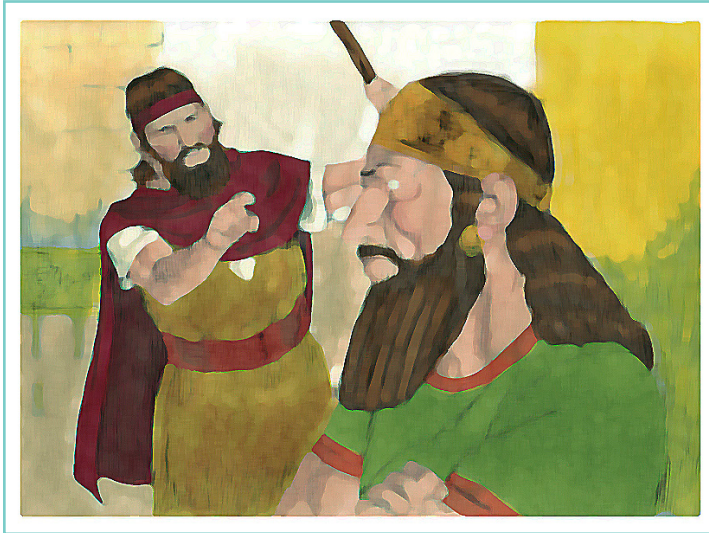


Lesson 3: Tyranny



Old Testament

New Testament

Where in the Bible?

Genesis is the first book in the Old Testament.

The Old Testament - History

The books of 1 and 2 Samuel and the books of 1 and 2 Kings tell the story of Israel as a united nation and the subsequent division into north and south kingdoms. Part of the biblical books of History, some of this same content is repeated in 1 and 2 Chronicles in a more abbreviated form.

Biblical Time Period: Division

With the death of King Solomon, the time of the unified monarchy came to an end. Because of disputes in the royal house, God's people were split into a Northern Kingdom (Israel) and a Southern Kingdom (Judah), both of which began to fall into idolatry.

This period was the time of many prophets, who spoke the Word of God to the leaders and people of both kingdoms. God criticized the people for following after pagan idols, and he warned them of the coming disaster that would result from their sins.

Introduction

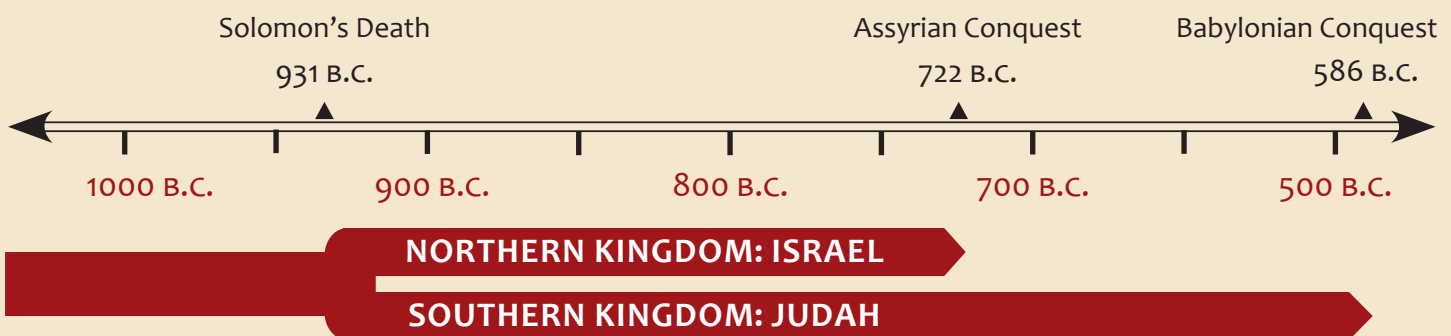
Today's story picks up after the death of King Solomon, when his son, Rehoboam, became the new king. When Rehoboam refused to listen to the advice of the elders, Jeroboam, one of Solomon's former officials, took leadership in the north, splitting the kingdom in two.

Read: 1 Kings 12:1-17

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?

When in Time?

After King Solomon died in 931 B.C., the kingdom split into two. The Northern Kingdom, called Israel, had its capital in Samaria. The Southern Kingdom, called Judah, had its capital in Jerusalem.



Discuss: 1 Kings 12:1-17

1. Read: 1 King 11:29-32. These verses are just ahead of our lesson for today. What did the prophet Ahijah say was about to happen? In what respect was this division the fault of the people? In what sense was it a part of God's plan?
2. When the delegation came and asked the newly seated King Rehoboam to lighten the "heavy yoke" on the people, to what were they referring? Why are people still concerned about such things in our own day?
3. To whose advice did Rehoboam listen? Why do you think he did that?
4. With what kind of attitude did Rehoboam make his reply to the delegation (v. 13-14)?
5. Up to this point in Scripture, the name "Israel" had referred to the whole nation of God's people. Now it came to refer to the kingdom of the northern tribes. Why did the southern kingdom take the name of "Judah"?
6. According to verse 15, *who* brought about these events? Does this happen in the political affairs of our own day? Explain.
7. In your life, to whom do you go for advice? On what basis or by what criteria do you evaluate their suggestions?
8. Read: Mark 10:42-45. What does Jesus say is the normal tendency of human leaders? How does Jesus want leadership to be lived out among his followers?

Where in the World?

The border between the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah ran from the top of the Salt Sea at the River Jordan to the western coast.

- a) The Kingdom of Judah consisted of that tribe's land along with lands in the south that had previously belonged to Simeon and Benjamin.
- b) The Kingdom of Israel consisted of the remaining ten northern tribes: Dan, Ephraim, Rueben, Gad, Manasseh, Asher, Naphtali, Issachar, and Zebulun. (Simeon is counted among the tribes of the north.)

Were there 12 or 13 tribes?

The original tribe of Levi (to which Moses and Aaron belonged) was given no ancestral lands, but served the Lord in worship as priests to all the people. The original tribe of Joseph is split between what are called the "half-tribes" of Ephraim and Manasseh. (See Joshua 14:4.) Depending on which groupings are being referred to, the total number of tribes can be counted as 12 or 13.

