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Trusting In Our Flesh Is Foolish!
2Chron. 16:1-14

The character of leaders will directly affect the destiny of a nation, therefore the book of 1-2 Chronicles focuses on the responsibility of the kings and leaders of the nation of Judah.

1. Did you know that James Madison, the fourth president, known as “The Father of Our Constitution” made the following statement: “We have staked the whole of all our political institutions upon the capacitor of mankind for self-government, upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves, to control ourselves, to sustain ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of God.”

2. Did you know Patrick Henry, that Founding Father of our country said: “It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded not by religionists but by Christians, not on religions but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

3. Did you know that Thomas Jefferson worried that the Courts would overstep their authority and instead of interpreting the law would begin making law, an oligarchy, the rule of few over many.”

* Our leaders have trusted in themselves and corrupted themselves believing to be elite over the people, a total contradiction of our Constitution

Guess which organization is being described in 2010.

36 have been accused of spousal abuse.

7 have been arrested for fraud.

19 have been accused of writing bad checks.

117 have directly or indirectly bankrupted at least 2 businesses.

3 have done time for assault.

71 repeat 71 cannot get a credit card due to bad credit.

14 have been arrested on drug-related charges.

8 have been arrested for shoplifting.

21 currently are defendants in lawsuits, and 84 have been arrested for drunk driving in the last year.

* It is the 535 members of the United States Congress, the one that want to keep us in line!

The book of Second Chronicles gives us God’s perspective of history past with the emphasis on the family line through David to Solomon to Rehoboam, the line of Judah that resulted in the divided kingdom till the destruction of Jerusalem. 2Chron. 1-36

1. The times of reform or revival are by five good kings, comprising twenty-one of the thirty-six chapters. 2Chron. 14-35

2. The key to each reform and renewal or revival was repentance and returning to obey the Word of God. 2Chron. 15:8, 9; 17:3, 4; 23:16-21; 24:1-6; 29:3-36; 30:1, 15, 16; 34:18-21

Asa is the first good king to depended on God resulting in the first reform or revival, as he trusted

God to defeat the Ethiopians, but he failed to trust God in his later years! 2Chron. 14-16

* The parallel passage. 1Kingss 15:16-24

We want to look at the reform of Asa as it turned from God to self-reliance presented in three movements.

2Chron. 16:1-14

- I. The occasion was when the king of Israel attacked Asa. vs. 1-6
- II. The confrontation came from the prophet Hanani to rebuked Asa. vs. 7-10
- III. The stipulations about the life of Asa. vs. 11-14

I. The occasion was when the king of Israel attacked Asa. vs. 1-6

A. The king of Israel made an advance against Judah. vs. 1

- 1. The year of the attack is stated, “In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa.” vs. 1a
 - a. This about 895 B. C, he had looked to God for thirty-six years, then he trusted in the arm of flesh?
 - b. The civil war had been going on since the reign of Rehoboam and Abijah his son.
 - c. The Southern kingdom had 20 kings, 10 good, 10 bad, 5 outstanding by the five revivals or reforms.
* Many of the kings fell in their old age!

- 2. The king of the northern kingdom is also stated, “Baasha king of Israel .” vs. 1b
 - a. Baasha had taken Bethel and been constantly hostile. 2Chron. 13:19; 15:16
 - b. The Northern kingdom had 19 kings, all of them was bad, not one good one.
 - 3. The intent and purpose of Baasha was to isolate Asa at Jerusalem, “came up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.” vs. 1b-c
 - a. The city of Ramah was five miles north of Jerusalem, in the heart of Benjamin, five miles south of Bethel that he had already taken. 2Chron. 13:19
 - b. The strategy was to have a blockade so no one could go for help or bring in supplies.
- B. The king of Judah solicited help from the king of Syria. vs. 2-3**
- 1. The counter strategy of Asa was to hire some mercenaries to help him. vs. 2
 - a. Asa used the temple money, “Then Asa brought silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the LORD and of the king’s house.” vs. 2a
 - 1) Asa should have used the resource of his God related to the temple.
 - 2) Instead he trusted in the arm of flesh.

- b.** Asa looked to the arm of flesh, “and sent to Ben-Hadad king of Syria, who dwelt in Damascus, saying.” vs. 2b-c
* The power and ability of military forces to deliver him! Jer. 17:5
- 2.** The proposal of Asa to Ben-Hadad was political. vs. 3
 - a.** Asa proposed they renew an old alliance of the past, “Let there be a treaty between you and me, as there was between my father and your father.” vs. 3a
* The old alliance. 1Kings 15:18
 - b.** Asa was asking Ben-Hadad to betray his alliance with King Baasha, “Here, I have sent you silver and gold; come, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me.”
 - 1)** Notice Asa enticed Ben-Hadad with the money.
 - 2)** His intent was not hidden, “so that he will withdraw from me.”
- C.** The king of Syria agreed to a renewed joint-alliance. vs. 4-6
 - 1.** The king of Syria took the bait. vs. 4
 - a.** Ben-Hadad sent his armies out against Israel, “So Ben-Hadad heeded King Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel.” vs. 4a-b

- b.** The particular cities are named, “They attacked Ijon, Dan, Abel Maim, and all the storage cities of Naphtali.” vs. 4c-f
* These cities were in the northern part of Israel.
- 2.** The strategy of Asa seemed to work. vs. 5
 - a.** The news of the Syrian attack reached Baasha, “Now it happened, when Baasha heard it.” vs. 5a-b
 - b.** The king of Israel Baasha abandoned his blockade against Judah, “that he stopped building Ramah and ceased his work.” vs. 5c
* He returned to defend his kingdom.
- 3.** The strategy gave Asa the spoils of war. vs. 6
 - a.** They took all the building materials, “Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones and timber of Ramah,” vs. 6a-b
 - 1)** First kings says, “Asa made a proclamation throughout all of Judah; none was exempted, And they took away the stones and timber of Ramah.” 1Kings. 15:22a-c
 - 2)** Without doubt Asa considered himself ahead financially in spite of the gold and silver spent to hire the king of Syria.
 - b.** They built two cities with it, “which Baasha had used for building; and with

them he built Geba and Mizpah.” vs. 6d-e

- 1) Kings tells us it was, “Geba of Benjamin.” 1Kings 15:22d-f
- 2) The amount of spoil was enormous, enough to build two cities.

Illustration

Gehazi was the servant of Elisha and he ran after Naaman since his master Elisha had refused the reward, so when he caught up with Naaman Gehazi told him that two young men had arrived from the mountains of Ephraim and if he might give them a two talent of silver and two changes of garments. So when Gehazi return and hid the silver and garment Gehazi said, “Where did you go, **Gehazi**?” And he said, “Your servant did not go anywhere.” Then he said to him, “Did not my heart go with you when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? Is it time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? “Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever.” And he went out from his presence leprous, as white as snow.” 2Kings 5:25c-27

Application

1. Oh how each of us need to understand how insufficient we are to handle the smallest of matter s without relying on God.

- a. The buying of a house moving farther out because they are cheaper, is it God or just us.
 - b. We have seen people bring much hurt to their walk, family and even stop going to church by decisions made on their own, apart from God.
 - c. The spending of our money, what we purchase and how much debt we place on ourselves.
 - d. We need to go to God in prayer and wait on Him and not allow our desires or presure of the moment to take matters into our own hands.
 - * “Be anxious for nothing, but in **everything** by **prayer** and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Phil. 4:6-7
2. Oh how many people we have seen through the years that got involves in questionable things as Christians and it came back to bite them.
- a. Doing shaddy things financially.
 - b. Getting involve with an unbeliever as a single person, only to fall into adultery or fornication resulting in a pregnancy.
 - c. Compromising one’s walk and taking liberties where the Bible clearly forbids or warns against, but thinking they were the exception.
 - 1) “Do not be deceived, God is not **mocked**; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the

Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”
Gal. 6:7-8

2) “Be sure Your sin will find you out. Num.
32:23d

3. Oh how foolish we are when we do not rely on the Lord for our marriages.

- a. Every day asking for knowledge and wisdom.
- b. Every day asking God to fill us with His Holy Spirit and love.
- c. Every day recognizing that if we do not walk in the Spirit, we will walk in the flesh.
- d. Every day understanding we are not beyond the most horrible sin, as husband or wife.

* The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; who can know it?” Jer.
17:9; Matt. 15:18-19

The occasion that Asa turned from relying on God was when the king of Israel attacked Asa!

II. The confrontation came from the prophet Hannani to rebuked Asa. vs. 7-10

- A. The prophet of God went to confront Asa for relying on the king of Syria. vs. 7-8
 1. The prophet all of a sudden appears before Asa, “And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah.” vs. 7a
 - a. The prophet Hanani is called a “seer” another term to identify a prophet.

1) The idea being he was able to see the things God revealed to him.

2) He is the father of Jehu the seer, who would serve Jehoshaphat. 2Chron.
19:2; 20:34

b. Asa without doubt was feeling victorious and wise.

1) Admiring his wise move that allowed him to build these two cities.

2) And drove his enemy Baasha away.

2. The prophet revealed the err of Asa, “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.” vs. 7b-e

a. Asa relied on the king of Syria.

b. Asa did not rely on Yahweh “his God”.

c. Asa did not realize the army of Syria was a danger to him and let it escape.

3. The prophet reminded Asa how he had called on God to deliver him from the Ethiopians, “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.” vs. 8

a. Asa prayed to Yahweh that it was nothing for Him to help with many or with those that had no power. 2Chron.
14:11

- b.** Asa relied on Yahweh and was delivered.
- B.** The prophet of God rebuked Asa for relying on the king of Syria and not God. vs. 9-10
- 1.** The prophet revealed God's eager willingness to help those who call on Him, "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." vs. 9a-b
 - a.** God is always looking over the earth to reveal "Himself strong".
 - * Strong in the sense of being sufficient for the most impossible things.
 - b.** God gives the condition, "whose heart is loyal to Him".
 - * The idea is of one's heart being complete, true and faithful to depend on God for anything and everything.
 - 2.** The prophet pin-pointed the unwise decision of Asa, "In this you have done foolishly; therefore from now on you shall have wars." vs. 9c
 - a.** The word foolishly "cakal" means not only to act like a fool, but played the fool!
 - b.** Asa thought he would avoid a war, but only multiplied them, bringing hurt on himself.
 - * So will we if we trust our fleshly endeavors and cleaverness to resolve

- every day issues or spiritual matters through carnal means. Eph. 6:10-18
- 3.** The prophet was dealt with severely by Asa for his message from God. vs. 10
 - a.** The once humble and God-fearing Asa became lifted up in pride, "Then Asa was angry with the seer, and put him in prison." vs. 10a-b
 - 1)** His anger of Asa against the Prophet Hanani only led to a greater sin.
 - 2)** Not relying on the LORD was bad enough, Asa now rejected the message of rebuke from the prophet and punished the messenger of Yahweh by putting him in prison, literally, the stocks.
 - b.** The retaliation was really against God, who sent the prophet, "for he was enraged at him because of this." vs. 10c
 - 1)** Asa exalted himself above God and in so many words was saying to God he was not wrong and he knew better.
 - 2)** What a difference in the attitude and character of Asa from his first and second reform, "But the high places were not removed. Nevertheless Asa's heart was loyal to the LORD all his days" up to that point. 1Kings 15:14
 - c.** The hard heart of Asa was taken out on the people, "And Asa oppressed some of the people at that time." vs. 10d

- 1) This was because Asa was not right with God.
- 2) Therefore he took it out on the people by oppressing some of them brutally.

Illustration

Nebuchadnezzar in his pride said, “Is this not the great Babylon I have built?” so God let him dwell with the beast of the field for seven seasons until he knew that the Most High ruled in the kingdoms of men and give it to whoever He chooses. Dan. 4:30-33

Application

1. The Bible is clear the first One to confront us in our spiritual err is God.
 - a. God convicts us when we sin by the conviction of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. God wait to see our response, whether we acknowledge our sin and ask forgiveness or continue in our sin.
 - c. God is very patient, merciful and gracious, but there come a time when He will deal with His children.

* “And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: “My son, do not **despise** the **chastening** of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.” Heb. 12:5-6

2. The Bible says each of us is to be confrontable by other Christians that love the Lord Jesus and us.
 - a. We have the same Savior and Lord.
 - b. We have the same Scriptures.
 - c. We have the same two nature, a sinful one and a divine one to escape the corruption in the world through lust.
 - d. We have a personal responsibility to confront one another to turn each other from sin that would hinder our fellowship with God and hurt or destroy others.

* “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of **gentleness**, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Gal. 6:1-2
3. The Bible says each of us is to be subject to those in authority in the church when they confront us about sin as a believer.
 - a. Matthew 18 is always the method of confrontation, by one, two or three, then the elders of the church. Matt. 18:15-20
 - b. The elders and Pastor do not have authority in and of themselves, but it is limited to the Bible.
 - c. When a person does not want to submit to spiritual discipline for sin to the leaders of the church, they may be asked to leave, if the offense mandates it, but always in hope of future repentance.

- * “Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also **may fear.**” 1Tim. 5:19-20

The confrontation came from the prophet Hanani to rebuked Asa!

III. The stipulations about the life of Asa. vs. 11-14

- A. The summary statement gives us supplementary source about King Asa and the condition at the end of his life. vs. 11-12
1. **The** recorded material is diverse, “Note that the acts of Asa, first and last, are indeed written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.” vs. 11
 - a. We have seen many other books mentioned in 1-2Chronicles as sources for the Chronicles.
 - 1) The book of Gad. 1Chron. 29:29
 - 2) The book of Nathan. 2Chron. 9:29
 - 3) The book of Shemiah. 2Chron. 12:15
 - 4) The book of Jehu. 2Chron. 20:34
 - b. The Chronicles are of Judah, not Israel. 1Chron. 9:1
 - 1) The Chronicles are not a repetition of First and Second Samuel or Kings.

- 2) The Chronicles were written from God’s perspective of history past and focusing on what He considered important and valuable for the post-captivity people that were about to build the second temple.
 - 3) The Chronicles were a reminder and exhortation to the captives that returned about God’s faithfulness to His promise to David.
2. The summary statement gives us the sad end of the once godly king Asa. vs. 12
- a. The king ended up becoming physically sick, “And in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa became diseased in his feet, and his malady was severe.” vs. 12a-c
 - 1) We are not told if God struck him with this disease, around 871 B.C. but it very well could be the case.
 - 2) We are simply told it was severe “ma’ al” very high in scale of the disease.
 - b. The king ended up with a bad spiritual condition, having a heart that was hard and bitter against God, “yet in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians.” vs. 12d-e
 - 1) The emphasis is that Asa knowing of his severe physical condition made his heart stiff against God, like Pharaoh.

- 2) The sins of Asa piled one on another progressing to greater sin, due to his unwillingness to repent.
- 3) Asa relied on the physicians alone, not God.
 - a) Nothing wrong with going to the doctor, but we pray first that God would heal us.
 - b) We pray to God after going to the doctors when they can do nothing.

B. The summary statement gives us the death and funeral of Asa.

1. The death of Asa is recorded, “So Asa rested with his fathers; he died in the forty-first year of his reign.” vs. 13
 - a. Asa became diseased in his feet for two years. vs. 12-13
 - b. What pain and misery we endure because we do not repent and go to God in prayer.
2. The funeral of Asa is also recorded. vs. 14
 - a. Asa had prepared his own tomb, “They buried him in his own tomb, which he had made for himself in the City of David.” vs. 14a-b
 - * A burial chamber cut out for himself.
 - b. Asa’s was body was prepared for burial, “and they laid him in the bed which was filled with spices and various ingredients

prepared in a mixture of ointments.” vs. 14c

- * If you remember Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea asked for the body of Jesus, “bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.” Jn. 19:39-40
- c. Asa had ceremony of incense, “They made a very great burning for him.” vs. 14d
 - 1) This is not speaking of cremation.
 - 2) Cremation is not forbidden in the Scriptures, as some teach, it is personal preference.
 - 3) Many believers have died in fires, it is not more difficult for God to raise the body!

Illustration

David Livingstone said, “If God has accepted my service, then my life is charmed till my work is done.”

Application

1. What has been the record of our life in Christ to the present?
 - a. Constant turmoil trusting in ourselves or constant victorious warfare inspite of the difficulties and heart-ache?

- b. Constantly falling into sin and backsliding or constantly abiding and growing, moving forwards?
 - c. Constantly relying on self or the Lord?
 - * “Therefore strengthen the hands which **hang down**, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.” Heb. 12:12-13
2. Some Christians through their life of carnality end up with a hard heart towards God.
- a. It affects their relation with God.
 - b. It affects their relations with people.
 - c. Their husband, wife, children grandchildren and friends.
 - * “And do not **be** drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but **be filled** with the Spirit.” Eph. 5:18
3. What will be said at your funeral?
- a. Will people be happy to see you go?
 - b. Will people be sad to see you go?
 - c. Will people be able to thank God for you through the years of living for Jesus, as an asset to all those around you?
 - * “The days of our lives are **seventy years**; And if by reason of strength they are eighty **years**, Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.” Ps. 90:10

Conclusion

We have looked at the reform of Asa as he turned from God to self-reliance presented in three movements.

- I. The occasion that Asa turned from relying on God was when the king of Israel attacked Asa!
- II. The confrontation came from the prophet Hanani to rebuke Asa!
- III. The stipulations were not good about the life of Asa!

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