

Reign of Abijah - The Pull of Inconsistency

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[0 : 00] As we continue here in 1 Kings chapter 15, as we've been going through the kings here, looking at the transitions and things that take place as they go through.

And if you've got your little chart from last week, we can look, because we're going to be moving to Abijah here, right under the, be on your left-hand side of the sheet, right under Rehoboam, as he takes the throne from his father here at the 18 years in from the dividing of the kingdom.

And we see here that the tension between Israel and Judah, though, had not de-escalated in 18 years, but it actually escalated up, you know, and the tensions had increased there in that, and they continued to even get more so as Rehoboam drew close to passing on the throne.

And we see here that the dynamic and the conflict was not just a geopolitical conflict, it was also a religious conflict.

And the things that take place, because ultimately we know we can have, you can have geopolitical type conflicts that cause division, but you know, I want you to understand, what somebody believes impacts a lot more than we realize.

[1 : 29] And we're going to see that as we go through the children of Israel, the choices that they made early here and the direction they've taken impacts the relationships and how those things work together and how those things come about.

And we're going to see here tonight is they have become this polarity of religion within them. And because Judah, if you remember, kind of partially held on to the things of God.

And we're going to look at that tonight because we looked last week about what happened in Rehoboam's reign. You had that blending of what God had along with the things that the children or that the Canaanites had that they brought in, the false gods, all that was trying to be blended together, you know, and to have that syncretism that hindered Rehoboam.

And we ended last week there in 2 Chronicles chapter 12 where it talked about that he failed to prepare his heart to seek the Lord. You know, that's a statement to really all of us have to consider each day.

Because it guides us where our heart is pointed is the direction you're going to be traveling. Your heart affects so much. It has to do with what you love, what you serve, you know.

[2 : 49] And we're going to find that was the summary of his life, you know. You know, if God was to write about you, I hope not that's what God would write. That you failed to follow him because you didn't prepare your heart to seek him.

You know, that's a bad epitaph on this tombstone, isn't it? You know, as we realize what's happening. And so let's go ahead and hear in 1 Kings chapter 15 here in verse 1.

Let's look here. It says, Now in the 18th year of King Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, reigned Abijah over Judah. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we take a few moments tonight, as we look into your word, Lord, as we study the reality of Abijah and just the things here in his life, in the short reign that he had and the things that influenced him, how he influenced others, Lord, the things that we can learn and redeem from this account.

Lord, you say you've told us that the Old Testament is written for our learning and for our understanding. And Lord, help us to apply the truths in our life, to realize the importance of preparing our heart to follow you.

And Lord, we just ask all these things in your precious name. Amen. You know, we look here as we begin to see this transition. At 18 years since the division of the kingdom, we have Rehoboam has passed off the scene.

[4 : 13] And we find his son, and his son is referred to by two different names, and we're going to talk about that in a moment. Because you have one here in 1 Kings where he's called Abijah, and

in Chronicles he's called Abijah.

There's important distinction that you're going to see from this name and how each refers to him. It's the same person. And we're going to see here some things, because let's look at the lineage of Abijah.

You know, because now he assumes the throne of his father, being preferred above his brothers. Remember back in 1 Kings chapter 11, it told us that Rehoboam prepared him specifically to be king, even above his older brothers.

I mean, he was kind of drawn out of the crowd, and he was prepared and set forth for what he was to be doing. And we find here that all that preparation, that his reign was relatively short.

It was only three years long. You know, it was pretty quick, relatively speaking. And it talks about here in verse 2, notice here, it says, Three years reigned he in Jerusalem, and his mother's name was Makai, and the daughter of Absalom.

[5 : 25] And he walked in all the sins of his father, which had done before him, and his heart was not perfect, but the Lord is God, as the heart of David his father.

And so we're going to see here, as he assumes the throne, it's the son of Makai, the granddaughter of Absalom. And I want you to understand, through this thing, you'll find the moms are being mentioned, along with the dads.

You know, one of the things I want you to understand is the mom and dad both influence the kids. The decision-making here, you'll find that the dads are the ones that are held the most accountable in Scripture, because it says they did not the sins of their father, or they did the sins of their father. But the moms have a great impact, and we see that even in the lives, as the moms are mentioned here, through this passages of Scripture.

But she was the granddaughter of Absalom, which is an interesting thing, because who was Absalom? He was one of David's sons, and he was the one that did what?

[6 : 30] Rebelled against his father, and tried to set up his own, and there was a whole thing in that, that we could talk about, you know, because of what went on in the family dynamic.

That's where David didn't step up and do what he ought to do, and caused even more tension in his household, because he failed to do what the God commanded them that they were supposed to do. And to deal with it appropriately, it caused a lot of division in his household, and it had a great impact, but that's not the lesson for tonight, so we'll move on, okay?

You go back and read about that, and understand some of how that crosses in, in the decisions and things that were made there. But I want you to see here that Absalom's granddaughter was who Rehoboam married.

In other words, we find here that as Abijah assumes the throne of Rehoboam, he's continuing with the lineage from both sides. His mom was of the seed of David, and Solomon was definitely seed of David.

[7 : 36] And so you see here that this kingly lineage that is following in, that he lays claim to, and we're going to see this play out in his thinking even here a little later in that.

But as he assumes the throne, the Bible makes a very bold statement here about him again, that he says that he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him.

In other words, he learned the things he learned from his father. Watching what his father did, watching how his father prioritized, watching those things played out in his thinking.

And we see here as he was being prepared for this, he was following the example set by his parents. And I want you to understand, the interesting thing about Abijah is he didn't fully reject God, but he didn't fully walk in God's ways either.

He was trying to run the middle of the road. He was trying to appease everybody. He was trying to work that, say, well, I can go to church on Sunday and do whatever I want on Monday.

[8 : 47] I can do things contrary to the things of God as long as I go do and perform the things that I ought to do. And we're going to see here that he was, as we're going to look at his comments, he was very performance-based in his mindset about it.

If I perform this, therefore I'm okay. And we have to be careful because God doesn't care as much about what you perform that if your heart's right, because if your heart's right, what you do is going to be right.

But you can do what appears right with a wrong heart. But if your heart's right, you're going to do right. We learned that from Rehoboam, didn't we? He sinned because he did not prepare his heart

to seek the Lord.

That's a dynamic that was there. And we find as we walk through here that Abijah is going to take the promises of God and try to manipulate them for his advantage.

You know, he was clearly in the lineage of David, the one that God promised to uphold. And he, like many throughout time, they hear the promises of God that benefit them and ignore or downplay the promises they don't like or the commands they don't like.

[10:04] And that's how we play both sides of that coin sometimes is we overemphasize things that we like and we de-emphasize things we don't like. Where God says they're all the same.

And to measure that, we're going to see that in Abijah's life here. And we're going to see as this is how it's going to impact his thinking and being in the lineage of David along with the kingdom that had been established under David and Solomon.

He sought to re-establish that kingdom once again by force. And we're going to see his thinking play out because we're going to find here in just a little bit that he claimed the promises of the kingdom but didn't hold to the commands of God.

He wanted the benefits without the responsibility. You know, same thing today. There's a lot of people want the benefits of God without the responsibility that comes of standing before God.

They want all the blessing but they don't want anything of accountability. And we're going to see here Abijah, you might say, is the poster child for some of this as we look through because he sets the stage for what's to come.

[11:16] And we find here that he claimed those promises of the Lord but it says his heart was not perfect with the Lord. Notice in verse 3 there it says his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God as the heart of David his father.

David would have actually been his great-grandfather and that's something you need to keep in mind and remember when you're reading through Scripture is that when you hear that relationship that can sometimes mean more than just an immediate but extended out like David was his father in the sense he was his great-grandfather.

Okay? And so just when you're reading through the Bible you have to keep some of that in mind or you'll get confused. How is that son there and this one over here and that relationship?

You have to understand in Hebrew the writing of that and the terms used could be used. It just means in the lineage of. Okay? And so it has that family connection but it says something here his heart was not perfect with the Lord.

That word perfect there generally means complete but this one actually in Hebrew ties in the thing of that peace with God. And that's one thing we see here because he's contrasted against David.

[12:34] And we're going to see here in just a minute we're going to talk about David and how God refers to David here because this is important for us to understand. Because it said his heart was not perfect before God as David's was.

And the first thing comes to mind when you talk about David and his heart was right but perfect before God and all the things that he did your first thought is David did a lot of wrong things.

How could God look at David and say David was a man after my own heart? That David was a godly individual. Look what David did. David committed adultery, killed a person.

But yet God said he was a man. That's hard for some people to comprehend. But I want you to understand when we look at this tonight it describes how that's possible. Because just like with you and I God takes a sinful person and can make us right with him.

And we see this going to be spoken about here a little bit but let's look here at just a moment here. I talked about the names. You know because in 1 Kings chapter 15 he's called Abijam which is references the Canaanite God Yam.

[13:42] In other words it's interesting that we see this division even in his name because here it's listed as a Canaanite type name giving honor to a Canaanite God.

But over in 1 Chronicles he's taught in chapter 13 he's Abijah which refers to he is of his father Jehovah. You know.

It gives that picture that dynamic of difference. And even his actions. Because remember he did not fully reject God but he didn't fully accept God.

And you have a lot of people in the same place. They'll give lip service to God. They know all the right answers. They know exactly what people want to hear and what people expect.

But their heart is not perfect before God. And we see this brought out for us. And we see as he's playing these things come to fruition.

[14:42] We find in verse 4 here in his lineage here this interesting thing. Verse 4 begins with a word nevertheless. Nevertheless. You know.

In other words Abijah was not right before God. He gave God homage. He respected God in certain ways. But his heart was not right with him.

But it says this. Nevertheless for David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem to set up his son after him to establish Jerusalem. You know.

Nevertheless for David's sake. Now that's a power punch statement right there. Nevertheless for David's sake. The lineage of Abijah was from David.

And Abijah's going to hold on to some of what God has declared to his great grandfather David. But he doesn't understand how that plays out.

[15:38] We're going to look at that a little bit tonight. Because what a great truth we see here though that's declared. Nevertheless for David's sake did the Lord God give him a lamp in Jerusalem. You know what.

This speaks highly about God's character. This is a statement that tells you something about who God is. Because remember God told David this is what I'm going to do.

He didn't tell David if you do this or if you do that or if you do this over here. When you read over in 1 Samuel chapter 7 you'll find that God just told David this is what I'm going to do.

And you know what this tells us? What God told David he was going to do. God said nevertheless no matter what somebody else does I'm going to keep my word. I'm going to keep my promise. You know this is one of them when you look at God could justly look and say they didn't merit me keeping my promise.

But you know what God did anyways. We see God's character here because God keeps his word. God keeping his word is not dependent upon us.

[16:44] You know David had been given a promise there in 1 Samuel chapter 7 that God would give him his throne and his throne would be established forever.

That there would be a lineage that was there and he was going to keep a light for David there. And he would keep because David did right in the eyes of the Lord.

Because notice here in verse 5. Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord and turned not aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

You know. That's another one of those that David was not a perfect individual. In the eyes as we see David sinned. I want you to understand that David is no different than you and I.

But we can see one of God's promises working right here. We see a promise of God at work because not that David sinned. It's because David sinned and David did something to get right with God.

[17:50] And it wasn't much of sacrifices. It wasn't going through different ordinances. It wasn't doing all those other things. You'll find that when David turned back to God and said God I'm a sinner and I need your forgiveness.

God responded. You know look over the New Testament for a moment. Go over to Acts chapter 13. You know it's always interesting as you read about the Old Testament saints in the New Testament. You'll find that you sometimes look at it and you look at it and say are they talking about the same person? Because look here in Acts 13 verse 22 it says. And when he had removed him he raised up unto them David to be their king to whom also he gave testimony and said.

I have found David the son of Jesse a man after mine own heart which shall fulfill all my will. David was not without sin.

We know he went after Bathsheba the wife of Uriah the Hittite which ended in the death. He had Uriah killed. Ultimately the child that was born from that passed away.

[19:01] But you know what it wasn't that David that God overlooked what David did. It was David's response to what he did that made a difference.

Because God is in the business of dealing with sin. You know we understand the importance because notice here how can God look at David and say he was a man after his own heart.

Go to Psalm 51 for a moment because this is important to understand. And you know and this is one of those things that oftentimes I think we miss.

But David published this as a song for people to sing. David was given testimony of his own life when he wrote this about his relationship. Notice in Psalm 51 you'll notice there's all in the Psalms you'll sometimes have a little heading that comes up in there.

Right underneath the top of the Psalm there right when it's listed. And this one says to the chief musician a Psalm of David when Nathan the prophet came unto him after he had gone into Bathsheba.

[20 : 04] That gives us the pretense those are actually part of the scripture. Because it's identifying those things for us. And notice what David writes.

He says have mercy upon me oh God according to thy loving kindness. According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Now I want you to catch something here because verse 3 is important. Because sometimes people say well I'll ask God to forgive me and I'm really sorry.

But notice what David adds here because this is an important element of getting right with God. He says for I acknowledge my transgression my sin is ever before me. In other words David acknowledged that yes I violated God's law.

Nobody else did. I did. I'm responsible. But I want you to understand that God also forgives. You can finish reading through Psalm 51 and you'll find out that David asks for something in prayer.

[21 : 11] He wants to restore the joy of his salvation. You know what he's asking for? God I want to be at peace with you again. I want my heart perfect before you again.

I want to have that fellowship that we once had in the right way. I desire those things that are missing. Because look up just a little bit before that in the back in our passage where we started there in 1 Kings.

Because notice the problem with Abijah was what? His heart was not perfect, complete. It wasn't at peace with God. Why wasn't it at peace? Because there were things separating him from God that he wasn't willing to deal with.

He didn't want to deal with those things. But you say, how can God talk about David having his heart right? Because simply this. God forgave him.

Because David came and recognized and called upon the Lord to forgive him. And you know what? Whenever you ask God sincerely and genuinely, understanding that you violated his law, God says, I will forgive.

[22 : 18] And God says he'll take that sin and move it as far as the east is from the west. You know, a few weeks ago we talked about that concept of behind your back.

You know, things behind your back you never see. Why could God say this? Because David asked for forgiveness and God said, I took that and placed it behind my back. I put it away.

I've dealt with those things. You know, it's showing here that God's again honoring his promise.

Because God is very clear that if we come to him, he will no wise reject you or turn you out.

God's revealing and even reminding. I believe he reminded Abijah many times that, hey, if you get your heart right, the rest is going to fall into place. But we're going to find here that Abijah chose differently.

Because we're going to look at the battle of Abijah. Look here at verse 6. And it says, And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. And now the rest of the acts of Abijah and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

[23 : 26] And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. Now I want you to look at the battle. So in order to do that, let's go over to 2 Chronicles chapter 13. Because remember that the kings, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings are tied together in a block.

And then you have 1 and 2 Chronicles. And 1 and 2 Chronicles give you further insight into 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings. It gives you a different perspective.

And so as we're going to look here in 2 Chronicles over here, chapter 13, we see here, it picks up, it says, And now in the 18th year the king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah.

He reigned three years in Jerusalem, and his mother's name was Micaiah, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. And Abijah set the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, even 400,000 chosen men.

Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with 800,000 chosen men, being mighty men of valor. And so we see here that Abijah's growing up witnessing and experiencing the conflict

between his father Rehoboam and Jeroboam.

[24 : 44] Because remember there was this constant tension between them the whole time. That he was growing up. And we understand that he's going to come here, and he's going to accuse Jeroboam of being a wrong usurper of the kingdom.

Which as you read this, you find a little irony considering his great-grandfather usurped David in things. You know, it's interesting how those things come back around.

But I want you to see here that there was two battles happening in his life. One was between serving the Lord and doing what's right, and the other was to serve the idols and the things and the selfishness and the self-righteousness that he promoted of himself.

You know, we find this struggle recorded for us here. Because notice he moves his army into Israel. It tells us here he went to Mount Ephraim. Which is basically right in the heart of the northern tribes. It was their important place. And he stands up on the mountain. He puts his 400,000 men around him. And stands up and starts proclaiming. He makes this great oration. Notice what he says here.

[25 : 52] We pick up in verse 4. And Abijah stood upon the Mount Zerim, which is Mount Ephraim. And he said, Hear me, thou Jeroboam and all Israel.

Ought ye not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David forever, even to him and to his sons by covenant of salt? Yet Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon, the son of David, is risen up and hath rebelled against his Lord.

And there are gathered unto him vain men and children of Belial and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam and their son Solomon. And the son of Solomon, which Rehoboam was young and tenderhearted and could not understand or not withstand them.

And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the son of David. And ye be a great multitude. And there are with you golden calves which Jeroboam made you for gods.

Let's stop here for a moment and start breaking some of this down a little bit. Because I want you to see the picture. Here's Abijah. Goes into Israel with 400,000 men.

[27 : 04] Stands up on the mountain and says, I'm taking back what's rightfully mine because God gave the kingdom to my grandfather David. He's making a bold assertion. He's making a declaration that he's taking the kingdom because it's what God wanted.

Now I want you to notice and remember something important here. What he said is partially true.

You know, do we live in a day where people operate on partially true things?

We need to be careful that we operate in full truth and not try to do things or dictate things in partial truth. Because what he said is true.

God gave the kingdom from Saul to David. But what he failed to leave out is what had happened in the meantime. Look back to 1 Kings chapter 11. Look down at verse 30.

Do you remember when we talked about this? When Ahijah the prophet, there in 1 Kings chapter 11 verse 30. Excuse me, is that?

[28 : 09] Yeah, that's 1 Kings. Yep, right. Caught a new garment on him and rent it in 12 pieces and said unto Jeroboam, Take thee 10 pieces, for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Behold, I will rent the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and give 10 tribes unto thee.

What was he doing? Because he would have been very aware this took place. He was taking the part he liked and said, I'm going to operate in the part I like and ignore the part I don't like.

Because let me ask you a question. Had God given Jeroboam the 10 tribes? The scripture is very clear that God gave Jeroboam the 10 tribes.

Why did he give 10 tribes over to Jeroboam? Do you remember? Because of the sins of Solomon. Because Solomon in his later years turned from the Lord.

He was really here, Abijah here is declaring a divine right to take back the kingdom based on a promise given to David, but yet rejects the prophet Ahijah's declaration against Solomon because of his sin.

[29 : 14] Now let's apply this for a moment. Whenever you, when you don't consider the whole counsel of God, it will cause you to draw conclusions that are inaccurate.

We need to make sure that we have a full picture of what God has said. Because here, just as he did, it's easy to draw false conclusions and false narratives if you don't consider the whole counsel of God's word.

You say, what do you mean? Well, let's use a nice easy one. Have you ever heard, well, God loves people, so nobody's going to go to hell? Now let me ask you a question.

Is it true that God loves everybody? But if you don't consider the whole counsel of God, you get misguided and have a wrong narrative, don't you? Because they forget to tell you, when they say God loves you, is the fact that Jesus Christ is that love manifest to you.

That he came and died on the cross because of your sin. And what you've done with the one he sent to die on the cross changes everything about your relationship with God.

[30 : 16] Because whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. There's a change that takes place because of the whole counsel of God and not just part of it. That's easy and obvious, but we need to be careful in every area that we're measuring things with the whole counsel of God and not just part of it.

Not taking the stuff we like like Abijah did. God promised the kingdom to David, so let's go take it. Because he was pushing a false narrative. He has a lot of false narrative.

Look at verse 7. As I read this, it's interesting. The end of verse 7 is another one of those wonderful, you know, we talked a lot today about misinformation and falsehoods.

Here's a, I want you to remember back when we talked about Rehoboam taking over for Solomon and the kingdom dividing. Notice what his son says about him.

Look at verse 7. It says, And when Rehoboam was young and tenderhearted and could not withstand them. Now, think back for a moment. How old was Rehoboam when he took the kingdom from his father?

[31 : 23] He was 41 years old. So, does the young part in definition meet? Because young here, he's implying that he was naive. That in his youth, he didn't understand what was happening.

I think at 41 years old, he had a full clue of what was happening. Especially growing up in his father Solomon's house. He knew what was going on. He was tenderhearted. Now, that one's got to make you chuckle a little bit.

When we just talked about Rehoboam and all the things that he did. And he could not withstand them. In other words, what he's saying is, Jeroboam came and took them, and my father wasn't able, or wasn't up to speed to defend it.

Now, remember, when Jeroboam took the ten tribes, what did Rehoboam try to do? He tried to take it back. Why did he not take it back?

Because he was young and tenderhearted and didn't understand? Yeah, God sent a prophet and said, no, you don't. Because remember, he called up all the men.

[32 : 28] He was getting ready to go. And God sent the prophet to him and said, no, you don't. That's a nice twist of narrative, isn't it? What we experience today is no different than what they did back then.

You know, there's nothing new under the sun. And I want you to see here, God's describing what takes place in this. And then notice the next assessment here in verse 8.

And it says, Now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the Son of David, and ye be a great multitude, and there are with you golden calves with Jeroboam made you for gods.

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

Now notice, he's standing on the mountain and he's making accusations against Israel. Now, is what he said false? No, here goes back to a pretty accurate narrative, doesn't he?

[33 : 35] It's exactly what was taking place with Jeroboam. Because remember, all the priests and others had moved back, had come back into Judah because of this. But now, look at verse 10.

But as for us, the Lord is our God and we have not forsaken him. Now, what did it say about Abijah at the beginning in 1 Kings?

That he followed after, what, the sins of his father. And they had all the evil in the land, they had all the false worship set up in the land.

This is a little self-righteousness going on here. And notice why he says that. This is important to pick note. Because in the priests which minister unto the Lord are the sons of Aaron and the Levites wait upon their business and they burn unto the Lord every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense and the showbread is also set in order upon the pure table and the candlestick of gold and lamps thereof to burn everything, to burn every evening.

For we keep the charge of the Lord our God, ye have forsaken him. And behold, God himself is with our captains and his priests with a sounding trumpet to cry alarm against you.

[34 : 55] Now let's slow down and back up for a moment. In Jerusalem, were they still worshipping God in the temple? Yes.

All these things were happening, but simultaneously people were going out into the groves and worshipping all the others at the same time. Now do you see the self-righteous nature of what he's saying here?

He says, we're still seeking God because we're going through the actions. We're doing all the things that God wanted us to do, but remember the assessment in 1 Kings? His heart was what? Not perfect before the Lord his God. He has a conflict that's going on because he's like, I'm going through all the ritual, I'm going through all the things that I'm supposed to do, all the things that make me look religious, all the things that give an appearance I'm doing what I ought to do, therefore I'm serving God and you're not.

In reality, what he was doing was no different than the children of Israel because his heart was far from God. It's the same condemnation that Jesus gave to the Pharisees, didn't he?

[36 : 07] He said, you honor me with your lips, but your heart is far from me. We see this self-righteousness and this self-proclamation. The Lord is our God.

We haven't forsaken anything. The priests still do the sacrifice and we do all the things that we're supposed to and therefore God is with us. We see all this playing out and verse 12, it says, and behold, God himself is with us for our captain and his priests and 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. In other words, he's building the case of we're so self-righteous, God's going to hand you over to us.

Now, while he's up on the mountain speaking, we're going to condense this down quick so we can get to the conclusion. While he's up on the mountain surrounded by his 400,000 men, Jeroboam goes, huh, they're all in one place up on the mountain.

Let's get around and circle them. So when he gets done with his great oration here, he discovers that he has 800,000 men surrounding his 400,000 men. Ultimately, they were victorious.

[37 : 17] Why? First Kings tells us why he was victorious and not destroyed for the sake of David. Because God said, I can't allow this to take place and be able to keep my promise over here.

I want you to understand just because you're successful and say the Lord did it doesn't mean God did it because of you. Look at verse 14 back there in 2 Chronicles.

And Judah looked back and behold, the battle was before and behind and notice this. I think this is the thing that played into it. And they cried unto the Lord. You know, one thing about it, when you call upon God, God hears you.

And we see God delivers them. Matter of fact, the Bible tells us as we go down through here, we'll notice all that went on here.

And it said that verse 16, the children of Israel fled before Judah and God delivered them into their hand and Abijah and his people slew of them a great slaughter. So there fell down slain of Israel 500,000 chosen men.

[38 : 19] And so Abijah continues and he conquers much of the land of Israel trying to fulfill what he said was his divine right. So let's talk just for a moment here because ultimately he has a short reign less than three years.

Just under three years of time he was on the throne. And it says he died. What lessons can we learn from Abijah? You know, what do we observe and learn from his life?

Well, a few things that are positive. We know he was a courageous man. I mean, he was a man that would stand up and go do something. He was a man that could be convincing in his speech.

He was a great orator. He was a preacher, a proclaimer. People followed him and boy, he put together a good sounding message. It wasn't accurate, but it was good. I'm sure he got lots of amens in the crowd.

He knew about God and his commandments and promises, but he didn't internalize them. He had no relationship. His heart was not at peace with God. And lastly, we see he lived a double life trying to please both the Lord and the world.

[39 : 24] Because he said, well, I want everybody to know we worship God just like we're supposed to, but yet he still sinned after the same thing as his father, going out into the groves and participating in the evil that took place.

You know, there's a lot of things we can learn from Abijah, but let me give you a couple other observations that we learn from this passage. You know, one primary one we can take away is God always keeps his promises.

God always keeps his promises and it's not dependent upon what people do. Secondly, God will not change his will to suit the ideas of people. Because remember, Abijah had a thought, I'm going to use this, I'm going to manipulate, I'm going to do this, and God in 1 Kings says, hey, I'm not doing this for you, I'm doing it because I made a promise to David.

Because if David's heart was right with me. Third thing you can find, I think it's very important here, that if you have sin and you repent and turn to God to restore right fellowship, God will forgive.

Not just partially, but completely. And the fourth thing is we need to know not only what God says, but how it applies to us.

[40 : 36] Because if you apply God's word wrongly, you get wrong conclusions and end up in a wrong place. Some important lessons we can learn through this.

As we move through and understand what's happening as we see him pass from the scene quickly and his son Asa take the throne.

Asa says I will be house as a Henry can die to the woman who is that to superhero is correct and after family the woman should ask you be turned the Angst Hitler