

Watch

by Bakht Singh

The greater our longing for spiritual growth, the greater our blessings from God, but also the greater our attacks from Satan, and we must be watchful and obedient to God to overcome these attacks.

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 14:2, 2 Chronicles 15:7, 2 Chronicles 15:17, 2 Chronicles 16:9

Topics: "Obedience To God", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

Bakht Singh delivers a powerful sermon on the reign of King Asa, emphasizing the importance of obedience, faithfulness, and complete trust in God. Asa's story serves as a solemn warning for all believers today, highlighting the reality of spiritual attacks as we grow closer to God and serve Him. The victory over enemies and trials comes through honoring God's Word, seeking His guidance, and being willing to take a stand against sin, even within our own families. However, any compromise in obedience, no matter how small, can lead to downfall and the loss of God's promises, as seen in Asa's life.

Transcript

Asa and Jehoshaphat were two kings of Judah who experienced much blessing from God, but the history of their reigns contains a solemn warning for all God's people today also. The greater the longing we have for spiritual growth and the more we are blessed by God and used in His service, the more we shall become the object of the attacks of Satan. We must learn to be very watchful indeed if we wish to overcome the enemy and live in the victory of Christ.

Let us consider the reign of king Asa. He began his reign with God's full approval and he "did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God: For he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves: And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and images: and the kingdom was quiet before him" (2 Chronicles 14:2-5). In those days Israel as a nation had begun to worship other gods. They bowed down before trees and idols. There was great spiritual darkness over the land. But king Asa set his heart to obey God and His word. He utterly destroyed all altars, high places, images and groves. He built fenced cities in Judah (v.6). W~ read that "... they built and prospered" (v.7). God was with king Asa; and He blessed and prospered him. Thus we see that as long as we obey God fully and honour Him in everything, we can claim His promises and He will manifest His power on our behalf.

Soon after this the Ethiopians came out against Israel with hundreds of chariots and thousands of soldiers. But Asa was not afraid; he believed God would help him. King Asa prayed to God and the result was that God gave him a great victory. The Ethiopians were overthrown and Israel carried away much spoil (vs. 10-13). This shows that as long as we honour God's Word and obey Him, He will surely deliver us from our strongest enemies. Even if they come upon us unexpectedly like a flood, we need not be afraid. The Lord will sustain us in every trial and carry us to triumph in every battle.

As long as Asa was obedient God sent His prophets, such as Azariah, to lead, guide and encourage him. Azariah said to him; "Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded" (2 Chronicles 15:7). Thus God will send His servants to us also to encourage, exhort and warn us. We stand very much in need of this kind of ministry, because the enemy is always watching for a chance to deceive us by his subtle tricks and wicked devices. Asa took courage through the words of the prophet Azariah and put away all abominable idols out of the land (v.8). We also must accept God's word when He sends it to us through His servants and resolutely put away every questionable thing out of our lives.

Asa even had to take a strong stand against his own mother Maachah, because she had made an idol in a grove. He boldly removed her from being queen, cut down her idol, stamped upon it and burnt it (v.16). Sin has entered into many homes through fathers, mothers, husbands, wives and sometimes even through the children. In many cases the whole family has ultimately been ruined. There will be occasions when you will have to take a strong stand for God's Word in the face of opposition from dear ones. Because of natural affection many people tend to condone the sins of loved ones instead of urging them to repent, confess their sin and put it away. If we like Asa take a strong stand against sin even in our loved ones, God will surely help us to bring them to the experience of salvation.

Although Asa accomplished all this, we notice that he did fail in just one thing; he did not remove some of the high places in the land, and people continued to sacrifice to other gods upon those high places (2 Chronicles 15: 17; 1 Kings 15:14). In India even till today, you will find on almost every high hill and under every green tree, that people have built either a temple or a mosque. Likewise, wherever the Roman Catholics see a high place, they like to build a shrine and put a statue in it. In the same way the children of Israel had built their shrines on high places all over the land. This showed their disobedience, blindness and stubbornness. King Asa allowed some of these high places to remain. This seemingly unimportant detail weakened his faith and brought about his downfall.

The result of this weakness in king Asa's faith became evident very soon. Baasha king of Israel came to fight against Juda. King Asa turned to the king of Assyria for help instead of trusting in God (2 Chron. 16:1-6). Although by this means Asa succeeded in defeating Israel he brought upon himself the displeasure and judgment of God.

It was at this time that the words of 2 Chronicles 16:9 were spoken by God through the prophet Hanani : "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 ". In these words we have a promise, which brings us much comfort, inspiration and strength. As long as we continue to put our trust in God, and seek to honour and obey Him implicitly, His eyes will run to and fro throughout the whole earth on our behalf; and no matter what our danger, need, problem or temptation, He will cast down our enemies, meet every need, solve every problem and give us victory over every temptation.

Because king Asa had failed in a small matter of obedience and faithfulness, the Lord was not able to fulfill this promise for him and in the second part of the same verse the Lord had to tell him., "Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars". In this we have a warning for ourselves, that if we fail as Asa failed, we also will forfeit the promise of God.

Sometimes when people fail to get a promotion in their job, they are persuaded by their friends to give bribes in order to secure it. They argue, "We prayed to God and waited long enough, but He did not answer our prayers; so we were compelled to use the usual method". They succeed in getting the promotion, which they longed for, but they lose their faith in God. As a result, they end their lives like Asa without peace or joy:

Thus although king Asa began his life well, with faith in God, he ended it in misery. What a great lesson this is to us all! You too, might have begun your spiritual life well. But now, because of your trials, perhaps you are being tempted to give bribes or submit a false statement. If that is so, you would do well to take a warning from the life of king Asa.

A Christian lady doctor known to me had an income of As. 40,000 a year through her practice. Her friends advised her to declare a lesser figure of As. 25,000, because if she gave the correct figure, the Government officers would still say that, like most others, she also had given a false figure, and was actually getting much more. She came to me for advice. I told her that she was a Christian and so should never tell a lie but should give the correct figure even though the officials might harass her, saying she must be getting much more than that. In the end, the Lord would honour her.

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