

BAD KINGS

Israel had asked God for a king.

Even though God was their true King and leader, Israel decided they wanted a human king, just like the other nations.

God gave them Saul to be their king. Saul started out okay, but didn't stay that way for very long. **SAUL** wasn't a good king.



Then came David. **DAVID** was a good king. Yes, there was that time he killed a man so he could take his wife. That was bad. But he was very, very sorry and asked God to forgive him. He wasn't perfect, but overall, David was a good king.

Then came **SOLOMON**, David's son. Like Saul, Solomon started out okay. But he didn't stay that way either. He forced the Israelites to build him big, fancy palaces. And Solomon married women from other countries who worshipped other gods. Pretty soon Solomon was worshipping other gods too!

And then things really went downhill. Solomon's son **REHOBOAM** became king. He was so mean to the Israelites that half of them said, "We don't want you to be our king!" They picked a guy named **JEROBOAM** to be their king instead.



Now Israel had **TWO** kings!
No country can have two kings at the same time, so can you guess what happened?

Israel split in two. The northern half of Israel followed Jeroboam, and the southern half followed Rehoboam. Israel, God's chosen nation, was no longer one nation. It was two nations, and neither of them was doing a very good job of following God.



In the north, Nadab became king after Jeroboam, and he was just as bad. Then Baasha became king. Just as bad. Then Elah, then Zimri. **BAD** and **DOUBLE BAD!**

You'd think everyone would learn a lesson from all these bad kings. But they didn't. The next king of the north was Omri, and the Bible says he "did more evil than **ALL** the kings before him!"



Omri's son Ahab was even worse. Not only did Ahab not follow God, but he and his wife, Jezebel, tried to kill everyone who **DID** follow God!



Things weren't much better down south.

After Rehoboam and Jeroboam split Israel in half, the two halves of Israel had **39 KINGS** over the next **400 YEARS**—thirty-nine kings! And almost all of them were bad!

All these bad kings were a problem for a couple of reasons. First, bad kings make bad decisions, and bad decisions aren't good for **ANYBODY**.

Second, way back in the time of Moses, God promised He would protect Israel from their enemies as long as they followed God. If Israel **STOPPED** following God, God would stop protecting Israel.

Remember the time of the judges? The Israelites would turn away from God, and then—**BOOM!**—one of their enemies would attack them and take over a few cities.

Well . . . 400 years later, Israel's enemies were **HUGE**. Israel's new enemies were so big they weren't just kingdoms anymore—they were **EMPIRES**, and that changed everything!



BAD KINGS

FAMILY CONNECTION

1 KINGS 12-16



FUN FACTS

During the reign of Solomon's son Rehoboam, around 930 BC, Israel split into two kingdoms—the kingdom of Israel in the north, including the tribes of Asher, Dan, Ephraim, Gad, Issachar, Manasseh, Naphtali, Reuben, Simeon, and Zebulun, and the kingdom of Judah in the south, made up of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

TALK

Why did Israel split in two?

What was so bad about Israel's bad kings?

Dear
God . . .

PRAY

Dear God, even when our leaders make bad choices, help us choose to live Your way. Amen.



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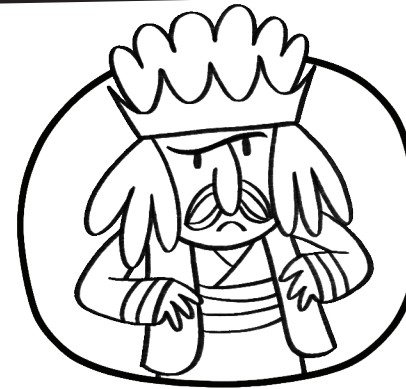
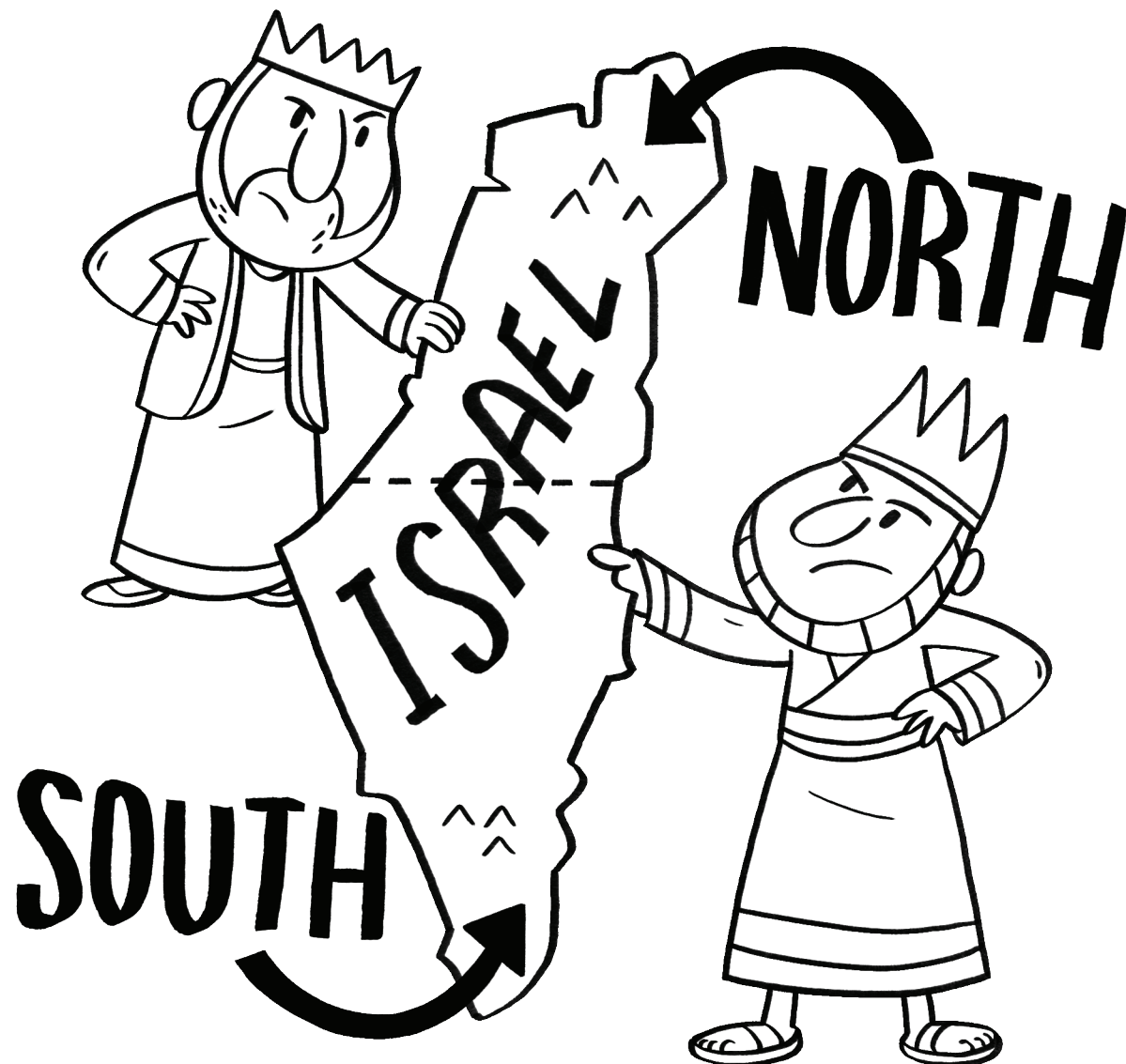
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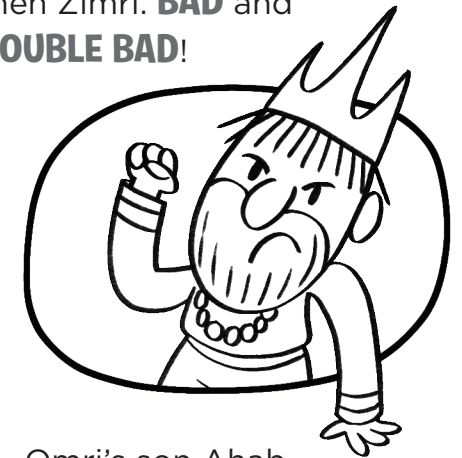
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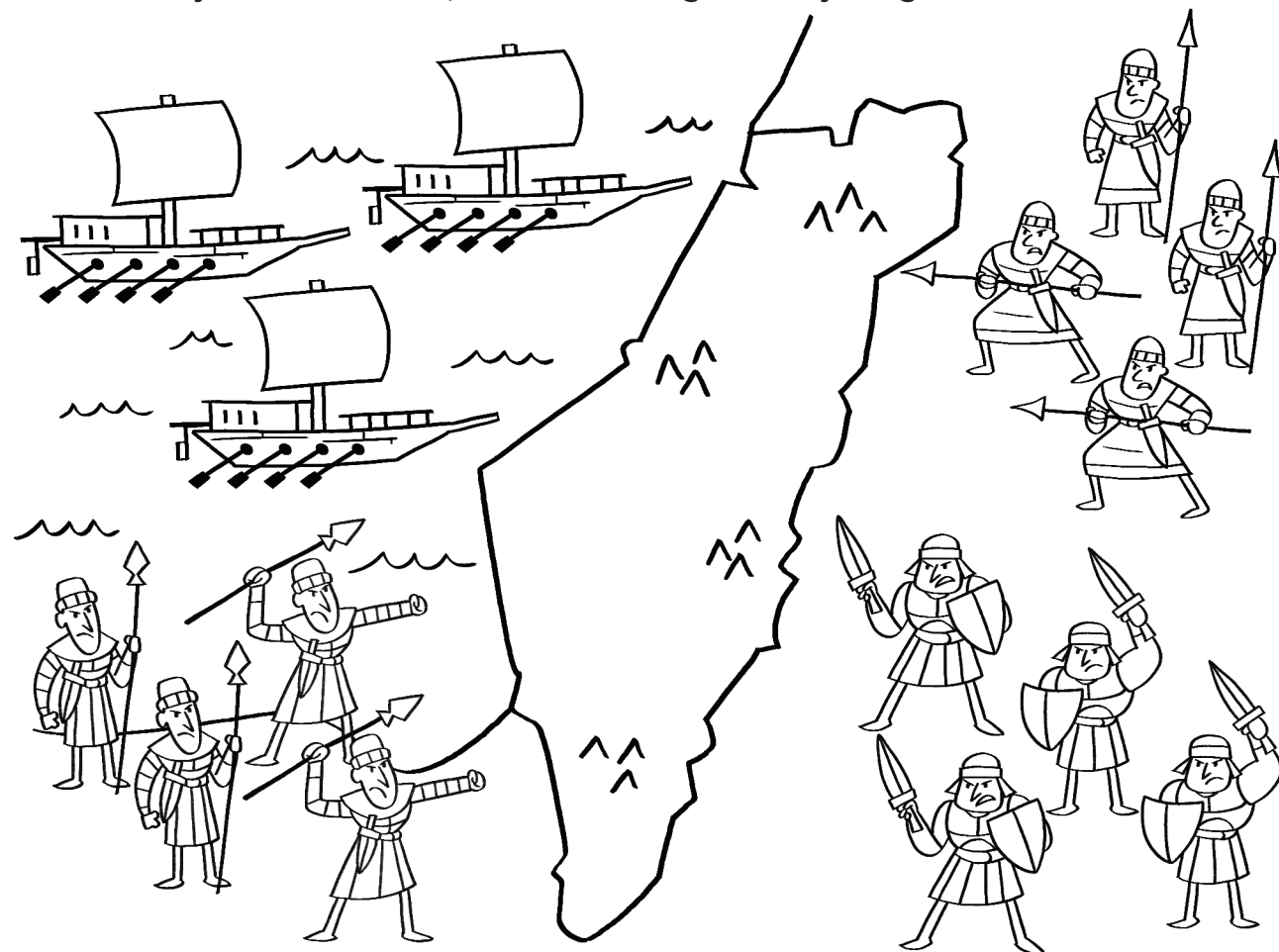
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