

Ask The Rabbi – November 2 2021

Question:

In 2 Chronicles, mainly chapters 15-16 concerning King Asa, it is said in 15:17 'that Asa was wholehearted throughout his life.' But in chapter 16, he fell away because he did not seek Adonai's help but rather man's help to defeat King Ba'asha of Israel. When a seer came & rebuked him for it he (Asa) became angry & threw him in prison. He became sick & still did not seek Adonai's help but turned to physicians. He died...

Question: Do you think he died 'righteous' because as stated in 15:17 that he was 'whole hearted throughout his life' that he is in paradise or did he die in this sin and is in Sheol? (Maybe not for us to judge or know?)

Response:

Before, we look further into the question at hand, let's review the verses associated with the life of King Asa.

2Ch 15:1 The Spirit of God came on `Azaryah the son of `Oded;

2Ch 15:2 he went out to meet Asa and said to him, "Listen to me, Asa, and all Y'hudah and Binyamin! Adonai is with you, as long as you are with him; if you seek him, you will find him; but if you abandon him, he will abandon you!

2Ch 15:3 For a long time Isra'el was without the true God, without a cohen who could teach, and without Torah.

There had been an absence of Adonai from the nation. For which Adonai spoke to the prophet and conveyed that if Asa would listen, Adonai would be with him. Asa is the anointed King of Israel, a unique position immersed in great responsibility.

2Ch 15:4 But when, in their distress, they turned to Adonai the God of Isra'el and sought him, they found him.

2Ch 15:5 In those times people going about their business were insecure, and great disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands;

2Ch 15:6 so that they were shattered to pieces, nation against nation and city against city, as God troubled them with every kind of distress.

2Ch 15:7 But you, be strong, and don't slack off; for your work will be rewarded."

2Ch 15:8 When Asa heard these words prophesied by `Oded the prophet, it gave him courage to throw the disgusting things out of the whole land of Y'hudah and Binyamin and out of the cities he had captured in the hills of Efrayim; he also renewed the altar of Adonai which was in front of the vestibule of Adonai.

2Ch 15:9 Then he gathered all Y'hudah and Binyamin, along with those from Efrayim, M'nasheh and Shim'on who were staying with him (for they had defected to him in large numbers upon seeing that Adonai his God was with him).

2Ch 15:10 They assembled together at Yerushalayim in the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign.

2Ch 15:11 That day they sacrificed to Adonai 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep from the spoil they had brought;

2Ch 15:12 and they entered into a covenant to seek Adonai, the God of their ancestors, with all their heart and with all their being;

2Ch 15:13 [*they also agreed*] that whoever refused to seek Adonai the God of Isra'el should be put to death, whether small or great, man or woman.

2Ch 15:14 They swore this to Adonai in a loud voice, with shouting and blowing of trumpets and shofars.

2Ch 15:15 All Y'hudah was full of joy at this oath; for they had sworn with all their heart and had sought him with all their will; and they found him, and Adonai gave them rest all around.

2Ch 15:16 Asa the king also deposed Ma`akhah his [*grand*]mother from her position as queen mother, because she had made a disgusting image for an asherah. Asa cut down this image of hers, chopped it into tiny pieces and burned it in Vadi Kidron.

2Ch 15:17 But the high places were not removed from Isra'el. Nevertheless, Asa was **wholehearted** throughout his life.

לֵב

lêb

labe

A form of H3824; the *heart*; also used (figuratively) very widely for the feelings, the will and even the intellect; likewise for the *centre* of anything: - + care for, comfortably, consent, X considered, courag [-eous], friend [-ly], ([broken-], [hard-], [merry-], [stiff-], [stout-], double) heart ([-ed]), X heed, X I, kindly, midst, mind (-ed), X regard ([-ed]), X themselves, X unawares, understanding, X well, willingly, wisdom.

2Ch 15:18 He brought into the house of God all the articles his father had consecrated, also the things he himself had consecrated—silver, gold and utensils.

2Ch 15:19 There was no more war through the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign.

The reign of Asa's first thirty five years were times of peace and prosperity because of the promises of Adonai.

Deu 28:1 "If you listen closely to what Adonai your God says, observing and obeying all his mitzvot which I am giving you today, Adonai your God will raise you high above all the nations on earth;

Deu 28:2 and all the following blessings will be yours in abundance—if you will do what Adonai your God says:

Deu 28:7 "Adonai will cause your enemies attacking you to be defeated before you; they will advance on you one way and flee before you seven ways.

Deu 28:9 "Adonai will establish you as a people separated out for himself, as he has sworn to you—if you will observe the mitzvot of Adonai your God and follow his ways.

Deu 28:10 Then all the peoples on earth will see that Adonai's name, his presence, is with you; so that they will be afraid of you.

Deu 28:13 Adonai will make you the head and not the tail; and you will be only above, never below—if you will listen to, observe and obey the mitzvot of Adonai your God

Deu 28:14 and not turn away from any of the words I am ordering you today, neither to the right nor to the left, to follow after other gods and serve them.

Then comes the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign.

2Ch 16:1 In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign, Ba`asha king of Isra'el attacked Y'hudah, and he fortified Ramah to prevent anyone's leaving or entering the territory of Asa king of Y'hudah.

2Ch 16:2 Then Asa removed silver and gold from the treasures of the house of Adonai and the royal palace; and sent this message to Ben-Hadad king of Aram, who lived in Dammesek:

2Ch 16:3 "There is a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Here, I am sending you silver and gold; go, and break your covenant with Ba`asha king of Isra'el, so that he will leave me alone."

2Ch 16:4 Ben-Hadad did as King Asa had asked—he sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Isra'el, attacking `Iyon, Dan, Avel-Mayim and all the storage-cities of Naftali.

2Ch 16:5 As soon as Ba`asha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah and abandoned his work.

2Ch 16:6 Asa the king took all Y'hudah and carried off the stones and timber which Ba`asha had used to fortify Ramah. With them he fortified Geva and Mitzpah.

2Ch 16:7 It was around then that Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Y'hudah and said to him, "Because you relied on the king of Aram and didn't rely on Adonai your God, the king of Aram's army has escaped from your power.

2Ch 16:8 The army of the Ethiopians and Luvim was huge, wasn't it? How many chariots and horsemen did they have? Yet because you relied on Adonai, he handed them over to you.

2Ch 16:9 For the eyes of Adonai move here and there throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong on behalf of those who are wholehearted toward him. You acted foolishly in this regard; for from now on, you will have war."

2Ch 16:10 But Asa became angry at the seer; in fact, because of his rage at him over this matter he threw him in prison. Moreover, at the same time, he mistreated some of the people.

2Ch 16:11 The activities of Asa from beginning to end are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Y'hudah and Isra'el.

We read of the curses that would fall upon the nation if the nation were to turn from Adonai and towards other gods, ultimately not trusting in Adonai. The potential for such lacking of trust can be seen in the curses of Deuteronomy 28...where Adonai will remove His protection from the nation.

Deu 28:48 Adonai will send your enemy against you; and you will serve him when you are hungry, thirsty, poorly clothed and lacking everything; he will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he destroys you.

Deu 28:49 Yes, Adonai will bring against you a nation from far away that will swoop down on you from the end of the earth like a vulture, a nation whose language you don't understand,

Deu 28:50 a nation grim in appearance, whose people neither respect the old nor pity the young.

Deu 28:51 They will devour the offspring of your livestock and the produce of your soil, until you have been destroyed. They will leave you without grain, wine, olive oil, or your young cattle and sheep—until they have caused you to perish.

Deu 28:52 They will besiege all your towns until your high, fortified walls, in which you trusted, collapse everywhere in your land, which Adonai your God gave you.

Asa's transgression did not warrant the judgment of D'varim 28, but we would see his life diminish as is recounted in the closing verses of 2 Chronicles 16...

2Ch 16:12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa suffered from a disease in his legs. It was a very serious

disease, yet even with this disease he did not seek out Adonai but turned to the physicians.

2Ch 16:13 Asa slept with his ancestors, dying in the forty-first year of his reign.

2Ch 16:14 They buried him in his own burial cave, which he had ordered cut for himself in the City of David. They laid him in a bed filled with sweet spices of various kinds, expertly compounded; and a very great fire was kindled in his honor.

Is this a salvation issue, for we are talking about two aspects here...

Asa the King:

The responsibilities of the King are greater in that He is also responsible for the entire nation as its leader, placed there by Adonai.

Deu 17:14 "When you have entered the land Adonai your God is giving you, have taken possession of it and are living there, you may say, 'I want to have a king over me, like all the other nations around me.'

Deu 17:15 In that event, you must appoint as king the one whom Adonai your God will choose. He must be one of your kinsmen, this king you appoint over you—you are forbidden to appoint a foreigner over you who is not your kinsman.

Deu 17:16 However, he is not to acquire many horses for himself or have the people return to Egypt to obtain more horses, inasmuch as Adonai told you never to go back that way again.

Deu 17:17 Likewise, he is not to acquire many wives for himself, so that his heart will not turn away; and he is not to acquire excessive quantities of silver and gold.

Deu 17:18 "When he has come to occupy the throne of his kingdom, he is to write a copy of this Torah for himself in a scroll, from the one the cohanim and L'vi'im use.

Deu 17:19 It is to remain with him, and he is to read in it every day, as long as he lives; so that he will learn to fear Adonai his God and keep all the words of this Torah and these laws and obey them;

Deu 17:20 so that he will not think he is better than his kinsmen; and so that he will not turn aside either to the right or to the left from the mitzvah. In this way he will prolong his own reign and that of his children in Isra'el.

Asa the man:

Asa, a human residing within the Avrahamic covenant that established the promise of Avraham's descendants and out of them a nation would be established with the intent of Adonai to be a blessing to the world. He would function with the authority of the Mosaic Covenant, the constitution of the nation, providing the standards of the nation that are unique to the nation.

Rom 9:1 I am speaking the truth—as one who belongs to the Messiah, I do not lie; and also bearing witness is my conscience, governed by the Ruach HaKodesh:

Rom 9:2 my grief is so great, the pain in my heart so constant,

Rom 9:3 that I could wish myself actually under God's curse and separated from the Messiah, if it would help my brothers, my own flesh and blood,

Rom 9:4 the people of Isra'el! They were made God's children, the Sh'khinah has been with them, the covenants are theirs, likewise the giving of the Torah, the Temple service and the promises;

Rom 9:5 the Patriarchs are theirs; and from them, as far as his physical descent is concerned, came the Messiah, who is over all. Praised be Adonai for ever! Amen.

Yet Asa, as a man would also be accountable to the Mitzvot of Adonai just as any other individual within the nation.

The question, having to do with Asa, as is presented tonight is this a salvation issue.

What were Asa's transgressions?

In both instances, he didn't trust God.

2Ch 16:7 It was around then that Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Y'hudah and said to him, "Because you relied on the king of Aram and didn't rely on Adonai your God, the king of Aram's army has escaped from your power.

2Ch 16:12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa suffered from a disease in his legs. It was a very serious disease, yet even with this disease he did not seek out Adonai but turned to the physicians.

His transgression was lack of faith, not a violation of the Mitzvot, Chukim or Mishpatim. Scripture does not say what he did or didn't do from this perspective. Consider 2 Chronicles 16:14

2Ch 16:14 They buried him in his own burial cave, which he had ordered cut for himself in the City of David. They laid him in a bed filled with sweet spices of various kinds, expertly compounded; **and a very great fire was kindled in his honor.**

The last 5+ years of his life did not play out as his first 35 years, reigning as King of Israel. The account in 1Kings conveys...

1Ki 15:9 It was in the twentieth year of Yarov'am king of Isra'el that Asa began his reign over Y'hudah.

1Ki 15:10 He ruled forty-one years in Yerushalayim; his [*grand*]mother's name was Ma`akhah the daughter of Avishalom.

1Ki 15:11 Asa did what was right from the perspective of Adonai, as David his ancestor had done.

This would include a repentant heart for transgression and atoning sacrifices to restore his standing with Adonai.

1Ki 15:14 But the high places were not removed. Nevertheless, Asa was wholehearted with Adonai throughout his life.

Consider the contrast to one who is not wholehearted...

1Ki 16:29 It was in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Y'hudah that Ach'av the son of `Omri began his rule over Isra'el; Ach'av the son of `Omri ruled twenty-two years over Isra'el in Shomron.

1Ki 16:30 Ach'av the son of `Omri did what was evil from Adonai's perspective, outdoing all his predecessors [*in wickedness*].

Proverbs 3 ultimately sums up Asa's shortcomings, that is his lack of trust for which we all have fallen short at one time or another. Fortunate for us that this is not the standard that would separate us from the Love of God.

One might ask, had Asa's faith in Adonai not diminished under certain conditions, what would the last five years of his life looked like. Thus the lesson here is to learn from the times our faith was lacking, in order to grow stronger in our faith.

Pro 3:1 My son, don't forget my teaching, keep my commands in your heart;

Pro 3:2 for they will add to you many days, years of life and peace.

Pro 3:3 Do not let grace and truth leave you—bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart.

Pro 3:4 Then you will win favor and esteem in the sight of God and of people.

Pro 3:5 Trust in Adonai with all your heart; do not rely on your own understanding.

Pro 3:6 In all your ways acknowledge him; then he will level your paths.

Pro 3:7 Don't be conceited about your own wisdom; but fear Adonai, and turn from evil.

Pro 3:8 This will bring health to your body and give strength to your bones.

Pro 3:9 Honor Adonai with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your income.

Pro 3:10 Then your granaries will be filled and your vats overflow with new wine.

Pro 3:11 My son, don't despise Adonai's discipline or resent his reproof;

Pro 3:12 for Adonai corrects those he loves like a father who delights in his son.

Pro 3:13 Happy the person who finds wisdom, the person who acquires understanding;

Pro 3:14 for her profit exceeds that of silver, gaining her is better than gold,

Pro 3:15 she is more precious than pearls—nothing you want can compare with her.

Pro 3:16 Long life is in her right hand, riches and honor in her left.

Pro 3:17 Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace.

Pro 3:18 She is a tree of life to those who grasp her; whoever holds fast to her will be made happy.

Pro 3:19 Adonai by wisdom founded the earth, by understanding he established the heavens,

Pro 3:20 by his knowledge the deep [*springs*] burst open and the dew condenses from the sky.

Pro 3:21 My son, don't let these slip from your sight; preserve common sense and discretion;

Pro 3:22 they will be life for your being and grace for your neck.

Pro 3:23 Then you will walk your way securely, without hurting your foot.

Pro 3:24 When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.

Pro 3:25 Don't be afraid of sudden terror or destruction caused by the wicked, when it comes;

Pro 3:26 for you can rely on Adonai; he will keep your foot from being caught in a trap.

Pro 3:27 Don't withhold good from someone entitled to it when you have in hand the power to do it.

Pro 3:28 Don't tell your neighbor, "Go away! Come another time; I'll give it to you tomorrow," when you have it now.

Pro 3:29 Don't plan harm against your neighbor who lives beside you trustingly.

Pro 3:30 Don't quarrel with someone for no reason, if he has done you no harm.

Pro 3:31 Don't envy a man of violence, don't choose any of his ways;

Pro 3:32 for the perverse is an abomination to Adonai, but he shares his secret counsel with the upright.

Pro 3:33 Adonai's curse is in the house of the wicked, but he blesses the home of the righteous.

Pro 3:34 The scornful he scorns, but gives grace to the humble.

Pro 3:35 The wise win honor, but fools win shame.

Those who find the Wisdom of Adonai are Blessed !!!