

“Trust In God—Not In Man”

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January 9th, 2011

2 Chronicles 15:1-4 ...if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him...

As we begin our lesson, we read about three people: Azariah, Asa, and Oded. Asa was the king of Judah, and Azariah went to the king and said that the Lord would be with Judah, **if** Judah would be with the Lord, but, if Judah forsook the Lord, then the Lord would forsake Judah. Now this would be a great story **if** Asa had taken those words to heart and turned back to God; if Asa had led Judah back to the Lord, and allowed the Lord to bless Judah, but, that's not what happened.

2 Chronicles 16:1-5 ...Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa...

Baasha, king of Israel, sent his armies to compass about Asa and Judah. Basically, Baasha was building a captivity for Judah. Asa knew that if Baasha finished, then Judah would be entirely dependent on Israel. No one would be able to enter or leave, they wouldn't be able to trade with other nations, except through Israel. So, Asa sent to Ben-hadad, king of Syria, and asked him to fight against Israel; and he did. Syria's army prospered against the army of Israel.

Now, when facing something that compasses us about, as Asa faced, where should he have turned? Particularly considering that he had just been told by the prophet that God would be with him, if he would be with God. Instead, he took silver and gold from the temple of God, and sent it to Syria, to get their help.

1 Peter 1:7 ...the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth...

Faith is much more precious than gold or silver. If you have faith in Jesus, then, at judgment day, your faith will be there, but the gold will pass away. The true believers will see New Jerusalem.

And, if you look at it, it says that Ben-hadad and the Syrian army managed to prevent Baasha and Israel from surrounding Judah. You know what? that's the worst thing that could have happened. Asa thought he got away with it. Now Asa can say, "Look how mighty we are!" except, of course, that it wasn't how mighty Judah was, it was how mighty Syria was, or how mighty Ben-hadad was. Judah and Syria didn't have the same God. All Ben-hadad wanted to do was to kill some Jews; it didn't really matter to him whether they were Jews from Israel or Jews from Judah, he just wanted to kill them. So, yeah, this time, he killed some Israeli Jews, and that worked to Asa's advantage, but maybe next time...

Notice also, that it says that Asa had been king for 36 years. If you have been saved for any length of time, you are a target for this kind of attack. You know, you may think that after twenty years of praying, then you figure that you have built up some kind of reserve, that, after this long, you don't have to depend on God any more. You may tell

yourself, “I got this.” You know what, though? There is no seniority in God. Jesus died on the cross so that we could come to Him for our needs. That doesn’t change, no matter how long you have been in Christ.

A friend of mine at work told me that his son got married, and then his son started spending more and more time with his father-in-law. After a while, it got to where the son didn’t even call his father on the phone; it just seemed like he spent all his time with his father-in-law. Now, see, the father-in-law had money. But then, the father-in-law died. So, now, the son wants to spend time with his father again. How do you think that made his father feel? I wonder sometimes how God feels when so many of us treat him the same way. He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that made the heart, shall He not feel?

2 Chronicles 16:6-9 ...thou hast done foolishly...

So, now, Asa is taking the stones and the timber That Baasha was using to encompass Judah, and he is adding to Judah instead. It seems like everything is going good, right? But, then, God sends Hanani to tell Asa that he didn’t get away with it. In verse 8, he starts naming off the things that God has done for Judah. The Ethiopians had come against Judah with a million man army (the Bible says a thousand thousand), and Asa cried out to God, and God defeated them. He wants to show Himself strong; He wants to pour out a blessing so that people would say, “Who is the God of this people?”

Now, you would think that, after all of this, that Asa would repent, and get right with God. Surely, he will see the error of his ways, and make it right. After all, it is clear at this point what he has done wrong.

2 Chronicles 16:10-12 ...sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians.

This is in the thirty-ninth year of Asa’s reign, so, three years later. He’s had three years to get this right, and yet, when he gets this disease, he doesn’t turn to God, but to the physicians. God gives us avenues and permission to use His power. Now, don’t misunderstand me, I’m not against doctors. I believe that God gave doctors their abilities. At the same time, though, if you trust in doctors more than you trust in God... When you have a medical problem, you should pray about it first, and then go to the doctor. How much better is it to go to the doctor, and have him say, “Well, I can see that there was a problem here, but, whatever it was, it’s gone now,” than to go to the doctor and have him say, “I’m sorry, but there’s nothing I can do.”

I was visiting family recently, and someone very close to me dropped a bombshell. She told me that Mary wasn’t really a virgin, that Joseph was tiptoeing around and she got pregnant. And God just came over me, the words that came out of my mouth were, “Then you will die in your sins, because you believe not that Jesus is He.” I reminded her of John 3:16, and that out of all the other people that have claimed to be the way, Jesus is that One who ascended up into Glory. God is not happy when we sin, but that’s why He made a way for us to have our sins remitted and forgiven. She thanked me for saying that to her.

Revelation 7:13-17 ...God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.