

other Israelites were expected to pay for tabernacle expenses. The twelve tribes of Israel which inherited the land of Palestine, therefore, were named after the twelve sons of Jacob, minus one (Levi), and plus one (Ephraim and Manasseh instead of Joseph). During the centuries when "there was no king in Israel" there was no strong centralized government. Judah in the south and Ephraim in the center of the land developed military strength far beyond any other tribes, and a rivalry for national control arose between them. This control would, according to custom, be the right of the firstborn. It was generally admitted that Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, had forfeited the rights of his tribe, and it was admitted that Joseph, whom Jacob recognized as firstborn, was succeeded in his rights by Ephraim. Accordingly early prophecies seem to promise to Ephraim dominance over the nation, and the tribe was quick to claim all the rights that such prophecies pointed toward. But Judah, also, had had a promise of the "scepter." Down to the time of King Saul nearly all the men who had effectively swayed either scepter or sword had come from Ephraim and Manasseh; for example, Joshua, Gideon, Deborah, Abimelech, Jephthah, and Samuel. King Saul, however, was a Benjamite, and David was from Judah. During the first seven years and a half of David's rule the northern tribes had maintained a separate monarchy, and David eventually became king over them by a special compact, admitting what we would now call a charter, or constitutional rights. During his reign and that of Solomon the two kingdoms were united under one scepter. Rehoboam inherited the monarchy of Judah; this was undisputed; but he could not be recognized as king over the northerly tribes without a distinct agreement on their part, and probably another coronation. His refusal to admit the reasonable demands of the representatives of the northern tribes lost him the larger part of his kingdom. When the division came Judah gathered to itself most of Benjamin, Simeon, and Levi. What are called the ten tribes, therefore, were really nine in number, and the name "ten" was probably adopted because Benjamin was at first claimed by Israel as well as by Judah.

**Verse 16. All Israel.** Keep in mind the two great divisions of the Hebrew race, divisions which were not quite lost sight of even under David and Solomon. "When all Israel saw," or recognized, means, therefore, when the northern two thirds of the united kingdom saw. **The king, Rehoboam. Hearkened not unto them.** Refused to give proper consideration to their request for relief. Most of the financial profit incidental to Solomon's immense undertakings in architecture, armament, and commerce, and most of the glory reflected from his court, were limited to Judah; and the remoter parts of the nation refused longer to pay for Judah's aggrandizement. But Rehoboam, turning from the advice of his father's wisest counselors, and swayed by inexperienced youthful friends, had not only refused to make concessions, but had treated the petitioners with contempt. **The people answered.** Doubtless formally by their official representatives, but also by turbulent outcries of defiance. **What portion have we in David?** What mutual rights continue between us and the dynasty of Jerusalem? They do not deny that the young king was at the outset their rightful sovereign; but by trampling upon their rights he had forfeited his. **Neither have we inheritance.** Just as a king inherits his kingdom so the kingdom inherits its king. But the ten tribes were not thus either inheritors or inheritance. **The son of Jesse.** David, whose father Jesse was a shepherd. The taunt means "That's what your royalty comes from!" **To**

**your tents, O Israel.** Get ready to fight. **See to thine own house, David.** "House" here means family, including the royal dynasty and its belongings. The phrase has the meaning of "Mind your own business!" "Hands off!" "You rule your little Judah; we will care for ourselves." **So Israel departed unto their tents.** In modern English, the assemblage broke up. The multitudes returned to their various vocations in country and city.

**17. The children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah.** The natives of the north who had been led by business or family interests to settle in the south. **Rehoboam reigned over them.** They neither fled back to their homesteads nor made local disturbances in Judah. They were not foreign by blood or by prejudice, and it was easier not to change.

**18. Adoram.** Elsewhere called Adoniram and Hadoram. **Over the tribute.** In charge of the collection of taxes and assessments, which were the chief cause of complaint. **All Israel stoned him with stones.** Probably he was arrested, charged with treason, and executed in the name of all Israel. **Therefore.** In consideration of the fact that hostilities had begun, and that he was in the enemy's country. **Jerusalem** was the stronghold of Rehoboam's friends.

**19. Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.** By the blunder and crime of his grandson more than one half of the beneficent results of David's lifework were swept aside in a day.