

Rheobean--the king
Jerobean, the rebel

THE BLINDNESS OF INJUSTICE

The symbol of justice is always blindfolded

To signify impartiality

But injustice is often based on inability to see the truth.

And because of the blindness of Rheobean, Israel was divided.
Solomon had been an energetic and resourceful ruler.

In his building, he used a man named Jerobean
And Solomon became ruthless

Like the Chinese today, national glory the first goal.
While Solomon still lived, Jerobean led a revolt of the 12 tribes.
It failed, and he fled to Egypt.

Now Rheobean is crowned--in Shechem--in the Northern kingdom
Story of Jerobean in Egypt--Pharaoh's wife's sister to wife
But shortly he comes back, builds fort at Zeredah.
He is made spokesman

He leads no great battle of ~~principles~~ religious reform
The people want less taxes, less forced labor

Rheobean follows the forms his father & grandfather had set
Consult with experienced advisers. /Adoram/

But like youth, he has difficulty in accepting their advice
So the 2 12 tribes are separated, the kingdom is destroyed, a
civil war begins. Solomon had sown the wind and Rheobean
has reaped the whirlwind.

These passages are full of lessons:

1. There is a day of reckoning. ~~xxxxxxx~~

If we spend money we do not have, bankrupted and discredit.
If we give hate, we get hate--and hatred is so easy
If we fill our lives with sensuality, as Solomon...
We don't "get away with sin" in God's world--if we think so
we are more foolish than Rheobean. 3000 years experience.
Rheobean thought he could have his own way--others had it.
Hitler & Mussolini thought they could

Douglas Kelly, the psychiatrist who examined criminals
at Nuremberg--not an "insane Joe" in the crowd.
They just had no moral concepts.

The Chinese think they can

Perhaps on the grounds "the ends justifies the means"
It will become pure despotism
Just as some elements of the labor movement have today.

What of our own lives

What sins are we living in the belief that we can get away with
them?

Are we harboring, hatred, envy, jealousy, lust, greed?
It will come home to roost.

2. The primacy of the spiritual factor.

We all have a religion. Comes from Latin "to bind". Whatever
we tie to, that is our religion.

Kruschev has a religion--power. An atheist, he says--but he
will give up all else for power. It will destroy him.
The thief has a religion--the alcoholic--and only a higher religion
will save them.

Some people have two religions--the one they confess, and the
one to which they give their true allegiance.

Many a Christian actually worships at some other shrine

Money, success, ambition, selfishness

A Sunday God, of good clothes, and hymns, and offerings

A Monday thru Saturday God--idols

"We give to them, but they cannot give in return

WORSHIP LEAFLET

A Service of Worship for Small Church Schools

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MAY 24 (WORLD SERVICE SUNDAY): "RESTORES THE LOST AND BINDS THE SPIRIT BROKEN"

(General Theme: "Fold to Thy Heart Thy Brother")

1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT (by leader).¹

2. HYMN: "O Brother Man, Fold to Thy Heart Thy Brother!" (*The Methodist Hymnal*, 466; *The Cokesbury Worship Hymnal*, 172) or "Lead On, O King Eternal" (*The Methodist Hymnal*, 278; *The Abingdon Song Book*, 210).

3. SCRIPTURE READING (by a young person; Luke 4:18-19):

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

4. TALK (by a teacher of youth).¹

5. PRAYER (by leader):

O God, we thank thee for Jesus Christ, who went about doing good, binding up the wounds of people hurt in the struggle for existence. We would follow his example and try to make this a fairer world to live in. Help us to become aware of the needs of people in our own town and to reach out a helping hand to them in the spirit of Christ. Amen.

6. HYMN: "God of the Strong, God of the Weak" (*The Methodist Hymnal*, 457) or "O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee" (*The Methodist Hymnal*, 259; *The Abingdon Song Book*, 116).

¹ For the introductory statement, the talk, and other materials for enriching this service of worship see *The Church School for May*.

FOR MAY 24 (WORLD SERVICE SUNDAY)

The Blindness of Injustice

(Unit VI: God in Human Affairs)

1 Kings 12:12-20

12 So Jerobo'am and all the people came to Rehobo'am the third day, as the king said, "Come to me again the third day."

13 And the king answered the people harshly, and forsaking the counsel which the old men had given him,

14 He spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."

15 So the king did not hearken to the people; for it was a turn of affairs brought about by the Lord that he might fulfil his word, which the Lord spoke by Ahij'ah the Shil'onite to Jerobo'am the son of Nebat.

16 And when all Israel saw that the king did not hearken to them, the people answered the king,

"What portion have we in David?

We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse.

To your tents, O Israel!

Look now to your own house, David." So Israel departed to their tents.

17 But Rehobo'am reigned over the people of Israel who dwell in the cities of Judah.

18 Then King Rehobo'am sent Ado'ram, who was taskmaster over the forced labor, and all Israel stoned him to death with stones. And King Rehobo'am made haste to mount his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

19 So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

20 And when all Israel heard that Jerobo'am had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. There was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

(Read also 1 Kings 11:9 through 12:11, 21-33.)

Memory Selection: If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. (Mark 3:24-25.)

The Gist of the Lesson

The people of Israel asked Rehoboam to lighten the tax and forced-labor requirements placed upon them by his father, Solomon. The new king, reared in luxury, refused to listen to wise counsel and promised to make the burdens worse. As a result the ten northern tribes formed a new kingdom under Jeroboam. Injustice brought permanent division to the nation.

To what extent is justice necessary for unity in homes, communities, organizations, or governments? How can we best attain national unity? We need to be constantly vigilant to correct oppression and injustice in our midst. Otherwise we can fail to see it because of unconcern or familiarity. Justice will help keep our nation united and will further the cause of world unity as well.

Next week's lesson will be "We Are Not Alone," based on 1 Kings 16:29 through 19:18.

Today is World Service Sunday in The Methodist Church. This means that the entire church-school offering should go to support World Service activities. Part of today's offering will be used in promoting the work of the Board of Social and Economic Relations of The Methodist Church.