



God Punishes Jeroboam

1 Kings 11:35–38; 12:1–33; 14:1–18



LESSON GOAL

Students will enjoy the blessings of obedience.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Describe the blessing God offered to Jeroboam.
- List the sinful things Jeroboam did.
- Summarize the consequences of Jeroboam's disobedience.
- Remember that Israel's exile was punishment for their idolatry.

KEY VERSE

"But 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" (1 Kings 14:9).

APPLICATION

- Search your heart for rebellion and disobedience to God.
- Rejoice that God blesses humble obedience.
- Realize that without God's grace, you will receive only punishment.

NEXT WEEK

Elijah and the Prophets of Baal
Read 1 Kings 17:1; 18:17–46.

Symbol Key



Craft



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Activity



Q & A



Work Sheet



2 Grade Level

Teacher Planning Sheet

PREPARE

Objectives/Truths to cover this week

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Application

As a result of my study in this passage, God wants me to...

- _____
- _____
- _____

Three ways students need to apply this passage are...

- _____
- _____
- _____

Materials Needed:

POINT

Choose from various ideas to point students to the coming Bible lesson.

- _____
- _____

PROCLAIM

Choose from various ideas to proclaim the Bible lesson.

Presentation Ideas

- _____
- _____

Praise/Music Ideas

- _____
- _____
- _____

PRACTICE

Choose ideas to help review and apply today's lesson.

- _____
- _____

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

The Lord’s Promised Blessing (1 Kings 11:35–38)

Because of Solomon’s idolatry, the Lord promised to give the kingdom of Israel to one of Solomon’s servants (1 Kings 11:9–11). The prophet Ahijah came to Jeroboam, a powerful man in Solomon’s labor force (11:28), to tell him that God had chosen him to replace the son of Solomon as king over the 10 northern tribes (11:35). The Lord gave Jeroboam the opportunity to receive a wonderful blessing. If he obeyed God’s commands as King David had, then God would turn Jeroboam’s descendants into a ruling dynasty (11:38). Jeroboam’s enjoyment of this blessing was dependent on his willingness to submit to God’s Law. If Jeroboam rejected God’s commands, he would not enjoy the blessing of his descendants reigning over the 10 northern tribes.

The Lord’s Fulfilled Plan (1 Kings 12:1–24)

After Solomon’s son Rehoboam had become king over all Israel, the northern tribes called for Jeroboam to return from exile (where he had fled from Solomon) and represent the tribes before the king (1 Kings 12:1–3). Jeroboam presented the northern tribes’ complaint that they had been overworked by Solomon but promised obedience if Rehoboam would lighten their workload (12:3–4). After rejecting wise counsel and accepting the advice of his peers, Rehoboam foolishly responded that he would increase the northern tribes’ workload and would rule more severely than his father had (12:5–14). The author of Kings reveals that “the king did not listen to the people; for the turn of events was from the LORD, that He might fulfill His word, which the LORD had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam” (12:15). God was sovereignly working through Rehoboam’s foolish choice in order to make Jeroboam king (Prov. 21:1).

The northern tribes responded to Rehoboam’s harsh administration by rejecting him, killing his representative, and making Jeroboam king over all Israel (1 Kings 12:16–20). Not surprisingly, Rehoboam wanted to regain his kingdom. The tribe of Judah (along with the tribe of Benjamin) gathered 180,000 troops to recover control of the northern tribes. Before war erupted, a prophet of God told Rehoboam and all Israel not to fight because the dividing of the kingdoms was from the Lord (12:23–24). The Lord was ultimately the one who had given Jeroboam control over the majority of Solomon’s empire. Having seen the Lord’s power to fulfill His Word, Jeroboam should have eagerly obeyed God’s Word and trusted His ability to give his descendants a strong kingdom.

The Lord’s Rejected Commands (1 Kings 12:25–33)

Instead of simply obeying God’s commands as David had, Jeroboam relied upon his own wisdom to secure his kingdom. Jeroboam’s biggest concern was that if the

Israelites returned to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices at the temple, they might again desire to have Rehoboam as their king (12:25–27). Like Rehoboam, Jeroboam listened to foolish advice (12:28). He spurned the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:3–5) and presented Israel with two calves of gold, saying, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!” (1 Kings 12:28). To make worship as easy as possible, Jeroboam placed one idol in the south of Israel at Bethel and the other in the most northern city of Dan (12:29–30). In competing for the people’s religious affection, he rejected the Levites as priests and made “priests from every class” (12:31) and replaced the Feast of Tabernacles with his own feast celebrated in the eighth month of the year (12:32). Jeroboam’s religion had been “devised in his own heart” (12:33). In a foolish attempt to solidify his control, Jeroboam led the people away from God’s covenant with them at Sinai. He blatantly rejected God’s command and spurned His promised blessing.

The Lord’s Future Punishment (1 Kings 14:1–18)

When Jeroboam’s son Abijah became sick (1 Kings 14:1), he left his self-devised religion and turned to Ahijah, the prophet of the Lord who had told Jeroboam he would be king. Unwilling to let the people know he was going to the Lord for help, Jeroboam sent his disguised wife with a small gift (not one befitting a king) to find out what would happen to his son (14:1–4). The blind Ahijah was told by the Lord that the wife of Jeroboam was coming and that she was pretending to be another woman (14:4–5). By sending his wife in disguise, perhaps Jeroboam was trying to escape being confronted about his sin.

Ahijah’s message from the Lord dealt with more than the health of Jeroboam’s son. The Lord’s judgment on Jeroboam was severe because of how great a blessing he had been given by God (1 Kings 14:7–8). Not only had Jeroboam not obeyed God’s commands as David had, but also his wickedness was even greater than Solomon’s (14:8–9). Because Jeroboam had cast God “behind his back” (14:9), his house was going to be destroyed; instead of a dynasty, there would be only death for Jeroboam’s male descendants (14:10–11). The judgment would begin with Jeroboam’s sick son Abijah. As soon as Jeroboam’s wife returned, the child would die (14:12). Of all Jeroboam’s descendants, his son Abijah would be the only one who would die honorably (“come to the grave”), “because in him there [was] found something good toward the LORD God of Israel” (14:13). Within a generation, the Lord would raise another line to rule over Israel (14:14; 15:25–32).

Jeroboam’s family members were not the only ones who would suffer for his sin. Ahijah announced a fearful judgment upon Israel “because they [had] made their wooden images, provoking the LORD to anger” (1 Kings 14:15). Not only had Jeroboam sinned, but Israel also willingly followed him into idolatry (14:16). In judgment, the Lord would “strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water” (14:15). Ahijah prophesied: “He [the Lord] will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River” (14:15). In Deuteronomy 29:25–28, Moses had warned the people that if they rejected the Lord’s covenant, they would go into exile. Jeroboam’s wicked leadership eventually led to Israel’s forced exile from the Promised Land (2 Kings 17).

As soon as Jeroboam’s wife crossed “the threshold of the house, the child died” (1 Kings 14:17). “The word of the LORD which He spoke through His servant Ahijah the prophet” had been accomplished (14:18). With the fulfillment of this first judgment, Jeroboam could be certain that the rest of Ahijah’s prophecy would also come true: the destruction of his descendants, the taking away of his dynasty, and the eventual exile of Israel.

Conclusion

Jeroboam's passing from promised blessing to future judgment is a strong warning for both the lost and the saved. The lost person is called by Christ to experience the blessing of submitting to His lordship, having his sins forgiven, and living a life blessed with the knowledge of God's sanctifying power and lasting love. But if the lost man forsakes God's promised blessing and remains his own god, he will suffer the most miserable life and eternity. The believer, too, can also be warned by Jeroboam's rejection of God's blessing. Although the believer's eternal blessings will not be taken away, he will more fully glorify God by obediently submitting to God's will and loving Him with all his heart. The submitting believer is promised abundant love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22–23).

POINT TO THE TRUTH

"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth" (Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.

What did God say would happen if the children of Israel intermarried with people from the other nations?

If the children of Israel intermarried with people from these nations, their hearts would be turned away from God.

How do we know that Solomon loved his wives more than he loved God?

"Solomon clung to these in love" (1 Kings 11:2). Solomon's heart was turned away. He wanted to please his wives so much that he was willing to turn away from God.

What evil things did Solomon do?

Solomon went after Ashtoreth and Milcom and built a high place for Chemosh and for Molech.

How did the Lord respond to what Solomon had done?

First Kings 11:9 says that "the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel." Solomon sinned greatly by disobeying God and worshiping other gods.

What did the Lord do because of Solomon's terrible disobedience?

The kingdom would be broken into two parts because of Solomon's sin. But because God loved David, who was His servant, the kingdom would be broken up only after Solomon's death.



The Blessings of Obedience

Help the students prepare for today's lesson by reviewing the blessings and curses found in Deuteronomy 27–28. In those chapters God instituted a ritual where half of Israel's tribes would stand on Mount Gerizim and proclaim all the blessings of obedience to the covenant. The other six tribes would stand on Mount Ebel and proclaim all the curses of disobedience to the covenant. Since the one mountain was lush and green and the other dry and brown, this provided a very graphic dramatization of the decision that constantly lay before the nation of Israel. This same decision lies before us every day. Ask the students to name some of the benefits of obeying their parents and some of the consequences of disobedience. Hold up a tasty piece of candy and a rotten apple, and ask which they would prefer. Even though we desire good things, every time we choose to disobey God, we are choosing the rotten apple.



Considering Wise Counsel

Select two student volunteers, and give each a scenario (see below). Read the first scenario to the class. Ask the class whether they have any advice to the first student. Allow this student to consider the advice and then decide whether to follow it. Ask the class whether the student chose wise or foolish counsel. Use this discussion to direct the students to God's Word, the only source of truly wise counsel. Repeat this discussion pattern with the second student volunteer. After the discussion, tell the class that in today's lesson they will learn what kind of advice King Rehoboam heeded in 1 Kings 12:1–17.

Scenario 1 (for a girl): You are in the school library to check out a book for a class project. You notice a sparkling bracelet on the ground. You pick it up and notice that there is no form of identification on it. You cannot help but think how pretty the bracelet would look with your new dress, and no one saw you pick it up. After school, you ask a few friends if they know whom the bracelet belongs to; none of them have seen it before. What should you do with the bracelet?

Scenario 2 (for either a girl or a boy): You are at a friend's house for a birthday party and ask to use the bathroom. When you reach across the sink to dry your hands, you accidentally knock a ceramic vase onto the floor, and a piece breaks off. You can hear everyone outside singing "Happy Birthday," so you know that no one heard you break the vase. You pick up the pieces and notice that they fit back together with only a small crack showing. You put the damaged vase back on the sink and leave the bathroom. As soon as you walk out the door, you run into your friend's mother. What should you do or say to her?



Consequences of Sin

Bring to class a pair of handcuffs, and allow a few students to be "cuffed." Then talk to the class about who wears handcuffs. What does a person have to do to be arrested by the police? What would our city be like if the police never did anything to people who do wrong things? What would it be like if your parents let you do whatever you wanted and never punished you for bad choices? We should be thankful that God hates sin and punishes it. The consequences or penalties for sin are meant to help us avoid it in the future. To avoid punishment for sin, we must learn what it means to truly obey God.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

“Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done” (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students’ understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Reading of the Text

Read 1 Kings 12:1–33; 14:1–18.

Introduction

Today we will talk about a man to whom God gave a very special blessing. What an honor it would be to receive a gift from God. This gift was that a man named Jeroboam would rule the people of Israel if he obeyed God’s Law. But, if he disobeyed, God would take the kingdom from him. Let’s see whether Jeroboam was obedient to what the Lord commanded.



Leadoff Questions (LOQs)

LOQ: Why did God promise that He would make one of Solomon’s servant’s king rather than Solomon’s sons?

Answer: Because of Solomon’s idolatry, God did not allow his family to rule all Israel.

LOQ: What happened when Solomon’s son Rehoboam began to rule?

Answer: He gave even more work to the people, and they were unhappy. The northern tribes called for Jeroboam to rule.

LOQ: Whom did God make the king of the northern tribes?

Answer: A man named Jeroboam.

LOQ: What was Jeroboam instructed to do as leader of Israel?

Answer: Obey God’s commands.

LOQ: What would happen if he was obedient?

Answer: Jeroboam’s family would reign as a dynasty over Israel.

LOQ: Did Jeroboam obey God’s instructions and Law?

Answer: No. Instead of obeying God’s commands as David had, Jeroboam relied upon his own wisdom to secure his kingdom. Jeroboam’s biggest concern was that if the Israelites returned to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices at the temple, they might again desire to have Rehoboam as their king (12:25–27). Jeroboam spurned the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:3–5) and presented Israel with two calves of gold, saying, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel,

which brought you up from the land of Egypt!" (1 Kings 12:28). To make worship as easy as possible, Jeroboam placed one idol in the south of Israel at Bethel and the other in the most northern city of Dan (12:29).

LOQ: What was the consequence for Jeroboam's disobedience?

Answer: His son became sick.

LOQ: What did Jeroboam do to find out what would happen to his son who had become sick?

Answer: Jeroboam sent his wife to the prophet Ahijah disguised as another woman. Ahijah gave the Lord's message that Jeroboam's son would die and his family would be destroyed instead of continuing to rule. Rather than a dynasty, there would be only death for Jeroboam's descendants.

LOQ: What other consequences would there be for Jeroboam's disobedience and Israel's idolatry?

Answer: Moses had warned the people in Deuteronomy 29:25–28, that if they rejected the Lord's covenant, they would go into exile. God kept His promise. Jeroboam's wicked leadership eventually led to Israel's forced exile from the Promised Land (2 Kings 17).

Summary

After Solomon's reign, his son Rehoboam became the ruler of Israel. Because of Solomon's idolatry, the Lord promised to give the kingdom of Israel to one of Solomon's servants. The prophet Ahijah went to one of Solomon's servants named Jeroboam to tell him that God had chosen him to replace Rehoboam as the king over the 10 northern tribes. The Lord gave Jeroboam the opportunity to receive a wonderful blessing. If Jeroboam obeyed God's commands as King David had, God would turn his descendants into a ruling dynasty. Jeroboam could enjoy God's blessing only if he submitted to God's Law. If Jeroboam rejected God's commands, he would not enjoy the blessing of his descendants reigning over the 10 northern tribes. Instead of obeying God's commands as David had, Jeroboam relied upon his own wisdom to secure his kingdom. He presented Israel with two calves of gold, calling them the gods of Israel. Because of their idolatry, God would punish Israel and send them into exile.

Application

Jeroboam's actions and punishment are a warning to both the lost and the saved. The lost person is called to submit to Christ's lordship and live a life of blessing with the knowledge of God's sanctifying power and lasting love. But if the lost man forsakes God's promised blessing and remains his own god, he will suffer the most miserable life and eternity. The believer is also warned by Jeroboam's rejection of God's blessing and disobedience. Although the believer's eternal blessings will not be taken away, he will more fully glorify God by obediently submitting himself to God's will and loving Him with all his heart. The submitting believer is promised abundant love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.



A Heavier Yoke

Instruct two student volunteers to hold out their arms, palms up, and place four heavy books in each student's arms. Read the suggestion Jeroboam and the assembly of Israel, including the elders, gave to Rehoboam in verses 1–7. Take two books away from the first student to illustrate how Rehoboam could have chosen to lighten the burden on Israel. Read verses 8–17, and place the two books you removed from the first student onto the stack carried by the second student. Ask this student how he feels carrying a much heavier load. Then add two more books (total of eight books) to increase the weight further. You may choose to prolong this demonstration during the entire lesson to see how long the student with the "heavier yoke" can manage to carry the increased burden in comparison to the student now holding only two books. In addition, after reading verse 10, ask all students to hold up their pinkies and compare it to the sizes of their waists. This will give them a visual image of how much Rehoboam desired to increase the burden on the people of Israel.



Uprooted Plant

Bring to class a potted plant, and place it in front of the class during the lesson. As 1 Kings 14:15–16 is read, discuss God's uprooting of Israel from the good land. To illustrate this, pull the plant out of its pot by its roots. (Using a plant with an established root base works best.) Later, talk about what happens to a plant when it is uprooted.

Praise and Worship

Change My Heart, Oh God

Cleanse Me

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Humble Thyself in the Sight of the Lord

Micah 6:8

Rejoice in the Lord Always

Trust and Obey

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



It's Raining Blessings of Salvation

Materials: flexible straws, foam bowls, copies of the “Blessings of Salvation” craft page on blue paper, scissors, string cut to various lengths (six pieces per student), hole puncher, black markers, crayons

Directions: Give each student a copy of the craft page. The students should cut out the raindrops and punch a hole in the top center of each one. Give each student a foam bowl and a straw. Show the students how to bend the flexible end of the straw to resemble an umbrella handle. They should hold the bowl upside down and poke a hole through the center with the straight end of the straw. Instruct them to punch six evenly spaced holes around the bowl’s rim and then use the string to tie the raindrops on. They should use a black marker to write “It’s raining blessings of salvation!” and the key verse on the rim of the bowl. They also can decorate the bowls to make them look more like umbrellas. Use this mobile to review the blessings of salvation that believers experience when they are obedient.



Questions of a King

It can be confusing to remember all the happenings of Israel and Judah. Here are some questions to ask the students about Rehoboam and Jeroboam. You may divide the class into two teams and provide each with two signs, one marked with an “R” and the other with a “J.” Select two students from each team to be the sign holders. Ask the following questions. If both teams hold up the correct sign, award them one point each. If only one team answers correctly, award that team two points. Award the winning team with a small treat.

Who ruled over Judah? R

Who ruled over Israel? J

Who was prophesied to reign? J

Who was Solomon’s son? R

Who reigned where the temple was? R

Who hid in Egypt from Solomon? J

Who taxed the people greatly? R

Who led his people away from the Lord? Both J + R



God Keeps His Promises

One of the great characteristics of God is His faithfulness—He always keeps His promises! What He says, He will do. This is true of both blessings and punishments. God loves His children and will discipline them when they sin. Help the students to understand that there will be consequences for their sin. Help them to think of concrete examples of sin and what the consequences are. Finally, discuss with them how they can stay away from sin in their lives.



“God Punishes Jeroboam”

Use this work sheet to reinforce the key truths of today’s lesson. The work sheet is located at the back of the lesson.



Journal Page: “Choosing Obedience”

Give each student a copy of the journal page at the back of this lesson. The students can complete the page individually, in small groups, or at home.

Coloring Pages

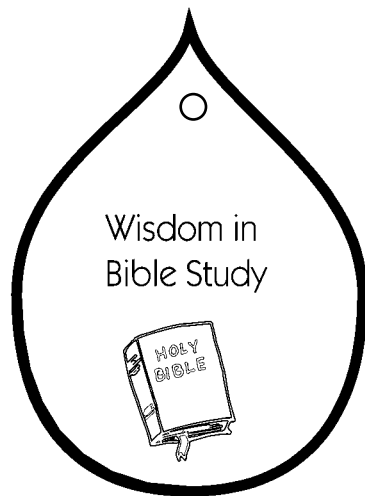
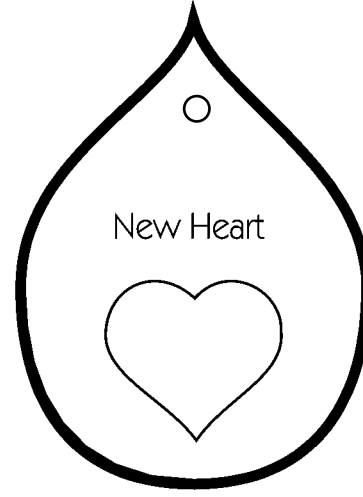
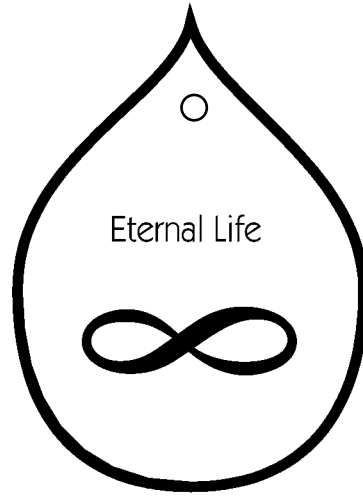
Give each student copies of the coloring pages at the back of the lesson. Students can color the pages in class or at home.



MEMORY VERSE

“Show me Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day” (Psalm 25:4–5).

Blessings of Salvation



God *Punishes* Jeroboam



1 Kings 12:1-33; 14:1-18

Name _____

1. Who was Rehoboam's father? _____
2. The people of Israel asked Rehoboam to make their yoke _____.
heavy medium over easy light
3. Did Rehoboam listen to the advice of the elders? _____
4. Whom did Israel choose for their new king? _____
David Rehoboam Jeroboam Solomon
5. What kind of idols did Jeroboam make in 1 Kings 12:28? _____
6. First Kings 14:9 says Jeroboam had done more _____ than all who were before him.
7. How did God punish Jeroboam? _____

Choosing Obedience

Why was it so hard for the Israelites to obey God? Moses had told them if they would obey, God would bless them, but if they disobeyed, they would be cursed.

In today's lesson, when Jeroboam gave the Israelites idols, the Israelites disobeyed God's commandment and worshiped the idols! They had the chance to choose blessings or cursings, and they chose cursings. Write out 1 Kings 14:15 below to see how God responded to their sin.

What do you think this verse means? Write your answer in the space below.

They would no longer dwell in the land; they would be shaken and scattered. Just as the prophet said, "He [the Lord] will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River" (1 Kings 14:15). Israel could be sure that God would scatter them.

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God wants believers to choose to obey. He has given Christians many blessings, such as salvation and forgiveness of sins. He has promised that as we obey, we will grow in our faith and have the following fruit. Unscramble the words from Galatians 5:22-23.

VLOE _____ JYO _____

ACPEE _____

NOGL-IFUSERFNG _____

SKESNNID _____

OSENODSG _____

LENSENTEG _____

FELS-ROTCOINL _____

What fruits do you see in your life?

Which ones are you lacking?

PRAYER

Thank the Lord for the fruit of the Spirit. Ask Him to help you in the areas you are lacking, and ask Him to help you obey.

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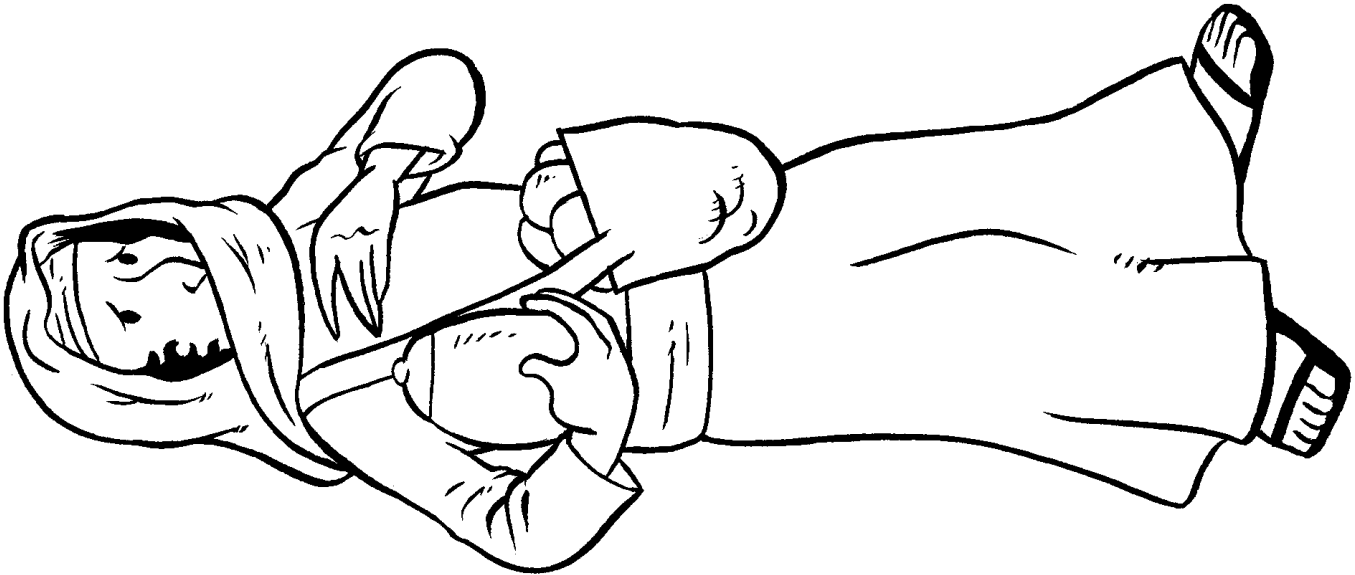
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**“[King Jeroboam] made two calves of gold, and said to the people,
‘...Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!’
(1 Kings 12:28).**



Ahijah the prophet told Jeroboam's wife that Jeroboam's son Abijah would die (1 Kings 14:6-16).

