

The Story, chapter 14 and 15, NIV (excerpts from 1 Kings 12-18)

Solomon's son, Rehoboam became king of Judah. Jeroboam led the assembly to ask Rehoboam to lighten the load that the Israelite people bore. Rehoboam refused to listen to the people causing the people to rebel. (1 Kings 12:1-18)

¹⁹ So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

²² But this word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God: ²³ “Say to Rehoboam son of Solomon king of Judah, to all Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, ²⁴ ‘This is what the Lord says: Do not go up to fight against your brothers, the Israelites. Go home, every one of you, for this is my doing.’” So they obeyed the word of the Lord and went home again, as the Lord had ordered.

The Kings of Judah and Israel continued to be at war with each other and did evil in the eyes of the Lord. Son after son, the story repeats itself leaving the Lord aroused with anger over their worthless idols. (1 Kings 15:25- 16:29)

After Solomon, God divided the twelve tribes and the kingdom of Israel into two nations. The northern one kept the name Israel, but its leaders and people strayed farther and farther from God. King Ahab and Queen Jezebel were among the worst.

God sent messengers, called prophets, to call the people back to true worship and righteous behavior. In the northern kingdom of Israel, they were ignored or attacked.
(1Ki 17:1-3)

There was no rain in Israel for three years and the famine grew very severe. At last, the After a long time, in the third year, the word of the Lord came to Elijah: “Go and present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the land.” So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah. ¹⁷ When he saw Elijah, he said to him, “Is that you, you troubler of Israel?”

¹⁸ “I have not made trouble for Israel,” Elijah replied. “But you and your father’s family have. You have abandoned the Lord’s commands and have followed the Baals.”
(1Ki 18:1, 16-18)

Elijah challenged 450 priests of Baal to a duel. Each side prepared a sacrifice, then prayed for their god to send fire to consume the sacrifice. The priests of Baal chanted and danced all day to no effect. Elijah teased them – Was Baal asleep? Shout louder!

At last, Elijah’s turn came. He prayed, “Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.”

38 Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. 39 When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, “The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!” (1Ki 18:37-39)

God sent nine different prophets to the 19 kings of Israel over 208 years, calling the people to obedience. Elisha finished the work of Elijah, then Amos and Hosea.