

## Sunday Evening Message

June 16, 2024

*The Kings of Judah – Abijam, Asa, and Jehoshaphat*

Text – 1 Kings 15

### Introduction

In the last message from 1 Kings, we were looking into chapter fourteen, and we examined the reigns of Jeroboam from the northern kingdom, and Rehoboam from the southern kingdom. Today, we will begin studying the kings of Judah that succeeded Rehoboam, beginning with Rehoboam's son, Abijam.

As we did in the previous message regarding Rehoboam, we will once again consider some parallel verses from 2 Chronicles. Chronicles and Kings have slightly different purposes but much of the same information.

Wiersbe said this regarding the differences in the two books:

Keep in mind that the books of Kings and Chronicles don't record history from exactly the same perspective. The focus in 1 and 2 Kings is on the kings of Israel, but in 1 and 2 Chronicles, the emphasis is on David's dynasty in Judah. The Northern Kingdom of Israel, later called Samaria, is mentioned in Chronicles only when it had dealings with Judah. Another thing to remember is that the two kingdoms used different systems in keeping official records. In Judah, the king's reign was counted from the beginning of the next calendar year after he began his reign, while in Israel, the count began with the year the king actually ascended the throne. Also, some kings had their sons as coregents during the closing years of their reign. These factors complicate calculating how long some kings reigned, and this helps us understand why biblical chronologists don't always agree.<sup>1</sup>

#### I. A Reviled King - Abijam (vs. 1 – 7)

2 Chronicles 13 refers to Abijam as Abijah.

V. 1 - Notice in verse one, the kings of Judah were often compared with the kings of Israel as a way of delineating a chronological reference point.

Jeroboam reigned from 931 – 910 BC.

Abijam reigned from 913 – 911 BC so his reign of only three years began and ended within Jeroboam's reign.

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<sup>1</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Responsible*, "Be" Commentary Series (Colorado Springs, CO: Victor, 2002), 114–116.

V. 2 – Maachah is referred to as Machaiah in 2 Chronicles 13. It is interesting that in this section, the kings' mothers are referenced, instead of the fathers.

Abishalom is a variant spelling of Absalom.<sup>2</sup>

2 Chronicles 11 gives us a little more information about both Abijam and Maachah:

*"20 And after her he took Maachah the daughter of Absalom; which bare him Abijah, and Attai, and Ziza, and Shelomith. 21 And Rehoboam loved Maachah the daughter of Absalom above all his wives and his concubines: (for he took eighteen wives, and threescore concubines; and begat twenty and eight sons, and threescore daughters.) 22 And Rehoboam made Abijah the son of Maachah the chief, to be ruler among his brethren: for he thought to make him king." (2 Chronicles 11:20-22)*

Chronicles also tells us that Abijam and Jeroboam were at war the entire time Abijam was king.

V. 3 – The Scripture reveals that Abijam was wicked like his father Rehoboam was, and like Solomon ended up. Notice that God says here that David is the good king that Abijam was contrasted with, not Solomon.

Vs. 4 – 5 – God once again heaps praises on David, saying he had a “perfect heart” (v. 3), and that he did right (v. 4), and that he never turned away from God “save only in the matter of Urriah the Hittite” (v. 5). This is very interesting. There is no mention of his adultery with Bathsheba or his numbering of the people, which also adversely affected the entire nation.

Vs. 6 – 7 – Twice in these verses and once in 2 Chronicles, the Bible references the war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

Turn to 2 Chronicles 13: 3 – 22 to read the rest of the story regarding Abijam. Chronicles never mentions that Abijam was evil, but it does not say he was good either.

Apparently, Abijam was well-versed in the Scriptures because this passage reveals a biblically accurate sermon that Abijam preached to Jeroboam.

## **II. A Revered King - Asa (vs. 8 – 24)**

2 Chronicles 14 – 16 deal with Asa's reign.

Asa was a good king overall. Notice – he removed the sodomites and the idols from Judah. He also removed Maachah, his grandmother from being the queen because of her idolatry (v. 13). Note – the Bible does not typically use the term “grandfather or grandson,

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<sup>2</sup> Thomas L. Constable, “1 Kings,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 518.

grandmother of granddaughter. It only uses father or son, mother or daughter, with one exception (2 Timothy 1:5 – Lois).

His downfall involved his paying Syria to come help in a battle against the northern kingdom. God sent a prophet to rebuke him for doing this, and instead of repenting, he got angry, throwing the prophet in prison. This is likely the reason that God gave him the disease in his feet. Note – the reason for this disease is not given in 1 Kings, but we read about it in 2 Chronicles 16.

He trusted in Syria instead of God.

He punished the messenger, Hanani.

He trusted in the physicians instead of trusting in the Lord.

### **III. A Revolt in the Northern Kingdom (vs. 25 – 34)**