

A The people of Israel.

❖ The need for obedience. Deuteronomy 28:2.

- God set very clear conditions when Israel was about to enter the Promised Land:
 - (1) Obeying God → Abundant life and peace (Deuteronomy 28:1-14).
 - (2) Disobedience → War and conflicts (Deuteronomy 28:15-68).
- Despite Israel's disobedience, God was always by their side. He sent prophets to call them to repentance because He loved His people (Jeremiah 3:14-15; 31:3).
- God longs for His people to have prosperity, unity and health. He is able to do so when we live in faith and obedience.

❖ Doing whatever I want. Judges 21:25.

- The people of Israel followed their own earthly desires and disobeyed God's law. They made two serious mistakes:
 - (1) They served other gods (Judges 2:11-13).
 - (2) They married Canaanites (Judges 3:5-7).
- They willingly stepped away from God's protection. Israel suffered wars and terrible sins as a result of those decisions.
- Doing whatever I want has terrible results. Let's make the firm decision to do God's will from now on.

❖ The need for wisdom. 1 Kings 12:16.

- Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, sought wisdom in the wrong place. He didn't hear the requests of his people and he was ruthless and cruel.
- The Bible encourages us to get wisdom. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 4:7; 9:10). We only need to ask for it (James 1:5).

B The Christian Church.

❖ Favoritism. 1 Corinthians 1:10.

- There were factions in the Church in Corinth: some said they were of Apollos, others of Paul, others of Cephas and others of Christ.
- The heart of unity is Christ. He is our model and we must set our eyes on Him. When we all look at the cross, we are united in purpose.

❖ Self-interest. Acts 20:29.

- Paul warned the Church about people who would cause disunity in order to take advantage of the Church.
- There is good advice in 2 Timothy 2:14-19 and 3:12-17 to avoid being misled:
 - (1) Study the Bible, understand it and teach it.
 - (2) Avoid trivial and speculative topics. Speak about the truth.
 - (3) Obey God.