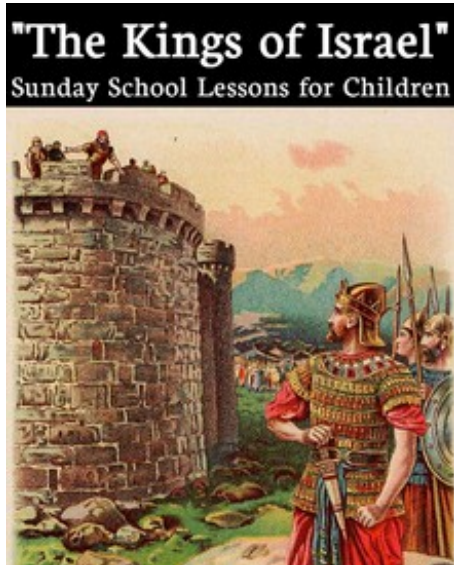


The Divided Kingdom (Sunday School Lesson)

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January 13, 2011



This lesson plan continues our series about the Kings of Israel. The lesson teaches us that while sin separates us from God's best for us, His promises still stand despite our sin. The lesson is a guide to help teachers study and prepare the lesson for the individual needs of the ministry in which they lead.

This lesson was prepared for older elementary students and can be adapted to your ministry needs. Following the lesson are additional resources. [Click here](#) to see the lesson index.

Bible Story: The Kingdom of Israel is Divided

Scripture: [1 Kings 11:26-40](#); [12:1-20](#)

Target Age Group: Age 9 – 11 (U.S. 3rd – 5th Grade)

Learning Context: Sunday School

Target Time Frame: 60 minutes

Printer Friendly Bible Lesson:  [PRINT](#) this lesson plan

You Can Help: Please share your feedback and suggestions to improve this children's Bible lesson. [Click here to respond](#)

Supply List: Bibles, Map of Israel during time of Israel's kings, outline of robe, envelopes, red colored pencils and another color (blue)

Learning Goal: Students who are believers will learn that nothing can separate them from God's love and unbelievers will learn that sin separates them from God.

Learning Indicator: Students will demonstrate their understanding of the lesson by participating in a game of tic tac toe as they answer review questions.

Learning Activity #1: Draw an outline of a robe on a piece of paper. Divide the robe into 12 parts and write the 12 tribes of Israel in each division. Use 2 envelopes and on one write Northern Kingdom (Israel) and on the other write Southern Kingdom (Judah). At the point in the story where Ahijah tells Jeroboam that God is going to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hand allow students to tear off the twelve pieces. Explain how from this point on in Israel's history Israel's kingdom was divided. The Northern Kingdom consisted of the majority of the Israelites and the Southern Kingdom consisted of the tribe of Judah and Benjamin. Keep the

envelopes as you study the kings of Israel as a reminder of the divided kingdom and if you want you can add the names of each king studied and put in the envelope of the kingdom they ruled over.

Learning Activity #2: To help establish an understanding of the history of the divided kingdom use a map showing the divided kingdom: Southern Israel was ruled by Judah's King (Jerusalem). Northern Israel was ruled by Israel's (the ten tribes were referred to as Israel) king (at first in Shechem and then Samaria). Clarify to the students that Israel can mean the entire nation of God's children or as in the study of the kings can refer to only the ten tribes. If students have their own Bibles they can underline each king from the two kingdoms in different color pencils. Judah's kings can be underlined in red to remind them that this is the kingdom that God promised David that a ruler would come and reign forever (royal kingdom). Choose a different color to underline Israel's kings.

Test: Review Questions

Memory Verse: Romans 8:38-39 (Choose the version of your choice)

Teaching the Memory Verse: Have students choose hand motions for the verse and recite the verse as a class using the hand motions.

Bible Lesson: The Divided Kingdom

In our last lesson we learned how Solomon turned away from God and worshipped his many wives false gods. Solomon's choice to worship false gods was sin against the One and Only True God. God is holy (that means He is without sin) and He must punish sin. God told Solomon that since he did not keep God's laws, the kingdom was going to be torn away from him and given to someone else (1 Kings 11:11).

God always does what He says He is going to do. Whether it is punishing His child for sin or keeping a promise He made years ago, He will always do what He says. God promised David that his kingdom would endure forever and his throne would be established forever. (2 Samuel 7:16) This promise God made to David was a prophecy that from David's family a King would be born who would rule forever. We are living thousands of years after God made this promise to King David. Do you know the Name of this King who was born from David's family? (Jesus)

Sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2, Ephesians 4:18). God sent His Son Jesus into the world. He died on the cross for our sins was buried and rose again. All who believe in Jesus as their Savior will not be separated from Him any longer. Those who choose not to believe will continue to be separated from God and will face the punishment for their sins by spending eternity away from God's presence in hell.

Sin has consequences but nothing can stop God's eternal promises. God punished Solomon by taking away the kingdom and still kept His promise to David. Today in our lesson we are going to see how God did that.

When Solomon was walking with God and obeying his commands his kingdom was blessed

with peace and safety. Solomon's choice to sin separated him from the blessings that God promised he would have if he walked in obedience to His commands. As a consequence to Solomon's sin God raised up enemies against him.

Let's read 1 Kings 11:26-28. Solomon saw that Jeroboam was a good worker so he put him in charge of a group of workers. One day after Jeroboam was finished with his work and was on his way home, God sent a prophet to meet him. Choose volunteers to read 1 Kings 11:29-32. (If you have prepared the robe and envelopes allow students to tear a part of the robe.)

Ahijah the prophet explained why God was tearing the kingdom away from Solomon. (1 Kings 11:33-36) God had given Jeroboam the job to be king over 10 tribes of Israel. Let's read the instructions God gave Jeroboam in 1 Kings 11:37-39. God promised Jeroboam that His presence would be with him if he obeyed God's laws.

- How can you and I apply the truth that God punishes sins but nothing can stop God's eternal promises? God has promised that whoever believes in Jesus will have eternal life. That is an eternal promise. If you are a believer nothing can keep you from going to heaven when you die. You may ask, 'what if I sin against God?' God will discipline His children when they sin. When He disciplines His children it should cause him/her to repent and turn away from sin and daily walk in obedience to God. Our memory verse tells us that if we are God's children, nothing can separate us from His love, not even sin.

Somehow King Solomon learned that Jeroboam was going to be king and he wanted to have him killed. Jeroboam ran away from Solomon and lived in Egypt until Solomon died.

Rehoboam became king after his father Solomon died. Since Rehoboam is from King David's family it will help us remember God's promise to David by underlining Rehoboam's name in our Bible with a red pencil. The red will remind us that the King who will reign forever (Jesus) will be born from this family of kings.

After Solomon's death Jeroboam returned to the land of Israel. A group of people found Jeroboam and they discussed their concerns with him. "Solomon made our life very difficult. He wanted more and more beautiful buildings and he made us work hard to build them. He raised our taxes so that he could pay for the beautiful things he wanted. Life is very difficult for us because of the decisions Solomon made. Now that his son is king perhaps we can talk to him and ask him to help us."

Jeroboam and the people went to Rehoboam and told him their concerns and asked him to lift the burden of difficulty that Solomon had placed on the people of Israel.

Rehoboam told them to give him three days and he would let them know what his decision would be.

Rehoboam was not a wise king. A wise king would seek God's answer to the problem the people gave to him. (James 1:5) Remember when God told Solomon to ask what he wanted from him? Solomon asked for wisdom because he knew that he could not lead God's people without God's wisdom. Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." The Scriptures do not tell us that Rehoboam asked God for wisdom instead he went to two different groups of people and asked them for their advice.

First, he went to the older men who gave his father advice when he was king. Read 1 Kings 12:7 to see how they answered Rehoboam's question. Rehoboam showed he lacked wisdom by rejecting these elderly men's advice. Imagine Rehoboam rolling his eyes and shaking his head as he walked off to go to the second group of people for advice.

The second group Rehoboam went to was a group of young men who had grown up with him. Read 1 Kings 12:10-11.

Let's think about the two very different answers that Rehoboam received. If you were Rehoboam which advice do you think would follow and why?

Believers have God's Word, prayer and believers to turn to when we need to make a decision. If we go to people for advice we need to make sure that what they tell us agrees with what God has shown us from His Word. We can't be like Rehoboam and go to people first, we need to ask God for wisdom first.

The advice that the elders gave Solomon was wise advice. What they said was later said by our Lord Jesus in John 13:14-17 "Now that I, your Lord have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."

The advice of Rehoboam's friends was foolish advice. Rehoboam was foolish and he decided that his friends gave the best advice. After three days he went to the people and gave him his answer. Read 1 Kings 12:13-14.

Rehoboam's foolish decision caused God's promise to Jeroboam to be fulfilled. The people were disappointed with Rehoboam's answer so they left and went home. The ten tribes of Israel made Jeroboam their king and Rehoboam was king over the tribe of Judah.

We will continue to study the Kings of Israel and discover how each kingdom responded to God. There will be times we will see kings who love and obey God and we will see kings who are wicked and lead God's people to do evil things.

As we close, how is sin affecting your relationship to God? Are you separated from Him and do not have a relationship with Him because you have not believed in Jesus? Today you can change that by coming to Jesus. Admit to Him that you are a sinner and believe that He died

for your sins and call to Him to save you from your sins.

If you are a believer are you allowing sin to keep you from a close relationship with Jesus? Sin can never separate us from God's love but it can cause us to feel distant from Him. If you know there is sin in your life, stop today and confess it before God. He knows about your sin but as you acknowledge to Him your sin, you recognize what you are doing is sin and you need forgiveness and God's power to stop sinning in that way. (James 4:7-10)

Close in prayer: Father, You know the heart of each person here. If there is anyone here that has not been saved please help them to hear Your voice and call upon Jesus to save them from their sins. If anyone has sin in their life against You, help them to confess that sin and turn away from it. Thank you for loving us and never leaving us. Help us to walk closely with you this week and not allow anything to turn our hearts away from you. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen.

Review Questions:

Divide class into two teams assigning them as an x or an o and each time a question is answered correctly the team places an x or o on the tic tac toe grid.

1. Why did God tell Solomon that the kingdom was going to be torn from him? (He sinned by worshiping false gods)
2. Which prophet tore his robe into 12 pieces? (Ahijah)
3. Who did God say would be king over 10 tribes of Israel? (Jeroboam)
4. Why did Jeroboam have to hide in Egypt? (Solomon wanted to kill him)
5. What did Jeroboam and Israel ask Rehoboam? (Lighten the burden of work and taxes that Solomon placed on them)
6. Who did Rehoboam ask advice from? (Elders, his friends)
7. How did Rehoboam show he did not have wisdom? (Didn't seek God, took the advice of his friends and rejected elders' advice)
8. How did God's promise to Jeroboam fulfilled? (When Rehoboam answered harshly the ten tribes were disappointed and asked Jeroboam to be their king)

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