

Gleanings of Grace

2 Chronicles 16

Lesson 15

2 Chronicles begins with the story of the Baasha, the king of Israel laying siege against Asa, the king of Judah. King Asa had begun his reign well. He removed the altars of the foreign gods and along with the people of Judah *entered into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul* (2 Chronicles 15:12). However, in the 36th year of his reign, he sought protection from a pagan king. Asa's life was never the same. Great lessons await us to glean from his life.

OBSERVATION: Read 2 Chronicles 16

1. Read 2 Chronicles 16 using the Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework). After reading through the chapter, what would you say to someone if they asked you what it is about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to the *LORD* and each of the people marked as key words.
Key Words: *LORD/God, Asa, Baasha, Ben-Hadad, and Hanani*
3. The contrasting words *but* and *yet* are used three times in 2 Chronicles 16. Mark the words. Choose one instance of their use and record what is being contrasted.
4. The term of conclusion *therefore* is used two times in 2 Chronicles 16. Mark the word. Choose one instance of its use; record the conclusion and what it was based upon.

Background: Read 2 Chronicles 14

1. King Asa was the great-grandson of Solomon. Unlike his father and grand-father, Asa, *did what was good and right in the eyes of the LORD*. Using 2 Chronicles 14:3-8, describe the beginning of his reign.

2. All did not remain peaceful. *Zerah the Ethiopian came out against them with an army of a million men and three hundred chariots* (verse 9). What did:

King Asa do?

King Asa pray?

God do?

3. 2 Chronicles 15:1 recounts that *the Spirit of God came upon Azariah...* What did he say to King Asa? verse 2

- a. According to verse 8, how did King Asa respond?

Read 2 Chronicles 16:1-6

1. Proceeding with the story of Asa, we might think that this king who seemed to understand how to seek the LORD would continue to do so. After King Solomon's death, the kingdom of Israel, God's chosen people was divided into two nations. Here in 2 Chronicles 16, less than 70 years later, we find Baasha, king of Israel, pitting his nation against Asa, king of Judah. King Asa's response was much different than what was chronicled in chapter 14. Using 2 Chronicles 16:2,3, rather than seek the LORD, what did he do?

- a. What should we learn from God's warning in Isaiah 31:1-3?

Challenge: Find other verses that express the futility of running to other things or people for *help*.

- 1.) What is an example of *going down to Egypt for help* today?

- a.) Why is that futile?

2. In his compromising, King Asa asked Ben-Hadad to *break his treaty* with the king of Israel. Define the word *treaty*.
 - a. Considering the commitment behind a *treaty*, what was King Asa asking Ben-Hadad to do?

3. Where did King Asa get the funds to pay Ben-Hadad?
 - a. Asa took *treasures from the house of God* and gave them to a pagan King for his use. What are some things that can happen in a person's life that might tempt a person to compromise like this?

4. King Baasha had gained the upper hand over King Asa because he effectively blocked a main route into Judah at the city of Ramah. In attacking the cities of Judah, King Baasha was forced to divert his efforts from Ramah to protecting his cities. In 2 Chronicles 16:6, King Asa had, through his aligning with a pagan king, achieved his goal of relief from King Baasha. In what ways can getting what we want deceive us into thinking we have done the right thing?

Read 2 Chronicles 16:7-10

1. 2 Chronicles 16:7 begins with the words *at that time*. When it would seem like all was well, God sent *Hanani* to Asa with a message. What did he say Asa had done?
 - a. What insights do you glean from:

Psalm 146:3-6

Jeremiah 17:5-8
 - b. King Asa was not unfamiliar with the delivering power of God. Neither was his father, who was not known for choosing to rely on God. However, three chapters earlier, we read of a time God delivered him. Record the words that followed that victory in 2 Chronicles 13:18.
 - 1.) Why do you think that even when we have seen God do wondrous deliverances in our lives, that we can tend to go back to leaning on our own thinking and resources rather than on Him?

2. Hanani also pronounced a consequence because Asa had *not relied on God*. What was it?
 - a. King Asa was deceived into thinking that his enemy was Israel. God saw beyond that. He knew that Syria (Ben-Hadad) was his real enemy. Syria would become a constant problem for Judah. What can we learn from Asa's mistake of thinking we know the problem, and not seeking God who sees the big picture?
 - 1.) Jot down some thoughts about a time when you found yourself thinking like Asa.
3. Referring to the victory of 2 Chronicles 14, Hanani challenged King Asa in 2 Chronicles 16:8. What did he say?
 - a. What attributes of God or past victories in your life would be helpful for you to refer to in times when you are tempted to seek deliverances from the wrong source?
4. Write the first sentence of verse 9 in all capital letters.
 - a. Satan has deceived us many times into thinking God reluctantly works in our lives. What does it mean to you that God looks for ways to *show Himself strong*?
 - 1.) In contrast, according to 1 Peter 5:8, what is Satan's goal?
 - b. On whose *behalf* does the LORD desire to *show Himself strong*?
 - 1.) Describe a *heart that is loyal* to the LORD?
 - c. Rather than show loyalty towards the LORD, what did Hanani say Asa had *done*?
 - 1.) What did Hanani say would be the consequences of Asa's *foolishness*?

5. Asa had greatly compromised in his efforts to avoid wars. The consequences would be wars. What was Asa's reaction to Hanani's word from the LORD? verse 10
 - a. What are your thoughts as you consider his anger and the resulting actions?

Read 2 Chronicles 16:11-14

1. What happened in the *thirty-ninth year of Asa's reign*?
 - a. *...yet in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians.* Observe that Asa's error was not that he *sought physicians*. It was that *he did not seek the LORD*. Luke, writer of the gospel of Luke and Acts was known as the *beloved physician*. In what ways might Asa's earlier compromises caused him to *not seek the LORD*?
2. Fill in the number of years mentioned in each verse:
Verse 1 *In the _____ year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah*
Verse 12 *In the _____ year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet*
Verse 13 *So Asa rested with his fathers, he died in the _____ year of his reign*
 - a. Consider the span of years between his compromise and his death. What are your thoughts?
3. Reflect upon the life of Asa which began well, but finished in failure.

REVIEW: Read 2 Chronicles 16

1. Scan the chapter and list the progression and affects that followed Asa's decision to not seek the LORD when he was threatened by the King of Israel.

2. What have you gleaned from this lesson about:

Compromise

Seeking the LORD

Seeking resources instead of the LORD

*For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD,
And He ponders all his paths.
- Proverbs 5:21*

Observation Worksheet

2 Chronicles 16

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. Here, 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.