

2 Chronicles Chapters 15-16 – The Great Lesson From Asa! Is Our Present Level of Spirituality that of Asa’s Beginning or of His Ending?

2/16/19 Sat Morn Prayer – P. Twente, 714 425-9221; ptwente@gmail.com

BREATHE ON ME, BREATH OF GOD – Edward Hatch – York College Concert

Breathe on me, Breath of God, Fill me with life anew, That I may love what Thou dost love, And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, Until my heart is pure, Until with Thee I will one will, To do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, Till I am wholly Thine, Until this earthly part of me Glows with Thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, So shall I never die, But live with Thee the perfect life Of Thine eternity.

Asa (2 Chronicles Chapters 14-16)

Asa led the nation in **two reforms** as **he removed the altars** to the foreign gods and **commanded the people to return to the Lord**. God honored his efforts by giving the nation **ten years of peace**, during which the king fortified the cities. His victory over the Ethiopians and the message from the prophet Azariah motivated the king to gather all the people together to reaffirm their covenant with Him (2Ch 15:12). Asa even deposed the Queen Mother and destroyed her idols! How sad it is that in his later years, Asa stopped trusting the Lord and robbed God’s temple to buy protection from a heathen king. When rebuked by the prophet Hanani, the king didn’t repent; then, when afflicted with an illness, he didn’t turn to the Lord. **Good beginnings are no guarantee of good endings.**

Asa's Religious Reforms - 2Ch 15:1-19 *Now the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded. [2] And he went out to meet Asa, and said to him: "Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you." [3] For a long time Israel has been without the true God, without a teaching priest, and without law; [4] but when in their trouble they turned to the LORD God of Israel, and sought Him, He was found by them. [5] And in those times there was no peace to the one who went out, nor to the one who came in, but great turmoil was on all the inhabitants of the lands. [6] So nation was destroyed by nation, and city by city, for God troubled them with every adversity. [7] But you, be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded!" [8] And when Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities which he had taken in the mountains of Ephraim; and he restored the altar of the LORD that was before the vestibule of the LORD. [9] Then he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and those who dwelt with them from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon, for they came over to him in great numbers from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him. [10] So they gathered together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. [11] And they offered to the LORD at that time seven hundred bulls and seven thousand sheep from the spoil they had brought. [12] Then they entered into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul; [13] and whoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel was to be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman. [14] Then they took an oath before the LORD with a loud voice, with shouting and trumpets and rams' horns. [15] And all Judah rejoiced at the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart and sought Him with all their soul; and He was found by them, and the LORD gave them rest all around. [16] Also he removed Maachah, the mother of Asa the king, from being queen mother, because she had made an obscene image of Asherah; and Asa cut down her obscene image, then crushed and burned it by the Brook Kidron. [17] But the high places were not removed from Israel. Nevertheless the heart of Asa was loyal all his days. [18] He also brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated and that he himself had dedicated: silver and gold and utensils. [19] And there was no war until the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.*

Asa's Last Years – 2 Ch 16:1-14 *In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. [2] Then Asa brought silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-Hadad king of Syria, who dwelt in Damascus, saying, [3] "Let there be a treaty between you and me, as there was between my father and your father. See, I have sent you silver and gold; come, break*

your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me." [4] So Ben-Hadad heeded King Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel. They attacked Ijon, Dan, Abel Maim, and all the storage cities of Naphtali. [5] Now it happened, when Baasha heard it, that he stopped building Ramah and ceased his work. [6] Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones and timber of Ramah, which Baasha had used for building; and with them he built Geba and Mizpah. [7] And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said to him: "Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand. [8] Were the Ethiopians and the Lubim not a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand. [9] For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. In this you have done foolishly; therefore from now on you shall have wars! [10] Then Asa was angry with the seer, and put him in prison, for he was enraged at him because of this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at that time. [11] Note that the acts of Asa, first and last, are indeed written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. [12] And in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa became diseased in his feet, and his malady was severe; yet in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians. [13] So Asa rested with his fathers; he died in the forty-first year of his reign. [14] They buried him in his own tomb, which he had made for himself in the City of David; and they laid him in the bed which was filled with spices and various ingredients prepared in a mixture of ointments. They made a very great burning for him.

SUMMARY:

- In response to Asa's simple, prayerful demonstration of faith in God, He had given Asa a great, supernatural victory over the Ethiopians. Asa must have thought, never will I doubt God ever again!
- Azariah gives God's rebuke and warning to Asa of God's faithfulness - ***The LORD is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.***
- God never gives us warnings unless He knows we have weaknesses and need to act in response.
- Asa continues well at first in relying on God and being obedient to Him; reforms and a national covenant, destroying his grandmother's obscene image! God gave peace to Judah for 20 years!
- Then Baasha comes against Judah at Ramah. Notices Asa's response! Seeking God, praying? No, he now has other options and devises his own, clever, successful plan of relying on Hadad, king of Syria!
- God is not happy! He has been denied the opportunity to deliver Judah! He has been dishonored!
- Asa, lifted up in pride, is rebuked by Hanani, ***"Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand."***
- Asa now shows less faith than he did years ago! **What a great lesson for us! What about me? Do I see Asa's tendencies in my life? What is my level of spirituality and dependence on God? May we let this passage search our lives. Are we? Will we have an ending as Asa begun or as he ended?**

I Surrender All - VanDeVenter; Weeden - Maranatha! Praise Band

1. All to Jesus I surrender; all to Him I freely give; I will ever love and trust Him, in His presence daily live.
Refrain - I surrender all, I surrender all, all to Thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all.
2. All to Jesus I surrender; humbly at His feet I bow, worldly pleasures all forsaken; take me, Jesus, take me now. (Refrain)
3. All to Jesus I surrender; make me, Savior, wholly Thine; Let me feel the Holy Spirit, Truly know that Thou art mine. (Refrain)
4. All to Jesus I surrender; Lord, I give myself to Thee; fill me with Thy love and power; let Thy blessing fall on me. (Refrain)
5. All to Jesus I surrender; now I feel the sacred flame. O the joy of full salvation! Glory, glory, to His name! (Refrain)

Please Note: You may see/download past notes/audio of the Bible Prayer Devotionals by going to: www.ptwente.com