

Kingdom Falls Apart & Divides

1 Kings 11:26—12:33



bible verse

COMMITTING TO MEMORY

Ms

main street

March 20, 2011

1 Kings 12:15 KJV

...for the turn of affairs was from the Lord, that he might fulfill his word.



story lesson

BIBLE STORY

The kingdom of Solomon was one of immense grandeur and world-wide influence. It was a reflection of the kingdom of God reaching from Israel out into the world. This was the defining moment of the nation of Israel and its charter as the representative people of God.



However, their hearts were turned to other gods and to materialism. The Lord rose up a couple of adversaries against Solomon—Hadad the Edomite and Rezon, son of Eliada. Also, a man named Jeroboam was promoted among the labor force of Solomon. While on a walk with a prophet, Jeroboam received word from the Lord that he would be ruler of ten tribes of Israel, while the other two tribes would be under control of a descendant of Solomon. Upon hearing this, Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but he fled to Egypt.





After Solomon dies, Jeroboam returns from Egypt. Meanwhile, the kingdom is handed over to Solomon's son, Rehoboam. The people of Israel asked Rehoboam not to put a heavy yoke on them as his father had done... "but now lighten the harsh labor and the heavy yoke he put on us, and we will serve you" (1 Kings 12:4). They were tired and worn out and they wanted their king to care about them. Rehoboam told them that he would

answer them in three days. Then he consulted the elders who had served under his father. They told him to give the people a favorable answer—to lighten the load: "if today you will be a servant to these people and serve them and give them a favorable answer, they will always be your servants" (1 Kings 12:7). Rehoboam rejected this advice. Instead, he consulted the young men who had grown up with him – "tell them: 'My little finger is thicker than my father's waist...my father laid on you a heavy yoke; I will make it even heavier...my father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions'" (1 Kings 12:10-11).

Three days later, Rehoboam met with the people (Jeroboam was there as well) and he answered them harshly. "So the king did not listen to the people, for this turn of events was from the Lord, to fulfill the word the Lord had spoken to Jeroboam son of Nebat through Ahijah the Shilomite" (1 Kings 12:15). The people then divided on North and South lines – Israel to the North, and the house of David to the South.

3 days

King Rehoboam tried to exert force over the all Israel, but was met with extreme opposition. He then "mustered the whole house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin... to make war against the house of Israel and to regain the kingdom for Rehoboam son of Solomon" (1 Kings 12:21). But the Lord intervened – strongly. "Do



not go up to fight against your brothers, the Israelites... Go home, every one of you, for this is my doing" (1 Kings 12:24). The Lord took direct credit for what was happening in the course of human events. He arranged this, and His will would not be thwarted.

And so the kingdom was divided – Israel (to the north) and Judah (to the south, Judah and Benjamin).

This was God's doing... Amazing that the Lord made this so explicit. Yes, we know that He is always involved... we are not deists (God as the clock-maker, only to wind up the clock and then let it run on its own). And yet, when He steps in so deliberately and dictates His immediate will, we are amazed. Wow! God is really at work, moving and shaping and directing in the ordinary affairs of human events. This idea warms our hearts and bears witness to an active God within our midst.



life application

MAKING IT REAL

Do What Is Right In the Eyes of the Lord

The Lord commands obedience of his people, especially its leaders. Through the prophet supplied, the Lord relayed to Jeroboam that he would be handed over ten of the tribes of Israel to rule. "If you do whatever I command you and walk in my ways and do what is right in my eyes by keeping my statutes and commands, as David my servant did, I will be with you" (1 Kings 11:38). God expects obedience. If obedience does not follow, then negative consequences follow. Of all of us, the Lord expects obedience. Not obedience out of trying to master our lives, but the opposite: obedience because we have let the Lord master our life and we respond based on his lordship.

Listen to Wise People

Rehoboam chose to listen to those who were unwise, rather than those who were wise. He should have answered the people well, but he unwisely did not. It is important to listen and heed to the wise counsel in your life. For children, God put wise parents in your life. For adults, God puts other people in your life for you to receive wisdom. The question is: Are you listening to those God has placed in your life?



questions

REMEMBERING

- 1. Who did Solomon try to kill because he was going to be king of 10 tribes?**
Jeroboam
- 2. Who became king after Solomon died?** Rehoboam
- 3. What did the people ask Rehoboam to do?** Lighten their workload
- 4. What was Rehoboam's response?** He said he was going to make their workload even harder because they asked him that... Rehoboam took advice from his peers and not the wise elders
- 5. What did the people decide to do after Rehoboam answered harshly?** They made Jeroboam their king—the ten tribes to the north was called Israel with Jeroboam as king and the two tribes to the south was called Judah with Rehoboam as king
- 6. What happens when we take sides in conflicts or arguments?**



coloring sheet

ON THE NEXT PAGE

JEROBOAM -
TAKE TEN PIECES FOR YOURSELF.
I KNOW THAT GOD WILL TAKE
SOLOMON'S KINGDOM AWAY FROM
HIM!



Kingdom Falls Apart, Divides