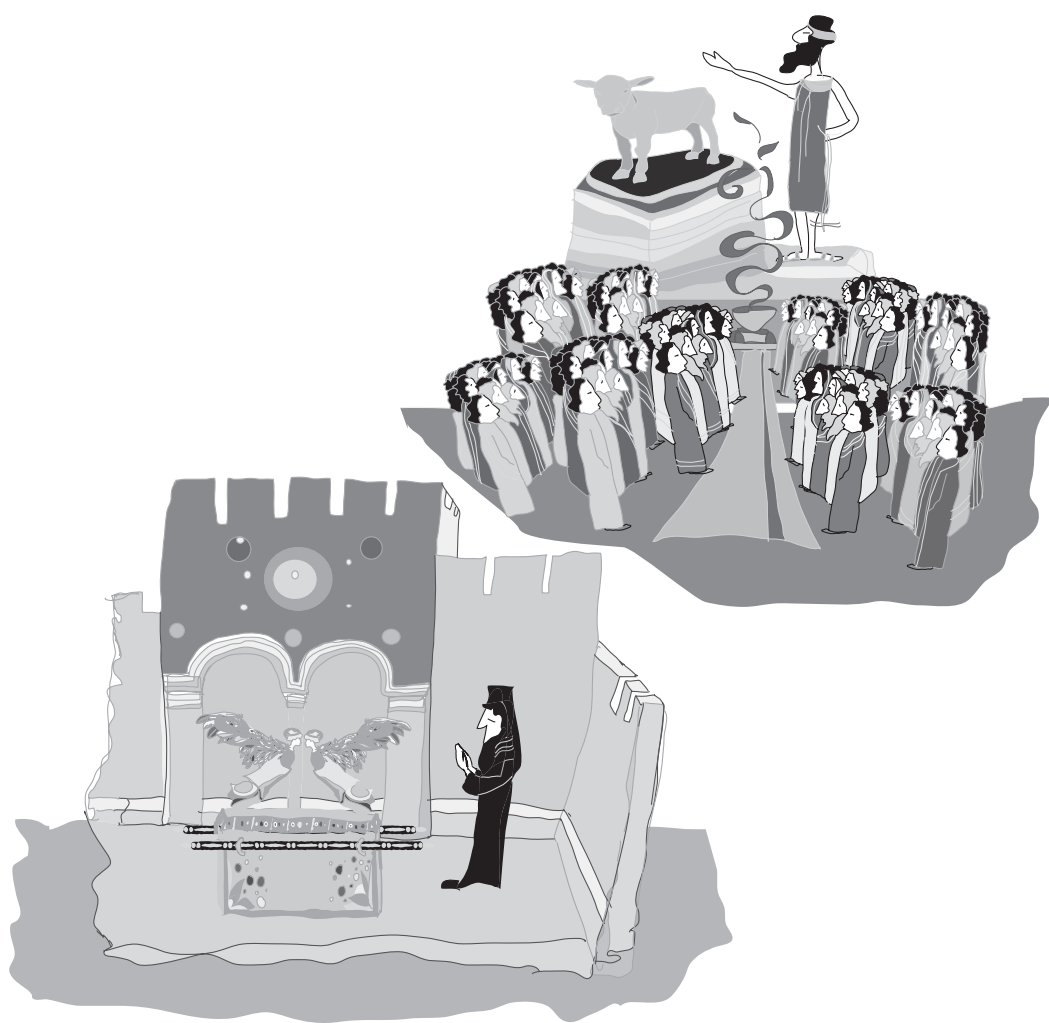


LESSON 61

The Kingdom Is Divided

1 KINGS 11–12



BIBLE TRUTH

A DIVIDED HEART LEADS TO A DIVIDED LIFE

LESSON SNAPSHOT

- 1. OPENING REVIEW** **5 MIN**
 Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
- 2. BIBLE STORY** **10 MIN**
 Read 1 Kings 11:1–13 from the Scriptures or read story 61, “The Kingdom Is Divided,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
- 3. OBJECT LESSON 1** **10 MIN**
 Which Team Am I Rooting For?
SUPPLIES:

 - ✓ team jersey and cap for a well-known rival sports team
 - ✓ matching team-colored balloons and streamers
- 4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION** **10 MIN**
- 5. OBJECT LESSON 2** **10 MIN**
 Youthful Advisors
SUPPLIES:

 - ✓ four older, wise adults
- 6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY** **5 MIN**
- 7. ACTIVITY TIME** **10 MIN**
 Coloring Activity
SUPPLIES:

 - ✓ coloring page 61—one copy for each child
- 8. CLOSING PRAYER** **5 MIN**
- 9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON** **10 MIN**
 A Divided Heart
SUPPLIES:

 - ✓ glass jar
 - ✓ seven hundred colored stones (use multicolored decorative river rocks that can be purchased at a garden center or a craft supply store)

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Solomon loves the world—King David had many sons, but God chose Solomon to be king after David. God made Solomon the wisest man who had ever lived. God even gave Solomon the honor of building a magnificent temple for him.

Nevertheless, Solomon does the exact thing God had warned his kings not to do (“[the king] shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold” [Deuteronomy 17:17]). As the years go by, Solomon takes wives from among the pagan peoples of Canaan, and Solomon’s disobedience brings the exact result God had warned him against. Eventually, these foreign women lead Solomon’s heart away from the Lord. Solomon turns away from the Lord and begins serving false gods.

God disciplines Solomon in mercy—At the end of Solomon’s reign when he is worshiping false gods, the Lord raises up against him one enemy after another. Although God is angry with Solomon, he also loves him. God brings enemies against Solomon to help him understand that he has disobeyed God.

Sometimes God does the same thing with us. He allows difficulties and challenges to come against us so that we will examine our hearts to see if we are living lives of love and obedience to God.

Rehoboam’s foolish pride—Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, becomes king when Solomon dies. Hearing that Solomon is dead, Jeroboam, Solomon’s enemy, comes back to Israel because he wants to be king.

The people of Israel ask Rehoboam to rule more kindly than his father Solomon did. The elder wise men encourage Rehoboam to hear the people and treat them kindly. But when the new king turns to his younger friends to see what they would say, the inexperienced counselors recommend he treat the people harshly, worse than his father. As a result, ten tribes of Israel break away from Rehoboam and Jerusalem and make Jeroboam their king just as the prophet Ahijah said they would (1 Kings 11:34–36). God’s people then live divided: the kingdom of Judah in the north and the kingdom of Israel in the south.

WHERE IS JESUS? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read 1 Kings 11:13.

Even though God judged Solomon for worshipping false gods, there was hope in God's punishment. God gave Solomon good news mixed with the bad news. The bad news was that God was taking the kingdom away from Solomon, but the good news was that he promised not to do it until Solomon's son was king. And even then God promised not to take all of Israel away, but to allow Solomon's son to be king over one tribe.

God did this for the sake of David and for the sake of Jerusalem. You see, God had promised David that he would have a son on the throne forever. So even though Solomon disobeyed God, he remained on the throne so God could keep his promise to David.

Jesus, one of Solomon's far-off grandchildren, is the ultimate way God kept that promise. By saving the tribe of Judah (the tribe Jesus came from) and allowing Solomon to remain on the throne, God kept his promise to David and opened the way for the good news of the gospel to come to us all.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW

5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY

10 MIN

Read 1 Kings 11:1–13 from the Scriptures or read story 61, "The Kingdom Is Divided," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 **10 MIN**

Which Team Am I Rooting For?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ team jersey and cap for a well-known rival sports team
- ✓ matching team-colored balloons and streamers

Depending on the sporting season and your local teams, pick a rival team to which the class will object. Decorate the room and wear the rival team cap and shirt.

When the children arrive, someone is likely to comment and object to the room's décor. Tell them that you decorated the room and ask them if they like it. When they say no, ask why not. They should object to the fact that it supports a rival team. Ask what team they like and go on to say how you are also a fan of that team. If others in the class mention a third team, say that their team is also your favorite. Continue this to demonstrate divided loyalties.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- **Who here thinks I am a good, loyal fan?**
(They should answer that you are not a good, loyal fan.)
- **Why am I not a good loyal fan?**
(Your support, affections, and loyalty are divided.)
- **How is my life and divided heart toward sports teams like Solomon's divided heart toward God?**
(Solomon tried to follow both God and false gods, but God said that we are to love him only and have no other gods before him.)
- **What competes in your life for your affections for God?**
(See if the children can point to those alternate loves that capture their hearts. Point out to them that we are to love God with all our heart, soul, and strength.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION

10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 **10 MIN**

Youthful Advisors

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ four older, wise adults

This exercise is to demonstrate the foolishness of choosing inexperienced advisors from among our friends and rejecting the wise counsel of those older than we are.

Pick two volunteers from the class. Tell one to choose four trusted advisors from among his or her friends. Tell the second volunteer you have brought in older outside advisors as his or her counselors.

Ask both the following questions and have them seek counsel from their advisors and then report their answers to the class. The volunteers may elect to have a counselor answer the question for them if they like.

1. What is the best way for a young person to build a solid credit rating?
2. What majors in college should be avoided due to their inability to translate into solid employment opportunities?
3. What guidelines should a person follow to know whether they should rent an apartment or purchase a home?
4. What amount of life insurance should a newly married father of one carry on himself?
5. What are the pitfalls of commission-only sales jobs? When is it acceptable to take such a job?

The difference in counsel should be significant.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- Which group of counselors would you rather have advising you?
(Most of the class if not all should say the adults.)
- Why do you think young people often reject the counsel of adults and listen to their friends?
(You want to point out the sin of pride here and help the children to see that our pride causes us to reject those in authority over us. Pride makes us think we can make independent decisions or take counsel from our friends. Pride also rejects God's Word.)

- How did Jeroboam and Rehoboam demonstrate pride in the decisions they made?

(Rehoboam listened to his youthful friends instead of the trusted older counselors and ended up dividing the kingdom. Jeroboam rejected God's counsel (1 Kings 11:38–39) and did not follow the Lord but set up alternate gods in Israel (the northern kingdom).)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page 61—one copy for each child

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- Who is the man in the picture?
(The man is Ahijah, a prophet of God.)
- What is the man in the picture doing?
(tearing his outer garment)
- Why is he tearing his shirt?
(He is telling Jeroboam that God is correcting Solomon and bringing judgment to Israel by ripping it in pieces. God is going to make Jeroboam king over ten tribes. Only Jerusalem and the tribe of Judah will be left for Solomon's son to rule.)

CLOSING PRAYER

5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

A Divided Heart

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ glass jar
- ✓ seven hundred colored stones (use multicolored decorative river rocks that can be purchased at a garden center or a craft supply store)

This is to demonstrate the shallow nature of Solomon’s love for God and his wives.

Walk around the classroom showing the jar to the children. Spark their curiosity about the rocks by asking them if they think the rocks are attractive. Ask them if they have rock collections at home, and then ask if any of them are interested in having one of the rocks.

Ask for three volunteers. Have them come to the front of the class. Pour a handful of rocks on a table, and ask the first volunteer to pick out one rock they like best. Pour about a quarter of the rocks onto the table and ask the second volunteer to pick out the ten rocks that they like best. Finally, pour the remainder of the rocks on the table and ask the final volunteer to pick out the seven hundred rocks they like best. Hurry them along and stop them once they have picked out about fifty.

The object here is to help the children see that although you could take care in picking out one wife or husband, when you divide your attention over seven hundred wives, you cannot possibly care for them. You might ask the third volunteer to put seven hundred rocks in his or her pockets.

When you tell them that Solomon had seven hundred wives, it will not be hard for the children to see that this is not wise.

Also, take time to explain that these wives did not love the Lord, nor did they serve the Lord. Instead, they led Solomon astray, and he worshiped other gods.

Then ask the class the following questions:

■ **Did Solomon love his wives?**

(No, Solomon could boast about seven hundred wives but he could not love seven hundred wives. God directs us to love one spouse for our whole life.)

- Could Solomon love other gods and still love the Lord?

(No, the other gods were false. The Lord is the only true God. To worship false gods is to disrespect the true God who demands all our worship.)

- How is Solomon's love for God and his love for his wives the same?

(Solomon didn't really love either his wives or God. Solomon's love was divided.)

LESSON 61 - THE KINGDOM IS DIVIDED

