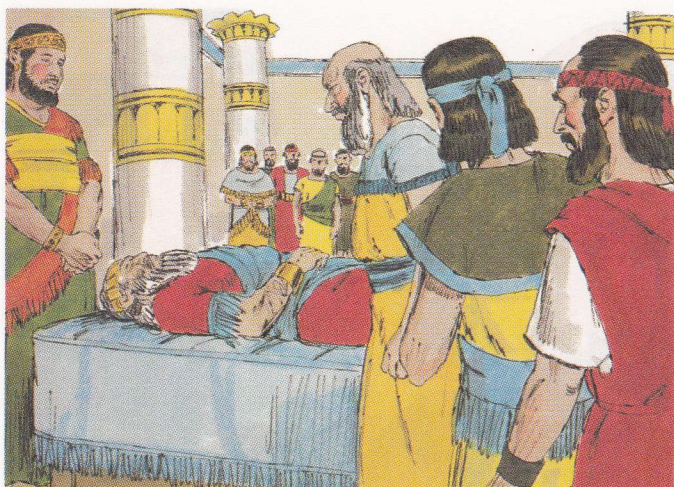


The Kingdom Is Divided



1 After Solomon died, his son Rehoboam became king. Jeroboam, who had fled from Solomon, returned from Egypt to Israel. Now the crowning of Rehoboam as king was to take place at Shechem.



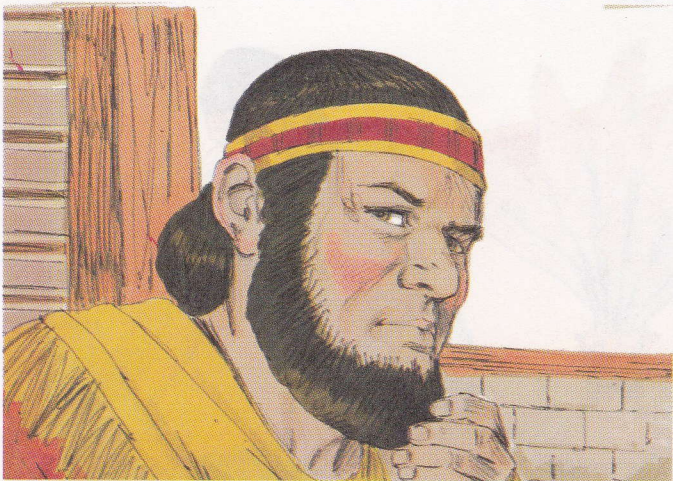
2 But at Shechem the northern tribes complained to Rehoboam. They said, "Your father treated us badly and made life hard for us. If you will make life easier for us, we will always be your loyal subjects."



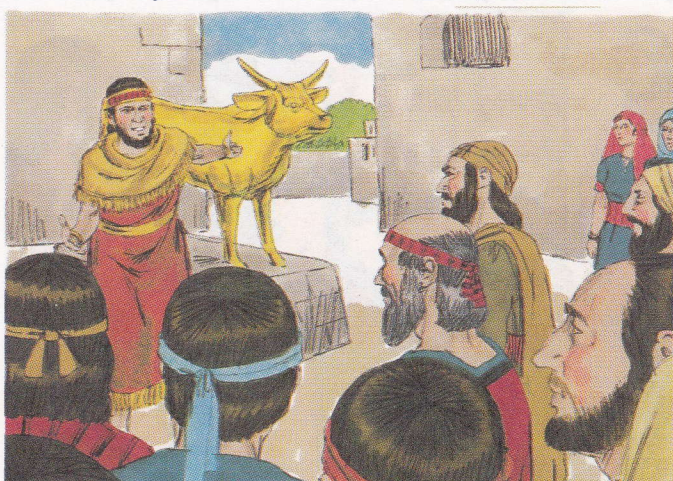
3 Rehoboam ignored the wise advice of his older advisers. His reply to the leaders of the northern tribes was rude and harsh. "I am going to make life even harder for you than my father did!" he said.



4 In anger they shouted, "We will have nothing more to do with David and his family!" So they made Jeroboam their king. Only the tribe of Judah remained loyal to David's descendant, Rehoboam.



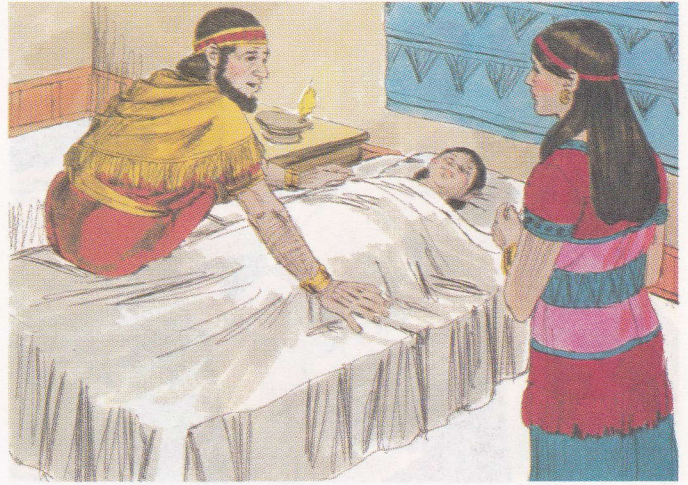
5 The Temple of the Lord was in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. So Jeroboam thought, "If my people continue to go to Jerusalem to worship, they will again become loyal to David's descendant, King Rehoboam."



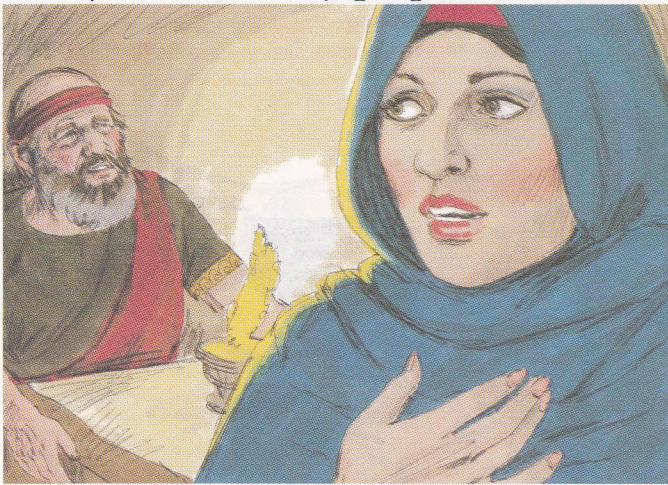
6 So Jeroboam made two calves of gold, putting one at Bethel and the other at Dan. He said to the people, "Don't go to Jerusalem any more. These are your gods! Worship them at Dan and Bethel."



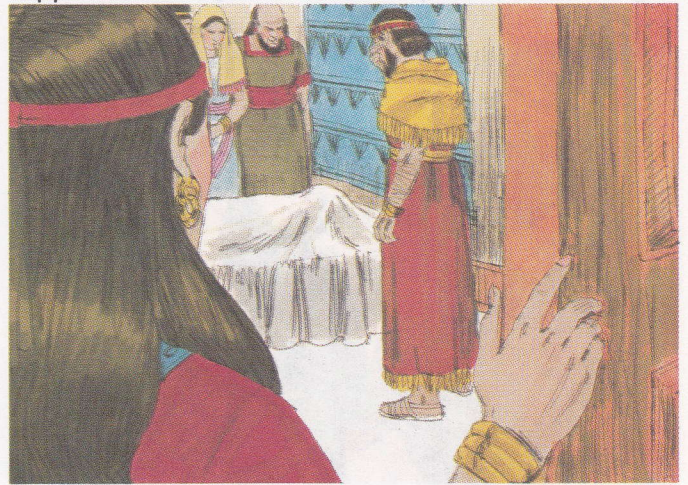
7 God was not pleased with Jeroboam. He sent a prophet to Bethel to say, "Someday a child will be born in the family of David who will kill on this altar all the priests who serve pagan gods."



8 Some time later, King Jeroboam's son became ill. Jeroboam said to his wife, "Put on a disguise and go to Shiloh. Ask Ahijah the prophet what will happen to our son."



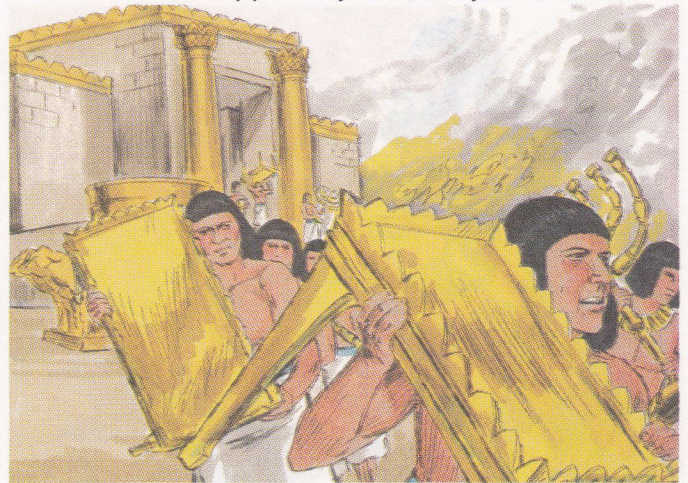
9 But the Lord revealed to Ahijah who she was. Ahijah said to her, "Tell Jeroboam that God took the kingdom from David's descendants and gave it to him because David's descendants had sinned."



10 "But Jeroboam has sinned even more than they did! Therefore, God will destroy all his male descendants! Now go home. When you get there, your son will die." It happened just as Ahijah said.



11 The people of Judah also sinned against the Lord. They built places of worship for false gods and set up stone pillars for worship on the hills, just as the Canaanites had once done.



12 Several years later, the Egyptians attacked Jerusalem. They took away all the treasures of the Temple and of the palace. Because the Israelites had sinned, the Lord did not protect them or the Temple.