

## When

- Rehoboam, Solomon's son, became king in his father's place in 975 B.C.
- Rehoboam reigned 17 years (1 Kings 14:21) in Judah, from approximately 975-958 B.C.
- Abijah reigned for 3 years following Rehoboam, 958-955 B.C.
- When the kingdom of Israel and Judah divided, the people of Israel made Jeroboam their king.
- Jeroboam was king over Israel for 22 years (1 Kings 14:20), 975-953 B.C.

## Key Characters

- **Rehoboam** – The son of Solomon and the 4th king of Israel and Judah.
- **Abijah** – Rehoboam's son. He took the throne of Judah after his father's death.
- **Jeroboam** – An Ephraimite who was originally a servant of Solomon. God selected him to be the king over Israel following the rebellion against Rehoboam.



## Where

- Abijah and Jeroboam waged war against each other in the hill country of Ephraim.
- Abijah captured Bethel and brought it under the control of the nation of Judah.

## Outline

### - ABIJAH REIGNS IN JUDAH AND WARS WITH JEROBOAM (13:1-22):

- + Rehoboam's son, Abijah, took the throne and reigned over Judah 3 years.
- + He went to war with Jeroboam of Israel. His army of 400,000 fought Jeroboam's 800,000 men.
- + Abijah stood up and addressed Jeroboam before the battle. He accused him of rebelling against God because God had promised the leadership of the nation to David's house.
- + He called out Jeroboam's idol worship and the illegitimate priests Israel had appointed to serve at their unauthorized places of worship.
- + In contrast, Abijah spoke of Judah's respect for God and His commands.
- + Unknown to Abijah, Jeroboam had secretly surrounded the army of Judah by sending an ambushing force behind Abijah's army.
- + When Abijah discovered his peril, the priests blew their trumpets and the king cried out to the Lord for help.
- + God heard Abijah's plea, and He helped Judah defeat the army of Jeroboam. 500,000 men of Israel were killed in the battle.
- + Abijah was able to take control of a few of Jeroboam's cities, including Bethel.
- + The text says Judah won the battle because "they relied on the Lord, the God of their fathers" (13:18).
- + Jeroboam never managed to rebuild the strength of Israel during his reign. The Lord "struck him down" after he reigned 22 years.
- + Unfortunately, Abijah was not always faithful to the Lord either (1 Kings 15:3). He repeated many of the sins of his father.

## Application

- Probabilities, odds, strategies, and proportions are meaningless when God's power is at play in a situation.
- Have you noticed from the Bible stories that God likes to give victories to His servants when the battles they fight have odds heavily stacked against them?
- Abijah was out-manned and out-maneuvered, but his plea to God was enough to negate all those factors.
- Can God not work in these same ways today? Can He not still tip the balances of power and secure victories for His saints over seemingly insurmountable forces of evil?
- This should give us confidence to undertake great and ambitious tasks. Our strength may be insufficient to achieve them, but a plea to God may be all it takes to rally the forces of heaven behind our cause.