

Abijah

Abijah means “Yahweh is father” the son of Rehoboam had a short reign in Judah after his father’s death, only three years, [2 Chronicles 13:1-2].

1 Kings 15:1-5 [New King James] *“In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam the son of Nebat, Abijam became king over Judah. He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Maachah the granddaughter of Abishalom. And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him; his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. Nevertheless for David’s sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by setting up his son after him and by establishing Jerusalem; because David did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.”*

The inherited attitude of Solomon who allowed his pagan wives to influence him and caused him to turn away from the true Creator God was still at work in this third generation, in the person of Abijah.

The writer of Chronicles chose to highlight the little good that Abijah did in order to show he was still under God’s covenant promise to King David.

2 Chronicles 13:1-12 [New King James] *“In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah became king over Judah. He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. Abijah set the battle in order with an army of valiant warriors, four hundred thousand choice men. Jeroboam also drew up in battle formation against him with eight hundred thousand choice men, mighty men of valour. Then Abijah stood on Mount Zemaraim, which is in the mountains of Ephraim, and said, ‘Hear me, Jeroboam and all Israel: Should you not know that the LORD God of Israel gave the dominion over Israel to David forever, to him and his sons, by a covenant of salt? Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, rose up and rebelled against his lord. Then worthless rogues gathered to him, and strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and inexperienced and could not withstand them. And now you think to withstand the kingdom of the LORD, which is in the hand of the sons of David; and you are a great multitude, and with you are the gold calves which Jeroboam made for you as gods. Have you not cast out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and made for yourselves priests, like the peoples of other lands, so that whoever comes to consecrate himself with a young bull and seven rams may be a priest of things that are not gods? But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken Him; and the priests who minister to the LORD are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites attend to their duties. And they burn to the LORD every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense; they also set the showbread in order on the pure gold table, and the lampstand of gold with its lamps to burn every evening; for we keep the command of the LORD our God, but you have forsaken Him. Now look, God Himself is with us as our head, and His priests with sounding trumpets to sound the alarm against you. O children of Israel, do not fight against the LORD God of your fathers, for you shall not prosper!”*

This fiery speech made by Abijah and his belief in the God of David, spared him the immediate consequences of his sin, and God gave him an outstanding victory, [2 Chronicles 13:13-20].

Jeroboam’s army was cursed because of the golden idol calves they carried with them, [verse 8]. They had lowered the true Creator God into an idol they could carry around with them.

We all need to consider if there are any physical things we carry around with us or thoughts in our mind that we look on as more valuable than our spiritual relationship with God in our mind and human spirit, [Job 32:8; 1 Corinthians 2:11; Proverbs 20:27].

The spiritual life difference between the northern tribes under the rule of Jeroboam and his descendants constantly served the pagan god Baal, as a result they experienced God's punishment of exile and slavery many years before Judah, who had a series of kings who were faithful to the true Creator God for at least part of their reign.

Whenever an idolatrous king reigned in Judah, his rule was followed by a God-honouring king who reformed religious life, who was greatly assisted by the fact that the priests and Levites had moved to Judah from the northern tribes under Jeroboam, [**2 Chronicles 11:13-17**].

2 Chronicles 13:21-22 – 2 Chronicles 14:1 [New King James] *“But Abijah grew mighty, married fourteen wives, and begot twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters. Now the rest of the acts of Abijah, his ways, and his sayings are written in the annals of the prophet Iddo. So Abijah rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the City of David. Then Asa his son reigned in his place. In his days the land was quiet for ten years.”*

Iddo was a seer or prophet whose writings were one of the sources of the Chronicler during the reign of Solomon, Rehoboam and Abijah.

What can we learn from the life of Abijah?

When we look to the Creator God for help, the size of the problem in human eyes is not relative to the outcome, [2 Chronicles 13:3**].**

Even if our part has been sinful, if we confess it to God, ask for forgiveness then put trust and faith in Him, we can overcome those sins however great they were.

We always need the guidance and support of those whom the true Creator God have given us to lead us into the Truth through the active presence of the Holy Spirit in them and our own lives, [John 16:13; Acts 5:32**].**