

2 Chronicles 16 - Asa's Backsliding; Hanani's Message to Asa; Asa Falls Ill, Dies

IV. Judah's Kings (2 Chr 10:1—36:23)

(2) Reform and apostasy in Judah (2 Chr 12:1—36:14)

(C) Asa (2 Chr 14:1—16:14)

(b) Asa's trust in Ben Hadad rather than the Lord for protection from Baasha leads to curse (16:1-14)

2 Chronicles 16

(b) Asa's trust in Ben Hadad rather than the Lord for protection from Baasha leads to curse (16:1-14) (Cf. 1 Kings 15:16-22)

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1 In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and fortified Ramah in order to prevent *anyone* from going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah.

1 During the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign, King Baasha of Israel invaded Judah and interdicted Ramah by building fortifications around it so no one could enter or leave to join King Asa of Judah.

1 In the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

- "...thirty-sixth year" - there is a chronological problem here...1 Kings 16:8 says: "In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel...."
— Most scholars attribute the difference to a scribal error and conclude that the number in 1 Kings is correct

- "...fortified Ramah" - Baasha's purpose was to prevent further movement of Israelites south to Judah

2 Then Asa brought out **silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the LORD** and the king's house, and sent it to Ben-hadad king of Aram, who lived in Damascus,

saying,

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2 But Asa removed some silver and gold from the treasuries of the LORD's Temple and from his royal palace and sent them to King Ben-hadad of Aram, who lived in Damascus.

2 Then Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Benhadad king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,

- "...silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the LORD" - Asa appropriated temple treasures to purchasing power to bribe Ben-Hadad to invade northern Israel so Baasha, Israel's king, would be distracted and stop fortifying Ramah

— Asa sinfully resorted to trusting a pagan king, instead of Jehovah God, for protection against the king of Israel

— This was in contrast to Abijam (13:2-20) and his own earlier battle against Egypt (14:9-15), when they trusted wholly in the Lord

3 "A treaty *must be made* between you and me, *as there was* between my father and your father. Behold, I have sent you silver and gold; go, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so that he will withdraw from me."

3 "*Let there be* a treaty between you and me, *as between* my father and your father. Behold, I have sent you silver and gold; go, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so that he will withdraw from me."

3 "Let's make a treaty between you and me," he said, "just like the one between my father and your father. Notice that I've sent you silver and gold to break your treaty with King Baasha of Israel, so he'll retreat from his attack on me."

3 There is a league between me and thee, as there was between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.

4 And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa, and he sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and all the storage cities of Naphtali.

4 So Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim and all the store cities of Naphtali.

4 So King Ben-hadad did just what King Asa had asked: he sent his commanding officers to attack the cities of Israel. They conquered Ijon, Dan, Bel-maim, and all of the storage centers in Naphtali.

4 And Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abelmaim, and all the store cities of Naphtali.

- Ben-Hadad invaded Israel and took some towns near the Sea of Kinnereth (later known as the Sea of Galilee), forcing Baasha to move his forces from Ramah to the north

— Although Asa's treaty with Ben-Hadad worked, it evidenced some lack of trust in God (Cf. v7-9)

— Even so, Asa's strategy was blessed by God, and it enabled him to break down Baasha's fortifications and use their materials to rebuild two towns on Judah's side of the border (1 Kings 15:22)

5 When Baasha heard *about it*, he stopped fortifying Ramah and put an end to his work.

5 When Baasha heard *of it*, he ceased fortifying Ramah and stopped his work.

5 When Baasha learned of the attack, he withdrew from Ramah and stopped his interdiction.

5 And it came to pass, when Baasha heard it, that he left off building of Ramah, and let his work cease.

6 Then King Asa brought all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber with which Baasha had been building, and with it he fortified Geba and Mizpah.

6 Then King Asa brought all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber with which Baasha had been building, and with them he fortified Geba and Mizpah.

6 Then King Asa brought his entire army of Judah to carry away the building stones and the timber that Baasha had been using to surround Ramah, and he used those materials to fortify Geba and Mizpah.

6 Then Asa the king took all Judah; and they carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was building; and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah.

- Asa then proceeded to confiscate the building materials (stones and timber) Baasha left behind to fortify Ramah and used them to strengthen his own defense cities of Geba and Mizpah near Israel's border

— His plan was clever and successful, but it also may demonstrate a lack of trust in God

Asa is Rebuked by Hanani the Seer

7 At that time **Hanani** the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you have relied on the king of Aram and have not relied on the LORD your God, for that reason the army of the king of Aram has escaped from your hand.

7 At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you have relied on the king of Aram and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the

army of the king of Aram has escaped out of your hand.

7 Right about then, Hanani the seer came to King Asa of Judah and rebuked him.

"Because you have put your trust in the king of Aram and have not relied on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Aram has escaped from your control.

7 And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.

- "...Hanani" - God used this prophet to rebuke Asa for his wicked appropriation of temple treasures to purchase power, and for his faithless dependence on a pagan king instead of on the Lord

8 Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim an immense army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the LORD, He handed them over to you.

8 Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim an immense army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand.

8 Weren't the Ethiopians and the Libyans a vast army with many chariots and cavalry? Yet because you relied on the LORD, he gave them into your control!

8 Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand.

- Hanani told Asa that if he had not relied on the king of Syria, and instead upon *Jehovah*, he would have had him as a vassal instead of being himself subordinate to Syria

— Carnal policy brings on the very evil which it shuns, and which would have been completely averted by a policy of faith

9 For the eyes of the LORD roam throughout the earth, so that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will have wars."

9 For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars."

9 The LORD's eyes keep on roaming throughout the earth, looking for those whose hearts completely belong to him, so that he may strongly support them. But because you have acted foolishly in this, from now on you will have wars."

9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

- A noteworthy verse, worthy of application: No problem can arise for God's people of which He is not aware and out of which He cannot deliver them, if they commit themselves

to Him fully.

Asa Imprisons Hanani

10 Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in prison, for he was enraged at him for this. And Asa mistreated some of the people at the same time.

10 Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in prison, for he was enraged at him for this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at the same time.

10 In response, Asa flew into a rage and locked up the seer in stocks in the palace prison because of what Hanani had told him. Asa also tortured some of the people of Israel at that time.

10 Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time.

- This is the first physical persecution of a prophet, but many others followed (Cf. 1 Kings 22:27; Mark 6:17-18)

- Asa showed his own spiritual decline both in his lack of trust in God for protection and victory, but also in his treatment of the prophet of God who spoke truth

— Rather than confessing his guilt, Asa became angry and oppressed his own kingdom

— It may have looked for a while as if Asa was the Son of David who would perfectly trust and obey God; unfortunately he did not remain faithful

— As a result, Asa would experience war until the end of his days. This so angered Asa that he cast the prophet into prison and took out his frustrations on the people.

Asa's Illness and Death (Cf. 1 Kings 15:23-24)

11 Now, the acts of Asa *from* the first to the last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

11 Now, the acts of Asa from first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

11 Now the accomplishments of Asa from first to last are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah.

11 And, behold, the acts of Asa, first and last, lo, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet. His disease was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians.

12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet. His disease was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians.

12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa suffered from a foot disease. Even though he suffered greatly, he never sought the LORD, but instead looked to doctors.

12 And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians.

- During the last 6 years of Asa's reign, he uncharacteristically exhibited anger at truth, oppression of God's prophet and people, and seeking man instead of God

13 So Asa lay down with his fathers, and died in the forty-first year of his reign.

13 So Asa slept with his fathers, having died in the forty-first year of his reign.

13 As a result, in the forty-first year of his reign, Asa died, as had his ancestors,

13 And Asa slept with his fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign.

- The book of the kings of Judah and Israel (not 1 and 2 Kings) recorded more details on Asa's reign

- When Asa suffered a foot disease in his 39th year of rule (872 BC) he refused to seek God's help but only turned to the physicians

- The dates of Jehoshaphat, Asa's son (873-848 BC), reveal a co-regency of some three years. This may reflect the period of Asa's incapacity.

14 They buried him in his own tomb which he had cut out for himself in the city of David, and they laid him in the resting place which he had filled with spices of various kinds blended by the perfumers' art; and they made a very great fire for him.

14 They buried him in his own tomb which he had cut out for himself in the city of David, and they laid him in the resting place which he had filled with spices of various kinds blended by the perfumers' art; and they made a very great fire for him.

14 and he was buried in his own tomb that he had prepared for himself in the City of David. He was laid out on a bier that had been filled with various spices prepared by morticians, and the mourners built a massive bonfire to honor his memory.

14 And they buried him in his own sepulchres, which he had made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odours and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art: and they made a very great burning for him.

- Two years later he died and was buried with an impressive state funeral

- The fire was not a cremation. Though Asa was generally an upright king, his reign was marred by his reliance on the ungodly Ben-Hadad and his failure to trust the Lord in his illness.