

THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

Part 1: The Northern Kingdom

“All of this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt . . .” (2 Kings 17:7)

Tonight we go from a wealthy, well-organized kingdom to a nation split in two. We will look first at the Northern Kingdom and a succession of kings that do ‘evil’ in the sight of God. The challenge to remain faithful to God during this time is kept alive by the prophets, and our story tonight will include two great prophets, Elijah and Elisha.

We left our story with the downfall of Solomon (he brought pagan gods and practices to the kingdom and lost his desire to serve God). God has said that the kingdom will not pass intact to his descendants.

Kingdom Divided	1 Kings 12:1-16:34
Prophets	1 Kings 17:1 – 2 Kings 8:15
Kings	2 Kings 8:16 – 16:20
Fall of Israel	2 Kings 17:1 - 41

Kingdom Divided

- Tensions during Solomon’s Reign:
 - Forced labor
 - Taxation due to Solomon’s lavish lifestyle
 - Religious syncretism (combining different beliefs)
 - Jeroboam and Ahijah (1 Kings 11:26ff) – Jeroboam attempts coup
- Solomon dies after a reign of 40 years, and his son Rehoboam, succeeds him.
 - ‘Unwise’ Rehoboam – result: rebellion (1 Kings 12:1-19)
- Jeroboam becomes king of Northern Kingdom (1 Kings 12:20)
 - New capital – Shechem
 - New worship centers – Bethel and Dan (1 Kings 12:25-34)
 - Jeroboam doesn’t want people to be drawn to Jerusalem to worship and sets up a religion of his own.

The Office of Prophet

- Samuel – Nathan – Ahijah
- Elijah:
 - Emerges to oppose Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings 17:1 - 2 Kings 2:18)
 - Drought (1 King 17:1) – Widow at Zarephath (17:7-24)
 - Contest on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18:19-40), 12 stones
 - Mt. Horeb and the “still small voice/sound of sheer silence” (19:1-18)
 - Call of Elisha (1 Kings 19:19-21)
 - “Departure” of Elijah (2 Kings 2:1-18)

- Elisha:
60 years as prophet – through reigns of 6 kings
Miracles:
Oil for the widow (4:1-7)
Raising a child to life (4:18-37)
Naaman (5:1-27) Note: we'll hear this text in worship on February 12.

Kings

- Overview/timeline (20 kings and 5 dynasties in 200 years)
- Summary of King Omri's reign (1 Kings 16:21-28)
- Ahab's reign (1 Kings 16:29-34) - Jezebel
- Persecution of those loyal to Yahweh (1 Kings 18:4); Naboth's vineyard (21:1-16)
- Assyrian campaigns
- Hoshea, last king of Israel (2 Kings 17:1-6)
- Siege of Samaria – Fall (722/721 BC)

~ SMALL GROUP TIME ~
~ The Divided Kingdom: The Northern Kingdom ~

1. What were some of the tensions within the United Kingdom during the reign of King Solomon?
2. What was the significance of the office of prophet?
3. What king was the standard by which all other kings were measured?
4. What important changes did Jeroboam make in the worship life of the people? Why?
5. Why was Queen Jezebel against the worship of Yahweh?
6. What was the purpose of the contest on Mt. Carmel?
7. What is an example of Ahab's greed?
8. Why did Elijah flee to Mt. Horeb?
9. When was Samaria destroyed?
10. What king from what country destroyed the Northern Kingdom?
11. How is God's love revealed in these stories?

Did you know? (Fun facts to know and tell!)

The books of Kings: These books along with the books of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel are known as ‘the Former Prophets.’ They are the history books that tell the story of Israel from their arrival in the Promised Land. Kings 1 and 2 complete the story that started in the time of Joshua.

Parting the Waters: We read about waters being parted on two occasions in our previous lessons (Moses at the Red Sea, Joshua at the Jordan River to enter the Promised Land). In our readings tonight the Jordan River is parted twice, once for Elijah and Elisha before Elijah departs in a whirlwind, and again when Elisha recrosses (2 Kings 2:7-14).

Enoch and Elijah: Do you remember Enoch (Genesis 5:24)? He “walked with God” and then God took him. Elijah is the only other person described in the Bible as being taken to heaven without dying.

King Omri (who ‘sinned more than all those before him’) made Samaria his capital, founding a country which has kept the same name since. Samaria rose about 300 ft. above the valleys, and was a great location (difficult to capture or enter by force) for a capital city. This was the ‘royal city’ of the Northern Kingdom, like Jerusalem was for the southern kingdom. Archaeologists have discovered that Omri and Ahab (his son) even erected some structures that rivaled those of Solomon.

Moses and Elijah: In Mark 9:4, Elijah and Moses appear to talk with Jesus at his Transfiguration (we’ll hear this text on February 19). Moses stands for the Law and Elijah for the Prophets – the two strands in the Old Testament that lead to Christ.

Respect your Elders: In 2 Kings 2:23-24 we read about a group of youths making fun of Elisha saying, “Go away, bald head!” Two bears came out of the woods and mauled the youth!

Grim Prophecy: Death of Jezebel (2 Kings 9:30-37) – her corpse is devoured by dogs as prophesied by Elijah (1 Kings 21:23)

Lost Tribes: Many “myths” have developed concerning the ten lost tribes of Israel. Assyrian records reveal that the deportations were a small part of the population (usually noble families). Agricultural workers, the majority of the population, were deliberately left to care for the crops.

Our Verse: *“All of this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt . . .”* (2 Kings 17:7)

Next Week: We’ll look at the southern kingdom (Judah) that is ruled by the descendants of David. There are fewer kings (even some that do ‘right’ in the eyes of the Lord) but no happy endings . . . we’ll look for a note of hope. **See you then!**

UNITED KINGDOM

Saul	1050 – 1010
David	1010 – 970
Solomon	970 – 930

ISRAEL (NORTHERN KINGDOM)					
KINGS			PROPHETS		
<u>Jeroboam</u>	22 years	930-909	AHIJAH		
<u>Nadab</u>	2 years	909-908			
<u>Baasha</u>	24 years	908-886			
<u>Elah</u>	2 years	886-885			
<u>Zimri</u>	7 days	885			
<u>Tibni</u>	Overlap w/Omri	885-880			
Omri	12 years/ <i>11 years</i>				
	Overlap w/Tibni	885-880			
	Sole Reign	885-874			
<u>Ahab</u>	22 years/ <i>21 years</i>	874-853		ELIJAH 875-848	
<u>Ahaziah</u>	2 years/ <i>1 year</i>	853-852			
<u>Joram (Jehoram)</u>	12 years/ <i>11 years</i>	852-841	ELISHA 848-797		
<u>Jehu</u>	28 years	841-814			
<u>Jehoahaz</u>	17 years	814-798			
<u>Jehoash</u>	16 years	798-782			
Jeroboam II	41 years				
	Co-regency w/Jehoash	793-782			JONAH 785-775
	Sole Reign	782-753			
<u>Zechariah</u>	6 months	753			
<u>Shallum</u>	1 month	752			
<u>Menahem</u>	10 years	752-742		HOSEA 750-715	
<u>Pekahiah</u>	2 years	742-740			
Pekah	20 years				
	In Gilead, overlapping years	752-740			
	Sole Reign	740-732			
<u>Hoshea</u>	9 years	732-722			

JUDAH (SOUTHERN KINGDOM)			
KINGS			PROPHETS
<u>Rehoboam</u>	17 years	930-913	OBADIAH (?) 855-840
<u>Abijah</u>	3 years	913-910	
<u>Asa</u>	41 years	910-869	
Jehoshaphat	25 years – official reign	872-848	
	Co-regency with Asa	872-869	
	Beginning of sole reign	869-853	
	Jehoram as regent	853-848	
<u>Jehoram</u>	8 years/ <i>7 years</i>	848-841	
<u>Ahaziah</u>	1 year	841	
<u>Athaliah</u>	7 years	841-835	
<u>Joash</u>	40 years	835-796	
Amaziah	29 years	796-792	
	Overlap with Azariah	792-767	
Azariah	52 years		
	Overlap with Amaziah	792-767	
	Sole reign	767-740	
Jotham	16 years	750-735	
	Co-regency with Azariah	750-740	
<u>Ahaz</u>	16 years	735-715	JEREMIAH 626-585
<u>Hezekiah</u>	29 years	715-686	
Manasseh	55 years	697-642	
	Co-regency with Hezekiah	697-686	
<u>Amon</u>	2 years	642-640	
<u>Josiah</u>	31 years	640-609	
<u>Jehoahaz</u>	3 months	609	
<u>Jehoiakim</u>	11 years	609-598	
<u>Jehoiachin</u>	3 months	598-597	
<u>Zedekiah</u>	11 years	597-586	