



Week 2: 2 Chronicles 16:1-14

RETURN TO BROKENNESS

Nearly six decades have passed since Solomon's death, and the Jewish people have endured the fracturing of a once-united kingdom under Solomon's son and successor, Rehoboam. What remains is the kingdom of Judah to the South, centered around Jerusalem's throne of David, while the northern tribes declare themselves as Israel. King Asa, Rehoboam's descendant, ascends the throne and gradually steers the people away from dependence on the Lord. Initially victorious against the Ethiopians by trusting in God, Asa's subsequent turn to seeking aid from the king of Aram marks a pivotal shift, leading to disastrous consequences as his trust in human intervention overtakes his faith in the Lord.

THE SCRIPTURE: 2 CHRONICLES 16:1-14

¹In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. ²Then Asa took silver and gold from the treasures of the house of the LORD and the king's house and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Syria, who lived in Damascus, saying, ³"There is a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Behold, I am sending to you silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me." ⁴And 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. ⁵And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah and let his work cease. ⁶Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them he built Geba and Mizpah. ⁷At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped you."

⁸ Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the LORD, he gave them into your hand. 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." ¹⁰ Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the stocks in prison, for he was in a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties upon some of the people at the same time. ¹¹ The acts of Asa, from first to last, are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ¹² In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased in his feet, and his disease became severe. Yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but sought help from physicians. ¹³ And Asa slept with his fathers, dying in the forty-first year of his reign. ¹⁴ They buried him in the tomb that he had cut for himself in the city of David. They laid him on a bier that had been filled with various kinds of spices prepared by the perfumer's art, and they made a very great fire in his honor.

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LIFEGROUP QUESTIONS: WEEK 2

OPENING QUESTIONS

1. Can you recall a time when you relied on your own strength or skills rather than trusting in an expert? What happened?
2. Do you think things like having access to a lot of money, or power influence the way we follow Jesus? Why or why not?

DIVING DEEPER

3. Read 2 Chronicles 14:9-12 for some background on King Asa. What was the conflict that Asa faced in these verses, and how did he choose to face it? What was the result?
4. Read also 2 Chronicles 15:1-7. What does Azariah the prophet, promise to Asa, and how does the king respond in the following verses?
5. As you read 2 Chronicles 16, many individuals are mentioned. To help you sort through the names, use the chart below, and give a brief description of each person.

Asa	
Baasha	
Ben-haddad	
Hanani	

6. Briefly, and using your own words, summarize the storyline of 2 Chronicles 16:1-6.
7. Compare Asa's actions in verses 1-6, with his earlier response to crises? What has changed, and why?

8. How can we guard ourselves against pride and self-reliance, especially during times of prosperity and power?
9. A second prophet, Hanani, visits King Asa in verse 7. What message does he bring and how does the king respond in this instance?
10. What does this sentence in verse 9 mean: "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."? Is this meant to be a comforting statement, or an unsettling one?
11. Consider 2 Chronicles 16:12. How is Asa's trust in the Lord visibly diminishing? Does this verse teach that we should not seek medical care?
12. Asa placed his trust in foreign armies and physicians. How could you apply the principles of this passage to your life?