

# 2 Chronicles 15 Commentary

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| SECOND CHRONICLES                         |                                   |                                  |   |  |  |                                     |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| The Kingdom of Israel                     |                                   |                                  |   |  |  |                                     |
| From Splendor to Disaster                 |                                   |                                  |   |  |  |                                     |
| Splendor                                  |                                   |                                  | Disaster                                |  |  |                                     |
| King Solomon of Judah<br>2 Chronicles 1-9 |                                   |                                  | Successive Kings of Judah<br>2Chr 10-36 |  |  |                                     |
| Kingdom United                            |                                   |                                  | Kingdom Divided<br>2Chr 10:1-19         | Rulers of the Southern Kingdom of Judah<br>After the Split |  | The Exile of Judah<br>2Chr 36:17-23 |
| Inaugural<br>2Chr 1:1-17                  | Solomon's Temple<br>2Chr 2:1-7:22 | Solomon's Glory<br>2Chr 8:1-9:31 |   |  |  |                                     |
| Building of the Temple                    |                                   |                                  | Decline & Destruction of the Temple     |  |  | Temple Destroyed                    |
| ~40 Years                                 |                                   |                                  | ~393 Years                              |  |  |                                     |

Click chart to enlarge  
Chart from [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
[Click Chart from Charles Swindoll](#)

| TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES |          |        |        |         |     |     |
|---|----------|--------|--------|---------|-----|-----|
| 1107  | 1011     | 971    | 931    | 853     | 722 | 586 |
| 1Samuel   | 2 Samuel | 1Kings | 1Kings | 2 Kings |     |     |

|                 |     |               |       |               |                     |                       |                       |       |
|-----------------|-----|---------------|-------|---------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| 31              | 1-4 | 5-10          | 11-20 | 21-24         | 1-11                | 12-22                 | 1-17                  | 18-25 |
| 1 Chronicles 10 |     | 1Chr<br>11-19 |       | 1Chr<br>20-29 | 2 Chronicles<br>1-9 | 2 Chronicles<br>10-20 | 2 Chronicles<br>21-36 |       |

**Legend:** B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "**Judah**" and the Northern Kingdom as "**Israel**." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.

**NOTE: THESE COMMENTS ARE OFFERED IN AN "AS IS" FORMAT - IF I HAVE TIME IN THE FUTURE, THEY WILL BE UPDATED.**

**CLICK [2 CHRONICLES COMMENTARIES](#) FOR MULTIPLE SERMONS AND COMMENTARIES**

**2 Chronicles 15:1 Now the Spirit of God came on Azariah the son of Oded,**

- the Spirit (KJV): 2Ch 20:14 2Ch 24:20 Nu 24:2 Judges 3:10 2Sa 23:2 2Pe 1:21
- See [BELOW FOR BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR 1-2 CHRONICLES](#) - adapted from [Paul Apple's Bible Outlines](#)

Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 20:14 Then in the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite of the sons of Asaph;

2 Chronicles 24:20 Then the Spirit of God came on Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest; and he stood above the people and said to them, "Thus God has said, 'Why do you transgress the commandments of the LORD and do not prosper? Because you have forsaken the LORD, He has also forsaken you.'"

Numbers 24:2 And Balaam lifted up his eyes and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe; and the Spirit of God came upon him.

Judges 3:10 The Spirit of the LORD came upon him (Othniel - Jdg 3:9), and he judged Israel. When he went out to war, the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand, so that he prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

2 Samuel 23:2 "The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me (DAVID), And His word was on my tongue.

2 Peter 1:21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

**Raymond Dillard:** The post-exilic community probably saw the speech as quite applicable to its own life. The exile could have been regarded as a period without a proper cultic establishment in place and operational, a time when God had abandoned the people (2Ch 15:3); the adversity and strife faced by the restoration community mirrored the unsafe commerce (cf. Zech 7:14; Ezra 8:31), turmoil, and harassment of which Azariah spoke (2Ch 15:4–6). The promises of his speech, that God could be found and would reward their labor, would have immediate homiletical relevance; for the Chronicler the desired response may have been similar to that of Azariah's hearers (2Ch 15:8–15). (BORROW [2 Chronicles](#))

**Now the Spirit of God came on Azariah the son of Oded-** This is the only mention of the prophet Azariah, who was moved by the Holy Spirit (2Pe 1:21+).

**David Guzik** makes a good point - King Asa and the Kingdom of Judah had just enjoyed a significant victory over a mighty army. It would be easy to think that they had a permanent claim to God's favor and blessing. Speaking through the prophet Azariah, God wanted Asa to know the importance of abiding in the LORD.

**Wiersbe** - More than one general has won a battle but afterwards lost the war because of pride or carelessness, and the Lord didn't

want Asa to fall into that trap. ([Bible Exposition Commentary - Old Testament](#) )

**Frederick Mabie:** Whether seen from a past or future orientation, the Chronicler's postexilic audience would no doubt appreciate the parallel to their own situation in the light of Judah's seventy years of captivity and the destruction of the Jerusalem temple and thus be likewise exhorted to return and seek God. (The Expositor's Bible Commentary Revised Edition)

**Andrew Hill:** Azariah is unknown in the Old Testament apart from this one episode. The expression "the Spirit of God came upon" (15:1) is typically used in the Old Testament to signify divine empowerment for some specific task, often prophetic inspiration for delivering oracles from God (e.g., 20:14; 24:20). A direct commission of some sort usually accompanies the work of God's Spirit; in this case Azariah is charged to go and find King Asa (15:2a). God's prophet serves as the conscience of the divided monarchies, so it is appropriate that Azariah's message is delivered to the king and the people of Judah and Benjamin (15:2b). (The NIV Application Commentary – 1 & 2 Chronicles.)

**Ron Daniel** - 15:1-7 The Lord Is With You When You Are With Him. The prophet Az-ar-YAW was compelled by the Lord to approach King Asa with a reminder and an encouragement. Remember that Paul told us, 1Cor. 14:3 "...one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation." In this case, Az-ar-YAW was exhorting Asa with the reminder of Israel's departure from God and that to succeed, he must continue to be with the Lord. He was also edifying Asa with the encouragement to be strong and courageous, with the promise of reward.

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**D A Carson - THE REIGN OF KING ASA** of Judah is instructive on several fronts, and will occupy our attention both today (2 Chron. 14–15) and tomorrow.

Asa's long reign began with ten years of peace (2Ch 14:1), "for the LORD gave him rest" (2Ch 14:6). During this time Asa "commanded Judah to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, and to obey his laws and commands" (2Ch 14:4). The people sought the Lord, "and built and prospered" (2Ch 14:7). At the end of ten years, Asa faced the devastating power of the Cushite forces (from the upper Nile). Asa could not possibly have forgotten how his grandfather Rehoboam was subjugated by Shishak of Egypt (2 Chron. 12). Asa's own conduct is exemplary, a foretaste of how his descendant Hezekiah would handle himself centuries later when he faced the Babylonians: he called on the Lord, frankly acknowledging his utter powerlessness against such forces. "Help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this vast army. O LORD, you are our God; do not let man prevail against you" (2Ch 14:11). By whatever means (the text does not specify), the Lord answers, and Asa's relatively tiny army crushes the Cushite host.

Enter Azariah son of Oded, a prophet with a message of encouragement for Asa and for all Judah and Benjamin (2Ch 15:1–2). Reflecting on the terrible years of anarchy under the closing years of the judges and the opening years of the monarchy, when travel and trade were dangerous and when the Levites were not sufficiently disciplined and organized to teach the people, Azariah encourages king and people alike to seek the Lord, for "he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you" (2Ch 15:2). Such a message strengthens Asa's resolve. He proceeds against the remaining idolatry in the land and pours resources into the maintenance of the temple. This is the covenant community, and under Asa it begins to act like one. "They sought God eagerly, and he was found by them. So the LORD gave them rest on every side" (2Ch 15:15) for a further quarter century, to the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign (2Ch 15:19). The "high places" were not removed (2Ch 15:17)—a residue of competition with the temple—but for the most part Asa was a straight arrow.

We should not be embarrassed by the blessing of God on integrity and righteousness. Righteousness exalts a nation: it lifts it up and strengthens its hand. This is not merely a sociological inference: it is the way God has structured things, the way he providentially rules. Inversely, corruption attracts the wrath of God, and sooner or later will bring a nation down. (BORROW [For the Love of God, Combined Edition, Volumes One and Two](#))

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#### **James Smith - ASA'S FAITH AND FAILURE 2 CHRONICLES 14–16**

"Belief's fire, once in us,  
Makes all else mere stuff to show itself;  
We penetrate our life with such a glow  
As fire lends wood and iron."  
—Browning.

In these chapters we have a faithful biography of Asa. The features of his character, both good and bad, are equally prominent. In the Bible there is no touching up of the negative to give the photograph a more pleasing appearance. As an historian the Spirit of God knows nothing of the art of flattery. As a man is in his heart so is he before God. The life of Asa is full of encouragement and warning to us. We observe his—

## **I. Good Character.**

“Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God” (chap. 14:2). This was a noble start. He refused to be guided by the light of his own eyes, or by the opinions and prejudices of others. It is a good thing to remember that the eyes of the Lord are ever in search of those whose hearts are right with Him, that He might show Himself strong in their behalf (chap. 16:9). Right thinking will lead to right acting, and God’s strength is on the side of the righteous. Asa not only “broke down the images,” he also “commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers.” It is not enough to put away the wrong. We must seek the right. To give up our idols will avail us nothing unless we turn to God (1 Thess. 1:9).

## **II. Great Faith.**

Asa’s faith was put to the test when his army of 580,000 was met by 1,000,000 Ethiopians and 300 chariots, but it stood the test. “Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many or with them that have no power. We rest on Thee, and in Thy Name we go against this multitude” (2Ch 14:11, 12). He looks upon the many as nothing, but the “help of God” as everything. To have God’s help is to get an almighty lift. The way to secure His help is to “rest on Him,” and go in His Name. This is the work of faith, and faith gains the day, for the “Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa.” He did it, for Asa rested on Him, and trusted in His Name to do it. “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

## **III. Timely Warning.**

“The Spirit of God came upon Azariah, and he went out to meet Asa, and said, Hear ye me, Asa, the Lord is with you while ye be with Him ... Be ye strong therefore, ... for your work shall be rewarded” (2Ch 15:1–7). This is emphatically a Spirit-inspired message. Why did it come to Asa immediately after his great victory of faith? Because the Spirit of God knew that at that moment there was a danger of him being lifted up with pride, and of falling back into a state of self-confidence. Oh, how anxious the Holy Spirit still is to maintain our faith in God, that His Name might be honoured by doing great things for us! “If thou wouldst believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God” (John 11:40). Take heed how you hear.

## **IV. Mighty Influence.**

“They fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him” (2Ch 15:9). Many strangers from the kingdom of Israel joined the ranks of the king of Judah when they saw that God was on his side. Those who gain victories by faith are the most influential of all leaders. All are not born leaders. Many are ready to follow a tune who could never raise it. But the supernatural element must be self-evident in the divinely appointed leader. “My sheep,” says Christ, “hear My voice, and they follow Me.” Are there not many who would fall out of the kingdom of darkness to-day if they could but see that the Lord our God is with us? Not with us in theory, but in mighty conquering deeds. Asa’s influence was not only attractive, but it was most effectual in turning the whole heart of Judah unto the Lord (2Ch 15:12–14). He constrained them to seek the Lord until “He was found of them.” He used his great influence for the best of all purposes—to bring men to God.

## **V. Sudden Failure.**

When “Baasha, king of Israel, came up against Judah ... Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the Lord, and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Syria” (2Ch 16:1–4). This was a bribe sent to the king of Syria to help him against the king of Judah. Has he forgotten already that Spirit-inspired message of Azariah? (2Ch 15:1, 2). Where is his faith now? He began in the spirit. Is he going to end in the flesh? His present unbelief leads him to desecrate the things of God (2Ch 15:18). When in his greater trouble with the Ethiopian host he cried unto the Lord and rested on Him, but this is not such a formidable affair, so he thinks to manage it by his own skill and stratagem. God is ignored, and Asa has fallen from grace. Our greatest dangers do not always lie in our greatest temptations, for when we are made conscious of our own helplessness in the face of a great trial, we fortify ourselves by leaning upon God. It is thinking ourselves wise enough and strong enough for the petty occasion that our greatest danger lies. “In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths” (Prov. 3:6).

## **VI. Rebellious Attitude.**

When Hanani the seer rebuked Asa “because he had relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the Lord his God,” Asa, we read, “was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house, for he was in a rage with him because of this thing” (2Ch 16:7–10). It is an infallible sign of backsliding when a man gets into a rage at the seer of God because he tells him the truth. Casting the man of vision into the prison does not make the vision any the less true. The man of faith will always be a seer, while the man of unbelief will always be blind. Asa makes no attempt to bribe the seer, but he attempts to bridle his lips. Instead of repenting his folly in putting his trust in an arm of flesh, he seeks to justify himself, even to the condemnation of the warning voice of God. To get beyond repentance is to get beyond the hope of recovery. “If we sin we have an Advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ the Righteous” (1 John 2:1).

## **VII. Miserable End.**

“Asa ... was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceedingly great, yet in his disease he sought not the Lord, but to the physicians” (2Ch 16:12). His sin lay not in seeking the help of the physicians, but in not seeking the help of the Lord. Had not his heart been diseased as well as his feet this sin would never have been laid to his charge. A physician may be a gift from God as much as a seer, but when we trust the gift instead of the Giver, we dishonour God, and expose ourselves to failure and death. It is a melancholy fact that this otherwise great and good man’s life is closed with these sorrowful words, “He sought not the Lord.” “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12). Remember the words of the son of Oded, “The Lord is with you while ye be with Him” (2Ch 15:2).

**2 Chronicles 15:2 and he went out to meet Asa and said to him, “Listen to me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: the LORD is with you when you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.**

- Hear ye me (KJV): 2Ch 13:4 20:15,20 Jud 9:7 Ps 49:1,2 Isa 7:13 Mt 13:9 Rev 2:7,11,17 Rev 2:29 3:6,13,22
- The Lord (KJV): 2Ch 13:12 32:8 De 20:1 Jas 4:8
- if ye seek him (KJV): 2Ch 15:4,15 33:12 Isa 55:6,7 Jer 29:12-14 Mt 7:7,8
- if ye forsake (KJV): 2Ch 12:1-3 24:20 2Ki 21:14 1Ch 28:9 Ro 11:1,2 Heb 10:38 12:25

#### **Related Passages:**

1 Chronicles 28:9 “As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. **If you seek Him, He will let you find Him;** but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.

### **TWO CONDITIONS: "WHEN" AND "IF"**

**and he went out to meet Asa and said to him, “Listen to me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: the LORD is with you when you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you** - Seeking is a keyword (or concept) in this chapter - see 2Ch 15:4, 12, 13, 15.

**David Guzik** - The idea is that when we draw near to God, He reveals Himself to us. God does not hide Himself from the seeking heart. The converse is also true: if you forsake Him, He will forsake you. Ultimately, God gives us what we want from Him. If He gives the heart that seeks Him more, and He also gives the heart that rejects Him what it desires.

**MacArthur Study Bible** - The spiritual truth here is basic, namely that God is present and powerful in defense of His obedient people. Cf. Dt 20:1; 1Ch 28:9; Isa 55:6, 7; Jer 29:12-14; Jas 4:8. While good Asa ruled for 41 years, 8 wicked kings ruled in Israel, including Jeroboam, who along with the others, was a negative illustration of this truth (cf. 12:1ff.). (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Martin Selman:** The theme of seeking God continues from chapter 14, occupying a central role in both the prophecy (vv. 2, 4) and the covenant (vv. 12-13, 15). Two elements are stressed, that the purpose of seeking God is to be found by him (vv. 2, 4, 15), and that this is an attitude affecting the whole of life. Seeking is not an end in itself, but a God-given means to be restored to a relationship with him. That relationship is seen to encompass internal and external worlds, attitudes as well as actions. Neither pietism nor restructuring is adequate by itself, and any authentic movement of spiritual renewal should show evidence of both. Though the New Testament encourages people to make a priority of seeking God, it emphasizes that God seeks us much more than we seek him. There is a sense in which no-one truly seeks God (cf. Rom. 3:11), even though God invites everyone to seek him (Acts 15:17; 17:27). Ultimately, people find God because Jesus came ‘to seek and save what was lost’ (Luke 19:10), and was prepared to search for one lost sheep out of a hundred or for a wayward child (Luke 15). Seeking God is nonetheless very necessary, and the New Testament renews the Old Testament’s invitation, ‘seek and you will find’ (Matt. 7:7, etc.), and affirms that God rewards those who go on seeking him in faith (Heb. 11:6). (BORROW [2 Chronicles : a commentary](#))

**G Campbell Morgan** - This chapter chronicles with greater detail the occasion and value of the re-forms wrought in Judah during the reign of Ma. It is, however, chiefly remarkable for this word of prophetic interpretation. Azariah, who uttered it, only appears here. He is mentioned nowhere else. Yet, in an introductory word so brief that it only occupies half a verse in our Bibles, he revealed an inclusive philosophy of life under the control of God. Suddenly anointed by the Spirit of God, this man appeared to the king, and in this message gave direction to all his life and reign. If the message was brief, it was indeed weighty. The rest of the address

consisted of illustration of the application of the principle it declared to the then existing conditions; and of a direct appeal to the king. The principle declared is of perpetual application. Let it be well considered. It represents God as unchanging. All apparent changes on His part are really changes in the attitude of men toward Him. Man with God, finds God with him. Man, forsaking God, finds that he is forsaken of God. These are the extremes of the truth. Between them—not contradicting them, but complementing them and completing them—is the declaration that if a man seek God, He will be found of that man. A recognition of these things must at once give direction to life, and inspire the heart with courage. It certainly did so in the case of Asa.

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### Whose Side Is God On?

The Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. —1 Chronicles 28:9

Today's Scripture: 2 Chronicles 15:1-15

I do not boast that God is on my side," wrote Abraham Lincoln. "I humbly pray that I am on God's side."

Lincoln's words paraphrase the thoughts Azariah expressed to King Asa of Judah. After the Spirit of God came upon Azariah, he said, "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" (2 Chron. 15:2).

Throughout history, people have done despicable deeds while boldly claiming that God was on their side. But being a Christian doesn't guarantee that God is "on our side" any more than being an ancient Israelite guaranteed that God was on theirs (Isa. 3:14-15). God is on the side of those who are on His side—who know His heart and mind and do His will—not those who insist on convincing God and others that their way is right.

Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord indicated that He sides with the oppressed (Isa. 58:6-7,10). For Christians, that means it is right to be on the side of those who are being wronged.

Instead of jumping into a situation with the presumption that God is on our side, we need to be certain that we are on His. By: Julie Ackerman Link (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Who will leave the world's side? Who will face the foe?  
Who is on the Lord's side? Who for Him will go?  
By Thy call of mercy, by Thy grace divine,  
We are on the Lord's side—Savior, we are Thine!  
—Havergal

It's dangerous to mistake our wishes for God's will.

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### **John Gill - When and How Long the Lord is with His People**

#### **I. WHAT IT IS FOR THE LORD TO BE WITH HIS PEOPLE.**

1. Not His general or essential presence.
2. Nor His being with His creatures in a providential way; for so He is with all men.
3. Nor His special presence in a providential way with His own dear children.
4. But it is God's gracious presence, which Moses so earnestly entreated: "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence"; and of which David deprecates the loss: "Cast me not away from Thy presence." To enjoy His presence in this sense means —

- (1) To have the light of His countenance.
- (2) For God to commune with them.
- (3) For God to manifest His early loving-kindness to their souls.

#### **II. WHEN OR HOW LONG WILL GOD BE WITH HIS PEOPLE.? "While ye be with Him."**

1. While you keep close to Him in a way of duty; while you are with Him in prayer particularly.
2. While we have communion with them that fear the Lord. God is with them that fear Him; and those who keep company with such persons may expect His presence. Spiritual conversation is like putting fuel to fire; and prayer is like the bellows which blows up the flame.
3. While ye be with Him in public worship and attend the ordinances of His house ([Acts 2:1-3](#)). Inferences:
  1. The presence of God with His people is a most amazing instance of Divine goodness.

2. There is nothing so desirable to a gracious soul as the presence of God.

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## John Owen (Puritan) - God's Presence with His People the Spring of Their Prosperity

### I. GOD MAY BE SAID TO BE WITH MEN —

1. In respect of the omnipresence of His essence (1 Kings 8:27; Psalm 139:7-12).
2. In respect of personal union. "God was with him" (Acts 10:38).
3. In respect of the covenant of grace.
4. In respect of providential dispensations. This is twofold.

- (1) General; ordering, disposing, guiding, ruling all things, according to His own wisdom, by His own power, unto His own glory.
- (2) Special; attended with peculiar love, favour, goodwill, special care towards them with whom He is so present (Genesis 21:22; Joshua 1:5; Jeremiah 15:20; Isaiah 43:1, 2). This is the presence here intimated.

### II. A PEOPLE'S ABIDING WITH GOD IS TWOFOLD.

1. In personal obedience.
2. In national administrations.

### III. OBSERVATIONS.

1. All outward flourishing or prosperity of a people doth not always argue the special presence of God with them. The things required to make success and prosperity an evidence of the presence of God are —

- (1) That the people themselves prospered be His peculiar people.
- (2) That the whole work be good, and have a tendency to God's glory, wherein they are engaged.
- (3) Made useful and subservient to His glory.

2. Even great afflictions, eminent distresses, long perplexities, may have a consistency with God's special presence.

**2 Chronicles 15:3 "For many days Israel was without the true God and without a teaching priest and without law.**

- a long (KJV): 1Ki 12:28-33 Ho 3:4
- true God (KJV): Jer 10:10 Joh 17:3 1Th 1:9 1Jn 5:20
- a teaching (KJV): 2Ch 17:8,9 Lev 10:11 De 33:10 Ne 8:9 Eze 44:21-23 Mic 3:11 Mal 2:7 Mt 2:4,5 1Ti 3:2
- without law (KJV): Ro 2:12 7:8,9 1Co 9:21

### Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 17:7-9 Then in the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel and Micaiah, **to teach in the cities of Judah;** 8 and with them the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah and Tobadonijah, the Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests. 9 **They taught in Judah, having the book of the law of the LORD with them; and they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.**

Leviticus 10:11 and **so as to teach the sons of Israel all the statutes which the LORD has spoken to them through Moses."**

Deuteronomy 17:9-11 "So you shall come to the Levitical priest or the judge who is in office in those days, and you shall inquire of them and they will declare to you the verdict in the case. 10 "You shall do according to the terms of the verdict which they declare to you from that place which the LORD chooses; and **you shall be careful to observe according to all that they teach you.** 11 **"According to the terms of the law which they teach you,** and according to the verdict which they tell you, you shall do; **you shall not turn aside from the word which they declare to you, to the right or the left.**

**For many days Israel was without the true God-** This is surely an allusion to the horrible cycles of apostasy and return during the almost 300 years of days of the Judges, a sad time aptly summed up with the declaration that "In those days there was no king in



Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes." (Jdg 21:25+, cf Jdg 2:11–21+), a fulfillment of God's covenant warning (Dt. 28:25–26, 30, 49–52). Azariah's description sounds very current!

**and without a teaching priest and without law** - Note that Israel's priests not only led worship but also taught the Law to the people (2Ch 17:7-9; Lev 10:11; Dt 17:9-11).

**J. Vernon McGee** wrote that there are three bridges that must be crossed on the road to revival, and we see these in the record of Asa in 2 Chronicles. These are: knowledge of the Word of God (14:4; 15:3), scriptural separation (14:3, 5; 15:8, 13, 16), and faith in God (14:11; 15:4, 12). "The tragedy of the hour in our day is that there is not enough Bible teaching in the church."

**Andrew Hill:** The prophet's speech also has currency for the Chronicler's audience, for it summarizes the three essentials for sustaining the faith of the restoration community in post-exilic Judah: the true God, the teaching priest, and the law (15:3).

**2 Chronicles 15:4 "But in their distress they turned to the LORD God of Israel, and they sought Him, and He let them find Him.**

- in their trouble (KJV): De 4:29,30 Jud 3:9,10 10:10-16 Ps 106:44 Ho 6:1 14:1-3
- found of them (KJV): 2Ch 15:15 Isa 55:6 65:1,2 Ro 10:20

## A TURN FOR THE BETTER

**But in their distress they turned to the LORD God of Israel, and they sought Him, and He let them find Him**

**THOUGHT** - There used to be an add that said "[How do you spell relief](#)" and then it said "[I spell relief 'R-O-L-A-I-D-S'.](#)" "Roloids spells relief!" That may have be true in the physical realm, but in the spiritual realm the answer to the question "How do you spell relief?" is spelled "J-E-H-O-V-A-H!" Beloved, "He Himself is our Peace" (Eph 2:14+)!

**2 Chronicles 15:5 "In those times there was no peace to him who went out or to him who came in, for many disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands.**

NO GOD, NO PEACE!  
KNOW GOD, KNOW PEACE!

**"In those times there was no peace to him who went out or to him who came in, for many disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands** - When God is not present, there is no peace, for there are many disturbing afflictions.

**THOUGHT** - No God, no peace. Know God, know peace! This axiom was true in ancient Israel and is true today in our lives. Seek first the King of Shalom and you will experience the peaceful fruit of righteousness, from the Righteous One.

**2 Chronicles 15:6 "Nation was crushed by nation, and city by city, for God troubled them with every kind of distress.**

- nation (KJV): 2Ch 12:15 13:17 Mk 13:8 Lu 21:9,10
- destroyed (KJV): Heb. beaten in pieces
- God (KJV): 2Ch 33:11 36:17 Jud 2:14 Ps 106:41 Isa 10:6 Am 3:6 Lu 21:22-24

## DIVINE DISTURBANCES

**Nation was crushed by nation, and city by city, for God troubled them with every kind of distress.**

**2 Chronicles 15:7 "But you, be strong and do not lose courage, for there is reward for your work."**



- ye strong (KJV): Jos 1:7,9 1Ch 28:20 Ps 27:14 Isa 35:3,4 Da 10:19 1Co 16:13 Eph 6:10
- your work (KJV): Ge 15:1 Ru 2:12 Ps 19:11 58:11 Mt 5:12,46 6:1,4,6,18 10:41,42 Lu 6:35 Ro 4:4,5 1Co 3:8,14 9:17,18 1Co 15:58 Col 3:24 Heb 6:10 Heb 10:35 2Jn 1:8

**But you** - A strategic term of contrast. An about face so to speak, turning from disturbances to Yahweh.

**Be strong and do not lose courage, for** (term of explanation) **there is reward for your work** - In the Septuagint "be strong" (Septuagint = [ischuo](#)) is in the [present imperative](#) and "do not lose courage" is [present imperative](#) with a negative meaning, stop losing courage (Septuagint = [ekluo](#)) or don't begin to lose courage.

**THOUGHT** - This same charge is given to believers today, Paul commanding "Therefore, my beloved brethren, **be** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord." (1Cor 15:58+) **"Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.** 14 Let all that you do **be done in love.**" (1Co 16:13-14+ - all 5 verbs [present imperative](#))

**Frederick Mabie:** The prophet's admonition to Asa to "be strong" is a function of one's spiritual – not physical – fortitude in times of challenge and uncertainty. This spiritual dimension of being strong is seen in Asa's response ("he took courage," v.8) as he embarks on leading the people in worship and spiritual renewal (vv.8b-15). (The Expositor's Bible Commentary Revised Edition)

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**C H Spurgeon - Faith's Checkbook** - GOD had done great things for King Asa and Judah, but yet they were a feeble folk. Their feet were very tottering in the ways of the Lord, and their hearts very hesitating, so that they had to be warned that the Lord would be with them while they were with him, but that if they forsook him he would leave them. They were also reminded of the sister kingdom, how ill it fared in its rebellion, and how the Lord was gracious to it when repentance was shown. The Lord's design was to confirm them in his way, and make them strong in righteousness. So ought it to be with us. God deserves to be served with all the energy of which we are capable.

If the service of God is worth anything, it is worth everything. We shall find our best reward in the Lord's work if we do it with determined diligence. Our labour is not in vain in the Lord, and we know it. Halfhearted work will bring no reward; but, when we throw our whole soul into the cause, we shall see prosperity. This text was sent to the author of these notes in a day of terrible storm, and it suggested to him to put on all steam, with the assurance of reaching port in safety with a glorious freight.

**2 Chronicles 15:8 Now when Asa heard these words and the prophecy which Azariah the son of Oded the prophet spoke, he took courage and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities which he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim. He then restored the altar of the LORD which was in front of the porch of the LORD.**

- Oded (KJV): 2Ch 15:1
- took courage (KJV): 2Ch 19:11 Isa 44:14 \*margins Ac 28:15
- abominable idols (KJV): Heb. abominations, Lev 18:30 De 27:15 1Ki 11:5,7 2Ki 23:13 Isa 65:4 Jer 16:18 Eze 8:10 1Pe 4:3 Rev 17:4,5
- the cities (KJV): 2Ch 13:19
- the altar of the Lord (KJV): 2Ch 4:1 8:12 29:18 2Ki 16:14 18:22

#### **Related Passages:**

1 Kings 15:12-15 (ASA) He also put away the male cult prostitutes from the land and removed all the idols which his fathers had made. 13 He also removed Maacah his mother from being queen mother, because she had made a horrid image as an Asherah; and Asa cut down her horrid image and burned it at the brook Kidron. 14 But the high places were not taken away; nevertheless the heart of Asa was wholly devoted to the LORD all his days. 15 He brought into the house of the LORD the dedicated things of his father and his own dedicated things: silver and gold and utensils.

### **A RIGHT RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD**

**Now when Asa heard these words and the prophecy which Azariah the son of Oded the prophet spoke, he took courage**

**and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities which he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim** - Notice Asa's prompt response (he didn't say "I need to pray about it" -- some things don't need to be prayed about but promptly practiced!) was to eliminate the negative and accentuate the positive, smash the idols and seek the LORD through His altar (the brazen altar for burnt offering was **in front of the porch** and was for sacrifice being a foreshadowing of the Cross of Christ). Remember that idolatry and immorality go together so removing the abominable idols would be also cleansing the land of the horrid sexual immoralities that accompanied Canaanitish worship and which Israel had been ensnared by, even practicing sexual perversion under the deceptive guise of "worship!"

**THOUGHT** - When you stray from the Word of Truth, it is unbelievable how far your heart will stray and how deep can be the depravity in which it falls! Why? One simple answer is that sin is deceitful and gives passing pleasure! (Heb 3:13+, Heb 11:25+).

**Wiersbe** - He expelled the shrine male prostitutes, for this practice was prohibited by God's law (Deut. 23:17), as was sodomy itself (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; see also Rom. 1:27 and 1 Cor. 6:9) ([Bible Exposition Commentary - Old Testament](#))

**Frederick Mabie:** Asa's destruction of idols from the tribal territories of the southern kingdom and northern tribal areas ("the hills of Ephraim") is balanced with his repairs on the altar of the Jerusalem temple. These repairs on the altar function as a tangible act evidencing his inward disposition toward faithfulness and fidelity to God. The destruction of objects of idolatry and syncretistic worship per Deuteronomic admonition (cf. Dt 16:21-22) is a cornerstone of Asa's religious reforms and is likewise seen in the reforms of Hezekiah (cf. 2Ch 31:1) and Josiah (cf. 34:3-7). (The Expositor's Bible Commentary Revised Edition)

**He then restored the altar of the LORD which was in front of the porch of the LORD**- How or why the altar was damaged, the text doesn't say; but without the altar, the priests had no place to offer sacrifices. Restore (hadas) means to renew, restore and refers to the renovating or reconstructing of various items such as an altar (1Sa 11:14), the altar of the Lord in this verse (2Ch 15:8), the Temple (2Ch 24:4, 12), cities (Isa 61:4) and the surface of the ground or earth (Ps. 104:30).

**Ron Daniel** - Asa's Response To The Word - Asa responded to the exhortation with action. He made a renewed effort to continue removing the idolatry from the land. He also had the altar of sacrifice in the temple refurbished, since it had been being used daily for the last 60 years.

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### **[Step Up!](#)**

[Asa] took courage, and removed the abominable idols from all the land . . . ; and he restored the altar of the Lord. — 2 Chronicles 15:8

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Chronicles 15:1-12

When a woodchuck started eating our garage (well, just the trim), I bought a live trap with plans to transplant the little guy to a park. I baited it with an assortment of goodies and opened the trap door. The next morning, I was excited to see a little critter in my trap—until I noticed that it was no woodchuck. I had snared a skunk.

I went online to see how to untrap the skunk without having it . . . well, you know. The solutions were extremely cautious in their descriptions of how to protect yourself while releasing the animal. Plastic bags. Gloves. Tarps. Blankets. Goggles. The task looked daunting and dangerous.

Then my son-in-law Ewing stepped up. He simply walked over to the trap, opened the door, and coaxed our striped friend on its way with a few sprays from the garden hose.

Sometimes our fears can lead to inaction. We worry so much about protecting ourselves that we fail to simply step up. When King Asa learned that the Lord wanted him to remove the idols from Israel, he "took courage" (2 Chron. 15:8). He could have had a rebellion on his hands for doing this. But he stepped up, and as a result the nation rejoiced (v.15).

Facing a spiritual challenge? The Lord will help you step up with courage and trust Him for the outcome. By: Dave Branon (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Let the road be rough and dreary,  
And its end far out of sight,  
Foot it bravely, strong or weary;  
Trust in God and do the right.  
—Macleod

Courage is fear that has said its prayers.

**2 Chronicles 15:9 He gathered all Judah and Benjamin and those from Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon who resided with them, for many defected to him from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him.**

- the strangers (KJV): 2Ch 11:16 30:1-11,25
- they fell (KJV): 1Ki 12:19 1Ch 12:19
- they saw (KJV): Ge 39:3 1Sa 18:28 1Ki 3:28 Zec 8:21-23 Ac 7:9,10 9:31

**He gathered all Judah and Benjamin and those from Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon who resided with them, for many defected to him from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him** - This is a fascinating fact for in 722 BC the Assyrians took the 10 northern apostate tribes into exile, from which they did not return as did the exiles from Babylon in 586 BC. But here we see that there was a remnant (the text actually says "**many**") of spiritually attuned men and women from some of the 10 northern tribes, **for many defected**. Clearly the members of these Northern tribes were not taken into captivity by Assyria. So in a sense the "Ten Lost Tribes" is not completely true, for not all were lost!

**Wiersbe** - It's one thing to remove idols and repair the altar, but the greatest need was to rededicate the people. The calling of assemblies is a significant thing in the history of the Jews, both before and after the division of the kingdom. (See 1 Chron. 13:2-5; 28:8; 29:1; 2 Chron. 5:6; 20:3ff; 30:1ff.).... At significant times throughout Jewish history you find the leaders and the people renewing their commitment to the Lord, a good example for the church to follow today ([Bible Exposition Commentary - Old Testament](#) )

**ESV Study Bible** ([BORROW](#)) - The Chronicler highlights a number of occasions when northerners are reunited with their fellow Israelites in Judah, always in the context of worship and seeking God (cf. 2Ch 11:16; 30:11, 18, 25; 35:18).

**Henry Morris** Even though the ten tribes separated themselves from Judah and Jerusalem and eventually went into Assyrian exile never to return, this and other passages indicate that many of the most spiritually minded people among other tribes did return, to continue in the kingdom of the Davidic promises. No doubt all the tribes were thus represented in the Judaic heritage."

**Raymond Dillard:** The Chronicler's concern with "all Israel" is one of his most pervasive themes; from the vantage point of the post-exilic community, he has not simply written off the Northern tribes. Here Asa enjoys the loyalty of many Northerners, as had Rehoboam before him (11:13-17). The Chronicler speaks of actions in the North on the part of several of the kings of Judah. Asa's son Jehoshaphat put garrisons in the cities of Ephraim captured by his father (17:2) and sent a teaching delegation into the North (19:4). Hezekiah invited Israelites from Beersheba to Dan to celebrate the Passover (30:5, 11); Josiah's reform reached into "Ephraim, Manasseh, Simeon, and as far as Naphtali" (34:6; cf. 34:21, 33). Though there is the steady call for reform in the North and for the recognition of the Jerusalem cult, the Chronicler's attitude to the North is not one of exclusivism (cf. Ezra 6:17)

Ron Daniel - Defecting From Israel - You may remember that a few chapters ago, we read of a defection from the north, right after the nation split into two. Now, because of King Asa's faithfulness, even more are coming down from Israel.

2Chr. 11:14 For the Levites left their pasture lands and their property and came to Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had excluded them from serving as priests to the LORD.

2Chr. 11:16 Those from all the tribes of Israel who set their hearts on seeking the LORD God of Israel followed them to Jerusalem, to sacrifice to the LORD God of their fathers.

**2 Chronicles 15:10 So they assembled at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign.**

- the third month (KJV): Es 8:9

**So they assembled at Jerusalem in the third month(May-June) of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign** - Recall that Judah had been "**undisturbed for ten years during his days** (2Ch 14:1)." However, 2Ch 15:5 says there was no peace, therefore by implication there must have been a downward drift in devotion to Jehovah after the first 10 years of peace. This was Asa's fifteenth year, somewhere around 895-897 B.C (commentaries vary). Asa and his people entered into a covenant to seek the Lord in accordance with the ancient Deuteronomic Code (vv. 10-15), which called for death by stoning for all practitioners of idolatry (cf. Deut. 17:2-7). Assembling at this time of year would indicate this was probably at the time of the [Feast of Weeks \(Pentecost\)](#) (for it was held in the third month Lev 23:15-21) one of the three annual pilgrimage feasts (1Ch 23:31, Lev 23:15-21).

**THOUGHT** - There is an implicit warning here. When we are experiencing a time of peace in our life with no disturbances, we need to be careful not to drift from our devotion to our God, lest He send disturbances to get

our attention!

**Andrew Hill:** The covenant ceremony may have been associated with the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost, as the spring pilgrimage festival would have naturally necessitated the gathering of all Israel in Jerusalem at that time of year (15:10). It also appears that the victory over Zerah the Cushite (cf. 14:9–15) was incorporated into the festival since some of the animals taken as plunder from that battle are included in the sacrificial offerings to the Lord (15:11).

**Ron Daniel** - 10-15 A Covenant To Seek The Lord. The Jews have made this covenant before (Exo. 24:7), and will make it again (2Kings 23:1-3). But the Lord doesn't say, "Yeah, right! Heard it all before!" Instead, "He let them find Him" and "gave them rest on every side." Our God is so gracious and patient with us, isn't He?

**2 Chronicles 15:11 They sacrificed to the LORD that day 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep from the spoil they had brought.**

- offered (KJV): 2Ch 14:13-15 Nu 31:28,29,50 1Sa 15:15,21 1Ch 26:26,27
- the same time (KJV): Heb. in that day
- seven hundred (KJV): 2Ch 1:6 7:5

**They sacrificed to the LORD that day 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep from the spoil they had brought-**

**2 Chronicles 15:12 They entered into the covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and soul;**

- they entered: 2Ch 23:16 29:10 34:31,32 De 29:1,12 2Ki 23:3 Ne 9:38 10:29 Jer 50:5 2Co 8:5
- seek: 2Ch 15:4 De 4:29 Dt 10:12 1Ki 8:48 Jer 29:12,13 Ac 24:14

#### **Related Passages:**

1 Kings 8:48 if they return to You with **all their heart and with all their soul** in the land of their enemies who have taken them captive, and pray to You toward their land which You have given to their fathers, the city which You have chosen, and the house which I have built for Your name

Deuteronomy 6:4-5+ (THE [SHEMA](#)) "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! 5 "You shall love the LORD your God **with all your heart and with all your soul** and with all your might.

Deuteronomy 4:29+ (THIS IS A FUTURE PROPHECY BUT IS ALSO TRUE IN PRINCIPLE) "But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him **with all your heart and all your soul**.

Deuteronomy 10:12+ "Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God **with all your heart and with all your soul**,

Deuteronomy 11:13+ "It shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him **with all your heart and all your soul**,

Mark 12:30+ AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH **ALL YOUR HEART**, AND WITH **ALL YOUR SOUL**, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.'

Jeremiah 29:13 (PROPHETIC PROMISE TO ISRAEL GIVEN BEFORE THEY WERE TAKEN INTO EXILE IN BABYLON) 'You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me **with all your heart**.

Isaiah 55:6 **Seek the LORD** while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near.

**ALL THEIR  
HEART AND SOUL!**

**They entered into the covenant** ([berit/berith/beriyth](#)) **to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and soul**- Note the words "THE covenant." In the ancient world, covenant was the most solemn, binding agreement humans could enter into and in context the seriousness of this covenant is shown by invoking the death penalty on those who refused to enter it (2Ch 15:13)! The phrase **all their heart and soul** speaks of total commitment!

**NIV Study Bible** ([BORROW](#)) on **entered into the covenant** - A renewal of the covenant made at Sinai, similar to the covenant renewals on the plain of Moab (Dt 29:1), at Mount Ebal (Jos 8:30-35), at Shechem (Jos 24:25) and at Gilgal (1Sa 11:14; see note there). Later the priest Jehoiada (2Ch 23:16), as well as Hezekiah (2Ch 29:10) and Josiah (2Ch 34:31-32), would also lead in renewals of the covenant—events of primary significance in the view of the Chronicler

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**Covenant** (01285) [berit/berith/beriyth](#) means covenant, treaty, compact, agreement between two parties (first use in God's covenant with Noah - Ge 6:18, 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17). As discussed more below **beriyth** describes a compact made by passing between pieces of flesh. Covenant is a solemn, binding arrangement between two parties and entails a variety of responsibilities, benefits and penalties depending on the specific covenant which is being studied. OT covenants were made between God and man (eg, God with Noah - Ge 6:18, with Abram - Ge 15:18) or between men (Abraham and Abimelech - Ge 21:27, Isaac and Abimelech - Ge 26:28, Jacob and Laban - Ge 31:44) (**For summary of covenants see - [Covenant in the Bible](#)**).

**Covenant** can be summarized as follows...

(1) Between two parties (sometimes equal, other times superior to inferior) -- (a) **nations** -- (peace) treaty, alliance of friendship (b) **individuals** -- a pledge or agreement with mutual obligations to each other (c) **monarch and subjects** (2Sa 3:21, 5:3, 1Chr 11:3) -- a constitution (d) **God and man** -- Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, New Covenants. **TWOT** adds that..."Apart from blood ties the covenant was the way people of the ancient world formed wider relationships with each other The accounts of the relationship between David and Jonathan are the only unequivocal mention of a compact between two individuals in the Old Testament (1Sa 18:3; 20:8; 23:18). It is spoken of as "a covenant of the Lord" because the Lord witnessed the transaction and protected the legal order."

(2) Accompanied by (a) **signs** (also witnesses, memorials, shared meals) (b) **sacrifices**, (c) **solemn, binding oaths** -- sealing the relationship with promises of blessing for keeping the covenant and curses for breaking the covenant (d) Sometimes with written document on which the words of the covenant, its terms in the form of promises and stipulations were spelled out, witnessed to, signed and sealed. **Behm** (TDNT) notes that in ancient times

There is no firmer guarantee of legal security peace or personal loyalty than the covenant (e.g., [Amos 1:9](#)).

(3) Is depicted in the idiomatic phrase "**make (cut) a covenant**" in which there is was a blood sacrifice as part of the covenant ritual.

Almost 100 years ago, **Andrew Murray** motivated by a waning understanding regarding the truth and power inherent in the Biblical truth of **covenant** wrote that...

One of the words of Scripture, which is almost going out of fashion, is the word **Covenant**'. There was a time when it was the keynote of the theology and the Christian life of strong and holy men. We know how deep in Scotland it entered into the national life and thought. It made mighty men, to whom God, and His promise and power were wonderfully real. It will be found still to bring strength and purpose to those who will take the trouble to bring all their life (**Ed**: and their marriages) under control of the inspiring assurance that they are living in **covenant** with a God who has sworn faithfully to fulfill in them every promise He has given. ([Two Covenants - Index - Andrew Murray](#))

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**F B Meyer** - We hear but little talk in the present day of the covenant, the mention of which was dear to God's people of olden time. There is this difference between it and the covenants which we make with God. That is permanent, these evanescent. That is founded upon the oath and promise of God; these on the resolutions and endeavors of man. That is full of promises of what God will be and do; these recount what we are prepared to sacrifice and suffer. And though we sign them with blood drawn from our veins, they will disappoint and fail.

Do not think too much of entering into and keeping a covenant with God; but remember that the Lord Jesus, on our behalf, has entered into covenant relation with the Father, and the Father with us in Him. This is the new covenant. It is drawn out at length in Hebrews 8. Very little is said about our side, but it is full to overflowing of God's. Nothing is said of our fidelity to our obligations, because man has been too often weighed in the balances and found wanting; and because the Lord Jesus Christ, as our representative, has already fulfilled all the conditions of obedience and devotion on which its provisions depend. He has also graciously undertaken to realize those conditions by the Holy Spirit in us.

Every time we put to our lips the cup of the new covenant, we humbly remind God of all He has promised, and ask Him to do as He has said. At the same time we may confidently ask the great Surety of the covenant to accomplish in us such a mind as may love

and keep our Father's law. And what He did for our fathers, who were naturally just such as we are, He will certainly do for us.  
2 Chronicles 16:9

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**QUESTION - [What does it mean to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength?](#)**

**ANSWER** - "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:4–5). This is known as the [Shema](#), taken from the first word "hear" in Hebrew. Modern Jews consider the recital of the *Shema* both evening and morning to be one of their most sacred duties. It was cited by Jesus as the "greatest commandment in the Law" (Matthew 22:36–37).

This command seems to be impossible to obey. That's because, in the natural state of man, it is impossible. There is no greater evidence of the inability of man to obey God's Law than this one commandment. No human being with a fallen nature can possibly love God with *all* his heart, soul, and strength 24 hours a day. It's humanly impossible. But to disobey any commandment of God is sin. Therefore, even without considering the sins we commit daily, we are all condemned by our inability to fulfill this one commandment. This is the reason Jesus continually reminded the Pharisees of their inability to keep the Law of God. He was trying to get them to see their utter spiritual bankruptcy and their need for a Savior. Without the cleansing of sin that He provides, and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit who lives in the hearts of the redeemed, loving God to any degree is impossible.

But, as Christians, we have been cleansed from sin and we do have the Spirit. So how do we begin to love God the way we should? Just as the man in Mark 9:24 asked God to help his unbelief, so too we can ask God to help us in areas where we don't love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. It is His power that we need to do the impossible, and we begin by seeking and appropriating that power.

In most cases, our love and affection for God grows more intense as time goes by. Certainly, young Christians newly saved are very much aware of the love of God and their love for Him. But it is through the witness of God's faithfulness during times of struggle and trial that a deep love for God grows and grows. Over time, we witness His compassion, mercy, grace, and love for us, as well as His hatred for sin, His holiness, and His righteousness. We cannot love someone we don't know, so knowing Him should be our first priority. Those who pursue God and His righteousness, who take seriously the command to love Him above all else, are those who are consumed with the things of God. They are eager to study God's Word, eager to pray, eager to obey and honor God in all things, and eager to share Jesus Christ with others. It is through these spiritual disciplines that the love for God grows and matures to the glory of God. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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**Related Resources:**

- [What is the heart? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the human soul? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Do we have two or three parts? Body, soul, and spirit? Dichotomy or trichotomy? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**2 Chronicles 15:13 and whoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, man or woman.**

- whosoever (KJV): Ex 22:20 De 13:5-15 17:2-5 1Ki 18:40
- whether small (KJV): Ge 19:11 Ex 12:29 De 29:18 Job 3:19 34:19 Ps 115:13 Ac 26:22 Rev 6:15 20:12

**Related Passages:**

Exodus 22:20+ "He who sacrifices to any god, other than to the LORD alone, shall be utterly destroyed.

Deuteronomy 13:6-9+ If your brother, your mother's son, or your son or daughter, or the wife you cherish, or your friend who is as your own soul, entice you secretly, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods' (whom neither you nor your fathers have known, 7 of the gods of the peoples who are around you, near you or far from you, from one end of the earth to the other end), 8 you shall not yield to him or listen to him; and your eye shall not pity him, nor shall you spare or conceal him. 9 "But you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people.

Deuteronomy 17:2-7+ (IDOLATRY WAS PUNISHABLE BY DEATH) "If there is found in your midst, in any of your towns, which the LORD your God is giving you, a man or a woman who does what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, by transgressing His **covenant**, 3 and has gone and served other gods and worshiped



them, or the sun or the moon or any of the heavenly host, which I have not commanded, 4 and if it is told you and you have heard of it, then you shall inquire thoroughly. Behold, if it is true and the thing certain that this detestable thing has been done in Israel, 5 then you shall bring out that man or that woman who has done this evil deed to your gates, that is, the man or the woman, and **you shall stone them to death.** 6 **“On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.** 7 “The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

## THE PENALTY FOR NOT SEEKING JEHOVAH

**And whoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, man or woman-** To not seek Him implies that they would seek other gods, and the penalty for idolatry was death (Dt 17:2-7+). **Seek the LORD God** is not just physically seeking Him, coming to the Temple, etc, but implies they would obey Him. This recalls the double promise Israel made at Mount Sinai "Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, **“All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do”**...."Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, **“All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!”** (Ex 24:3,7+)

**2 Chronicles 15:14 Moreover, they made an oath to the LORD with a loud voice, with shouting, with trumpets and with horns.**

- **they made an oath:** Ne 5:13 10:29
- **trumpets:** Ps 81:1-4

## THE PEOPLE SWORE AN OATH TO YAHWEH

**Moreover, they made an oath to the LORD with a loud voice, with shouting, with trumpets and with horns.**

**2 Chronicles 15:15 All Judah rejoiced concerning the oath, for they had sworn with their whole heart and had sought Him earnestly, and He let them find Him. So the LORD gave them rest on every side.**

- rejoiced (KJV): 2Ch 23:16-21 29:10,36 De 26:11 Ne 8:9 Ps 32:11 119:111 Pr 3:17 2Co 1:12
- sworn (KJV): Ps 119:106
- sought him (KJV): 2Ch 15:2,4,12 Isa 26:8 45:19 Php 1:23
- and he was (KJV): 2Ch 15:4
- the Lord (KJV): 2Ch 15:6 Jos 23:1 Job 34:29

### Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 14:5-7 He also removed the high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah. And the kingdom was undisturbed under him. 6 He built fortified cities in Judah, since the land was undisturbed, and there was no one at war with him during those years, because the LORD had given him rest. 7 For he said to Judah, “Let us build these cities and surround them with walls and towers, gates and bars. The land is still ours because we have sought the LORD our God; we have sought Him, and He has given us rest on every side.” So they built and prospered.

**All Judah rejoiced concerning the oath, for they had sworn with their whole heart and had sought Him earnestly, and He let them find Him. So the LORD gave them rest on every side** - Rest from enemies was part of God's blessing for obedience (see 2Ch 14:5-7 1Ch 22:8-9,18).

**THOUGHT** - Are you currently experiencing "rest on every side?" If you are, it is a gift from your Father in Heaven. If you are not, perhaps you might want to do a "Psalm 139:23-24 Inventory." Of course, not every "disturbance" is related to our personal sin, for we live in a fallen world filled with many disturbances, but even



then God's Spirit can use our trials for our good and His glory (e.g., James 1:2-4+, 1Pe 1:6-7+).

**2 Chronicles 15:16 He also removed Maacah, the mother of King Asa, from the position of queen mother, because she had made a horrid image as an Asherah, and Asa cut down her horrid image, crushed it and burned it at the brook Kidron.**

- Maachah (KJV): 1Ki 15:13-24
- the mother: that is, grandmother, 1Ki 15:2,10
- he removed (KJV): 2Ch 14:3-5 Ex 32:27,28 De 13:6-8 33:9 Zec 13:3 Mk 3:21,31-35 2Co 5:16
- cut down (KJV): 2Ch 14:3-5 34:7 Ex 32:20 Lev 26:30 De 7:5,25,26 9:21 1Ki 15:14-24 2Ki 23:6,12,15

#### Related Passages:

1 Kings 15:13 He also removed Maacah his mother from being queen mother, because she had made a **horrid image** (miphletseth) as an Asherah; and Asa cut down her **horrid image** (miphletseth) and burned it at the brook Kidron.

2 Chronicles 11:20-22+ After her he took Maacah the daughter of Absalom, and she bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza and Shelomith. 21 Rehoboam loved Maacah the daughter of Absalom more than all his other wives and concubines. For he had taken eighteen wives and sixty concubines and fathered twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters. 22 Rehoboam appointed Abijah the son of Maacah as head and leader among his brothers, for he intended to make him king.

2 Chronicles 29:16 (KIDRON VALLEY - GARBAGE DUMP FOR IDOLS) So the priests went in to the inner part of the house of the LORD to cleanse it, and every unclean thing which they found in the temple of the LORD they brought out to the court of the house of the LORD. **Then the Levites received it to carry out to the Kidron valley.**

2 Chronicles 30:14 (KIDRON VALLEY - GARBAGE DUMP FOR IDOLS) they arose and removed the altars which were in Jerusalem; they also removed all the incense altars and **cast them into the brook Kidron.**

**He also removed Maacah, the mother of King Asa, from the position of queen(gebirah) mother, because she had made a horrid image as an Asherah, and Asa cut down her horrid image, crushed it and burned it at the [brook Kidron](#)** - Queen mothers often played important roles in family politics and as the king's adviser as well as an instructor of the royal offspring. In Maacah's case, her "value" is certainly questionable. Asa removed her but apparently did not execute her (which he should have done because of her gross idolatry - Dt 13:6-9+). So here we see at least a suggestion of Asa beginning to compromise on truth and holiness.

**Maacah** was the wife of Rehoboam and the mother of Abijah, who was Asa's father, thus Maacah was Asa's grandmother. The text says "mother," but she was actually his grandmother, for the word "mother" was not uncommonly substituted for grandmother (also in 1Ki 15:2,10). It is also notable that the Hebrew word for **queen** is not the one normally used and may indicate special authority, the same word referring to the Queen of Sheba. **Horrid image** is miphletseth, which is derived from the verb palats which means to shudder, quake, quiver or tremble (as in Job 9:6). The picture of her idol is that it was an image that was so horrible that it caused one to shudder from fear! Why was it so "horrid"? We don't know for the text does not give graphic details, probably because they are "X-Rated" as several commentators have suggested. The Spirit does not even want our "mind's eye" going to that unholy thought dear holy one of God!

The **Kidron Valley** was just to the east of the main city, down in a valley that had a perennial stream and it served as sort of a "garbage dump" for idolatrous objects (cf 2Ch 29:16, 2Ch 30:14)

**Frederick Mabie** adds: The Kidron Valley is located to the east of the old city of Jerusalem and is the location of the famed Gihon Spring. This valley as a focal point in the destruction of heterodoxy and idolatry continues into the later reforms of Hezekiah (cf. 2Ch 29:15-17; 30:14) and Josiah (cf. 2Ki 23:1-15).

**ESV Study Bible** ([BORROW](#)) has an interesting note that "An inscription found at the site of [Khirbet El-Qom](#), near modern Hebron, reads: "Blessed be Uriyahu by Yahweh and by his Asherah; from his enemies he saved him!" The inscription dates to the second half of the eighth century b.c. It reflects the constant struggle in Judah between true servants of Yahweh and those who were syncretists and idolaters. (ED: See [note below](#))

**Believer's Study Bible** on Maacah - Maachah remained as queen mother after the death of her son Abijah, who had reigned for only three years (v. 2). It is likely that she maintained the rule in the early years of her young grandson Asa, until he was old enough

to depose her. The reference to her as Asa's mother in 2 Chr. 15:16 reveals the fluidity of such terms as "mother," "brother," or "father." They can be used to mean one generation of relationship or many.

**Andrew Hill:** The Asherah pole was a cultic symbol of the Canaanite fertility goddess Asherah in the form of a tree or tree trunk. The pole represented the tree of life in Canaanite religion, and the fertility cult associations of the symbol made the object "repulsive" or even "obscene" (NEB). It was among the objects of false worship under the ban of holy war for the Israelites at the time of the conquest of Canaan (Deut. 7:5). The raising of an Asherah pole is expressly forbidden in Mosaic law as an act that God hates (Deut. 16:21; cf. 2 Kings 23:6). Asa smashes this pole and burns it in the Kidron Valley southeast of Jerusalem, a garbage pit and refuse dump sometimes used for the disposal of such religious objects (cf. 2 Chron. 29:16; 30:14).

**Ron Daniel** - Removing The Queen Mother. King Asa removed Mah-ak-AW - his grandmother, who had been Rehoboam's wife (2Chron. 11:20) - from her position of prominence. This must have been more than a little difficult for Asa. After all, it's his grandma! But there are times when a right walk with God means cutting off your relationship. Jesus said,

Matt. 10:34-36 "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW; and A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD."

Many people are torn, because we have a biblical mandate to honor mother and father (Eph. 6:1-2). But understand that honoring your mother and father doesn't mean tolerating sin in your midst.

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**Queen** (01377)(gebirah) means lady, queen or queen mother. Gilbrant has a lengthy note on gebirah - Gevîrah is a technical term which denotes legal superiority. It occurs fifteen times in the Hebrew Bible. Seven times it appears in the context of the female superior of a female servant (see also HED #8569). Six times it refers to either the queen or queen mother (the female superior of all in society). Twice it is used metaphorically in Isaiah as "queen." Three times it occurs in the account of Hagar's flight from Sarah and her discussion with the angel in the desert, ultimately leading to her return to her superior (Gen. 16:4ff). Naaman, a Syrian military official, became aware of the potential healing power of Elisha through the Israelite female slave of his wife (2 Ki. 5:3). The word is coupled with shiphah in poetic contexts. The psalmist states that the collective eyes of the people look upon Yahweh as servants look to masters and mistresses for mercy (123:2). In Isaiah 24, it is prophesied that Yahweh will punish the unrighteous. All will suffer identical fates. "As with the female servant, so with her mistress" (v. 2). Finally, among those things that cause the earth to tremble is "a female servant when she succeeds her mistress" (Prov. 30:23). The remaining occurrences of the word are those associated with the position of queen mother (with the exception of 1 Ki. 11:19, where the context implies the term is used to denote the queen of Egypt). This position is one which is associated with Judah, as the formula employed at the ascension of Judaeans kings include the mother of the king; Israelite kings do not mention them. Precisely what powers were held by the women in this position is not clear, although it is clear they wielded enough power to cause problems.

Four queen mothers are mentioned, three of them in a negative light. Bathsheeba (the non-negative example), wife of David and mother of Solomon, appears with access to and a position near her son's throne (perhaps as reward for her efforts in the harem intrigue which brought her son to power; 2 Sam. 11:3; 12:24). The only Israelite queen mother who is recorded in the Hebrew Bible is Jezebel. Her influence in the courts of her sons Ahaziah and Jehoram was undeniable (1 Ki. 16:31; 22:15; 2 Ki. 3:2; 9:22). Her prominence in the narratives is a stark contrast to the involvement of other queen mothers in Israel. This may be attributed to her being the daughter of the king of Sidon. It is clear that the queen played some role in neighboring Ugarit, although the extent of her role is unknown. The uniqueness and negativity of Jezebel's role is an indictment against allowing foreign influences to enter into Hebrew political and religious life. The prime charge against the evil queen mother involves the introduction of foreign religions. Jezebel was zealous concerning the worship of Phoenician deities of her native Sidon. She had 450 prophets of Baal and 400 of Asherah seated at the royal table, indicating state support of the religion (1 Ki. 18:19). Given the intolerance of normative Yahwism for other gods, she persecuted all members of the Yahwistic religious structure, including prophets (e.g., Elijah, 1 Ki. 18:4). She violated the royal role in Israel by her seizure of Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21). Murder is by no means the only serious offense in this incident (21:19). The ultimate violation by Jezebel's action is the seizure of inalienable property as her own. Yahweh owned the land; all property was his, and He allowed individuals to inherit the use of fields. To usurp ownership outside the clan structure was to take land from Yahweh, to usurp his role. Her inglorious end at the hand of eunuchs obeying the command of Jehu during his successful coup underscores her lack of power in the face of Yahweh. Her lack of burial is antithetical to her position of prominence, as the powerful secured elaborate tombs and a period of public mourning.

The next evil queen mother recorded in the Hebrew Bible was a Judahite queen, Athaliah, who was either the daughter or (less likely) sister-in-law (cf. 2 Ki. 8:26; see ABD 1, 511f) of Jezebel. First Kings 22:44 states that Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, made peace with Israel, doubtless sealed by the marriage of the crown prince Jehoram to Athaliah (2 Ki. 8:18). Jehoram reigned for eight years (most of which scholars hold was as coregent with his father), and was labeled as an evil king, especially in contrast to his

father and grandfather (2 Ki. 8:18; 2 Chr. 22:11ff). His sin was that "he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife." This indictment had to do with the tolerance of worship for foreign gods. Given Jezebel's influence and zeal for Sidonian gods, it is not at all surprising that her daughter (or any royal family member) would push for the same religious circumstances that existed in the Northern kingdom. The Chronicler blames her for the reign of her son Ahaziah, which was done in the fashion of the "ways of the house of Ahab" (2 Chr. 22:3ff). He was killed in the course of Jehu's coup in Israel, along with the entirety of Ahab's descendants and forty-two Davidic descendants who were in the Northern kingdom (2 Ki. 9:27ff; 10:13ff). Athaliah seized upon the political chaos by attempting to obliterate all male descendants of the royal line, inadvertently missing Ahaziah's son Joash (2 Kings 11). Joash was protected by the high priest of the Temple of Yahweh, who six years later would instate him as king in a palace coup (2 Ki. 11:4-20; 2 Chr. 22:11-12). Meanwhile, Athaliah became sole ruler in Judah, the lone queen to rule either kingdom. The animosity of the Yahwistic priesthood and the destruction of the temple of Baal in the coup which ended her reign and life confirm her commitment to Baalism. Her ability to stage a coup, to order male Davidic descendants to be slaughtered, speaks of the power of the position of the queen mother. Her ability to firmly establish Baalism as an official cult likewise is testimony to the power wielded by this woman. It is not clear if this represents the normal power wielded by her office or if it is representative of the enormous strength of personality of this woman. The latter certainly must play a role in her ascension to the rulership of the country; how much of a base her office provided is not clear.

The other person labeled *gevîrâh* in the Hebrew Bible was Maacah, the mother of Abijah and Asa, wife of Rehoboam the son of Solomon. Abijah did evil in the sight of Yahweh (1 Ki. 15:3-8). Asa did away with most forms of idolatry (1 Ki. 15:11-15). In order to do so, he had "to remove his mother Maacah from being queen mother, because she had made an abominable image for Asherah" (1 Ki. 15:13). Her power of office was sufficient to be enough of a nuisance to the king that Asa had to remove her from her power base.

Isaiah uses this noun metaphorically twice in ch. 47 in the course of an oracle against Babylon and its impending demise. Babylon is called the "mistress of kingdoms" (v. 5) and considers herself to be "mistress forever" (v. 7). Here the imagery is best understood as that of queen or superior. Verse 8 contains the boast of Babylon that she "shall not sit as a widow or know the loss of children." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

1 Ki. 11:19; 1 Ki. 15:13; 2 Ki. 10:13; 2 Chr. 15:16; Jer. 13:18; Jer. 29:2

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#### QUESTION - [Why was the worship of Baal and Asherah a constant struggle for the Israelites?](#)

**ANSWER** - Throughout the Old Testament, we read accounts of idol worship among the Israelites, especially the worship of [Baal](#) and [Asherah](#), or sometimes Baal and [Ashtoreth](#). The paganism that surrounded God's people crept in, gained a foothold, and led to much misery. It was a constant struggle to stay true to the Lord their God.

God had commanded Israel not to worship idols (Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 5:7)—indeed, they were to avoid even mentioning a false god's name (Exodus 23:13). To prevent compromise, they were warned not to intermarry with the pagan nations and to shun practices that might be construed as pagan worship rites (Leviticus 20:23; 2 Kings 17:15; Ezekiel 11:12). Israel was the nation chosen by God to one day give rise to the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. Yet, even with their heritage and so much riding on their future, Israel was continually drawn into dalliances with Baal and Asherah.

Baal was the supreme god in ancient Canaan and Phoenicia. As the storm god, he was usually depicted holding a raised lightning bolt. His consort, Asherah, was the chief female deity and was represented by a carved pole or limbless tree trunk planted in the ground. Baal and Asherah are often mentioned together in Scripture. Sometimes Baal is mentioned with the goddess Ashtoreth who, in Canaanite mythology, was closely related to Asherah and may have been for a time considered the same goddess. All of them were fertility gods, and their worship rites involved sexual perversion.

After the death of [Joshua](#), the worship of Baal and Asherah became a plaguing and perennial problem for Israel. It didn't take long: in the very next generation after Joshua, "The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord; they forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asherahs" (Judges 3:7). Later, God told the judge [Gideon](#) to clean house: "Tear down your father's altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole beside it" (Judges 6:25). Again, in the days of Jephthah, "the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord. They served the Baals and the Ashtoreths" (Judges 10:6).

During the monarchy, the kings got involved, forsaking the Lord and bringing the worship of Baal and Asherah into Israel. Under [King Ahab and Queen Jezebel](#), Israel was a state sponsor of a Phoenician form of idol worship, and the prophet Elijah had to confront "four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and . . . four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table" (1 Kings 18:19). The evil [King Manasseh](#) of Judah undid all the reforms of his father Hezekiah and "erected altars to Baal and made an Asherah pole" (2 Kings 21:3). In His indictment of Israel before sending them into exile, God said, "They forsook all the commands of the Lord their God and made for themselves two idols cast in the shape of calves, and an Asherah pole. They bowed down to all the starry hosts, and they worshiped Baal" (2 Kings 17:16).

There are several reasons why the worship of Baal and Asherah was such a problem for Israel. First, the worship of Baal and Asherah held the allure of illicit sex, since the religion involved ritual prostitution. This is exactly what we see in the incident of [Baal of Peor](#), as “the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods” (Numbers 25:1–2). During this episode an Israelite named Zimri brazenly brought a Midianite woman into the camp and went straight to his tent, where the two began having sex (verses 6–8, 14–15).

Another reason that the worship of Baal and Asherah was a perennial problem for Israel is what we could call international peer pressure. Israel wanted to be like the other nations (see 1 Samuel 8:5, 20). The other nations worshiped Baal and Asherah, and so many Israelites felt a pull to do the same.

And, most basically, Israel worshiped Baal and Asherah because of Satan’s temptations coupled with mankind’s [sinfulness](#). The enemy of our souls tempted Israel to worship idols; the sacrifices made to Baal and Asherah were really sacrifices to demons (1 Corinthians 10:20). The stubborn willfulness of humanity works in tandem with Satan’s seductions, and the result is rebellion against God. Israel repeatedly forsook their covenant with God, lost God’s blessings, and chased after the Baals and Asherahs to their own destruction.

The [book of Hosea](#) aptly uses adultery as a metaphor to describe Israel’s idol worship. Forsaking the God of their covenant and chasing after false gods such as Baal and Asherah was akin to [spiritual adultery](#). (ED: SEE ISRAEL THE WIFE OF JEHOVAH) But God promised to restore His unfaithful people and love them forever:

In that day,” declares the Lord, . . .  
“I will remove the names of the Baals from her lips;  
no longer will their names be invoked. . . .  
I will betroth you to me forever;  
I will betroth you in righteousness and justice,  
in love and compassion.  
I will betroth you in faithfulness  
and you will acknowledge the Lord.”  
(Hosea 2:16–17, 19–20)

The problem of Baal and Asherah worship was finally solved after God removed Israel from the Promised Land. Due to the Israelites’ idolatry and disregard of the law, God brought the nations of Assyria and Babylon against them in an act of judgment. After the exile, Israel was restored to the land, and the people did not dally again with idols.

Christians today may be quick to judge the Israelites for their idolatry, but we should remember that idols take many forms. Idolatrous sins still tempt the modern-day believer (Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8–10). Instead of bowing down to the ancient forms of Baal and Asherah, we today sometimes honor possessions, success, and physical pleasure to the dishonoring of God. Just as God disciplined the Israelites for their idolatry and forgave them when they repented, He graciously disciplines us and extends the offer of forgiveness in Christ (Hebrews 12:7–11; 1 John 1:9; 2 Peter 3:9). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### Related Resources:

- **Baal** (verb)(husband, marry, rule)([01166](#)) [baal](#)
- **Baal** (noun)(husband, lord, master, owner, possessor)([01167](#)) [ba'al](#)
- **Baal** (proper noun)([01168](#)) [ba'al](#) (See this entry for detailed discussion of baal and related words)
- **Baal** - See [uses in combination with other Hebrew words](#)
- **Baal** (Canaanite god)([01168](#)) [bā'al](#) (see also **Married** [01166](#) and **Husband** [01167](#))

**2 Chronicles 15:17 But the high places were not removed from Israel; nevertheless Asa’s heart was blameless all his days.**

- the high places (KJV): 2Ch 14:3-5 De 12:13,14 1Ki 3:2-4 22:43 2Ki 12:3 14:4
- the heart of Asa (KJV): 2Ch 16:7-12 1Ki 11:4

#### Related Passages:

1 Kings 15:14 But the high places were not taken away; nevertheless the heart of Asa was wholly devoted to the LORD all his days.

Deuteronomy 12:2-3+ You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess serve their gods, **on the high mountains and on the hills** and under every green tree. 3 "You shall tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and burn their Asherim with fire, and you shall cut down the engraved images of their gods and obliterate their name from that place.

## THE BAD AND THE GOOD CONTRASTS

**But** (a bad term of contrast) **the high places ([bamah](#)) were not removed from Israel** "According to 2 Chronicles 14:3,5, Asa did take away the high places out of Judah, but this verse indicates he had been unable to get them removed from the rest of Israel." (Morris) In other words this probably refers to those cities of the northern kingdom ("Israel") which Asa had conquered and over which Asa had some degree of control. Notice that the parallel passage in 1Ki 15:14 lacks the phrase removed from Israel, suggesting the writer of chronicles was clarifying the meaning.

**NIV Study Bible ([BORROW](#)) on high places...not removed** - 1Ki 15:14 states that Asa did not remove the high places. This difficulty is best resolved by the Chronicler's own statement in 1Ch 15:17, which is properly parallel to 1Ki 15:14: Early in his reign Asa did attempt to remove the high places, but pagan worship was extremely resilient, and ultimately his efforts were unsuccessful (15:17). Statements that the high places both were and were not removed are also found in the reign of Jehoshaphat (2Ch 17:6; 20:33).

**nevertheless** (a good term of contrast) **Asa's heart was blameless all his days** - See verses on whole heart or blameless heart - 1Ki 8:61, 11:4, 15:3,14 2Ki 20:3 1Ch 12:38, 28:9, 29:19, 2Ch 15:17, 16:9, 19:9, 25:2. As we shall soon see in chapter 16, Asa's last 5 years of reign did not end well, so here it is as if God grades his reign on a curve (so to speak), and gives him a very good grade, for relative to many of the other kings (all northern and many southern), Asa's reign was indeed "blameless."

**Andrew Hill:** Nevertheless, Asa fails to remove the high places from Israel. Rather than see this as a contradiction to the record of the king's reforms (2Ch 15:17; cf. 2Ch 14:2), it is probably better to assume that the writer distinguishes between the high places of Judah and Israel, or perhaps the two statements are but "evidence of the persistence of the indigenous cults over several years." (The NIV Application Commentary – 1 & 2 Chronicles.)

**Ron Daniel** - Compromise - Although Asa was trying, he was not successful at completely removing all of the high places. Fortunately, God was looking at the completeness of his heart rather than the completion of the job.

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**High places ([01116](#)) [bamah](#)** Six activities seem to be related to high places -- burning of incense, sacrificing, eating of sacrificial meals, praying, prostitution, child sacrifice (cf. bama in the valley, Je 7:31). The first use in Lev 26:30 is God's declaration to Israel "I will destroy your high places." In Dt 32:13 speaking of Jacob (Israel) He declared "He made him ride on the **high places** of the earth," so clearly some uses of bamah are not negative. In a similar use God says Israel "you will tread upon their (Israel's enemies') **high places**." Another positive use is Psalm 18:33 where David declared Jehovah "makes my feet like hinds' feet, And sets me upon my **high places**." (cp Hab 3:19 - [NET Note](#) = David "compares his agility in battle to the ability of a deer to negotiate rugged, high terrain without falling or being injured.", cp Isa 58:14) We see the effect of Israel's high places on Jehovah in Ps 78:58 = "For they provoked Him with their high places and aroused His jealousy with their graven images."

A sad phrase that is repeated again and again (speaking of Israel) is "the **high places** were not taken away" (1Ki 15:14, 2Ch 15:17 = King Asa but notice he did remove some of them - 2Ch 14:3, 5, 1Ki 22:43, 2Ch 20:33 = King Jehoshaphat, 2Ki 12:3 = King Jehoash, 2Ki 14:4 = King Amaziah, 2Ki 15:4 = King Azariah, 2Ki 15:35 = King Jotham son of Uzziah and look what his son did in 2Ki 16:1-4!, 2Ch 20:33). In many of these passages the context was of a king doing "spiritual house cleaning" so to speak and yet still failing to remove the high places. Isn't sin that way? We confess one or two sins but we have a little pet sin (better a "venomous viper") that we just don't have the heart to kill! God grant us spiritual eyes and hearts to learn from Israel's mistakes. Amen! Some kings like **Hezekiah** (1Ki 18:4, 2Ch 31:1, Isa 36:7) and **Josiah** (2Ki 23:4,8, 13, 15, 19-20, 2Ch 34:3 cp prophecy about **Josiah** 300 years earlier = 1Ki 13:2) did destroy the high places, but in Hezekiah's case his own son **Manasseh** rebuilt them (2Ki 21:1-2, 3, 2Ch 33:3) and in Josiah's case the people rebuilt them!

We see the spiritual effect of high places on the people when King Jehoram (2Ch 21:5-10) "made **high places** in the mountains of Judah, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot and led Judah astray." (2Ch 21:11)

One of the most incredible (and saddest) verses in the OT (in my opinion) is "Then Solomon built a **high place** for **Chemosh** the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon." (1Ki 11:7, cp 1Ki 3:3 = Solomon had "half a heart" for God!) This was too much for Jehovah and He declared that the 12 tribes would be split as a result of Solomon's sin! Sin is costly. You may think you are getting away with it, but you are not! You may think you are



the wisest man in the world (like Solomon) but you are really the most foolish (as Solomon was)! There was one high place that was not idolatrous (at least not at the outset) - "Then Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place which was at Gibeon; for God's tent of meeting was there, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness." (2Chr 1:3, cp 1Chr 16:39-40, 21:29).

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**Oswald Chambers - The relapse of concentration** - Asa was incomplete in his external obedience, he was right in the main but not entirely right. Beware of the thing of which you say—'Oh, that does not matter much.' The fact that it does not matter much to you may mean that it matters a very great deal to God. Nothing is a light matter with a child of God. How much longer are some of us going to keep God trying to teach us one thing? He never loses patience. You say—'I know I am right with God'; but still the "high places" remain, there is something over which you have not obeyed. Are you protesting that your heart is right with God, and yet is there something in your life about which He has caused you to doubt? Whenever there is doubt, quit immediately, no matter what it is. Nothing is a mere detail.

Are there some things in connection with your bodily life, your intellectual life, upon which you are not concentrating at all? You are all right in the main, but you are slipshod; there is a relapse on the line of concentration. You no more need a holiday from spiritual concentration than your heart needs a holiday from beating. You cannot have a moral holiday and remain moral, nor can you have a spiritual holiday and remain spiritual. God wants you to be entirely his, and this means that you have to watch to keep yourself fit. It takes a tremendous amount of time. Some of us expect to "clear the numberless ascensions" in about two minutes.

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#### **QUESTION - [What is the significance of high places in the Bible?](#)**

**ANSWER** - High places, very simply, were places of worship on elevated pieces of ground. High places were originally dedicated to idol worship (Numbers 33:52; Leviticus 26:30), especially among the Moabites (Isaiah 16:12). These shrines often included an altar and a sacred object such as a stone pillar or wooden pole in various shapes identified with the object of worship (animals, constellations, goddesses, and fertility deities). It seems that, at times, high places were set up in a spot that had been artificially elevated; 2 Kings 16:4 seems to differentiate the "high places" from the "hills."

The Israelites, forever turning away from God, practiced Molech worship and built high places for Baal (Jeremiah 32:35). Although Solomon built the temple of God in Jerusalem, he later established idolatrous high places for his foreign wives outside of Jerusalem and worshiped with them, causing him the loss of the kingdom (1 Kings 11:11). The people were still sacrificing at the pagan high places before the temple was built, and Solomon joined them. After the Lord appeared to him in a dream at Gibeon, the king returned to Jerusalem and sacrificed offerings; however, he continued to waver between the two places of worship.

Not all high places were dedicated to idol worship. They played a major role in Israelite worship, and the earliest biblical mention of a site of worship, later called a "high place," is found in Genesis 12:6–8 where Abram built altars to the Lord at Shechem and Hebron. Abraham built an altar in the region of Moriah and was willing to sacrifice his son there (Genesis 22:1–2). This site is traditionally believed to be the same high place where the temple of Jerusalem was built. Jacob set up a stone pillar to the Lord at Bethel (Genesis 28:18–19), and Moses met God on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19:1–3).

Joshua set up stone pillars after crossing the Jordan (Joshua 4:20) and considered this a high place of worship because the Israelites "came up from" the Jordan onto higher ground. The high places were visited regularly by the prophet Samuel (1 Samuel 7:16). High places as sites of Canaanite idol worship (Judges 3:19) extended into the period of Elijah (1 Kings 18:16–40). God would name only one high place where sacrifice was authorized, and that was the temple in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 3:1). God commanded that all other high places be destroyed. King Josiah destroyed them in 2 Kings 22—23. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**2 Chronicles 15:18 He brought into the house of God the dedicated things of his father and his own dedicated things: silver and gold and utensils.**

- **brought:** 1Ki 7:51 1Ki 15:14,15 1Ch 26:20-26

**He brought into the house of God the dedicated things of his father and his own dedicated things: silver and gold and utensils** - Parallels 1Ki 15:15.

**2 Chronicles 15:19 And there was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign.**

- until the thirty-fifth year: 2Ch 16:1 1Ki 15:16,17,31,33

## NO MORE WAR "UNTIL"

**And there was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign - Until** is a significant time phrase which means something happens up to a point in time and then something else happens. The implication is that "no more war" becomes "more war" as proved true in Asa's last years.

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