

When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. There was no one who followed the house of David, except the tribe of Judah alone. (1 Kings 12:20)

Rehoboam prepared to mount a counterattack, but was warned against it by a “man of God” named Shemaiah, the only time we hear Rehoboam listening to a word of YHWH (12:22–24). The narrative turns again to Jeroboam, now firmly in power outside Judah. We noted earlier that Moses was “in the air” of the Jeroboam story. Table 11 shows these parallels.

Table 11: Parallels between Moses and Jeroboam¹⁰

<i>Event</i>	<i>Text</i>
New king enslaves the population	Exod. 1:8; 1 Kings 2:12
Hero brought into royal court as royal servant to an oppressive “pharaoh”	Exod. 1:22–2:10; 1 Kings 11:26
Hero lives in exile after murder attempt/threat	Exod. 2:15; 1 Kings 11:40
Return after Pharaoh’s death	Exod. 4:20; 1 Kings 12:2 Cf. “three days,” Exod. 3:18; 5:3; 8:27; 1 Kings 12:5
Successful rebellion and flight	(throughout the Exodus narrative)
In addition:	
Midian as refuge	Exod. 2:15ff.; 1 Kings 11:18 (just before Jeroboam)
Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu (Exod. 6:23)	Jeroboam’s sons, Nadab and Abijah (1 Kings 14:1, 20)

The account of Jeroboam’s ascendancy to the throne of the new northern kingdom of “Israel” is portrayed by the later author of Kings as parallel to Moses’ encounter with Pharaoh. But why would an author who is about to condemn Jeroboam and use that condemnation as the basis for subsequent judgment against other northern kings make Jeroboam look like Israel’s greatest hero?

Recall how our inquiry began in chapter 9, as we entered into the contradictions within the portrayal of Solomon. In Table 4, we saw all the ways that Solomon matched Pharaoh. Now we can see the bigger picture: Jeroboam is Moses and Solomon is Pharaoh. Michael Oblath has shown in great detail how many of the specific locations listed as part of Israel’s migration in Exodus–Numbers

10. From Oblath (2000).