground in a night.

[21:10] And everything can be lost. All the time and labour of actually building that house. And furnishing it. And accumulating furniture and possessions. And things of sentimental value.

And things you've chosen to furnish it with. And all the memories that go into it. And all the people that have lived there. And maybe children that have been born in that house. Now, it's just a blackened shell. Just a ruin.

Destroyed in a night. In a moment. An heirloom. An ornament. Something that may have been crafted with such skill. Of the workman or the craftsman.

And kept in the family for generations. If it is carelessly dropped. It can be smashed in an instant. A tree. That can take decades.

Or maybe even centuries to go. Can be cut down. In an hour. And likewise. With things that are in our lives. Wisdom.

[22:06] Takes time to accumulate. Virtue. Is only the track record. Of how we behave. And the choices we make. Likewise. With. Without reputation.

Again. It is only that. Which we are. In repute. For doing. Ecclesiastes tells us. Chapter 10. Verse 1. Dead flies. Caused the ointment of the apothecary.

To send forth. A stinking savor. Sold of a little folly. Him that is in reputation. For wisdom. And honour. Let's just say for a moment. You know.

That you. You had say. A minister of the gospel. In some place. That for. Say. 30 years. He served diligently. And faithfully. And so on. And preaching. And serving.

And visiting. And discharging. All his duties. Faithful. But one day. One day. He came into the pulpit. Absolutely stone drunk. And he just fumbled his way.

[23 : 01] Through the service. And just. Made a complete mess of it. And then. You know. By the evening. Maybe he wasn't so great. And the next week. He was fine. Back to normal. And all the years that remained.

He was back to normal. He was fine. But. What are people going to remember? In 30 years. They'll remember that one time. That he disgraced himself. They'll remember that one time.

That he let himself down. And everybody else down. That is how easily. Years of faithful service. Or accumulation of wisdom. Or experience. Or whatever.

Can all be lost. In a moment. And this is what happened here. With Rehoboam. All the accumulation. Of his father's glory. And wealth.

All the groundwork laid by David. The beloved of the Lord. All the unity. The precarious unity. Of the tribes of Israel. Lost. Destroyed.

[23 : 53] In a moment. And so it is. With us. We can so easily lose. And destroy. That which the Lord. Has carefully over the years.

Gathered for us. And like Rehoboam. So often. We want. We desire. Something which will instantly. Gratify us. And.

Yes. Ministers are prone to this too. What minister wouldn't want. To say. Somebody said. Now what would you rather do? Would you rather? A big whoosh. Of revival. Or would you rather. Slog away.

For like 25. 30 years. And maybe have. Few converts. Along the way. And a wee bit of growth. Or would you rather. Have the big whoosh. It's a no brainer. Everybody's going to choose.

The big hearts. They all want. The big revival. And all their congregation. And fellow Christians too. Would want this. Great big in gathering. We want the big.

[24 : 47] The spectacular. The instantaneous. Even from a spiritual. Point of view. That is what we want. Even when we tell ourselves. It's for the glory of God. Even when we tell ourselves.

It's for the furtherance of his kingdom. And hand on the Bible. It may be. For that particular desire. That we have it. But. The instantaneous. And the spectacular. Is always more desirable.

Than that. Which takes the long growth. Of the harvest. Can you imagine. A nursery. Full of babies. But with no nurses.

To care for them. Can you imagine. A school. Bursting at the seams. With little children. But no teachers. For them. That's. What it would be like.

If we had a huge. Burst. In gathering. Of brand new. Ready made. Converted. In a revival. Moment. Christians. But no. Mature Christians.

[25 : 44] To lead them. No. Mature Christians. To be examples. Of fathers in God. And mothers in Israel. None. Who have been through. The barren desert. Of spiritual experience.

None. Who have known. The ups. And the downs. And the hard times. And the trials. Of the faith. And the dark light. Of the soul. It's the equivalent. Of having. An army. Full of raw recruits.

But no. Experienced. NCOs. Or officers. Or professional soldiers. To lead them. And say. Well look. I remember. When we were on campaign. Ten years ago. We were ambushed. And this happened.

We took some losses. I was wounded here. This is what happened. To guide them. To warn them. Of the pitfalls. And the blessings. And the good. And the bad.

But you see. When you're new. And when you come in fresh. You think like Rehoboam. This is how it's always going to be. This is the only kind of blessing. And glory.

[26 : 40] I've ever known. And of course. We would all love. To see such blessing. And such revival. But perhaps. What we need to pray for.

First of all. Is that shepherds. And mothers. And fathers. And the Lord. Would be prepared. And put in place. So that as. And when the harvest. Is given.

There will be those. Not only to reap it. But also to gather it in. And carefully. Stow it. And look after it. And tend it. So that that which the Lord gives.

Can be maximized. Now to grow. And to learn. And to mature. And to ripen. Whether in earthly wisdom.

Or in divine wisdom. Takes time. And many cycles of weather. Many seasons. Of the years. And for all of us.

[27 : 34] There will be times of winter. There will be times. When we are spiritually cold. There will be times. When nothing seems to grow. Times when we wonder. If we will ever see the spring.

When it will ever come. And there are likewise. Times when the blossom and bond begins to appear. And we have hope for the future. And there are times. No doubt. Perhaps fewer than we would like.

When there is the warmth. And the abundance of summer. And it seems like all is well. And all will be well. But of course. The autumn comes.

And the leaves fall from the trees. And the path beneath your feet. Becomes muddy. And stony. And the nights drawing again.

Many seasons. Many cycles of weather. Many experiences. Of many years. This is how we mature. This is how we grow.

[28 : 30] Both in the spiritual weather. And also in the physical. Experience. Is not always nice. The experienced soldiers.

Or NCOs. With their chest pools. Or medals. They didn't get those. Just for shining their boots. And tying their laces right. Or for a smart salute. They earned those medal ribbons.

In campaigns. And in times of danger. And for gallantry. And for putting their lives at risk. Perhaps for being wounded in action. Every single one of those bright coloured ribbons.

Tells a story of danger. And of service. And perhaps of suffering. And it's why the brand new recruit. His uniform made. He's sticking to stand. And he's got none of these.

Marks of service. None of these ribbons. Of suffering. None of these. Medals. Of all that has been endured. All the battle scarves.

[29 : 25] All the medal ribbons. All that we have. To testify to the years of service. They did not come easily. To those who have them. And most people would probably prefer.

Not to have gone through the things. Which earned them those ribbons. But nevertheless. We don't usually have a choice. Of what we go through.

But with the Lord. Whilst experience. May not always be nice. It will always. Be beneficial. It will always be worth.

Something. Because with God. Nothing is for nothing. We might say. Well let's look at this Lord's Day. Let's look at another day. In our Christian lives.

Here we are in church. Or taking the day. Quietly at home. Remembering the Sabbath day. To keep it holy. Has this day been exciting? Probably not. Has it been newsworthy?

[30 : 24] Probably not. Has it been spectacular? Probably not. But. But. There has nevertheless been a day. Of slowly building. And learning. And growing.

And such a day. Such an experience. Is not lost. And if an army is to be prepared. For battle. It will be so. Because of the training.

It has undergone. From the experienced hands. That lead it. Now training must be undertaken. In a time of peace. It must be undertaken. In a place of safety.

Where you're not actually under attack. From the enemy. Where they can simulate. Battle conditions. Where they can be trained. And tried. And tested. That all that training. Has to be done. Before. The bullets actually start flying. And the battle actually breaks overhead. Because it's too late to start then. Once the nursery is full of babies.

[31 : 19] It's too late then to start saying. Oh. Should we not think about training up some nurses? Once the children are bursting at the seams. In the school. We can't say. Actually we could do it. A few teachers.

But you know. Getting people to volunteer. To train for teaching. And the years. And the degree they need. And all the teachers need. That's going to take ages. What are we going to do in the meantime? No. You need them in place.

When the great influx happens. Now we don't see great influxes. We don't see great bursting at the seams. We don't see the days. And the harvest of late summer.

What we may see is winter. Or perhaps even just the hope. Or the promise of spring. But all these cycles and seasons. Have their purpose.

And their reason. And all the time. The ground. The land. The world. Is being prepared. For that which the Lord intends to do. And it is so also.

[32 : 15] With the Lord's own kingdom. Of his church. So this day in itself. May count for very little. It may seem not to have been exciting. Or spectacular. It may simply be a day of slow learning.

And growing. But it is not lost. It is not in vain. Neither was yesterday. Neither will be tomorrow. If we are spared to see it. It is all part of what must be nurtured.

And drawn in. And built upon. And utilized. For the building and growth may be slow. But the losing of it. May be instantaneous.

And it may be spectacularly so. And it may be done. In a moment. Therefore every day. That is safely completed.

In the Lord's relationship. In that holy relationship. With the Lord. That building up. And nurturing. Of our sonship. And daughtership. Under him.

[33 : 13] That another day. When we drink and moan of his truth. When we read his word. When we take a little time. And pray with him. When we seek to live our lives. Under his watchful. And fatherly care.

No such day is lost. No such experience. Is for nothing. The losing of it. May be instantaneous. But the building of it. Takes time.

A second would love. Nothing more. Than for each and every one. Of God's children. Say what's the point. In this day. You know. It doesn't mean anything. It doesn't amount to it. I might as well. Just go my own way. I might as well. Just let it all slide. I might as well. Have that one day. Of disgrace. When I let myself. And it's only one day. Things will be right again.

Tomorrow. No. If you think of that. Hypothetical situation. Think of a servant. Of the Lord. Thirty years. Of service. We might say. One day. Of disgrace.

[34 : 10] What will people remember. It is not just the one day. That it counts for. That blot. Will stand. That shadow. That cloud. Will be over.

Such an individual. For all of his or her life. And so it is. If we let slip our guard. If a soldier in battle. Let's down his shield.

Of faith. For a moment. And exposes his heart. Then yes. The breastplate of righteousness. May cover him. For a time. But if he keeps on. Being careless.

For his own safety. The enemy. Will capitalize on it. The devil is many things. But he is not a fool. And he is not slothful.

He may have many vices. But sloth is not amongst them. He is ever active. He is ever watchful. He is ever looking for a chink in the armour. For a moment. When your guard is down.

[35 : 04] Don't let any individual day. Be the day. In which it all gets lost. In a moment. Remember the king.

Whose empire was destroyed. In a moment. Servanthood. Which he was enjoined to. By the older men.

Who knew his father. And his father's faults. And failures too. Servanthood is safety. It is sensible. If we keep ourselves down. At a humble level. There is very little distance. In which to fall. So it is wise. It is sensible. It is safe. It is above all.

Christlike. Because the king of kings. And lord of lords. What did he do? We made reference to this this morning. In Philippians chapter 2. Let this mind be in you.

[36 : 00] Which was also in Christ Jesus. Who being in the form of God. Thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Or was it something that he wasn't worthy of. Or something to be grasped at.

Like a thief. But made himself of no reputation. And took upon him the form of a servant. And was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man.

He humbled himself. Emptied himself even further. And became obedient unto death. Even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him.

And given him a name which is above every name. But at the name of Jesus. Every knee should bow. Things in heaven. And things in earth. And things under the earth. And that every tongue should confess.

That Jesus Christ is lord. To the glory of God the father. If you want that kind of crown. That kind of glory. Although of course we don't aspire to be in Christ's position.

[36 : 57] But we want to follow and be close to with the ous. Then we must likewise be prepared to come down low. To be the kind of servant.

That Rehoboam despised to be. And to inherit and hold together. The blessing and the empire. And the glory that the Lord gives.

Day by day by day. Rehoboam because he had known nothing else. He thought this was normal. There's no such thing as normal. There's only that which God chooses to give.

Just as the radiators chuck out the heat. And keep the temperature that you think is just normal. I mean it's just a normal temperature. In the house. It's only because a huge amount of extra work is being done.

The blessings we enjoy in this world. The water that falls down from heaven. The wind that keeps the air fresh. The homes we have. The food we take so much for granted.

[37 : 56] It is only because God. Is pulling out all the stops. To make your life as good. As it is. And you might think. Oh well.

A lot more could be better. My life isn't that great. Your life is replete. With blessings you probably don't even realise. And like if water is taken away from your body.

How quickly you and I would shrivel up like a raisin. We are given those things. Which God gives. Which we so much take for granted.

We have been given wealth. We have been given blessing. We have been given above all. An open door to glory. And a crown far better.

Than Rehoboam could ever have dreamed of. He threw it all away. He destroyed it. He destroyed it. In a moment. Because he would not become a servant.

[38 : 53] To the people he was anointed to serve. We are called. To become servants. One to another. And to those who will not yet believe.

Not because the Lord wants to grind us down. But because he has gone there before us. This is what Jesus is like. This is what God is like.

He is saying. Follow me down to these depths. Because this is what I am like. And this is where I have been. And if you want to go where I am going. You have to follow first.

Where I meet. Don't let it be lost. In a moment. Don't make the mistake. Of thinking. Today doesn't matter.

Every day will matter. Every hour that you are given. Is precious. Upon mercy's grant. Don't so much. As someone has perhaps cleverly.

[39 : 47] Maybe too cleverly said. Don't so much count your days. As make your days count. And that will only be possible. When we go on with the Lord.

And follow. Where he leads us. Bless you.