

# 2 Chronicles 16 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 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 |
| 1 Samuel  | 2 Samuel |            |       |            | 1 Kings          | 1 Kings            | 2 Kings            |       |     |
| 31  | 1-4      | 5-10       | 11-20 | 21-24      | 1-11             | 12-22              | 1-17               | 18-25 |     |
| 1 Chronicles 10                                     |          | 1Chr 11-19 |       | 1Chr 20-29 | 2 Chronicles 1-9 | 2 Chronicles 10-20 | 2 Chronicles 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: Amaziah and Hezekiah considered GOOD by many writers  
[ESV chart - kings of Israel - more information](#)  
[ESV chart - kings of Judah - more information](#)  
[Another Chart with Variable Dates for Reigns of Kings](#)

**2 Chronicles 16:1 In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and fortified Ramah in order to prevent anyone from going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah.**

- In the six: See Note on 1 Ki 15:32. "From the rending of the ten tribes from Judah, over which Asa was now king." 1Ki 15:16-22
- to the intent: 2Ch 11:13-17 15:5,9 1Ki 12:27
- See [BELOW FOR BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR 1-2 CHRONICLES](#) - adapted from [Paul Apple's Bible Outlines](#)

#### Related Passage:

1 Kings 15:16 Now there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

Source: [ESV Study Bible p. 762](#)

## THE LAST LAP OF ASA'S RACE

The "Latter Rain" (Reign) of Asa—His Latter Years brought Sin and Failure this man of God turned his back on His God, 2Ch 16:1–14. Up to this point, King Asa had walked faithfully with the LORD, carrying on through trial after trial and witnessing the LORD's deliverance time and again. But now, in the latter years of his life, Asa is seen failing to persevere. Having begun well, he finishes up badly.

- Asa's treaty with Ben-Hadad of Syria, an unbeliever: the sin of evil associations (2Ch 16:1–6).
- Asa's rebuke by the seer (prophet) Hanani: the sin of rejecting and persecuting God's prophet (2Ch 16:7–10).
- Asa's severe disease and death: the sin of becoming hard-hearted—failing to repent (2Ch 16:11–14).

[Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible](#)

**THOUGHT** - King Asa's is like a "poster boy" for how not to finish your race! Dear older saint or one who has walked with Jesus for years, how are your latter years faring? Are you redeeming the time (Eph 5:16+) or are you wasting your short life left (Jas 4:14+) playing golf every day (once in a while is fine) or visiting every national park in the USA with your new fully equipped recreation vehicle? I do not mean to be mean, but you have only one life to store up for yourself treasure in heaven (and it won't be a set of Arnold Palmer golf clubs, etc) (Mt 6:19-21+). You will have all of eternity to rest in Jesus, but now there is kingdom work that the Lord gives you the privilege to join with His Spirit and accomplishing for His glory and honor. It's up to you to choose who you will serve. For some extra motivation, you might want to read John Piper's book [Don't Waste Your Life](#).

One could call this chapter

"O How the Mighty Have Fallen."

**Iain Duguid:** Baasha's aggressive act so close to Jerusalem hinted at his military strength in comparison to Judah's and presented a much more serious threat than the previous occasional raiding parties. Asa's response was to seek help from Syria, which bordered Israel to the northeast.

**Martin Selman:** Asa's last five years, recounted in chapter 16, completely reverse the pattern of the rest of his life, a decline that is all the more unexpected in that it seems to have started from an act of unprovoked hostility (v. 1). From that point on, however, Asa seemed determined to go his own way, and he followed his initial rejection of God's help (vv. 2-3) by persecuting a prophet (v. 10), oppressing his people (v. 10), and neglecting God (v. 12). A pattern therefore developed, which, though it may have begun by

accident, became a series of conscious decisions. (BORROW [2 Chronicles : a commentary](#))

**In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and fortified Ramah** ("height") **in order to prevent anyone from going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah** - Since Asa reigned 41 years (1Ki 15:10+), this section refers to the last 5 years, the last lap of his race! As has been well said it is always too soon to quit (unless what you are quitting is sin)! **Ramah** ("height" - see [note below](#)) tribal allocation of Benjamin, was a strategic city located about 4-5 miles north of Jerusalem on the main highway (and trade route) as shown on the magnified cutout in the map above.

This incursion by **Baasha** was a "test" allowed by the LORD, for Ramah was only about 5 miles from Jerusalem ([see map above](#)) and this would have been very threatening to King Asa. **Baasha** would also be able to control all traffic and trade running through that part of the Southern Kingdom, including the supply of provisions for the capital Jerusalem. Eventually, the city would fall due to lack of provisions. In sum, this was a major test. Would Asa trust God or would He trust self. Unfortunately he opted for the latter and his unwise decision would mark the beginning of Asa's backsliding over the last 5 years of his reign.

**THOUGHT** - When the "Baasha's" of this world come against us and the odds of survival do not look good, where do we turn? We need to learn from Asa's mistake. The best place to turn first is to the Lord. He may use human agencies to help us, but we should seek Him first before seeking the human agencies!

**MacArthur Study Bible** - Because of the topography and fortification of that city, this would effectively block all traffic into Jerusalem from the N. Cf. 1Ki 15:16-22. (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Andrew Hill:** After two decades of peace, conflict once again breaks out between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah (16:1). King Baasha of Israel is the aggressor in that the defensive measures he takes to fortify Ramah also threaten the territory of Judah economically and militarily. The town of Ramah (or er-Ram, a site some five miles north of Jerusalem) is strategically located on the major north-south ridge route that bypasses Jerusalem (cf. Jdg. 19:10–13). According to Dillard, control of Ramah is also close enough to the Beth-Horon ridge to menace the east-west traffic traversing the central Benjamin plateau. From this choke point, Baasha can control traffic flow in and out of northern Judah—trade caravans, Israelite defectors heading south, or pious Hebrews journeying to the temple to celebrate the pilgrimage festivals. (See [1 and 2 Chronicles - Page 17](#))

**Thomas Constable:** There is a chronological problem in verse 1, which says: "In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign, Baasha king of Israel" attacked Judah. But in 1 Kings 16:8 we read: "In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel." Keil attributed the difference to a scribal error and concluded that the number in 1 Kings is correct.

**Believer's Study Bible** - The political and military alliance between Judah and Syria was the result of the building of fortifications by Baasha at Ramah, a mere five miles from Jerusalem. The temple and palace treasures gathered since the time of Rehoboam (cf. 12:2, note) and Asa (cf. 14:2-5, note) were used as a bribe to persuade Ben-Hadad of Syria to break his alliance with Baasha of Israel. This pattern of alliances is a typical "balance of power" strategy. It appeared to have been used successfully in this instance, since it compelled Baasha to leave off building and fortifying Ramah after Ben-Hadad struck several places in northern Israel, including all of the territory of Naphtali (cf. 1 Kin. 15:16-22). However, God sent Hanani with the message that security ought to be sought in God, not in Ben-Hadad (v. 7). Thus, apparent success is not always an indication of divine pleasure. Obedience would have resulted in victory even over Syria. Asa's thirty-sixth year was 875 B.C. Baasha, however, died 11 years earlier in 886 B.C. (cf. 1 Kin. 16:8). Therefore, the phrase *malkut ^asa^* (Heb.) should probably be understood here as referring to "Asa's kingdom," i.e., Judah, rather than "Asa's reign." Since the kingdom of Judah came into being in 931 B.C., the thirty-sixth year was 895 B.C., the year of war between Asa and Baasha. This was the sixteenth year of Asa, the year following the great assembly (15:10). Another possible solution is that "35" and "36" in 15:19 and 16:1 are inaccurate transmissions for "15" and "16." This would be possible when numbers were written with Hebrew letters, since the letters for 10 and 30 look very much alike in ancient Hebrew.

**J.A. Thompson:** Asa withdrew silver and gold from the treasuries of the Lord's temple and his own palace and sent it to Ben-Hadad, king of Aram-Damascus, to encourage him to break the treaty he had with Baasha. The Arameans were implacable foes of the Northern Kingdom, and the drawing of Damascus into a hostile attitude to Judah would provide conflict for Baasha on a second front and ease pressure on Judah. By this political maneuver Asa's enlistment of Ben-Hadad's aid outmaneuvered Baasha. But however shrewd this scheme was politically, it displayed a lack of trust in the Lord and merited divine retribution.

**Mark Boda:** For the Chronicler, that Asa entered into a foreign alliance was bad enough; using the treasuries protected by the Levites at the Temple (1 Chr 9:26; 26:20, 22) was far worse. (See [1-2 Chronicles - Page 310](#))

**Cyril Barber** - The fact that Asa continued to walk with the Lord during the twenty years of peace and prosperity, without any external pressure being brought to bear upon him, is to his credit. He did not fall into the trap of thinking that he could get along without God (cf. Deuteronomy 32:15)...."Since God had given Asa such a unique victory over Zerah, why didn't he gather his forces together and attack Baasha?" The question is a good one. In answering it we need to point out that Asa may have had several reasons for not committing the army of Judah to the field of battle. (1) In the twenty years of peace, the army may have been

reduced in size and/or become sluggish and unfit for the rigors of combat. (2) With the advance of years Asa may have had physical limitations that in some way made it difficult for him to lead his people into battle. (We need to remember that at this time in history it was customary for a king to lead his men into battle.) And closely associated with this is a third reason: Accompanying the aging process is an awareness of how destructive war really is. Asa may have wanted to protect his people and not cause the widows to sing sad songs over the graves of their husbands and sons. ([2 Chronicles: God's Blessing of His Faith People](#))

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**Norman Geisler - 2 CHRONICLES 16:1—How can this verse say Baasha king of Israel built Ramah in the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa?**

**PROBLEM:** Asa began his reign in about 911 B.C. The thirty-sixth year of his reign would have been about 876 or 875 B.C. However, Baasha began his reign in 909 and reigned until 886 B.C. when Elah his son became king (1 Kings 16:8). How could 2 Chronicles 16:1 say Baasha built Ramah in the thirty-sixth year of Asa, 11 years after Baasha's death?

**SOLUTION:** The number "thirty-six" is undoubtedly a copyist error. The actual number was probably "sixteen." This error is explained by the fact that the numbers were probably written in numerical notation. In this type of notation, the difference between the letter representing the number 10 xx and the letter representing the number 30 xx was only two small strokes at the top of the letter. It is quite possible that a copyist misread the original and wrote the wrong letter for the number, possibly as the result of a smudged or damaged manuscript at his disposal. ([When Critics Ask](#))

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**W. Gustafson** writes that "There is a serious chronological difficulty in the first verse. It says that Baasha came up against Judah in the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa. 1 Kings 16:8 shows that Elah the son of Baasha began to reign in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Asa (right after his father had died), indicating that Baasha had died about ten years before the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign! Kiel writes, "The older commentators, for the most part, accepted the conjecture that the thirty-fifth year (in 15:19) is to be reckoned from the commencement of the kingdom of Judah; and consequently, since Asa became king in the twentieth year of the kingdom of Judah, Baasha's invasion occurred in the sixteenth year of his reign, and the land had enjoyed peace till his fifteenth year". In support of this theory, the Hebrew word MALKUT (<H4438>) is often translated "kingdom" as in 2 Chronicles 1:1; 2:1; 7:18; 11:17; 12:1; 33:13; Ezra 1:1; and Nehemiah 9:35. It is translated "realm" in 2 Chronicles 20:30 and Daniel 1:20.

Thiele has popularized this view so that some modern commentators refer to his book, [The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings](#). It is not always realized that Keil knew about this theory years before Thiele wrote. This is one possible solution and it does avoid the necessity of amending the text. But Dillard's first objection to this idea is formidable: "Of the hundreds of bits of data for the chronology of the divided monarchy, this would be the only occasion of dating from the schism. It would be unique to this passage and therefore, a case of 'special pleading' to appeal to it".

Another possible solution, first given by Keil, prefers to regard the number "thirty-five" in 2 Chronicles 15:19 and the number "thirty-six" in 16:1 as a copyist's error for "fifteen" and "sixteen" respectively. Archer (who is the most thorough and the most satisfying in dealing with this problem) also prefers this solution. He points out that, "if the number was written in numerical notation of the Hebrew alphabetic type (rather than the Egyptian multiple-stroke type used in the Elephantine Papyri), then 'sixteen' could quite easily be confused with 'thirty-six'. The reason for this is that up through the seventh century BC the letter yod (=10) greatly resembled the letter lamed (=30), except for two tiny strokes attached to the left of the main vertical stroke".

If this is the true solution for the discrepancy it would be similar to 2 Chronicles 36:9, which gives the age of Jehoiachin as eight at the time he began to reign, whereas the parallel passage in 2 Kings 24:8 gives the true age as "eighteen". Another similar instance is in 2 Chronicles 22:2, which gives the age of Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram, as "forty-two" when he began to reign, whereas 2 Kings 8:26 gives the correct age as "twenty-two".

Edersheim also considers this the only satisfactory solution. He writes, "There is manifestly here a copyist's mistake, and the numeral which we would substitute for 35 is not 15 (as by most German commentators) but 25—and this for reasons too long to explain".

Edersheim's suggestion of substituting 25 for 35 in 15:19 seems to be the best solution. That would also mean that 26 would be substituted for 36 in 16:1. ([What the Bible Teaches - 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles](#))

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**Gleason Archer - [New International Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties](#) - How can 2 Chronicles 16:1 (thirty-sixth year of Asa) be reconciled with 1 Kings 16:8 (Elah began to reign in the twenty-sixth year of Asa)?**

If Asa began his reign in 911 B.C., the thirty-sixth year of his reign would have been 876 or 875. He reigned for forty-one years (1 Kings 15:10); so this would have been a possible date—except for the fact that Baasha himself reigned from 909 to 886. Therefore he could not have built a fortress at Ramah in 875, eleven years after his death. Here we have a clear discrepancy in the Received

Text. There are two possible solutions.

One solution is that the phrase *male-kú-t 'Āsā* in 2 Chronicles 16:1 does not refer to Asa's own reign but rather should be understood as "the kingdom of Asa," i.e., the southern kingdom of Judah as distinguished from the northern kingdom of the Ten Tribes. Since the southern kingdom began under Rehoboam in 931 or 930 B.C., the thirty-sixth year would come out to 895 for the expedition of Baasha—which is the correct year, in all probability. (Leon Wood, *Israel's History*, p. 346, dates it as occurring in the sixteenth year of Asa, or 895.) This would mean that the Chronicler copied out his information from an older official record in Judah that at first used 931 as the "era" date rather than a regnal date. Later on, however, the Chronicler's sources seem to have shifted to a regular regnal system of dating; for there are no other examples of such an era date except 2 Chronicles 15:19, which puts the war between Asa and Baasha in the thirty-fifth year of his reign. Jamieson (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, *Commentary*, 1:274) favors this solution, saying, "The best Biblical critics are agreed in considering this date to be calculated from the separation of the kingdoms, and coincident with the sixteenth year of Asa's reign. This mode of reckoning was, in all likelihood, generally followed in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel, the public annals of the time (v.11), the source from which the inspired historian drew his account."

In defense of this theory it should be said that *malekūt* is often used even in the post-Exilic books to mean "kingdom" or "realm" rather than "reign" (e.g., 2 Chron. 1:1; 11:17; 20:30; Neh. 9:35, Esth. 1:14, etc.) In 1 Chronicles 17:14 it is used of "royalty" as belonging to Yahweh; in Esther 1:2 and 5:1 as the "kingdom" of Persia. But it is without parallel to refer to the kingdom of a nation as a whole and identify it thus with one particular king who comes later on in the ruling dynasty. And the fact that in its account of the later history of Judah no such usage can be instanced in Chronicles raises a formidable difficulty to this solution, even though it does avoid the necessity of textual emendation.

The other solution, presented by Keil (Keil and Delitzsch, *Chronicles*, pp. 366–67), prefers to regard the number "thirty-six" in 2 Chronicles 16:1 and the number "thirty-five" in 15:19 as a copyist's error for "sixteen" and "fifteen," respectively. There is no way in which such an error could have arisen if the Vorlage recorded the number of words fully spelled out (for "sixteen"—šīššāh 'āsār—cannot possibly be misunderstood as "thirty-six"—še lōšīm wāšēš). But if the number was written in numerical notation of the Hebrew alphabetic type (rather than the Egyptian multiple-stroke type used in the Elephantine Papyri), then "sixteen" could quite easily be confused with "thirty-six." The reason for this is that up through the seventh century B.C. the letter yod (= 10) greatly resembled the letter lamed (= 30), except for two tiny strokes attached to the left of the main vertical stroke. That is to say, yod looked like a "Z" tilted to the left with a second line parallel to the top of the "Z," and lamed looked like a "Z" tilted to the left but with no top member. It required only a smudge from excessive wear on the scroll-column to result in making the yod look like a lamed—with a resultant error of twenty. It is possible that this error occurred first in the earlier passage, in 2 Chronicles 15:19 (with its "thirty-five" wrongly copied from an original "fifteen"); then to make it consistent in 16:1, the same scribe (or perhaps a later one) concluded that "sixteen" must be an error for "thirty-six" and changed it accordingly on his copy.

If this is the true explanation for the discrepancy, then it would bear a similarity to the problem arising in 2 Kings 18:13, in which the relevant data compel an emendation of the "fourteenth year of King Hezekiah" to the "twenty-fourth year of King Hezekiah." Another example of this involves 2 Chronicles 36:9, which gives the age of Jehoiachin as eight at the time of his accession, whereas the parallel in 2 Kings 24:8 indicates the true number as "eighteen." Still another instance is 2 Chronicles 22:2, which gives the age of Ahaziah son of Jehoram as "forty-two" when he began to reign, whereas 2 Kings 8:26 gives it as "twenty-two" (which is more probably the correct number).

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### [A Brilliant Idea](#)

Help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on You. —2 Chronicles 14:11

Today's Scripture: 2 Chronicles 16:1-13

An ancient Indonesian fable tells of a turtle that could fly. He would hold on to a stick with his mouth as it was carried by geese. When the turtle heard the onlookers on the ground saying, "Aren't those geese brilliant!" his pride was so hurt that he shouted, "It was my idea!" Of course he lost his grip. His pride became his downfall.

For 41 years, Asa was a strong and humble king. He brought peace and prosperity to the kingdom of Judah. During the early years of Asa's reign he prayed, "Lord, it is nothing for You to help, whether with many or with those who have no power; help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on You" (2 Chronicles 14:11).

But toward the end of his reign, when the army of the northern kingdom of Israel confronted him, Asa sought help from the king of Syria instead of from God. Because of his foolishness, his rule weakened and his nation experienced wars. What went wrong? Proud of past achievements, Asa had forgotten to depend on the Lord, so the Lord was no longer showing "Himself strong" on Asa's behalf (16:9).

God is still looking for those who will allow Him to show Himself strong in their lives. Living a humble, God-dependent life is truly a brilliant idea! By: Albert Lee (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

We must depend upon our God  
With deep humility,  
Lest pride should rob us of His strength  
And bring futility.  
—D. De Haan

No one is stronger than the one who depends on God.

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**D A Carson - BEGINNING WELL DOES NOT mean ending well.** Judas Iscariot began as an apostle; Demas began as an apostolic helper. We know how they ended up. Asa began as a reforming king zealous for God, a man who displayed formidable faith and courage when the Cushites attacked (review yesterday's meditation)—but how he ends up in 2 Chronicles 16 is frankly disquieting.

The crisis was precipitated when Baasha, king of Israel, attacked some of Judah's outlying towns and cities. Instead of displaying the same kind of resolute faith he had shown twenty-five years earlier, when he had to face the more formidable Cushites, Asa opts for a costly political expedient. He strips both the temple and his own palace of wealth, and sends it to Ben-Hadad, ruler of the rising regional power of Aram, centered in Damascus. Asa wants Ben-Hadad to attack Israel from the north, thereby forcing Baasha to withdraw his troops from the southern assault and defend himself in the north. The ploy worked.

This was also linking Judah with Aram in dangerous ways. More importantly, the prophet Hanani puts his finger on the worst element in this strategy: Asa is depending on politics and money, and not on the Lord God. "Were not the Cushites and Libyans a mighty army with great numbers of chariots and horsemen? Yet when you relied on the LORD, he delivered them into your hand. For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war" (16:8–9).

Even then the situation might have been retrieved: God so regularly listens to the truly repentant. But Asa merely becomes angry, so enraged that he throws Hanani the prophet into prison. His dictatorial urges multiply, and Asa begins to brutalize the people (16:10). Four years later he contracts a wretched disease, but instead of asking for the Lord's help (let alone his forgiveness), he entrenches himself in bitterness and seeks help only from the physicians. Two years of disease later, he dies.

What about all those years of godly reform? We are not in the position, of course, to offer a final accounting: that belongs to God alone. But people can be on the side of goodness or reform for all kinds of reasons other than love of God; phenomenologically, people can have a heart for God for a long time (15:17) but wilt before demonstrating final perseverance. In a disciplined person, it may take a while before the truth comes out. But when it does, the test, as always, is fundamental: Am I number one, or is God? (BORROW [For the Love of God, Combined Edition, Volumes One and Two](#))

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

**ANSWER** - Ramah is the name of several different cities in the Bible.

Ramah of Asher is a village near the northern border of Asher in the region of Tyre (Joshua 19:29). Ramah of Naphtali is a village allotted to the tribe of Naphtali (Joshua 19:36). Ramah of Asher and Ramah of Naphtali may have been the same community since Asher's and Naphtali's boundaries were connected. Ramah of Benjamin is a town assigned to the tribe Benjamin near where [Deborah](#) ruled as judge over Israel (Judges 4:5). And Ramah of Simeon (also called Ramah of the Negev) is a desert village in the Negev allocated to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:8). King David once gave presents to the people there from the spoils of war after successfully defeating the Amalekites (1 Samuel 30:27).

*Ramah* means "height" or "high" and is often applied to military strongholds.

**Ramah of Benjamin** plays the most prominent role in the biblical narrative. Ramah of Benjamin, situated about five miles north of Jerusalem and west of Geba and Michmash, is associated today with modern er-Ram. This Ramah was the birthplace, hometown, and burial site of the [prophet Samuel](#) (1 Samuel 1:1, 19–20; 25:1). The book of 1 Samuel places Ramah in the hill country of Ephraim—a vast mountainous territory comprising the tribal lands of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh.

Deborah, Israel's only female judge, set up headquarters in a location near Ramah of Benjamin: "She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided"



(Judges 4:5). Ramah's nearness to Gibeah, [King Saul's](#) hometown (1 Samuel 10:26), made it the ideal refuge for [David](#) when fleeing from Saul to meet up with Samuel (1 Samuel 19:18–19).

**Ramah of Benjamin** appears again during the divided monarchy and the rival kingdoms of Israel and Judah. [King Baasha](#) of Israel built a fortress at Ramah in Benjamin to stop people from entering or leaving Judah. But [King Asa](#), who was ruling in Judah at the time, entered into an alliance with Ben-hadad of Damascus, king of Syria. When Baasha heard that Ben-hadad had attacked and conquered cities in Israel, he stopped fortifying Ramah and left for Tirzah. Asa then dismantled Baasha's fortress in Ramah (1 Kings 15:17–22).

**Ramah of Benjamin** is mentioned a few times in the prophetic books. Isaiah 10:29 tells how the [Assyrians](#) would advance toward Jerusalem by way of Ramah. This same Ramah is one of the cities that sounded a warning in Hosea's judgment cry against Israel (Hosea 5:8). And after [Jeremiah](#) had been imprisoned and later thrown into a cistern by [King Zedekiah](#), he was delivered to Ramah and released (Jeremiah 40:1). When the captives returned from exile in Babylon, Ramah of Benjamin is listed among the places where Jews settled (Ezra 2:26; Nehemiah 7:30).

Jacob's wife Rachel's burial site is also associated with this Ramah. [Rachel](#) died giving birth to her son Benjamin and was buried near Bethlehem. Jacob marked her grave with a large pillar (Genesis 35:20). Later, Rachel is mentioned in a passage of lament: "A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more" (Jeremiah 31:15). Speaking of the plight of the Hebrew exiles, the prophet portrays Rachel as weeping over her "children." Ramah, a city in the territory of Rachel's son Benjamin, was, in fact, populated by her descendants. In the New Testament, Matthew applies Jeremiah's words to the weeping in Bethlehem when Herod massacred the children there after the birth of Christ (Matthew 2:17–18). It is the only time Ramah is mentioned in the New Testament. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### QUESTION - [Who was King Baasha in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - Baasha was king of Israel from 909–886 BC. His contemporary in Judah was [King Asa](#), the great-grandson of King Solomon. The two kings were polar opposites—while Asa "did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as his father David had done" (1 Kings 15:11), King Baasha was an evil ruler and followed idolatrous practices.

Baasha took the throne after assassinating [King Nadab](#) son of [Jeroboam](#) while Nadab was attacking a Philistine town (1 Kings 15:27). Baasha then killed Jeroboam's entire family. Although Baasha may not have known it, his actions to secure his throne were actually a part of God's will. Years earlier, through Ahijah the prophet, God had pronounced judgment on Jeroboam and his descendants for their evil practices (1 Kings 14:1–16). It could be that Baasha had heard of the prophecy against Jeroboam, but he did not learn any lessons from Jeroboam's fate; instead, he continued in Jeroboam's wickedness. Because of Baasha's rebellion against God's Law, God spoke to the prophet Jehu and proclaimed the same judgment on Baasha's house that Jeroboam's family had received: complete destruction (1 Kings 16:1–4).

Throughout his reign, King Baasha was at war against King Asa (1 Kings 15:16, 32). Baasha originally had a treaty with the king of Syria, [Ben-Hadad](#), but, while Baasha was building fortifications in Ramah to keep anyone from going in or out of Judah, Asa took all the silver and gold from the Jerusalem treasuries and sent it to Ben-Hadad, asking the Syrians to ally with him instead. Ben-Hadad agreed, switched alliances, and sent his armies to attack the northern kingdom of Israel. This proved disastrous for Israel, as Ben-Hadad took the cities of Ijon, Dan, Abel, and Beth Maakah, as well as the region of Kinnereth and the territory of the tribe of Naphtali (verse 20).

It seems that Baasha died of natural causes (1 Kings 16:6), but, when his son Elah succeeded him, the Lord's judgment was swift in coming. After King Elah had reigned only two years, one of his commanders, [Zimri](#), assassinated him while he was getting drunk at the house of one of his administrators (verses 9–10). Zimri then did as Baasha had done to Jeroboam's household and killed Baasha's entire family, not sparing "a single male, whether relative or friend" (verse 11). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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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 16:2 Then Asa brought out silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the LORD and the king's house, and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Aram, who lived in Damascus, saying,**

- brought out: 2Ch 28:21 2Ki 12:18 16:8 18:15

### Related Passages:

1 Kings 15:18-19+ Then Asa took all the silver and the gold which were left in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and the treasuries of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants. And King Asa sent them to Ben-hadad the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, king of Aram, who lived in Damascus, saying, 19 "Let there be a treaty between you and me, as between my father and your father. Behold, I have sent you a present of silver and gold; go, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so that he will withdraw from me."

## RELIANCE OF ARM OF MAN NOT STRONG ARM OF THE LORD

**Then - Then** marks progression in a narrative and in this case sadly marks the beginning of declension in the spiritual life of Asa! God condemns foreign alliances for they are ultimately pacts with pagans whose father is the devil (Jn 8:44+) - 2Ch 19:2; 2Ch 20:35-37; 2Ch 22:5; 2Ch 28:16-21. King Asa resorts to human wisdom which says if a country is faced with war on two fronts, it will have to pull back its aggression on one of the fronts in order to defend the homeland. And indeed in keeping with Asa's human way of thinking, Baasha did withdraw from fortifying Ramah! For a while King Asa must have been quite self-satisfied, thinking "I pulled this coup off on my own!" Little did he know that he was about to meet His Maker's prophet who would clarify his humanistic logic! Asa's preference for diplomacy would begin his decline spiritually.

**THOUGHT** - Human wisdom to the exclusion of God's wisdom, may sound good and "wise" and even yield "good" results, but in the end human wisdom will fail and is no comparison to divine wisdom. This begs a question - How do you make your decisions? Do you allow God's Spirit and God's Word to prayerfully enter into your decision making? If not, you might end up being a fool like Asa! Results may look good for a time, but ultimately they do not honor God for He was excluded from the equation. Our goal in this short time on earth is clearly stated in the Westminster Shorter Catechism which declares "The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." God grant us the grace to let godly wisdom saturate our human decisions, doing so for Your honor and glory in and through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

**Asa brought out silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the LORD and the king's house, and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Aram, who lived in Damascus, saying** - This passage continues the description of Asa's decline spiritually. And it was a costly mistake in more ways than one, because he seems to virtually empty the national treasury to secure a treaty. Whether Pr 3:5 ("Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding.") was available for him to read is uncertain, but he is clearly doing just the opposite, not trusting the LORD, and instead leaning on his own understanding. **Ben-Hadad** means "son of Hadad" and is a royal title of the kings of Syria.

**THOUGHT** - Remember that there is only one letter difference between "GOD" and "GOLD" but it is a letter that can make all the difference in the world and the world to come!!!

**Gustafson** - Asa gave up the results of his own piety described in 2 Chronicles 15:18, and the blessing of God of 2Ch 14:13-14. These things all belonged to God but Asa gave them to a heathen king to try to get him to break his league with Baasha. Believers should be careful that they do not give time, treasures, and talents that belong to God to someone else. Ben-hadad was wrong to break his league with Baasha and Asa was wrong to try to get him to do it. The most serious downfall of Asa was in giving up his

trust in the Lord and putting his trust in a mere man. ([What the Bible Teaches - 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles](#))

**Utley** points out that ""**hadad**" is an ANE storm god who gave rain for fertility (BDB 212). He is analogous with Ba'al, the Canaanite storm god. He is known by several names (ABA, p. 11) *Hadad* – Amorites, Arameans (Syria) *Adad* – Mesopotamia *Hadda/Ba'al* – Canaan (Ras Shamra texts) *Ramman/Rimmon* – 2 Kgs. 5:18 also (Syrian, Zech. 12:11 he was the war god of the Assyrians; his symbol was a young bull like *Ba'al*)." This background helps us understand why God would be so opposed to forming an alliance with a pagan worshipping king!

**Spurgeon** - "I will say nothing about what belonged to his own house. He might do as he liked with that so long as he did not spend it upon sin, but he took of the treasure that belonged to the house of the Lord, and gave it to Benhadad to bribe him to break his league with Bassha, and be in league with himself. Thus God was robbed that the unbelieving king might find help in an arm of flesh."

**Knapp** - "Jeremiah 41:9 refers to a pit (or cistern) made by Asa 'for fear of Baasha king of Israel'. God would thus, in this incidental way, remind us by this late and last historical notice of King Asa what was the beginning of his decline—'The fear of man (which) bringeth a snare' (Prov 29:25)" (See [The Kings of Judah and Israel](#))

**Ron Daniel** - **Asa Pays The Arameans** For 35 years, Asa had walked with God. Unfortunately, his last four years were not marked by the same faithfulness. Twenty-six years before, Asa faced the Ethiopians attacking from the south. Now, he is being assaulted by Israel to the north. Asa's plan 26 years before was to pray, 2Ch 14:11 ..."LORD, there is no one besides You to help in the battle between the powerful and those who have no strength..." But now he has found someone else to help. He paid Ben-had-AD, king of Aram to be his ally. Asa's plan worked. But at what cost?

**Andrew Hill:** The Chronicler's report of Baasha's activity at Ramah and Asa's response is based on 1 Kings 15:17–22. Asa resorts to the oft-used political ploy of paying tribute to a third party for the purpose of engaging an aggressor nation on a second front (2 Chron. 16:3–4). The cost of contracting Ben-Hadad king of Aram to wage war against Israel is apparently steep, because Asa has to siphon monies from two treasuries (the temple and the palace, 15:6) to seal the pact. This is probably due to the fact that Aram and Israel are already partners in an alliance, and Ben-Hadad will need a greater offer to break his treaty with Baasha (16:3b). (See [1 and 2 Chronicles - Page 18](#))

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#### QUESTION - [Who was Ben-Hadad in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - Ben-Hadad seems to have been the title of the reigning king of [Aram \(Syria\)](#). *Ben-Hadad* means "son of Hadad." Hadad or Adad was the god of storm and thunder, and, as was common in that epoch of history, kings were seen as sons of the primary god of the region.

In the Bible, Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram, is mentioned in 1 Kings 15:18–22; throughout 1 Kings 20; 2 Kings 6:24; 8:9; 13:24–25; 2 Chronicles 16:2–4; Jeremiah 49:27; and Amos 1:4. Since *Ben-Hadad* is a title much like *Pharaoh* or *President*, the term can refer to different individuals at different times. The context of each passage must be studied to determine just who is involved. Most students of history accept the existence of three Ben-Hadads who ruled in Damascus: Ben-Hadad I, who ruled c. 900–860 BC; his son (or grandson) Ben-Hadad II, who ruled 860–841; and another, unrelated Ben-Hadad, the son of the man who assassinated Ben-Hadad II.

In 1 Kings 15:18, Ben-Hadad is designated as the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion. In this passage, [King Asa](#) of Judah makes a treaty with Ben-Hadad to help protect himself against the king of Israel, who was threatening Judah. (This is also recorded in 2 Chronicles 16:2–4.) Ben-Hadad sent soldiers against Israel and King Baasha and conquered a number of towns, bringing some relief to Judah.

In 1 Kings 20, Ben-Hadad once again attacks the northern kingdom of Israel, where [Ahab](#) is now the king. It is possible that this is the same Ben-Hadad who attacked in 1 Kings 15, or it could be a son, Ben-Hadad II. It seems that this time Ben-Hadad is attacking on his own without consideration for any treaty with Judah. And this time, although he had 32 kings helping him (1 Kings 20:1), he is defeated by King Ahab and the army of Israel. About three years later, Israel and Syria renew their conflict, leading to Ahab's final battle and death (1 Kings 22).

In 2 Kings 6–7, about nine years after Ahab's death, Ben-Hadad II invades Israel and lays siege to Samaria, the capital. The siege went on for so long that the people in the city were starving to death. However, in the middle of the night, the Lord caused the Aramean army to hear sounds of an advancing army. Thinking the king of Israel was receiving help from foreign nations, all of Ben-Hadad's men fled, leaving everything behind.

In 2 Kings 8, the [prophet Elisha](#) travels to Damascus and relays a paradoxical prophecy to Ben-Hadad II, who was ill: "Go and say to

him, 'You will certainly recover.' Nevertheless, the Lord has revealed to me that he will in fact die" (verse 10). Just as Elisha said, Ben-Hadad began to recover from his illness, but then a man named [Hazeal](#) murdered Ben-Hadad and took the throne of Aram. In 2 Kings 13, Hazeal is succeeded by his son, who is also named Ben-Hadad. This final Ben-Hadad was defeated three times by King Jehoash of Israel, fulfilling another prophecy of Elisha (2 Kings 13:1–25).

In Jeremiah 49:27, the word of the Lord says, "I will set fire to the walls of Damascus; it will consume the fortresses of Ben-Hadad." At the time of Jeremiah's prophecy, none of the Ben-Hadads mentioned above would have been alive. The reference may be to the current king of Aram or perhaps to a fortress that had been built by and now bore the name of a former king. In Amos 1:4 we have a similar prophecy: "I will send fire on the house of Hazeal that will consume the fortresses of Ben-Hadad." By this time, the original Ben-Hadad had been killed, and Hazeal was king. As above, "the fortress of Ben-Hadad" could simply refer to a fortress of the current king or to a specific fortress that was known by that name.

In summary, *Ben-Hadad* is the title of the Aramean king, "son of Hadad," a prominent deity in the region. Several kings of Aram had extensive interaction with the kingdom of Israel and attacked several times. The Lord used Ben-Hadad and the Arameans to bring judgment on rebellious Israel, but He punished Aram for her evil, as well. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**2 Chronicles 16:3 "Let there be a treaty between you and me, as between my father and your father. Behold, I have sent you silver and gold; go, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so that he will withdraw from me."**

- a league: 2Ch 18:3 19:2 Jdg 2:2 Isa 31:1-3 2Co 6:16
- break: Ge 20:9,10 Ex 32:21 Jos 9:19,20 2Sa 21:2 Ps 15:4 Eze 17:18,19 Ro 1:31,32 2Ti 3:3

### **ASA PLACES TRUST IN TEMPLE TREASURY - IN GOLD NOT GOD**

**Let there be a treaty** (actually "a covenant" [berit/berith/beriyth](#)) **between you and me, as between my father and your father** - Note the total absence to prayer in this section. There is no record of Asa's seeking the face of the LORD for deliverance in the face of his adversity. To the contrary he actually seeks to make a covenant with a pagan. Recall that **covenant** ([berit/berith/beriyth](#)) was the most solemn and binding agreement known in the ancient world. Recall also that Dt 17:18-19+ says "Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. "It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, **that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes.**" While we cannot state with certainty, it is very likely that Asa was not obeying this instruction for all the kings of Israel, because if he had been, he would have learned the **fear of the LORD his God**. And the **fear of LORD** is a powerful "antidote" to sinning against the LORD. Proverbs 3:7 says "Do not be wise in your own eyes; **Fear the LORD** and turn away from evil." Note the dynamic in this passage - Fear of Yahweh precedes and leads to turning from evil! If you doubt this dynamic, note that Pr 8:13 says ""The fear of the LORD is to hate evil." And do you remember the great description of Job? "There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, **fearing God and turning away from evil.**" (Job 1:1) Notice once again that "fearing God" is placed before "turning away from evil," clearly because godly fear impedes ungodly actions.

**THOUGHT** - The preceding truths beg the simple question - **Do you fear the LORD?** We are not speaking of shaking, quaking fear, but of reverential, honoring fear. Peter issues a command to believers we would all do well to obey "If (SINCE) you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work (THIS TRUTH SHOULD MOTIVATE US TO OBEY), **conduct** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves in **FEAR** during the time of your (SHORT - Ps 144:4, Jas 4:14+) stay on earth." (1Pe 1:17+)

It is sad to see Asa rely on the arm of flesh rather than on the arm of the LORD, relying on his own ability to deliver himself and his people rather than relying on God. Years later Jeremiah would write "Thus says the LORD, "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind And makes flesh his strength, And whose heart turns away from the LORD." (Jer 17:5) WOE!

**David Guzik** - Asa seems to have forgotten that his covenant was with God, not with a pagan king. Under the covenant they made with God, the LORD was responsible to protect Judah. Now they put their treasure and their trust into a pagan king.. Asa would find that Ben-Hadad and Syria were worse enemies than Israel.

**Spurgeon** - The power of Ethiopia was broken before him, and Judah's armies returned laden with the spoil. You would not have thought that a man who could perform that grand action would become, a little after, full of unbelief; but the greatest faith of yesterday will not give us confidence for to-day, unless the fresh springs which are in God shall overflow again.....But this was a

smaller trouble altogether, and somehow, I fancy, it was because it was a smaller trouble Asa thought that he could manage it very well himself by the help of an arm of flesh. In the case of the invasion by countless hordes of Ethiopians, Asa must have felt that it was of no use calling in Ben-hadad, the king of Syria, or asking any of the nations to help him, for with all their help he would not have been equal to the tremendous struggle. Therefore he was driven to God. But this being a smaller trial, he does not seem to have been so thoroughly divorced from confidence in man."

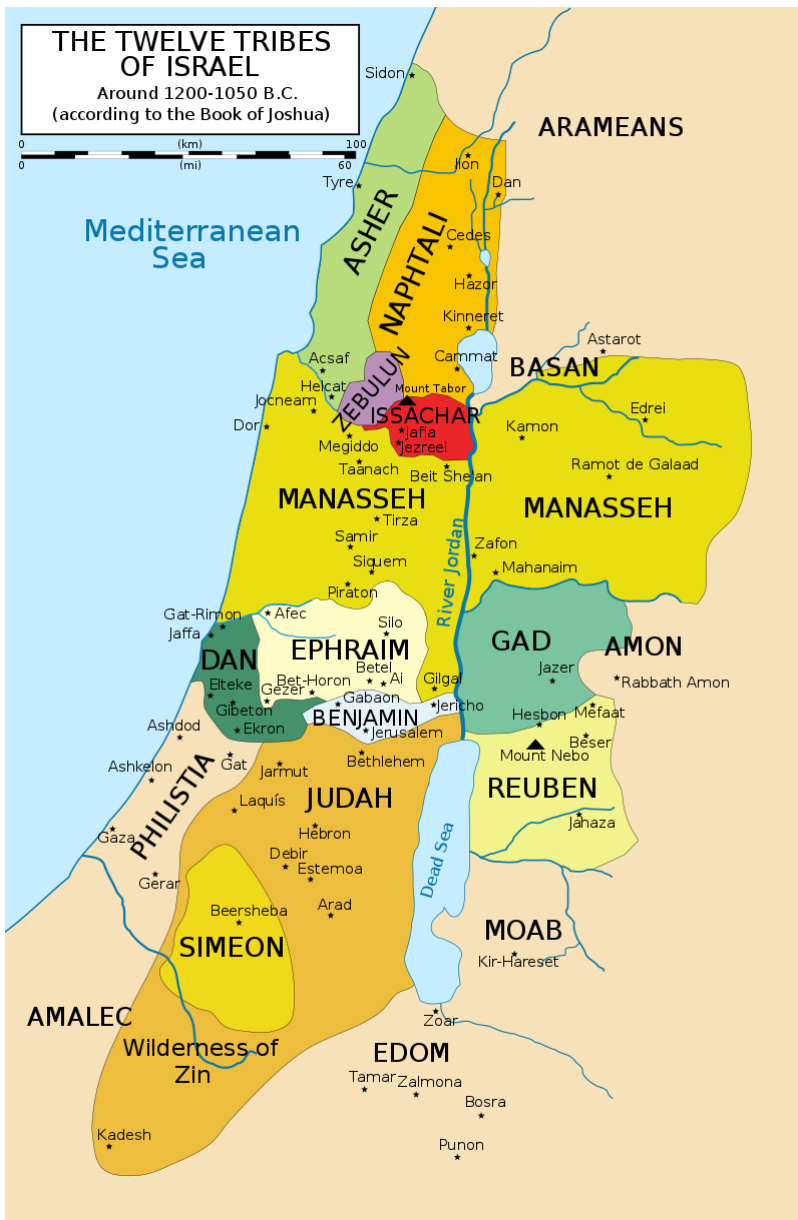
**NIV Study Bible (BORROW)** - Note on "**your father and my father**" - A reference to a previously unmentioned treaty between Abijah and Tabrimmon of Aram. When Tabrimmon died, Baasha succeeded in establishing a treaty with his successor Ben-Hadad. Asa saw no hope for success against Baasha without the assistance provided by a renewal of the old treaty with Aram. Although his plan seemed to be successful, it was condemned by Hanani the prophet as a foolish act and a denial of reliance on the Lord (see 2Ch 16:7-10). The true theocratic king was never to fear his enemies but to trust in the God of the covenant for security and protection (see note on 1Sa 17:11). Ahaz was later to follow Asa's bad example and seek Assyria's help when he was attacked by Israel and Aram (see 2Ki 16:5-9 and note on 16:7; Isa 7).

**Utley** suggests that "The alliance with Syria would have involved rituals using the names of Syrian's gods." adding that "Several of Judah's kings sought foreign/pagan military alliances. Asa – here (Syria), Jehoshaphat – 2 Chr. 20:35-37 (Israel), Ahaziah – 2 Chr. 22:1-9 (Israel), Ahaz – 2 Chr. 28:16-21 (Assyria).

**Behold, I have sent you silver and gold; go, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so that he will withdraw from me."** - Let's face it, money talks in this world and as we see in the next verse Ben-hadad listened to the clinking sound of gold and silver coins!

**2 Chronicles 16:4 So Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim and all the store cities of Naphtali.**

- hearkened: 1Ti 6:10 2Pe 2:15
- his armies: Heb. armies which were his
- Ijon: 1Ki 15:20
- Dan: Ge 14:14 Jdg 18:28,29 20:1
- Abelmaim: Abel-maim is called Abel-beth-maachah in 1 Ki 15:20, and elsewhere, on account of its belonging to the district of Beth-maachah.
- the store cities: 2Ch 8:6 17:12 1Ki 9:19



## BEN-HADAD BRIBED TO BREED TREATY WITH BAASHA

So - As the saying goes "money talks" and Ben-hadad accepted Asa's money.

**Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim and all the store cities of Naphtali.** The cities that Ben-Hadad conquered were located north and east of the Sea of Galilee in Naphtali (SEE MAP ABOVE) were important because it was the location of the major trade routes from Damascus going west to Tyre and SW through the plain of Jezreel to the coastal plain and Egypt. This same territory was later seized by the Assyrian ruler Tiglath-Pileser III (2Ki 15:29).

It is interesting to note that Asa's costly covenant with the Syrian Ben-hadad did not endure for long, because during the reign of his son Jehoshaphat, Judah would be at war with Syria (2Ch 18:30). So much for the integrity of human covenants, which are so unlike God's everlasting covenants!

**Andrew Hill:** The Arameans were irrepressible foes of Israel throughout the history of the northern kingdom, so there is doubtless little reservation about renegeing on a treaty with Baasha as long as the price is right. The Arameans invade Israelite cities along the northeastern border between the two nations (16:4). When Baasha hears the news that several important cities have fallen to Ben-Hadad, he has to abandon his plan to fortify Ramah and divert his attention to the war with Aram in the northern extremities of his territory (16:5). After Baasha withdraws from Ramah, Judah destroys the fortifications under construction and reuses the stones and timber to fortify Geba (modern day Jeba, a town of Benjamin some six miles northeast of Jerusalem) and Mizpah, thus extending Judah's defensive perimeter north of Ramah (16:6, assuming this is the Mizpah of Benjamin or Tell en-Nasbeh, nearly eight miles northeast of Jerusalem; cf. Josh 18:24, 26). (SEE [1 and 2 Chronicles - Page 18](#))

**Spurgeon** - Now, many people in the world judge actions by their immediate results. If a Christian does a wrong thing, and it prospers, then at once they conclude he was justified in doing it; but, ah! Brethren, this is a poor, blind way of judging the actions of men and the providence of God. Do you not know that there are devil's providences as well as God's providences?"

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**IJON** [ISBE]- i'-jon (ˈiyon; Septuagint in Kings has Ain, or Nain; in Chronicles Ion; Aion): A town in the territory of Naphtali, first mentioned in connection with the invasion of Ben-hadad, in the reign of Baasha. It was captured along with Dan and Abel-beth-maacah (1 Ki 15:20; 2 Ch 16:4). It shared with these cities a similar fate at the hands of Tiglath-pileser in the reign of Pekah (2 Ki 15:29). The name survives in that of Merj A`yun, "meadow of springs," a rich, oval-shaped plain to the Northwest of Tell el Qady, where the LiTany turns sharply westward to the sea. The ancient city may be represented by Tell Dibbin, an important site to the North of the plain. W. Ewing

**Dan** was a city of the tribe of Dan. Called also Laish, and Leshem, Gen. 14:14; Deut. 34:1; Judg. 20:1; Jer. 8:16. It was captured by the people of Dan in Josh. 19:47. Idolatry established at Dan in Jdg. 18; 1 Ki 12:28, 29; Amos 8:14. It was captured by Ben-hadad, 1 Ki 15:20; 2Chr. 16:4.

**DAN** [ISBE] - A city familiar as marking the northern limit of the land of Israel in the common phrase "from Dan even to Beer-sheba" (Jdg 20:1; 1 Sam 3:20, etc.). Its ancient name was Laish or Leshem (Jdg 18:7, etc.). It was probably an outlying settlement of Tyre of Sidon. Its inhabitants, pursuing the ends of peaceful traders, were defenseless against the onset of the Danite raiders. Having captured the city the Danites gave it the name of their own tribal ancestor (Jdg 18). It lay in the valley near Beth-rehob (Jdg 18:28). Josephus places it near Mt. Lebanon and the fountain of the lesser Jordan, a day's journey from Sidon (Ant., V, iii, 1; VIII, viii, 4; BJ, IV, i, 1). Eusebius, Onomasticon says it lay 4 Roman miles from Paneas on the way to Tyre, at the source of the Jordan. This points decisively to Tell el-Qady, in the plain West of Banias. The mound of this name--Kady is the exact Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew Dan--rises from among the bushes and reeds to a height varying from 40 to 80 ft. The largest of all the springs of the Jordan rises on the west side. The waters join with those of a smaller spring on the other side to form Nahr el-Leddán which flows southward to meet the streams from Banias and Chasbeiyeh. The mound, which is the crater of an extinct volcano, has certain ancient remains on the south side, while the tomb of Sheikh Marzuk is sheltered by two holy trees. The sanctuary and ritual established by the Danites persisted as long as the house of God was in Shiloh, and the priesthood in this idolatrous shrine remained in the family of Jonathan till the conquest of Tiglath-pileser (Jdg 18:30; 2 Ki 15:29). Here Jeroboam I set up the golden calf. The ancient sanctity of the place would tend to promote the success of his scheme (1 Ki 12:28 f, etc.). The calf, according to a Jewish tradition, was taken away by Tiglath-pileser. Dan fell before Benhadad, king of Syria (1 Ki 15:20; 2 Ch 16:4). It was regained by Jeroboam II (2 Ki 14:25). It shared the country's fate at th hands of Tiglath-pileser (2 Ki 15:29). It was to this district that Abraham pursued the army of Chedorlaomer (Gen 14:14). For Dr. G. A. Smith's suggestion that Dan may have been at Banias see HGHL1, 473, 480 f. W. Ewing

**Abel-maim** is either another name for Abel-beth-maacah, or the name of another place in the same vicinity.

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**Store** - storehouses, storage areas. It indicates a structure or even a city used for storage or supplies of various kinds, chiefly military supplies (Ex. 1:11; 1 Ki. 9:19; 2 Chr. 8:4, 6; 17:12); grain (2 Chr. 16:4); or wine and oil (2 Chr. 32:28). Gilbrant adds "Occurring seven times in the OT, this feminine noun is likely a loanword from Akkadian. During the sojourn in Egypt, Israelite forced labor was used by Pharaoh to build the store cities of Pithom and Rameses (Exo. 1:11). Of the references in which this noun is found, all but this one refer to Hebrew cities. Strictly speaking, miskanôth does not appear to mean a fortified city per se. Solomon built these throughout Israel (1 Kings 9:19; cf. 2 Chr. 8:6, "store cities" and "chariot cities," along with those near Hamath, 2 Chr. 8:4). The proximity of horses and chariots (i.e., the military) indicates, not only the storage of produce for civilian use and trade, but a prepositioning of provisions for soldiers should the need arise.

Both Jehoshaphat (2 Chr. 17:12) and Hezekiah (during the days of the Assyrian threat, 2 Chr. 32:28) stockpiled provisions in an effort to strengthen their kingdoms and to prepare for the possibility of a siege. These may have been built within the villages established for livestock (v. 29). A textual variation has possibly occurred with reference to the "store cities" of Naphtali (2 Chr. 16:4). These were conquered in the aftermath of a pact between King Ben-Hadad of Damascus and King Asa of Judah. The territory lost by King Asa of Israel may indicate a fertile region in the Northern Kingdom rather than "store cities."

**2 Chronicles 16:5 When Baasha heard of it, he ceased fortifying Ramah and stopped his work.**

- that he left off: 2Ch 16:1

**BAASHA REACTS AND**



## RETRACTS FROM RAMAH

When Baasha heard of it, he ceased fortifying Ramah and stopped his work - King Baasha was forced to retreat from Judah in order to deal with the Syrian invasion.

**2 Chronicles 16:6** Then King Asa brought all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber with which Baasha had been building, and with them he fortified Geba and Mizpah.

- **they carried:** 1Ki 15:22
- **Geba:** Jos 18:24-26, Gaba, 2Ch 21:17 1Ch 6:60 Isa 10:29 Zec 14:10
- **Mizpah:** Jos 15:38 18:26 1Sa 7:6,16 10:17, Mizpeh

### Related Passages:

1 Kings 15:22 Then King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah—none was exempt—and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber with which Baasha had built. And King Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah.



Source: [ESV Global Study Bible](#).

## KING ASA RETAKES RAMAH

When King Asa brought all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber with which Baasha had been building, and with them he fortified Geba and Mizpah. Asa confiscated the building materials Baasha was using to fortify Ramah and used them to reinforce Geba and Mizpah, two major cities that could serve as military strongholds and strengthen the border between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. Clearly Asa hoped to prevent any future invasion by the Northern Kingdom. **Geba and Mizpah** were both north of Jerusalem and very near Ramah as [shown on the map above](#).

**THOUGHT** - Asa formed an alliance with an unbeliever, thus overtly disobeying God's command to separate from pagans. Believers are not to form alliances or close associations with the evil people of this world. We are not to become unequally yoked with those who deny God, curse His name, reject His commandments, and worship idols. The end result will not be good!

**Do not be bound** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? 15 Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? 16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. (2Co 6:14-16+).

**GEBA [ISBE]- ge'-ba (gebha` , "hill"):** A town on the Northeast boundary of the territory of Benjamin (Josh 18:24), given to the Levites (Josh 21:17; 1 Ch 6:60). It stood on the northern frontier of the kingdom of Judah, Geba and Beersheba marking

respectively the northern and southern limits (2 Ki 23:8). In 2 Sam 5:25 "Geba" should be altered to "Gibeon," which stands in the corresponding passage, 1 Ch 14:16. In Jdg 20:10,33; 1 Sam 13:3,16, the Hebrew reads "Geba," the translation "Gibeah" being due to confusion of the two names. From 1 Sam 14:5 we gather that Geba stood to the South of the great gorge, Wady Suweinit, commanding the pass at Michmash. This was the scene of Jonathan's daring enterprise against the Philistines, when, accompanied by his armor-bearer, he accomplished an apparently impossible feat, climbing the rocky steepes of the gorge to the North and putting the enemy to flight. There can be no doubt that the modern village of Jeba` occupies the ancient site. It stands to the South of Wady Suweinit, looking toward Michmash--modern Mukhmas--with Seneh, the crag on the southern lip of the gorge, in front of it. The distance from Jerusalem is about 6 miles. It was fortified by Asa with materials that his enemy Baasha had used to fortify Ramah against him (1 Ki 15:22). It is named by Isaiah in his description of the terrifying march of the Assyrians upon Jerusalem from the North (1Ki 10:28 ff). It appears among the cities which were reoccupied by Israel after the Exile (Ezr 2:26, etc.; Neh 11:31).

**MIZPAH; MIZPEH [ISBE] - miz'-pa, miz'-pe:** This name is pointed both ways in the Hebrew, and is found usually with the article. The meaning seems to be "outlook" or "watchtower." It is natural, therefore, to look for the places so named in high positions commanding wide prospects. **Mizpah** was a town in the territory of Benjamin (Josh 18:26). Hither came the men of Israel to deal with the Benjamites after the outrage on the Levite's concubine (Jdg 20:1,3; 21:1,5,8). At Mizpah, Samuel gathered his countrymen. While there crying to God in their distress, they were attacked by the Philistines, whom they defeated with great slaughter (1 Sam 7:5, etc.). Here also Saul, the son of Kish, was chosen king, after which Samuel told the people the "manner of the kingdom" (10:17, etc.). Mizpah was fortified by Asa, king of Judah, with materials which Baasha, king of Israel, had used to fortify Ramah (1 Ki 15:22; 2 Ch 16:6). When Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem and made Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, governor of the remnant of the people left in the land of Judah, the governor's residence was fixed at Mizpah (2 Ki 25:23). Here he was joined by Jeremiah, whom Nebuzaradan, captain of the Babylonian guard, had set free. At Mizpah, Ishmael, son of Nathaiah, treacherously slew Gedaliah and many who were with him. Two days later he murdered a company of pilgrims, throwing their dead bodies into the great cistern which Asa had made when strengthening the place against possible attack by Baasha of Samaria. He then made prisoners of the people, including the king's daughters, and attempted to convey them away to the Ammonites, an attempt that was frustrated by Johanan, son of Kareah (Jer 40; 41). Mizpah was the scene of memorable assembly in a day of sore anxiety for Judah, when Judas Maccabeus called the warriors of Judah together for counsel and prayer (1 Macc 3:46). From this passage we also learn that the place was an ancient sanctuary--"for in Mizpah there was a place of prayer aforesaid for Israel."

**2 Chronicles 16:7 At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you have relied on the king of Aram and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Aram has escaped out of your hand.**

- **Hanani:** 2Ch 19:2 2Ch 20:34 1Ki 16:1
- **Because:** Ps 146:3-6 Isa 31:1 Isa 32:2 Jer 17:5-6 Eph 1:12,13
- **relied on:** 2Ch 13:18 32:7,8 2Ki 18:5 1Ch 5:20
- **the army:** 2Ch 16:3

#### Related Passages:

Psalm 146:3-6 Do not trust in princes, In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation. 4 His spirit departs, he returns to the earth; In that very day his thoughts perish. 5 How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, Whose hope is in the LORD his God, 6 Who made heaven and earth, The sea and all that is in them; Who keeps faith forever;

Jeremiah 17:5-6 Thus says the LORD, "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind And makes flesh his strength, And whose heart turns away from the LORD. 6 "For he will be like a bush in the desert And will not see when prosperity comes, But will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, A land of salt without inhabitant.

2 Chronicles 13:18+ (RESULTS OF RELYING ON GOD) Thus the sons of Israel were subdued at that time, and the sons of Judah conquered because they trusted in the LORD, the God of their fathers.

### THE PROPHET'S PITHY PRONOUNCEMENT

**At that time Hanani the seer ([roeh](#); Lxx = [prophetes](#)) came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you have relied on ([sha'an](#)) the king of Aram and have not relied on ([sha'an](#)) the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Aram has escaped out of your hand** - Note that 2Ch 16:7-10 are omitted from the account in First Kings, but obviously are critical to get a full

account of King Asa's reign. Remember that King Asa was the most powerful man in Judah, so it is no small task for Hanani to confront the king with a strong admonition. Hanani's son Jehu was also a prophet who spoke to Baasha the king of Israel (1Ki 16:1, 16:7) and to Jehoshaphat king of Judah (2Ch 19:2). **Relied on** is the Hebrew verb [sha'an](#) in both uses in this passage and means to lean on or the trust in and is used in Proverbs 3:5+

Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not **lean on** ([sha'an](#)) your own understanding.

Asa selected the wrong "support" to lean on, one that would prove detrimental and bring affliction the rest of his 5 year reign. The Septuagint translates sha'an with [peitho](#) which means to depend on, to trust in, to put one's confidence in (see 2Co 1:9 - confidence in flesh versus in God Who raises the dead!)

**THOUGHT** - The preceding discussion on reliance (confidence) begs the question, in whom are you trusting in the midst of your "test" (trial, affliction, etc), the "arm of flesh" (like Asa did with Ben-hadad) or the good hand of the LORD? Beloved, may God grant us all the grace to choose to lean on the everlasting arms of our omnipotent God the next time the winds of adversity begin to blow. In Jesus' Name. Amen

### **LEANING ON THE EVERLASTING ARMS**

What a fellowship, what a joy divine,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms;  
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.  
Leaning, leaning,  
Safe and secure from all alarms;  
Leaning, leaning,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.  
Oh, how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms;  
Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.  
Leaning, leaning,  
Safe and secure from all alarms;  
Leaning, leaning,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.  
What have I to dread, what have I to fear,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms;  
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.  
Leaning, leaning,  
Safe and secure from all alarms;  
Leaning, leaning,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

It is so sad to see Asa's dramatically antithetical responses to two of God's prophets. The prophet Azariah gave God's warning to King Asa, encouraging him to rid the nation of Judah of idols (2 Chronicles 15:1-7), a warning Asa heeded and for which he was blessed by Yahweh (2Ch 15:8ff). But the second prophet Hanani receives a rejection and a rebuke rather than a reception! Asa clearly has developed "heart disease," a hardening of his heart to God's truth. Recall Asa's words when his heart was tender to the LORD "Then Asa called to the LORD his God and said, "LORD, **there is no one besides You to help in the battle between the powerful and those who have no strength; so help us, O LORD our God, for we trust in You,** and in Your name have come against this multitude. O LORD, You are our God; let not man prevail against You." (2Ch 14:11) This is an amazing declaration of confidence in the unseen God's omnipotence! Asa was walking by faith in those early years, but now he is walking by sight.

**THOUGHT** - There is a lesson here for all of us. Faith is a dynamic entity. It is not static. We don't just reach an "apex" or "mountain top" in our faith and remain there. In fact if we think we have reached the "mountain top" in our faith, we need to take heed lest we fall down the other side of the mountain! (1Co 10:12+, cf Pr 16:18, Pr 28:14 = like Asa fell into calamity!) Faith is like riding a bicycle -- stop pedaling and you will eventually fall! Faith must be fed and must lead to Spirit enabled obedience, which demonstrates that it is authentic faith. If it is not "fed," it will fade! And ultimately we will fail the next divine "pop test" that God sends/allows (like He always does!) So feed your faith with the Word of Truth (Ro 10:17+), something Asa neglected to do to his great chagrin!

*Things which appear successful may,  
in the life of faith, prove to be most disastrous.*  
-- G Campbell Morgan

**MacArthur Study Bible** on the army of the king of Aram has escaped out of your hand- Asa forfeited by this sin the opportunity of gaining victory not only over Israel, but also Aram, or Syria. This could have been a greater victory than over the Ethiopians, which would have deprived Syria of any future successful attacks on Judah. Though God had delivered them when they were outnumbered (2Ch 13:3ff.; 2Ch 14:9ff.), the king showed his own spiritual decline both in lack of trust and in his treatment of the prophet of God who spoke truth (2Ch 16:10). (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**David Guzik** - This was a complete surprise to Asa. He believed that the main enemy was Israel, because of King Baasha's aggressive building of the Ramah fortress. He succeeded in gaining Syria's help against Baasha and Israel, but he failed to see what God saw: that the bigger enemy was Syria, and God wanted to give him victory over the greater enemy.

**THOUGHT** - Compromise blinds us to who our true enemies are and it leads us into alliances with those whom God would rather give us victory over. (Guzik)

**Ron Daniel** - vv7-10 Asa Rebuked, Hanani Imprisoned. This time, the prophet sent to King Asa was Khan-aw-NEE. God's rebuke of the king was delivered. Unbelievably, King Asa became so angry that he had Khan-aw-NEE locked up in prison. We could expect this sort of behavior from Herod or King Ahab. But Asa? Even the godliest of people are able to walk away from God if they don't maintain their heart. Asa stopped trusting in God, became offended at the Word, and started dealing with people brutally. Obvious signs of a hardened heart.

**Frederick Mabie:** The arrival of Hanani is the second recorded prophetic visit to Asa (the first from Azariah is recorded at 2Ch 15:1-7). While the prophet Azariah's visit to Asa was full of the possibilities and blessings of seeking God and exercising covenantal obedience, this visit is full of rebuke and critique in the light of the lack of faith implied in Asa's request for help from the Arameans. Instead of relying on God, Asa has sought protection by pursuing a more tangible means to military aid – namely, by paying the Arameans a bounty pillaged from the temple treasury and royal treasury (cf. 16:2-3). Ultimately, as the prophet notes, to place trust in humankind or human institutions rather than completely in God is foolishness that reaps broad consequences (v.9). (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary: 1 Chronicles-Job - Page 229](#))

**Gaebelein** - Asa showed his true state of Soul, when, instead of saying, "I have sinned," he began to rage; when instead of beseeching Hanani to pray for him, he put him in prison. He was away from the LORD and his behavior made it known. Stricken by disease, no doubt to humble him and bring him back to the Lord, he sought not the LORD, but the physicians.

**Gustafson** points out the boldness of Hanani confronting King Asa noting that "There are other records of prophets rebuking kings. Samuel spoke against Saul in 1 Samuel 13:13–14 and 15:14–29. Nathan spoke against David in 2 Samuel 12:1–14, and Gad also spoke against him (24:11–14). Shemaiah spoke against Rehoboam (2 Chr 11:2–4; 12:5). In later years Isaiah spoke against Hezekiah (Isa 39:3–7), and Jeremiah spoke against Jehoiakim (Jer 36:27–32), Coniah (Jer 22:24–30), and Zedekiah (Jer 21:3–7; 2 Chr 36:12). The most famous instance of a prophet warning a king not to trust in political alliances is found in Isaiah 7 when the prophet warned Ahaz to trust the Lord rather than trust the king of Assyria. That chapter contains the well-known "Immanuel" passage." ([What the Bible Teaches - 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles](#))

#### Related Resource:

- [SPECIAL TOPIC: THE DIFFERENT HEBREW TERMS FOR PROPHET](#)

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**Seer** (07203) **roeh** from **raah** - to see with the eyes) means a seer, an authoritative person who receives and communicates a message from God, perhaps with emphasis on the visual nature of the message.

**Gilbrant** - The meaning of rō'eh is divided into two categories. Once, it refers to a "vision" or "hallucination," apparently induced by drunkenness (Isa. 28:7). All other uses of rō'eh refer to a "seer." Rō'eh, or "seer," was the original title used for a **nabi**, "prophet" (1 Sam. 9:9, 11). Samuel (1 Sam. 9:18; 1 Chr. 9:22; 26:28) and Hanani (2 Chr. 16:7, 10) were both called "seers." Another synonym for "seer" is chōzeh, and Gad is called both nāvi' and chōzeh (2 Sam. 24:11). In fact, 1 Chr. 29:29 uses all three terms, referring to Samuel the "seer" (rō'eh), Nathan the prophet (nāvi') and Gad the seer (chōzeh) ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

[SPECIAL TOPIC: PROPHET \(the different Hebrew terms\)](#)

Roeh - 12x/11v - seer(10), seer's(1), seers(1). 1 Sam. 9:9; 1 Sam. 9:11; 1 Sam. 9:18; 1 Sam. 9:19; 2 Sam. 15:27; 1 Chr. 9:22; 1 Chr. 26:28; 1 Chr. 29:29; 2 Chr. 16:7; 2 Chr. 16:10; Isa. 30:10. The related word "roeh" is

used in Isa 28:7 "visions."

**Relied on** (leaned on, trusted in) (08172) **sha'an** primarily means to lean on something (Saul on his sword = 2Sa 1:6) or someone (2Ki 5:16, 7:2, 17), to rest on, to support oneself (Jdg 16:26), figuratively to trust (2Chr 13:18NAS, Job 8:15NAS, other versions render with rely), to rest (Ge 18:4). Rely on (2Chr 16:7 - twice). **Gilbrant** - The meaning of the verb *shā'an* is "to lean on" something or someone. Saul leaned on his spear (2 Sam. 1:6). Samson leaned against the pillar (Judg. 16:26). This meaning led to the common usage of this verb as a figurative idea of "relying on" someone for help. Kings had a close aid or officer to "lean on" or accompany them and give advice, help and even protection (2 Ki. 5:18; 7:2, 17). The idea of having a sense of security and support is found in Job 24:23. A person can trust in his house (8:15). Abraham told the three angels to rest or recline under the tree, using this verb (Gen. 18:4). A graphic picture of leaning on someone for help who is the wrong source is Judah trusting in and leaning on Egypt like a staff and having it break like a reed and hurt them (Ezek. 29:7). Asa quit looking to or "leaning on" the Lord for help against enemies as he used to do and so was rebuked and punished (2 Chr. 14:11; 16:7f). Isaiah rebuked the people for rejecting God's Word and depending on oppression and deceit (Isa. 30:12), and for depending on horses and chariots instead of seeking the Lord (31:1). Micah 3:11 says the leaders were falsely ministering out of greed. They claimed that they leaned on the Lord and assumed that they were secure from enemy attack because God was in Judah. Often, this verb is used in parallel with the more common verb for "trusting," **batach**. The most well-known verse which uses both verbs is Prov. 3:5: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not unto your own understanding." ([Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary](#))

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**G Campbell Morgan** - This is a very sad chapter, telling as it does the story of the lapse and failure of a man who for six-and-thirty years had —considering the conditions under which he lived—been remarkably true to God. When Baasha, king of Israel, commenced to build Ramah with the express purpose of troubling Judah, Asa, who had so often been led and delivered by God, turned to Ben-hadad, the king of Syria, for help. It seemed, moreover, to have been a successful policy, for Ben-hadad spoiled the cities of Israel, and Baasha was compelled to leave off his building of Ramah. Yet such seeming was false. It was the result of shortsightedness, failure to see the long issues. Things which appear successful may, in the life of faith, prove to be most disastrous. It was so in this case. The Syrians were, as a matter of fact, far more dangerous foes of Judah than was Israel. As Hanani, the seer, told the king, by this act they had escaped out of his hand. How perpetually men defeat their own ends when, either through lack of faith, or overconfidence in their own cleverness—which are practically the same thing—they attempt to do by policy what God is prepared to do for them in answer to their obedient faith. The story is the more sad in that there seems to have been no repentance on the part of the king. He persecuted the prophet, flinging him into prison. Surely none is ever safe from falling, however long loyalty has lasted. To the end there is need of watchfulness.

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#### **John Kitto - The Contrast—I Kings 16:15–23; II Chronicles 16:7–10**

The conduct of Asa, on receiving tidings of the Cushite invasion, was in all respects most praiseworthy, and in perfect conformity with the principles of the theocratic constitution. It seems also to evince much sound judgment in a military point of view. Instead of waiting in Jerusalem the appearance of the enemy, after they had ravaged the country in the march to that city, it appeared to him better to spare his people this misery, by marching to the southern frontier, and giving battle to the enemy at one of the great passes into the country (that of Zephathah), where, and to guard which, his grandfather had built the strong fortress is of Mareshah. The situation for posting his army, at this pass, was admirably chosen. But Asa, while doing the best that circumstances allowed, and taking every advantage in his power, did not rely upon this, and was deeply conscious of his inability to resist the invaders in any strength of his own. His reliance was elsewhere, even in Him who, in taking the position of real Head of the Hebrew commonwealth, had pledged himself to the defence and deliverance of his people. Viewed from the theocratic point of view, or indeed from any point of view, nothing can be finer than the prayer which Asa uttered before he fell to mortal conflict with the enemy:—"Lord, it is nothing to Thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power. Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on Thee, and in thy name go against this multitude. O Lord, Thou art our God; let not man prevail against Thee."

The Israelites never, from the commencement of their history, failed to be victorious in any battle undertaken in this spirit,—evincing that faith in Him, to which the Lord, by all his covenants, had bound himself to respond. This was so much a matter of course, that the historian simply, but with a truly grand laconism under the circumstances, adds,—"So the Lord smote the Cushites before Asa, and before Judah, and the Cushites fled." They were pursued with great slaughter to their encampments, and to their towns about Gerar; and the spoil with which the Judahites returned was prodigious, and being largely in sheep and camels, it must have made a material contribution to the substantial wealth of the country.

This victory, so signally the doing of the Lord, together with the encouragements given to the king by a prophet named Azariah, who came out to meet him on his return, greatly stimulated the king in his great work of religious reform and purification. A great festival sacrifice was held at Jerusalem, at which 700 oxen and 7000 sheep were offered, and the assembled people then and there entered into a high and solemn covenant, "to seek the Lord their God with all their heart and with all their soul."



The result was peace and prosperity for many years. This was so signal and apparent, that after a time so strong a tide of migration into this kingdom from the more troubled one of Israel set in, as excited the serious apprehension of Baasha, who was then upon the throne, and incited him to a bold measure for the purpose of preventing it, or holding it in check. He seized the town of Ramah, which lay within the territory of Judah, six miles from Jerusalem, on the way to Bethel, and began to turn it into a strong fortress. This audacious measure, which held out to Asa the prospect of having so able and resolute an enemy holding a position of great strength within so short a distance of his capital, filled with dismay the royal heart which had not quailed before the hosts of Zerah. He lost that faith which had ennobled his past career, and betook himself to miserable diplomacies, no less impolitic than degrading.

The now important Syrian power seated at Damascus, was at this time under a treaty of peace with the kingdom of Israel, to which it was naturally from its position, and had been before, and was afterwards, most hostile. Asa, knowing the really adverse temper of Syria towards Israel, thought it not unlikely, that the king might be induced to break the existing treaty, and by appearing in the north, compel Baasha to abandon his designs in the south. He tried it, and succeeded; but only received this aid from Benhadad, at a most costly sacrifice; for he sent all his silver and gold, whether in the form of treasure or vessels, which he could make available, sparing neither the precious things of his own palace nor of the temple. He reckoned, probably, that it was better to give it up in this way, than to have it taken by force from him; while, if peace resulted from the sacrifice, he would be able to replace it with interest in a few years. For this part of his conduct, it is worthy of note, he was not blamed. The treasure which the ambassadors brought was doubtless more effectual than their arguments in prevailing upon Ben-hadad to accede to a course so dishonorable. He did accede, and sent an army against the north of Israel, which captured and plundered many important towns, and ravaged the whole land of Naphtali, and the country about the sea of Galilee. On hearing this, Baasha at once abandoned Ramah, and went to protect his own country; and the war between him and the Syrians being thus renewed, he found too much employment to resume his former design.

But, however successful it seemed in its immediate object, the thing that Asa had done displeased the Lord. Its offence was gross and accumulated. It was a want of that reliance upon the Lord, which once, in a really more urgent strait, had won him so much honor; it was the tempting of another to do a dishonorable breach of faith; and it was the bringing of a heathen destroyer into that land which was still the Lord's heritage, though it belonged not to Judah; and upon that people who were still his, although they had strayed from him. For this—but especially for his relying upon the king of Syria more than upon the King of Heaven—a prophet was sent to rebuke and threaten him. It was intimated that, for this, he had not only lost a great victory over the Syrians, which the Lord would have given to him, but his future reign should be troubled with wars. The former intimation is worthy of notice, as being of that rare kind which indicates what would have occurred had a certain course not been taken. We understand it to mean that Baasha would have called the Syrians to his aid, and that Asa would have been afforded a signal victory over them.

To be thus rebuked in the moment when his diplomatic stroke seemed to have fulfilled its purpose so well, was more than one so little used to contradiction could bear; and in his rage he sent the faithful prophet to prison—adding to his original fault the grievous sin of persecuting an inspired messenger of Jehovah. Here we have the melancholy spectacle of a prophet of God imprisoned—not by an idolatrous or notoriously wicked king, but by one who has hitherto borne a noble character, and whose heart was substantially right with God. Not so did David receive Nathan's more stern rebuke. This descendant of his does that, for only attempting to do which Jeroboam had his arm palsied. But, as Bishop Hall charitably remarks: "It were a pity that the best man should be judged by each of his actions, and not by all; the course of our life must either allow or condemn us, not these sudden exceptions."

**2 Chronicles 16:8 "Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim an immense army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand."**

- **the Ethiopians:** 2Ch 12:3 2Ch 14:9-15
- **the Lubims:** 2Ch 12:3
- **because:** 2Ch 16:7 Ps 9:9,10 37:39,40

## **REMEMBER WHAT YAHWEH HAS DONE**

**Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim (not mentioned in 2Ch 14:9-15+) an immense army with very many chariots and horsemen?** Answer? Yes! This should have been a faith building experience in Asa's life, but sadly he shelved this truth and seems to have forgotten how great and mighty was His God and that He is still that same God in the face of Baasha's bashing! Note the mention of Lubim here indicates King Asa had not only defeated the Ethiopians but also the Lubim (perhaps some of the Lubim forces had joined the Ethiopians). In any event, Hanani is implying King Asa had defeated two enemies when he relied on the LORD.



**Yet because you relied on ([sha'an](#)) the LORD, He delivered them into your hand.** The conclusion. Asa had trusted in (leaned on) Yahweh and the result was victory of the enemy that outnumbered Judah! See 2Ch 14:9-15+. This should have been motivation for Asa to choose God over gold to Ben-hadad, but for some reason it did not.

**THOUGHT** - What is the lesson? The remembrance of the times we have experienced the good hand of the LORD in testing or adverse circumstances in our past should motivate us to seek His face in our present adversity! That's easy to "preach" but not easy to practice, because we are so forgetful of God's past mercies and deliverances. Oh Spirit of the Living God, stir our heart and mind to more quickly recall Your past deliverances in our life, so that we choose to lean on You when winds of adversity begin to blow. In Jesus' Mighty Name. Amen. One thing you might consider is journal and record those past victories so you can look back and refresh your memory. Or you might do like Joshua did and put up a pile of stones as a memorial to celebrate the Lord's bringing them across the Jordan River into the Promised Land. If it is something you and your family can see in your home (a verse on the wall in a place you would see it every day), it will be a reminder every time you see it of the goodness and greatness of your God.

**2 Chronicles 16:9 "For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars."**

KJV 2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

BGT 2 Chronicles 16:9 π ο φθαλμο κυρ ου πιβλ πουσιν ν π σ τ γ κατισχ σαι ν π σ καρδ π λ ρει π ρ ς α τ ν γ ν η κας π το τ π το ν ν σται μετ σο π λεμος

LXE 2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the Lord look upon all the earth, to strengthen every heart that is perfect toward him. In this thou hast done foolishly; henceforth there shall be war with thee.

NET 2 Chronicles 16:9 Certainly the LORD watches the whole earth carefully and is ready to strengthen those who are devoted to him. You have acted foolishly in this matter; from now on you will have war.

CSB 2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of Yahweh roam throughout the earth to show Himself strong for those whose hearts are completely His. You have been foolish in this matter. Therefore, you will have wars from now on."

ESV 2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars."

NIV 2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war."

NLT 2 Chronicles 16:9 The eyes of the LORD search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. What a fool you have been! From now on you will be at war."

NRS 2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the entire earth, to strengthen those whose heart is true to him. You have done foolishly in this; for from now on you will have wars."

NJB 2 Chronicles 16:9 for Yahweh's eyes rove to and fro across the whole world to support those whose hearts are loyal to him. You have acted like a fool in this respect; hence, from now on you will have wars.'

NAB 2 Chronicles 16:9 The eyes of the LORD roam over the whole earth, to encourage those who are devoted to him wholeheartedly. You have acted foolishly in this matter, for from now on you will have wars."

YLT 2 Chronicles 16:9 for Jehovah -- His eyes go to and fro in all the earth, to show Himself strong for a people whose heart is perfect towards Him; thou hast been foolish concerning this, because -- henceforth there are with thee wars.'

GWN 2 Chronicles 16:9 The LORD's eyes scan the whole world to find those whose hearts are committed to him and to strengthen them. You acted foolishly in this matter. So from now on, you will have to fight wars."

- **that He may strongly support** 2Ch 15:17 2Ki 20:3 Ps 37:37
- **You have acted foolishly in this.:** 1Sa 13:13 2Sa 12:7-12 1Ch 21:8 Job 34:18,19 Jer 5:21 Mt 5:22 Lu 12:20 1Co 15:36 Ga 3:1
- **from now on :** 1Ki 15:32

#### Related Passage:

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

Proverbs 15:3 **The eyes of the LORD are in every place** Watching the evil and the good.

Job 34:21 "For **His eyes are upon the ways of a man**, And **He sees all his steps**."

Job 34:22 "There is no darkness or deep shadow Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

Zechariah 4:10 "For who has despised the day of small things? But these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel—**these are the eyes of the LORD which range to and fro throughout the earth.**"

Psalm 37:37 Mark the blameless man, and behold the upright; For the man of peace will have a posterity.

### THE "EAGLE EYES" OF THE LORD EVER LOOK FOR COMMITMENT

**For the eyes of the LORD** see Ge 16:13 Dt 11:12 21:9 2Ch 6:20 Ps 33:18 34:15, 113:6, 139:2,3, Job 34:21,31:4, Je 16:17, 23:24, 32:19 Zec 4:10 Heb 4:13 1Pe 3:12 Ge 6:8) See [Omniscience](#)

**THOUGHT** - Does God's "eagle eye" see your heart as one that is fully committed to His cause, wholly devoted to Jesus as your Lord and Master? Here should be the goal of all of our lives as declared from the lips of our Lord " 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.' (Mark 12:30+).

**Utley** - the "eyes" of the Lord is [anthropomorphic imagery](#). The phrase "move to and fro" (BDB 1001, KB 1439, Polel ACTIVE PARTICIPLE) is an idiom used several times in the OT. (1) here, to denote YHWH actively seeking those who have sought Him with their whole heart (2) of those who seek YHWH, Dan. 12:4; Amos 8:12 (3) for YHWH seeking one godly person in Jerusalem so as to spare it from judgment, Jer. 5:1 (4) in connection to YHWH restoring the temple under Zerubbabel, Zech. 4:10. See topic [GOD DESCRIBED AS HUMAN](#)

**Move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support** ([chazaq](#); Lxx - [katischuo](#)) - This is an [anthropomorphism](#) picturing God like a man who is constantly surveying the land, but the fact is that God sees everything, everywhere, all the time! Hanani describes the eyes of the Lord, scrutinizing the entire earth in search of men who will rely on Him (2Ch 16:8; contrast Mt 6:24, Jas 4:8). It is notable that the Hebrew verb **strongly support** ([chazaq](#)) is the same verb used in Azariah's command to King Asa in 2Ch 15:7+ ("be strong" = [chazaq](#)) and to which Asa obediently responded in 2Ch 15:8 ("he took courage" = again same verb [chazaq](#)). It follows that from the time of Azariah's warning, sometime after the 10th year of Asa's reign until the 36th year of his reign Asa's heart was completely the LORD's and Asa reaped Yahweh's promised support. He lost that strong divine support in the 36th year of his reign when his heart was no longer completely the LORD's! Oh, that we might all learn from the life of King Asa!

**Those whose heart** ([lebab](#); Lxx - [kardia](#)) **is completely** ([shalem](#); Lxx - [pleres](#) - with nothing lacking) **His** - This is the heart of the matter regarding devotion to the LORD! What is fascinating is that the Hebrew word for **completely** ([shalem](#)) is the same word used to describe the heart of King Asa in 1Ki 15:14 ("the heart of Asa was **wholly devoted**" = [shalem](#) - see commentary)! So at one time Asa's heart was "completely His", but hearts are prone to drift.

**THOUGHT** - We all do well to frequently recall Robert Robertson's great words in [Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing](#) even prayerfully singing to God "Let Thy goodness like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to Thee. Prone to wander, LORD, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love. **Here's my heart, O take and seal it. Seal it for Thy courts above.**" Will you give your Holy God your heart wholly today? Will you lay aside that sin which so easily entangles you, so that you will be enabled by His Spirit to run the race set before you, running, running, running with endurance until your very last breath? (Heb 12:1+) Will you [Run Like Heaven \(play and ponder\)](#)?

Study these passages on heart completely devoted to God - Job 1:1,8, Nu 14:24, 1Ki 8:61 1Ki11:4 1Ki 15:3, 14 2Ki 20:3 1Ch 12:38, 2Ch 28:9, 2Ch 29:9,19, 2Ch 15:17, 2Ch 19:9 2Ch 25:2 Isa 38:3.

**THOUGHT** - Hanani's message is for all of us and it begs the question "Is my heart wholly devoted to the LORD or do I have a divided heart?" This is a very personal question, and it is one each of us should stand before our bathroom mirror and give an honest answer! If our heart is not wholly devoted to our Holy God, we would do well (I am speaking to myself beloved) to frequently pray Psalm 86:11b "Unite my heart to fear Your name." I also like the NIV rendering "Give me an undivided heart, that I may fear Your Name." And when we fear His Name, we will be more likely to turn away from evil as did Job. In Job 1:1 we read "There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil." From the context, why did Job turn away from evil? (cf Pr 8:13, Pr 14:16, 27 Ne 5:15 Job 28:28 Ps 34:11-14 Ec 12:13 2Co 7:1)

**Utley** "whose heart is completely His" This is an idiom for complete faith, obedience, and devotion. It was first used in various phrases in Deuteronomy (cf. Deut. 4:29; 6:5; 7:9; 10:12; 11:1,13,22; 19:9; 26:16; 30:2,6,10,16,20). It then was used in the historical books for occasions and actions of certain people. (1) Solomon – 1 Kgs. 8:23 (2) Josiah – 2 Kgs. 23:3 (3) soldiers of David – 1 Chr. 12:38 (4) David counsels Solomon – 1 Chr. 28:9 (5) the people as they brought an offering for David's plans for the temple – 1 Chr. 29:9 (6) YHWH's obedient servants – 2 Chr. 6:14 (7) used of those who repent – 2 Chr. 6:38

**David Guzik** - The Prophet Hanani's message was clear. God looks for ways to defend and show his strength on behalf of those who are committed to Him. Asa's fear that God could not be trusted with the defense of Israel was foolish and wrong; God wanted to show His strength of behalf of His trusting people.

**You have acted foolishly** ([sakal](#); Lxx - [agnoeo](#) - ignorantly in perfect tense - his fixed condition for the remainder of his life) **in this** - These words are very similar to Samuel's words to King Saul, his foolishness costing him the kingdom - "Samuel said to Saul, **You have acted foolishly** ([sakal](#)); you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, for now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever." (1Sa 13:13+) See [SPECIAL TOPIC: FOOLISH PEOPLE](#).

*Some men die by shrapnel,  
Some go down in flames.  
But most men perish inch by inch  
playing little games.*

**Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars** ([milchamah](#); Lxx - [polemos](#)) - Divine discipline for his faithlessness. **Utley** notes that "This is the opposite of YHWH's promised "rests" for His obedient covenant partners (i.e., Exod. 33:14; Deut. 3:20; 12:10; 25:19; Josh. 1:13,15; 21:44; 22:4; 23:1; 2 Sa 7:1,11; 1 Kgs. 5:4; 1 Chr. 22:9,18; 23:25; 2 Chr. 14:6,7; 15:15; 20:30)."

**Payne** - At one stroke Asa thereby sacrificed the results of his own piety (cf. on 2 Chronicles 15:18) and of God's blessing (2 Chronicles 14:13–14); he induced a pagan ruler to an act of perfidy (2 Chronicles 16:3); precipitated a pattern of Syrian intervention into the affairs of Israel that would have disastrous results throughout the succeeding century (cf. 2 Kings 10:32–33; 12:17–18); and in the most serious deviation of all, he departed from the Lord by placing his primary trust in 'the arm of flesh' (Jeremiah 17:5)." (BORROW [EXPOSITOR'S BIBLE COMMENTARY](#))

**J. A. Thompson:** The two periods of Asa's life are here contrasted. Early in his reign when he relied on the Lord, a great army (Cushites and Libyans) with many chariots and horsemen were delivered into his hand (2Ch 14:9-15). Now in the latter period of his reign, despite appearances, he was a defeated man. He had done a foolish thing, and henceforth war would plague him (cf. 1 Sam 13:13). God knows what is happening in the hearts of all people. He supports those who are wholeheartedly committed to him, but he will not support those who carelessly reject his sovereignty and lean on another. ([1, 2 Chronicles: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

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**Heart** ([03824](#)) **leb** and **lebab** note that this discussion also includes the closely related noun **lebab** ([-03824](#)) sometimes refers to a literal heart (Ex 28:29, 1Sa 25:37, 2Ki 9:24), but most often is used figurative to refer to what I term the "control center" of our being. Think of an Air Traffic Controller and how dysfunctional, even destructive it is when the controllers fail to function as they should. Just as a healthy human heart is at the center of the body and absolutely essential for physical life and health, so too a healthy spiritual heart (intellect, emotion, will) is at the center of one's inner being (soul) and is vital for a healthy soul, serving as the "fountain" of all moral attitudes and actions. Our spiritual heart thus controls out **actions** and our actions determine our **habits**, which in turn determine our **character**. When God measures the "worth" of a man's life He puts the measuring tape around his heart, not around his head. Be a man after God's Own heart (Acts 13:22) We must continually "post a guard" at the doorway of our heart, so that every avenue for sin's entry is blocked.

**Richard Watson** - The Hebrews regarded the heart as the source of wit, understanding, love, courage, grief, and pleasure... The heart is said to be dilated by joy, contracted by sadness, broken by sorrow, to grow fat, and be hardened by prosperity. The heart melts under discouragement, forsakes one under terror, is desolate in affliction, and fluctuating in doubt. To speak to any one's heart is to comfort him, to say pleasing and affecting things to him. The heart expresses also the middle part of any thing: "Tyre is in the heart of the seas," Ezekiel 27:4; in the midst of the seas. "We will not fear though the mountains be carried into the heart (middle) of the sea," Psalms 46:2. The heart of man is naturally depraved and inclined to evil, Jeremiah 17:9. A divine power is requisite for its renovation, John 3:1-11. When thus renewed, the effects will be seen in the temper, conversation, and conduct at large. Hardness of heart is that state in which a sinner is inclined to, and actually goes on in, rebellion against God.

**HEART** - page 1262 in the [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery online](#)

**Acted foolishly** (05528)(*sakal*) means to be a fool, to act foolishly. Having or showing a lack of good sense, judgment, or discretion. It means acting in an indefensible manner, without reason, in foolish haste (Ge 31:28); especially in disobeying God's instructions (1Sa 13:13; 1Ch 21:8; 2Ch 16:9). Uses an idiom, Saul would later say "Behold, I have played the fool and have committed a serious error." (1Sa 26:21).

**Complete Biblical Library** - Occurring eight times in the OT, the verb *sākhāl* has cognates attested in Arabic, Syriac and Akkadian. When used in the Niphal (passive) stem, the verb means "to act foolishly" in disregarding the counsel or prescription of the Lord.

Saul's impatience, for example, prompted him to offer a burnt offering without waiting for Samuel to arrive at Gilgal. Samuel charged, "You have acted foolishly" in not keeping the Lord's command (1 Sam. 13:13). Similarly, David acknowledged his folly of numbering the people. In committing this sin, he aligned himself with human security rather than with God's strength (2 Sam. 24:10; cf. 1 Chr. 21:8). Asa of Judah sought an alliance with Ben-Hadad of Syria against Israel instead of relying on the Lord's power. Hanani the seer rebuked him, "You have acted foolishly in this" (2 Chr. 16:9).

When *sākhāl* occurs in the Piel stem, it suggests the idea that God frustrates, or brings to nothing, false counsel. For example, David's prayer that the Lord would "make foolish" Ahithophel's counsel to Absalom (2 Sam. 15:31) was answered in dramatic fashion (17:14, 23). In Isa. 44:25, *sākhāl* (with the alternate spelling *sākhā*) is used to describe how God "makes foolish" the counsel of diviners and false prophets. In contrast, the word of his servants comes to pass (v. 26).

The two uses of *sākhāl* in the Hiphil depict mistakes in judgment. Laban accused Jacob of "acting foolishly" by running away without a proper farewell (Gen. 31:28). When David spared Saul's life a second time in the wilderness of Ziph, the king confessed that his pursuit of David had been ill-advised. He said, "I have sinned... and I have acted like a fool" (1 Sam. 26:21).

**Sakal - 8v - acted foolishly(2), acted...foolishly(1), done\*(1), done...foolishly(1), foolishly(1), foolishness(2), make(1), played the fool(1).** Gen. 31:28; 1 Sam. 13:13; 1 Sam. 26:21; 2 Sam. 15:31; 2 Sam. 24:10; 1 Chr. 21:8; 2 Chr. 16:9; Isa. 44:25

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**C H Spurgeon** - excerpt from sermon [A Lesson from the Life of King Asa](#) - OUR text leads us to speak upon historical matters, and for this I shall by no means apologise, although I have sometimes heard very foolish professors speak slightly of the historical part of Scripture. Remember that the historical books were almost the only Scripture possessed by the early saints; and from those they learned the mind of God. David sang the blessedness of the man who delighted in the law of the Lord, yet he had only the first five books, and, perhaps, Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, all books of history, in which to meditate day and night. The psalmist himself spoke most lovingly of these books, which were the only statutes and testimonies of the Lord to him, with, perhaps, the addition of the Book of Job. Other saints delighted in the histories of the word before the more spiritual books came in their way at all. If rightly viewed, the histories of the Old Testament are full of instruction. They supply us both with warnings and examples in the realm of practical morals; and hidden within their letter, like pearls in oyster shells, lie grand spiritual truths couched in allegory and metaphor. I may say of the least important of all the books what our Lord said of children, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." To take away from Holy Writ involves a curse upon the daring deed: may we never incur the penalty! All Scripture is given by inspiration, and is profitable; be it ours to gain the profit. Let us see whether we cannot get a lesson from the life of King Asa.

We will commence by noticing who he was, and what he had done in his better days, for this will help to understand more clearly the fault into which he fell. He was a man of whom it is said that his heart was perfect before God all his days. It is a great thing to have said of any one; indeed, it is the greatest commendation which can be pronounced upon mortal man. When the heart, the intention,

the master-affection is right, the man is reckoned a good man before the Lord, notwithstanding that there may be a thousand things which are not commendable—yea, and some things which are censurable in the man's outward career. Asa is noticeable in the early part of his life for the fact that he set up the worship of God, and carried it out with great diligence, though his mother was an idolater, and his father, Abijah, was little better. He had enjoyed no training as a youth that could lead him aright, but quite the contrary; yet he was very decided, even in the first days of his reign, for the Lord his God, and acted in all things with an earnest desire to glorify Jehovah, and to lead his people away from all idols to the worship of the true God. Now, a life may begin well, and yet may be clouded ere its close; the verdure of earnestness may fade into the sere and yellow leaf of backsliding. We may have the grace of God in our earliest days, but unless we have day by day fresh help from on high, dead flies may pollute the ointment and spoil the sweet odour of our lives. We shall need to watch against temptation so long as we are in this wilderness of sin. Only in heaven are we out of gunshot of the devil. Though we may have been kept in the ways of the Lord, as Asa was, for fifty or sixty years, yet if left by the Master for a single moment we shall bring discredit upon his holy name.

In the middle of his reign Asa was put to the test by a very serious trial. He was attacked by the Ethiopians, and they came against him in mighty swarms. What a host to be arrayed against poor little Judah—an army of a million footmen and three hundred thousand chariots! All the host that Asa could muster—and he did his best—was but small compared to this mighty band; and it appeared as if the whole land would be eaten up, for the people seemed sufficient to carry away Judea by handfuls. But Asa believed in God, and therefore when he had mustered his little band he committed the battle to the Lord his God. Read attentively that earnest believing prayer which he offered. "And 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: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee." How grandly he threw all his burden upon God! He declared that he rested in the Most High, and believed that God could as well achieve the victory by a few and feeble folk as by a vast army; after this prayer he marched to the battle with holy confidence, and God gave him the victory. The power of Ethiopia was broken before him, and Judah's armies returned laden with the spoil. You would not have thought that a man who could perform that grand action would become, a little after, full of unbelief; but the greatest faith of yesterday will not give us confidence for to-day, unless the fresh springs which are in God shall overflow again. Even Abraham, who at one time staggered not at the promise through unbelief, yet did stagger some time afterwards about a far less difficult matter. The greatest of God's servants, if their Lord hides his face, soon sink even below the least; all the strength of the strongest lies in him.

After Asa had thus by divine strength won a great victory, he did not, as some do, grow proud of it, but he set to work, in obedience to a prophetic warning, to purge his country by a thorough reformation; he did it, and did it well. He did not show any partiality towards the rich and great in his country who were guilty of the worship of false gods, for the queen-mother was a great fosterer of idolatry, and she had a grove of her own with a temple in it, in which was her own peculiar idol; but the king put her away from her eminent position, took her idol, and not merely broke it, but stamped upon it and burned it, with every sign of contempt, at the brook Kidron, into which ran the sewage of the temple, to let the people know that, whether in high places or amongst the poor, there should be nothing left to provoke the Lord throughout the land. This was well done. Oh that such a reformation might happen in this land, for the country is beginning to be covered with idols and mass-houses! Everywhere they are setting up the altars of their broaden deity, shrines to the queen of heaven, the crucifix and the saints, while the spiritual worship of God is put aside to make room for vain shows and spiritual masquerades. The God of the Reformation—how much is he forgotten now-a-days! Oh for a return of the days of Knox, and his covenanting brethren! Asa was for a root and branch reform, and he went through with it bravely. You would not have thought that a man so thorough—a man who, like Levi of old, knew not his own mother when it came to the matter of serving God, but made "through stitch" with it, as the old writers used to say—you would not have supposed that he would be the man who, when he came into another trial, would be running after an idolater and cringing before him and praying him to give him his help. Alas, the best of men are men at the best! God alone is unchangeable. He alone is good always, or indeed at all. "There is none good save one, that is God." We are only good as he makes us good; and if his hand be withdrawn even for a moment, we start aside like a deceitful bow, or a broken bone which has been badly set. Alas, how soon are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war broken, if the Lord uphold not! Asa, who could do marvels, and who walked so well and thoroughly before his God, yet nevertheless came to do foolishly and bring upon himself lifelong chastisement.....

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**WHOLE HEART** (HEART ...WHOLLY DEVOTED TO): combination of whole & heart:

- [\*\*PLAY THIS SONG BY CRAIG SMITH - WHOLE HEART\*\*](#)
- [\*\*PLAY THIS SONG BY CRAIG SMITH - SINGLE HEART\*\*](#)
- 1 Ki 8:61 heart therefore be wholly devoted
- 1 Ki 11:4 heart was not wholly devoted
- 1 Ki 15:3 heart was not wholly devoted
- 1 Ki 15:14 heart of Asa was wholly devoted
- 2 Ki 20:3 with a whole heart,



- 1 Chr 12:38 (PERFECT HEART)
- 1 Chr 28:9 with a whole heart
- 1 Chr 29:19 (PERFECT HEART)
- 2 Chr 15:17 (heart was blameless)
- 2 Chr 16:9 heart is completely
- 2 Chr 19:9 wholeheartedly.
- 2 Chr 25:2 a whole heart.

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*What an exquisite thought is suggested by the allusion to the eyes of the Lord running to and fro throughout the whole earth*

**F B Meyer** - The emphasis is clearly on the word perfect. That was the point between Hanani the seer, and Asa the king. Asa's mistake and sin lay in his resorting to Benhadad, king of Syria, as an ally against Baasha. Evidently he did not perfectly trust the delivering power of God; and in this failure of his faith, he forfeited the all-sufficient help which would have more than availed. As the seer said very truly, simple trust in God had brought deliverance from the Ethiopians and Lubim, though they were a much huger host than Baasha's; and the same attitude in respect of Baasha would have secured a like result. God was only awaiting the appeal of Asa's faith, to show Himself strong. What a mistake to send to Syria!

Now, dear reader, this is very pertinent for your life and mine. We often complain that we are bereft of help, and send off for Benhadad. And all the while the eyes of the Lord are looking pitifully and longingly at us. Nothing would give Him greater pleasure than to show Himself strong on our behalf. This, however, He cannot do until renouncing all other confidants and helpers, our heart is perfect in the simplicity and frankness of its faith. What an exquisite thought is suggested by the allusion to the eyes of the Lord running to and fro throughout the whole earth. At a glance He takes in our position; not a sorrow, trial, or temptation visits us without exciting His notice and loving sympathy. In all the whole wide earth there is not one spot so lonely, one heart so darkened, as to escape those eyes. Oh for the perfect confidence which will allow Him to act! It is for lack of this that we remain unhelped, and spend our days in the midst of wars and tumults.

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### What God Sees

The eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.  
2 Chronicles 16:9

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Chronicles 16:7–9

Early in the morning, I quietly pad past a family-room window overlooking a wilderness area behind our house. Often, I notice a hawk or owl perched in a tree, keeping watch over the area. One morning I was surprised to find a bald eagle boldly balanced on a high branch, surveying the terrain as if the entire expanse belonged to him. Likely he was watching for "breakfast." His all-inclusive gaze seemed regal.

In 2 Chronicles 16, Hanani the seer (God's prophet) informed a king that his actions were under a royal gaze. He told Asa, king of Judah, "You relied on the king of Aram and not on the Lord your God" (v. 7). Then Hanani explained, "The eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him" (v. 9). Because of Asa's misplaced dependence, he would always be at war.

Reading these words, we might get the false sense that God watches our every move so He can pounce on us like a bird of prey. But Hanani's words focus on the positive. His point is that our God continually watches and waits for us to call on Him when we're in need.

Like my backyard bald eagle, how might God's eyes be roaming our world—even now—looking to find faithfulness in you and me? How might He provide the hope and help we need? By: Elisa Morgan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Why is it vital for you to regularly look to God for direction and guidance? How does it encourage you to know that God awaits your calls for help?

O God, may You strengthen our hearts that we might be fully committed to You.

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**Does God Have All?** - General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, was once asked the secret of his success. General Booth hesitated a moment, then with tears streaming down his cheeks he replied, "I'll tell you the secret; God had all of me there was to have. From the day I got the poor on my heart and a vision of what Christ could do, I made up my mind that God would have



all there was of William Booth—God had all the adoration of my heart, all the power of my will and all the influence of my life."

The birth of the Salvation Army came about through a man who offered his life as a sacrifice to God.

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### **Vance Havner - TO GOD BE THE GLORY!**

The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God. 1 Kings 18:39.

When the fire fell on Carmel, the people did not say, "Elijah, he is the great prophet!" but "The Lord, He is the God." God's purpose is not to show us strong in His behalf, but Himself strong in our behalf (2 Chronicles 16:9). Facing Goliath, David prayed that all men might know not that there was a David in the camp, but "that there is a God in Israel" (1 Samuel 17:46). Elijah's prayer on Carmel was that "this people may know that thou art the Lord God..." (1 Kings 18:37). When that is our objective, then the fire will fall and we shall see revival. We begin with, "Hallelujah, Thine the glory!" and end singing, "To God be the glory, great things He hath done."

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### **Vance Havner - He Shows Himself Strong**

For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. II Chronicles 16:9.

God is not waiting to show us strong in His behalf but Himself strong in our behalf. That makes a lot of difference. He is not out to demonstrate what we can do but what He can do. But God is on the lookout for candidates with hearts perfect toward Him. He is not a talent scout looking for somebody strong enough or good enough. He is looking for someone with a heart set on pleasing Him and an eye single to His glory. He will do the rest.

What a wonder that God will use our lives to demonstrate Himself! But we like to demonstrate ourselves and do great exploits in God's behalf. That reverses the process and God does not get the glory. We have seen enough of what men can do for God; we need to see more of what God can do through men.

He has shown Himself strong in our behalf many a time. And what He has done for others, He will do for you.

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### **Will You Be One? - Vance Havner**

"For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." 2 Chron. 16:9

It was Moody who heard someone say that God was waiting to show the world what he could do through one wholly surrendered man, and who said, "By the grace of God, I'll be that man"—and he was!

God is ready to do that at any time: he is waiting for the man whose heart is perfect toward him—not faultless but blameless, completely set on pleasing him. Our Lord said, "I do always those things that please him." If we told the truth, we should say, "I do always those things that please him—meaning myself," or "I do always those things that please them—other people."

Yes, God is ready to show himself strong in somebody who, according to the prayer of Epaphras, stands perfect and complete in all the will of God (Col. 4:12). That person might as well be you. "But I am not qualified!" do you lament? "All the fitness he requireth is to feel your need of him." The Philippian saints were at Philippi but in Christ Jesus. Whatever your situation here you can be in his will! Will you be one in whose behalf God may show his power? Set your heart completely on pleasing him and see what happens!

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### **"Henceforth... Wars"**

"Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars." 2 Chron. 16:9

King Asa made a splendid beginning. He did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. He cleaned up idolatry and built fenced cities. The Lord gave him rest and the land was at peace. He gained a mighty victory over a million Ethiopians, was encouraged by Azariah the prophet to even greater reforms and put down even his idolatrous grandmother.

But in the face of a new crisis he weakened and allied with Syria, thus leaning on the arm of flesh instead of the Lord his God. Stern is the reproof of Hanani, the prophet: "Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars."

Trouble sets in when we begin to take some of our weight off God and lean on ourselves or others. From henceforth, from the day you start that sort of thing, you may count on wars within and without. "From whence come wars and fightings among you?" One reason is, we fear that God's promise is not enough, we must supplement that with resources of flesh. So we make unholy alliances: we call in native ability and personal shrewdness, we accept help from others. It is so easy to fall into the old carnal way of meeting

danger. But God is enough: "It is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power" (2 Chron. 14:11)

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## UNLEASHING GOD'S POWER

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. --2 Chronicles 16:9

God saw the Israelite soldiers cowering in fear before the Philistine invaders. He must not have liked what He saw. But He didn't step in to help the Israelites -- until Jonathan and his armor bearer took daring action.

God also saw the people in a mountain area of Haiti, in the early 1940s, who were living in poverty and spiritual bondage and voodooism. He didn't like what He saw. But He didn't intervene until Wallace Turnbull started living and working among them. Wallace taught them to farm more efficiently and to read and write. He treated their diseases. And he told them about Jesus. As a result of his initial work, thousands of people in that area have become Christians. Over 40,000 children are being given a Christian education. These results came because God unleashed His power and blessed the efforts of Wallace and those who helped him.

God often unleashes His power through His people. The prophet said, "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him" (2 Chronicles 16:9).

Do you see a need that you can meet? Trust God and start doing something about it. You can be one of the people through whom God will "show Himself strong." -H V Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

The power of God will be unleashed  
To meet the world's needs,  
If we will just step out in faith  
And follow when He leads.  
--Sper

If we attempt great things for God, we can expect great things from God.

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## From God's Viewpoint

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. —2 Chronicles 16:9

[Astronaut Jack Lousma](#) described how earth looks from space. He wrote: "With the naked eye we could see freeways, airports, and cities . . . , white clouds and the snow on the mountains. We could see the green-and-brown patchwork of the farmers' fields and the beautifully painted deserts. . . . When we were over Chicago, we could see most of Hudson Bay . . . , Washington, DC, and Baltimore. We could see two-thirds of the way down the Mississippi River and out to Denver."

What intrigues me about this amazing out-of-this-world vantage point is its vast range yet intricate detail. It reminds me of God's perspective of His universe and of the inner world of each of His children. The Bible says that the "eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth" (2 Chronicles 16:9). Even more striking is the fact that He knows all about us—even our secret thoughts! (Psalm 139:1-4).

Two conclusions can be drawn from these verses. We can never drift outside the range of His loving care, and we can never hide from His holiness. This both reassures us and unsettles us, for it's a love that never lets us go, nor does it let us get away with any wrong. And there is no greater love than that. —Dennis De Haan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

We cannot fully know God's greatness,  
Wisdom, power, and care;  
But it's enough to know that He  
In love hears every prayer.  
—Hess

Others see what we do, but God sees why we do it.

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## A Loyal Heart - Henry Blackaby

"For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to show Himself strong for those whose hearts are

completely His. You have been foolish in this matter, for from now on, you will have wars.”—2 Chronicles 16:9

If your heart is loyal to God, you do not have to look for Him, He is already looking for you! God told King Asa that He continuously watches for those who are steadfast in their commitment to Him. When He finds them, He makes His presence powerfully evident to them. King Asa had experienced God's awesome power when he faced a menacing army from Ethiopia (2 Chron. 14:9). God gave Asa victory, despite the overwhelming odds he faced. In spite of this miracle, the next time Asa faced an enemy he failed to trust God. Even though the army Asa faced was smaller than the one God had previously defeated, Asa's faith in God faltered. God encouraged Asa to take courage in knowing that God never rests or sleeps. He is never distracted, but diligently seeks individuals whose hearts are completely committed to Him.

Life's challenges sometimes seem impossible. Do you feel you are too weak to fight the battle? Don't give up! Keep your heart loyal to God, for He constantly watches over you, and He desires to demonstrate His strength in your life. God is willing and just as capable of giving you victory in your current challenge as He was with those in times past. The question is not whether God is looking for His people, but whether His people are seeking Him. Take comfort in God's promise that He watches over you and He wants to give you victory (See [Experiencing God Day by Day: Daily Devotional - Page 224](#))

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R C Neighbor - "To show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." (2 Chron. 16:9.)

God holds me, and His love enfolds me,  
He will never let me go;  
God calls me, and His grace enralls me,  
Wondrous peace He doth bestow:  
Oft new mercies do appear,  
Oft I sense His presence near;  
God fills me, and His glory thrills me,  
Oh, what joy in Him I know.

God guides me and securely hides me  
'Neath the shelter of His wing;  
God hears me, and His love endears me,  
All my help from Him doth spring:  
Toward Him now my heart doth turn,  
Toward Him all my fires do burn,  
God knows me, and His arms enclose me,  
How my heart to Him doth cling.

What more could we ask or desire than to have a Lord who actually shows Himself strong in our behalf?

He holds us; He enfolds us; He hides us, and He guides us. There is just one thing He asks of us in return: He wants our hearts to be perfect toward Him.

Our Lord has our names written upon the epaulets of His shoulders, the place of His strength; He carries them engraved upon His hands, the place of His help. He is our Jehovah-Jireh.

Our Lord has loved us with an everlasting love, and He will not let us go. He says, "because I live, ye shall live also." He stakes His life as security for ours.

How can we help but love Him? How can we withhold from Him the praise of our lips?

I love Him, O, I love Him  
Because He first loved me;  
I'll worship and adore Him  
Through all eternity.

I love Him, O, I love Him,  
He is my joy and song;  
I'll sing His praise forever  
And serve Him all day long.

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## TAKING A STAND

The LORD searches all the earth for people who have given themselves completely to him. He wants to make them strong 2 CHRONICLES 16:9 NCV

The year 1951 was a magical one for the University of San Francisco. The school wasn't known for its football team, but that year the right combination of talent and coaching came together, and the team finished the year undefeated with a 9–0–0 record.

Hours after the San Francisco Dons won their final game, Orange Bowl officials invited the team to play. It was a dream come true. Playing in a bowl game would make it much easier for the team's players to have a shot at a professional career in football. In addition, the university stood to gain the financial backing it needed for its struggling football program.

But 1951 was also the height of the Jim Crow era in the South. African Americans were not welcome as equal participants in the white-dominated Southern culture. The bowl invitation arrived with a condition. Burl Toler and Ollie Matson, the two black members of the team, were not welcome. Knowing full well what it would cost, every member of the team turned the invitation down. The football program didn't receive the funding it needed, and it never really recovered. But several members of the team went on to play pro football; three members, including Matson, were inducted into football's Hall of Fame. In 2006, surviving members of the 1951 team were at the university's graduation ceremonies receiving honorary doctorates. All three thousand people present rose to their feet to give them a long standing ovation for their act of courage taken fifty-five years earlier.

There will always be forces seeking to sway our children to compromise their values and do something other than the right thing. As dads, we lead the way, teaching our children to stand up for what is right, even when everyone stands against them.

God, please grant my children and me the courage we need to stand for what is right, even when our stand is not popular or accepted. Give us the wisdom to understand the times and to know which choice is best. Amen.

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### **Hearts Fully Committed -- Joni Eareckson Tada**

For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. 2 CHRONICLES 16:9

It all began when I received a letter from a quadriplegic in China. He had recently come to Christ and now saw his disabled friends as his mission field. He couldn't use his hands, and so he needed a power wheelchair to get around. He wrote, asking for help. Where am I going to get such a chair, and how will we get it to China? At the same time, I received a late-night call from John, a friend in Ohio. His disabled wife had recently passed away. "We just purchased a new \$20,000 power chair. My wife hardly used it. Think you can find someone who needs it?" Remembering the quadriplegic in China, I blurted, "Of course!" Then I wondered, How are we going to get a hold of this wheelchair? There's crating and shipping and ...

Before I could say another thing, John added, "We received some financial gifts at the funeral. ... I'd love to cover the costs of sending this chair to whoever needs it, no matter how far away." I was breathless. I told John about the man in China. We rejoiced together, utterly amazed at how the eyes of the Lord were on a quadriplegic on the other side of the earth, and his eyes were on a widower in Ohio with a slightly used wheelchair too. And the Lord wanted to strengthen the hearts of both!

It happens in China. It happens in Ohio. And it can happen to you. Of all the places in the earth, God has his eyes on you. He desires to strengthen the hearts of those who are fully committed to him. How can you demonstrate to the Lord today that he has your undivided heart? Is there anything hindering you from being fully committed to Christ?

Dear Lord Jesus, I want my heart to be completely focused on you. Please look upon me today, and in your great mercy, strengthen my faith and give me an undivided heart! (See [Pearls of Great Price: 366 Daily Devotional Readings - Page 24](#))

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### **Watching Over Us**

Topics: GOD'S PROTECTION

Bible Verses: 2 Chronicles 16:9; Ezra 5:5

On February 26, 1844, occurred one of the major disasters in the history of the United States Navy. The Princeton, the most powerful warship of that day, commanded by Captain Stockton, was taking the President, members of Congress and government officials down the Potomac River.

Onboard were President John Tyler, and the Secretaries of State and the Navy. For the entertainment of the guests, the great gun on the Princeton called the "Peacemaker" was fired. At the second discharge the gun burst, killing the secretary of state, the secretary of the navy, and a number of others.

Just before the gun was fired, Senator Thomas Benton of Missouri was standing near it, when a friend laid a hand on his shoulder. Benton turned away to speak with him, when, much to his annoyance, the secretary of the navy, Thomas Gilmer, elbowed his way

into his place. At that moment the gun was fired and Gilmer was killed.

That singular providence had a great impression upon Benton. He had been a man of bitter feuds and quarrels, and had many a fierce quarrel with the statesman Daniel Webster. But after his escape from death on the Princeton, Benton sought reconciliation with Webster. He said to him.

“It seemed to me, Mr. Webster as if that touch on my shoulder was the hand of the Almighty stretched down there, drawing me away from what otherwise would have been instantaneous death. That one circumstance has changed the whole current of my thought and life. I feel that I am a different man; and I want, in the first place, to be at peace with all those with whom I have been so sharply at variance.”

God is not only always watching, He is active in our lives in more ways than we can ever know.

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## **FULLY COMMITTED OR FOOLISHLY CLEVER?**

For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war. 2 CHRONICLES 16:9

It had seemed like a prudent move. Strategic diplomacy, some might say. “Let there be a treaty between me and you,” [Asa] said, “as there was between my father and your father” (2 Chronicles 16:3) —what could be better than such negotiations?

What could be better? A lot, said the Lord to King Asa, through Hanani the seer. “Because you relied on the king of Aram and not on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Aram has escaped from your hand” (2 Chronicles 16:7). And after years of trusting God against the Cushites and the Libyans, the idols and the Asherah poles, Asa made a poor choice. “You have done a foolish thing,” said Hanani.

Having trusted in the Lord in the past, Asa now was trusting in a foreign ruler to bring peace and, later, would be relying only on his physicians to heal his foot disease.

We shake our heads. Having trusted in God and found him trustworthy, how could Asa place that trust in anything or anybody else? Then we remember our own temptation to do for ourselves. We say, “God would have done something by now if he were going to.” Or perhaps we cloak our misplaced trust in words such as, “Maybe I’ll just try this too. The Lord helps those who help themselves, right?”

In what areas of your life are you trusting something or someone other than the Lord? Turn over those situations to God. He willingly helps all who come to him, fully committed, worshiping him.

PRAYER O God, I trust you to ... (See [NIV, Once-A-Day: Worship and Praise Devotional: 365 Days](#))

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## **David Jeremiah - You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees.**

O Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O Lord, You know it altogether.... Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it.

Your eyes, Lord, are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good. The ways of man are before Your eyes, and You ponder all our paths. God, You know my heart. Your eyes, O Lord, run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Yourself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to You.

Jesus knew all men, and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man. Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.

It’s frightening to think how well You know me, Lord. You see the sins I try to hide—and the sins I’m so comfortable with that I don’t recognize them as sin. Yet You love me! Teach me to love You better!

GENESIS 16:13; PSALM 139:1–4, 6; PROVERBS 15:3; PROVERBS 5:21; LUKE 16:15; 2 CHRONICLES 16:9; JOHN 2:24–25; JOHN 21:17

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## **Andrew Murray - FULLY COMMITTED HEART**

“The eyes of the LORD search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.” 2 CHRONICLES 16:9

In worldly matters, we know how important it is that work should be done with the whole heart. In the spiritual realm, this rule should also hold true. God has promised in Jeremiah 29:13 that “if you look for me in earnest, you will find me when you seek me.”

It is amazing that earnest Christians, who attend to their daily work with all their hearts, are so content to take things easy in the service of God. They do not realize that, if anywhere, they should give themselves to God’s service with all the power of their will. In the words of our text, we get an insight into the absolute necessity of seeking God with a fully committed heart.

What an encouragement this should be to us to humbly wait on God with an upright heart. We can be assured that His eye will be upon us and that He will show forth His mighty power in us and in our work.

Christian, have you learned this lesson in your worship of God—to yield yourself each morning with your whole heart to do God’s will? Pray each prayer in true wholehearted devotion to Him. In faith, expect the power of God to work in you and through you.

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**Charles Swindoll - A HEART FOR THE TASK** (See [Wisdom for the Way: 365 Days of Wise Words for Busy People](#))

The eyes of the LORD search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. 2 CHRONICLES 16:9

God’s choices often seem so illogical from our point of view. We tell ourselves it can’t be what He really means.

Would you have singled out a sun-withered, eighty-year-old shepherd to face down one of the mightiest kings in the world? Moses had been out to pasture for forty years. He had completely lost touch with his people. He’d been raising a little family, living with and working for his father-in-law. In four decades the man couldn’t scrape together enough shekels to build a little place of his own. Admit it, doesn’t he seem like a highly unlikely prospect for the job of delivering an entire people group from the clutches of a mighty nation?

God’s eyes roam across the planet to find specific individuals whose hearts are just right for a particular task He has in mind. And when He finds them, watch out! He plunges them into the stream of action, upholding them with His mighty hand.

Moses: A Man of Selfless Dedication

Do you feel ill-equipped for a task suddenly placed before you? What if the only thing you need is a heart devoted to the Lord? [Your Response Here]

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**David Jeremiah - ALL IT TAKES**

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.  
2 CHRONICLES 16:9

Dwight L. Moody preached the Gospel to more people in the nineteenth century than anyone else in the world. He left home at age seventeen with the equivalent of a fifth-grade education. He was won to Christ as a teenager, and in 1873, a friend in England challenged him with the following statement: “The world has yet to see what God can do with a man fully consecrated to him.” Moody’s reply was, “With God’s help, I aim to be that man.”

That challenge certainly motivated Moody, but it wasn’t altogether accurate. For the world had already seen what God would do with a man fully committed to Him. Daniel, taken from Jerusalem to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, immediately impressed his pagan captors. His physical appearance, his wisdom, and his unswerving commitment to his God elevated him to a place of influence—all without compromising his beliefs. Noah, Joseph, Daniel, Paul—all were ordinary people whom God used to do extraordinary things.

Will today’s world see extraordinary things done for God? All it takes is a person like Daniel or Dwight L. Moody—that is, a person like you—fully consecrated to God. (See [David Jeremiah Morning and Evening Devotions: Holy Moments](#))

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**Charles Swindoll - 2Ch 16:9 - What is God looking for?** He is looking for men and women whose hearts are completely His—completely. That means there are no locked closets. Nothing’s been swept under the rugs. That means that when you do wrong, you admit it and immediately come to terms with it. You’re grieved over wrong. You’re concerned about those things that displease Him. You long to please Him in your actions. You care about the motivations behind your actions. That’s true spirituality.

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**C H Spurgeon - THE EYES OF THE LORD. 2 Chronicles 16:9**

I testify that in some of my many sicknesses I have been able to see the reason as plainly as I can see that two time two equals four. Even when we cannot see the reason, God knows why.



Your sickness, pain, grief, depression, and all sorts of trials are often sent to prevent sinning. It ties you fast, like a horse with a heavy weight on its leg. Someone asked the horse's owner, "Why do you put a weight on such a fine horse. It seems a pity."

"Well," replied the owner, "I would rather weight him down than lose him. He jumps fences, and this is the only way we can keep him in the pasture." So, my friend, you might be weighed down because the Lord does not want to lose you. He would sooner have you suffer here than permit you to suffer forever in hell.

A Quaker felt an irresistible impulse to get out of bed and ride to a neighboring town. He stopped at a house where he saw a light upstairs. He knocked and knocked and knocked again. Finally a man came to the door and asked what he wanted at that time of night. The Quaker replied, "Perhaps, friend, thou canst tell me, for the Lord has sent me to thee. But I do not know why."

"Come upstairs," said the man. "I think I can tell you." He had fixed a rope to hang himself, but God had sent His servant to prevent the crime.

Such striking providence may not happen to us, but it does happen to some to prevent sinning. The wheels of providence are full of eyes. Those eyes are continually fixed on us, and those wheels revolve on our behalf to God's glory (Ezek. 10:12). "The eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself

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### **A Lock Of Hair**

The Lord . . . [shows] Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. —2 Chronicles 16:9

After his return from the moon, Neil Armstrong was often plagued by the media. Seeking greater privacy, he moved his family into a small town. But notoriety was a nuisance even there. Armstrong's barber found out that people would pay good money to get a lock of his hair. So after giving the space hero several haircuts, he sold the clippings to a buyer for \$3,000! Armstrong was shocked at the barber's opportunism.

The Scriptures tell of another story of disloyalty and a haircut. As a symbol of God's calling of Samson as a Nazirite, he was never to cut his hair (Judg. 13:5). When the Spirit of God came upon him, he was given super-human strength over his enemies (15:14). Wanting to overpower him, the Philistines hired Delilah, a woman who had a relationship with him, to find out the secret of that strength. He foolishly told her that his power would be gone if his hair were cut. She lulled him to sleep and had him shorn (2Ch 16:5,19).

Greed can drive us to be disloyal to others and to God, causing us to make sinful choices. Our desire should be to exhibit a heart that is fully committed to love the Lord and others. He shows "Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him" (2 Chron. 16:9). by Dennis Fisher (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

O Lord, may my heart be loyal to You  
In all that I say and all that I do;  
When a trusted person is not a true friend,  
I know that on You I can always depend.  
—Hess

Loyalty is the test of true love.

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### **Not a Simple Story**

The eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.  
2 Chronicles 16:9

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Chronicles 16:7–14

Life seems straightforward in the laws of the Old Testament. Obey God and get blessed. Disobey Him and expect trouble. It's a satisfying theology. But is it that simple?

King Asa's story seems to fit the pattern. He led his people away from false gods and his kingdom thrived (2 Chron. 15:1–19). Then late in his reign, he depended on himself instead of God (2Ch 16:2–7) and the rest of his life was marked by war and illness (2Ch 16:12).

It's easy to look at that story and draw a simple conclusion. But when the prophet Hanani warned Asa, he said that God will "strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him" (16:9). Why do our hearts need strengthening? Because doing the right

thing may require courage and perseverance.

Job got the starring role in a cosmic tragedy. His crime? “He [was] blameless and upright” (Job 1:8). Joseph, falsely accused of attempted rape, languished in prison for years—to serve God’s good purposes (Gen. 39:19–41:1). And Jeremiah was beaten and put in stocks (Jer. 20:2). What was the prophet’s offense? Telling the truth to rebellious people (Jer 26:15).

Life is not simple, and God’s ways are not our ways. Making the right decision may come at a cost. But in God’s eternal plan, His blessings arrive in due time. By: Tim Gustafson (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, thank You for the examples of courage and obedience in Your Word. Help us learn from their mistakes and from their wise choices, as we make our choice to serve You.

God helps those who depend on Him.

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### **To Show His Strength**

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro . . . , to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.  
—2 Chronicles 16:9

Although it’s God’s desire to reveal His power to us, we seldom give Him the chance.

We’re like the accountant who was told by his boss to falsify company records. Afraid of being fired, he chose to comply—even though as a believer in Christ he knew he was lying and breaking the law. Worse than being out of a job, he ended up in jail. He missed the opportunity to trust God and give Him a chance to show His power.

I’m afraid we’re not much different. We’re like King Asa, a good king who foolishly chose to make a treaty with Ben-Hadad rather than trust God. Asa had reason to worry—Judah was at war with Israel. But Hanani the prophet told Asa, “Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the Lord your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped” (2 Chr. 16:7). As a result, the rest of Asa’s reign was plagued by war (1 Ki. 15:16).

God continues to show Himself strong to those who remain loyal to Him. Whenever we rely on a crooked boss or a clever scheme or a pack of lies, we are headed for trouble. But if we stay true to God when we’re under fire, we give Him the opportunity to show us His power. by David C. Egener (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

In God we trust, let others trust their rulers,  
We trust in God to save us from alarm;  
Like broken reeds, the works of man will fail us,  
Our God alone can keep us from all harm.  
—Smith

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### **BENEFICIAL POWER**

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro . . . , to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.  
—2 Chronicles 16:9

Boxing and strong-man competitions have a unique aspect to them. In the events, the athletes compete individually to demonstrate their superior strength. It’s like arm wrestling—you do it to prove that you are the strongest person in the room.

One aspect of God’s glory is His almighty power. But how does He show His strength? He doesn’t do it by rearranging the galaxies before our very eyes, changing the colour of the sun at a whim or freezing a lightning bolt. Instead, in His love and compassion for needy people like ourselves, God has chosen to “show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him” (2 Chron. 16:9).

And this happens throughout Scripture. From the dividing of the Red Sea, to the provision of bread in the wilderness; from the miraculous virgin birth ultimately to the power of the resurrection—our Almighty God has chosen to demonstrate His strength to bless, preserve and protect His people.

Be assured that He delights in showing Himself strong in the challenges of our life. And when He proves His power on our behalf, let’s remember to give Him the glory! Joe Stowell (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

ALL OF GOD'S PROMISES ARE BACKED BY HIS WISDOM, LOVE AND POWER.

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## The Eye Of God

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. —2 Chronicles 16:9

Today's Scripture: 2 Chronicles 16:7-14

The Hubble Space Telescope has taken photos of the Helix Nebula. Some astronomers describe it as “a trillion-mile-long tunnel of glowing gases.” At its center is a dying star that has ejected dust and gas stretching toward its outer rim. Remarkable photos of it look like the blue iris of a human eye complete with eyelids. Because of this, some have called it the “Eye of God.”

Although this nebula is not literally the eye of God, the Scriptures do talk about God's gaze on our lives. The prophet Hanani said, “The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him” (2 Chron. 16:9).

This proclamation of God's all-seeing eye was given in response to King Asa's reliance upon another ruler for military security. Asa seemed to have forgotten that it was the Lord God, not mere soldiers, who had given him past victories over his enemies (14:11-12). This spiritual disloyalty did not escape the notice of God, who seeks to pour out blessing on acts of obedience to Him.

Although we cannot see the eyes of God, we can be assured that He sees us. His desire is to show Himself strong to those who are loyal to Him with their whole heart. By: Dennis Fisher (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Precious promise God hath given  
To the weary passerby,  
On the way from earth to heaven,  
“I will guide thee with Mine eye.”  
—Niles

To know that God sees us brings both conviction and comfort.

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**Streams in the Desert** - GOD is looking for a man, or woman, whose heart will be always set on Him, and who will trust Him for all He desires to do. God is eager to work more mightily now than He ever has through any soul. The clock of the centuries points to the eleventh hour.

“The world is waiting yet to see what God can do through a consecrated soul.” Not the world alone, but God Himself is waiting for one, who will be more fully devoted to Him than any who have ever lived; who will be willing to be nothing that Christ may be all; who will grasp God's own purposes; and taking His humility and His faith, His love and His power, will, without hindering, continue to let God do exploits.—C. H. P.

“There is no limit to what God can do with a man, providing he will not touch the glory.”

In an address given to ministers and workers after his ninetieth birthday, George Mueller spoke thus of himself: “I was converted in November, 1825, but I only came into the full surrender of the heart four years later, in July, 1829. The love of money was gone, the love of place was gone, the love of position was gone, the love of worldly pleasures and engagements was gone. God, God alone became my portion. I found my all in Him; I wanted nothing else. And by the grace of God this has remained, and has made me a happy man, an exceedingly happy man, and it led me to care only about the things of God. I ask affectionately, my beloved brethren, have you fully surrendered the heart to God, or is there this thing or that thing with which you are taken up irrespective of God? I read a little of the Scriptures before, but preferred other books; but since that time the revelation He has made of Himself has become unspeakably blessed to me, and I can say from my heart, God is an infinitely lovely Being. Oh, be not satisfied until in your own inmost soul you can say, God is an infinitely lovely Being!”—Selected.

I pray to God this day to make me an extraordinary Christian.—Whitefield.

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**Daily Light on the Daily Path** - You search out my path and my lying down.

Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.” And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

"The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him."

In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

Because you have made the Lord your dwelling place—the Most High, who is my refuge—no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.—If you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.—He gives to his beloved sleep.

Ps. 139:3; Gen. 28:16–17; 2 Chron. 16:9; Ps. 4:8; Ps. 91:9–11; Prov. 3:24; Ps. 127:2

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## **2 Chronicles 16:9 THE EYES OF THE LORD RUN TO AND FRO**

These words were spoken by Hanani the seer to Asa king of Judah near the end of his life. Asa was being reminded of the constant attention of God towards His people. His eyes never close in sleep but are ever watchful of both the good and bad in our lives. This scrutiny took place at every stage of Asa's life.

The service of Asa had begun well with a period of rest for ten years during which he 'did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God'. He took away from the kingdom all forms of evil, both spiritual, such as idolatry, 2 Chr. 14:3, and moral, such as sodomy, 1 Kgs. 15:12. His heart was perfect towards God and he was a good influence on his people as he 'commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment', 2 Chr. 14:4.

Then, there was a twenty-five-year period when King Asa was tested in war and in other ways. The first came when Zerah the Ethiopian brought well over a million soldiers and many chariots against Judah. But Asa relied on the power of God and not merely on the might of his army. He cried to God, saying, 'we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude'. And 'the Lord smote the Ethiopians'. God was showing 'himself strong' on Asa's behalf, and prayer, with the subsequent divine power, was the secret of the victory. As Asa returned from this battle he found that God had sent the seer Azariah to meet him with a solemn warning. Azariah confirmed that God's presence and future help would be with him providing that he would still seek Him. This resulted in him putting away further idolatry and renewing the altar. The people were brought back to the Lord through these actions because they could see that once again the Lord was helping a man whose heart was toward Him. But his final period of three years was his worst. We know that past blessing cannot meet the present need. And, like others, Asa failed at the end despite the many times of fellowship with God. It happened when Baasha king of Israel came against him. Instead of turning to the Lord he turned to Benhadad, the Gentile king of Syria. The result was imprisonment for Hanani and the close of Asa's life—out of fellowship with God.

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### **Daily Light on the Daily Path** - "You are a God of seeing."

O Lord, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether. . . . Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.—For a man's ways are before the eyes of the Lord, and he ponders all his paths.—"But God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God."—"For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him."

But Jesus . . . knew all people and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.—"Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you."

Gen. 16:13; Ps. 139:1–4, 6; Prov. 15:3; Prov. 5:21; Luke 16:15; 2 Chron. 16:9; John 2:24–25; John 21:17

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### **SEIZE TODAY** - Greg Laurie [Because... - Page 133](#)

"For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him." (2 Chronicles 16:9)

What kind of people does God want to use? We find the same pattern throughout Scripture: the people God used were faithful in what He had placed before them. The people that God used for big things were people who were faithful in the little things. Perhaps you have considered dedicating your life to Christian service one day, maybe even in another country. That is a good and noble aspiration. But how about just serving the Lord where you are right now? How about seizing the opportunities around you today?

When God used David to defeat Goliath, he was on an errand for his father, taking food to his brothers on the front lines. But as he

was faithful in a little way, God gave him more. We know that when God called Gideon to lead Israel, he was threshing wheat. When Elijah called Elisha into the Lord's service, he was plowing a field. When Jesus called Peter and John to become fishers of men, they were mending their nets. Not one of them was sitting around thinking, "I wonder if God will ever do anything in my life?" They were busy with the work at hand.

While we're looking for distant opportunities, we might miss the ones that are right in front of us. Are you serving the Lord right now with what He has called you to do? Be faithful in that. Do it well. Do it as unto the Lord. It may seem like your efforts go unnoticed, but there is someone who sees. And He will one day reward you openly.

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### **Chris Tiegreen - 2 Chronicles 16:9**

The words were spoken to someone who didn't fit God's criteria, but they still invite a response from those who will. God isn't looking for those who have behaved perfectly, or for those who have discovered His principles for life, or for those who impress Him with their achievements. He looks for those whose hearts are devoted—those who seek Him, trust Him, and love Him. He searches for those like David, who, in spite of their flaws, are continually running in His direction. And when He finds them, He rises up to support them.

The image of God's eyes looking back and forth throughout the earth is a startling one. Why is He searching? Why does this God seem to care so much? Does He just need servants who will do what He says? No, He wants those who will recognize Him for who He is—His strength and love and wisdom—and who will relate to Him on that basis. He searches for those who see dire circumstances, hear of His faithfulness, and choose to trust the truth of the latter over the power of the former. He longs for those who will believe Him and love Him. He is always trying to cultivate relationship.

When people ask, "Why doesn't God do something?" this is sometimes the reason. We can be reluctant to trust, slow to fully commit, hesitant to invest ourselves with reckless abandon. But that's exactly what God is looking for—those who will abandon themselves to Him. He strongly supports those who do.

Lord, I don't want Your eyes to look past me. I want to have one of those hearts You stop to gaze at. I devote myself completely to You and trust that You will show me Your strong support. (See [The One Year Experiencing God's Presence Devotional](#))

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### **[Ham and Eggs](#)**

The eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.  
2 Chronicles 16:9

Today's Scripture: 2 Chronicles 16:1–9

In the fable of the chicken and the pig, the two animals discuss opening a restaurant together. As they plan their menu, the chicken suggests they serve ham and eggs. The pig swiftly objects saying, "No thanks. I'd be committed, but you would only be involved."

Although the pig didn't care to put himself on the platter, his understanding of commitment is instructive to me as I learn to better follow God with my whole heart.

To protect his kingdom, Asa, king of Judah, sought to break up a treaty between the kings of Israel and Aram. To accomplish this, he sent personal treasure along with "silver and gold out of the treasuries of the Lord's temple" to secure favor with Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram (2 Chron. 16:2). Ben-Hadad agreed and their joint forces repelled Israel.

But God's prophet Hanani called Asa foolish for relying on human help instead of God who had delivered other enemies into their hands. Hanani asserted, "The eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him" (v. 9).

As we face our own battles and challenges, let's remember that God is our best ally. He strengthens us when we're willing to "serve up" a whole-hearted commitment to Him. By: Kirsten Holmberg (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, I want to rely on You more fully. Sometimes I see only what is around me. Please help me to look up and to trust You more.

When we are abandoned to God, He works through us all the time.  
Oswald Chambers

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### **C H Spurgeon - [A lesson from the life of king Asa \(full sermon\)](#)**

'Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.' 2 Chronicles 16:9

I may be speaking as God's mouth to some of you who are now entering upon a testing time, a trouble in the family, a trial in business, or a difficulty in reference to a contemplated marriage, and you are asking, 'What course shall I take?' You know what a man of the world would do, and it has been suggested to you that such a course is the right one for you to follow. My dear brother, remember that you are not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world; mind you act accordingly. If you are a worldly man and do as worldly men do, then I must leave you, for 'them that are without God judgeth'. But if you are a man of God and an heir of heaven, I beseech you, do not follow custom, or do a wrong thing because others would do it, or do a little evil for the sake of a great good, but in your confidence possess your soul, and abide faithful to conscience and to the eternal law of rectitude. Let others do as they please, but as for you, set the Lord always before you, and let integrity and uprightness preserve you. Ask the Lord to help you. Is it not written that he 'will with the temptation also make a way to escape'? 'Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.' Do not put forth your hand to iniquity. You may, in order to help yourself, do in five minutes what you cannot undo in fifty years, and you may bring upon yourself a lifelong series of trials by one single unbelieving action. Beware of relying on Egypt and sending for help to Assyria, for these will distress you, but not help you. Cry, 'Lord, Increase our faith.' That is what you greatly need in the trying hour.

**2 Chronicles 16:10 Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in prison, for he was enraged at him for this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at the same time.**

- **then:** 2Ch 25:16 26:19 2Sa 12:13 24:10-14 Ps 141:5 Pr 9:7-9
- **put him:** 2Ch 18:26 Jer 20:2 29:26 Mt 14:3,4 Lu 3:20 Ac 16:23,24
- **oppressed:** Job 20:19 \*marg: Isa 51:23 Jer 51:34 La 3:34
- **the same time:** 2Sa 11:4 12:31

### ASA'S WRONG RESPONSE TO HANINI'S RIGHTEOUS WORDS

**Then** - This time sensitive word should always get your attention for it show progression in a narrative and at times shows sequence if a prophecy.

**Asa was angry with the seer** - Why is Asa really angry? What does a prophet speak? The prophet speaks for God, so in effect Asa is showing his contempt for God's word! Amazing hubris! But when you are deceived by sin, by definition you don't even know you are deceived!

**and put him in prison, for he was enraged at him for this** - Oh, that horrible internal "demon" of pride! If Asa cannot stop the prophet's voice, he will put him in prison!

**Utley** It is always dangerous to speak to power (ED: GOD'S PROPHET!) But for Asa, who started so well (cf. 2 Chr. 14:2,17), like so many of the Israelite kings, his reign ended poorly. This is the first recorded royal action against YHWH's spokesman. Other persecution of prophets followed. (1) Micaiah, son of Imla – 2 Chr. 18:4-27 (2) Zechariah, son of Jehoiada – 2 Chr. 24:20-22 (3) characteristics of the covenant people – Matt. 5:12 (4) John the Baptist by Herod – Mark 6:14-29. Surprisingly, Kings omits the account. Usually most of the negative things about the kings of Judah are in Kings but omitted in Chronicles. This is just the reverse!

**And Asa oppressed (ratsats) some of the people at the same time** - While the text does not say for certain, it is possible that it was those who supported Hanani as a true prophet. The Septuagint uses **lumaino** a strong verb to translate **oppressed (ratsats)**, this verb meaning to cause harm to, injure, damage, spoil, ruin, destroy. Asa had turned his back on Yahweh and now begins lashing out at men. God had given Asa over to the lusts of his flesh, in this case an evil desire to inflict punishment on others, a righteous prophet and likely righteous Hebrews who reacted to Asa's foolish decision to trust gold, not God. Rather than confessing his guilt, and repenting (an acceptable "about-face"), Asa became angry and oppressed his own kingdom.

Asa's heart was right in that he consistently loved God. Nevertheless, like David, his obedience lapsed. He trusted in a foreign alliance and later in physicians more than in Yahweh. This resulted in his defeat and death. "Asa, then, has done a complete volte-face [about-face, change of policy] from his earlier faithfulness. It is as if we meet two altogether different Asas. He appeared first in the strength of God-reliance, now in the weakness of self reliance." [McConville - borrow [I & II Chronicles](#)]

**ESV Study Bible** (BORROW) - Asa's response is the first act of persecution of a prophet by a king recorded in the OT (see 18:26; 24:21; 25:16; 36:16). Put him in the stocks calls to mind the persecution of Jeremiah (Jer. 20:2).



**Oppressed** (crushed)(07533) [ratsats](#) iterally means to crush (as a skull - Jdg 9:53), but most of the uses are figurative of crushing in the sense of oppression (Dt 28:33, Jdg 10:8), as in the exercising of authority or power in a burdensome, cruel, or unjust manner. Of King Asa oppressing his own people (2 Chr 16:10) Refers to nation of Egypt as a crushed reed (2 Ki 18:21, Isa 36:6). The verb *rātsats* conveys the basic meaning "to crush," "to oppress" or "to break into pieces." Used literally, this verb illustrates the breaking of a golden bowl and well wheel (Ecc. 12:6).

Ratsats is translated in the Septuagint in Jdg 10:8 with the Greek verb *thlao* which means to break a seal (which in this case is not a natural, purposeful act, but one greatly to be regretted, since the seal appears as a means of protection, whose destruction is followed by dire consequences) Hs 8, 6, 3. It means to crush, to bruise (of persons) 2 Sa 22,39; to break (down) (of things) 2 Ki18,21; to oppress as in Jgs 10,8.

**2 Chronicles 16:11 Now, the acts of Asa from first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.**

- **the acts of Asa:** 2Ch 9:29 12:15 20:34 26:22
- Judah: 2Ch 25:26 27:7 32:32 34:18 35:27 1Ki 15:23

#### Related Passages:

2Ch 12:15 Now the acts of Rehoboam, from first to last, are they not written in the records of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer, according to genealogical enrollment? And there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.

2Ch 13:22; Now the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways and his words are written in the treatise of the prophet Iddo.

1 Kings 14:19 ow the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he made war and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

**Now, the acts of Asa from first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel-** Notice the writer includes both the Southern and Northern Kingdoms.

**Gustafson** writes "Verse 11 is the first time in 2 Chronicles that the Chronicler gives his most important literary source—" the book of the kings of Judah and Israel". It is mentioned also in 1 Chronicles 9:1. This source cannot be our present 1 and 2 Kings (that has only a small part of the material on Asa found in Chronicles), and is now lost. In the following chapters this title or similar titles occur several times (2Ch 20:34; 24:27; 25:26; 27:7; 28:26; 32:32; 33:18; 35:27; 36:8). In the parallel portion in 1 Kings 15:23 we read of, "the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah". But never once in any of these other nine references does the writer of the Chronicles refer to the kings of Judah alone. Whenever we read of the kings of Judah we also read of Israel. In this way the historian wanted to show that Judah was part of the inclusive Israel, which he considered an ideal." ([What the Bible Teaches - 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles](#))

**Ron Daniel** - 16:11-14 He Did Not Seek The Lord, But The Physicians. Three years later, King Asa came to his end. He never turned back to the Lord, but continued to trust in man. This is evident when we read,

2Chr. 16:12 ...Asa became diseased in his feet. His disease was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians.

Understand, this is not a slam against doctors. The Apostle Paul called Luke,

Col. 4:14 ...the beloved physician...

And Jesus acknowledged people's need for doctors when He said,

Mark 2:17 ..."It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick..."

However, when a believer trusts in the doctors instead of the Lord, they are in danger. "No thanks, God. My doc's got this one covered." And it seems the more severe the disease, the less people trust prayer. But here, we see the opposite being presented as the truth: "His disease was severe, but he STILL didn't seek God." Saints, who are we trusting in? The other day, someone was telling me about the latest miracle product, the hottest, newest cure-all. They said, "I've gotten so bold, I'm telling everyone about this stuff!" It's amazing to me how most Christians can't be bold enough to say to a sick friend,

James 5:14-15 Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray

over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick...

And yet, those same Christians have no problem evangelizing the latest herb or technique! This has a very spiritual application for us as well. When you're diseased in the feet, it means that you can't walk well. Our Christian walk is vital for our lives. If your walk is going poorly, who are you going to put your trust in? The latest book? The latest wind of doctrine? Or are you going to seek the Lord? The more severe the disease, the more clearly you need to seek Him.

**2 Chronicles 16:12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet. His disease was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians.**

- **diseased:** Mt 7:2 Lu 6:37,38 Rev 3:19
- **in his disease:** 2Ch 16:9 28:22 1Ch 10:14 Jer 17:5
- **physicians:** Ge 50:2 Job 13:4 Jer 8:22 Mt 9:12 Mk 2:17 5:26 Col 4:14

## SECOND BAD SEEKING

**In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet. His disease was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians** - Severe disease in his feet could have been gangrene, which is common with diabetics and for which the orthopedic surgeon has to perform an amputation lest it spread to the rest of the leg and then the body and ultimately cause death. This miserable way of dying could indeed have been Asa's tragic fate! For a second time in this chapter when adversity struck Asa, he turned away from Yahweh and sought men's wisdom. The chronicler is not condemning physicians (of which this writer is one), but just Asa's faith failure, his failure to lean on Yahweh.

**THOUGHT** - There is a lesson here. When we begin to backslide and turn away from God, it becomes easier to turn away from Him the next time we experience adversity. And be assured that there will be a NEXT TIME of adversity, because the long arm of the Lord will discipline us in an attempt to bring us back to our senses (Hebrews 12:5-10+). It did not work out well with Asa. Will it work out well for you (ME)? Remember the final "fruit" of divine discipline is "the peaceful fruit of righteousness." (Hebrews 12:11+) Asa was reaping the rotten fruit of unrighteousness! (cf Gal 6:7-8+). The following could have been "Asa's song"...

*Sin will take you further than you ever wanted to stray!  
Cost you more than you ever dreamed you would pay!  
Keep you longer than you ever thought you would stay!*

"You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth?" (Gal 5:7+) might be asked of many saints and not just the Galatians or King Asa. A good beginning is good, but it is not good enough! The clarion call is to run with *endurance* the race that is set before us (Heb 12:1+). The problem is that when God's people become "diseased in their feet," (whatever that might look like in each of our lives), we cease to run well. As [Knapp](#) says "We may try various expedients, such as ritualism, revivalism, the union of churches, etc., to recover themselves, they are every one of them "physicians of no value." "Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation," wrote a notable backslider (Ps 51:12). It is Jehovah Who says through His prophet, "I will heal their backslidings." (Jer 3:22KJV, Hos 14:4KJV)

It is amazing that Asa is the same man who had "commanded Judah to **seek the LORD God of their fathers**" (2Ch 14:4, cf 2Ch 14:7). And in 2Ch 15:12 under Asa's leadership "They entered into the covenant to **seek the LORD God of their fathers** with all their heart and soul." If Asa had been reading the Law of the LORD as he had been instructed in Dt 17:18-19+, he would have run across a passage that would have aided him in his present illness, for in Ex 15:26+ Yahweh declares "I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, **the LORD, am your healer.**" See the study of this great Name of Yahweh - [Jehovah Rapha: \(Jehovah Rophe\) The LORD our Healer](#). As an aside Asa seems also to have forgotten the healing of the land promised in 2Ch 7:14+.

**Gustafson** writes "Asa failed to seek God in his military crisis but not only then. He also failed to seek God in his personal crisis. In both cases he relied on human aid instead of relying on God. He had done so well in seeking the Lord in his earlier years. Now he is not condemned for going to physicians, but he is condemned for going to physicians without seeking God at all in the matter. The writer of the Chronicles is amazed that Asa did not turn to the Lord when he was so seriously ill. Hezekiah, who excelled in trusting the Lord (2 Kings 18:5), is a good example of how one who trusts should react in serious sickness (2 Kings 20:1-3). Even in the

miraculous cure of Hezekiah means were used (2 Kings 20:7), showing that it is not wrong to use such methods so long as one seeks God first. Every saint should be exercised by any chastening that God sends into their lives (Heb 12:11). ([What the Bible Teaches - 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles](#))

**NIV Study Bible (BORROW)** - For other examples of disease as punishment for sin see 2Ch 21:16-20; 26:16-23; Ac 12:23. Cf. 2Ki 15:5. Contrast King Hezekiah (Isa 38); cf. Jer 17:5-8; Jas 5:14-16.

**Spurgeon** - It is not wrong to send for physicians, it is quite right; but it is very wrong to send for physicians in place of crying to God, thus putting the human agency before the divine; besides, it is very probable that these physicians were only heathenish conjurers, necromancers, and pretenders to magical arts, and could not be consulted without implicating the patient in their evil practices.

**Believer's Study Bible** According to the most likely reconstruction of the chronology of the kings of Judah and Israel, Asa reigned from 911 to 870 B.C. In his thirty-ninth year (873 B.C.), when he contracted a foot disease, he appointed his son Jehoshaphat as coregent with him, the first of several coregencies in Judah (cf. 2 Ki 1:17). Jehoshaphat's 25-year rule is counted from this point (cf. 1 Ki 22:41-42).

**Iain Duguid**: Asa's failure to seek God in his disease does not necessarily negate the value of physicians in general but rather judges his reliance on them alone and his failure to see that God ultimately is the source of all healing. A comparison can be seen in the earlier recounting of military defensive preparedness within an overall life of seeking and relying on God (2 Chronicles 14). Elsewhere, Scripture includes both frequent references to God as the one who "heals" (Gen. 20:17; Ex. 15:26; Deut. 32:39; Pss. 6:2; 30:2; etc.) and positive instances of help from physicians (e.g., Isa. 38:21; Jer. 8:22; Col. 4:14). Further, illness may have a spiritual cause (1 Cor. 11:30), and, increasingly, modern medicine is becoming aware of spiritual factors in health and healing. The account of Asa points to the God who calls for people to "seek" and "rely on" him in all of life

**Jamieson**: The physicians that Asa sought (v. 12) were most probably Egyptian physicians, who were anciently in high repute at foreign courts, and who pretended to expel diseases by charms, incantations, and mystic arts. Asa's fault consisted in his trusting to such physicians, while he neglected to supplicate the aid and blessing of God.

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**Norman Geisler - 2 CHRONICLES 16:12—Does this text teach that king Asa's death resulted from seeking physicians rather than the Lord?**

**MISINTERPRETATION**: According to [Christian Science](#), this passage teaches that King Asa's death was a consequence of his seeking the aid of physicians, rather than from the Lord (Eddy, 245). From this they infer that we too should refrain from drugs and medical assistance, even in time of serious illness.

**CORRECTING THE MISINTERPRETATION**: Such an inference is not necessary in this context, and it is contrary to other passages of Scripture. Several considerations make this apparent.

The verse does not say it is wrong to seek the aid of a physician but to do this instead of seeking the Lord. God wants to be put first (cf. Matt. 6:33; Col. 1:18). As Jeremiah put it, "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD" (Jer. 17:5).

Both the Old and New Testaments recommend the use of medicine. Isaiah the prophet was commanded to "prepare a poultice of figs" for a boil. This poultice was applied to the boil, and he recovered (2 Kings 20:7). And Paul told Timothy, "Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses" (1 Tim. 5:23 NIV).

Finally, the fact that the apostle Paul was afflicted with an infirmity (Gal. 4:13; cf. 2 Cor. 12:7) may be the reason he often traveled with Dr. Luke (see Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11). Nowhere does the Bible condemn going to a physician or taking medicine. Even Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick" (Matt. 9:12 NIV). The Bible simply insists that we should seek God first to determine whether the sickness is sent by him. ([When Cultists Ask](#))

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**John Kitto - Physicians—I Kings 15:23; II Chronicles 16:12**

Asa was in his latter days afflicted with "a disease in his feet," which is generally supposed to have been the gout. Here, again, the king incurs some blame for having resorted to "the physicians instead of relying upon God." We cannot suppose that he was blameworthy for taking proper means for his recovery, but he was for relying upon them instead of upon the Lord's blessing upon the means they employed. It was therefore a new manifestation of that lapse of faith, to which he had unhappily become too prone. Much had been given to him—even large capacities of faith—and much more therefore was required from him than from men less favored. It may have been something even worse. It is even probable that the "physicians" may have been foreigners and idolaters,

whose practice consisted much in superstitious arts and idolatrous rites, instead of the priests, or rather Levites, in whose hands the medical practice of the Jews chiefly rested. In this case his offence was the same in kind as that of the king of Israel (Jehoram) in the next generation, who sent to Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, respecting the disease with which he was afflicted, and who incurred thereby a dreadful rebuke for not having rather consulted the God of Israel. This shows, that since diseases were considered the immediate act of God, so was also the cure; and it was usual to ascertain his will through the priests or prophets. It was also sought to propitiate Him by vows, by prayers, and by sacrifices. Under the same views as to the cause of the disease, the heathen resorted to their gods, and sought to will their favor or to pacify them by various strange, superstitious, and often brutal rites. In any case, certainly, under such a state of things, to apply to a foreign physician was but an indirect mode of application to the god he served.

We will take this opportunity of stating a few particulars respecting the state of medicine among the ancient Hebrews.

There have been some curious speculations among them as to the medical knowledge of Adam—founded on the idea that the knowledge of all creatures, implied in his bestowal of appropriate names upon them, must have comprised a knowledge of their medicinal properties and uses. The mere conjecture shows the extent to which animal substances were applied in the *materia medica* of the Hebrews. In this age, where more potent medicinal agents have been found, it is hard to conceive the extent to which the parts of animals were used, not only by the ancients, but, until a comparatively recent date, by the moderns. Indeed, most of the practices as to applications of animal simples, which, where found in use among our peasantry, are cited, under such headings as “Folk-Lore,” as rural superstitions, are often little other than remnants of ancient and legitimate medical practice.

The point is curious; and in proof of it we might quote largely from a work bearing the date of 1664, which sets forth the medical uses of most animals, citing ancient and medical authorities for most of the statements—including Jewish medical writers.<sup>545</sup> We wish our space allowed quotation from this book; but can only give a sample or two. The first article is “Ape,”—in which, among other things, we are told “an ape eaten by a lion, cureth his diseases”—a fact we most potently believe, having often noted a lion to seem greatly refreshed after demolishing an ape. Under “Asse” we are told, among other delectable matter, that “a little of the water being drunke, of which the cow or asse hath drunke, doth effectually help the headach.” “The dried brain of an asse, being drunke daily in water and honey, helpeth the epilepsie in 30 daies.”—“The heart of a black male asse, being eaten with bread, helpeth the falling sickness.”—“The gall doth asswage the signes of abscesses.”—“The flesh helpeth against the paine of the back-bone and hipps. The marrow anointed cureth the gout, and easeth the paine. The ashes of the hoofes burned help the falling sickness. The dung mixed with the yolk of an egge, and applied to the forehead, stoppeth the fluxe of blood, and, with a bull’s gall, curleth the haire.” Of the mouse it is said,—“The flesh causeth oblivion. A mouse dissected and applied draweth out reeds, darts, and other things that stick in the flesh. Being eaten by children, when rosted, they dry up their spittle. The water in which they have been boiled helpeth against the quinsey. The ashes, with honey, used ten dayes, clear the eyes. The head, worne in a cloth, helpeth the headache and epilepsy. The liver, rosted in the new of the moon, trieth the epilepsie. The brain, being steeped in wine and applied to the forehead, helpeth the headach. The gall, with vinegar, dropped into the eare, bringeth out live creatures in the eare. The dung, given in any liquour, helpeth the colick,” and is further stated to be good, as are other of its parts and products, for a variety of other uses, which must have rendered this little creature formerly of much more estimation in public opinion than it now bears.

The first mention of physicians in Scripture is in the time of Joseph, and with reference to Egypt, which may be regarded as the western cradle of this and many other ancient sciences and arts. These physicians were those who embalmed Jacob; and were, therefore, rather embalmers than physicians, whose profession is to cure the living, not to embalm the dead. Nevertheless, we know from other sources that the Egyptians had early made great progress in the study of medicine, and acquired high reputation; so that the aid of Egyptian physicians was much sought for even in foreign lands. Indeed, it is far from unlikely that the physicians whose skill Asa so unwisely relied on were of Egypt. It was believed that they had a knowledge of *materia medica* more extensive than any other men by whom medical science was cultivated, and that in this their great strength lay. Indeed, there is clear enough allusion to this in one of the prophets, who exclaims, “O, virgin daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medicines, for thou shalt not be cured.” Jeremiah 46:11.

No one can doubt that the Hebrews must have brought some considerable portion of this knowledge of medicine with them from Egypt. The proof of the knowledge actually possessed is strikingly manifested in the indication of the characters by which the priest was to recognize the leprosy, as well as of the sanitary measures to be taken, and the means of cure to be adopted. All this may be seen in Leviticus 13; and it suffices to observe, that modern physicians,<sup>546</sup> who have given attention to the subject, have only found occasion to attest the exact accuracy of these indications. The knowledge thus possessed by, and required from the priests, sufficiently indicates that medicine was in all essential respects a sacred pursuit, and was, as such, in the hands of the Levitical priesthood, whose learned leisure and dispersion through the country, as well as their superior education, rendered them in these remote ages the best and fittest depositaries of medical science. Indeed, nothing is more certain than the essential identity among all ancient nations of the professions—religion, law, and medicine, which the progress of civilization has separated into three. Indeed, in our own country even, the profession of the law still bears the outward and visible marks of its ancient connection with religion; and the time is not distant when every parish priest was expected to possess some knowledge of medicine.

Among the Hebrews, leprosy, and all other diseases, were deemed to be the immediate effect of the omnipotence of God. They were sent for punishment or fatherly correction to those who had offended Him or incurred His rebuke; and they were cured when they had appeased Him by their contrition and their prayers, or when the object of their chastening had been accomplished. This true theory of disease and cure among the Hebrews will, in its application, throw much light upon all the passages which more or less bear upon the subject.

As we shall, in the Illustrations of the New Testament, have to take up the further developments of a subject which is most conspicuously produced in that portion of Divine revelation, we here limit our view, as much as possible, to the state of the matter before Christ. For the elucidation of this, there is a most remarkable passage in the Apocrypha, which has been much overlooked in the consideration of the question. It is in Ecclesiasticus; and as the apocryphal books are not now generally accessible, we give it entire below.<sup>547</sup>

It appears to us that this passage very exactly defines the position of the physician. It allows him honor, and gives due weight to his skill and the real use of the means he employs, but admirably refers all to God. The skill of the physician is His; the medicaments are His; and the cure is His. Even the skill of the physician is proportioned to the faculty he possesses of rendering God honor, by his knowledge and employment of the healing properties which he has imparted to various productions of the earth. In the last clause there is, however, something which would be regarded as a sarcasm on the profession if it were met with in a modern writing:—"He that sinneth before his Maker, let him fall into the hands of the physician!"

## **2 Chronicles 16:13 So Asa slept with his fathers, having died in the forty-first year of his reign.**

- **slept:** 1Ki 15:24

**So Asa slept with his fathers, having died in the forty-first year of his reign**- He reigned 912-871. For 36 years Yahweh reigned over Asa, but for 5 years Asa reigned over Asa! Asa died in his 41st year and reigned concurrent with 7 other kings of Israel - Jeroboam (reigning when Asa began to reign), Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, and Ahab.

**Jain Duguid**:: Here have been recounted, in quick succession, three examples of Asa's not "relying on" or "seeking" the Lord, which led to judgment: (1) seeking aid from Ben-hadad, resulting in failure to defeat Ben-hadad and in continuing "wars" instead; (2) anger at the prophet's message, leading to disease; and (3) failure "even in his disease [to] seek the Lord," leading to death. The ending, however, is positive, as the Chronicler adds details of burial rites that give him "honor." In fact, he is the only king for whom such memorial "fire" and spices are specifically mentioned (generic mention in 21:19 and Jer. 34:5). It seems that Asa's experience of God's grace had diminished but not been destroyed.

**Knapp** - Asa's *history* reveals his weaknesses: God, in His comments on his character, gives no hint of them (2 Chron. 20:32; 21:12). He loves to commend whatever is lovely in His servants' lives, and only when necessary exposes their failures and follies. May we in this, as in all things else, be "imitators of God"! (Eph. 5:1.) ([The Kings of Judah and Israel](#))

## **2 Chronicles 16:14 They buried him in his own tomb which he had cut out for himself in the city of David, and they laid him in the resting place which he had filled with spices of various kinds blended by the perfumers' art; and they made a very great fire for him.**

- his own sepulchres: 2Ch 35:24 Isa 22:16 Joh 19:41,42
- made: Heb. digged
- sweet odours: Ge 50:2 Mk 16:1 Joh 19:39,40
- the apothecaries' art: Ex 30:25-37 Ec 10:1
- a very great: 2Ch 21:19 Jer 34:5

### **Related Passage:**

Jeremiah 34:5 'You will die in peace; and as spices were burned for your fathers, the former kings who were before you, so they will burn spices for you; and they will lament for you, "Alas, lord!"' For I have spoken the word," declares the LORD.

## BON FIRE

**They buried him in his own tomb** (KJV - sepulchres) **which he had cut out for himself in the city of David, and they laid him in the resting place which he had filled with spices of various kinds blended by the perfumers' art** See [SPECIAL TOPIC: BURIAL SPICES](#). In death he made sure he would rest in a sweet aroma. It is too bad he did not give off such a sweet aroma in the last 5 years of his reign.

**Rawlinson** "The use of the plural—'sepulchres'—will not seem strange, if we remember that a tomb in Judæa was ordinarily an excavation in the solid rock containing a number of cells each capable of holding a body."

**And they made a very great fire for him** - This is not a reference to cremation, which was only used in extraordinary circumstances (1Sa 31:12).

**Bob Utley** observes that "There is no parallel in 1 Kgs. 15:23-24. This appears to be some kind of memorial (cf. 2 Chr. 21:19; Jer. 34:5) and not [CREMATION](#). The use of "spices" strongly implies a burial. In 2Ch 21:9 [Jehoram](#) was not honored by fire because of his dishonorable reign as king.

### Related Resources:

- Discussion of Death and Funeral Rites - BORROW [Ancient Israel by Roland de Vaux](#)
- [What does the Bible say about cremation? Should Christians be cremated? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Raymond Dillard:** The fire accompanying his burial was not cremation, but rather a memorial and honorific rite customarily attending the death of kings (21:19; Jer 34:5). ([2 Chronicles, Volume 15 - Page 127](#))

**Gustafson** - Both 2 Chronicles 21:19 and Jeremiah 34:5 indicate that it was usual to have a burning at the burial service of a king. Even though Asa finished so badly, he was one of Judah's best kings and the people honoured him at his burial. Jehoshaphat, another of Judah's good kings, followed Asa. Asa's best years (when relying on God) had a good influence on his son. No other Judean king did as well in following his father in virtue as Jehoshaphat. ([What the Bible Teaches - 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles](#))

**G Campbell Morgan** - "It is the record of a faulty life, but one in which the deepest thing, that of desire, was right; and so it is the record of a life, the influence of which was a blessing rather than a curse. It is a revealing story."

**Knapp** - Asa's history reveals his weakness: God, in His comments on his character, gives no hint of them (2Ch 20:32, 2Ch 21:12). He loves to commend whatever is lovely in His servants' lives, and only when necessary exposes their failures and follies. May we in this, as in all things else, be "imitators of God"! (Eph 5:1+).

**Frederick Mabie:** A funeral pyre would be a statement of respect and honor for the deceased and was typically only available for those of high stature (cf. Jer 34:4-5). The withholding of honor is clearly connected to the absence of a funerary pyre for Jehoram (cf. 2Ch 21:19). Such fires were accompanied by spices and ointments as noted here and could also be seen as an aspect of purification of the dead, as reflected in the death customs of Egypt and Assyria. The notation that Asa had "cut out for himself" a tomb is unique in terms of regnal death notices in Chronicles. (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary: 1 Chronicles-Job - Page 231](#))

**Paul Apple - DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:** 1) What caused such a dramatic reversal in Asa's reign? 2) What are some of the lessons about leadership from these three chapters? 3) How do we go about daily seeking the Lord? 4) When we turn for help to physicians, how can we make sure that we are still relying ultimately on the Lord?

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### [QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:](#)

**Andrew Hill:** The Chronicles are all about the relevance of earlier Israelite history for the writer's generation. That relevance is demonstrated by the example of God's people of a bygone era and includes especially the relevance of obedience to God's Word, the relevance of prayer to the God of heaven, and the relevance of proper worship at Yahweh's temple. For the Chronicler, the applicability of earlier Israelite history for postexilic Judah includes the currency of the prophetic voice for the spiritual and moral well-being of God's people, despite the fact that the voice of God's prophets and prophetesses has not been heard for perhaps a century or more by the time the Chronicler retells the story of Israel's kingship. Second Chronicles 14:2 – 16:14, summarizing the reign of Asa, points toward the contemporary significance of the larger literary unit (10:1 – 21:3) by underscoring the perpetual relevance of seeking help from the Lord (20:4). (See [1 and 2 Chronicles - Page 13](#))

**Mark Boda:** To explain these negative elements, the Chronicler expanded his account and introduced a carefully articulated chronological framework. This framework, which validates the Chronicler's retribution, describes a land at peace for the first decade



(14:1), a covenant renewal in the 15th year (15:10-12), and no war until the 35th year (15:19). Only in chapter 16 does the Chronicler finally introduce the negative elements in Asa's reign, a turn precipitated by the conflict with Baasha, which began in Asa's 36th year. As Dillard (1987:123) concludes, "The Chronicler has reshaped the account he found in Kings by elaborating and reinforcing the divine favor enjoyed by an obedient king and by making explicit the nature of the transgressions that led to his disease and death." (See [1-2 Chronicles - Page 304](#))

**Phil Winfield:** What can we learn about proper leadership?

- A good leader has a good sense of right and wrong.
- A good leader inspires people by example to do right.
- A good leader does not waste times of peace and prosperity. He prepares to protect his people.
- A good leader knows that he alone cannot lead the nation in war or peace times.
- A good leader stays vigilant about the rise of evil among his people
- A good leader does not make exceptions for family.
- A good leader doesn't become proud and self-confident.
- A good leader doesn't attack the bearer of bad news.
- A good leader doesn't forget where they came from.
- A good leader finishes well.

**August Konkell:** The Chronicler inserts a number of chronological notes into his account of Asa. They are designed to divide his reign into periods that show the consequences of his decisions (cf. 2 Chron 14:1; 15:10; 16:1, 12, 13). The Chronicler discounts the earlier battles with the north as having no consequence for the renewal of 15:8–19, though he makes mention of the cities taken from Ephraim (v. 8). The first years of Asa's reign were characterized by divine favor enjoyed by an obedient king. . . . Asa is the first example of efforts to bring about an extensive reform for worship at the temple in Jerusalem, efforts that extended into the territories of Ephraim and Manasseh (2 Chron 15:8-9). Many in Israel became loyal to Asa. Just a few verses later, his engagement in war with Baasha is reported (15:19 – 16:1). This passage, parallel to 1 Kings 16:17, comes like a bolt from the blue (Rainey 1997: 45). There is no obvious rationale for Baasha to fortify the border to control traffic to Judah. However, Baasha's fortification of Ramah makes a lot of sense alongside the Chronicler's information about the impact of Asa's reform activities in the north. Baasha had usurped the throne in the north, and to secure it he systematically exterminated the remaining members of the house of Jeroboam (1 Kings 15:27-29). This would have created considerable unrest in the Northern Kingdom, which gave Asa opportunity to extend his reforms into that area. Further, military conflict with the Philistines who were centered at Gibbethon when Baasha came to power (1 Kings 15:27), apparently continued: that territory seems to have remained unsettled until the end of Baasha's reign. Asa's victory over Zerah in Philistine territory and his successes in his border war with Baasha surely earned him a lot of respect with many in the north. (See [1 & 2 Chronicles](#))

**Martin Selman:** Two themes provide the framework for Asa's reign. - The first is "relying" on God, indicated by the occurrence of the Hebrew verb *sa'an* five times in chapters 13-16 but nowhere else in Chronicles. Both Abijah and Asa offer examples for others to imitate (13:18; 14:11; 16:8), though unfortunately Asa did not end as he began (16:7). - The second theme, that of seeking God, is central to Asa's reign (the verb "to seek" occurs nine times). King and people both live out the principle of 15:2 (14:4, 7; 15:4), committing themselves to God by a covenant (15:12, 15). Again, however, Asa falls away from his previous good practice (16:12), potentially putting himself under the curse of his own covenant (15:13). A variety of other themes also bind the reign of Asa together. One of the most persistent is war and peace (or rest). Where humankind seems bent on making war (14:9-10; 15:5-6; 16:1, 4) God gives deliverance and peace (14:1, 5-7, 12-15; 15:15, 19) to those who put their trust in him, though he may send war as a punishment to those who look elsewhere for help (16:9). A related theme is that of strengthening the kingdom, both through fortifications (14:6-7; 16:6) and through inner strength (15:7-8; 16:9). Trust in God is also expressed through faithfulness to Yahwism, especially in a concern for the temple (15:8, 18) and an intolerance of the paraphernalia of Canaanite religion (14:2-5; 15:8, 16-18). A key feature is respect for the authority of the prophetic word. Two prophecies are prominent, one to which Asa responds with enthusiasm (15:1-8) and one which causes him great anger (16:7-10). The centerpiece of Asa's faithfulness, however, is undoubtedly the covenant made at a special assembly (15:10-15). This highpoint of Judah's national life so far is entered into by the whole people with heart and soul, and was accompanied by much sacrificial worship and rejoicing. There is, though, a reverse side to this in a covenant or treaty made between Asa and Ben-Hadad of Syria (16:2-3), whose unhappy consequences (16:7-12) replaced the blessings of the first covenant. (See [2 Chronicles: An Introduction and Commentary - Page 402](#))

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