



DAY 5

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2 Chronicles 16:9 (NKJV)

“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. In this you have done foolishly; therefore from now on you shall have wars.”

Many people know this scripture and love to reference the beginning of it, but many do not know the scriptural context of this verse. These words were being spoken to Asa, king of Judah, by a prophet sent from the Lord.

2 Chronicles 14:2-4 (NKJV) says, “Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God, for he removed the altars of the foreign gods and the high places, and broke down the sacred pillars and cut down the wooden images. He commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers and to observe the law and the commandment.”

In this passage of Scripture, we see in Asa’s life that he not only did what was right and good in the eyes of the Lord, but he trusted and sought the Lord in trouble too. An Ethiopian king and army of one million men came against Asa’s army of five hundred thousand.

Asa sought and cried out to the Lord, “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 and in Your name we go against this multitude” (2 Chronicles 14:11 NKJV). Scripture says God “struck” the Ethiopians, they fled, and Asa and his army pursued and defeated them. This war with the Ethiopians occurred about half way through Asa’s reign.

God blessed Asa and gave him peace in the land for many years. Asa continued to do good before the Lord. He restored the altar to the Lord. He removed his grandmother from being “queen mother,” because she made an obscene image of the god, Asherah. He dedicated items to the house of God: gold, silver and utensils. Scripture says that he and the people sought the Lord with their whole hearts and souls.

As the scripture describes all that Asa did, it says that “the heart of Asa was loyal all his days” (2 Chronicles 15:17 NKJV). Wouldn’t you want this to be said of you? I know I would love the Lord and history to speak of my life in this way!

Back to our story, all was going good for Asa and Judah, until about 20 years later. Baasha, the king of Israel, started stirring up trouble for them. It says in 2 Chronicles 16:1 (NKJV) that he, “came against Judah and built Ramah, that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.”

So, what did Asa do? You think Asa would have sought the Lord again as he did earlier in his life. This time, Asa did not seek the Lord.

Verse two says, “Then Asa brought silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the Lord and of the king’s house, and sent to Ben-Hadad king of Syria, who dwelt in Damascus, saying, ‘Let there be a treaty between you and me, as there was between my father and your father. See, I have sent you silver and gold; come, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me.’”

Ben-Hadad accepted Asa’s gold and silver, and attacked the cities of Israel. So, Baasha, King of Israel, withdrew from Ramah and all was well, so Asa thought.

Do you see what Asa did in order to win favor before the king of Syria? Scripture says that he took gold and silver from the house of the Lord. The gold and silver he once gave and dedicated to the Lord, he took back and gave it to the king of Syria. He trusted in another for his help, instead of God. He didn’t seek the Lord first to see what he should do.

Verses seven through nine say, “And at that time, Hanani, the seer came to Asa King of Judah, and said to him; ‘Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the Lord your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand. Were the Ethiopians and the Lubim not a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the Lord, He delivered them into your hand. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. In this you have done foolishly therefore, from now on, you shall have wars.’”

Asa did not receive this word well, and actually put the prophet in prison. He didn’t turn or repent for not seeking the Lord. If he would have, God would have been right there to receive his forgiveness. God did not want a treaty between he and the king of Syria; God wanted to use Asa to defeat the king of Syria and prevail against him. He ended up doing the exact opposite of what the Lord had in His heart to do for Asa.

The story goes on to share that Asa became “diseased in his feet.” It says in verse 12, “yet in his disease he did not seek the Lord, but the physicians.” Even in our sicknesses, God wants us to seek Him first. He wants us to seek Him and believe that He will give us our healing, whether it be through wisdom with our diet and surroundings, an inner issue or just by his touch. Whatever your trouble, God wants you to seek Him and put your trust in Him for your victory and salvation!

God is looking to make us whole and mature, and many times He can get more accomplished in our lives by teaching us something along with our healing, rather than just giving us a miraculous one. There are so many ways God can do something, and we cannot put Him in a box of how we want him to heal us.

Are you seeking God to give you the answer for a healing? Are you open, not just for a miraculous touch, but for God to give you understanding about your ailment that gets down to the root of the issue? In the case of Asa, it was a heart issue he needed to repent of, so sometimes healing comes in the form of wisdom that we then need to take and implement into our lives.

As we look into our theme of faithfulness, I looked up the words “loyal” and “faithful” in several dictionaries. I found they are often used to describe one another and have similar meanings. It is interesting to me that Scripture says Asa was loyal “all his days.” I struggled with this because of the latter part of his life and the decisions he made. He didn’t seem loyal to me towards the end of his life.

I did a study on the difference between being loyal and faithful. What I found is that loyalty is an allegiance or commitment to a cause, institution or person, where faithfulness is more often a commitment to a person and intimate relationships. For example, a person would be loyal to a job, country or president (that they may have never met), but one would be faithful to their spouse, child or friend.

Asa was loyal to the Lord all the days of his life, but I believe that he wasn’t always faithful to the Lord. Loyalty is good. God loves loyalty and our original passage of scripture says that God looks for someone loyal to show Himself strong through.

Loyalty attracts God. Just as a king looks for loyal subjects to bring into his inner circle of relationship, so the Lord is inviting those loyal to Him into a deeper, more meaningful relationship that He can bless and show forth his strength and glory towards.

We must be loyal to God in the way we live our lives. We have a duty to stand up for righteousness - to love what He loves and hate what He hates. We should be committed to God's ways, statutes and commands.

I believe this scripture reveals that, though God looks for loyalty in people to show himself strong through, our faithfulness (or faith) is what gives Him the access to do it. We must go from being loyal to being faithful - from allegiance to a trusting relationship.

The prophetic word that Asa received said that he had "done foolishly" and from that point on He would have wars. This means he was foolish to not have faith in God, to not include the Lord in his latter life challenges, and instead trust and have faith in others. Like Asa, we are foolish when we do the same. We are foolish to only have an allegiance to our Heavenly Father, when we can have so much more through an interrelationship with Him.

God desires relationship with us, and He wants us to choose to "do life" with Him. He wants us to believe that He truly cares about every detail of our lives and that He wants to "show up" and "show off" on our behalf, because He loves us and we love Him.

Our faithfulness to God is determined by how we allow Him and include Him in our lives. Are we going to live our lives figuring things out alone, wandering through our hardships, and disregard God because, "We got this!"? That is not being faithful to the lover of our souls.

Faithfulness to God is being in covenant with God. God is wanting to go deeper with us, and He loves us by showing Himself strong on our behalf because of relationship's sake. Our part is to lean on Him, trust Him, seek Him and include Him in the process. Faithfulness is relying on God and living a life in such a way that we can't live without Him, not a life that we can.

God is looking throughout the earth for loyal hearts that will be faithful hearts. People who are not strong in themselves, but are strong "in the Lord." He's looking to show Himself strong through those who will be faithful to seek Him first for answers and trust Him in all their challenges and difficulties they face (Proverbs 3:5-6). Don't rob God from receiving glory through your life.

I believe the story of Asa shows how much the Lord wants us to trust Him and rely on Him in this life. It is not because we have to; we see many people not trusting in Him today. The Lord wants us to trust and rely on Him, because we want to, and because we want to become one with Him, just as Jesus is one with Him.

As we read Hebrews 11 (the Great Hall of Faith), we see people who were faithful to let God be a part of their story and the details of their lives. They didn't go it alone. They could have gone about their lives without Him, still being loyal to an allegiance with Him, but they chose faithfulness. They chose relationship. They chose co-laboring. They chose Him over the ways of the world.

The Word said that because of Asa's foolishness, he would have wars. Could some of the battles we are facing in our lives be because we are trusting in other things and not trusting in the Lord? Do we keep coming up against the same enemy, over and over again, because we are not fully trusting Him and seeking Him to give us the victory?

God is looking for those who will have faith in Him – who will believe that He can and will show Himself strong on their behalf - in them, through them and all around them.

During this fast I encourage you to get before the Lord and ask Him these 3 questions:

- 1. Am I living my life in a way that You can show Yourself strong through me? (Hebrews 11:6)**
- 2. Is there a place in my life that I am trusting in others instead of trusting in You? (Proverbs 3:5-6)**
- 3. Are You finding me faithful to You and to Your will for my life? (Luke 18:8)**

Open up your heart to hear what the Lord says to you.

Sometimes showing Himself strong through us looks like delivering us from trouble, challenge or a terrible situation. Sometimes showing Himself strong through us looks like an assignment or calling that we cannot do without Him. The point in it all is that we learn to be faithful to the One who is most faithful, and that faithfulness leads us to walking with Him in the journey of our life. He doesn't just want allegiance; He wants you - all of you, and He wants to show you His strength, love and salvation through your story.