

Covid Keys & Cures in 2 Chronicles

Please read 2 Chronicles Chapter 11

In this chapter we learn of (i) the establishment of Rehoboam's southern kingdom, (ii) the apostasy & spiritual dereliction of Jeroboam & the northern kingdom & (iii) God's prohibition of civil strife between Israel & Judah. Let's look at each of these in turn:

- (i) Rehoboam dealt shrewdly with Judah and Benjamin. He fortified various local cities with armoury and various provisions but most importantly, he established Jerusalem as the religious capital. God fearing priests & Levites from throughout all the territories north & south recognised that authentic, and therefore acceptable worship, of God must be in accordance with God's prescription. Accordingly, they travelled several times a year for various rituals, feasts & solemn assemblies to Jerusalem (vs 14-16). For three years therefore, since Rehoboam's chief officials walked uprightly before the Lord the southern kingdom was strengthened and established (v17); NB. The polygamy of Rehoboam was not exemplary; rather it most likely served a military purpose. By it, Rehoboam would leverage authority & control over the various townships in the south (vs 18-23).
- (ii) By contrast, Jeroboam's practice represents an example of compromised, syncretistic religion. Jeroboam believed it was acceptable to worship God according to personal whim; he cared little for the commandment of God nor the restrictions & limitations God had imposed on how God was to be honoured. From this episode and other similarly clear passages the best theologians have crafted 'the Regulative Principle of Divine Worship.' Accordingly,

The Regulative Principle of Worship

Lutheranism	Calvinism
<u>Whatever is not prohibited may be allowed.</u>	<u>Only that which God commands is to be allowed.</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Is beauty and creativity not properly offered to God in worship?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Beauty and creativity are called for from all of life rather than being restricted to the church.
<p><i>"I am not of the opinion that all arts are to be cast down and destroyed on account of the gospel, ... on the other hand, I would gladly see all arts, especially music, in the service of him who has given and created them."</i></p>	<p><i>"...[T]here is nothing more perilous to our salvation than a distorted and perverse worship of God."</i></p>

- (iii) God forbade civil war between the north & the south. It's unclear (to me) why. Having been divided, the nation was certainly more vulnerable to defeat ('divide & conquer' = motif of globalism!). In due course, both the northern tribes & the southern territories would capitulate & be taken into captivity. Each would eventually succumb to general apostasy. Perhaps the two necessary but weakening historical eventualities of the past 2000 years were (a) the Great Schism (1054) which divide the Church into East & West and (b) the Reformation (1517) which splintered the more principled reform branch into dozens (hundreds) of fragmentary units.

Covid Keys & Cures in 2 Chronicles – Questions from Ch 11:

- ***Would you have made the journeys to Jerusalem to worship God aright? Or might you have settled for an easier life?***
- ***Does it matter how we worship God? Are we freer now under the NT administration of God's covenant?***
- ***Covid-19 has most certainly divided the Christian Church. How hard will it be for us to be reunited? First century Christians paid with their blood for refusing Caesar worship. In later years they were challenged (e.g. by Augustine) to consider reconciliation with many of those who had bowed the knee to Caesar.***

Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

(Rev 12:10-11)