

The Kings Of Judah And Israel

Introduction. After the kingdom divided, both Israel and Judah had a succession of kings. Some of the kings in Judah followed and served God. None of the kings in Israel followed God. This lesson will cover two kings in Judah and five in Israel.

I. **Abijah**

- A. He was the son of Rehoboam and reigned for about three years in Judah (1 Kings 14:31-15:2).
- B. His reign continued the promises to David (2 Samuel 7:11-16; 1 Kings 15:3-5).
- C. He fought against Jeroboam even though he was outnumbered (2 Chronicles 13:2-3).
- D. He made a speech to Jeroboam and Israel before the battle (2 Chronicles 13:4-12).
 - 1. God made a covenant with David (vs. 5).
 - 2. Jeroboam has rebelled against God and against His anointed king (vss. 6-8).
 - 3. Israel has forsaken God (vss. 8-9).
 - 4. Judah is worshiping properly, and God is with Judah (vss. 10-12).
 - 5. Therefore, Israel is warned not to attack, because they would be fighting God (vs. 12).
- E. Jeroboam attacks and 500,000 of Israel's army were killed (2 Chronicles 13:13-20).
- F. Judah was victorious because they relied on God (2 Chronicles 13:18).
- G. In general, however, Abijah was not a follower of God (1 Kings 15:2-3).
- H. Appropriate principles.
 - 1. God remained true to His promise to establish David's throne, and He remains true to that promise today.
 - 2. With God on our side, there is always the possibility of success, even against overwhelming odds.

II. **Asa**

- A. He was Abijah's son and reigned for 41 years in Judah (1 Kings 15:8-10).
- B. His reign continued the promise to David (2 Samuel 7:11-16).
- C. His reforms are notable (2 Chronicles 14:1-7).
 - 1. He removed the altars and idols (vss. 2-3).
 - 2. He turned the people back to God (vs. 4).
 - 3. Judah had peace for ten years (vss. 1, 5).
 - 4. He fortified cities (vss. 6-7).

- D. Zerah the Ethiopian invaded Judah (2 Chronicles 14:9-15).
 - 1. Asa and Judah faced a superior army (vss. 9-11).
 - 2. Asa prayed to God for help (vs. 11).
 - 3. Judah was victorious (vss. 12-15).
- E. He instituted further reforms (2 Chronicles 15:1-19).
 - 1. The prophets encouraged continued faithfulness (vss. 1-8).
 - 2. The covenant to serve God was renewed (vss. 8-15).
 - 3. Even Asa's mother was not spared in these reforms (vs. 16).
 - 4. Peace continued until the 35th year of his reign (vs. 19).
- F. He turned away from God in his last years (2 Chronicles 16:1-14).
 - 1. War with Israel (vs. 1).
 - 2. Asa turned to Syria for help, but not to God (vss. 2-6).
 - 3. Hanani rebuked Asa for not relying on God (vss. 7-10).
 - 4. Asa imprisoned Hanani and oppressed others (vs. 10).
 - 5. He turned to men instead of God during his illness (vs. 12).
 - 6. Asa died (vss. 13-14).
- G. Appropriate principles:
 - 1. Those who rebel against God will ultimately suffer.
 - 2. Those who rely on God and obey Him will be blessed.
 - 3. When we stray from God's will, we need to repent.
 - 4. Repentance includes stopping sinful practices.
 - 5. Compromise leads to weak faith.

III. **Nadab**

- A. He was Jeroboam's son and he walked in the sins of his father (1 Kings 15:25-27).
- B. He reigned two years and was assassinated.

IV. **Baasha**

- A. He assassinated Nadab and killed all the descendants of Jeroboam as Ahijah had prophesied. He also followed in the sins of Jeroboam (1 Kings 15:27-16:7).
- B. Jehu prophesied of the destruction of Baasha's household. He reigned 24 years.

V. **Elah**

- A. He was Baasha's son (1 Kings 16:6-10).
- B. He reigned for two years and was assassinated.

VI. **Zimri**

- A. He assassinated Elah (1 Kings 16:8-20).
- B. He killed the descendants of Baasha, fulfilling the prophecy of Jehu. He reigned 7 days.

VII. **Omri**

- A. He led the rebellion against Zimri; had a brief rivalry against Tibni (1 Kings 16:16-28).
- B. He built Samaria, followed in the sins of Jeroboam and reigned 12 years.

Conclusion. Judah was blessed in that she had two good kings in a row (Asa, Jehoshaphat). Regrettably, after its political instability, Israel had to endure Ahab as her next king.

Questions:

1. How does God's fulfillment of His promise to establish David's throne give us strength and encouragement today?
2. We can name people who are wicked but are prospering. We can also name people who are righteous but suffering. How can this be reconciled with the Bible?
3. How does compromise weaken our faith in God? What can result if we compromise our convictions?
4. What is God's attitude toward sin (Proverbs 6:16-19; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10)?