



# The Kingdom Is Divided

# 9

## Key Theme

- God demands obedience and trust.

## Key Passages

- Deuteronomy 17:15–17; 1 Kings 11:1–4, 11:9–11, 12:13–15, 12:20–21, 12:24

## Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe why God became angry with Solomon.
- Explain how the kingdom was divided.



## Lesson Overview



### Come On In

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Students will place paper strips at Deuteronomy 17 and 1 Kings 11 and 12. Students will practice the memory verse by unscrambling the words on the activity sheet and then reciting the verse to each other or to the class.



### Activity 1: The Kingdom Is Divided Class Notes

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Students will complete the Kingdom Is Divided Class Notes as you study the lesson.



### Studying God's Word

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Solomon disobeyed God when he amassed riches, gold, and silver—wealth he used for his own pleasure. He also married many wives from foreign countries who brought their gods and practices with them. Solomon turned away from God to worship the false gods of his wives. God judged his sin by tearing Israel from him. During the reign of Solomon's son, Rehoboam, Israel was split. From this point on, the Israelites would be divided and ruled over by different kings.



### Activity 2: Divided Kingdom Review Game

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Students will play a board game in teams to review the lesson material.

# Lesson Preparation

## WHAT YOU WILL DO

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED



### COME ON IN

- Cut paper into strips for each student to mark today's study passages in Deuteronomy 17 and 1 Kings 11 and 12.
- Print the Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Paper strips
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student



### THE KINGDOM IS DIVIDED CLASS NOTES

- Print one The Kingdom Is Divided Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

- The Kingdom Is Divided Class Notes for each student
- The Kingdom Is Divided Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils



### STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



### DIVIDED KINGDOM REVIEW GAME

- Print one Divided Kingdom Review Game Board from the Resource DVD-ROM for each team of 2–3 students.
- Print one Divided Kingdom Review Questions and Answer Key from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Print and cut out the Divided Kingdom Review Game Numbers from the Resource DVD-ROM. Place numbers in a cup.

- Divided Kingdom Review Game Board, one per team
- Divided Kingdom Review Questions and Answer Key
- Divided Kingdom Review Game Numbers in a cup
- Buttons for game markers for each team

## Memory Verse

**1 Chronicles 29:11** Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all.

➤ **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





# Prepare to Share

## SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above with this background.

God warned them it would happen. Before the Israelites even came into the Promised Land, God commanded that the future king should not gather wives and horses for himself or amass great wealth (Deuteronomy 17:14–17). When the people cried out for a king, God warned them through Samuel that a king would abuse them, making their sons and daughters his servants and taking their land and its produce (1 Samuel 8:9–18). God had been their king, but now they would be ruled by a descendant of Adam—a man with a sinful heart.

Although Solomon’s reign started off well, he eventually fell into sin. He disobeyed God and did all the things God had warned that the king should not do. Solomon had many horses imported from Egypt and Keveh (or Kue) to fortify his armies (1 Kings 10:28). He gathered massive amounts of gold into his treasury, counting silver as a common metal (1 Kings 10:16–23). He married many women from all of the lands surrounding his kingdom as a way to secure alliances. He loved many women from foreign nations with whom God had prohibited the Israelites to intermarry. In fact, he had 700 wives and 300 concubines (1 Kings 11:1–3). Solomon’s sinful heart led him to violate God’s clear commands, and the result was just as God had said—Solomon turned to worshipping the gods of his wives (1 Kings 11:4). Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord. Sadly, this phrase would become a common refrain regarding the kings of Israel.

As a result of his polygamous relationships and idolatrous sin, God appeared to Solomon to deliver a message of judgment. Because of Solomon’s sins against God, the kingdom would be torn away from him (1 Kings 11:9–11). And yet, even in this punishment, God demonstrated His mercy and His faithfulness. For the sake of God’s promise to David, God would wait until after Solomon’s death. Solomon’s son would be the one from whom the kingdom would be taken, yet one tribe would remain under his rule for David’s sake (1 Kings 11:12–13).

After Solomon’s death, his son Rehoboam took his place on the throne (1 Kings 11:41–43). What happened next sounds like the storyline of a suspense-filled drama. Jeroboam, a servant of Solomon who had fled to Egypt to escape Solomon, returned. Ahijah, a prophet from Shiloh, had told Jeroboam that the kingdom

would be divided and that 10 tribes would be given to him (Jeroboam) and only one tribe would remain with Rehoboam (Solomon’s son) (1 Kings 11:34–36). Jeroboam returned to Israel to serve as the advocate and spokesperson for the people before Rehoboam. The people requested that Rehoboam lighten the burdensome service his father, Solomon, had put on them (1 Kings 12:1–5).

King Rehoboam sought counsel. He received differing opinions, and his answer revealed just how dark his heart was. He announced that he would not lighten the load but would add to their burdens and oppress them even more wickedly than Solomon had (1 Kings 12:5–11).

The people would have served a just leader, but they rebelled against Rehoboam because of the severity of his answer. We see a vivid picture of God’s sovereignty in the affairs of men as we read that “the king did not listen to the people for the turn of events was from the Lord, that He might fulfill His word, which the Lord had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat” (1 Kings 12:15).

This was God’s plan. God was the one who orchestrated all of these events. God used Rehoboam’s foolish actions to cause the people to rebel against his kingdom. God used the sinful heart of man to bring about His purpose in the world. And how reassuring to us in a world that is tossed to and fro by many different political leaders that our God controls the hearts of the kings. He holds those hearts in His hands—and He turns them wherever He wishes (Proverbs 21:1). What a relief to know that God is in the heavens, and He is doing whatever He pleases (Psalm 115:3), and whatever He pleases is right (Genesis 18:25).

From this point forward, the Israelites would be divided and ruled over by different kings. Only the tribe of Judah remained under the authority of the line of David, and its capital was Jerusalem (1 Kings 12:20). The Southern Kingdom—consisting of one tribe—is usually referred to as Judah throughout the rest of the Old Testament. The Northern Kingdom—consisting of the remaining 10 tribes—became known as Israel. The tribe of Benjamin had divided land (and loyalties). And since the Levites did not acquire tribal land but resided in the Levitical cities, both kingdoms contained descendants from the tribe of Levi as well. The only hope to heal this division would be to bring about true healing and forgiveness through the Lion of Judah—the King of kings who came to sit on the throne of David as the perfect ruler.

## HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Polygamy was not uncommon at the time of Solomon. Indeed, it was a sign of wealth and status. Solomon would have taken many of his wives as symbols of treaties with other nations or tribes, but this was against God's commands to him. Solomon had written in the book of Proverbs about avoiding the sexual temptations of women, but he fell into a sinful pattern and was led to worship the gods that his wives served. He built places of worship for Ashtoreth, the fertility goddess of the Canaanites; Molech, the Ammonite god who received child sacrifice; and Chemosh, the Moabite god who also received child sacrifice. It is clear that Solomon engaged not only in marital polygamy but also in spiritual polygamy.

On top of those sins, Solomon had taken much of his wealth from the people. His son Rehoboam compounded that sin by seeking to oppress the people even more. From that point forward, there was constant strife between the North and the South. As we move forward through these lessons, we will get a brief overview of some of the troubles in each of the kingdoms. Most of the third quarter lessons will look at the kings and prophets of Judah and Israel, demonstrating

the good, the bad, and the really ugly things that happened. Through all of these events, though, we can trust that God is in control and that He was working all of these events together in a way that would ultimately lead to the coming of the perfect king—King Jesus.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



### BEFORE THE THRONE

Precious Father, teach me. Solomon started so well when he asked you for wisdom. Yet, he sinned. Maybe it started with a small compromise and then snowballed. Guard me from doing the same thing. Help me to regularly evaluate the state of my heart. Reveal quickly even the smallest wicked way in me, that I would put a stop to it before I have compromised everything. Bless my students this week. Prepare them even now for the truths they will receive in this lesson. Help us all to be honest before you as we contemplate every area of our lives that we might hold as an idol before you. Give us a renewed sense of love and awe for you as we remember your sovereignty and justice.



## COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will mark their Bibles at Deuteronomy 17 and 1 Kings 11 and 12 with strips of paper.
- They will recite the memory verse after they unscramble the words on the Memory Verse Review Sheet.

*This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. Students should unscramble the letters of the missing words and then recite the verse to you or another student. Each week the verse will get harder to unscramble. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.*



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



## REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



## The Kingdom Is Divided Class Notes

### MATERIALS

- The Kingdom Is Divided Class Notes
- The Kingdom Is Divided Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils

### INSTRUCTIONS

*Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the blanks as you study the lesson.*

We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible today. Try not to work ahead. I'll let you know when to fill something in.

### CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we complete these class notes today, we'll find out why God was angry with Solomon and what God did because He was angry.



# Studying God's Word

► Use the History of Israel Poster included with your teacher kit to show your class where the biblical accounts you study chronologically fit into this timeline.

## Deuteronomy 17:15–17

► After filling in each point on the class notes, have the students re-read the statement together or call on individual students to read it. This will aid in the retention of the account.

### READ THE WORD

We have talked about King Saul, then King David, and now David's son, King Solomon. A little more than 120 years before King Solomon's reign, the people had demanded a man for a king. And even though God was their King, and God wanted to be their King, He gave them what they asked for. God knew that any king who was a mere man would have a sinful heart. So He warned the people that the kings still must obey Him. We are going to talk about that today.

Turn back to the book of Deuteronomy for a few minutes and see what God said to the people about their kings. What did God expect from them? Let's read Deuteronomy 17:15–17. *Choose students to read the passage aloud.*

? There were certain things God made clear He did NOT want the kings to do. Someone tell me one thing God did not want the kings to do. Deuteronomy 17:16. *Gather many horses for himself.*

Great. Fill in #1a on your class notes. *Horses.*

? What is another thing God told them NOT to do? Look in Deuteronomy 17:17. What is the first thing listed in this verse? *Do not have many wives.*

OK. Complete #1b on your class notes. *Wives.*

? God explained why He gave this command about many wives. Why did the Lord say the king should not have many wives? Deuteronomy 17:17. *Lest his heart turn away.*

? What do you think that means? *Allow discussion.*

God knew that the kings often took wives from other nations in order to keep peace or make alliances with those nations. Of course, God's design for marriage has always been one man and one woman for life. So taking many wives was disobedience to God's plan. Also the wives from other countries would bring their false gods with them. Often the king would start worshipping his wives' false gods. This would break the first commandment from God that we should have no other gods before Him, in Exodus 20. No, God had higher standards in mind for the kings of Israel. He wanted them to worship only Him. And He wanted them to have only one wife.

? How would you complete #1c based on what we just talked about? *Allow discussion. Have students write in: gods, other.*

? Now look back in your Bible at Deuteronomy 17:17. There is something else God told them. What was that? *Do not multiply lots of silver and gold.*

? What does that mean? *Allow discussion.*

This means that the kings should not gather lots of money, riches, gold, and silver for their own selfish pleasure. Kings often got so rich they made their riches idols before them. They loved their riches more than they loved God. God was warning them not to do that.

? How will you complete #1d on your class notes? *Silver, gold.*

Good. Before any man-kings were put in place, God gave instructions that He wanted the kings to obey Him. Remember, God wanted to be their King. The man-king was to honor and worship the real King—God. God told the kings not to worship false gods, not to have many wives, not to gather many horses, not to lay up many riches in gold and silver. God wanted the kings to depend on Him for their success.

? How will you complete #2 on your class notes? *Depend.*

So, this was what God told the kings He wanted them to do. Did King Solomon do these things? His kingdom started off well. He built the Temple, asked God for wisdom, and ruled the people well. But Solomon was a man. And all men are sinners. Solomon was no exception.

So, did the wise King Solomon obey God? Let's see. Turn to 1 Kings 11:1–4. Let's read it together. *Divide the passage for members of the class to read aloud.*

1 Kings 11:1–4

## EXAMINE THE WORD

Really? Did you get that? This is very sad.

### Observe the Text

? Did Solomon obey God? *No.*

? How many women did king Solomon love? *1 Kings 11:1. Many women.*

? Where were these women from? *1 Kings 11:2. From the nations God told him not to have wives from.*

The women were from foreign countries. 1 Kings 11:1 says they were Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites. These were the very foreign women God told Solomon NOT to marry. Yet Solomon disobeyed God and did what he wanted to do.

? How many wives did Solomon have? *1 Kings 11:3. 700 wives!*

? The wives of Solomon did not believe in the true God. What happened to Solomon after being with all these wives? *1 Kings 11:4. His heart went after other gods. He was not loyal to the Lord his God.*

Solomon had disobeyed God's commands. Remember, God gave instructions that the king must NOT marry many wives. And now Solomon's heart was changed by the women he was married to and lived with. Solomon's heart was turned away from the Lord. He was not

## JUST

(Refer to Attributes Poster)

### 1 Kings 11:9–11

loyal to the Lord his God. He was worshipping the same false gods his many wives worshipped.

- ? What does God think about anyone who disobeys Him? *Allow discussion.*  
God does not like disobedience. He demands obedience and trust. God is just. He must punish sin. That is one of His attributes. *Refer to the Attributes of God Poster.*
- Let's read what happened to Solomon. *Assign readers for 1 Kings 11:9–11.*
- ? What did the Lord think of Solomon's disobedience? *1 Kings 11:9. The Lord became angry.*
- ? Why did the Lord become so angry? *1 Kings 11:9–10. Solomon's heart had turned away from the Lord God of Israel.*
- ? What was the Lord going to do to Solomon because of his disobedience? *1 Kings 11:11. He was going to tear the kingdom away from him and give it to his servant.*
- ? Look at #3 on your class notes. How will you complete that statement based on 1 Kings 11:11? *Have students fill in #3 on their class notes—tear, Israel, servant.*

### Discover the Truth

Well, it is pretty obvious that Solomon disobeyed God's commands. Someone look on the class notes for me. Let's read again the commands God made to the kings of Israel long before Solomon became king—#1 on your class notes. *Assign readers to read 1.a), b), c), and d) from the class notes.*

But what did Solomon do? Look at #4 on your class notes. Which part of God's commands did Solomon disobey? Put an "X" next to each one as I go down the list. Did he gather many horses and chariots during his reign? *Yes.* Did he marry many wives from other nations? *Yes.* Did he gather lots of riches, silver, and gold for his own selfish pleasure? *Yes.* Did he turn from the true God and worship the false gods of his wives? *Yes.*

Solomon disobeyed God in lots of ways. He knew better. He had started out so well—building the Temple, asking for wisdom. This is very sad.

So what next? Well, because God is holy and just, and because Solomon sinned, God punished him by tearing the kingdom from Solomon. God announced that the kingdom would go to Solomon's servant! We'll see how God worked that out next!



### READ THE WORD

King Solomon died. Remember, God had said that the kingdom would go to Solomon's servant. But first, Solomon's son Rehoboam did take over the kingdom. When Rehoboam took the throne, the people were hopeful that

this new king would treat them better than Solomon had treated them. Solomon had been mean and hard on the people. They were hoping his son Rehoboam would not be like Solomon was. The people sent Solomon's servant Jeroboam to talk to the king. Look at # 5 on your class notes. Solomon's servant and the spokesperson for the people was Jeroboam.

Complete #5 now. Write the name on the board to help with spelling. Jeroboam.

Jeroboam went to King Rehoboam—Solomon's son—to ask if he would be kinder to the people than his father Solomon had been. Let's read King Rehoboam's response to Jeroboam and the people. Turn to 1 Kings 12:13–15. Assign readers or read 1 Kings 12:13–15 aloud.

1 Kings 12:13–15

## EXAMINE THE WORD

That was certainly a harsh answer Rehoboam gave! Let's dig into those verses further to see what God would have us learn from them today.

### Observe the Text

? Was Rehoboam willing to change? To become nicer to the people? 1 Kings 12:14. Allow answers.

No! In fact, he was going to make their burdens heavier and beat them with scourges—more than his father Solomon had.

? Did the king listen to the people? 1 Kings 12:15. No!

? Who was in charge of all of these events? 1 Kings 12:15. The Lord.

? So, let's answer #6 on your class notes. Did King Rehoboam decide to be kinder to the people? No. Circle that answer.

? And we read in God's Word that someone was in charge, controlling everything that was happening. Who was that? 1 Kings 12:15. God. Complete #7.

That's right! The Lord was in control. Remember, the Lord had told Solomon that one day his servant would rule the kingdom. And the kingdom would be torn from his hands. Now King Rehoboam refused to do what the people asked and the people got upset. Jump down to 1 Kings 12:20–21. Let's read that. Read 1 Kings 12:20–21 or assign readers.

1 Kings 12:20–21

? What did the people do when the servant Jeroboam came back? 1 Kings 12:20. They made him king over Israel.

? Wow! What about Solomon's son, King Rehoboam? Where did he end up? 1 Kings 12:21. In Jerusalem.

? What was King Rehoboam doing in Jerusalem? 1 Kings 12:21. Preparing men to fight against Israel so he could get his kingdom back from Jeroboam.

## SOVEREIGN

*(Refer to Attributes Poster)*

Yes, he was planning to take his kingdom back from the new king Jeroboam. But would that work? Go to 1 Kings 12:24. Someone read that.  
*Assign a reader.*

- ? Was his attempt to take back Israel successful? *No!*
- ? Who stopped him? *The Lord.*
- ? The Lord stopped him. The Lord said He was in control. And the people obeyed the Word of the Lord. Which attribute of God does this verse remind you of? *Allow answers.*
- ? I'm thinking of the attribute that tells us that God is in charge of everything! What is that? *Sovereign.*

**Discover the Truth**

God was certainly showing His sovereign control over this entire situation. Just like God had announced, the kingdom was torn from Solomon. Solomon's servant would take the throne. Jeroboam was the new king of the northern kingdom. God allowed Solomon's son Rehoboam to rule over a small section of the kingdom, Judah—in the south. And the Bible told us that all of these events were in the hands of the Lord. God's plan was being completed just as He had sovereignly planned it to come about. Everything God said would happen was happening.

- Write the names on the board to help with spelling.

*Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster.* Now this can get a little confusing, so listen carefully. God divided the kingdom of Israel into two nations. The northern nation kept the name Israel. The new king of Israel was Jeroboam, Solomon's servant. Complete #8 on your class notes. *Jeroboam.*

The southern kingdom was much smaller. It was known as Judah. Solomon's son Rehoboam was the king of that small nation to the south. Complete #9 on your class notes. *Rehoboam.*





# Divided Kingdom Review Game

## MATERIALS

- Divided Kingdom Review Game Boards for each team of 2–3 students
- Divided Kingdom Review Questions and Answer Key
- Divided Kingdom Review Game Numbers in a cup
- Buttons to be used as game pieces

## INSTRUCTIONS

*Students will compete in small teams, taking turns drawing numbers from the cup, answering the questions, and moving their game piece forward on the game board for correct answers. The first team to the finish line is the winner. See the Divided Kingdom Review Questions and Answer Key for questions and more information on how to play the game.*

*NOTE: Give the Scripture references on the Divided Kingdom Review Questions Sheet. Teams can compete in finding the correct answers to move their game pieces.*

- ? Is everyone ready for a fun review of today's lesson? Yes!

Your team will have a good chance of winning if you were paying attention during the lesson. Try to work together as a team to get the best answer. You can draw a number from the cup. If you get the answer I ask you correct, you can move ahead on the game board by that number of spaces.

*Play the game.*

## CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Solomon disobeyed God and fell into serious sin. Because God is just, He had to punish Solomon's sin. That punishment came when the kingdom was divided and Solomon's son was left with only a small part of the kingdom. You did a great job reviewing this lesson. God loves it when we obey Him and study His Word!



# Applying God's Word

## WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

King Solomon started off his reign as king well when he asked God for wisdom. But he was a sinful man just like all men. He disobeyed God's commands for kings. He collected horses. He gathered together gold and silver. And he took many, many wives who brought their worship of other gods with them. Solomon did not stay true to the God of Israel. Sadly, he worshipped the gods of his wives—he turned to idolatry.

This is why God became angry with Solomon. He had to punish Solomon's sin and disobedience. So He tore the kingdom from him. The kingdom was divided between King Rehoboam (Solomon's son) in the south and King Jeroboam (Solomon's servant) in the north. The judgment of the Lord had come to pass. Refer to the History of Israel Poster. Point out the place on the poster where the single line splits into two. This is the point in Israel's history that we've been talking about today.

## GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

God demands our obedience, and He will not tolerate His people worshipping anything other than Him. He is the Lord our God, and we should have no idols before Him. He calls us to love Him with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind.

► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the students to practice the memory verse this week.

We should read the Word of God and learn from it. God demands our obedience. God calls us to love Him. Although we don't worship other idols and you will never have 700 wives or husbands . . . we turn away from God in other ways. What do we read? What do we watch on TV? What do we do when no one is looking? How do we treat our parents? Our brothers? Sisters? Teachers? Friends? Are we living our lives so that others can see that we love God above everything else—and we want to obey Him and honor Him with every part of our lives? It is worth thinking about. God demands our obedience and will punish disobedience.



### MEMORY VERSE

**1 Chronicles 29:11** Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all.



### GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God for His great love.
- Thank God for His faithfulness to us even when we sin.
- Ask God to help us to love Him more than anything else.