



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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The Kingdom Divided!

Lesson Text: 2 Kings 11-25; 2 Chronicles 10-36

Focus Verses: Ezekiel 37:15-17 -¹⁵ The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, ¹⁶ Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and for all the house of Israel his companions: ¹⁷ And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.

Truth About Covenant: Even though Israel divided, God did not give up on them.

Covenant Context: The nation of Israel divided into two kingdoms: Israel in the north and Judah in the south. Yet through the warring between the two nations, God redeemed the division to open the door for the entire world to be in covenant relationship with Him.

When close family members find themselves at odds, then brothers and sisters in Christ must be aware of the problems that can arise from disunity. The church must guard against falling into this trap. The Bible provides consistent warnings about problems between brothers (Ishmael and Isaac; Esau and Jacob; Joseph and his brothers).

The dismemberment of the nation of Israel left two southern tribes: Judah and Benjamin formed the southern kingdom of Judah; the remaining ten tribes were known as the northern kingdom of Israel, or Ephraim. After Solomon's death Rehoboam ascended to the throne, to the southern kingdom of Judah. And Jeroboam ascended to the throne, to the northern kingdom of Israel. Even though Jeroboam ruled over the majority of the tribes (the Northern Kingdom), he predicted a problem in maintaining power. He built golden calves in the city of Bethel, to worship God so they would not have to travel all the way to Jerusalem. Like Rehoboam who put even harsher taxation policies in place, he also made a disastrous decision with enormous consequences.

We need to humbly pray for God to reveal the error of our ways to us. Sometimes we can become so caught up in a situation that we cannot see clearly. God stands ready to forgive us. His mercy is new every morning, but we must repent of our sins and accept His mercy. If we do, we will not have to experience His judgment.

After many prophetic warnings from godly men like Isaiah, Hosea, Micah, and Amos to repent and turn back to God—and many repeated rejections of those warnings—the northern kingdom of Israel fell to Assyria in 722 BC (2 Kings 17:1-23). The Lord also let Judah know if they persisted in sinning, the same would happen to them. Unfortunately, the people and their rulers ignored the prophets like Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zephaniah, Habakkuk—not to mention the cautionary object lesson from the fall of Israel. After many prophetic warnings, the southern kingdom of Judah tragically fell to the Babylonians in 586 BC (2 Kings 25; 2 Chronicles 36).

We all make mistakes. Although we strive not to sin or allow our weights to overtake our lives, we can find ourselves struggling. Sometimes we may even fail. Although these moments might make us think God has forever broken His covenant with us, the Almighty demonstrates His great love for us by using our failures for His glory.

We should not willfully sin like the people of Judah and Israel and expect God to always bail us out. But neither should we hand our heads in despair and refuse to accept the forgiveness Jesus gives. After all, Jesus knew we all would fail Him at some point. Yet He loved us enough to die for us. No division is so great that He cannot heal it and reestablish His lasting covenant with us.

We must be especially careful to repent and reconnect with God if we have gone astray. The Lord will show mercy to us and reestablish His covenant. As we make things right with God, we may need to fix our relationships with others. We may even need to show others the mercy the Lord has shown to us. Learn from Jeroboam and Rehoboam: mend your divisions so you can enjoy the fruit of peace.