**A LAMP FOR DAVID’S SAKE**

1 Kings 15:1-34

Key verse 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.”

**Introduction**



 Today’s passage shows that God never fails to keep His promise given to His servant, David. Although the northern kingdom, Israel was getting worse, God promised to raise up a lamp in Jerusalem. May the Lord help us to fix our eyes on Jesus despite many discouraging things happening around us. May the Lord help us to keep our identity as God’s servants to serve Him by faith. Also may the Lord help us to plant believing words in our spiritual and physical children no matter what happens.

1. Read verses 1-8. What did the author say about Abijah, son of Rehoboam? (1-3) Despite his unfaithfulness, what did God do for David’s sake? (4-5) Describe the war between Abijah and Jeroboam. (6-8, 2 Chronicles 13:1-14:1)

1-1, Read verses 1-8.

In the eighteenth year of the reign of Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijah[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Kings%2015&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9251a)] became king of Judah, 2 and he reigned in Jerusalem three years. His mother’s name was Maakah 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 Abijah[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Kings%2015&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9256c)] 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 ancestors and was buried in the City of David. And Asa his son succeeded him as king.

1-2, What did the author say about Abijah, son of Rehoboam? (1-3)

***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 Maakah 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.***

* Abijah, son of Rehoboam, reigned for three years only. 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.
* According to 2 Chronicles 13, he knew something about God. But he did not honor God as much as he should do in his personal life.

1-3, Despite his unfaithfulness, what did God do for David’s sake? (4-5)

***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.***

* God preserved the dynasty of David in Jerusalem for the sake of David, not because of the merits of his descendants, but because of God’s faithfulness.
* David had a critical weakness in the case of Uriah. But God remembered his committed heart and obedience to God’s commands all the days of his life.
* Our commitment to the Lord is not wasted at all because God would remember our devotion to Him and our desire to live by the word of God despite our weaknesses. Praise God.

1-4, Describe the war between Abijah and Jeroboam. (6-8, 2 Chronicles 13:1-14:1)

 ***There was war between Abijah 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 ancestors and was buried in the City of David. And Asa his son succeeded him as king.***

* Thank God for a good reference about what Abijah had done during his reign. 2 Chronicles 13:1-14:1 shows that in a short period of his reign he won the great victory against Jeroboam because he cried out to the Lord.

*Now Jeroboam had sent troops around to the rear, so that while he was in front of Judah the ambush was behind them. 14 Judah turned and saw that they were being attacked at both front and rear. Then they cried out to the Lord. The priests blew their trumpets 15 and the men of Judah raised the battle cry. At the sound of their battle cry, God routed Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. 16 The Israelites fled before Judah, and God delivered them into their hands. 17 Abijah and his troops inflicted heavy losses on them, so that there were five hundred thousand casualties among Israel’s able men. 18 The Israelites were subdued on that occasion, and* ***the people of Judah were victorious because they relied on the Lord, the God of their ancestors.***

* Since then, Abijah grew strong while God struck Jeroboam down. He should have honored God who answered his prayer at such a war in a spectacular way. But his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord.
1. Read verses 9-24. What did Asa do for the Lord? (9-15) What did he do when Bassha king of Israel waged wars against him? (16-19) What happened in the late part of his reign? (20-24)

2-1, Read verses 9-24.

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 Maakah 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 ancestors had made. 13 He even deposed his grandmother Maakah from her position as queen mother, because she had made a repulsive image for the worship of Asherah. Asa cut it 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 Maakah 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 ancestors and was buried with them in the city of his father David. And Jehoshaphat his son succeeded him as king.

2-2, What did Asa do for the Lord? (9-15)

 ***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 Maakah 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 ancestors had made. 13 He even deposed his grandmother Maakah from her position as queen mother, because she had made a repulsive image for the worship of Asherah. Asa cut it 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.***

* 1 Kings 14:22-24 reads, “By the sins they committed they stirred up his jealous anger more than those who were before them had done. 23 They also set up for themselves high places, sacred stones and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree. 24 There were even male shrine prostitutes in the land; the people engaged in all the detestable practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites.”
* Even homosexual sins(prostitutes) were practiced. Asa expelled them all. We see the thoroughness of his reform. Even his grandma was dethroned because she made a repulsive fertility image after Asherah.
* The **Dung Gate** is one of the nine gates to the Old City in Jerusalem. It gains its name from the fact that it was the gate used to take trash out of the city to be disposed of in the **Kidron Valley**.
* His heart was fully dedicated to the Lord all his life. He brought silver and gold and articles to the temple. He restored everything to worship the Lord.
* 2 Chronicles 15:15 reads, “All Judah rejoiced about the oath because they had sworn it wholeheartedly. They sought God eagerly, and he was found by them. So the Lord gave them rest on every side.”
* When Asa fully dedicated his heart to the Lord, God gave him rest on every side and all Judah was happy.

2-3, What did he do when Bassha king of Israel waged wars against him? (16-19)

***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.”***

2-4, What happened in the late part of his reign? (20-24)

***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 Maakah 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 ancestors and was buried with them in the city of his father David. And Jehoshaphat his son succeeded him as king.***

* The author of this book does not explain the details about the late part of his reign. But according to 2 Chronicles 16, “At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him: “Because you relied on the king of Aram and not on the Lord your God, the army of the king of Aram has escaped from your hand. 8 Were not the Cushites[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Chronicles%2016&version=NIV#fen-NIV-11518b)] and Libyans a mighty army with great numbers of chariots and horsemen[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Chronicles%2016&version=NIV#fen-NIV-11518c)]? Yet when you relied on the Lord, he delivered them into your hand. 9 For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war.” 10 Asa was angry with the seer because of this; he was so enraged that he put him in prison.At the same time Asa brutally oppressed some of the people. 11 The events of Asa’s reign, from beginning to end, are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. 12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was afflicted with a disease in his feet. Though his disease was severe, even in his illness he did not seek help from the Lord, but only from the physicians. 13 Then in the forty-first year of his reign Asa died and rested with his ancestors. 14 They buried him in the tomb that he had cut out for himself in the City of David. They laid him on a bier covered with spices and various blended perfumes, and they made a huge fire in his honor.
* It is not easy to keep our faith and be humble to the end as a servant of God. May the Lord help us to identify our identity as God’s servant and be diligent in repenting our inner pride to exalt God’s name and live before Him to the end!
1. Read verses 25-34. What happened to Jeroboam’s family according to God’s word? (25-32) What did Naasha do although he was used by God? (33-34) What can we learn from this passage?

3-1, Read verses 25-34.

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, following the ways of his father and committing the same sin his father had caused Israel to commit. 27 Baasha son of Ahijah from the tribe 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 This happened because of the sins Jeroboam had committed and had caused Israel to commit, and because he aroused the anger of the Lord, the God of Israel. 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. 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, following the ways of Jeroboam and committing the same sin Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit.

3-2, What happened to Jeroboam’s family according to God’s word? (25-32)

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***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.***

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* According to 1 Kings 11:38, Jeroboam could have had a long lasting dynasty like the house of David if he had obeyed the word of God from the beginning to the end. But due to his horrible sins and his long reign, his son only reigned 2 years and was killed. His whole family was wiped out according to God’s words.

3-3, What did Naasha do although he was used by God? (33-34)

 ***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, following the ways of Jeroboam and committing the same sin Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit.***

* Although Baasha was used by God to judge the family of Jeroboam, he inherited Jeroboam’s bad legacy and committed sins before God.

3-4, What can we learn from this passage?

**Conclusion**

 To some extent, Abijah knew God and won a great victory against Jeroboam. But he did not commit himself fully to the Lord. Asa dedicated all his life to serve God and did a fabulous job for the Lord. God might consider him to be a light for David’s sake. But at the end of his reign he became proud and rebelled against God and His servant. He was struck with foot disease such as Diabetes induced atherosclerosis and gangrene. Baasha could have restored God’s rule in the northern kingdom but he was the same evil king like Jeroboam. May the Lord help us to rely on the Lord to the end so that we may pass on our spiritual legacy to the next generations. Amen.

**One word: For David’s sake!**