

General Church Education



The Two Kingdoms

1 Kings 14:1-31; 15:9-24

Lesson 9

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 6: The Lord Is Our Prophet

For ages 11-12 years

The Two Kingdoms

1 Kings 14:1-31

Teacher Background

Many kings loved themselves above everyone else and acted from this love. But one king, Asa, loved the Lord and cared for Judah above himself. One thing that gets in the way of obeying the Lord, and especially love to Him and the neighbor, is loving self above others.

Children typically see themselves as the center of their world and have little idea of how to genuinely love others. Adults are responsible for helping them develop an awareness of how to put another's happiness before their own.

At times, children exhibit thoughtful behavior. When this happens, try not to overly praise, but say a heartfelt thank you. Later, you might mention the act and point out how it made you and others happy. There are also times when children act selfishly. An immediate response might be anger or frustration and hard words might be exchanged. Sometimes a consequence is needed. Whenever possible, minimize your reaction, choose a few words to express disappointment and explain the consequence. Adolescents often want to engage in an argument—it gives them a chance to try out their budding rationality. If possible, avoid arguments and discuss what happened later.

Focus Points

- The Lord commanded Saul to destroy the Amalekites completely.
- Saul defeated the Amalekites but spared the king and the best animals.
- Samuel chastised Saul, who made excuses, therefore the kingdom would be taken from him.

Readings from the Writings

“‘To set up altars, altars to burn incense unto Baal,’ signifies worship from the love of self and from the love of the world. This nation did set up altars and burn incense to Baal; but as all things of their worship were representative, the things that were done according to the statutes were representative of things celestial and spiritual; consequently the things that were done contrary to the statutes were representative of things infernal; therefore by ‘altars set up to the gods,’ and by ‘incense offered to Baal,’ these contrary things are signified.”

Apocalypse Explained 324

“It is said concerning Jezebel that she called herself a prophetess ... because by her is signified the delight of the love of self and of the world; and this delight teaches and seduces those who are in truths; for whoever thinks from self, thinks from his own love, and thence fills himself with falsities, which is to teach and to seduce.” *Apocalypse Explained* 160

Teacher Activity Overview

The lesson offers the following activity choices:

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“For the Lord will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River, because they have made their wooden images, provoking the Lord to anger.” (1 Kings 14:15)

Projects and Activities (for answers, see back of lesson)

Write a Question about the Division of Israel

Read each sentence and write a question it could answer.

Loving Others—Loving Yourself

Separate words about loving from words about self-love. Then read various scenarios.

Describe how you might put someone else’s needs before your own for each situation.

Additional Project and Activity Choices for Parents and Teachers

Jeroboam to Ahab: Eight Evil Kings in Israel

Learn about the names and deeds of eight evil kings of Israel. Available at: <https://newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-jeroboam-to-ahab-eight-evil-kings-in-israel-1-kings-12-16.pdf>

A Chart of the Kings of Israel and Judah

As you learn about the kings of Israel and Judah, complete a chart. As you fill in the spaces, think about whether the king is good or evil. Available at: <https://newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-a-chart-of-the-kings-of-israel-and-judah-1-kings-2-kings.pdf>

The Two Kingdoms

1 Kings 14:1-31; 15:9-24

Vocabulary

loyal—faithful and trusted

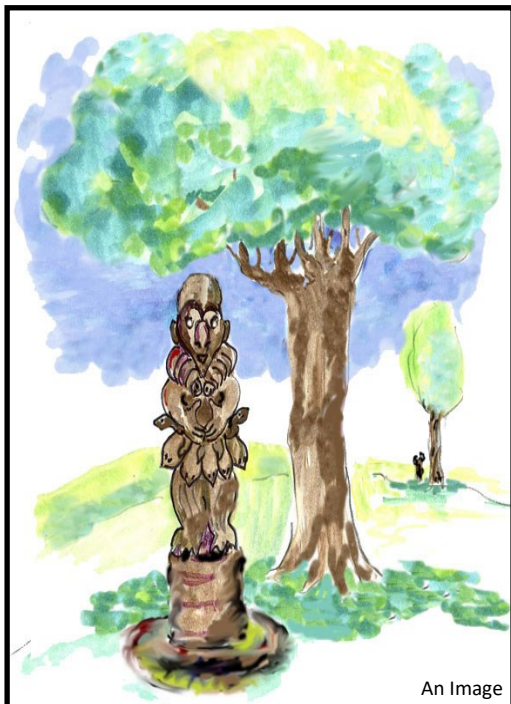
followed in his footsteps—acted in the same way

Jeroboam's Son Becomes Sick

We might remember that while a prophet warned Jeroboam, the king of Israel, that he was disobeying the Lord, Jeroboam did not seem to understand that Ahijah, the prophet who brought him the promise of kingship, might not like the way he was using his kingly power. Jeroboam disguised his wife and sent her to Ahijah to ask him about his sick son.

Ahijah was going blind so he would not have recognized Jeroboam's wife, even without a disguise. However, when she entered his house, the prophet knew her. Of course the Lord warned Ahijah that she was arriving, pretending to be someone else. She must have been surprised when Ahijah called her the "wife of Jeroboam". However, his words would have distressed her.

"You have done more evil than all who were before you, for you have gone and made for yourself other gods and molded images to provoke Me to anger, and have cast Me behind your back—therefore behold! I will bring disaster upon the house of Jeroboam...." (1 Kings 14: 9-10)



She learned that all of her husband's house would die. It must have been difficult to hear that Israel would mourn her son because the Lord saw something good in him, yet he would die because of her husband's choices. The rest of the prophet's warning told that a new king would cut off the house of Jeroboam, and that in time all of Israel would be lost because of her husband's sins. When Jeroboam's wife entered her house, her son died and Israel mourned. However, Jeroboam still ignored the Lord's commandments.

Rehoboam Rules in Judah

Solomon's son, Rehoboam, continued to rule in Judah, making war with Jeroboam and the Israelites. Like Jeroboam, Rehoboam led his people in committing sins against the Lord.

Lesson 9 • The Two Kingdoms

“They built for themselves high places, sacred pillars and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree. (1 Kings 14:23)

Many people delighted in twisting the Lord’s laws of order and doing terrible things. The Word tells us their sins were worse than those of their fathers.

Treasures Are Stolen from Jerusalem

In the fifth year of Rehoboam’s reign, Egypt attacked Jerusalem and took treasures from the temple and the king’s palace. These included the gold shields Solomon had made. Following this, the guards protected Rehoboam with bronze shields. Although these shields were strong, they were not like the golden shields. Spiritually, the gold shields stood for the Lord’s love and protection while bronze stood for natural love.

Rehoboam fought with Jeroboam throughout his reign. Then, when Rehoboam died, his son Abijam became king and continued to fight Israel. He was not loyal to the Lord, but sinned like his father. He reigned for just three years. When Abijam died his son Asa became king.

A Good King Reigns in Judah

Asa was not like his father or his grandfather. He was loyal to the Lord. He removed the idols and banished those who disobeyed the Lord’s laws. He even removed his grandmother from being the queen mother because she did not worship the Lord.

During Rehoboam and Abijam’s reigns many treasures were taken from the temple. Asa re-turned the items that were still in Jerusalem. Then he heard that Israel, under a new king, Baasha, was rising up against Judah and building a city near Jerusalem named Ramah. Asa knew he would need help to fight Israel. So Asa had the treasures removed from the temple and sent them to the king of Syria as a peace-offering.



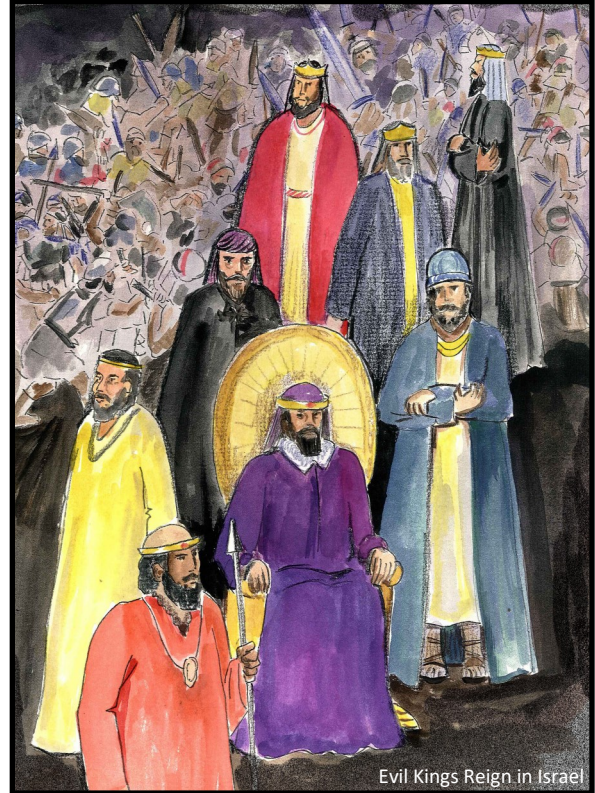
Syria was to the north of Israel. If Syria attacked Israel, Baasha would have to ward off those attacks and would have fewer soldiers to fight Judah. Of course, Asa was not certain whether Syria would help. However, when Syria did attack, Baasha stopped building Ramah and stayed further north, in Tirzah. So, Asa took the materials Baasha had used to build Ramah

and built two cities in Judah. When Asa died forty years later, his son Jehoshaphat became king of Judah.

Evil Kings Reign in Israel

During Asa's reign many kings ruled Israel. All of these kings followed in Jeroboam's footsteps and chose evil. First, Jeroboam was on the throne. When he died, his son Nadab ruled for two years. Then Baasha, the son of Ahijah, killed him and took the throne. As had been prophesied to Jeroboam, Baasha and his followers destroyed his house. Baasha reigned for twenty-four years, but he was so evil that it was prophesied that his family would be wiped out.

Baasha's son, Elah, ruled for two years before the commander of his chariots, Zimri, rebelled and killed the king. Zimri did as Baasha had done to Jeroboam's descendants; he killed all the male members of his house. However, the people were not pleased, so they made Omri, the commander of the army, the new king. Then Omri and all of Israel attacked the city of Tirzah. Zimri was so afraid that he went into the palace and burned it down, killing himself. This divided Israel. Some people chose Tibni as their ruler while others chose Omri. But Tibni soon died. Then Omri reigned for six years. After he died, his son Ahab became king.



Love of Self and the World

It is hard to think that the kings of Israel could be any more evil than they had been since the time of Jeroboam, but the Word tells us that Ahab was the most evil of them all. He married Jezebel, the daughter of the king of the Sidonians, a tribe from which Israel was not to marry. Then he set up an altar to Baal and worshipped him. To worship Baal stands for worshipping from a love of self and the world rather than a love to the Lord.

Love of self means putting ourselves above everyone else, thinking we are more important than others or even than the Lord. Love of the world means letting our desire to have nice things overpower our willingness to share. It means things become more important to us than other people or the Lord. We should remember that things should not become our life's purpose. If we are thinking of ourselves when we worship, there is no real worship. Prayers that ask the Lord for things we want for purely selfish reasons are empty. They turn us away from the Lord, instead of toward Him. The Lord asks us to worship Him and pray to Him not for Himself, but for our own spiritual welfare. When we do this from a love of the Lord and the neighbor, it leads to true happiness in this world and in heaven.

Activity Overview

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“For the Lord will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River, because they have made their wooden images, provoking the Lord to anger.” (1 Kings 14:15)

Projects and Activities (for answers, see back of lesson)

Choose one or two.

Write a Question about the Division of Israel

Read each sentence and write a question it could answer.

Loving Others—Loving Yourself

Separate words about loving from words about self-love. Then read various scenarios. Describe how you might put someone else’s needs before your own for each situation.

Write a Question about the Division of Israel

1 Kings 14:1-31; 15:9-24

The following statements are answers to questions. Write a question that the statement could answer. The first one is done for you.

1. Jeroboam's son, Abijah
Question: Who was sick at the beginning of the story?
2. Disguise his wife and send her with special food to Ahijah, the prophet of the Lord, to find out what would happen to his son
Question:
3. Blindness, so he would not recognize Jeroboam's wife
Question:
4. The Lord warned Ahijah that Jeroboam's wife was coming
Question:
5. Jeroboam's son would die and all of his family and descendants would die
Question:
6. Israel would be uprooted and scattered throughout the surrounding lands
Question:
7. Jeroboam sinned and caused Israel to sin
Question:
8. The people of Judah built high places, sacred pillars, and wooden images all over Judah
Question:
9. Asa followed the Lord, removed the idols and restored dedicated objects to the temple, but did not remove the high places
Question:
10. Asa took silver and gold from the treasuries of the temple and the palace and sent them to Syria
Question:

Loving Others—Loving Yourself

So much evil in the world is done because people love themselves more than they love others. The Lord does not tell us that we should not love ourselves, but that we should love others as much or more than we love ourselves. It is often hard to choose another person's happiness over our own, and sometimes it is not easy to recognize the difference between loving others and loving yourself.

- Look at the words below. Circle words about loving others and cross out words having to do with loving yourself more than others. Look up words you do not know.

Charitable	Spiteful	Compassionate	Unkind	Annoying
Ruthless	Selfish	Cruel	Merciful	Cooperative
Helpful	Sympathetic	Generous	Obliging	Considerate
Respectful	Egotistical	Merciless	Harsh	Courteous
Supportive	Polite	Benevolent	Malicious	Kind

- Read the scenarios below and describe how you might put someone else's needs or wishes before your own. There are some obvious answers, but you might come up with more creative ways to make others happy.
1. One of your classmates loves soccer, but is not very good at it so he/she is often left out of the pick-up games. You enjoy soccer and want a good game. This classmate asks you if he/she can play. What do you do?
 2. Your sister is in a play and wants you to attend. You would rather see your friends. What do you do?
 3. Your eccentric aunt is in town and wants to take you out to dinner. You would rather not be seen with her because she can be embarrassing. What do you do?
 4. Your parents won't let you do something you want to do. They have given you reasons for their decision, but you don't like the reasons and are angry. What do you do?

Answers

Lesson 9

Write a Question about the Division of Israel

2. Who sent his wife to Ahijah with special food? 3. Why did Jeroboam think Ahijah would not recognize his wife? 4. Why did Ahijah know Jeroboam's wife was coming? 5. What did Ahijah tell Jeroboam's wife? 6. What would happen to Israel? 7. What had Jeroboam done to cause this? 8. What the people of Israel do that was against the Lord's commandments? 9. What did Asa do or not do to return to the Lord? 10. How did Asa make a treaty with Ben-Hadad, king of Syria?