



“This is the Story...”

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## **Week 18: A Nation Tears Apart**

1 Kings 11-12

**Intro Video:** <https://youtu.be/-xZiTAMsp2I>

**Review the big story:** God created the cosmos and humans and called it all good. We were created to live in harmony, but sometimes we miss the mark. All of humanity missed the mark, and they had to live with the consequences, but God stuck with them and continued to love them. Then God called a family to be a blessing to the whole earth. Like the humans before them, the generations of this family often missed the mark, but God was faithful. When the people became slaves in Egypt, God raised up Moses to be their leader. God performed many signs and wonders, and delivered them from slavery. In the wilderness, they learned to be a people of God, trusting in God’s provision, living out God’s commandments, and wrestling with the law in shalom community. As they prepared to go into the promised land, they were given the *shema*, words of love to keep with their whole beings. God gave the people a new leader, Joshua, and through miraculous works brought the people into the promised land. Once there, they had to learn again how to be God’s people. They missed the mark a lot, and God sent judges to guide them. Ordinary people showed creativity and steadfast love in the way they continued the story of the people of God. God called a young boy, Samuel to be a bridge between the people and God. Prophets like Samuel would continue to try to keep the people faithful to God in the time of the kings, beginning with Saul and David. David’s son Solomon, the third king of Israel, built a temple in Jerusalem to be a gathering place for worship of God.

- **Key verses:** 1 Kings 11:11; 1 Kings 11:37-38; 1 Kings 12:16; 1 Kings 12:22-24

**Tell the story:** The kings of Israel were human beings, and they often missed the mark. King Solomon began to worship other gods. A prophet named Ahijah prophesied to a man named Jeroboam that he would become king of the ten northern tribes, leaving only two for the kingdom of the descendants of Solomon. Jeroboam fled to safety in Egypt, and after Solomon died and his son Rehoboam became king, Jeroboam led a rebellion that ended in the establishment of two kingdoms, the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Soon, though, Jeroboam also initiated idol worship in Israel. The cycle of missing the mark continued. God stuck with the people by speaking through faithful prophets.

- Read 1 Kings 11-12. Or if you want a shorter section to read, try 1 Kings 11:1-6; 9-13; 26-43; 1 Kings 12:1-16; 20-33
- There is no corresponding *Shine On* story, but the story on page 101 may be helpful for families.

### **Prime the pump:**

- **Things to notice:**
  - Solomon is said to have had a thousand wives, most of them from foreign countries. Notice what it is about having all of these wives that Solomon gets in trouble for.
  - 1 Kings 11:42 says that Solomon reigned for forty years. This is a typological number. Where else do you remember forty years from the stories we have already read?
  - “High places” and altars play a big role in these stories. Notice all the times one of these places is described. Is it positive or negative? Notice the description of Jeroboam’s altars in 1 Kings 12:28. What does that remind you of?
  - Notice which country shelters Jeroboam in 1 Kings 11:40. Hmm...
  - Notice who Rehoboam listens to in Kings 6-14. This tendency has apparently been around for a long time.

- **Background information:**
  - The story of tearing of clothing in 1 Kings 11:29-32 reflects back on a story in 1 Samuel 15:27-28. Look it up and see if it gives you some insight into this story.
  - This passage has a parallel telling of the same story in 2 Chronicles 10-11. If that interests you, read the Chronicles story and find the similarities and differences.
  - Maps make this story intriguing! [This map](#) can help you visualize the story.
  - The festival described in 1 Kings 12:33 refers to Succoth. But it is a month later than the same festival in the south.
- **Conversation starters:**
  - Solomon had a thousand wives. Jacob had two wives and two concubines. What was acceptable in marriage certainly changed over the course of history. How much of this change do you think was a change in culture, and how much was a change in understanding of God's will?
  - Shechem, where Rehoboam comes for his coronation, is in the north. It is interesting that this is the chosen place for this event instead of Jerusalem. What might have been the political reasons for this?

**Microsong:** "A Nation Tears Apart" (Listen: <https://youtu.be/HbNjOt9Deuo>)

The wisest king forgets rule one, his son becomes a bully.

A nation tears apart that day, and both parts lose their way and lose the heart God loved in David.

**Sing the big song:** (Listen: <https://youtu.be/NfyWug4brT4>)

This is the story of how it all began. God made matter, and chaos shattered.

Eve and Adam, they tried to hide. The world got violent and God replied with a mark and flood  
and a rainbow sign, God's love written on skin and sky,

*And then God called a family to be a blessing to the earth, oh oh*

A mother and her favorite son wrestle for the blessing, another son becomes a slave, the land is  
saved from famine.

God's family grows. Egypt oppresses. They groan to God and God sends Moses.

*Ten strange signs say "Please release them!" By the sea God saves them. Ohh ohhh.*

The people complain and God rains bread. Daily food and ten new rules.

Five sisters come and ask for land. God says "Yes, amend the law!"

*Moses says, "In your new life across the Jordan, love God with your whole heart and with all your  
being, and your strength, now listen: God is One, only God! God is One, only God!"*

Cross over Jordan, stories and stones. Circuits and shouts and the walls come down.

God sends judges like Deborah and the land has rest.

Ruth's worth more than seven sons; Redeem the lost with steadfast love.

Corruption in the temple, and God sends Samuel.

God gives them a prophet, They ask for a king. Does God need a temple? A wise king forgets.

And when a bully rules the land, the nation tears apart.

And loses David's heart.....

*God loves every one of us, it's true, and God loves the universe.*

**Go do your household project!**