

## ***“The Divided Kingdom” - Class 14***

### **A Walk Through the Old Testament**

Various Scriptures

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**Don Maurer:** Well, Jeff, two things. #1, I think I finally figured out the Johnny Cash song you were referring to last week in regard to Solomon and his lapse.

**Jeff:** Okay. *(Don plays and sings):*

**Don:** “I fell into a burnin’ ring of fire.” *(Laughter)*  
“I went down, down, down, and the flame went higher.”

Okay, now—

**Jeff:** Great. *(Laughter)*

**Don:** All right now, here we go. Now secondly, last Saturday I sent Jeff an email, profusely expressing my gratitude for a book that he recommended for Paul and I, as we’re going to teach a Sunday school class at church. You know, I was just profusely thanking him. And he sends me back an email. “That’s very good, but I didn’t hear anything about candy this time.” *(Laughter)* I just can’t win! *(Laughter)* And so Jeff, as a token of my appreciation, and because I truly do see Christ in you, *(Laughter)*, I’d like to present this to you.

**Transcriber’s Note:** Don passes a bag of Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups to Jeff.  
*(Laughter and applause)*

**Jeff:** Let’s just get this straight, though. *(Laughter)* What I said in that email was to chalk this one up as a record, because there was no “Candy Man” playing in the background or anything like this, or no “Supa Troupa.” *(Laughter)*

But I want you to know something. I did do a little research. *(Laughter)* And I wondered to myself and I said to myself, “What is up with this guy and Super Trouper and Abba?” I mean, he came to my church one time. He’s sitting there in the pew after the service, during the announcement time, and he’s giving exhortations on Abba. Not “Abba, Father!”, Romans 8 stuff, *(Laughter)* but Abba! *(Laughter)* And then I—

**Don Maurer:** Who brought it up first? *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** And then I discovered. I went back through and I realized that Don was an original member of Abba. *(Laughter and applause)* I don’t know what else to say and I don’t think I need to say anything else. *(Laughter)* Don, there’s a picture up here of you in Abba. *(Laughter)*

**Don:** Oh, I’m touched! *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** I want you to know. *(Laughter)* But it’s a—

**Bill Stolze:** It’s not complimentary, Don. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** But Don, it is! *(Laughter)* I mean, I don’t know what these people’s names are, but I know it’s Abba. *(Laughter)* Anyway,—

**Don Maurer:** Thank you, Jeff.

**Jeff:** You’re welcome. Well thank you, Don.

**Don:** Okay. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** All right. Well, why don’t you lead us into a time of prayer? *(Music)*

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Our heavenly Father, we thank You and praise You that You are God and there is no other. We thank You that You’ve revealed Yourself in the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is by His Spirit that You come and reveal Yourself to us. Father, we’re thankful for that Holy Spirit of Yours who indeed brings glory and honor to the Son and applies His work to us. And Father, we come to You now, asking that Your hand would be upon us as we study the Word that was inspired by the Holy Spirit as He carried along the apostles and the prophets and gave them the words, the very words that He would have them to speak. We praise You and thank You that we study what is indeed Your word.

Father, as we gather we also pray that You will continue to be with Harry Repic as he works to overcome that difficult situation with his ex-wife, so that he might enjoy a time of real peace, and also enjoy a time of visiting his children. Father, we’re thankful for the good report we heard about Terry Gaab’s wife Mary and the stability that she’s enjoying because of the medicine. And we pray for her, continually asking that Your hand would be upon her.

Father, we pray for Bruce Bickel, and we ask that Your grace would surround him, that Your love would uphold him, and that You would constantly make him useful in Your kingdom as You have in the past. Father, we pray for Reed as he is in the process of recovery and rehabilitation. And certainly, Father, we pray that Your hand would be upon him for good.

And Father, we pray for Nancy and ask that You will bless her in the treatment of her cancer. And Father, we pray that You would take it away from her entirely. And if not, we pray that You will give her contentment and grace to be able to walk through this valley of the shadow. And we pray the same for Sig as he stands beside her. And Lord, we just ask that Your hand would be upon them both. We’re thankful for them. And certainly we miss Sig being from our presence and ask that You’ll bless him and keep him, Father, as he is apart from us. And Father, we ask all of these things and many more in the precious name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Brave Men:** Amen.

**Jeff:** I referenced this, but I got an email from Terry Gaab saying that his wife is doing better, so that’s a good thing there. All right. Well, let’s think about what we’re going to do today. The purpose statement of what we’re going to do is basically that we’re going to move away from Solomon, and we’re going to enter into that time of the divided kingdom, and we’ll talk about that a little bit. But really as you know from the last time, Solomon really planted the seeds of division that would come to fruition in his own kingdom.

And I really want you to think about this for just a minute. When you find the historical unfolding of the Old Testament, what you find is—well, we haven’t done this for just a little while. Let me throw this up on the board because it’s important for you to keep this in mind. When you think about the covenantal unfolding, this is after Adam and Eve in the garden. So this is *the covenant of grace*. And there is one covenant of grace with five exfoliations.

And the very first exfoliation is with Noah. Noah is promised that God will preserve the stage of redemption. He’ll preserve the earth.

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And then what do you have afterward? You have Abraham. And Abraham is really when God draws the first characters out onto the stage of redemption. And he gives him basically three promises. “I’ll make you a great nation. I’ll give you land in which to dwell as a nation. And I will make you a blessing to all the other nations.”

And how does He do that? Well, the book of Genesis is really about how He makes that promise of a great nation come to pass. He takes Joseph down into Egypt. And Egypt becomes something of a nation incubator for Israel. They grow into a nation. And then Exodus talks about how God takes that nation and puts them into the land of promise so that they can be a blessing to the other nations.

And then what happens is this. Moses comes along, and the Mosaic covenant. And the Mosaic covenant is when they enter into the land. And when they enter into the land God gives them a law and says, “Now here’s the deal. Don’t be like the other nations. Be My people.”

Now this is the question. The question at this point is why the law? Why law, because law seems to nullify promise? This is the very question that Paul asks in Galatians and in Romans. *“Then why the law? Does the law nullify the promise?”*

You remember the illustration I gave to you. I said that I’m going to give Tom my car next week, and I promise to give it to him. But when next week comes I say, “Tom, you’re going to have to do three things in order to get my car.”

What has happened? “All you have to do” nullifies the promise I gave him last week. And so Paul is asking, *“Does the law nullify the promise?”* And Paul says, “No, it doesn’t.” And then he asks the natural question. Well, why the law, then? What’s the purpose of the law? Had the purpose of the law was to draw out sin—in other words, to make what was there all the while in original sin that indwelt them, to make that so fully manifest that they would understand why it was that they could not be righteous in the sight of God and that they must have the sacrifice, and the sacrifice, the ultimate sacrifice to which all of those other sacrifices pointed, obviously the Lord Jesus Christ. So the law is to tease out sin, okay?

Now what happens next? The next covenant is the covenant with David. And the covenant with David really goes back to the Mosaic covenant, and it really goes back to the covenant with Abraham, because in those early days God said, “The scepter will never depart from Judah. I’ll give you a king.” And here under David the king is promised. And it comes to fruition in Solomon.

And so Solomon really becomes in some ways the type of the Christ who is to come.. He’s full of wisdom. He’s expanding the borders. And what does that mean? That means that the Abrahamic covenant is being fulfilled. It means that this nation is being a blessing to the other nations.

But remember, he’s only a type. And the type is not the Antitype. And an antitype is that which comes instead of the type.

It’s sort of like this. If I give you a mold of a biscuit and say, “Here’s a type of a biscuit.” And then I come along and I say, “Here’s the biscuit.” What would you rather have? (*Laughter*) You’d rather have the biscuit, right?

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And so Jesus comes along and He is the Antitype. He is that which is instead of the type. He is in place of the type, that which the type always pointed toward. And He is the fulfillment of it.

And so where are we? Well, we are right here in this process. And this process is a very disobedient process because of this law coming on to the scene.

**Matt Reichart:** So does the biscuit have gravy? *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** The biscuit has gravy. *(Laughter)*

**Don Maurer:** Jeff, what did you say the biscuit has?

**Jeff:** Don, behave yourself! *(Laughter)*

**Ted Wood:** That's a good answer. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** All right. So anyway, we are in this long period. Solomon has planted the seeds for the division of the kingdom. And we're going to see this kingdom which was growing and being a blessing to the other nations fracture. And so here's your text for next time; it's on your outline. And here's the introduction, *the consequences for sin, the reign of Rehoboam, the reign of Jeroboam, and the kings of the kingdom*. What we're going to do is that we're going to talk today very briefly about the division that comes in Solomon's reign, and then we're going to talk about his son. And then we're going to talk about the man who supplants his son. And we're going to talk about some kings that are in the kingdom. And we're going to really begin walking through this time of division, okay?

So let's get started with some introduction. I want you to realize something, something interesting. And I don't want to spend a lot of time with it, but it's interesting. I want you to think about *Judah and her placement*. Judah is really isolated when you think about it. Look at this. Here's Judah. And so you have the Philistines here to the west. You have the Dead Sea to the east. You have what? You have the Desert of Sin here. And then you have Israel. They are going to become enemies in the north. And so the bottom line is that you have Judah as a very isolated nation, or as a very isolated tribe which becomes a nation.

When this kingdom divides, twelve kingdoms are going to divide, two against ten. Judah is going to be one of those nations. Benjamin is going to be the other nation. So it's going to be Judah and Benjamin who is right up in this area. It's going to be Judah and Benjamin against the ten tribes in the North.

Do you know what's really interesting about that when you think about it? When you think about it, there were some stories in the book of Judges about Benjamin and Judah that really brought them into a highlighted position.

And then this. The interesting thing is that you have Benjamin which was the tribe of Saul and Judah as the tribe of David. And they're together against the rest of Israel. That's an interesting thing. I'm not making a lot out of it. I'm just saying it's kind of an interesting thing when you bring these kinds of things together and think about them.

So Judah becomes a very isolated tribe, and that means something. Why? Because under Solomon's corvee, Solomon had a red Corvette. *(Laughter and groans)* Chevy now makes a Corvee. *(Laughter)*

**Don Maurer:** What is a corvee?

**Jeff:** A corvee is slave labor.

**Don:** Okay, thank you.

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**Jeff:** Yes. And there’s a nice little kind of squiggly line, but my computer doesn’t do that.

**Don Nemit:** It’s ancient.

**Jeff:** Ancient French, you know. *(Laughter)* So Solomon puts everyone into labor. Great! *(Laughter)*

**Don Nemit:** Sure he did. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** In one sense there’s a lot of travail going on. *(Laughter)* Anyway, he enslaves their sons, makes them work. Oh, what’s going on there? And—

**Transcriber’s Note:** Jeff has trouble with his slide.

**Don Nemit:** The Corvee had a flat tire. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** But here’s the interesting thing. The interesting thing is that the heavy taxation that he places on the other tribes, and the enslavement of the sons of fellow Israelites, doesn’t happen to those in Judah. Judah is exempted from that kind of behavior.

Now I don’t know about you, but any parent ought to know that’s a bad way to rule this whole scenario. You have twelve kids—you might as well call them twelve kids,—and you’re going to treat one with favoritism. What does that remind you of? It reminds you of the early patriarchs.

**Brave Men:** Yes.

**Jeff:** You know, Solomon doesn’t seem to have learned his lesson. And then what does he do? He accumulates wives and concubines. And we already said that the interesting thing is that he ruled for forty years. And Rehoboam was 41 years old when he came to power, which means that he was born before Solomon was king, whether there was a co-regency with David or not. I doubt it, because that’s not the way it’s set up. Of course with David it could have been that. But my point is that before he comes to power as king he has a son by the name of Rehoboam who is one year old, whose mother was an Ammonite. So he’s starting to intermarry with pagan nations prior to being king, okay?

So the fracture in his wisdom is noticeable even then. And that produces the idolatry. Remember what it says. You know, I’m going to have to go there in a little bit, so we’ll just hold off on going right there. He turns to idols. He turns away from God. He doesn’t serve God wholeheartedly. And this leads to the problems in his kingdom. So those were the seeds that were being sown, that were being planted. And now we’re going to think about some of the consequences of those sins. Yes, please?

**Ron Baling:** Did he actually worship the idols, or did he just let his wives do it?

**Jeff:** You know, it says that he turned away and started doing it. *“His heart was not fully devoted to the LORD.”* Okay? All right. Yes?

**Brave Man:** Do you have any opinion if Solomon made it to heaven? Do you think--

**Jeff:** You know—

**Brave Man:** Just a thought.

**Mike Davis:** What was the question?

**Jeff:** He wants to know if Solomon made it—

**Brave Man:** Do you think he made it to heaven? Just an opinion.

**Second Brave Man:** Why wouldn’t he?

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**First Brave Man:** I don’t know, I’m just asking him. *(Laughter)* Don’t ask me because I don’t know.

**Jeff:** I think that’s a tough one to answer.

**Bishop Rodgers:** It’s iffy.

**Jeff:** I don’t know.

**Brave Man:** Did he come back to the Lord?

**Bishop Rodgers:** It’s iffy.

**Jeff:** Yes?

**Brave Man:** I just think that’s a hard one to answer.

**Jeff:** I think that when people ask that—

**Brave Man:** That’s a tuffy.

**Jeff:** Well, there are motivations as to why people ask that. They come to me and say, “Jeff, you’ve been a pastor before.” So there are motivations behind that, right?

**Brave Man:** Right.

**Jeff:** And sometimes the motivation is how much of Solomon’s life can I live and still make it, right? *(Laughter)*

**Bill Stolze:** Hey Jeff, do you want to take a chance on this?

**Brave Man:** The thing is, by grace you’re saved through faith. Can your faith die? I think it can.

**Brave Men:** Whoa!

**Brave Man:** I know that’s a difficult subject for people.

**Don Maurer:** Jeff, would God use an unsaved person to write Scripture?

**Paul Deffenbaugh:** Good call.

**Don:** And at the end of his life, as we talked about last week, in Ecclesiastes it seems like he repented. So, for what it’s worth,--

**Bishop Rodgers:** That’s good.

**Jeff:** I’m going to let Don have the last word on that, because anything I say at this point would open up a can of worms.

**Brave Man:** Good. Okay. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** Does anybody else want to take the can off the shelf?

**Brave Man:** I was going to say the exact thing that he said. I thought that too. It seemed like he had full repentance in Ecclesiastes; it seems clear there. If he could be wise enough to get himself into a problem, I guess he was wise enough to get himself out.

**Jeff:** Yes. I did say something like that the last time. Yes, Bishop?

**Bishop Rodgers:** It all depends on whether or not Solomon was one of the elect. *(Laughter)*

**Ted Wood:** Yes.

**Don Maurer:** Right. That was a good answer.

**Bishop Rodgers:** And we do not know.

**Matt:** Is salvation by grace, or is it by works?

**Jeff:** Yeah, right.

**Matt:** So if it isn’t, I’m in trouble too.

**Jeff:** Yes.

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**Don Maurer:** Amen.

**Jeff:** All right. Well, this man dies. *(Laughter)*

**Don Nemit:** So does the conversation. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** This man dies, and so does the conversation. I want you to take out your Bibles and go with me to 1 Kings at this point.

You know, I do “Ask the Pastor” in my congregation with the kids. So once every three months I sit down with the kids during the evening youth group, and they can ask me anything they want. And I had an “ask the pastor” this past week. And this one boy asked a question there, and here’s what he asked. What do you think about David’s having danced in front of the ark? And I immediately thought of Don and Abba. *(Laughter)*

**Don Maurer:** Dancing King.

**Jeff:** But I resisted and here’s what I said, because I thought it was one of those how-do-you-feel-about-it questions.

**Tom Hansz:** Yes.

**Jeff:** So I said, “I was glad I didn’t see him.” *(Laughter)* I don’t want to see that. I don’t want to see a grown man jumping around in his loincloth. *(Laughter)*

**Ted:** Did he have his loincloth on?

**Jeff:** Did he?

**Ted:** Did he? *(Laughter)*

**Paul:** I think so.

**Jeff:** I don’t think he was naked, was he?

**Paul:** No.

**Jeff:** I thought he had a Johnny Weissmuller loincloth on. *(Laughter)* All right. So look at 1 Kings 11:4. *“For when Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.”*

And here’s why I said what I said about him doing these things. *“For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as David his father had done.”*

Now I want you to look at 1 Kings 11:9 and 10, because these are the consequences of what he did. *“And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he did not keep what the Lord commanded. Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, ‘Since this has been your practice, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant.’”*

Now let me just have you think about that for a minute. Here is a text that tells us that twice the Lord went to Solomon and warned him about this kind of behavior. And twice Solomon disobeys and allows his heart to be turned to these false gods. And you know, I had honestly forgotten about that warning with which he had been twice warned. It struck

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me that here’s a man to whom God comes and says to him in His patience and long-suffering, “Stop doing this,” and he doesn’t stop. And then the interesting thing is that God is still kind and gracious to him because when He punishes him, He waits until after Solomon’s death and says that then the kingdom will be torn apart. “It won’t be torn apart in your lifetime.” Oftentimes God is very kind like that. And so the warning and the consequences are here.

Rehoboam comes to power. And Rehoboam comes to power after Solomon dies. This is Solomon’s son, Rehoboam. And Rehoboam rules in Judah, which, remember, is exempt from the corvee.

And then what you have is this. You get a very well-known story about Jeroboam coming to Rehoboam. And who is Jeroboam? This is going to be tough. It’s Ray and Jer.

**Don Maurer:** Yeah, right. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** All right. So Jeroboam enters the scene. Now who is Jeroboam? Jeroboam is a figure who caught the king’s eye, Solomon’s eye. If you go back to 1 Kings chapter 11 and verse 28, you notice that it says, *“The man Jeroboam was very able. And when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious, he gave him charge over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph.”*

So Jeroboam is a man who is making inroads into Solomon’s kingdom by virtue of his industry. And he’s given leadership. And when Solomon dies he goes to Rehoboam. But he goes to Rehoboam with a certain amount of confidence. Why? Well not because Solomon has made him a leader, but because right after that, in 1 Kings chapter 11 verse 31, the prophet Ahijah comes to him and tells him that the Lord is going to tear apart Solomon’s kingdom, and that he’s going to take ten tribes, and he’s going to lead them away.

**Transcriber’s Note:** 1 Kings 11:31-32, NKJV. *“And he said to Jeroboam, ‘Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and will give ten tribes to you (but he shall have one tribe for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel.)’”*

So he knows by prophecy that this is what’s going to happen, that God is going to give him control over ten tribes. So what happens is, Solomon dies. Rehoboam takes power. And Jeroboam goes to him. And he says, “Look, here’s the deal. Your dad was very oppressive, and we want you to lighten up.”

And remember what Rehoboam says. Rehoboam says, “Well, let me have some time to think about it.” So then he goes to the older men in the kingdom, the men with sage wisdom. And they say, “The best thing for you to do is to lighten up. If you lighten up, your rule and reign will be secure.”

And then he goes to his young buds. You know, he goes to those young bucks with whom he meets at the pub twice a week, you know? *(Laughter)* And he says, “What about it?”

And you know how this goes. *(Laughter)*

**Don Nemit:** That’s good.



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**Jeff:** This doesn't go well because these young guys say, “Show ‘em who's boss. You tell ‘em that you thought my dad was tough? Wait till you get a load of me! I'm going to be super tough on you” So that's what he opts for. He opts for the young men's advice. And he goes and he tells Jeroboam, “Look, you got a taste of my dad. You thought he was bad. Wait till you get a load of me.”

And Jeroboam says, “Well, guess what? We're leaving, and Judah can fend for herself.” And so they depart. And Jeroboam leads the ten tribes away, just like it's prophesied to him through Ahijah, and just like God predicted and prophesied to Solomon. And so now you have a divided kingdom. You have North and you have South. You have ten tribes in the North; you have two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, in the South.

Now Israel rebels and Jeroboam sets up his political capital in Shechem, which has what? It has ancient roots, right? This is where Abraham goes. This is where a lot of the patriarchs offered sacrifice. And so the North is now going to appeal to the tradition of the patriarchs in terms of its establishment.

And what's Judah going to do? Well, you need to remember this. Here's what you need to remember right up front. Right up front you need to remember that God did not take away His promises to Judah. In other words, Genesis 49 was still right, that the scepter would never depart from Judah. Jeroboam would have been foolish and was foolish to think that God had changed His mind. What God did was to punish His people and especially His king, which is what He said He was going to do in 2 Samuel chapter 7. “When he sins I will punish him.” And that's what He's doing. Solomon is the son who was to come and initially fulfill that prophecy. And God was punishing him.

And so the plan didn't change. Jeroboam was only an instrument to punish Judah, okay? Now Jeroboam should have understood that. But Jeroboam had a problem. But let's talk about the reign of Rehoboam first.

It's interesting because once the split happens, the Levites flee to the South. The Levites are the priestly order. They flee to the South.

I want you to catch this. Go with me to 2 Chronicles. If you're in Kings just go right through 2 Kings and then through 1 Chronicles, and then into 2 Chronicles. And look with me at chapter 11 at verse 13 and following. Actually, I'm going to throw part of it up on the board ; there it is.

*“And the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel presented themselves to him from all places where they lived. So the Levites left their common lands and their holdings and came to Judah and Jerusalem, because Jeroboam and his sons cast them out from serving as priests of the LORD. And he appointed his own priests for the high places, and for the goat idols and for the calves that he had made.”*

Now notice this. *“And those who had set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came after them from all the tribes of Israel to Jerusalem, to sacrifice to the LORD, the God of their fathers.”* And here's the important verse. *“They strengthened the kingdom of Judah. And for three years they made Rehoboam the son of Solomon secure, for they walked for three years in the way of David and Solomon.”*

Now I want you to think about that. Rehoboam was not a man after God's own heart. But because of the people around him who inhabited his kingdom, they strengthened

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Rehoboam's rule. And it's not just that they strengthened it from a human perspective. God allowed them to be a strength to Rehoboam when Rehoboam should have been acting faithfully. In other words, God delayed judgment because of them.

And I want you to catch something else. Notice this. Rehoboam is unfaithful. So what God does is that He sends Shishak to punish him. But notice this. In 2 Chronicles 12:2 it says this. *“In the fifth year of king Rehoboam, because they had been unfaithful to the LORD, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.”*

So for three years the Levites had been able to strengthen Rehoboam's reign. But the wickedness of Rehoboam finally got to the point where God said, “I'm going to allow Shishak to punish you and to bring punishment on the land.” And that's exactly what happens. And so in 1 Kings chapter 14 you read about that. You read about that moment. *“In the fifth year of king Rehoboam Shishak the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. He took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house; he took away everything. He also took away all the shields of gold that Solomon had made,”* and so on. And so God punishes him for his wickedness.

But notice this. And I realize that we're going back and forth, but with this story you have to piece the story together. It says this. Look at this, and here's the amazing thing. This is Rehoboam. *“And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, so as not to make a complete destruction. Moreover, conditions were good in Judah.”*

Now I want you to think about that for just a minute. Here's Rehoboam. Rehoboam has been raised in Solomon's house. The trouble is that we look at these figures and we think, oh, Rehoboam is completely bad. Rehoboam is not completely bad. Rehoboam has some covenant home upbringing in him. He knows what's good and bad. But he gives his heart to evil. And he acts in an evil way. God is actually suspending judgment because of the Levites that come. And for sure the Levites are talking to him and they're leading the people in righteousness. And he's secure.

But in the fifth year his evil is too much and God brings punishment upon him. But then in the last twelve years of his reign he humbles himself. And God suspends some of the things that He's doing, and He doesn't bring complete destruction on the land.

Now we all know that this is under the sovereign hand and purpose of God. But we also know that there is real responsibility in play here. There's real repentance that takes place in Rehoboam. And as a result, God responds to this man, okay?

And so I don't know about you. But when I look at this, I say to myself, “This teaches so many lessons.”

**Don Nemit:** Amen.

**Jeff:** I mean, think about it. We need to surround ourselves with godly people, because we need to be helped and supported. So when we surround ourselves with godly people, godly friends, when we instill godly principles in our families, what are we doing? We're doing the very thing that we see happening in Judah when the Levites come. So it's super important.

And then, look. *Repentance is real.* And God is kind and compassionate. God brought consequences for sin. And Rehoboam for the rest of his life would have said, “Man, you

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know, look at this! We don’t have the treasure we used to have. The house of the Lord doesn’t have the things that it used to have, and all because of my sin. But God is good. When I repented, He turned away His wrath.”

And you know, the idea that it’s never too late to repent, I mean some people just get it into their heads that “I just can’t repent now; I’m too old. You know, what am I going to do? I’ve already made a mess of my life and my kids’ lives,” and so on and so forth. And here’s a great story that just teaches you so many lessons about redemption, and about what it means to be in the Lord, because I want you to know something. Rehoboam is not an exception. In some ways Rehoboam looks like many people we already know.

**Brave Man:** Amen. Just like us.

**Jeff:** That’s right.

**Ted:** Looks like us?

**Jeff:** Yes, that’s right.

**Ted:** Not others.

**Jeff:** That’s right. So now let’s look at *the reign of Jeroboam*. Israel has five dynasties. Now this is easy to remember. Every king in Israel is a bad king—not one good king. Judah has some good kings, Israel bad kings—not one good. Five dynasties, all bad. Okay?

Jeroboam is worried. Why is he worried? He’s worried because he’s already thinking, “I’ve gotten tribes! I’m the leader! How can I hold on to this?”

He’s not saying to himself, “All right. I’m going to have to stay close to God because, you know what? I could really see myself getting pulled into this power thing. And so I know that I’m a stopgap. I know that God is using me to punish the tribe of Judah. And so I need to stay close to the Lord and do what He tells me to do.”

He doesn’t do that. Instead he says, “I’ve got to hold on to this thing. This is too good to be true!” And so what does he do? He sets up two worship sites. and so his is the dividing line between Israel and Judah. He sets one up all the way up in Dan, and then he sets up another one in Bethel.

Why? Because remember, you have to go down to Jerusalem to worship three times a year. Well Jeroboam said, “No more of that! We’re going to set up alternative sites so you don’t have to go down to Jerusalem.”

I want you to know something. God wanted these people to go down to Jerusalem three times a year. This was still where the temple and the ark were located; they were supposed to. And Jeroboam was supposed to allow that. But instead he says, “You don’t have to do that anymore. You can worship in the North. If you’re going to be here in the North, we’re going to make two handy locations.” (*Laughter*) That’s what he did.

“And guess what? We’re going to put Bethel with it. Bethel has significance to the patriarchs. And if you’re going to go down into Jerusalem, you’re going to have to go right through Bethel. Why would you do that?”, right?

So he institutes new worship. And he’s got calves in both Dan and Bethel that you can worship, priests, new calendar days. It’s an alternative form of religion. That’s what it is. It looks like Judaism. It smells like Judaism. But it’s got a twist of fun that you’ll love. (*Laughter*) That sort of thing.

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And so in 1 Kings 13 God sends him a prophet and gives him a little warning. He says, “You’re not doing the right thing here. You’d better turn back.” And so that leads us to this. I just want to walk through some of these things, the kings and the kingdoms as a result of the division.

**Bill Stolze:** Was that the first big church with multi-campus? *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** He’s the M.C. *(Laughter)*

**Bishop Rodgers:** Ah, listen to that.

**Jeff:** All right. Well, let’s just put it this way. It’s not Presbyterianism. *(Laughter)*

**Don Maurer:** Aha, ooohhh!

**Jeff:** I dislike that. What was that? Aha, ooohhh! *(Laughter)* Same guy! *(Laughter)* All right.

**Don Nemit:** Well done.

**Jeff:** All right. So first of all in Judea, Abijah reigns for three years. Now the thing about Abijah is that in 1 Kings 15:1-8 we’re told that he is an evil man, an evil ruler.

**Transcriber’s Note:** 1 Kings 15:1-8, NKJV. *“In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam the son of Nebat, Abijah became king over Judah. He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Maachah the granddaughter of Abishalom. And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him; his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David.*

*“Nevertheless for David’s sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by setting up his son after him and by establishing Jerusalem; because David did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.*

*“And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. Now the rest of the acts of Abijah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.”*

**Jeff:** However, in 2 Chronicles 13:4-12 we’re told that this man understood the covenants.

**Transcriber’s Note:** 1 Chronicles 13:4-12, NKJV. *“Then Abijah stood on Mount Zemaraim, which is in the mountains of Ephraim, and said, ‘Hear me, Jeroboam and all Israel: Should you not know that the LORD God of Israel gave the dominion over Israel to David forever, to him and his sons, by a covenant of salt? Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, rose up and rebelled against his lord. Then worthless rogues gathered to him, and strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and inexperienced and could not withstand them. And now you think to withstand the kingdom of the LORD, which is in the hand of the sons of David; and you are a great multitude, and with you are the gold calves which Jeroboam made for you as gods. Have you not cast out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and made for yourselves priests, like the peoples of other lands, so that whoever comes to consecrate himself with a young bull and seven rams may be a priest of things that are not gods?*

*“But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken Him; and the priests who minister to the LORD are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites attend to their duties.*

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*And they burn to the LORD every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense; they also set the showbread in order on the pure gold table, and the lamp-stand of gold with its lamps to burn every evening; for we keep the command of the LORD our God, but you have forsaken Him. Now look, God Himself is with us as our head, and His priests with sounding trumpets to sound the alarm against you. O children of Israel, do not fight against the LORD God of your fathers, for you shall not prosper!”*

**Jeff:** It’s kind of an interesting thing. You know, you get these evil people who grow up in these covenant homes, and even articulate the covenant very well to their enemies. He can say to Israel, “You guys don’t know anything! The promises are still in Judah!” And yet he acts in an evil way. It’s striking. (*Unclear*)

So he’s yelling at Jeroboam’s group for thinking that all of a sudden they’re the new elite. And he’s saying, “You’re not the new elite. God’s promises haven’t changed. The promises are still in Judah.” And yet he acts in an evil way.

And after him is Asa, who rules 41 years. Here’s the problem with Asa. The problem with Asa was that he was loyal to God. But if you think about Israel to the north, think about Damascus right above Israel. Damascus was a growing power at that time, and actually the big boy on the block. And the problem with Asa is that he puts his trust in Damascus for his help. He’s loyal to God, but he doesn’t trust fully because he depends on Damascus.

And so he feels like he’s got Israel in a vise, because he’s in the South, Damascus is in the north, and Israel is in between. And he put the squeeze on them. So instead of relying on God, he relies on his relationship with Damascus.

He actually has a prophet that comes to him and speaks a rebuke to him because of this. And he imprisons the prophet.

Okay. So then with Israel in the North, you find that Nadab rules for two years. He’s evil in the sight of the Lord. He’s the first dynasty in Israel after Jeroboam. And then in Israel again you find Baasha who rules for 24 years, and he’s the second dynasty. He’s also evil.

And then after him is Elah. And Elah is king for two years. He’s evil; he’s in the North; he’s got to be evil. He rules for two years. He’s in a drunken stupor. And guess who kills him? You guessed it: Zimri. Zimri kills him, and Zimri rules for seven days. He rules for seven days and then hears that the people have made Omri king. Omri was a military guy.

He says, “Ah no, this is not going to be a good scene.” So he gets all loaded up and then sets the palace on fire and dies in the flames.

And then Omri comes to power. And Omri is really the third dynasty in the North. And Omri is obviously evil. And we’ll hear more about the house of Omri in just a little bit. But Omri is evil.

And then go back to Judah. And Jehoshaphat rules for 25 years. Some of you may know the name Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat is 35 years old when he comes to power. He was co-reigning with his father for about three years. And he was a contemporary with Ahab, who was of the house of Omri.

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He doesn't trust Ahab. But the problem is that he enters into alliances with Ahab. And he gets the short end of the stick oftentimes. And he learns his lesson, and then sometimes he goes back.

But he loves the Lord, he really does. But he's a king, and he's tied up in these political situations. And he doesn't always make the right decisions as a result of it.

The wonderful thing about him is that you can see his heart, because in 2 Chronicles chapter 7 he sends missionaries into the North. He knows that they need to be brought back to the covenant promises of God. So he sends missionaries into the North to go and to basically evangelize them.

So Jehoshaphat is a good king in Judah. None of the good kings in Judah are stellar or spectacular. They all have disloyalties. Guess what? They're all like us. They're all in some sense, in some sense the best ones, are giving us a little glimpse of the greater Son of David who will come and rule permanently.

So the next time what we're going to do is that when we go through these kings, we're going to take the next three sessions to walk through some of the kingships. But some of these have the interjection of Elijah and Elisha, great stories that are going to take some of our time. And we're going to think about some of the things that happen during the lives of those prophets in the lands of both Israel and Judah. And so we're going to take the next three sessions and walk through this divided kingdom, looking at some of those figures as well. Any questions before I pray for us?

I realize that this is a lot of material. And in some ways I feel like I'm running right through it. But you know, at least it's good for us to get the fill of the redemptive history covenantally, and see what God is doing and how He brings it to fulfillment in Christ and what the Old Testament is used for, how we are to understand it. So any time along the way, if you want to stop and talk, you're allowed to interrupt me.

So let's pray. Father, thank You for this day. Thank You for the time You've given us. Thank You for the opportunity to study Your lord in this kind of way. And Father, we thank You for the ability to go through it together on a morning like this. Father, we just pray that You'll continue to bless us. We pray, Father, that You'll put Levites around us, men of strength and character who will help us to stand fast and firm. Let us be that kind of man to others, especially to our families and those around us who are close.

Father, we pray that when we sin, we pray that we'll take an example like the one we noticed today, and that we'll repent without hesitation, and that we'll find Your favor and Your grace to be sufficient. And Father, we pray that we would learn not only about one king to the next, but we pray that we'll learn what to be like and what not to be like, for we realize that these things were written for our examples and for our good.

Father, most of all we're thankful for the Lord Jesus Christ in whom we live and in whom we move, and in whom we have salvation. And Father, we're thankful for Him. And we are so thankful that our salvation is not dependent upon anything that we do but wholly on what He did. And Father, thank You for the revelation of Your covenants that taught these people that long ago. And they continue to teach us that very same lesson. So we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

**Brave Men:** Amen. (*Applause*)