

## SOLOMON---REHOBOAM---JEROBOAM

(I Kings 2:1—14:31)

The United Kingdom period included 3 kings: Saul, David, and Solomon. After Solomon the kingdom divided into 2 parts: Israel (10 tribes) to the North, and Judah (2 tribes) to the South. As we will point out later, the Divided Kingdom period was a very dismal time.

Before he died David gave advice and instructions to Solomon, especially the charge to be faithful to God. There were also some old “scores” which David wanted settled, especially vengeance on some old enemies.

Chapter 3 records Solomon’s request to God for wisdom (when God asked him what he wanted). In time Solomon became very famous for his wisdom.

Not only did Solomon have great wisdom, but God blessed him with fabulous wealth. Solomon carried through on David’s desire to build a temple for the Lord. After the temple was completed the Lord appeared to Solomon, renewing promises made to David, provided that Solomon walked in an upright way.

Chapter 10 records the visit of the Queen of Sheba as she brought many gifts and was overwhelmed with the splendor of Solomon’s court.

Sadly, Solomon did not continue to walk in God’s ways. He married hundreds of wives, many of whom were idol worshippers. In time Solomon actually worshipped various pagan gods. The Lord became angry with him and began to raise up adversaries who gave him troubles in his last years. A man named Jeroboam tried to lead an uprising against Solomon, but did not succeed.

Many of Solomon’s writings are found in the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. He died after ruling for forty years.

Rehoboam, Solomon’s son became the new king. Jeroboam and his followers went to Rehoboam asking him to lighten the harsh burdens which Solomon had placed on the people. Rehoboam’s older advisors recommended that Rehoboam comply with this request, but his younger advisors urged him to refuse, threatening even harsher conditions. This led to a rebellion and a split in the kingdom as the Northern 10 tribes pulled away, making Jeroboam their king.

Jeroboam might have been successful if he had been faithful to God. But, fearful that the people might return to Rehoboam if they had to go to Jerusalem to worship, he set up golden calves and had his people to worship them. This led to the Lord’s condemnation. He died after 22 years of rule. Under Rehoboam idolatry increased in Judah also. He died after ruling for 17 years.