

Lesson 3

The Story of Rehoboam



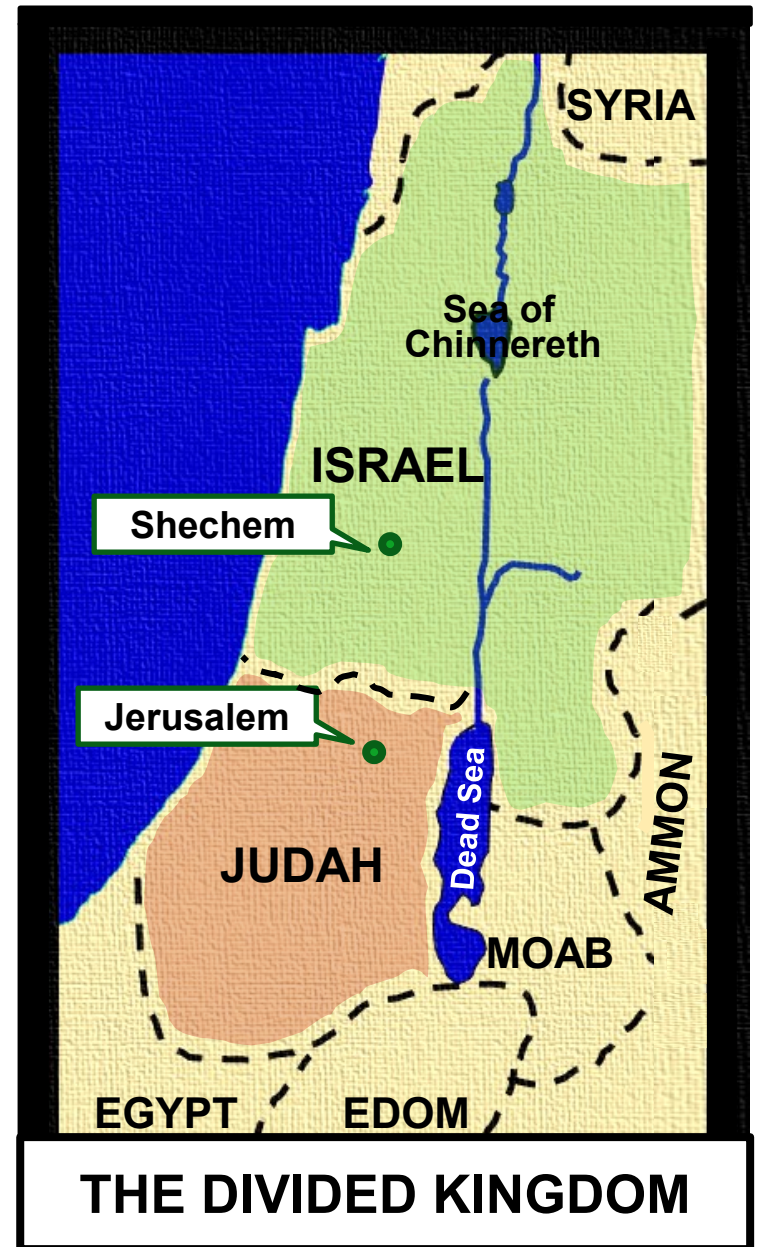
Jeroboam
Solomon's servant



Rehoboam
Solomon's son

Artist: Jason McDade

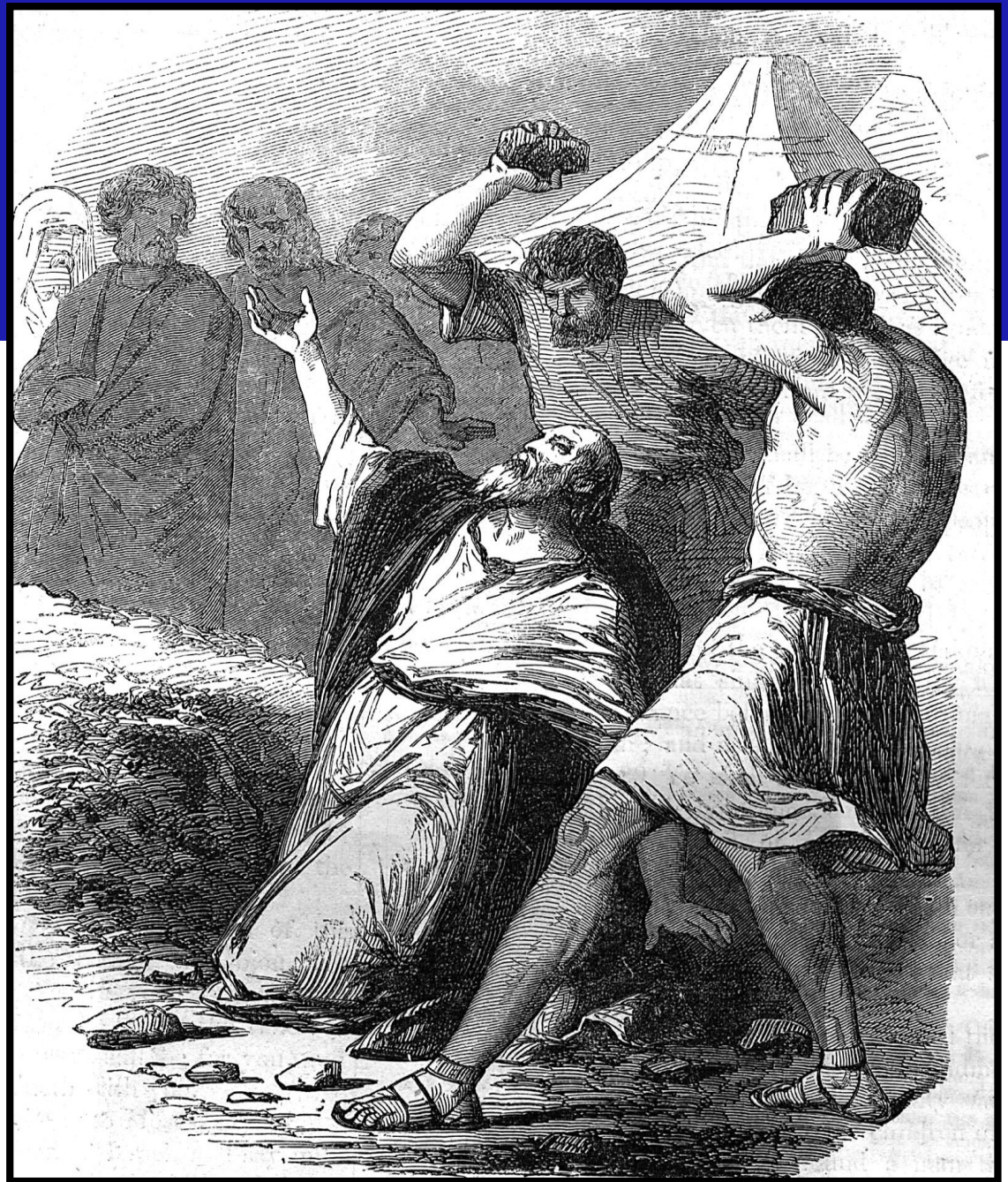
Solomon's son, **Rehoboam**, was forbidden to reign over a United Kingdom as retribution "from the Lord" (I Kings 12:15). It was the consequence of Solomon's sin of idolatry. **Rehoboam** and **Jeroboam** would rule over a divided kingdom no matter how much **Rehoboam** resisted.



THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

Rehoboam had been invited to Shechem to be made King, but

instead he was confronted by a people with a grievance. He refused their demands for lower taxes and Adoram the tax collector was stoned to death.



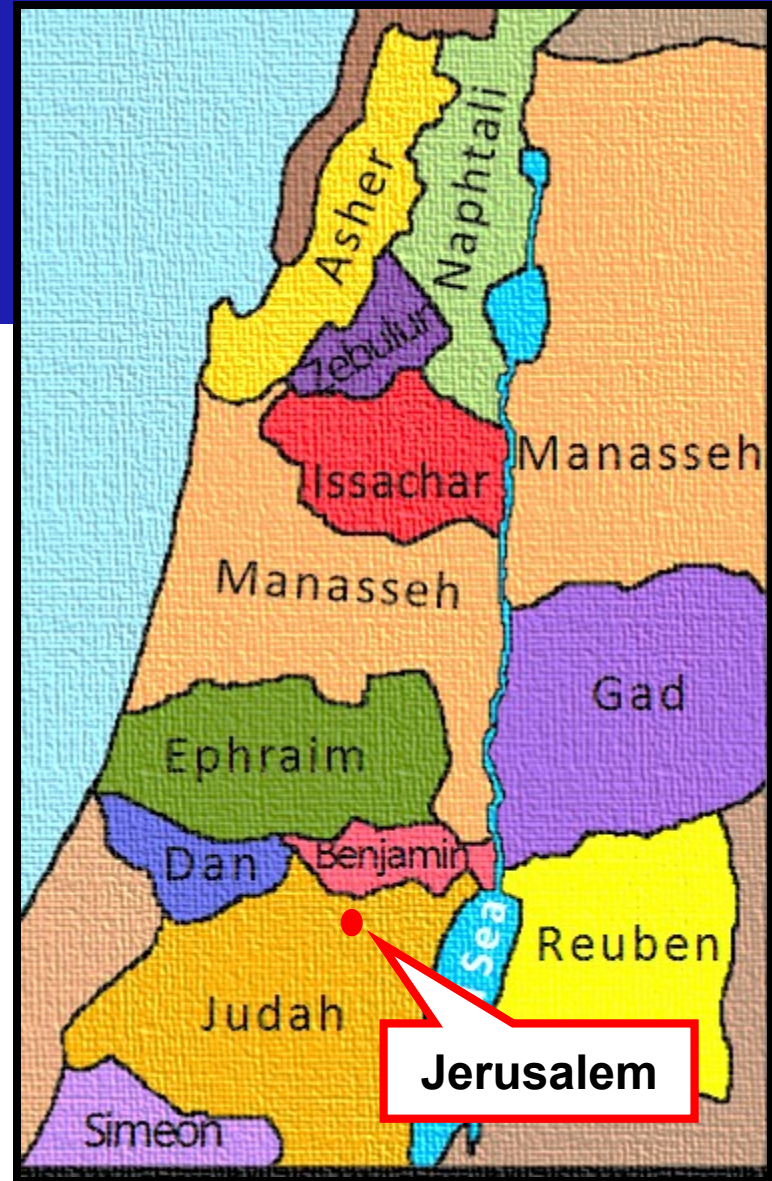
Rehoboam escaped by fleeing to Jerusalem. He refused to concede and was determined to force the people into subjection. When Rehoboam reached Jerusalem, he raised an army of 180,000 men to recover his kingdom.



THE TEXT:

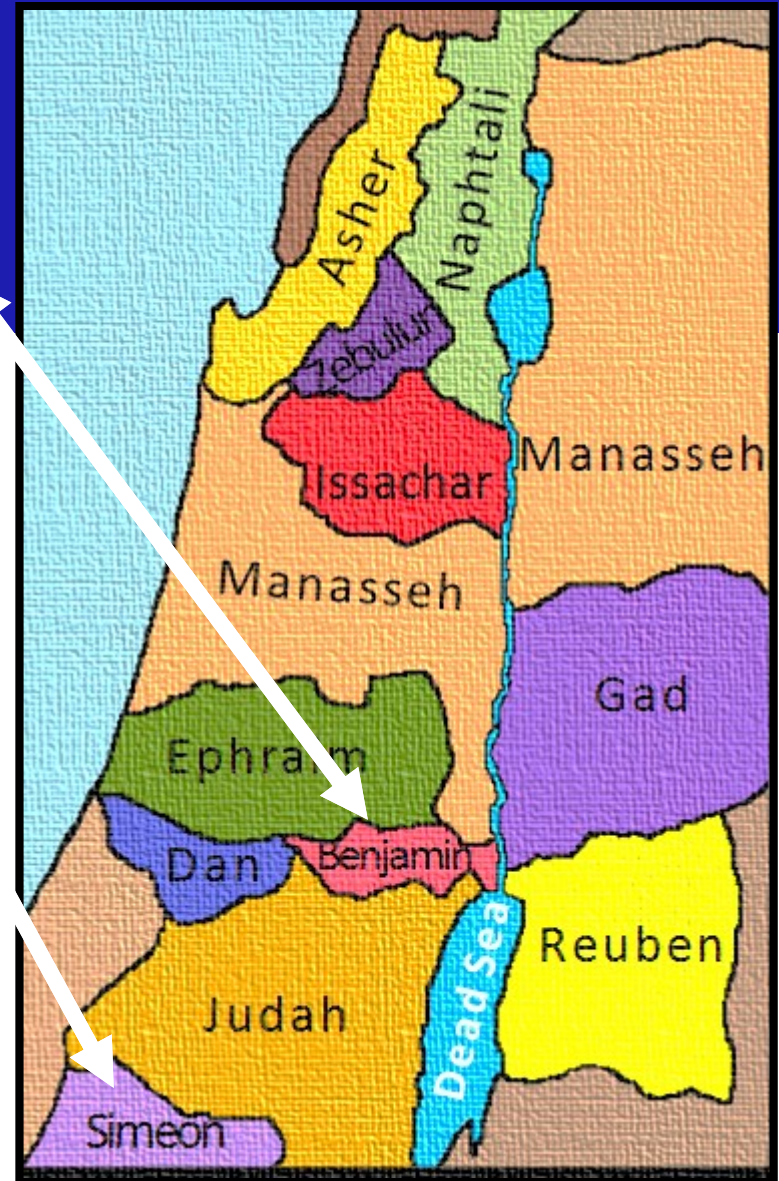
I Kings 12

“²¹And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.”



As a side note about verse 21:
When Rehoboam returned to Jerusalem and became King of Judah the tribe of Benjamin joined Judah and the two tribes became one from then on.

Another interesting note: The tribe of Simeon had diminished during the wilderness wanderings and when Joshua divided the land they were only given a few cities in the south. By the time of Rehoboam they had scattered as had been prophesied by Jacob upon his deathbed (Genesis 49:5-7).



As Rehoboam's army assembled, God spoke to the prophet Shemaiah and told him to "speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah" (I Kings 12:23).

This is the first time Rehoboam is called "the king of Judah;" he was not and never would be king of the United Kingdom of Israel.



God called upon Shemaiah to convince Rehoboam to withdraw, for to war against the other tribes would be fighting against his own brethren and against God.

Rehoboam reluctantly laid down his arms upon hearing God's Word from Shemaiah.



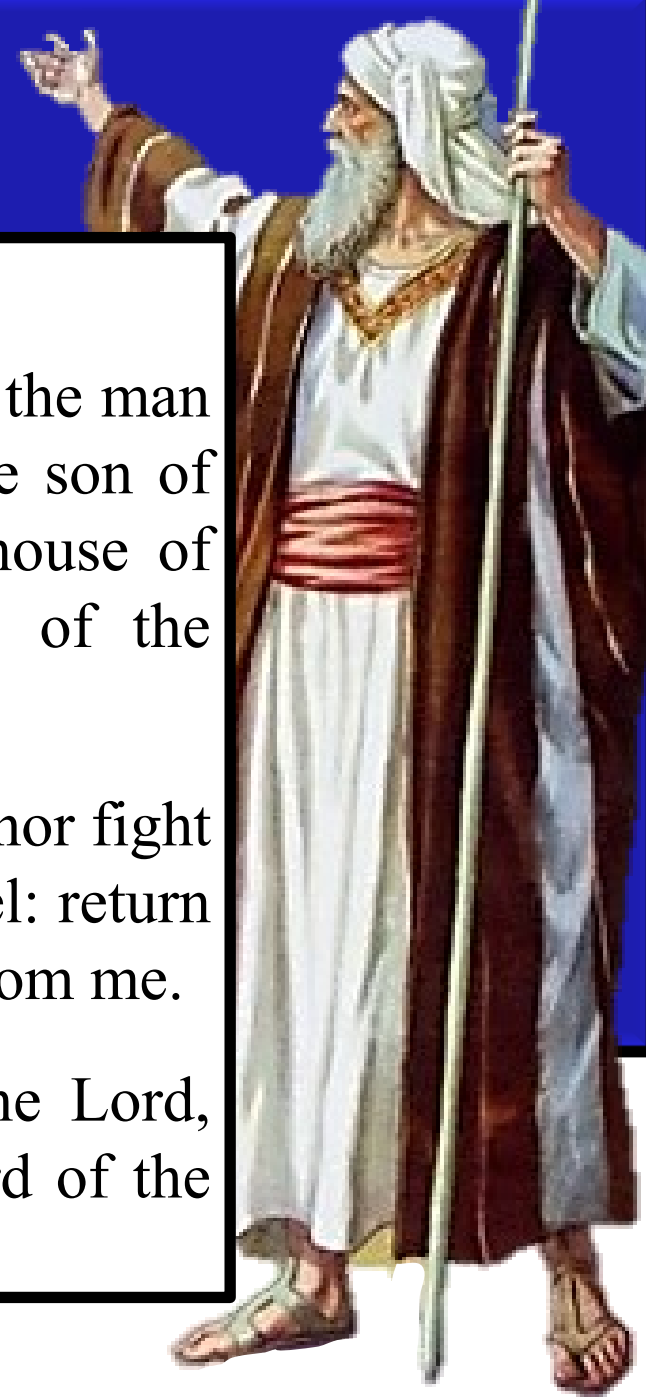
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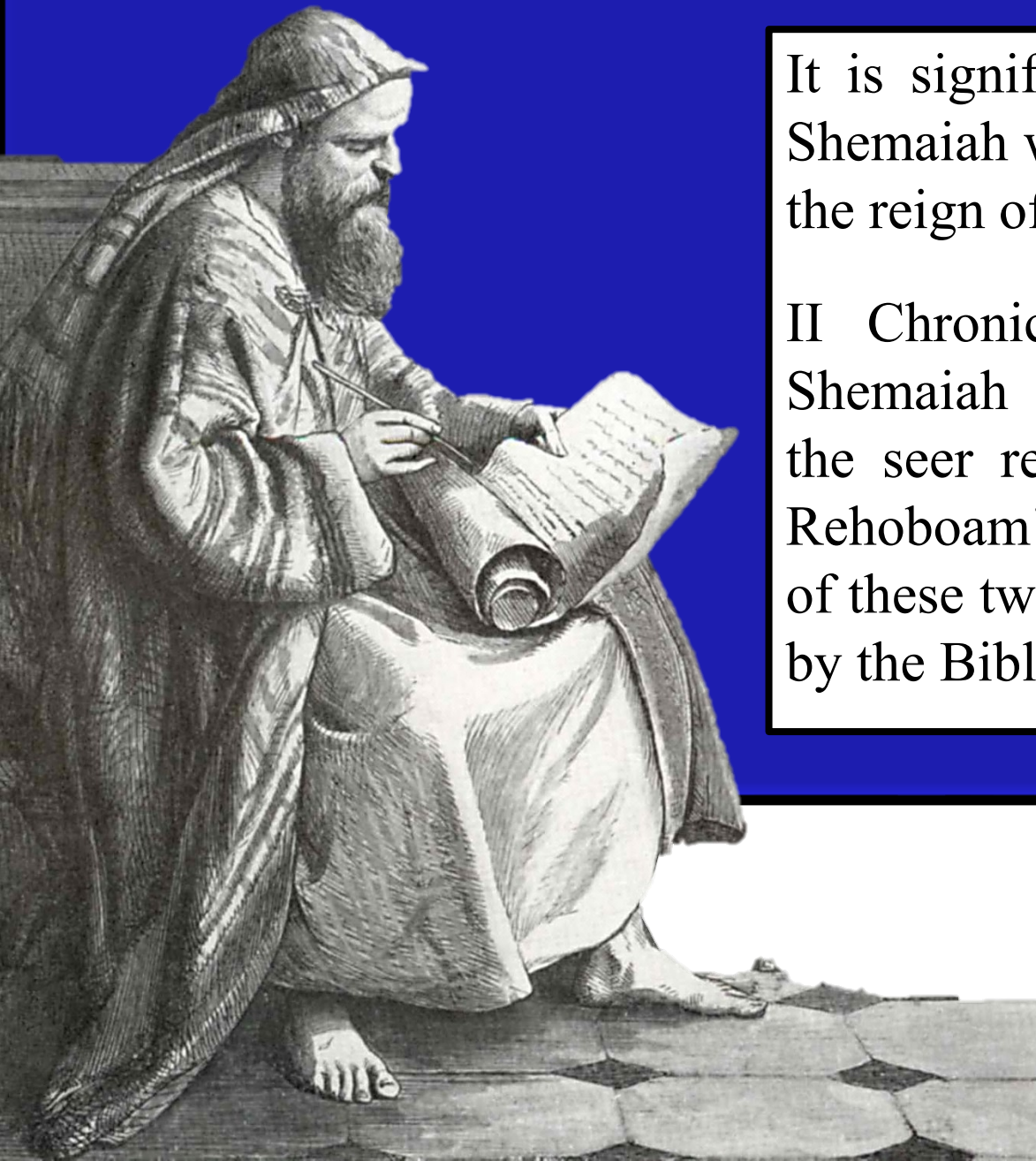
I Kings 12

“²²But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying, ²³Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying,

²⁴Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me.

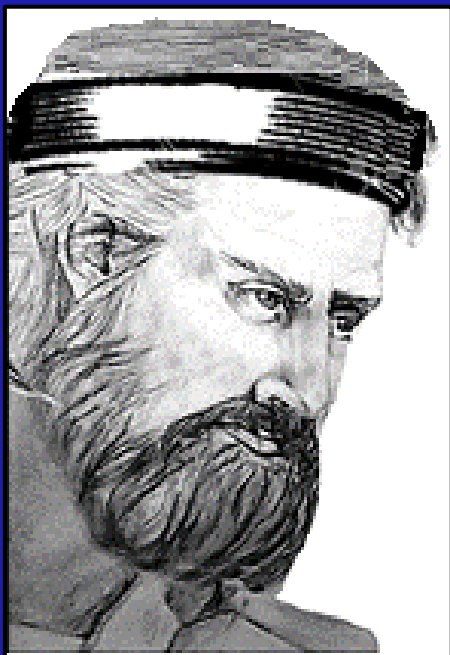
They hearkened therefore to the word of the Lord, and returned to depart, according to the word of the Lord.”





It is significant that the prophet Shemaiah was present throughout the reign of Rehoboam.

II Chronicles 12:15 says that Shemaiah the prophet and Iddo the seer recorded the history of Rehoboam's reign. The existence of these two books is known only by the Bible referring to them.



Jeroboam
who had been
Solomon's servant
and was now king
over 10 tribes of
Israel immediately
began building up
his domain.

I Kings 12

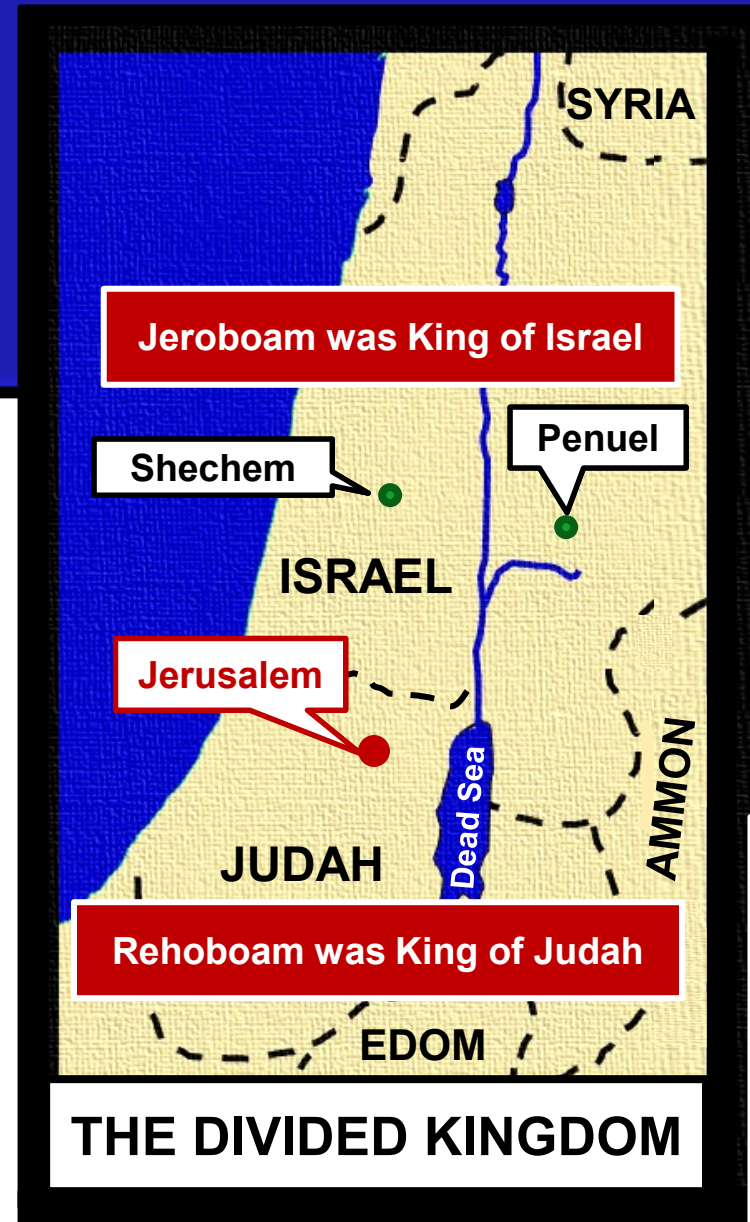
“²⁵Then Jeroboam built **Shechem**
in mount Ephraim, and dwelt
therein; and went out from
thence, and built **Penuel**.”



Rehoboam (Solomon's son and now the King of Judah)

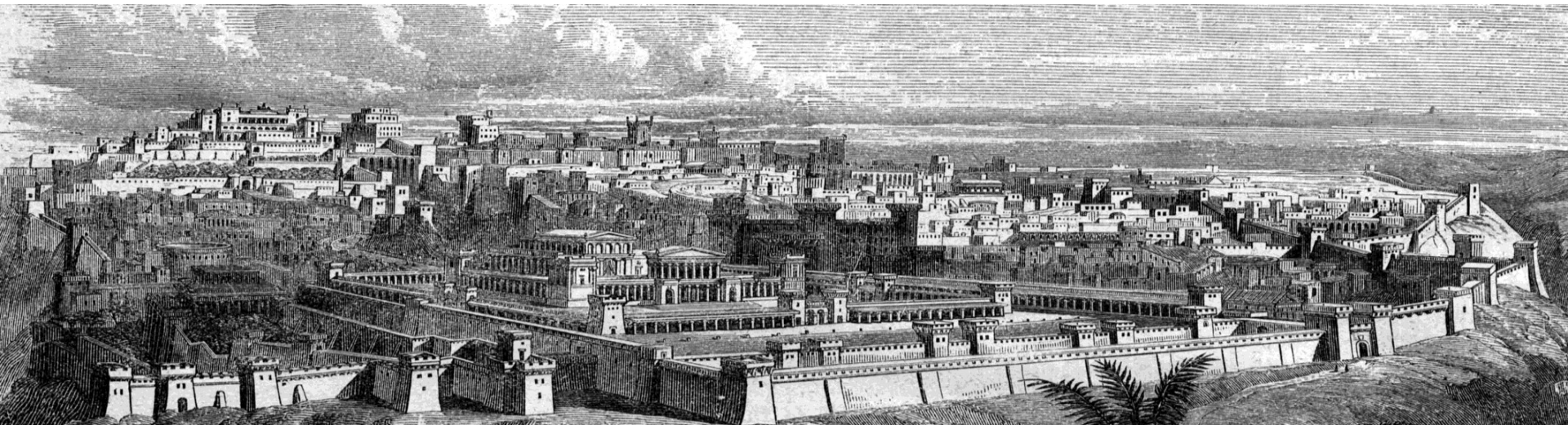


came to terms with his diminished kingdom after he conceded his loss at the warning of God's prophet Shemaiah. He reigned from Jerusalem, his father Solomon's royal city, and began a campaign to defend the Kingdom of Judah by building up cities.



REHOBOAM BUILDS UP THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH

II Chronicles 11:5-10 names fifteen of the cities King Rehoboam fortified: Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, Bethzur, Shoco, Adullam, Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron. He secured them with fences and strong holds. He armed them with soldiers, weapons, and supplies for he had much to fear. His father's enemies, Hadad the Edomite and Rezon King of Syria (I Kings 11:14-25) would have still been a threat, and Shishak King of Egypt was an even more significant adversary.



Shishak King of Egypt

had shown whose side he was on when he sheltered Jeroboam as he escaped King Solomon's assassination attempt (I Kings 11:40).

With these facts in mind it is not surprising to see that most of the cities that Rehoboam fortified were southernly on the roads to Egypt.



LEVITICAL PRIESTS EXPELLED



Jeroboam's first move after being crowned King of Israel was to order the priests and Levites out of the Northern Kingdom that they might not execute the priest's office there (II Chronicles 11:14).



THE TEXT:

I Kings 12

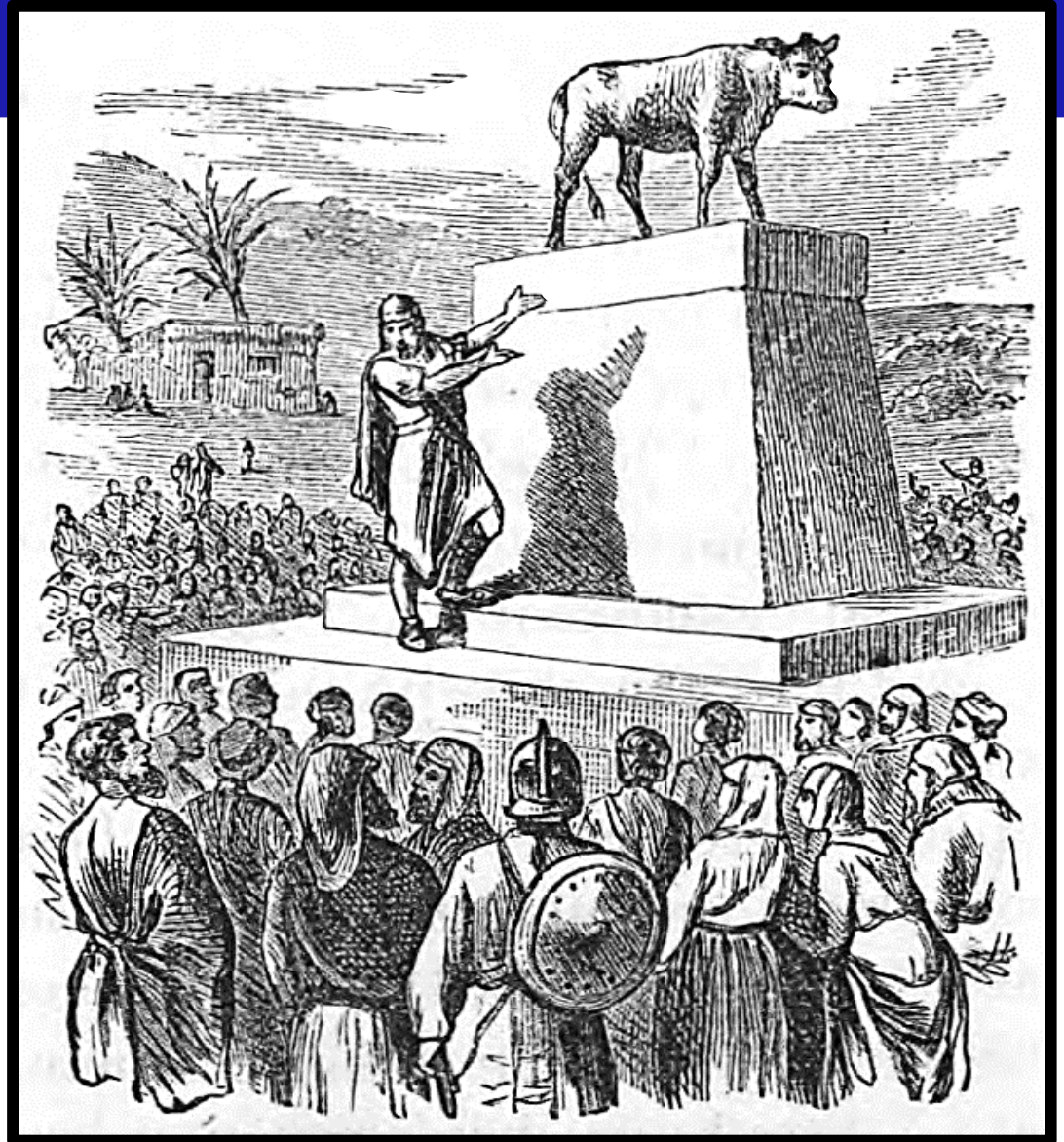
“²⁶And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David:
²⁷If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.”



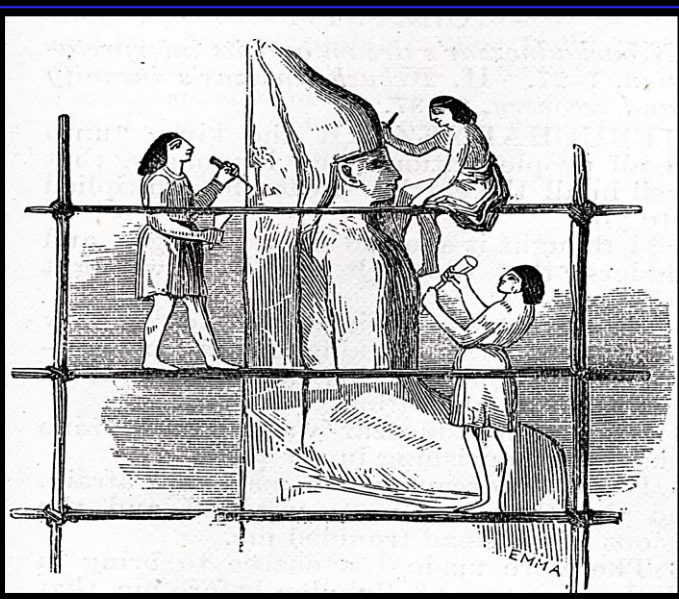
Jeroboam King of Israel

ordained priests for his false gods, “for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he made” (II Chronicles 11:15).

So, all those who “set their hearts to seek the Lord” went to Jerusalem where Rehoboam was king, and his father Solomon’s temple still stood.



Rehoboam King of Judah became corrupt.



The priests and faithful people that relocated to Judah strengthened the Southern Kingdom for 3 years.

After those 3 years Rehoboam forsook the law of the Lord and after 2 years of his disobedience the city of Jerusalem was polluted with idolatry and immorality.





Artist: Jason McDade

Rehoboam King of Judah became corrupt.

Rehoboam permitted Jerusalem to become so polluted that God allowed Shishak King of Egypt to make a successful attack. King Shishak desecrated Solomon's temple and stole its treasures.

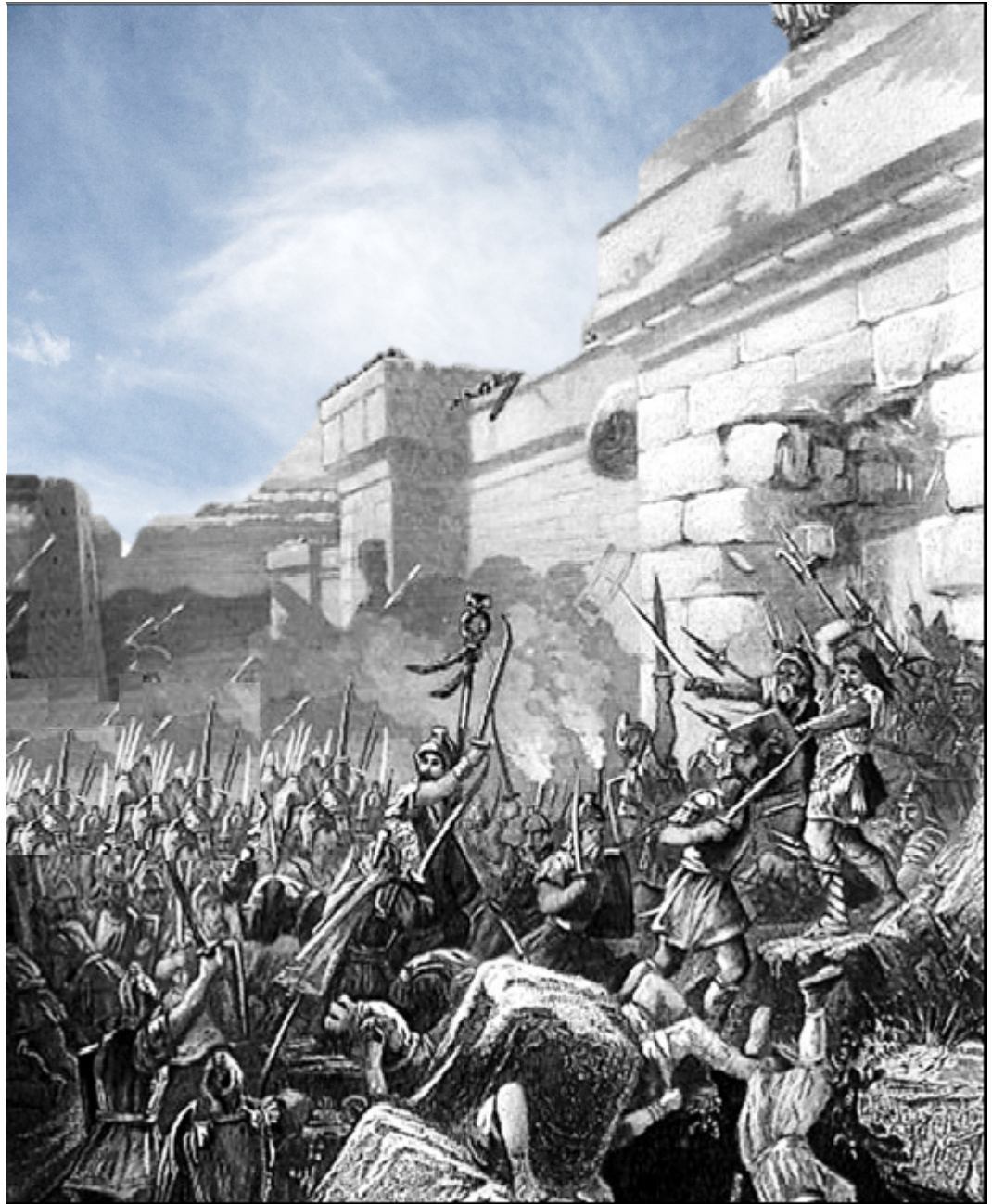


II Chronicles 12

“² . . . Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed against the LORD,

³With twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people were without number that came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians.

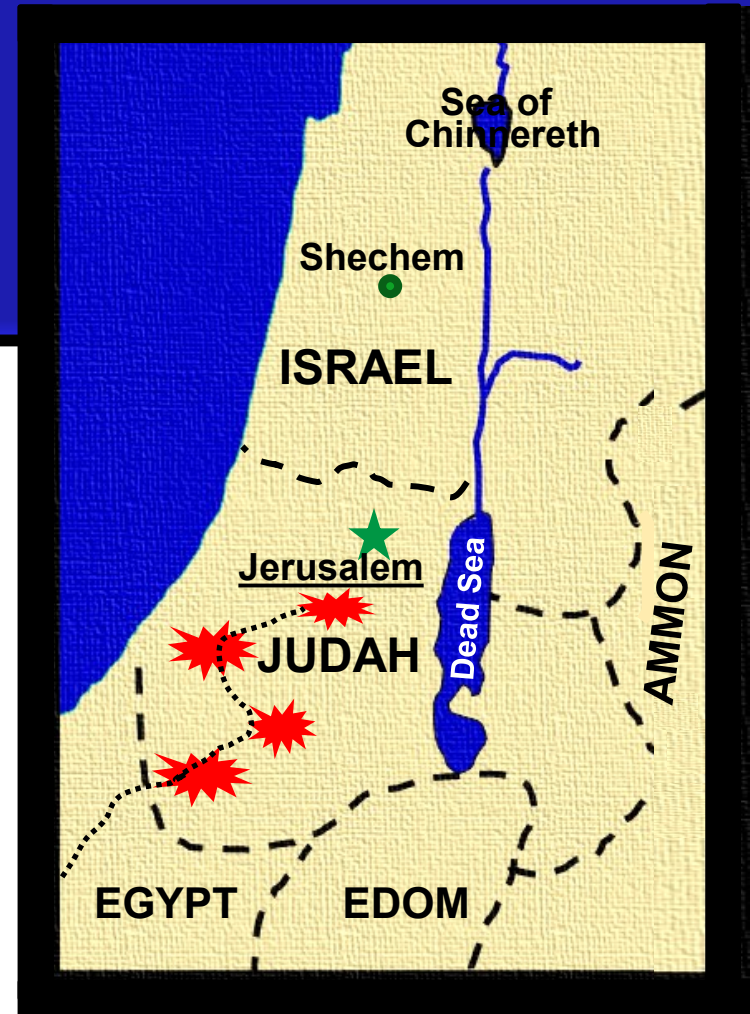
⁴And he took the fenced cities which pertained to Judah, and came to Jerusalem.”

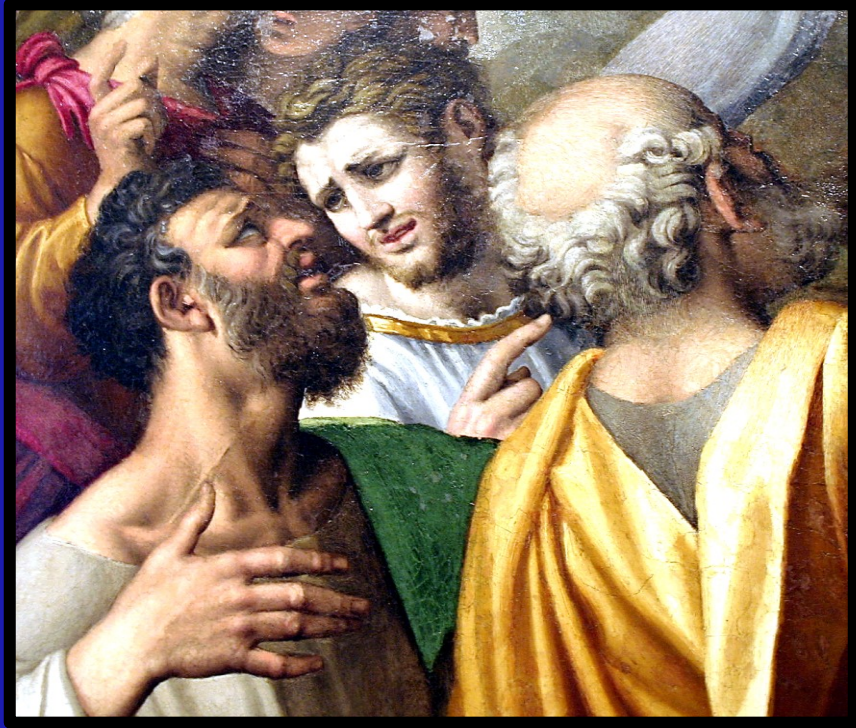




Shemaiah the prophet warned King Rehoboam.

Shishak King of Egypt attacked other cities in Judah before he reached Jerusalem. The princes of Judah gathered in Jerusalem as Shishak approached and Shemaiah the prophet told them that the invasion was of the Lord because Judah had forsaken him.





II Chronicles 12

“⁵ Then came Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and to the princes of Judah, that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said unto them, Thus saith the Lord, Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak.

⁶ Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves; and they said, the Lord is righteous.

⁷ And when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak.

⁸ Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.”

II Chronicles 12

“⁹So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king’s house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made.”





NOTICE: In the description of Shishak King of Egypt's attack upon Jerusalem there is no mention of the city itself being destroyed or people slaughtered.

The most devastating blow of King Shishak's attack was that he took the treasures that David and Solomon had placed in the temple. Solomon had made **golden shields for his guards**. They must have been magnificent for they are specifically mentioned as being taken.

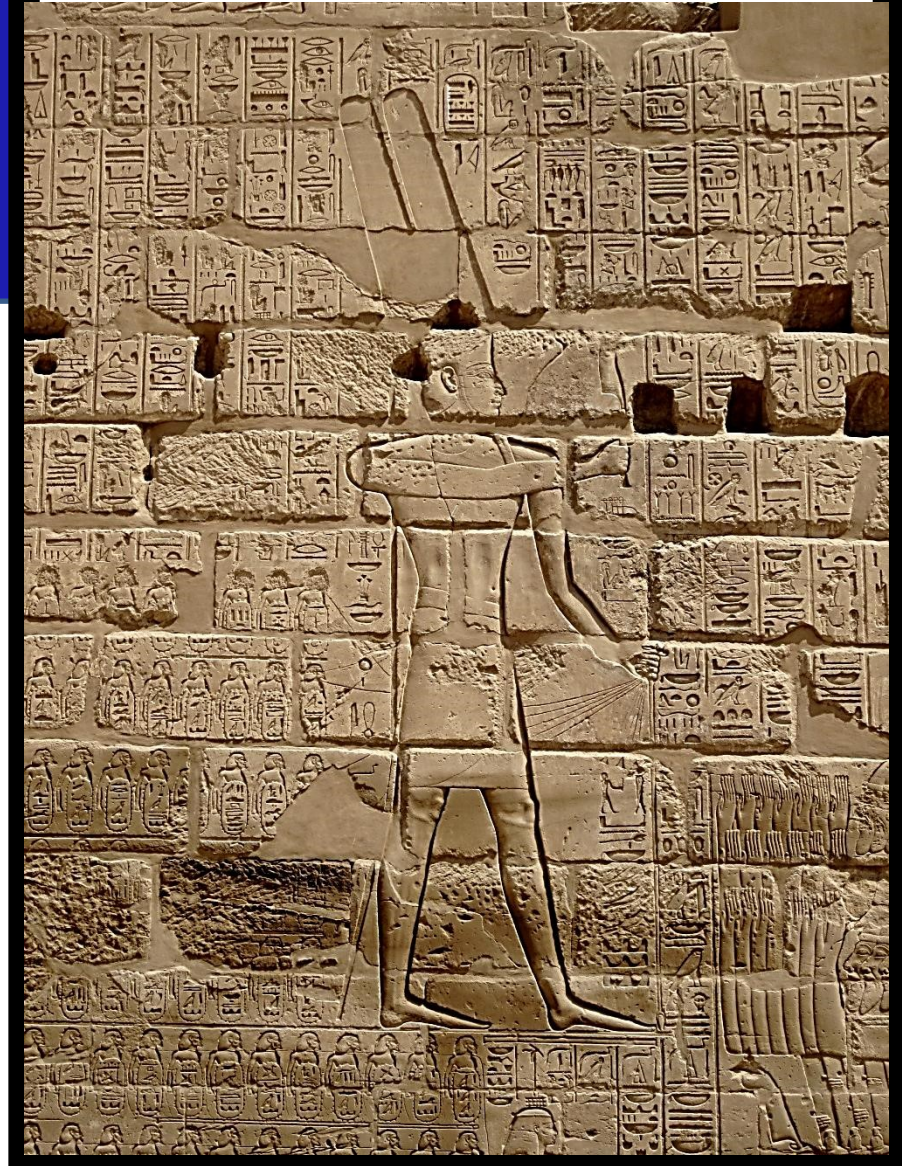


It is not revealed in what way Rehoboam became a servant of the King of Egypt as predicted by the prophet Shemaiah. Possibly Judah was forced to pay tribute to Shishak to press them into subjection. According to secular Egyptian history Shishak did not live much more than a year after his attack upon Jerusalem, so conceivably Judah's subjection ended with his death.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Among the Egyptian ruins of Karnak there is a carved relief of King Shoshenq (the biblical Shishak) which lists the cities he conquered. Jerusalem is in the list, and therefore it verifies Shishak's victory against Israel as recorded in I Kings 14:25 and II Chronicles 12:9.

Triumphal Relief At Karnak



ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Karnak, the location of Shishak's relief, is an ancient temple complex at Luxor, Egypt which is on the Nile River. It is a vast mix of decayed temples of Egyptian gods from age-old dynasties. The ruins contain colossal statues, obelisks, and columns.

Like an open air museum it is the second most visited historical site in Egypt. Only the Giza Pyramids receive more visits.



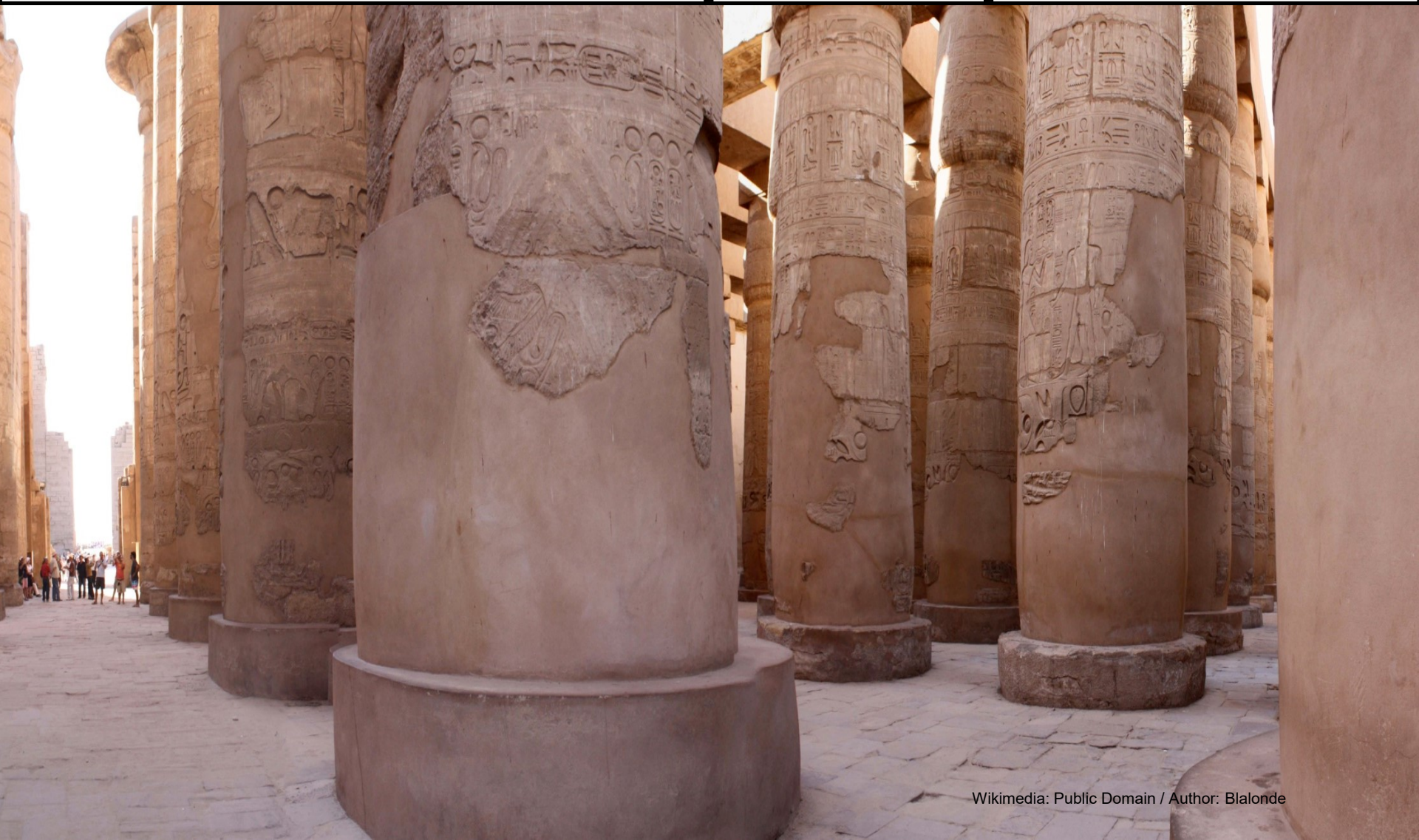
SCENE FROM Karnak Temple Complex



SCENE FROM Karnak Temple Complex



SCENE FROM Karnak Temple Complex



SCENE FROM Karnak Temple Complex



CONTINUING WITH THE STORY . . .

However long Judah's subjection to Egypt lasted it was not devastating for things went well for the rest of Rehoboam's reign.

II Chronicles 12

“²And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the Lord turned from him, that he would not destroy him altogether: and also in Judah things went well.”



Rehoboam King of Judah



When the Lord warned Rehoboam by sending the prophet Shemaiah he listened and complied, but he did not “seek the Lord.”

He was not known for making sacrifices to God or destroying idols. The *official religion* was the one true God. However, idol worship continued in Judah.





Jeroboam King of Israel

IN CONTRAST:

**Jeroboam King of Israel
was completely devoted
to idols.**

**He never heeded the
prophets of God.**

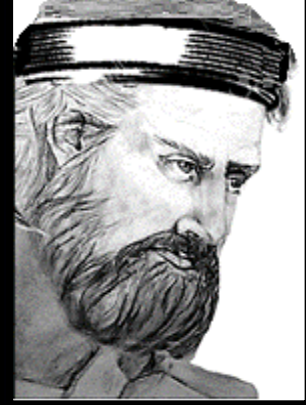




Jeroboam's affinity with false gods may have begun when he was in Egypt hiding from King Solomon's assassins. Then again, Solomon was an idolater when Jeroboam was employed as his servant. The point is that idolatry came naturally to him.

Jeroboam knew some of his subjects were accustomed to worshipping God in Solomon's magnificent temple, so to maintain the divide between the two kingdoms Jeroboam told the people that it was too much for them to travel to the temple in Jerusalem.





Jeroboam made high places in

Dan and **Bethel** for them to worship “the gods that brought them out of Egypt” (I Kings 12:28). What a blasphemous proclamation! His idol worship earned him the title, “**Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin**” (I Kings 22:52). This derogatory title for him appears nineteen times in the books of I and II Kings.



Idol worship brought with it immorality— the abomination of sodomy.

I KINGS 14

“²¹ And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And his mother’s name was Naamah an Ammonitess.

²² And Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they

had committed, above all that their fathers had done.

²³ For they also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree.

²⁴ And there were also sodomites in the land: and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel.”

In the law of Moses immorality was punishable by death, including sodomy.

LEVITICUS 20

¹⁰ And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

¹¹ And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

¹² And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to

death: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them.

¹³ If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

¹⁴ And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you."

The law of Christ says sodomy is a damnable sin along with effeminate behavior

Romans 1:26-28

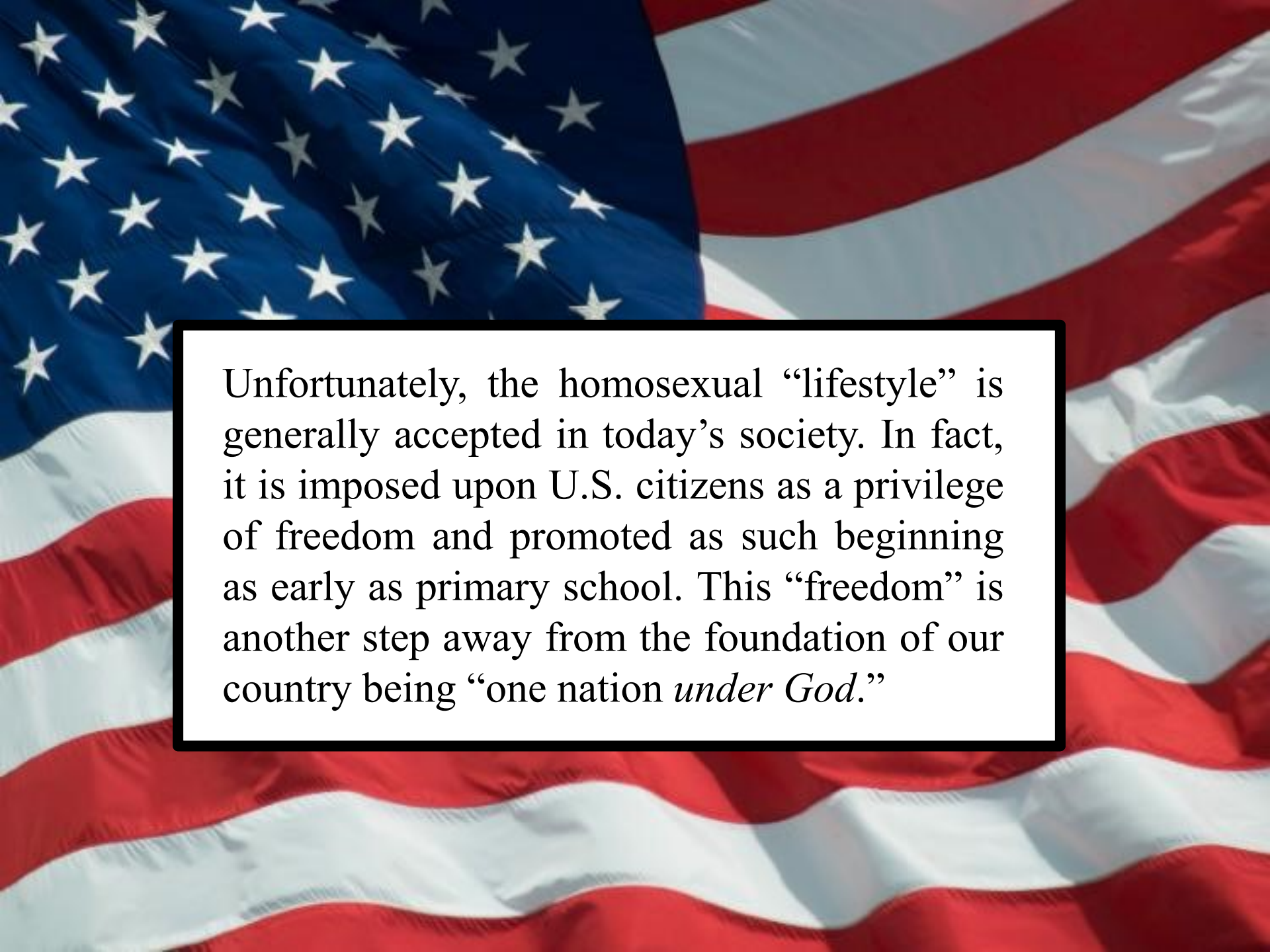
“²⁶For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

²⁷ And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.”

I Corinthians 6:9

“⁹ Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor **effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind.**”

The background of the image is a close-up, slightly blurred view of the United States flag, showing the stars and stripes in detail. The flag is waving, creating a sense of movement. The colors are vibrant, with the blue field of stars and the red and white stripes being prominent.

Unfortunately, the homosexual “lifestyle” is generally accepted in today’s society. In fact, it is imposed upon U.S. citizens as a privilege of freedom and promoted as such beginning as early as primary school. This “freedom” is another step away from the foundation of our country being “one nation *under God*.”

THE END