

Episode: Kings and Prophets Series No. 10

Narrator: Rehoboam and Jeroboam

Primary Scriptures: 1 Kings 11-14, 2 Chronicles 10-12

Story Summary: Split of Israel into the Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdoms **Location:** Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom

Time: 930-915 BC

Suggested Memory Scriptures: 1 Kings 11:4, 11:6; 12:8; 12:19, 12:28; 13:34; 14:22

This episode sets the stage for the rest of the *Kings and Prophets Series*. 1 Kings 11 describes Solomon's later life and how he fell into idolatry by worshiping the gods of his foreign wives. By building temples and shrines to these false gods, Solomon led the whole Israelite nation into idolatry. Obviously, this angered God, so God started setting the stage to discipline the Israelites in hopes they would return to him.

As soon as Rehoboam inherited the crown from Solomon, he realized the country was in trouble. He needed to raise taxes to continue the public projects, but his subjects did not want that. When he aggressively pressed the issue, ten of the tribes of Israel rebelled and went off on their own, rallying under the leadership of Solomon's enemy, Jeroboam. From that point on, there were two nations.

The southern nation was made up of two tribes of Israel: Judah and the tiny tribe of Benjamin. These became known as the Southern Kingdom, the Kingdom of Judah, or Judah. The first king of this nation was King Rehoboam. One of the most important assets of the Southern Kingdom was Jerusalem, including the Temple located there. The kings of the Southern Kingdom will be descendants of King David. It is the Southern Kingdom that will eventually go into exile in Babylon, and return from there.

The northern nation was made up of the remaining ten tribe of Israel. These became known as the Northern Kingdom, the Kingdom of Israel, or Samaria. Sound confusing? That's because it is! And its capital was sometimes at the city of Samaria. The first king was King Jeroboam. Since the Temple was located in the Southern Kingdom, King Jeroboam set up alternate worship locations and worship methods in several areas. The Northern Kingdom will eventually get destroyed by the Assyrians in about 722 BCE, and its people will be scattered among the nations. They will become known as the Lost Tribes of Israel.

The two kingdoms self-destructed in some part because they wasted resources fighting each other. More importantly, they self-destructed because they continued worshiping idols and false gods instead of the one true God of their ancestors.

Discussion Questions:

1. According to 1 Kings 11:1-3, why did Solomon marry seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines?
2. How might 1 Kings 11:4 impact your view of Solomon?
3. According to 1 Kings 11:7-8, how deeply did Solomon fall into idolatry?
4. According to 1 Kings 11:26-40, how did Jeroboam come into importance?
5. Was God surprised when Rehoboam made a bad decision that split the kingdom?
6. According to 1 Kings 12: 21, what two tribes will comprise the Southern Kingdom?

1. He “loved” many women, which probably means he lusted after them. They were of royal birth, so he was marrying them to improve his foreign relations with other countries. Many of them were women of countries that were expressly forbidden for him to marry, so he may have gotten some perverse satisfaction from disobeying God. 2. As he aged, he quit withstanding some temptations, and completely fell into idolatry. 3. He built thousands of idols and places of worship for foreign gods. According to 2 Kings 23:13, many of these lasted for hundreds of years. 4. God put him in importance in order to prepare him to take away part of Solomon’s kingdom. 5. No. According to 1 Kings 12:15, he was acting as God knew he would. 6. Judah and Benjamin. That’s how Jerusalem ended up being in the Southern Kingdom.

Application Questions:

1. What might be some implications of 1 Kings 11:4 to what temptations happen to men as they age? Do these same temptations happen to women as they age?
2. According to 1 Kings 11:38, God gave Jeroboam the same conditional promise to have an everlasting dynasty as he gave to David and Solomon. What conditional promise(s) has God given to you that could incentivize you to be obedient to him?
3. Rehoboam did not take the advice of his experienced advisors. What types of people do you tend to take advice from? Do you take more advice from celebrities and television personalities than you should?

Application Questions for Teens:

1. According to 1 Kings 11:4, Solomon started worshiping other gods because of his many wives and concubines. When you are around friends who believe differently than you, are you more likely to start thinking the way they do, or for them to start thinking like you? Is it dangerous to have many friends who do not believe in God?
2. According to 1 Kings 12:8-12, Rehoboam rejected the advice of experienced people and took the advice of his inexperienced friends. How did that work out for Rehoboam? How does it work out for you when you take the advice of friends who are not experienced and wise?
3. According to 1 Kings 12:26, why did Rehoboam immediately quit obeying God after he became king? How did he rationalize his decision? Do you rationalize the times you are disobedient to God?