

**Week 36**  
**THE KINGDOM DIVIDES**

**Key Verse: I Kings 11:36 (see also 2 Chronicles 21:7)**

I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name.

I Kings 11 marks a pivotal point in the history of the Children of Israel. Noticing that the chapter begins with the word “but” or “however” should give us a clue that something is amiss! King Solomon seemingly handled his wealth better than his women.

The nation that God had founded and provided for was torn from the hand of King Solomon because he had angered God (1 Kings 11:9-11). For David’s sake (1 Kings 11:12; 1 Chronicles 17:13) He waited until Solomon’s death and left the line of David with two tribes — Judah and Benjamin. Judah, the largest tribe, and Benjamin, the smallest, were often mentioned as one tribe because they shared the same border.

God had warned His people through Moses, Joshua, and Samuel that sin would bring destruction. It was not an outside force which defeated them, but the fact that they themselves forsook God. They were not spared from God’s judgment on their sin.

God warned Solomon twice about worshipping foreign gods. Yet “Solomon did not keep the Lord’s command” (1 Kings 11:10). For this reason the Lord told him the kingdom would be taken away from him, though not in his lifetime. God said that He would give one tribe to Solomon’s son “for the sake of David . . . and for the sake of Jerusalem” (1 Kings 11:13).

The sin of Solomon and of the people in forsaking God and turning to idolatry was the main reason why the kingdom was divided.

**DAY ONE: The Lord Raised Up**  
**Read I Kings 11:14-23**

1. Who or what did God use to take the kingdom from Solomon? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who are the Edomites? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Name some well-known Edomites: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who was the second adversary that God raised up? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Where did he go live? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are there still problems in Damascus? \_\_\_\_\_ Read Isaiah 17:1 to see what Isaiah prophesied that is still to come regarding Damascus.
7. Have you ever had trouble with an “enemy?” Enemies aren’t always flesh and blood. Tell how the Lord has helped you defeat an enemy in your life. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PRAYER FOCUS: Thank the Lord for His promise in Micah 5:9 “Your hand will be lifted up in triumph over your enemies, and all your foes will be destroyed.”**

**Week 36**  
**THE KINGDOM DIVIDES**

**Key Verse: I Kings 11:36 (see also 2 Chronicles 21:7)**

I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name.

**DAY TWO:**

**Read 1 Kings 11:26-43**

1. Who was Jeroboam? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How did he rebel against the King? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who did God speak through to tell Jeroboam what was going to happen? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What was he wearing? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How did the prophet use what he was wearing to prophecy to Jeroboam? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What was God giving to Jeroboam? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Why was God dividing the tribes? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What does I Kings 11:36 tell us regarding how God feels about David? \_\_\_\_\_  
about Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_  
Compare with 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and 2 Chronicles 6:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
How will God continue the light burning in Jerusalem through David? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What was God requiring of Jeroboam in I Kings 11:38? \_\_\_\_\_

Jeroboam had the potential to be the first of a great line of kings. God told him that He would “build thee a sure house, as I built for David” if he would only follow His commandments. Unfortunately, Jeroboam was the first of nineteen evil kings of Israel. He stained the kingdom and led the way for all kings after him, who “walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.” For over two hundred years, there was not a single good king in Israel, and then Assyria conquered the kingdom and took them into captivity.

10. Does God require obedience of us today? \_\_\_\_\_ Should we expect him to “be with us” in the midst of disobedience? \_\_\_\_\_ Should we expect consequences for disobedience? \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 65:6-7 reminds us that the judgment of sin can sometimes fall in the laps of the children.

11. Who succeeded Solomon upon his death? \_\_\_\_\_

**PRAYER FOCUS: Spend time with the Lord today thanking him for the sure word from Jeremiah: No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." Begin looking and longing for that day! (Jeremiah 31:34)**

**Week 36**  
**THE KINGDOM DIVIDES**

**Key Verse: I Kings 11:36 (see also 2 Chronicles 21:7)**

I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name.

**DAY THREE: What's wrong with this picture?**  
**I Kings 12:1-24**

The United Kingdom of Israel has split into 2 kingdoms: Israel in the North, consisting of 10 of the 12 tribes and Judah in the South, consisting of only of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. Jerusalem will remain the capital of the Southern Kingdom of Judah with Rehoboam as her king but the 10 tribes elect Jeroboam, prince of Ephraim as king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Shechem will become the first capital of the Northern Kingdom but later the capital will be moved to the city of Samaria. The kingdoms were divided at the northern end of the Dead Sea. See map of the Divided Kingdom.

We see that Rehoboam, Solomon's son reigned upon the death of Solomon. The similarity of these names can cause confusion when you are trying to get this in your mind initially. (There is also a Jeroboam II that adds to the confusion!)

Jerusalem was the seat of Israel's government at the time of Solomon's death. However, Solomon's son, Rehoboam went about thirty-five miles north to Shechem to become king. Possibly, Rehoboam thought it would help rally the support of the northern tribes if he traveled north. The lack of unity between the tribes began in the time of the judges, and was especially noticeable between Judah (in the south) and Ephraim (in the north).

1. How did Rehoboam know the "young men" from whom he took counsel? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Contrast the way Rehoboam asked the "old men" for advice with the way he asked the "young men." What was the difference? (What was his attitude?) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

A second reason for the division of the kingdom was the attitude of Solomon's son Rehoboam, who became king after Solomon. The people had become restless under the heavy taxes and burdens of Solomon's latter days. They asked their new king to give them relief. But Rehoboam didn't just consult the counsel of the elders, but also consulted his young friends.

3. Whose advice did Rehoboam take? \_\_\_\_\_

Thereafter, the people rebelled and set up a northern kingdom under Jeroboam, a former official in Solomon's government.

What we've seen so far is that Jeroboam was given 10 northern tribes of Israel to rule. These 10 tribes became known in the prophetic literature as the House of Israel. (Can you name the ten northern tribes?)  
\_\_\_\_\_

The two remaining tribes in the south, Judah and Benjamin, became known as the House of Judah. You'll find references all through the prophets speaking of the House of Israel and the House of Judah.

**Week 36**  
**THE KINGDOM DIVIDES**

**Key Verse: I Kings 11:36 (see also 2 Chronicles 21:7)**

I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name.

A third reason for the division was the ancient jealousy between the tribe of Judah and the great tribe of Ephraim to the north. You will remember that Joshua had been an Ephraimite. Saul, on the other hand, was chosen from the tribe of Benjamin and David from the tribe of Judah. The sharp rivalry between Judah and Ephraim is seen in the biblical account. While they obeyed God there was unity. But when they did not the division seemed unavoidable.

When the kingdom was divided into two rival states, the entire political structure collapsed. The Philistines, Syrians, Ammonites, and Moabites—nations whom Israel had subdued—regained their freedom. The economic disturbance was serious. These nations no longer paid tribute, and it was impossible for the divided tribes to keep control of the major trade routes. A great kingdom literally fell apart overnight, leaving two weak, second-rate powers.

4. When Rehoboam assembled an army to attack the tribes under Jeroboam, what did God tell him? ( Kings 12:22) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do we often blame God and think that hardships that happen to us were “His doing?” Comment \_\_\_\_\_

This episode marks a division of the nation of Israel that lasted 3,877 years! The united nation Israel ceased to exist and would not be reestablished as a unified people until 1947 when the United Nations voted the creation of a new Jewish nation of Israel and a new Arab-Palestinian nation of Jordan from the lands the British held as a protectorate after the fall of the old Ottoman Empire

This split in the 12 tribes of Israel did not begin with the reign of Solomon's rash son. The movement toward disunity began as early as the days of the Judges when tribal jealousies, especially between the tribe of Ephraim, the most powerful tribe of the north, and Judah, the most powerful southern tribe, surfaced. Before the days of Saul and David the religious and political center of Israel was located for the most part in the territory of Ephraim. When David captured Jerusalem around 1000 BC, he moved the religious center of Israel to Jerusalem, on the border between Benjamin and Judah.

**PRAYER FOCUS: Jeremiah weeps over the destruction of Jerusalem when the nation of Judah is utterly defeated and captives taken away to Babylon. Read Jeremiah 3 and hear his anguish of soul that turns to hope in verse 25.**

**DAY FOUR: WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS?**

**Read I Kings 12:25-32**

1. Did Jeroboam do as God requested to be a good king? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What was he afraid of? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What did he build? \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 36**  
**THE KINGDOM DIVIDES**

**Key Verse: 1 Kings 11:36 (see also 2 Chronicles 21:7)**

I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name.

4. What did he institute? \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Was this according to God's plan? \_\_\_\_\_
  6. Have we ever replaced our own plans for God's plans? \_\_\_\_\_ Comment: \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- 

King Jeroboam instituted the idolatrous golden calf worship because he did not want the people to go to Jerusalem to worship, for fear that they would give their allegiance to Rehoboam, King of Judah (1 Kings 12:26-27). The "sin of Jeroboam" (golden calf worship) was promoted by every future king of Israel.

The Law instructed that only those from the tribe of Levi were to be priests (Numbers 3:10-12). The penalty for disobedience was death, yet Jeroboam not only chose whoever he wanted to be priests (verses 33-34), he performed priestly duties himself (verse 1).

The prophecy concerning the desecration of the golden calf altar in 1 Kings 13:2 is amazing because it refers to Josiah by name. This prophecy came to pass approximately three hundred years later, when King Josiah of Judah destroyed the golden calf idols (2 Kings 23:15-18).

After this act by Jeroboam, the priests, Levites, and many others from each tribe who were strong in loyalty to the Lord forsook the northern kingdom and transferred their allegiance to Judah. Judah was greatly strengthened by their addition. This meant that remnants of all the tribes were then found within Judah's borders (2 Chronicles 11:13-17).

We have seen that up to this time the name "Israel" has been used to refer to Jacob himself and all of his descendants (Genesis 32:22-32; 49:2; Joshua 1:2). After the kingdom was divided, however, the Bible uses "Israel" to refer to the northern kingdom of ten tribes whose first ruler was Jeroboam.

At times the northern kingdom is also called "Ephraim," the name of its most influential tribe. On the other hand, the southern kingdom of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin is called "Judah." It is important to keep these facts in mind when reading the different books of the Old Testament.

Many find a reading of Kings and Chronicles because it seems that it is just a succession of kings – mostly bad – who came into power. Today's reading is a list of a few of the kings so that you can see the types of kings that ruled.

**PRAYER FOCUS: Thank the Lord for Jeremiah's encouragement in chapter 29:11 where he reminds us that "I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."**

**DAY FIVE: The Kings who came to power**  
**Various scriptures**

The history of the united and divided kingdom is recorded in the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. Together these books make up about one-fifth (20%) of the Old Testament. It is important to remember that this history is written from God's point of view. For example, consider one of the kings of the northern

**Week 36**  
**THE KINGDOM DIVIDES**

**Key Verse: I Kings 11:36 (see also 2 Chronicles 21:7)**

I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name.

kingdom named Omri. His family reigned for 44 years, the second longest dynasty of all of Israel. We learn from nonbiblical records that Omri founded the most powerful ruling family in the northern kingdom. He moved the capital to Samaria, where he began a great city, and he regained territory from the Moabites. In fact, the Assyrians, who later conquered the northern kingdom, called it the land of Omri. Yet the Bible gives the actual events of Omri's reign in only two verses—1 Kings 16:23–24! It is important to keep this point of view in mind when studying these historical records.

These books differ from each other regarding the importance they place on different aspects of the history they deal with. Let us consider the emphasis of each one.

1. The books of 1 and 2 Samuel show us the principles upon which God wanted the kingdom to be established. It was to be founded on the spiritual values taught by Samuel and ruled by kings who followed the example of David's submissive leadership.
2. The books of 1 and 2 Kings describe how the kingdom actually developed. We see how the prophecy given by Nathan to David (2 Samuel 7:12–16) was fulfilled. This prophecy said that David would always have descendants. First and Second Kings tell about both the northern and southern kingdom. They give much attention to the prophets such as Elijah and Elisha.
3. The books of 1 and 2 Chronicles emphasize the temple: its ceremonies of worship and official figures. With the priesthood and the temple as their main theme, these books recount the history of the united kingdom under Saul, David, and Solomon. Then they deal mainly with the history of Judah, the southern kingdom. The northern kingdom of Israel is mentioned only when its events are related to those in the southern.

The character of Israel and Judah, in one sense, was seen in their kings, because the role of the king in the spiritual destiny of the nation was crucial. What the king was, the people eventually became. This was true both for the good, or, as was usually the case, for the bad.

After Solomon the story of kings gives a sad picture of decline and backsliding. In the northern kingdom Jeroboam had set up the worship of golden bulls. As the first king, his example corrupted the nation and ultimately led to its destruction (1 Kings 16:7; 22:52; 2 Kings 10:31). In the southern kingdom Rehoboam permitted the Israelites to build places in which to worship false gods. They followed the wicked practices of the people that God had ordered them to drive out of Palestine (1 Kings 14:22–24). But though most of the kings were bad, there were some that were good. The reign of Hezekiah in Judah, for example, was a wonderful time of faith and glory (2 Kings 18:1–20:21).

**Let's just look at a few of the kings:**

1. What kind of Kings was Jeroboam? I Kings 13:33-34 \_\_\_\_\_
2. How long did Jeroboam rule? I Kings 14:20 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Was Judah obedient? I Kings 14:22 \_\_\_\_\_
4. What did they do wrong? I Kings 14:23-24 \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did Rehoboam and Jeroboam get along? I Kings 14:30 \_\_\_\_\_
6. What kind of king was Abijah? I Kings 15:3 \_\_\_\_\_
7. What kind of king was Asa? I Kings 15:14 \_\_\_\_\_
8. What kind of king was Nadab? I Kings 15:26 \_\_\_\_\_
9. What kind of king was Baasha? I Kings 15:34 \_\_\_\_\_
10. What kind of king was Elah? I Kings 16:13 \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 36**  
**THE KINGDOM DIVIDES**

**Key Verse: I Kings 11:36 (see also 2 Chronicles 21:7)**

I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name.

11. What kind of king was Zimri? I Kings 16:20 \_\_\_\_\_  
12. What kind of king was Ahab? I Kings 16:30 \_\_\_\_\_

With this long succession of evil kings, it seems that God had just turned His head and ignored His people.

Will their sin go unpunished? \_\_\_\_\_

Will our sin go unpunished? \_\_\_\_\_

In what ways do you think sin is “punished?” \_\_\_\_\_

Read Deuteronomy 28:33, 36.

**PRAYER FOCUS: Zechariah the prophet gives us hope for a future day of peace: (9:10) *I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6)***

The northern kingdom (Israel) had many advantages over the southern kingdom (Judah). It possessed ten strong tribes whereas the southern kingdom had only two. (Sometimes, however, Judah and Benjamin are counted as one tribe.) As you will see by looking at a map of the two kingdoms, the northern one had a much larger area. It also had the best farming land—the fertile Jordan valley. Its population outnumbered that of Judah by three to one. In addition, the major military centers built by Solomon and David were there. So were the schools of the prophets in Bethel, Gilgal, and Ramah. The reason for its existence was that God had allowed the kingdom to be divided in this way in judgment because of the people’s sins. But the southern kingdom, though smaller in land and population, possessed Jerusalem, the political and religious center of the nation. It was fear of the influence of Jerusalem which caused Jeroboam, the first king of the northern kingdom, to make a fatal error. This act brought God’s immediate wrath and judgment upon him.

The southern kingdom enjoyed one even greater advantage. It had only one family of kings, all from the descendants of David. God kept His promise to David, His servant! In contrast, the northern kingdom had nine separate dynasties or families of kings with nineteen wicked rulers. These dynasties followed one another by assassination, bloodshed, and revolution. Perhaps for this reason the southern kingdom outlasted the northern kingdom by 130 years.

You are aware of what civil war does in a nation. It leaves families divided. It leaves business, transportation, and social life destroyed. Israel had been one family, one language, and one nation. Now they were, as Ahijah had prophesied, like a garment torn into twelve pieces; ten pieces now united against two. The relationship between the two kingdoms went through four clearly-marked periods:

1. Mutual hostility. During this time the kings of Judah continued to try to regain authority over the ten tribes of the northern kingdom. There were about 60 years of constant warfare.
2. Close ties against a mutual enemy. Syria threatened the two kingdoms. King Ahab of Israel tried to form an alliance with Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, through the intermarriage of the royal families. The purpose was to unite against the increasing powers of Syria.
3. A period of fresh mutual hostility. When Jehu came to the throne in the northern kingdom he killed all the remaining people of the family of Ahab. This shattered the alliance which had been made by Ahab with the

## Week 36 THE KINGDOM DIVIDES

**Key Verse: I Kings 11:36 (see also 2 Chronicles 21:7)**

I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name.

southern kingdom. The wound was never healed. The northern kingdom fell more and more into idolatry. There were a number of prophetic warnings, but the northern kingdom was finally carried away into captivity by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.

4. The southern kingdom alone. Assyria, Egypt, and finally the Chaldeans came to try to conquer Judah. The struggle went on for about 130 years until 586 B.C. when Judah was taken into captivity by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar.

### SUMMARY OF RISE AND FALL OF DIVIDED KINGDOM

Each of these two Houses had 19 kings. In the north, none of them were righteous. Most of the kings of the south were also wicked, however there was the occasional revival under certain kings like Josiah and Hezekiah. Among the prophets, some prophets spoke only to the northern House of Israel, some spoke only to the southern House of Judah, and some travelled between the two.

The House of Judah to the south consisted of the large tribe of Judah, and the small tribe of Benjamin. Benjamin, in essence, became swallowed up in Judah, so our Scriptures refer to the southern kingdom as “one tribe”. But in fact, Judah consisted not only of Judahites and Benjaminites, but many Levites and those from among the 10 northern tribes that had a heart for Jerusalem. ( 2 Chron. 11:14-17)

“For the Levites left their suburbs and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem: for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest’s office unto Adonai...And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek Adonai, God of Israel, came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto Adonai God of their fathers. So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah...”

So we find here that the southern kingdom consisted not only of Judah and Benjamin, but those from every tribe that had a heart for the God of Israel. They fled the wickedness of the north. This is why we find in the later Babylonian Captivity a record of the House of Judah that returned to the Land of Israel, with men from all the various tribes.

We find throughout the prophets that the wickedness of the northern kingdom continued to worsen. Eventually, in 1 Kings 17, we find the record that in King Hoshea’s 9<sup>th</sup> year as king, the Assyrians took the House of Israel [also known as “Samaria” and “Ephraim”] captive [ @ 722BC]. The Assyrians took these Israelite captives and spread them all over their empire, leaving only some that knew how to work the land. They then took men from all the other nations that they had conquered, and they brought them into this northern region of Israel, Samaria. This was in order to squelch an uprising from their subjects. As far as cruel tyrannies go, it was smart. The remnant of the ten tribes left in the north eventually intermarried with the gentiles brought in from the nations. This created a half-bred Israel, known today as Samaritans. This is why we find in the gospels that the Jews despised Samaritans, because they considered them half-bred dogs [“dogs” being a common term for gentiles among the Judeans of the first century].

But Israel wasn’t alone in this captivity exercise. Judah also eventually became exiled under the Babylonians [ @ 586BC]. Unlike Israel’s captivity however, Judah was allowed to maintain a continuity of community in Babylon. We will study these stories of Judah’s exiles through the stories of Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar; Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego; and Esther and Mordechai. But after 70 years of captivity, Judah was allowed



**Week 36**  
**THE KINGDOM DIVIDES**

**Key Verse: I Kings 11:36 (see also 2 Chronicles 21:7)**

I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name.

to return to the Land of Israel again under the ministry of men like Nehemiah, Ezra, Haggai and Zechariah. These men were all contemporaries that led Israel to a time of rebuilding in the Land. Under their work, Jerusalem, and eventually the Temple, was rebuilt.

But the northern tribe of Israel never returned from captivity. They were scattered far and wide among the nations and, in fact, to this day have never returned. But that doesn't mean God didn't speak about this future return. God promised a time when Israel and Judah would be gathered from among the nations, eclipsing the very Exodus from Egypt in magnitude! There will be a day when this Kingdom of God will be restored and David's Dynasty will be established again!

(RESOURCES: [www.apostolicfaith.org](http://www.apostolicfaith.org), and other various sources)