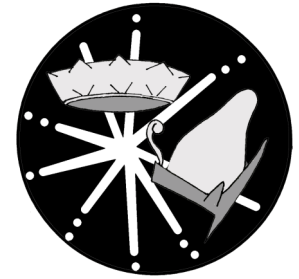


Lesson #2-8**THE KINGDOM DIVIDED**

1 Kings 12:1-17, 25-29

**Key Verse:**

[The elders] answered him, “If you will be a servant to this people today and serve them...then they will be your servants forever.”

1 Kings 12:7

The Point:

We lead best when we listen to and serve others.

Unit Theme (October 22—November 5)

God’s Way of Leading

CONTEXTS & CONNECTIONS**Geography/Setting**

- Shechem was an important city in Israelite history. Located forty-one miles north of Jerusalem, Shechem was the first place Abraham visited after crossing into Canaan. When the Israelites entered Canaan under Joshua’s leadership, Shechem quickly became a religious and cultural center for the twelve tribes of Israel. It is likely for this reason that Rehoboam was anointed king at this site. After Israel and Judah split, Shechem became the first capital of the northern kingdom of Israel, though Jeroboam later moved the capital to Tirzah. Shechem would eventually become the religious center of the Samaritans.*

Culture/Religion

- Jeroboam established worship sites at Bethel and Dan and put into place two statues of golden calves. These idols were common in the ancient Near East and were used in the religious iconography of Egypt and Babylon. Jeroboam likely saw the statues not as depictions of gods, but rather as seats for the divine as a direct counterpart to the seats of cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant. Additionally, it is clear that the author of this passage is making a connection to the Exodus story where Aaron had the Israelites build a golden calf while Moses was on the mountain.*

Hymns/Music

- Hymns with the theme of turning back to God include “Amazing Grace,” “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name,” “Come Home, O Wayward Child, Come Home,” “Dear Lord I Own That I Am Weak,” and “Just a Closer Walk with Thee.”

* Full endnote citations are found at the end of Contexts & Connections #2-8 or available upon request.