

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
THE REIGNS OF ABIJAM AND ASA
1 KINGS 15:1-15

Introduction

I don't know about you but it seems to me that time is quickly flying by!
And the older that I get, the faster it seems to go...at least to me.

The 20th Century doesn't seem that long ago. Remember as we approached the end of that century that folks were all concerned about what was going to happen in Y2K. It doesn't seem that long ago, yet it has been 20 years!

James reminds us of the brevity of this life in *James 4:14*:
“*Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*”

It is here for a little while and then it's gone. The average lifespan for a woman in the U.S. is **81.2** and for a man it is **76.4 years**. **That used to seem far away and yet now I'm just 13 years from that number.**

Psalm 90:9 “...we spend our years as a tale that is told.”
Think about what kind of story your life is telling.

Psalm 90:12 “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

What we do with our time in this life, not only affects us, but those who follow behind us—especially our loved ones! Our life can even affect people we may never meet personally.

We all need to take a good look at our life right now and see what the direction of it is—Where are we heading?

The road we are traveling with regard to the LORD, is it one of obedience to Him or rebellion against him? Are we on the road of ruin or the road of blessing?

In our text tonight, Solomon has been dead for almost two decades, yet, the ripple effect of his life continues to influence his family and his nation.

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As the curtain opens in this chapter, we will see the effects of Solomon and David's lives, decades after their deaths.

I. WE SEE THE ASCENSION OF ABIJAM TO THE THRONE. (15:1-2)

After the death of Rehoboam, Abijam ascended to the throne in Judah. Abijam was not Rehoboam's oldest son. **He was the son of his favorite wife Maachah.** Rehoboam had 18 wives, 60 concubines, 28 sons, and 60 daughters.

Polygamy was practiced by David, Solomon, Rehoboam, and then Abijam. Abijam married 14 wives and had 22 sons and 16 daughters (**2 Chronicles 13:21**).

Isn't it sad that children normally tend to pick up the bad traits and habits of their parents, but rarely the good ones! We see this in the next verse as well!

II. WE SEE THE WALK OF ABIJAM. (15:3)

Abijam walked in the sins of his fathers both in polygamy and in idolatry. It says here that “...his heart was not perfect toward the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father.”

It means **his heart was lacking when it came to the LORD**. That lack can come from an attitude of either **indifference** or **rebellion**.

Notice the digression from David down to Abijam:

1. **David's** heart's direction was **TOWARD the LORD**.
Even when he sinned, he came back to the LORD!
2. **Solomon's** heart started **TOWARD the LORD** but was **TURNED AWAY from the LORD** by his many wives just as the LORD had warned him they would do.
3. **Rehoboam's** heart started **AWAY from the LORD**, appeared to have been brought back **TOWARD the LORD** for a short period.

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2 Chronicles 12:1 says that when "...he had established his kingdom and strengthened himself, **he forsook the law of the LORD.**"

4. **Abijam's** heart started **AWAY from the LORD** as it says here in *verse 3* that "**...he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him.**"

Oh there was **TALK about the LORD** when he rose up against Jeroboam and Israel, but it was only **TALK**. And the LORD DID deliver Abijam and Judah out of Israel's hands, but it was for David's sake! (*2 Chronicles 13:1-22*)

Abijam's reign lasted only three short years. He abused and wasted his opportunities and was quickly removed.

- III. WE SEE THE REASON FOR ABIJAM'S REIGN. (15:4-5)**
Abijam deserved judgment. But because of God's grace and God's covenant with David, he was allowed to rule three years, even though he was a wicked king.

God could have ended the Davidic line, but He promised David He would not end it. **And God keeps His promises!** God promised to give David a lamp which is a reference or term for "*descendant.*"

To have one's lamp put out meant the removal of a family line.
Proverbs 13:9 The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

Proverbs 20:20 Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.

God allowed Abijam to rule because of the merits of David.

May we live in such a way that our loved ones are in a position to be blessed because of our relationship with the Lord.

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Se may wonder if our life really makes a difference in the world. Let me assure you it does! Our life can have a ripple effect on people we rub shoulders with as well as with people we have never met.

Our life and decisions can have a domino effect. There is no telling whose life we might affect, so we should choose to live it for God!

David was faithful to the Lord, except for the matter of Uriah the Hittite. The truth of that statement is that sin leaves a stain on an otherwise righteous man.

Oh how we need to avoid the stains of sin in our lives as Believers! We need to keep the slate of our lives clean by clinging to the LORD!

- IV. WE SEE THE REIGN LONG RESISTANCE WITH ISRAEL. (15:6-8; Cf. 2 Chronicles 13:1-22)**
Abijam had constant problems with Israel, but the LORD allowed him to prevail over Jeroboam for David's sake!

- V. WE SEE THE REIGN OF THE RIGHTEOUS KING ASA. (15:9-11; 2 Chronicles 14, 15, 16)**
The next king in line was Asa. His name means "*physician*" or "*Who will heal?*"

For the next 41 years, Asa began to bring healing to the nation.

Eight of the nineteen kings of Judah were good kings. Four of them led in great revivals. Asa was one of those. **He was the first to do right in the eyes of the Lord.** The land rested for the first ten years of his reign. (*2 Chronicles 14:1*)

Even though he was reared in a wicked home, Asa did not follow the evil ways of his father.

The grace of God touched his life. This makes one wonder, "*Why does one child follow his parent's ways and why does another reject them?*"

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Why do kids reject the teachings of Believing parents? Why does one child turn from God while another follows the Lord?" Only God knows the heart and the reasons.

Whether kids have godly parenting or ungodly parenting, they still have the responsibility to choose for themselves! God holds the parent responsible for the testimony presented and children responsible for the choices they make!

Asa rejected the instructions of his mother/grandmother for he knew idolatry was wrong and wickedness was wrong.

VI. WE SEE THE REMOVAL OF STUMBLING BLOCKS BY ASA.
(15:12-14)

Asa **removed the sodomites...He removed the idols** of Abijam, Rehoboam, and all the way back to the ones erected by Solomon **(Vs 12)**...and **he removed his own mother (actually grandmother)** from the royal court because she had made an idol in a grove. **(Vs 13)**

All of these were factors that had led to the corruption of the nation! Asa's reform began with his own family. Asa knew if the royal court was corrupt, then that is where he had to begin to make changes!

I doubt that it was easy for Asa. Sometimes our obedience to God may alienate family members or others around us.

If revival is to come to our own dear country, it must begin with us, even our own families, then the Church!

1 Peter 4:17 — "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"

Asa knew that to have the blessing of the LORD, he had to remove that which was offensive to God. So, Asa removed the sodomites, the idols and his grandmother from leadership.

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But he left the high places...difficult to level, no doubt! **(Vs 14)** Nevertheless, Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days.

To leave the evil alone and unrebuked would mean that he would share in the guilt of the evil. Removing his grandmother/mother demonstrated to the people that he meant business and was no respecter of persons.

VII. WE SEE THE RELATIONSHIP OF ASA WITH THE LORD.
(5:15)

Asa knew how to stand alone for God and be steadfast. He was more concerned about God's opinion than man's.

He began to undo what Solomon started. What a contrast between the two. Solomon, the wisest king at the height of his prosperity and peaceful reign, ended up building altars of abominations.

Asa, a young prince, unknown to fame, having no special abilities and surrounded by obstacles, was the first to stem the tide of sin and shame that Solomon started.

Solomon built altars for his wives and Asa burnt those idols as well as the idols of his own mother/grandmother.

Solomon was a strong king who was brought into subjection by weak and foolish women. The little known king humbled the proudest, and strongest woman of his time. He resolved to do what was right!

Conclusion

So the wickedness of our ancestors is NOT an excuse for US to do wrong!

God will judge the wickedness of our ancestors, but he will still hold us responsible for the choices we make!

And regardless of how our ancestors may have lived, we can still choose to live for the LORD and be blessed of the LORD in our own lives!