

Setting for the story

Main characters: meeting Rehoboam and Jeroboam

Lower Story plot, resolution, and theme

Upper Story plot, resolution, and theme

Discussion questions:

1. When Solomon's son, Rehoboam, was faced with a decision about the heavy taxes he was placing on the people, he sought two sources of input (1 Kings 12:1-11). What was each source and how did their advice conflict? Why do you think the advice was so radically different?
2. Older people who have walked longer in life often carry a body of wisdom in their heart. Who is a very wise person who impacted your life with their wisdom? What is one of the best pieces of wisdom that person offered you?
3. In their wisdom, the elders told Rehoboam that if he served the nation, the people would gladly follow him. Jesus modeled this truth in the New Testament when he washed the disciples' feet (John 13). How can serving with a humble heart actually make a person a stronger leader?
4. This part of The Story, as well as the teaching and the life of Jesus illustrate that a divided house will always fall. What practical things can we do to bring peace in our family and within our homes? Satan loves to divide families. If the enemy has created conflict in your family (or is trying to do so), how can you battle against this and seek healing and peace?
5. The church, the family of God, has had its own share of civil wars and divisions through the centuries. What can you do to seek peace and harmony at CrossPoint?
6. From the perspective of the Lower Story, the division in the kingdom was a result of Rehoboam's harsh leadership style. From the Upper Story, we know that Solomon's idolatry and compromise were cascading like a line of dominos into the nation's future. What can we learn from the wrong attitudes and actions of both father and son in this story?
7. Whenever Israel was fully devoted to God, they were strong and prospered; but when they divided their loyalty with other gods or interests, they were weakened. How do you see this spiritual reality alive in our readings this week, as well as, in our lives today?
8. As this chapter of The Story shows, the sin of spiritual compromise through idolatry is of great concern to God. It led to Solomon's poor finish in life. It also marked both the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah and eventually led to the fall of both. What are ways that idolatry can still slip into our lives today? How can we identify it and root it out before it weakens our faith and destroys us?

Homework: One of the most divisive organizations in the history of the world, sadly, has been the church. As you move about your community in the coming week, commit to pray for every church you pass. Ask for God's blessing and guidance for these brothers and sisters.

For next week, please read chapter 15 of The Story (1 Kings 17-19; 2 Kings 2, 4, 6; Hosea 4-5, 8-9, 14; Amos 1, 3-5, 9)