



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE II CHRONICLES 13:3-18 ABIJAH CHALLENGES KING JEROBOAM— July 4, 2021

INTRODUCTION:

2nd CHRON.13:1 Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah.

Sometimes they count the year that a king began to rule as a complete year. In fact, he may have begun his rule part of the way through the year. And sometimes two kings ruled at the same time. For example, Uzziah became ill. Then his son ruled while he was still alive. Also, the northern and southern kingdoms began their years in different months. The northern kingdom began its year in the month called Nisan (March/April.) The southern kingdom began its year in the month called Tishri (September/October.)

Jeroboam was the first king of Israel. He became the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel (1 Kings 11:26-40). He is the son of Nebat, a member of the Tribe of Ephraim of Zereda. On the death of Solomon, he was summoned by the ten tribes to return and present their demands to Rehoboam; and when these were refused, he was chosen king of the revolted tribes, B. C. 975. He reigned twenty-two years.

Abijah (also called Abijam in 1 Kings 15:3 as wicked), but here in Chronicles, shows that he was capable of acts of faith, even though his life was generally characterized by disobedience to the Will of God. Abijah began to rule over Judah in the 18th year of Jeroboam's rule.

13:2 He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.

2nd Chronicles 11:18 Rehoboam married Mahalath, the daughter of Jerimoth and Abihail. 11:20 Rehoboam then married Absalom's daughter, Maacah. They had 4 children, Abijah, Attai, Ziza and Shelomith. 11:21 Rehoboam loved Maacah more than he loved his other wives. She was his favorite wife. 11:22 Rehoboam chose Abijah, son of Maacah to be the chief prince among his brothers. He wanted Abijah to be king after him instead of Jeush, who was his firstborn son by Mahalath. In this, he did not obey God's law (Deuteronomy 21:15-17). In the same way, David made Solomon king while he was still alive (1 Chronicles 23:1), Rehoboam did as his grandfather David, and he appointed Abijah as chief, intending to make him king. After he died, Abijah reigned in Rehoboam's place. Abijah ruled Jerusalem for three years.

King Abijah saw king Jeroboam as one who had rebelled against the house of David and had managed to split Israel into two kingdoms, and had successfully usurped ten tribes and made himself king over them. In a bid to serve him with justice, he went to war intending to reclaim the ten tribes that were under the leadership of King Jeroboam. And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.

LESSON: I. A SHAMEFUL HISTORY RECOUNTED II CHRONICLES 13:3-9

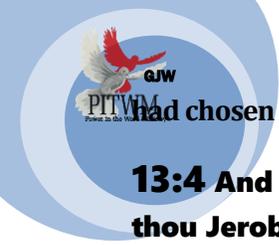
2nd CHRON.13:3 And Abijah set the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, even four hundred thousand chosen men: Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, being mighty men of valour. In the case of Rehoboam, the Lord had prohibited war with Israel, but here, God did not interfere, possibly because Jeroboam's flagrant idolatry deserved judgment. Abijah was greatly outnumbered, but he went into battle with an army of 400,000 chosen men, strong, valiant soldiers of war, and Jeroboam prepared to fight against him with 800,000 chosen strong, brave mighty soldiers of valor that he had chosen. Jeroboam's army was twice the size of Abijah's army. Both

¹ <https://biblehub.com/topical/j/jeroboam.htm>

² <https://www.easyenglish.bible/bible-commentary/2chronicles-10-36-lbw.htm>

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had chosen men for what they were capable to do.

13:4 And Abijah stood up upon mount Zemaraim, which is in mount Ephraim, and said, Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel;— Abijah (portrayed as Abijam in 1 Kings 15:3 as wicked), but here in 2nd Chronicles, shows that he was capable of acts of faith, even though his life was generally characterized by disobedience to the Will of God. He stood on a high place where he could see Jeroboam's army and they could see him. He stood up upon "Mount Zemaraim", located in the territory of Benjamin, just a few miles south-west of Bethel. He called out to Jeroboam and the Israelite army. Abijah shouts a whole speech (13:4-9) to, and about Jeroboam, and all Israel accounting their shameful history. "Listen to me...!"

13:5 Ought ye not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt?— Don't you realize that the Lord, the God of Israel, made a lasting covenant with David, giving him and his descendants the throne of Israel forever? This is something the Israelites should have known, so Abijah is reiterating to them—"Don't you know or remember the Covenant, the Covenant with David?" It's a lasting covenant that's forever: "a covenant of salt" which is an expression of *permanence; never to be broken*. Both parties take a little salt and mix it together. The salt could never be separated; the covenant would never be set aside. The preservative quality of salt represents the finality or loyalty intended in keeping the covenant. This is God's irrevocable pledge and intended loyalty in fulfilling the Davidic Covenant and God's desire for the loyalty of David's lineage to Him, and that the people are to enjoy the blessings of the covenant.

13:6 Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is risen up, and hath rebelled against his lord. Yet Jeroboam son of Nebat, a mere servant of David's son Solomon, rebelled against his master. Jeroboam's kingship is looked at as rebellion against his master Solomon.

13:7 And there are gathered unto him vain men, the children of Belial, and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tenderhearted, and could not withstand them. Then a whole gang of scoundrels joined Jeroboam, defying Solomon's son Rehoboam when he was young and inexperienced and could not stand up to them. Jeroboam's kingdom was extremely rotten, built upon the children of Belial—worthless, base men; liars. This depicts at a time when Rehoboam was "young and tenderhearted", not because of age, but because of immaturity and lack of experience. He didn't follow good counsel of the wise seasoned men. The result was the division of the nation. 10 tribes followed Jeroboam and were called Israel. Jeroboam became the first king of the northern kingdom. The other two tribes, Benjamin and Judah stayed loyal to David's line and accepted Rehoboam's rule and were called Judah. They became two separate kingdoms.

13:8 And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the sons of David; and ye be a great multitude, and there are with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods. "You may have a vast army, and you have those golden calves that you (Jeroboam) made as your gods, but, Do you really think you can stand against the kingdom of the Lord that is led by the descendants of David?"

Abijah is ridiculing the heck out of Israel and Jeroboam

- whose acting like he can defeat the kingdom of the Lord Almighty
- that's led by the descendant of David
- just because of his army that's twice as Abijah's
- and carrying those cursed golden idol calves he made and calls as gods.

This is smack truth talk and Abijah does not back down.

13:9 Have ye not cast out the priests of the Lord, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have made you priests after the manner of the nations of other lands? so that whosoever cometh to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams, the same may be a priest of them that are no gods.

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And you have chased away the priests of the Lord (the descendants of Aaron) and the Levites, and you have appointed your own priests, just like the pagan nations. You let anyone become a priest these days! Whoever comes to be dedicated with a young bull and seven rams can become a priest of these so-called gods of yours!" Israel was full of idols and false priests as Jeroboam had driven out the Levitical priests and with them the true worship of God. Jeroboam had staffed the sacred offices with any non-Levite who could meet one stipulation: payment of a bullock and seven rams. Those appointed to positions of responsibility in the church should be selected upon dedication to God and strong spiritual character. All appointments are through God's process.

II. AN EARNEST WARNING GIVEN II CHRONICLES 13:10-12

13:10 But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priests, which minister unto the Lord, are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business:— Now, Abijah accounts what true worship unto God is all about. "But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not abandoned him. Only the descendants of Aaron serve the Lord as priests, and the Levites alone may help them in their work. Abijah calls out that the Lord is their God and the Lord was for them and the office of the priests and the Levites did not change.

- The sons of Aaron are ministering unto the Lord as priests.
- The Levites wait upon or attend to their service (help in their work).

13:11 And they burn unto the Lord every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense: the shewbread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the Lord our God; but ye have forsaken him.

- They present burnt offerings and fragrant incense to the Lord every morning and evening.
- They place the Bread of the Presence on the holy table.
- They light the golden lampstand every evening.
- They keep the charge of the Lord their God meaning they are following the instructions of the Lord their God.

Abijah tells Jeroboam that he has done none of these things because he's forsaken and abandoned the Lord.

13:12 And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper. Now, Abijah gives a strong warning for Israel not to fight against them and begins to tell them why! So you see, God is with us. He is our leader. His priests blow their trumpets and lead us into battle against you. O people of Israel, do not fight against the Lord, the God of your ancestors, for you will not succeed!" That last part is outstanding— *'All Abijah had to do was just drop the "mic."* He continues to tell them that if they fight, they're fighting against the Lord God of their fathers (ancestors) and they won't succeed! As Jesus said to Saul on the Road to Damascus— *"And the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest: It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks"* (Acts 9:5b). This meant that it was a losing battle. Resisting God is destruction!

III. A TREACHEROUS AMBUSH THWARTED II CHRONICLES 13:13-18

13:13 But Jeroboam caused an ambushment to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the ambushment was behind them. Jeroboam was not big on any talk, but on action. He was unimpressed by the warning Abijah made. He made a surprise attack, trapping Abijah's army (Judah) by encircling them in the front and in the rear.

13:14 And when Judah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind: and they cried unto the Lord, and the priests sounded with the trumpets. Before Judah knew it, Jeroboam's army was in front and behind them. They knew that it was time to call upon the Lord and for the priests to blow the trumpets.



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13:15 Then the men of Judah gave a shout: and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.

13:16 And the children of Israel fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their hand.

This caused the men of Judah to give a loud shout, and as they shouted, God struck Jeroboam and all Israel causing them to flee from before Abijah and Judah. And God delivered them into the hands of Judah.

13:17 And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men. Abijah and his army inflicted heavy losses on them; 500,000 of Israel's chosen men were killed that day.

13:18 Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers. So, Judah defeated Israel on that occasion. The children of Israel were brought low because Abijah and Judah trusted in the Lord, the God of their ancestors.

SUMMARY:

Abijah was greatly outnumbered in his army of 400 000 chosen men, while Jeroboam had 800 000 chosen men to fight. Jeroboam's army was twice the size of Abijah's army. Abijah stood up upon Mount Zemaraim, which is in Mount Ephraim, and said, *"Hear me thou Jeroboam and all Israel, don't you realize that the Lord, the God of Israel, made a lasting covenant with David, giving him and his descendants the throne of Israel forever? even by a covenant of salt? Yet Jeroboam, a mere servant of David's son Solomon, rebelled against his master. Vain men, the children of Belial gathered to you and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tenderhearted, and could not withstand them."* Abijah is ridiculing Israel and Jeroboam. "And you having a great multitude with your golden calves, which you made as your gods, now you think you can withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the sons of David. You have chased away the priests of the Lord (the descendants of Aaron) and the Levites, and you've appointed your own priests, just like the pagan nations. You've let anyone become a priest these days! Whoever comes to be dedicated with a young bull and seven rams can become a priest of these so-called gods of yours! (13:3-9).

Judah did not abandon the Lord. He is our God. Only the descendants of Aaron serve the Lord as priests, and the Levites alone may help them in their work. The sons of Aaron are ministering unto the Lord as priests, and the Levites wait upon or attend to their service (help in their work). They present burnt offerings and fragrant incense to the Lord every morning and evening. They place the Bread of the Presence on the holy table. They light the golden lampstand every evening. They keep the charge of the Lord their God meaning they are. following the instructions of the Lord their God. And Abijah tells Jeroboam that none of this he had done because he's forsaken and abandoned the Lord (13:10-12).

Jeroboam was unimpressed and attacked Abijah's army (Judah) encircling them from the rear and the front. Before Judah knew it, Jeroboam's army was in front and behind them. Judah knew that it was time to call upon the Lord and for the priests to blow the trumpets. This caused the men of Judah to give a loud shout, and as they shouted, God struck Jeroboam and all Israel that were before Abijah and Judah. The children of Israel fled from Judah, and God delivered them into their hands. Abijah and his army inflicted heavy losses upon them; 500,000 of Israel's chosen men were killed that day. So, Judah defeated Israel on that occasion. The children of Israel were brought low because Abijah and Judah trusted in the Lord, the God of their ancestors (13:13-18).