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2CHRONICLES 13: 1 In the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah.

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Abijah begins to reign over Judah, and has war with Jeroboam, 2Chr 13:1-3. His speech from Mount Zemaraim to Jeroboam, before the commencement of hostilities, 2Chr 13:4-12. While thus engaged, Jeroboam despatches some troops which come on the rear of Abijah's army, 2Chr 13:13. Perceiving this, they cry unto the Lord, and the Israelites are defeated with the loss of five hundred thousand men, 2Chr 13:14-18. Abijah retakes several cities from Jeroboam, who is smitten by the Lord, and dies, 2Chr 13:19, 2Chr 13:20. Abijah's marriages and issue, 2Chr 13:21, 2Chr 13:22.

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2CHRONICLES 13: 2 He reigned three years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Micaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.

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#### Verse 2

His mother's name - was Michaiah - See on 2Chr 11:20 (note).

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2CHRONICLES 13: 3 Abijah joined battle with an army of valiant men of war, even four hundred thousand chosen men: and Jeroboam set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, who were mighty men of valor.

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#### Verse 3

Abijah set the battle in array - The numbers in this verse and in the seventeenth seem almost incredible. Abijah's army consisted of four hundred thousand effective men; that of Jeroboam consisted of eight hundred thousand; and the slain of Jeroboam's army were five hundred thousand. Now it is very possible that there is a cipher too much in all these numbers, and that they should stand thus: Abijah's army, forty thousand; Jeroboam's eighty thousand; the slain, fifty thousand. Calmet, who defends the common reading, allows that the Venice edition of the Vulgate, in 1478; another, in 1489; that of Nuremberg, in 1521; that of Basil, by Froben, in 1538; that of Robert Stevens, in 1546; and many others, have the smaller numbers. Dr. Kennicott says: "On a particular collation of the Vulgate version, it appears that the number of chosen men here slain, which Pope Clement's edition in 1592 determines to be five hundred thousand, the edition of Pope Sixtus, printed two years before, determined to be only fifty thousand; and the two preceding numbers, in the edition of Sixtus, are forty thousand and eighty thousand. As to different printed editions, out of fifty-two, from the year 1462 to 1592, thirty-one contain the less number. And out of fifty-one MSS. twenty-three in the Bodleian library, four in that of Dean Aldrich, and two in that of Exeter College, contain the less number, or else are corrupted irregularly, varying only one or two numbers."

This examination was made by Dr. Kennicott before he had finished his collation of Hebrew MSS., and before De Rossi had published his *Variae Lectiones Veteris Testamenti*; but from these works we find little help, as far as the Hebrew MSS. are concerned. One Hebrew MS., instead of ארבע מאות

ארבע אלף arba meoth eleph, four hundred thousand, reads עשר אלף arba eser eleph, fourteen thousand.

In all printed copies of the Hebrew, the numbers are as in the common text, four hundred thousand, eight hundred thousand, and five hundred thousand.

The versions are as follow: - The Targum, or Chaldee, the same in each place as the Hebrew.

The Syriac in 2Chr 13:3 has four hundred thousand young men for the army of Abijah, and eight hundred thousand stout youth for that of Jeroboam. For the slain Israelites, in 2Chr 13:17, it has five hundred thousand, falsely translated in the Latin text quinque milia, five thousand, both in the Paris and London Polyglots: another proof among many that little dependence is to be placed on the Latin translation of this version in either of the above Polyglots.

The Arabic is the same in all these cases with the Syriac, from which it has been translated.

The Septuagint, both as it is published in all the Polyglots, and as far as I have seen in MSS. is the same with the Hebrew text. So also is Josephus.

The Vulgate or Latin version is that alone that exhibits any important variations; we have had considerable proof of this in the above-mentioned collations of Calmet and Kennicott. I shall beg liberty to add others from my own collection.

In the Editio Princeps of the Latin Bible, though without date or place, yet evidently printed long before that of Fust, in 1462, the places stand thus: 2Chr 13:3. Cumque inisset certamen, et haberet bellicosissimos viros, et electorum Quadraginta milia: Iheroboam construxit e contra aciem Octoginta milia virorum; "With him Abia entered into battle; and he had of the most warlike and choice men forty thousand; and Jeroboam raised an army against him of eighty thousand men." And in 2Chr 13:17 : Et corruerunt vulnerati ex Israel, Quinquaginta milia virorum fortium; "And there fell down wounded fifty thousand stout men of Israel." In the Glossa Ordinaria, by Strabo Fuldensis, we have forty thousand and eighty thousand in the two first instances, and five hundred thousand in the last. - Bib. Sacr. vol. ii., Antv. 1634.

In six ancient MSS. of my own, marked A, B, C, D, E, F. the text stands thus: -

A. - Cumque inisset Abia certamen, et haberet bellicosissimos viros, et electorum XL. MIL. Jeroboam instruxit contra aciem LXXX. MIL.

And in 2Chr 13:17 : Et corruerunt vulnerati ex Israel L. MIL. virorum fortium. Here we have forty thousand for the army of Abijah, and eighty thousand for that of Jeroboam, and Fifty thousand for the slain of the latter.

B. -

Quadraginta milia Forty thousand Octoginta milia Eighty thousand Quinquaginta milia Fifty thousand

The numbers being here expressed in words at full length, there can be no suspicion of mistake.

C. -

CCCC milia 400 thousand DCCC milibus 800 thousand D milia 500 thousand

This is the same as the Hebrew text, and very distinctly expressed.

D. - xl. m. 40,000 lxxx. m. 80,000 l. v. m. 50 and 5000

This, in the two first numbers, is the same as the others above; but the last is confused, and appears to stand for fifty thousand and five thousand. A later hand has corrected the two first cccc numbers in this MS., placing over the first four CCCC, thus 40, thus changing forty into four hundred; and over the second thus, dccc lxxx., thus changing eighty into eight hundred. Over the latter number, which is evidently a mistake of the scribe, there is no correction.

E. - xl. m. 40,000 Octoginta m. Eighty thousand l. m. 50,000

F. -

CCCC. m. 400,000 DCCC. m. 800,000 D. m. 600,000

This also is the same as the Hebrew.

The reader has now the whole evidence which I have been able to collect before him, and may choose; the smaller numbers appear to be the most correct. Corruptions in the numbers in these historical books we have often had cause to suspect, and to complain of.

2CHRONICLES 13: 4 Abijah stood up on Mount Zemaraim, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, and said, "Hear me, Jeroboam and all Israel:

Verse 4

Stood up upon Mount Zemaraim - "Which was a mount of the tribe of the house of Ephraim." - Targum. Jarchi thinks that Abijah went to the confines of the tribe of Ephraim to attack Jeroboam. It could not be Shomeron, the mount on which Samaria was built in the days of Omri king of Israel, 1Kgs 16:24.

2CHRONICLES 13: 5 Ought you not to know that the LORD, the God of Israel, gave the kingdom over Israel to David forever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt?

Verse 5

By a covenant of salt? - For ever. "For as the waters of the sea never grow sweet, neither shall the dominion depart from the house of David." - Targum. See my note on Num 18:19 (note).

2CHRONICLES 13: 6 Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, rose up, and rebelled against his lord.

2CHRONICLES 13: 7 There were gathered to him worthless men, base fellows, who strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tender hearted, and could not withstand them.

Verse 7

When Rehoboam was young and tender-hearted - Therefore he could not be forty-one when he came to the throne; see the note on 2Chr 13:3. Children of Belial here signifies men of the most abandoned principles and characters; or men without consideration, education, or brains.

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2CHRONICLES 13: 8 "Now you think to withstand the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David; and you are a great multitude, and there are with you the golden calves which Jeroboam made you for gods.

2CHRONICLES 13: 9 Haven't you driven out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and made priests for yourselves after the ways of the peoples of other lands? so that whoever comes to consecrate himself with a young bull and seven rams, the same may be a priest of those who are no gods.

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Verse 9

A young bullock and seven rams - He who could provide these for his own consecration was received into the order of this spurious and wicked priesthood. Some think he who could give to Jeroboam a young bullock and seven rams, was thereby received into the priesthood; this being the price for which the priesthood was conferred. The former is most likely.

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2CHRONICLES 13: 10 "But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken him; and we have priests ministering to the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites in their work:

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Verse 10

The Lord is our God - We have not abandoned the Lord; and we still serve him according to his own law.

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2CHRONICLES 13: 11 and they burn to the LORD every morning and every evening burnt offerings and sweet incense. They also set the show bread in order on the pure table; and the lamp stand of gold with its lamps, to burn every evening: for we keep the instruction of the LORD our God; but you have forsaken him.

2CHRONICLES 13: 12 Behold, God is with us at our head, and his priests with the trumpets of alarm to sound an alarm against you. Children of Israel, don't fight against the LORD, the God of your fathers; for you shall not prosper."

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Verse 12

God himself is with us - Ye have golden calves; we have the living and omnipotent Jehovah.

With - trumpets to cry alarm against you - This was appalling: When the priests sound their trumpets, it will be a proof that the vengeance of the Lord shall speedily descend upon you.

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2CHRONICLES 13: 13 But Jeroboam caused an ambush to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the ambush was behind them.

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Verse 13

But Jeroboam caused an ambushment - While Abijah was thus employed in reproofing them, Jeroboam divided his army privately, and sent a part to take Abijah in the rear; and this must have proved fatal to the Jews, had not the Lord interposed.

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2CHRONICLES 13: 14 When Judah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind them; and they cried to the LORD, and the priests sounded with the trumpets.

2CHRONICLES 13: 15 Then the men of Judah gave a shout. As the men of Judah shouted, God struck Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.

2CHRONICLES 13: 16 The children of Israel fled before Judah; and God delivered them into their hand.

2CHRONICLES 13: 17 Abijah and his people killed them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men.

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Verse 17

Slain - five hundred thousand chosen men - Query, fifty thousand? This was a great slaughter: see the note on 2Chr 13:3, where all these numbers are supposed to be overcharged.

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2CHRONICLES 13: 18 Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied on the LORD, the God of their fathers.

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Verse 18

Judah prevailed, because - "They depended on the Word of the God of their fathers." - T.

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2CHRONICLES 13: 19 Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and took cities from him, Bethel with its towns, and Jeshanah with its towns, and Ephron with its towns.

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Verse 19

Beth-el - "Beth-lehem." - Targum.

Jeshanah - We know not where these towns lay.

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2CHRONICLES 13: 20 Jeroboam didn't recover strength again in the days of Abijah. The LORD struck him, and he died.

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Verse 20

The Lord struck him, and he died - Who died? Abijah or Jeroboam? Some think it was Jeroboam; some, that it was Abijah. Both rabbins and Christians are divided on this point; nor is it yet settled. The prevailing opinion is that Jeroboam is meant, who was struck then with that disease of which he died about two years after; for he did not die till two years after Abijah: see 1Kgs 14:20; 1Kgs 15:9. It seems as if Jeroboam was meant, not Abijah.

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2CHRONICLES 13: 21 But Abijah grew mighty, and took to himself fourteen wives, and became the father of twenty-two sons, and sixteen daughters.

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Verse 21

Married fourteen wives - Probably he made alliances with the neighboring powers, by taking their daughters to him for wives.

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2CHRONICLES 13: 22 The rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, are written in the commentary of the prophet Iddo.

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Verse 22

Written in the story - במדרש bemidrash, "in the commentary;" this, as far as I recollect, is the first place where a midrash or commentary is mentioned. The margin is right.

His ways, and his sayings - The commentary of the prophet Iddo is lost. What his sayings were we cannot tell; but from the specimen in this chapter, he appears to have been a very able speaker, and one who knew well how to make the best use of his argument.