

1Kings 15:1 ¶ Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat reigned Abijam over Judah.

1Kings 15:2 Three years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

1Kings 15:3 And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father.

It is noted that in the 18th year of the reign of King Jeroboam in Israel, Abijah ascended to the throne in Judah. He reigned for three years in Jerusalem. He was the son of Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom. There seems to be a discrepancy between Kings and Chronicles regarding Maachah.

2 Chronicles 13:2 "His mother's name also was Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah."

JFB offers this explanation: "Michaiah (2 Chronicles 13:2), probably altered from the one to the other on her becoming queen, as was very common under a change of circumstances. She is called the daughter of Abishalom, or Absalom (2 Chronicles 11:21), of Uriel (2 Chronicles 13:2). Hence, it has been thought probable that Tamar, the daughter of Absalom (2 Samuel 14:27; 18:18), had been married to Uriel, and that Maachah was their daughter."

Already I am a bit confused because of the notes from the previous chapter on Abijah leading his people out to battle against Jeroboam in the name of the LORD. It would seem that this must have been at the beginning of his reign, because verse 3 is clear in declaring that he "walked in all the sins of his father," Rehoboam. Maybe he was one who acknowledged the LORD God of Israel but did not submit to Him as LORD.

Guzik makes a good observation: "This was the real problem with Abijam's reign - his lack of a real personal relationship with God. David sinned during his reign, but his heart stayed **loyal to the LORD his God.**"

The Chronicler also tells us a bit about his family.

2 Chronicles 13:21 "But Abijah waxed mighty, and married fourteen wives, and begat twenty and two sons, and sixteen daughters."

1Kings 15:4 Nevertheless for David's sake did the LORD his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem:

1Kings 15:5 Because David did *that which was right* in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any *thing* that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

Only for David's sake did the LORD God allow this man to reign and establish Jerusalem firmly under the rule of the house of David because of David's love for the LORD. We know that David sinned, but David was always quick to repent when confronted with his sin and to renew his commitment to follow the LORD in obedience. It is noted that David's great sin centered on the circumstances

associated with the murder of Uriah the Hittite.

1Kings 15:6 And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life.

As noted in the previous chapter, we are told that there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam throughout their lifetimes.

1Kings 15:7 Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, *are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?* And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

1Kings 15:8 And Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead.

The record on Abijam ends as it is noted that there was also war between Abijam and Jeroboam. (See notes on previous chapter.)

Abijam died and was buried in the city of David; his son Asa succeeded him to the throne.

1Kings 15:9 ¶ And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah.

1Kings 15:10 And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

In the 20th year of Jeroboam's reign in Israel, Asa became king over Judah. He was the (grand)son of Maachah, the (grand)daughter of Absalom. He ruled in Judah for 41 years. The Chronicler tells us in 2Chronicles 14:1 that "the land was quiet for ten years" during his reign—presumably the first ten years.

According to the Chronicler, he made use of this time to build up the cities of Judah and fortify their walls. It would also seem from his record that it was the victory that God gave Judah over the attacking armies of Ethiopia that spurred Asa into making the reforms that are noted in the next verses. He then notes that there was no more war in Judah until the 35th year of the reign of Asa. Once again there is a discrepancy between the two accounts. Gill offers the following explanation.

The Chronicler declares this "...to be in the thirty sixth year of Asa's reign, or rather of his kingdom; for it can never mean the year of his reign, for Baasha was dead many years before that, since his reign began in the third of Asa, and he reigned but twenty four years, and therefore must die in the twenty seventh of Asa; but it is to be understood of the kingdom of Judah, when it was divided from Israel; from that time to this were thirty six years, seventeen under Rehoboam, three under Abijam, so that this year must be the sixteenth of Asa; thus it is calculated in the Jewish chronology²¹, and which is followed by many of the best of our chronologers."

1Kings 15:11 And Asa did *that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did*

David his father.

1Kings 15:12 And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.

1Kings 15:13 And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from *being* queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt *it* by the brook Kidron.

1Kings 15:14 But the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days.

In contrast to his father, Asa did that which was right before the LORD, following the example of his great great grandfather David. Asa removed all the sodomites and idols out of the land. He even removed his grandmother from being queen because she had made an idol in a grove, a place of worship to false gods. Asa destroyed her idol with fire by the brook Kidron.

Asa did not, however, destroy all the high places. In spite of that bad decision, it is noted that his heart was at peace with the LORD throughout his life.

Once again, there is an apparent discrepancy with the record of the Chronicler.

2 Chronicles 14:3–5 “For he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves: And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images:”

Guzik offers this explanation: The Chronicler “says that Asa did remove the high places, but it mentions these high places in connection with *altars of the foreign gods*. Therefore Asa removed the high places that were dedicated to idols, but not the ones that were dedicated to the LORD.”

Even with this explanation, it was wrong for Asa not to have removed the high places that were used to worship the LORD. The LORD had commanded that such worship was to take place at the temple.

1Kings 15:15 And he brought in the things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the LORD, silver, and gold, and vessels.

Asa gathered together all the things that he and his father had dedicated to the house of the LORD—silver, gold and vessels.

1Kings 15:16 And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

1Kings 15:17 And Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

There was war between Asa and Baasha, the king of Israel, throughout their lives. Baasha attacked Israel and captured Ramah for the purpose of controlling access to Judah from Israel. As noted in above comments, it is stated that this occurred

in the 35th year of Asa's reign but there is a discrepancy with Chronicles. (See note at verses 9-10.)

See verse 25-28 below as to Baasha becoming king in Israel.

1Kings 15:18 Then Asa took all the silver and the gold *that were* left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants: and king Asa sent them to Benhadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,

1Kings 15:19 *There is a league between me and thee, and between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.*

Asa responded by taking all the silver and gold that was left in the treasures of the house of the LORD and the king's house and sent them with trusted servants as a gift to Benhadad, the king of Syria that lived in Damascus. The messengers reminded Benhadad that there had been a covenant between their fathers. He urged him to break covenant with Baasha and intervene on Judah's behalf. He wanted his help in getting Baasha out of Judah.

1Kings 15:20 So Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of the hosts which he had against the cities of Israel, and smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abelbethmaachah, and all Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali.

1Kings 15:21 And it came to pass, when Baasha heard *thereof*, that he left off building of Ramah, and dwelt in Tirzah.

Benhadad did as Asa asked and sent his armies against the cities of Israel. They attacked the cities of Ijon, Dan, Abelbethmaachah, Cinneroth and the land of Naphtali. When Baasha heard what was happening, he left Ramah to go back to Tirzah.

The NIV Commentary adds some insight: "But seeing Asa's treasure and sensing the gain that was to be had from a new league with Judah and from a military venture against Israel, Ben-Hadad was only too happy to help. He may have followed Asa's suggestion of appealing to a prior treaty between Damascus and Jerusalem as a pretext for coming to Judah's aid against Baasha. Moving swiftly, Ben-Hadad ravaged Baasha's northern sector, not only gaining for himself access to the international caravan routes that led from Egypt through Phoenicia and on to Damascus, but giving Asa the desired relief in Judah. For in order to meet the new emergency on his northern flank, Baasha was forced to abandon his operations at Ramah."

1Kings 15:22 Then king Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah; none *was* exempted: and they took away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded; and king Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah.

King Asa made a proclamation requiring all the men of Judah to come and

remove the stones and timber at Ramah and take them to Geba in the land of Benjamin and Mizpah.

The Chronicler adds some important information.

2 Chronicles 16:7–10 “And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand. Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand. For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars. Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time.”

Asa made a grave mistake by seeking help from men before seeking the counsel of the LORD and trusting in Him as Judah’s defender. There seems to be clear indication that his relationship with the LORD was faltering in his old age.

How sad it is when a servant of the LORD falters after many years of faithful obedience!

1Kings 15:23 The rest of all the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.

1Kings 15:24 And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.

The writer notes that the rest of the acts of Asa are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah. There is a note made, however, that he was diseased in his feet in his old age. Again, the Chronicler adds important information.

2 Chronicles 16:12 “And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians.”

Once again, Asa chose to place his faith in man rather than seeking help from and placing his faith in the LORD. This incident spoke to me early on in my life. Since then, it has been the foundation upon which I have dealt with health issues in my own life. I do not consider it wrong to go to doctors, but I will always seek God’s counsel first as long as I have the choice. My faith is in His provision, not in the knowledge and skills of men.

Asa died and was buried in the city of David with his ancestors. His son Jehoshaphat succeeded him to the throne. Once again the Chronicler adds a little bit more information.

2 Chronicles 16:14 "And they buried him in his own sepulchres, which he had made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odours and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art: and they made a very great burning for him."

1Kings 15:25 ¶ And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years.
1Kings 15:26 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

Nadab, the son of Jeroboam, succeeded his father Jeroboam to the throne of Israel in the second year of the reign of Asa in Judah. His reign only lasted for two years. He followed in the steps of his father and did evil in the sight of the LORD.

1Kings 15:27 And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which *belonged* to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon.
1Kings 15:28 Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in his stead.

Baasha, son of Ahijah of the house of Issachar, plotted to overthrow Nadab. When Nadab and his troops laid siege to the Philistine city of Gibbethon, Baasha found an opportunity to kill him and seize the throne.

This occurred during the third year of Asa's reign in Judah.

1Kings 15:29 And it came to pass, when he reigned, *that* he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite:
1Kings 15:30 Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.

Once Baasha seized the throne, he killed all the descendants of Jeroboam. This fulfilled the prophecy that the LORD had declared through the prophet Ahijah. (See notes on previous chapter.)

1Kings 15:31 Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

This is not a reference to the books of Chronicles in scripture.

1Kings 15:32 And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.
1Kings 15:33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years.

1Kings 15:34 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

It is noted that there was war between Asa and Baasha throughout their lives. Baasha seized the throne of Israel during the third year of Asa's reign in Judah; he reigned over Israel in Tirzah for 24 years (into the 27th year of Asa's reign). Baasha was an evil man, just as evil as Jeroboam. The last phrase testifies to the fact that he too worshipped idols and false gods.

Guzik provides an information note from Dilday: "Nadab was king little more than one year, but since it covered parts of two years, Hebrew time measurement reckons his reign as two years."