

Exegetical Notes – 1 Kings 14:21-31

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1 Kings 14:21-31

Verse 21

²¹ Rehoboam son of Solomon was king in Judah. He was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel in which to put his Name. His mother's name was Naamah; she was an Ammonite.

- Rehoboam was the king of the southern kingdom of the divided nation of Israel/ Judah. He reigned in Judah at the same time that Jeroboam was king of the northern part of the divided nation of Israel. He reigned for 17 years. The capital city of Judah was Jerusalem.
- Rehoboam's mother's name was Naamah. She was not a Jewess. She was from Ammon. She was one of the foreign wives of Solomon. Jews determine if a child is a Jew by birth through the mother of that child. Since Rehoboam's mother was not Jewish, he would not have been considered a Jew either. This detail concerning Rehoboam's mother's nationality is given in the text to show us that even though Rehoboam rules over the Kingdom of Judah from Jerusalem, he was not a Jew.

Verses 22-24

²² Judah did evil in the eyes of the Lord. 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.

- Though the worship of YHWH was the official religion of Judah, during the time of Rehoboam, the people of Judah worshipped other gods. The practice of idol worship was open in Judah. It was public and tolerated.
- Male shrine prostitutes were priests in some of the idol cults at which the people of Judah worshipped. At these places people had sex with the

priests as an act of worship. Both homosexuality and heterosexuality were practiced as acts of worship in these false cults.

- YHWH was offended by the religious practices of Judah during the reign of Rehoboam.

Verses 25-26

²⁵ In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem.

²⁶ He carried off the treasures of the temple of the Lord and the treasures of the royal palace. He took everything, including all the gold shields Solomon had made.

- Early in the reign of Rehoboam, Shishak, the king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem and defeated Rehoboam. He carried off the treasures of Solomon which remained in Jerusalem, including the temple treasury.

Verses 27-28

²⁷ So King Rehoboam made bronze shields to replace them and assigned these to the commanders of the guard on duty at the entrance to the royal palace.

²⁸ Whenever the king went to the Lord's temple, the guards bore the shields, and afterward they returned them to the guardroom.

- Rehoboam replaced the gold shields of Solomon with bronze ones and displayed them as if nothing had happened. He did not repent of the evil allowed in Judah or attempt to become closer to YHWH.

Verses 29-31

²⁹ As for the other events of Rehoboam's reign, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? ³⁰ There was continual warfare between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. ³¹ And Rehoboam rested with his ancestors and was buried with them in the City of David. His mother's name was Naamah; she was an Ammonite. And Abijah his son succeeded him as king.

- The annals of the kings of Judah is a document which we do not have.
- Judah and Israel were constantly at war with each other during the reign of Rehoboam and Jeroboam.
- When Rehoboam died, he was buried in Jerusalem.
- This passage concludes by restating the problem. Though Rehoboam was king of Judah, he was not a Jew. His mother was an Ammonite.
- Rehoboam's son, Abijah became king of Judah after him.

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