

Small Group Guide

Character Studies in the Old Testament | Summer Series 2026

Rehoboam: One Generation Away

Based on 1 Kings 12:1-19 | August 02, 2026

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed to help your group move from hearing the Word to living it. Work through the sections at a pace that fits your group. You do not need to cover every question. Choose the ones that generate the most honest conversation and allow the Spirit to lead.

OPENING REFLECTION

Before diving into discussion, take a moment to read or summarize the sermon's opening thought together:

"The question is not whether God can preserve His work. The question is: Will we faithfully pass the hope of Christ on to the next generation, or will our children and grandchildren end up in spiritual exile?"

Allow thirty seconds of silence after reading it, then ask the group:

- What word or phrase from that statement stands out to you most, and why?

BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Rehoboam inherited the throne with every conceivable advantage. He was the grandson of David, the son of Solomon, and stood at the center of the most powerful kingdom Israel had ever known. Yet in a single moment of arrogance, he fractured everything that had been built. His failure was not a lack of access to wisdom. It was a refusal to submit to it.

The sermon identified three layers of Rehoboam's failure:

- He rejected mature counsel in favor of voices that confirmed what he already wanted to hear
- He refused to listen to the real burden the people were carrying
- He inherited spiritual heritage without ever being formed by it

These failures are not unique to ancient Israel. They are warnings for every church, family, and leader today.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Use these statements to anchor your group's conversation throughout the discussion.

****1. Proximity to truth is not the same as being formed by truth.****

Rehoboam grew up surrounded by wisdom but never allowed it to shape him from the inside out.

****2. Listening is a moral act.****

The Hebrew concept of listening in 1 Kings 12 implies attentive, responsive obedience, not passive hearing. Rehoboam's refusal to listen was not a personality flaw. It was a spiritual failure.

****3. Heritage does not guarantee formation.****

Children can grow up in homes and churches full of biblical language, worship services, and ministry programs and still not know how to walk with God.

****4. The next generation is not rejecting God. They are questioning whether the church believes what it says.****

Gen Z and Gen Alpha are spiritually hungry but cautious. They are not looking for more production. They are looking for genuine, trustworthy spiritual mothers and fathers.

****5. We are only one generation away from losing it all.****

This is not a statement of despair. It is a call to urgency, intentionality, and faithful discipleship.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Section One: Rehoboam's Failure

1. The sermon described Rehoboam as a man who had "heritage without formation" and "access without submission." What is the difference between those two things? Have you ever experienced that gap in your own life?

2. Rehoboam consulted two groups of advisors: the older counselors who had served Solomon, and the younger men who had grown up with him. Why do you think he ultimately rejected the older counselors' advice? What does that reveal about his character?

3. The older counselors told Rehoboam in 1 Kings 12:7 that if he would serve the people, they would serve him in return. Why is servant leadership so difficult to embrace, especially for someone who has just come into power or authority?

4. The sermon noted that the Hebrew word for listening in this passage implies attentive, responsive obedience. In your own experience, what is the difference between hearing someone and truly listening to them? When have you failed to listen well, and what were the consequences?

5. Verse 15 says Rehoboam refused to listen to the people, and this was the pivot point of the entire chapter. What does it reveal about leadership when a person in authority consistently refuses to hear the concerns of those they are leading?

Section Two: The Generational Warning

6. The sermon made a striking observation: "Solomon's wisdom did not automatically become Rehoboam's wisdom." What does that tell us about the limits of spiritual inheritance? How does this challenge assumptions we might make about our own families or churches?

7. The pastor said, "We must never assume that because our children know the songs, understand the culture, or participate in the programs, they have been disciplined." Do you agree with that statement? What does genuine discipleship look like compared to cultural familiarity with Christianity?

8. The sermon described the "yoke" language in 1 Kings 12:4 and connected it to ministry culture today. In what ways can a church unintentionally become a heavy burden for people, especially younger generations? What would a lighter, life-giving ministry culture look like?

9. The pastor described Gen Z and Gen Alpha as "desperately spiritually hungry, but distrustful, skeptical, and often wounded by shallow religion and performative Christianity." How does that description shape the way your group or church should approach ministry to younger people?

10. The sermon stated plainly: "Gen Z and Gen Alpha are not rejecting God because they hate truth. They are rejecting church because they doubt whether the church actually believes what it says." How does that land with you? Is there any area where the church, or your own life, has projected something outwardly that does not match what is happening inwardly?

Section Three: The Call to Action

11. The sermon presented five responses to avoid repeating Rehoboam's tragedy:

- Prioritize discipleship over production
- Recover biblical authority
- Model authentic faith
- Listen before leading
- Give the next generation real responsibility

Which of these five feels most urgent for your church or small group right now? Which one is most personally challenging for you?

12. The pastor said the next generation is not looking for "flawless Sunday morning experiences" or "emotionally driven worship." They are looking for "spiritual mothers and fathers who care, who engage on a personal level, who invest time and energy." Who in your life has served that role for you? Who are you currently serving in that role for someone else?

13. The sermon closed with this challenge: "These next generations are not asking for a fake church that sounds relevant. They are asking for a real Jesus proclaimed through a real church that actually believes the Word of God." What is one specific, honest change your group could make to live that out more faithfully?

GOING DEEPER

For groups that want to explore further, consider these additional reflection questions:

- Read 1 Kings 11:1-13 before your next meeting. How did Solomon's own spiritual drift set the stage for Rehoboam's failure? What does that tell us about the long-term consequences of our personal choices?

- The sermon referenced Matthew Henry's observation that Rehoboam chose "ego over wisdom, image over stewardship, and pride over service." In what areas of your life are you most tempted to make those same trade-offs?

- Jesus speaks of his yoke being easy and his burden being light. How does the invitation of Jesus stand in contrast to the kind of leadership Rehoboam demonstrated? What does it

mean practically to lead and live under the yoke of Christ rather than the yoke of performance or pride?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

These are drawn directly from the sermon's Life Change Challenge. Use them as a group commitment, not just individual assignments.

****Application One: Spend One Intentional Hour with Someone Younger****

Each group member should identify a teenager, young adult, or child in their family, church, or community. Commit to spending one hour with that person this week. Ask about their real life, their doubts, their pressures, and their spiritual questions. The goal is not to teach. The goal is to listen.

- As a group, share who you plan to spend time with and report back next week.

****Application Two: Remove One Layer of Performance from Your Spiritual Life****

Ask the Lord to reveal one area where your faith has become more curated than sincere. That might be in how you pray, how you serve, how you present yourself at church, or how you talk about your spiritual life. Take one honest step toward authenticity this week.

- Consider sharing this with a trusted person in the group for accountability.

****Application Three: Open Scripture Together with a Younger Person****

Read 1 Kings 12:1-19 with a younger person this week. Do not turn it into a lecture. Ask them what they notice. Ask what they think Rehoboam should have done differently. Then

ask together, "What would it look like for our church and our home to choose humility instead of pride?" Close by praying for the next generation by name.

- Bring one observation from that conversation to share with the group next week.

GROUP PRAYER FOCUS

Close your time together by praying specifically and intentionally. Use these prompts to guide your prayer:

- Pray for the younger generation by name. If group members have children, grandchildren, students, or young people in their lives, speak their names aloud before God and ask for His hand to be upon them.

- Pray for your church to be a place of genuine discipleship, not just impressive programming.

- Pray for humility. Ask God to reveal any area where pride, image management, or self-protection is keeping your group or your family from listening well and leading faithfully.

- Pray for spiritual mothers and fathers to rise up within your congregation who will invest deeply, love genuinely, and guide the next generation with patience and truth.

CLOSING THOUGHT

The story of Rehoboam is not primarily a political story. It is a story about what happens when a generation receives the benefits of a spiritual legacy without being transformed by it. The kingdom did not fracture because of an enemy from outside. It fractured from within, through pride, selective listening, and the refusal to lead with humility.

The church today faces the same test. The next generation is watching. They are asking whether what we say on Sunday matches how we live on Monday. They are not impressed by production, but they are moved by authenticity. They are not looking for a polished institution, but they are hungry for a real community that actually believes the living Word of God.

We are one generation away. Let us be the generation that chooses differently.

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