

Notes: January 9 2016

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tovv
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Praise and Worship Songs
8. Message
9. Aaronic Blessing
10. Kiddush
11. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction: Spiritual Drift

We are going to look at the life of King Asa, one of the great Kings of Judah. His reign was one of triumph and revival. We will see that He lived his entire life wholeheartedly devoted to Adonai. He didn't fall into idolatry as many Kings before him did and many Kings after him would do. He was in line with Yosiah, Hezekiah and Yosiphat yet is not often remembered as one of Judah's righteous Kings. He sort of gets lost in the shuffle.

So, today, I am looking at the life of Asa as recounted in 2 Chronicles 14 – 16.

2Ch 14:2 (14:1) Asa did what was good and right from the perspective of Adonai his God;

2Ch 14:3 (14:2) for he removed the foreign altars and the high places, smashing the standing-stones and chopping down the sacred poles.

2Ch 14:4 (14:3) He ordered Y'hudah to seek Adonai, the God of their ancestors, and to obey the Torah and the mitzvah.

He commanded the people to obey Torah.

2Ch 14:5 (14:4) He removed the high places and pillars for sun-worship from all the cities of Y'hudah, and under him the kingdom was quiet.

First 10 years quiet, likely referring to battles. The word shakah, translated as quiet, also means to be still, to rest, to be idle. But this doesn't mean that Asa was quiet he wasn't quiet because he was on fire for Adonai. Likewise the nation too was on fire.

What Asa did was the recipe for Spiritual revival...

He removed the idolatrous worship from Y'hudah and brought Torah back, the Word of Adonai.

2Ch 14:6 (14:5) Because the land was quiet, and he had no war during those years, since Adonai had given him rest, he built fortified cities in Y'hudah.

2Ch 14:7 (14:6) "Let's build these cities," he said to Y'hudah; "we'll surround them with walls, towers, gates and bars. The land is there for us to use, because we have sought Adonai our God; we have sought him, and he has given us peace on every side." So they built and prospered.

Y'hudah was in a state of rest due to the hedge of protection provided by Adonai because of Asa's actions and the people's response. Based on what he was doing, Asa could be considered a wise King in that during this time of rest from their enemies he was building and fortifying the land, because one day he knew war was going to come some day...

Likewise Asa built up an army that was ready for whatever was to come...

2Ch 14:8 (14:7) Asa had an army of 300,000 men from Y'hudah, equipped with shields and spears, and another 280,000 from Binyamin, with shields and bows; all were brave, strong men.

And sure enough crisis would come...

2Ch 14:9 (14:8) Zerach the Ethiopian came out to attack them with an army of one million and three hundred chariots. When he arrived at Mareshah,

The Ethiopian army was twice the size of the army of Y'hudah.

Didn't cower, but went out to meet them in battle

2Ch 14:10 (14:9) Asa went out to fight him, and the forces were arranged for battle in the Tz'fat Valley at Mareshah.

Asa's prayer going into battle...

2Ch 14:11 (14:10) Asa cried out to Adonai his God, "Adonai, there is no one besides yourself, strong or weak, who can help. Help us, Adonai our God, because we are relying on you, and we are coming against this vast throng in your name. You are Adonai our God; don't let human beings stop you!"

He sought Adonai before they went into battle.

Our most impassioned prayers are prayers when we are in need. Asa's prayer was no different. Remember this is a man who did what was right in the sight of Adonai. He purged the land of idolatry and made Adonai the center of attention, ultimately decreeing the people to follow the Torah of Adonai.

So, when we get to the battle...

2Ch 14:12 (14:11) So Adonai struck the Ethiopians before Asa and Y'hudah, and the Ethiopians fled.

2Ch 14:13 (14:12) Asa and the army with him pursued them to G'rar, and the Ethiopians were defeated beyond recovery; they were shattered before Adonai and his army, who carried off much spoil.

Asa, as King was doing everything a righteous King was to do and the nation prospered.

In chapter 15 Asa is visited by a Prophet of Adonai...

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!"

A positive message from the Prophet...He told Asa...

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

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."

Oded was telling Asa to be strong. This was a word of encouragement. It isn't often that a Prophet would bring a Word of encouragement. Prophets usually brought warnings for repentance.

This message given by Oded is consistent with the other Prophets – Seek Him and you will find Him. Turn away from Him and He will turn away from you. Return to Him and He will return to you. Yeshua conveys much the same message...

Mat 6:33 But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

With this Word of encouragement from Oded, more and greater reform was perpetuated by Asa

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).

Israel is shrinking while Judah is growing

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

Another Shavuot revival like Acts 2

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.

You will have no other God's before Me.

Complacency is a dangerous place to be.

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.

Is Asa resting on his laurels. Is he coasting.

Were the people...

All is good. I would call this a mountain top moment.

No, He didn't rest or coast...

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.

He expelled his grandmother because she was idolatrous.

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

Yet he didn't do anything further in the northern Tribes of Israel.

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.

Through his 35th year as King there was no more war.

Asa never turned away from God, never in to idolatry.

Asa is on fire for Adonai.

In the 36th year.

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.

What was the reason for the wall being built by Israel. It is a similar problem we are having today but the flow is in the opposite direction.

The walls being built were not meant to keep out people but were meant to keep people in. To keep them in Israel. Judah was being inundated with people from the Northern Tribes, who sought Adonai.

Remember the silver and gold that came in...well it went out too...

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."

You can have all this silver and gold if you break the covenant

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.

What didn't Asa do?

Asa is now visited by another Prophet...Hanani

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."

God is saying "why did you depend on them and not on Me?"

You thought you were using wisdom and in essence you were being foolish.

What was Asa's response...

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.

Asa's response is not uncommon. Many times, those who were anointed by Adonai with a Word.

Now we get to his 39th year.

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.

He didn't seek Adonai, but 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.

What happened to Asa?

25 years ago he was on fire for Adonai. He was powerful and did everything right

Many years of peace and victory.

An army of one million people were defeated by an army half the size.

Asa brought revival not only to Judah but also to parts of Israel.

A revival lasting for decades, impacting the nation and the Northern Tribes.

But when we see Asa in the 36th year, he isn't the same man we saw earlier.

He was relying on his position and not the one who put him in that position.

He was inflicted with disease and didn't seek Adonai but his physicians.

He is a shell of his former self.

What happened to Asa?

He didn't fall into sin.

He didn't fall into idolatry

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

He was wholehearted with Adonai throughout his life – committed.

So, what happened?

You're either growing spiritually because you have a strong deliberation and effort to be with Adonai

or

You're drifting spiritually away from Adonai because of spiritual neglect and complacency

You are either growing spiritually or declining spiritually you cannot remain stagnant or neutral in your relationship with Adonai.

Spiritual Drift is a place of spiritual sluggishness, We are distracted. We are not taking spiritual matters seriously.

Are you in the “used to club”?

When we compromise with the world we are drifting away from Adonai.

Pride enters in and we gradually move away and we don't even realize it.

We are letting the world influence us as believers. I believe we need to be reminded on a regular basis...

Light and darkness cannot cohabitate...

Joh 1:5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not suppressed it.

The light is stronger than the darkness, not the other way around, yet we are seeing darkness drift into the body of Messiah. Believers are Spiritually Drifting.

There is a tolerance that is viewed as being compassionate, yet compassion, in reality, is actually acceptance for what Adonai calls sin. I have talked about this in the past where congregations are in essence throwing out the Word of Adonai and allowing the world to influence their ways. Israel is no stranger to this very dangerous and subtle tactic of the adversary. In essence throwing Adonai out and erecting altars to other gods. The prince of this world has become a god to many, not only outside the body of Messiah but also inside the body of Messiah.

You can even call Spiritual Drift a plague. When going unchecked it spreads like a cancer, it engulfs all things healthy with disease.

There is Spiritual Drift in the body of Messiah. There is Spiritual Drift in this congregation.

Asa drifted Spiritually. He was with Adonai his entire life, but began to rely less on Him and more on the king of Aram and his physicians. He in essence put others in front of Adonai. Are you putting others in front of Adonai?

How can we overcome Spiritual Drift?

It doesn't matter what age you are or how long you have been a believer and follower of Yeshua.

If you recognize that you are Spiritually Drifting, you need to fight it. You need to have the tenacity of Ya'akov when He wrestled with Adonai.

You need to get back to the basics.

Feed your spirit. Spiritual Drift occurs when we deprive our spirit of the things it needs.

Get back into the Word of Adonai.

Get back into fellowship with like minded people and with Adonai.

Get back into prayer – communicate with Him.

Get rid of all sin – don't compromise

Seek God – cry out to Him

Heb 2:1 Therefore, we must pay much more careful heed to the things we have heard, so that we will not drift away.

Do you have the heart of David?

Psa 101:1 *[A psalm of David:]* I am singing of grace and justice; I am singing to you, Adonai.

Psa 101:2 I will follow the path of integrity; when will you come to me? I will run my life with a sincere heart inside my own house.

Psa 101:3 I will not allow before my eyes any shameful thing. I hate those who act crookedly; what they do does not attract me.

Psa 101:4 Deviousness will depart from me; I will not tolerate evil.

Psa 101:5 If someone slanders another in secret, I will cut him off. Haughty eyes and proud hearts I cannot abide.

Psa 101:6 I look to the faithful of the land, so that they can be my companions; those who live lives of integrity can be servants of mine.

Psa 101:7 No deceitful person can live in my house; no liar can be my advisor.

Psa 101:8 Every morning I will destroy all the wicked of the land, cutting off all evildoers from the city of Adonai.