

CHRISTIAN LIGHT PUBLICATIONS

January – February 2012

A Lesson on Politics From the Old Testament

About three thousand years ago, the zealous new king of Judah, Abijah, found himself at war with his northern neighbor Jeroboam. Assembling 400,000 of his best men, he met his enemy for what would become an unusual battle. When the moment came for both kings to send their men forward, Abijah did something unexpected. In front of 800,000 enemy soldiers, King Abijah climbed a mount within earshot of his opponents to deliver them a speech!

So what did Abijah say? For the most part, he upbraided the Israelites for their sinful ways. But he also gave some commentary on history and politics which is quite intriguing. He tried to explain how his father lost a portion of his kingdom—10 tribes—to Jeroboam.

Here is what Abijah says:

Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is risen up, and hath rebelled against his lord. And there are gathered unto him vain men, the children of Belial, and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tenderhearted, and could not withstand them.

– 2 Chronicles 13:6-7

Interesting. In Abijah's mind, the reason his father lost the 10 tribes is because people rebelled against him while he was "young and

tenderhearted." So that was his perspective, but was it correct?

Well, if anybody would know, Abijah should know. Shouldn't he? Didn't he grow up in the king's palace? Didn't he hear all the inside information about the royal family? By today's standard, he could write a book about the royal family that would sell by the millions. He should be able explain it correctly. But the fact is, he didn't.

Today, we have the benefit of understanding the events surrounding Abijah because of other scriptures. The following passage explains why the 10 tribes were lost, from God's perspective.

And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice. And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant

and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.

– 1 Kings 11:9-12



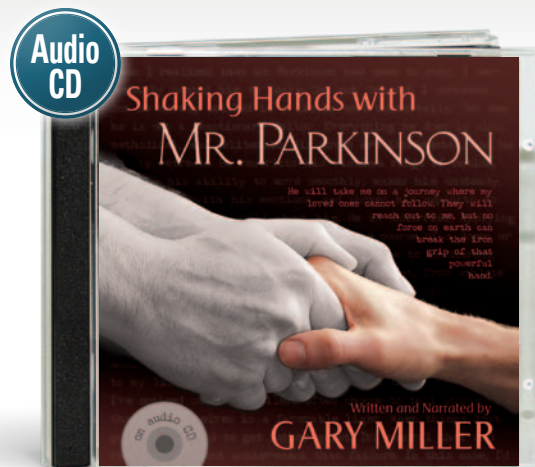
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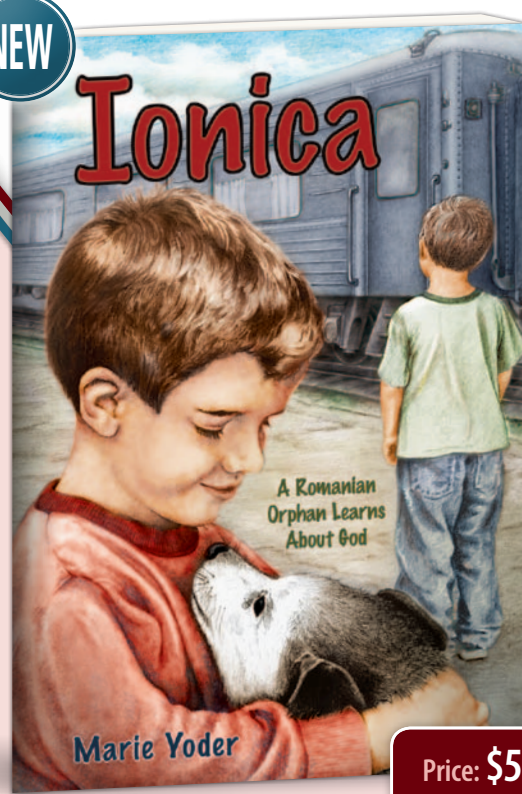
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There we have it. It happened because of grandfather Solomon.

So we see that Abijah was somewhat ignorant about the political events of Israel, even though he was a 4th generation king! Intriguing, but also sobering. For if Abijah missed the mark, how much more likely are we to miss the mark. And yet, we often hear statements such as this.

“The Americans won the Revolutionary War because . . .”

“Hitler gained power because . . .”

“The democrats won the election because . . .”

Do we really know? By applying the Bible to the events of this world, we may understand some of the how's of history, but what makes us think we can know the why's? When it comes to understanding the setting up and taking down of national leaders, we probably know less than Abijah, which is little. The world, and especially the media, wants us to believe

that somehow we can piece everything together, but we can't. They do not take into account the words of Daniel:

“And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings.”

– Daniel 2:21

God sets up the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of Canada, and the leader of North Korea. All the discussion from you, me, or the pundits is merely speculation. How can anybody know why Fidel Castro became the leader of Cuba?

The United States is entering a new election season, a topic which generates waves of discussion carried by people who think they know. Let us be wise. The next time we are tempted to become captivated by the analysis and speculation of the next election, let's remember Abijah, the zealous king who thought he had the inside scoop. Let's remember that God will set up the next President, and that eventually, God will do the explaining. ■

40th Annual Writers and Artists' Conference

You are invited to attend the 40th annual Christian Light Publication's Writers' and Artists' Conference, scheduled for April 13 and 14, 2012. We have expanded our meeting facilities and look forward to using them the first time. Here is an overview of the topics and speakers.

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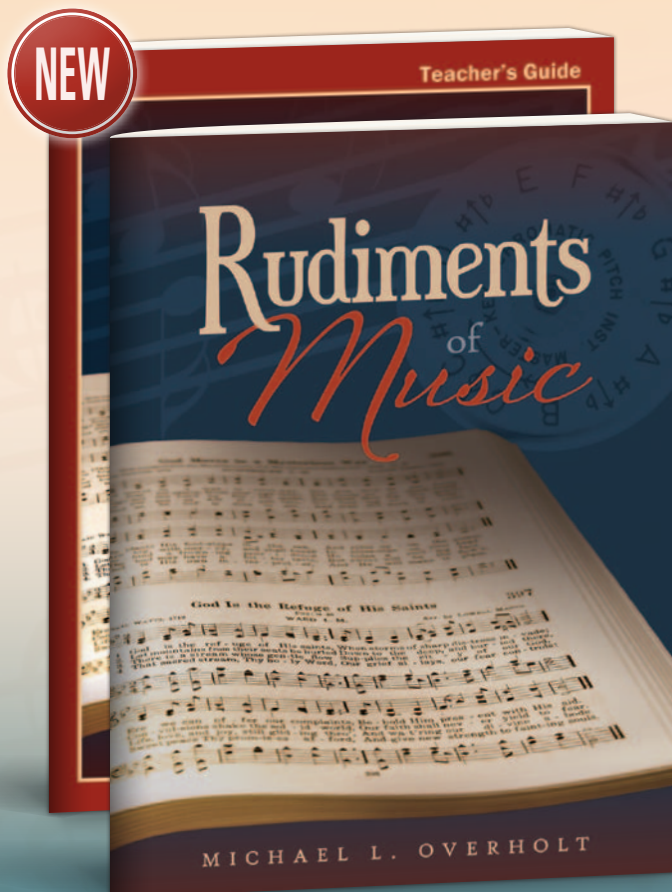
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