

CYCLOPÆDIA

OF

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LITERATURE.

PREPARED BY

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Abi'athar (Heb. *Ebyathar'*, אֲבִיָּאֲתָר, *father of abundance*, i. e. *liberal*; Sept. *'Aβιῆθαρ* or *'Aβιαθάρ*, N. T. *'Aβιῆθαρ*, Josephus *'Aβιαθάρως*), the thirteenth high-priest of the Jews, being the son of Ahimelech, and the third in descent from Eli; B.C. 1060-1012. When his father was slain with the priests of Neb, for suspected partiality to David, Abiathar escaped; and bearing with him the most essential part of the priestly raiment [see EPHOD], repaired to the son of Jesse, who was then in the cave of Adullam (1 Sam. xxii, 20-23; xxiii, 6). He was well received by David, and became the priest of the party during its exile and wanderings, receiving for David responses from God (1 Sam. xxx, 7; comp. 2 Sam. ii, 1; v, 19). The cause of this strong attachment on the part of the monarch was the feeling that he had been unintentionally the cause of the death of Abiathar's kindred. When David became king of Judah he appointed Abiathar high-priest (see 1 Chron. xv, 11; 1 Kings ii, 26), and a member of his cabinet (1 Chron. xxvii, 34). Meanwhile Zadok had been made high-priest by Saul—an appointment not only unexceptionable in itself, but in accordance with the divine sentence of deposition which had been passed, through Samuel, upon the house of Eli (1 Sam. ii, 30-36). When, therefore, David acquired the kingdom of Israel, he had no just ground on which Zadok could be removed, and Abiathar set in his place; and the attempt would probably have been offensive to his new subjects, who had been accustomed to the ministration of Zadok, and whose good feeling he was anxious to cultivate. The king appears to have got over this difficulty by allowing both appointments to stand; and until the end of David's reign Zadok and Abiathar were joint high-priests (1 Kings iv, 4). As a high-priest, Abiathar was the least excusable, in some respects, of all those who were parties in the attempt to raise Adonijah to the throne (1 Kings i, 19); and Solomon, in deposing him from the high-priesthood, plainly told him that only his sacerdotal character, and his former services to David, preserved him from capital punishment (1 Kings ii, 26, 27). This completed the doom upon the house of Eli, and restored the pontifical succession—Zadok, who remained the high-priest, being of the elder line of Aaron's sons. See ELEAZAR.

In Mark ii, 26, a circumstance is described as occurring "in the days of Abiathar, the high-priest" (ἡμετέρας τῶν ἡμετέρων ἀβιαθάρων—*a phrase that is susceptible of the rendering, in [the time] of Abiathar, [the son] of the high-priest*), which appears, from 1 Sam. xxi, 1, to have really occurred when his father Ahimelech was the high-priest. The most probable solution of this difficulty (but see Alford's *Comment.* in loc.) is that which interprets the reference thus: "in the days of Abiathar, who was afterward the high-priest" (Middleton, *Greek Article*, p. 188-190). But this leaves open another difficulty, which arises from the precisely opposite reference (in 2 Sam. viii, 17; 1 Chron. xviii, 16; xxiv, 3, 6, 31) to "Ahimelech [or Ahimelech] the son of Abiathar," as the person who was high-priest along with Zadok, and who was deposed by Solomon; whereas the history describes that personage as Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech. Another explanation is, that both father and son bore the two names of Ahimelech and Abiathar, and might be, and were, called by either (J. C. Leuschner, *De Achimelech binominis*, Hirscht. 1750). But although it was not unusual for the Jews to have two names, it was not usual for both father and son to have the same two names. Others suppose a second Abiathar, the father of Ahimelech, and some even a son of the same name; but none of these suppositions are warranted by the text, nor allowable in the list of high-priests. See HIGH-PRIEST. The names have probably become transposed by copyists, for the Syriac and Arabic versions have "Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech." The mention of Abiathar in the above pas-

sage of Mark, rather than the acting priest Ahimelech, may have arisen from the greater prominence of the former in the history of David's reign, and he appears even at that time to have been with his father, and to have had some part in the pontifical duties. In additional explanation of the other difficulty above referred to, it may be suggested as not unlikely that Ahimelech may have been the name of one of Abiathar's sons likewise associated with him, as well as that of his father, and that copyists have confounded these names together.—Kitto, s.v. See AHIMELECH.

A'bib (Heb. *Abib'*, אֲבִיב, from an obsolete root אֲבִיב, to *fructify*), properly, a head or ear of grain (Lev. ii, 14, "green ears;" Exod. xiii, 31, "ear"); hence, the month of newly-ripe grain (Exod. xiii, 4; xxiii, 15; xxxiv, 18; Deut. xvi, 1), the first of the Jewish ecclesiastical year, afterward (Neh. ii, 1) called NISAN (q. v.). It began with the new moon of March, according to the Rabbins (Buxtorf, *Lex. Talm.* col. 3), or rather of April, according to Michaelis (*Comment. de Mensibus Hebraeor.*, comp. his *Commentat.* Bremæ, 1769, p. 16 sq.); at which time the first grain ripens in Palestine (Robinson's *Researches*, ii, 99, 100). See MONTH. Hence it is hardly to be regarded as a strict name of a month, but rather as a designation of the season; as the Sept., Vulg., and Saadias have well rendered, in Exod. xiii, 4, "the month of the new grain;" less correctly the Syriac, "the month of flowers" (comp. Bechart, *Hieroz.* i, 557). Others (as A. Müller, *Gloss. Sacra*, p. 2) regard the name as derived from the eleventh Egyptian month, *Epep* (Ἐπιπέ, Plut. *de Iside*, p. 372); but this corresponds neither to March or April, but to July (Fabricii *Menologium*, p. 22-27; Jablonsky, *Opusc.* ed. Water, i, 65 sq.). See TEL-ABIB.

Abibas, a martyr of Edessa, burned in 322, under the Emperor Licinius. He is commemorated in the Greek Church, as a saint, on 15th November.

Ab'ida [many *Abi'da*] (Heb. *Abida'*, אֲבִידָא, *father of knowledge*, i. e. *knowing*; 1 Chron. i, 33, Sept. *'Aβιδά*; Gen. xxv, 4, *'Aβιδά*, Auth. Vers. "Abidah"), the fourth of the five sons of Midian, the son of Abraham by Keturah (Gen. xxv, 1; 1 Chron. i, 33), and apparently the head of a tribe in the peninsula of Arabia, B.C. post 2000. See ARABIA. Josephus (*Ant.* i, 15, 1) calls him *Ebidas* (Ἐβιδάς). For the city Abida, see ABILA.

Ab'idah [many *Abi'dah*], a less correct mode of Anglicizing (Gen. xxv, 4) the name ABIDA (q. v.).

Ab'idan (Heb. *Abidan'*, אֲבִידָן, *father of judgment*, i. e. *judge*; Sept. *'Aβιδάν*), the son of Gideon, and phylarch of the tribe of Benjamin at the exodus (Num. i, 11; ii, 22; x, 24). At the erection of the Tabernacle he made a contribution on the ninth day, similar to the other chiefs (Num. vii, 60, 65), B.C. 1657.

A'biël (Heb. *Abiël'*, אֲבִיֵּל, lit. *father* [i. e. *possessor*] *of God*, i. e. *pious*, or perhaps *father of strength*, i. e. *strong*; Sept. *'Aβιήλ*), the name of two men.

1. The son of Zeror, a Benjamite (1 Sam. ix, 1), and father of Ner (1 Sam. xiv, 51), which last was the grandfather of Saul, the first king of Israel (1 Chron. viii, 33; ix, 39). B.C. 1093. In 1 Sam. ix, 1 he is called the "father" (q. v.) of Kish, meaning grandfather. See NER.

2. An Arbatite, one of David's distinguished warriors (1 Chron. xi, 32). B.C. 1053. In the parallel passage he is called ABIALON (2 Sam. xxiii, 31). See DAVID.

Abië'zer (Heb. id., אֲבִיעֶזֶר, *father of help*, i. e. *helpful*; Sept. *'Aβιέζερ*), the name of two men.

1. The second of the three sons of Hammoleketh, sister of Gilead, grandson of Manasseh (1 Chron. vii, 18). B.C. cir. 1618. He became the founder of a family that settled beyond the Jordan [see OPIRAH], from which Gideon sprang (Josh. vii, 2), and which