

Divided Kingdom 1

Lesson 7

1 Kings 12 - 19

In our last lesson, we talked about how Solomon took his father's place as king. King Solomon was the wisest and richest of all the kings. King Solomon built the temple as a place to worship God. When King Solomon died, Rehoboam, his son, was king.

There was a man named Jeroboam who had been a servant for Solomon. Jeroboam had moved back to Egypt because King Solomon had made life very hard for the people. Jeroboam and the people with him went to Shechem to talk to Rehoboam. Jeroboam told King Rehoboam that they would serve him if he would make things easier on the people. He told Rehoboam that King Solomon had made things very difficult for them. Rehoboam told the people to return in three days and allow him to think about it. (1 Kings 12:4)

Rehoboam talked to the elders who had served King Solomon. The elders told Rehoboam to be good to the people and that they would want to serve him always. Then Rehoboam went to some men who were his own age. He had known them since he was a boy. (1 Kings 12:8) They told Rehoboam to tell the people that he was king and he would make them do even more work than his father had given them.

The people were angry because Rehoboam would not listen to them. Some of the people asked Jeroboam to be their king. The kingdom of Rehoboam divided. Ten of the tribes from the north went with Jeroboam. Only two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, stayed with Rehoboam. Jeroboam went to Shechem to be king.

The people of Israel were to go to Jerusalem to worship God. Jeroboam did not want his people to go because he was afraid they might start to follow Rehoboam again.

Jeroboam made two calves of gold. One was at Dan, and one was at Bethel. He told the people it was too hard to travel to Jerusalem. He told them the two golden calves would be their gods. (1 Kings 12:28) The priests from the tribe of Levi would not serve in the worship of idols. They moved to Judah. God had promised to bless Jeroboam if he obeyed Him, but Jeroboam chose to worship idols.

God sent a prophet to Jeroboam (1 Kings 13:1) The prophet told Jeroboam it was wrong to worship idols. Jeroboam reached out his hand and told his men to arrest the prophet. God made something happen to Jeroboam's arm. He could not move it. (1 Kings 13:5) Jeroboam asked the prophet to pray that God would make his arm well again. The prophet prayed for Jeroboam. His arm was made well again.

Jeroboam asked the prophet to go home with him to eat. The prophet told him no. God had commanded the prophet not to eat or drink at Bethel. The prophet left Bethel. King Jeroboam did not follow the Lord.

Jeroboam was the king in the northern kingdom. There were many men who served as kings after Jeroboam. Their names were

- Nadab
- Baasha
- Elah
- Zimri
- Omri/Tibni (The people divided and both kings reigned. Tibni died and Omri reigned.
- Ahab

Rehoboam was the king over the southern kingdom. These were the kings after Rehoboam.

- Abijam
- Asa
- Jehoshaphat

King Ahab was the most evil king of all. King Ahab married a woman named Jezebel. King Ahab and Jezebel did not worship God, they worshipped the idol, Baal. (1 Kings 16:30-32) God was still good to the Israelites and wanted them to change and follow Him.

God sent a prophet to warn King Ahab. The prophet was Elijah. Elijah told King Ahab that God was going to punish them because of their sins. He told Ahab that God was not going to send any dew or rain until Elijah said so. (1 Kings 17:1)

God spoke to Elijah. He told him to go to the Brook Cherith. God told him that he could drink water from the brook. God told Elijah that ravens would bring food to him. (1 Kings 17:4-5) The ravens brought bread and meat in the morning and in the evening. But after a while, the brook dried up because there was no rain.

The Lord told Elijah to go to Zarephath. God told Elijah that there would be a woman there to feed him. (1 Kings 17:9) Elijah went to Zarephath and saw the woman. He asked her for food. The woman told Elijah that she had only a small amount of flour to make bread for herself and her son. (1 Kings 17:12) Elijah told her to make him some bread and her flour would never be used up. As long as Elijah stayed there, the woman cooked for him. She never used up her flour.

After many days, the Lord told Elijah to go to Ahab and tell him there would be rain again. (1 Kings 18:1)

Obediah was a servant of King Ahab. Elijah told Obediah to go tell King Ahab that he had come.(1 Kings 18:8) Elijah sent for the children of Israel and the prophets of Baal to meet him at Mount Carmel. King Ahab sent for all of the people to meet at Mount Carmel. Elijah told the people that if the Lord was the true God, they should follow Him. And if Baal was the true god, they should follow him. Ahab and his people were worshippers of Baal. Elijah was the only prophet of God on Mount Carmel. There were 450 prophets of Baal there that day. (1 Kings 18:22)

Elijah told the prophets of Baal to take a bull and get it ready for an offering. Elijah told them he would do the same thing. He told them to put it on the wood but not to build a fire under it. Elijah told the 450 prophets to pray to their gods and he would pray to the Lord. Elijah told them that the true God would answer with fire.

The prophets of Baal did what Elijah told them. They called on the name of Baal from morning until noon. Baal did not answer their prayers. They cut themselves with their knives trying to get Baal to answer them. They continued to cry out to Baal, but he never answered them. (1 Kings 18:26-29)

Then Elijah told the people to get close to him. Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. (1 Kings 18:30) Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the twelve tribes. Then he dug a ditch around the altar. He put the wood in place and laid the bull on the wood. Elijah told them to fill 4 pots with water and pour it on the wood. (1 Kings 18:33) He told them to pour water on it on the second time, and the third time. There was so much water that it ran all over the altar and filled the ditch all the way around the altar. Then Elijah spoke, “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again...” (1 Kings 18:36-37)

Then the fire of the Lord burned on the altar. It burned the sacrifice, all the wood, and all of the water they had poured on it. When the people saw this, they fell on their faces on the ground. They knew that God was the true God, and Baal was not. (1 Kings 18:41)

Elijah had won over all of the prophets of Baal. Elijah told them there would be rain. (1 Kings 18:41) Ahab and Jezebel still hated Elijah. Jezebel wanted to kill Elijah.

Elijah left and went into the wilderness and rested under a tree. An angel appeared to Elijah while he was sleeping. The angel of the Lord gave Elijah bread to eat and water to drink. The angel of the Lord went to Elijah the second time and gave him food and water. Then Elijah traveled to Horeb.

The Lord gave Elijah signs to show He was still with him. The Lord told Elijah there were many people who were faithful to God. Elijah went on his way again. Elijah met a man named Elisha. Elisha left his family to go with Elijah. He wanted to learn the ways of Elijah to be a prophet of God.