

## What More Could He Have Done?

by Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian church

**Isaiah 5:1-4**, "Now will I sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?"

Although the Lord was speaking of the vineyard, he was talking about the nation of Israel. By his grace Israel had been established, blessed, given the law of God, and promised the continued blessings if they would keep his law. Any nation that attacked them was defeated as long as they walked with God. It was only when they turned away from God that he allowed them to be overcome by their enemies.

Israel was to have been God's witness to the ungodly,

just like the church is in today's world. Reading through the Old Testament we can see several gentiles who came to place their faith in the God of Israel. Rahab, Ruth, and Uriah were from gentile nations that had worshipped idols, yet they came to believe in the God of Israel. How many more would have made the same decision if Israel had stayed true to the Lord instead of going after the idols of the other nations?

God had given them the law through his prophet Moses. No other nation had the opportunity to know God and his law as the people of Israel did. In Egypt and through the wilderness journey they saw the hand of God in action time after time. He gave them water from the rock, manna from heaven, and led them by a column of fire and smoke. The Lord also did miracles such as parting the Red Sea, breaking the walls of Jericho, among others that he did for his people.

They saw the miracles of God many times and even heard his voice. So it was not a question of faith as to whether or not they believed in God. The Israelites knew that he was God and had led them from Egyptian bondage. They chose to disobey the Lord on many different occasions. God led them, nurtured them, defended them, and yet they turned from him whenever they were discouraged, or saw

some idol that they liked. We might think them unthankful, selfish, or wicked men, but we need to ask ourselves - are we any better?

It is easy to say what the other person should do, or what he should have done. We see them better than we see ourselves, or at least we think that we do. Romans 2: 1. Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. The Lord loved and blessed them and was merciful to them time and time again. I'm glad that he was, and is, forgiving for we need his forgiveness today as much as they did the past.

God has given his Son who paid for our sins with his own blood. He forgives those who place their faith in him and obey his commands. We are led by his Holy Spirit and have the promise of help in this life and the promise of life eternal. No man, however rich he may be, has more security than the child of God. Health fails, money fails, people will fail you, but God never fails. The Lord has done all that is needed for a person to live for him and to go to heaven. The only thing left for us to do is to believe and to obey him. He made the way of salvation and all we have to do is to walk in it. Really, what more could he have done?

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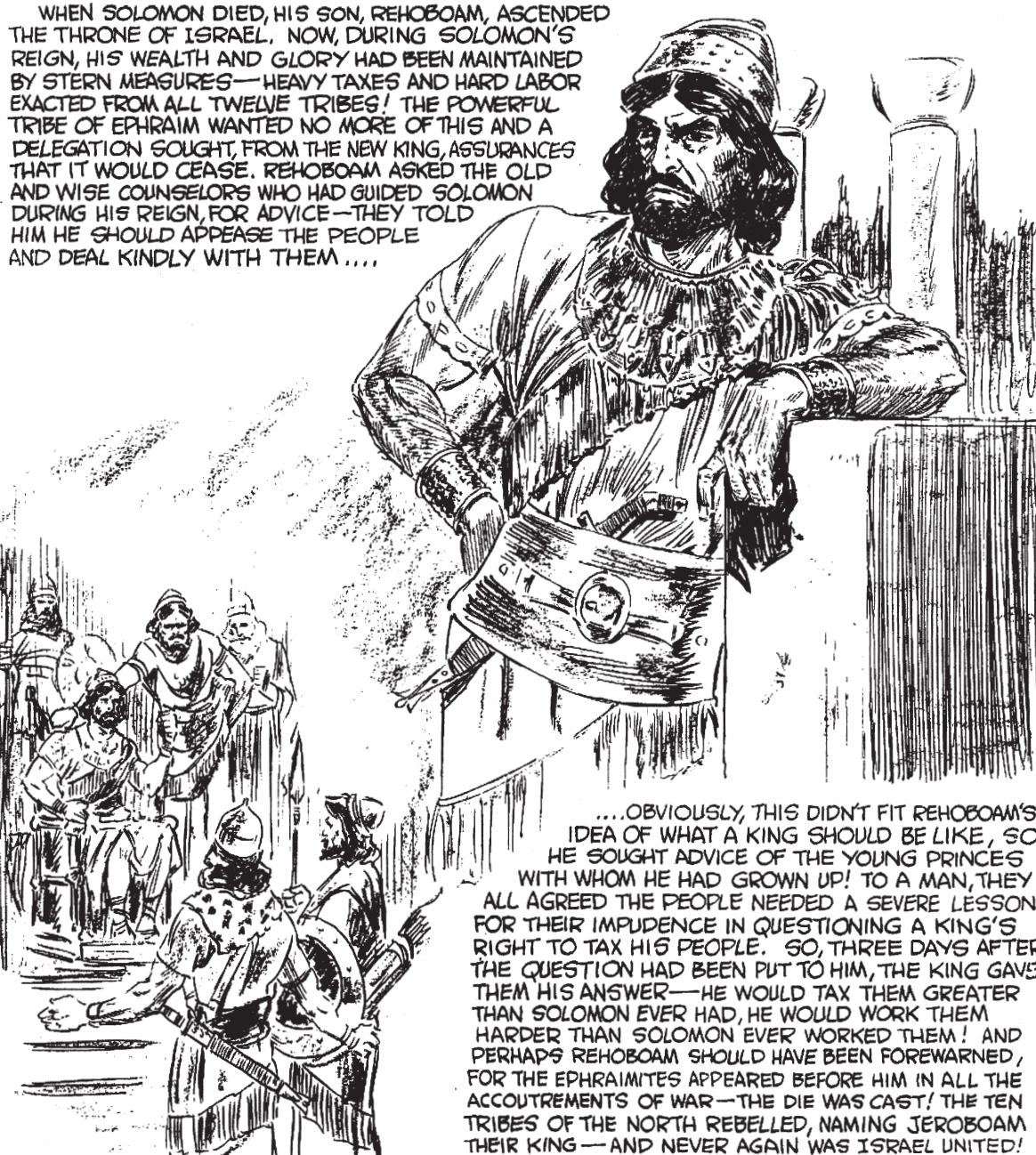
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**THE KING WHO DIVIDED THE KINGDOM!**

WHEN SOLOMON DIED, HIS SON, REHOBOAM, ASCENDED THE THRONE OF ISRAEL. NOW, DURING SOLOMON'S REIGN, HIS WEALTH AND GLORY HAD BEEN MAINTAINED BY STERN MEASURES—HEAVY TAXES AND HARD LABOR EXACTED FROM ALL TWELVE TRIBES! THE POWERFUL TRIBE OF EPHRAIM WANTED NO MORE OF THIS AND A DELEGATION SOUGHT, FROM THE NEW KING, ASSURANCES THAT IT WOULD CEASE. REHOBOAM ASKED THE OLD AND WISE COUNSELORS WHO HAD GUIDED SOLOMON DURING HIS REIGN, FOR ADVICE—THEY TOLD HIM HE SHOULD APPEASE THE PEOPLE AND DEAL KINDLY WITH THEM....



...OBVIOUSLY, THIS DIDN'T FIT REHOBOAM'S IDEA OF WHAT A KING SHOULD BE LIKE, SO HE SOUGHT ADVICE OF THE YOUNG PRINCES WITH WHOM HE HAD GROWN UP! TO A MAN, THEY ALL AGREED THE PEOPLE NEEDED A SEVERE LESSON FOR THEIR IMPUDENCE IN QUESTIONING A KING'S RIGHT TO TAX HIS PEOPLE. SO, THREE DAYS AFTER THE QUESTION HAD BEEN PUT TO HIM, THE KING GAVE THEM HIS ANSWER—HE WOULD TAX THEM GREATER THAN SOLOMON EVER HAD, HE WOULD WORK THEM HARDER THAN SOLOMON EVER WORKED THEM! AND PERHAPS REHOBOAM SHOULD HAVE BEEN FOREWARNED, FOR THE EPHRAIMITES APPEARED BEFORE HIM IN ALL THE ACCOUTREMENTS OF WAR—THE DIE WAS CAST! THE TEN TRIBES OF THE NORTH REBELLED, NAMING JEROBOAM THEIR KING—AND NEVER AGAIN WAS ISRAEL UNITED!

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