FIRST KINGS

Chapter 15

***Abijah King of Judah***

**In the eighteenth year of the reign of Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijah became king of Judah, 2 and he reigned in Jerusalem three years. His mother’s name was Maacah daughter of Abishalom.3 He committed all the sins his father had done before him; his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his forefather had been. 4 Nevertheless, for David’s sake the Lord his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem by raising up a son to succeed him and by making Jerusalem strong. 5 For David had done what was right in the eyes of the Lord and had not failed to keep any of the Lord’s commands all the days of his life—except in the case of Uriah the Hittite. 6 There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam throughout Abijah’s lifetime. 7 As for the other events of Abijah’s reign, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. 8 And Abijah rested with his fathers and was buried in the City of David. And Asa his son succeeded him as king.**

**15:1** *eighteenth year of the reign of Jeroboam.* The first of numerous synchronisms in 1,2 Kings between the reigns of the kings in the north and those in Judah (see, e.g., vv. 9, 25, 33; 16:8, 15, 29; see also Introduction: Chronology). (CSB)

 *Abijah.* See note on 14:1. Both Rehoboam and Jeroboam had sons by this name. (CSB)

**15:2** *three years.* 913–910 b.c. (CSB)

 *Maacah daughter of Abishalom.* See NIV text note. Abijah’s mother is said to be a daughter of Uriel of Gibeah in 2Ch 13:2. It is likely that Maacah was the granddaughter of Absalom and the daughter of a marriage between Tamar (Absalom’s daughter; see 2Sa 14:27) and Uriel. Absalom’s mother was also named Maacah (2Sa 3:3). (CSB)

**15:3** *sins his father had done.* See 14:22–24. (CSB)

 *not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as … David his forefather had been.* Although David fell into grievous sin, his heart was never divided between serving the Lord and serving the nature deities of the Canaanites. (CSB)

**15:4** *lamp in Jerusalem.* See note on 11:36. (CSB)

**15:5** *Uriah the Hittite.* See 2Sa 11. (CSB)

**15:6** *Rehoboam.* See NIV text note; see also note on 12:24. (CSB)

**15:7** *other events of Abijah’s reign.* See 2Ch 13. (CSB)

 *annals of the kings of Judah.* See note on 14:29. (CSB)

 *war between Abijah and Jeroboam.* Cf. v. 6; 14:30. From 2Ch 13 it is clear that the chronic hostile relations of preceding years flared into serious combat in which Abijah defeated Jeroboam and took several towns from him, including Bethel (2Ch 13:19). (CSB)

**15:8** *rested with his fathers.* See note on 1:21. (CSB)

***Asa King of Judah***

**9 In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa became king of Judah, 10 and he reigned in Jerusalem forty-one years. His grandmother’s name was Maacah daughter of Abishalom. 11 Asa did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as his father David had done. 12 He expelled the male shrine prostitutes from the land and got rid of all the idols his fathers had made. 13 He even deposed his grandmother Maacah from her position as queen mother, because she had made a repulsive Asherah pole. Asa cut the pole down and burned it in the Kidron Valley. 14 Although he did not remove the high places, Asa’s heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life. 15 He brought into the temple of the Lord the silver and gold and the articles that he and his father had dedicated. 16 There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel throughout their reigns. 17 Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and fortified Ramah to prevent anyone from leaving or entering the territory of Asa king of Judah. 18 Asa then took all the silver and gold that was left in the treasuries of the Lord’s temple and of his own palace. He entrusted it to his officials and sent them to Ben-Hadad son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, the king of Aram, who was ruling in Damascus. 19 “Let there be a treaty between me and you,” he said, “as there was between my father and your father. See, I am sending you a gift of silver and gold. Now break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so he will withdraw from me.” 20 Ben-Hadad agreed with King Asa and sent the commanders of his forces against the towns of Israel. He conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel Beth Maacah and all Kinnereth in addition to Naphtali. 21 When Baasha heard this, he stopped building Ramah and withdrew to Tirzah. 22 Then King Asa issued an order to all Judah—no one was exempt—and they carried away from Ramah the stones and timber Baasha had been using there. With them King Asa built up Geba in Benjamin, and also Mizpah. 23 As for all the other events of Asa’s reign, all his achievements, all he did and the cities he built, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? In his old age, however, his feet became diseased. 24 Then Asa rested with his fathers and was buried with them in the city of his father David. And Jehoshaphat his son succeeded him as king.**

**15:9** *twentieth year of Jeroboam.* 910 b.c. (see note on 14:20). (CSB)

**15:10** *forty-one years.* 910–869 b.c. (CSB)

 *Maacah daughter of Abishalom.* See note on v. 2. (CSB)

**Rulers of Israel and Judah**

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| data and dates in order of sequence |   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | Adapted from: *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings* by Edwin R. Thiele. © 1977 by the Zondervan Corporation. Used by Permission. |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| *1.* | *1Ki 12:1–24**14:21–31* | ***Rehoboam*** *(Judah)* |   | *17 years* |   | ***930–913*** |
| 2. | 1Ki 12:25–14:20 | **Jeroboam I** (Israel) |   | 22 years |   | **930–909** |
| *3.* | *1Ki 15:1–8* | ***Abijah*** *(Judah)* | *18th of Jeroboam* | *3 years* |   | ***913–910*** |
| *4.* | *1Ki 15:9–24* | ***Asa*** *(Judah)* | *20th of Jeroboam* | *41 years* |   | ***910–869*** |
| 5. | 1Ki 15:25–31 | **Nadab** (Israel) | 2nd of Asa | 2 years |   | **909–908** |
| 6. | 1Ki 15:32–16:7 | **Baasha** (Israel) | 3rd of Asa | 24 years |   | **908–886** |
| 7. | 1Ki 16:8–14 | **Elah** (Israel) | 26th of Asa | 2 years |   | **886–882** |
| 8. | 1Ki 16:15–20 | **Zimri** (Israel) | 27th of Asa | 7 days |   | **885** |
| 9. | 1Ki 16:21–22 | **Tibni** (Israel) |   |   | Overlap with Omri | **885–880** |
| 10. | 1Ki 16:23–28 | **Omri** (Israel) | 27th of Asa31st of Asa | 12 years | Made king by the peopleOverlap with TibniOfficial reign=11 actual yearsBeginning of sole reign | 885**885–880****885–874**880 |
| 11. | 1Ki 16:29–22:40 | **Ahab** (Israel) | 38th of Asa | 22 years | Official reign=21 actual years | **874–853** |
| *12.* | *1Ki 22:41–50* | ***Jehoshephat*** *(Judah)* | *4th Ahab* | *25 years* | *Co-regency with Asa**Official reign**Beginning of sole reign**Has Jehoram as regent* | *872–869**872–848**869**853–848* |
| 13. | 1Ki 22:51–2Ki 1:18 | **Ahaziah** (Israel) | 17th of Jehoshaphat | 2 years | Official reign=1 yr. actual reign | **853–852** |
| 14. | 2Ki 1:172Ki 3:1–8:15 | **Joram** (Israel) | 2nd of Johoram18th of Jehoshaphat | 12 years | Official reign=11 actual years | 852**852–841** |
| *15.* | *2Ki 8:16–24* | ***Jehoram*** *(Judah)* | *5th of Joram* | *8 years* | *Beginning of sole reign**Official reign=7 actual years* | *848****848–841*** |
| *16.* | *2Ki 8:25–29**2Ki 9:29* | ***Ahaziah*** *(Judah)* | *12th of Joram**11th of Joram* | *1 Year* | *Nonaccession-year reckoning**Accession-year reckoning* | *841**841* |
| 17. | 2Ki 9:30–10:36 | **Jehu** (Israel) |   | 28 years |   | **841–814** |
| *18.* | *2Ki 11* | ***Athaliah*** *(Judah)* |   | *7 years* |   | ***841–835*** |
| *19.* | *2Ki 12* | ***Joash*** *(Judah)* | *7th of Juha* | *40 years* |   | ***835–796*** |
| 20 | 2Ki 13:1–9 | **Jehoahaz** (Israel) | 23rd of Joash | 17 years |   | **814–798** |
| 21. | 2Ki 13:10–25 | **Jehoash** (Israel) | 37th of Joash | 16 years |   | **798–782** |
| *22.* | *2Ki 14:1–22* | ***Amaziah*** *(Judah)* | *2nd of Jehoash* | *29 years* | *Overlap with Azariah* | ***796–767*** |
| 23. | 2Ki 14:23–29 | **Jeroboam II** (Israel) | 15th Amaziah | 41 years | Co-regency with JehoashTotal reignBeginning of sole reign | **793–782****793–753****782** |
| *24.* | *2Ki 15:1–7* | ***Azariah*** *(Judah)* | *27th of Jeroboam* | *52 years* | *Overlap with Amaziah**Total reign**Beginning of sole reign* | *792–767****792–740****767* |
| 25. | 2Ki 15:8–12 | **Zechariah** (Israel) | 38th of Azariah | 6 months |   | **753** |
| 26. | 2Ki 15:13–15 | **Shallum** (Israel) | 39th of Azariah | 1 month |   | **752** |
| 27. | 2Ki 15:16–22 | **Menahem** (Israel) | 39th of Azariah | 10 years | Ruled in Samaria | **752–742** |
| 28. | 2Ki 15:23–26 | **Pekahiah** (Israel) | 50th of Azariah | 2 years |   | **742–740** |
| 29. | 2Ki 15:27–31 | **Pekah** (Israel) | 52nd of Azariah | 20 years | In Gilead; overlapping yearsTotal reignBeginning of sole reign | 752–740**752–732**740 |
| *30.* | *2Ki 15:32–38**2Ki 15:30* | ***Jotham*** *(Judah)* | *2nd of Pekah* | *16 years* | *Co-regent with Azariah**Offical reign**Reign to his 20th year**Beginning of co-regency* | *750–740**750–735****750–732****750* |
| *31.* | *2Ki 16* | ***Ahaz*** *(Judah)* |   | *16 years* | *Total reign**From 20th of Jotham* | *735–715**735****732–722*** |
| 32. | 2Ki 15:302Ki 17 | **Hoshea** (Israel) | 12th of Ahaz | 9 years | 20th of Jotham | 732**732–722** |
| *33.* | *2Ki 18:1–20:21* | ***Hezekiah*** *(Judah)* | *3rd of Hoshea* | *29 years* |   | ***715–686*** |
| *34.* | *2Ki 21:1–18* | ***Manasseh*** *(Judah)* |   | *55 years* | *Co-regency with Hezekiah**Total reign* | ***697–686******679–642*** |
| *35.* | *2Ki 21:19–26* | ***Amon*** *(Judah)* |   | *2 years* |   | ***642–640*** |
| *36.* | *2Ki 22:1–23:30* | ***Josiah*** *(Judah)* |   | *31 years* |   | ***640–609*** |
| *37.* | *2Ki 23:31–33* | ***Jehoahaz*** *(Judah)* |   | *3 months* |   | ***609*** |
| *38.* | *2Ki 23:34–24:7* | ***Jehoiakim*** *(Judah)* |   | *11 years* |   | ***609–598*** |
| *39.* | *2Ki 24:8–17* | ***Jehoichin*** *(Judah)* |   | *3 months* |   | ***598–597*** |
| *40.* | *2Ki 24:18–25:26* | ***Zedekiah*** *(Judah)* |   | *11 years* |   | ***597–586*** |
|   |   | *Italics denotes kings of* ***Judah***Non-italic type denotes kings of **Israel** |   |

**15:12** *male shrine prostitutes.* See note on 14:24. (CSB)

 *got rid of all the idols his fathers had made.* See 14:23. (CSB)

**15:13** *deposed his grandmother Maacah.* 2Ch 14:1–15:16 indicates a progression in Asa’s reform over a period of years. Although Asa had destroyed pagan idols and altars early in his reign (2Ch 14:2–3), it was not until after a victory over Zerah the Cushite (2Ch 14:8–15) that Asa responded to the message of the prophet Azariah son of Oded by calling for a covenant renewal assembly in Jerusalem in the 15th year of his reign (2Ch 15:10). After this assembly Asa deposed his grandmother Maacah because of her idolatry (2Ch 15:16). (CSB)

 *made a repulsive Asherah pole.* See note on 14:15. It appears that Maacah’s action was a deliberate attempt to counter Asa’s reform. (CSB)

**15:14** *did not remove the high places.* The reference here and in 2Ch 15:17 is to those high places where the Lord was worshiped (for the question of legitimacy of worship of the Lord at high places see note on 3:2). When 2Ch 14:3 indicates that Asa removed the high places, it is to be taken as a reference to the high places that were centers of pagan Canaanite worship (see 2Ch 17:6; 20:33 for the same distinction). This same statement of qualified approval that is made of Asa is made of five other kings of Judah prior to the time of Hezekiah (Jehoshaphat, 22:43; Joash, 2Ki 12:3; Amaziah, 2Ki 14:4; Azariah, 2Ki 15:4; Jotham, 2Ki 15:35). (CSB)

 *fully committed to the Lord*. See note on v. 3. (CSB)

**15:15** *silver and gold and the articles.* Most likely consisting of war booty that Abijah had taken from Jeroboam (2Ch 13) and that Asa acquired from Zerah the Cushite (2Ch 14:8–15). (CSB)

**15:16** *war between Asa and Baasha … throughout their reigns.* A reference to the chronic hostile relations that had existed ever since the division of the kingdom, rather than to full-scale combat (see notes on v. 7; 12:24; see also 2Ch 15:19). (CSB)

**15:17** *fortified Ramah.* Baasha had recaptured the territory previously taken from Jeroboam by Abijah (see note on v. 7; see also 2Ch 13:19) since Ramah was located south of Bethel and only about five miles north of Jerusalem. (CSB)

 *prevent anyone from leaving or entering the territory of Asa.* See 2Ch 15:9–10. (CSB)

**15:18** *silver and gold that was left.* That which remained after the plundering of Jerusalem by Shishak of Egypt (see 14:25). (CSB)

 *Hezion.* It is not clear whether Hezion is to be identified with Rezon of Damascus (see 11:23–25) or regarded as the founder of a new dynasty. (CSB)

**15:19** *treaty … between my father and your father.* A reference to a previously unmentioned treaty between Abijah and Tabrimmon of Aram. When Tabrimmon died, Baasha succeeded in establishing a treaty with his successor Ben-Hadad. Asa saw no hope for success against Baasha without the assistance provided by a renewal of the old treaty with Aram. Although his plan seemed to be successful, it was condemned by Hanani the prophet as a foolish act and a denial of reliance on the Lord (see 2Ch 16:7–10). The true theocratic king was never to fear his enemies but to trust in the God of the covenant for security and protection (see note on 1Sa 17:11). Ahaz was later to follow Asa’s bad example and seek Assyria’s help when he was attacked by Israel and Aram (see 2Ki 16:5–9; Isa 7). (CSB)

**15:20** *Naphtali.* The cities that Ben-Hadad conquered in Naphtali were of particular importance because the major trade routes from Damascus going west to Tyre and southwest through the plain of Jezreel to the coastal plain and Egypt transversed this area. This same territory was later seized by the Assyrian ruler Tiglath-Pileser III (2Ki 15:29). (CSB)

**15:21** *Tirzah.* See note on 14:17. (CSB)

**15:22** *order to all Judah.* Asa’s action is reminiscent of the labor force conscripted by Solomon (5:13–14; 11:28). (CSB)

 *Geba … Mizpah.* Asa established two border fortresses to check Baasha’s desire to expand his territory southward. Geba was east of Ramah, and Mizpah was southwest of Ramah. (CSB)

**15:23** *other events of Asa’s reign.* See 2Ch 14:2–16:14. (CSB)

 *annals of the kings of Judah.* See note on 14:29. (CSB)

 *feet became diseased.* See 2Ch 16:12. (CSB)

**15:24** *rested with his fathers.* See note on 1:21. (CSB)

 *Jehoshaphat his son succeeded him.* For the reign of Jehoshaphat see 22:41–50; 2Ch 17:1–21:1. (CSB)

***Nadab King of Israel***

**25 Nadab son of Jeroboam became king of Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years. 26 He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, walking in the ways of his father and in his sin, which he had caused Israel to commit. 27 Baasha son of Ahijah of the house of Issachar plotted against him, and he struck him down at Gibbethon, a Philistine town, while Nadab and all Israel were besieging it. 28 Baasha killed Nadab in the third year of Asa king of Judah and succeeded him as king. 29 As soon as he began to reign, he killed Jeroboam’s whole family. He did not leave Jeroboam anyone that breathed, but destroyed them all, according to the word of the Lord given through his servant Ahijah the Shilonite— 30 because of the sins Jeroboam had committed and had caused Israel to commit, and because he provoked the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger. 31 As for the other events of Nadab’s reign, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel? 32 There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel throughout their reigns.**

**15:25** *second year of Asa.* See note on v. 1. The second year of Asa of Judah corresponded to the 22nd and last year of Jeroboam of Israel (see v. 9; 14:20). *two years.* 909–908 b.c. (CSB)

**15:26** *his sin, which he had caused Israel to commit.* Jeroboam’s sin (see note on 14:16). Although Abijah of Judah occupied Bethel during the reign of Jeroboam (see note on v. 7), it is probable that the paganized worship Jeroboam initiated was continued elsewhere until control of Bethel was regained by Baasha. (CSB)

**15:27** *Gibbethon.* A town located between Jerusalem and Joppa (probably a few miles west of Gezer) in the territory originally assigned to Dan (Jos 19:43–45). This Levitical city (Jos 21:23) probably fell into Philistine hands at the time of the Philistine expansion in the period of the judges. (CSB)

**15:28** *third year of Asa.* 908 b.c. (see note on v. 10). It is likely that Baasha was a commander in Nadab’s army and was able to secure the support of the military for his revolt. (CSB)

**15:29** *the word … given through … Ahijah.* See 14:10–11. (CSB)

**15:30** *sins Jeroboam had committed and had caused Israel to commit.* See note on 14:16. (CSB)

**15:31** *annals of the kings of Israel.* See note on 14:19. (CSB)

**15:32** *war … throughout their reigns.* See note on v. 16. The demise of Jeroboam’s dynasty did not improve relations between the two kingdoms. (CSB)

***Baasha King of Israel***

**33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha son of Ahijah became king of all Israel in Tirzah, and he reigned twenty-four years. 34 He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, walking in the ways of Jeroboam and in his sin, which he had caused Israel to commit.**

**15:33** *third year of Asa.* 908 b.c. (see note on v. 10). (CSB)

 *Tirzah.* See note on 14:17. (CSB)

 *twenty-four years.* 908–886 b.c. His official years were counted as 24, though his actual years were 23 (see 16:8; see also Introduction: Chronology). (CSB)

**15:34** *his sin, which he had caused Israel to commit.* See note on 14:16. The assessment of Baasha’s reign indicates no improvement over the reign of Nadab, whom he replaced (see v. 26). (CSB)