

Step Into Scripture

Signposts Week 13: Rise & Ruin

This week, we witnessed the height of Israel's golden age under Solomon—a time marked by wisdom, wealth, and worship. The temple was completed, the Ark was placed in the Most Holy Place, and God's glory filled it. And yet, despite this extraordinary beginning, Solomon's compromises—especially his alliances with foreign nations through marriage—led to idolatry and spiritual decline. God responded with judgment, dividing the kingdom between Solomon's son Rehoboam and his servant Jeroboam. Rather than trust God's promise, Jeroboam built alternate worship centers out of fear and convenience, drawing the people into generational sin. This marked the beginning of a long decline in Israel's covenant history—a decline we'll trace through the kings and prophets in coming weeks. But even in judgment, God remained faithful to His promises. His covenant with David endured, and His voice continued to call His people to return.

Discussion Questions

1. How could someone as wise as Solomon fall so far?

- Solomon allowed his foreign wives to turn his heart toward other gods (1 Kings 11:4–8). Wisdom doesn't guarantee obedience; a divided heart opens the door to compromise and idolatry.
- In what areas of your life are you most vulnerable to letting influence or comfort lead you away from wholehearted devotion to God?

2. Why did God allow the kingdom to divide, and what does this reveal about His character?

- The division was a consequence of Solomon's unfaithfulness (1 Kings 11:11–13), but God showed mercy by preserving one tribe for David's sake. It demonstrates both God's **justice** and His **covenantal faithfulness** (2 Samuel 7:12–16).
- Can you recall a time in your life when God disciplined you but also preserved or restored something because of His faithfulness?

3. What made Jeroboam's decision to create new worship centers such a serious sin?

- Jeroboam violated God's command that worship be centered in the place He chose—Jerusalem (Deuteronomy 12:4–6). He acted out of fear, creating a more “convenient” form of worship that was rooted in control rather than obedience (1 Kings 12:28–30).
- When have you felt tempted to take spiritual shortcuts for the sake of convenience? How can you practice faithfulness even when obedience is inconvenient?

4. What does the story of the deceived prophet in 1 Kings 13 teach us about spiritual discernment?

- Even though the prophet had received a direct word from God, he allowed someone else's claim to override it. The story reminds us to test everything against Scripture and not to rely solely on others' opinions or spiritual claims (1 Kings 13:18–26).

- How can you grow in biblical discernment in a world full of competing voices?
- 5. Why is commitment to a local church community so important, especially in light of Hebrews 10:25?**
- Hebrews 10:25 urges believers not to give up meeting together, but to encourage one another—especially as the Day of the Lord draws near. The early church recognized that gathering regularly provided accountability, encouragement, and spiritual formation.
- What obstacles have kept you—or might be keeping others—from prioritizing consistent church fellowship? How can you realign your weekly rhythms to make gathering with the body of Christ a central part of your walk with God?

Prayer

- Pray for an undivided heart—one that seeks God above all else and resists spiritual compromise.
- Ask God to expose any areas where fear or convenience is shaping your decisions more than His Word.
- Thank God for His mercy and faithfulness, even when we fall short or face consequences.
- Pray for courage and discernment to stand on biblical truth, especially when it's unpopular or costly.
- Lift up your local church body—that it would remain unified, devoted to sound doctrine, and centered on Christ.