

CbC to May 16

May 10 Su Reading B130 — 1 Kings 15 — Asa and Baasha

Audio: [1 Kings 15 \(ESV\)](#)

A Lasting Legacy — The early kings of God’s people covered so far are Saul, David, Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijam, Asa, and Jehoshaphat. It is very significant that David was the stated standard for all who followed him. In today’s chapter, we see the three-year reign of the unfaithful King Abijam, whose *“heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father”* (v. 3). King Asa, who reigned for 41 years, *“did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as David his father had done”* (v. 11). A good king and a bad king were both compared to David, whose heart was right with God. David was the standard for others, and so are we. Each of us is building a legacy that will last for generations. How will we be remembered? The northern tribes of Israel had a different standard of comparison: Jeroboam. His son, Nadab, reigned for only two years and *“walked in the way of his father”* (v. 25). Israel’s next king, Baasha, reigned for 24 years, but he also *“walked in the way of Jeroboam”* (v. 34). Jeroboam was the negative standard for Israel for many years to come.

May 11 M Reading B131 — 2 Chron. 13 — Abijah Defeats Jeroboam

Audio: [2 Chron. 13 \(ESV\)](#)

Faith Wins — Today’s reading records a very significant war that was apparently initiated by King Jeroboam of Israel, coming with twice the size of Judah’s army led by King Abijah (also called Abijam in 1 Kings 15). Bravely, and with faith, Abijah stood up to Jeroboam. Yesterday, we read that Abijah *“was not wholly true to the LORD”* (1 Kings 15:3), but in today’s reading he claims that *“we have not forsaken him”* (v. 10). Both statements are true; Judah continued to worship Yahweh even though they had also included worship of some foreign gods. Jeroboam, on the other hand, completely rejected the worship of Yahweh when he substituted the two golden calves and set up his own priesthood to make offerings to them. King Abijah showed real faith in his speech when he told Jeroboam that *“you cannot succeed”* (v. 12) because he had rejected God completely and was depending on his calf idols that were *“not gods”* (v. 9). He was right because *“God defeated Jeroboam ... [and] Judah prevailed, because they relied on the LORD”* (vv. 15, 18). Abijah wasn’t perfect, but neither are we. We must not let our times of failing lead us to walk away from God. Continue to trust Him!

May 12 Tu Reading B132 — 2 Chron. 14 — Asa and Ethiopia

Audio: [2 Chron. 14 \(ESV\)](#)

Desperate Prayer — Yesterday, we read about Judah’s King Abijah, with 400,000 soldiers, soundly defeating Israel’s 800,000, because he trusted in Yahweh (13:3). Today, we see a very similar victory of King Asa over the Ethiopians’ much larger army. This time, it was because he prayed to the Lord. King Asa had a great beginning: *“Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God ... and commanded Judah to seek the LORD ... and to keep the law”* (14:2, 4). His prayer showed desperation and trust: *“O LORD, there is none like you to help... Help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on you... O LORD, you are our God; let not man prevail against you”* (v. 11). God’s response was quick and overwhelming: *“So the LORD defeated the Ethiopians ... and the Ethiopians fled ... until none remained alive, for they were broken before the LORD ... for the fear of the LORD was upon them”* (vv. 12-14). Do you remember a time when you were in a situation that seemed hopeless? Did you remember to pray? Did you expect God to answer with a victory for you? Did He? We sometimes tend to think that God’s power is stuck in the Old Testament. It isn’t! The New Testament tells us to *“take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day”* (Eph. 6:13). God is still willing to fight for us and give us victories, but we must ask Him in prayer and trust Him in faith.

Seeking Seriously — Azariah, an otherwise unknown prophet, brought this message of commitment to King Asa: “*The LORD is with you while you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you*” (v. 2). It was a simple principle: God’s help is related to our commitment. When troubles pile up in our lives, we should ask ourselves, “Have I backed away from my commitment to God?” King Asa and his people responded quickly: “*As soon as Asa heard these words... [they] put away the detestable idols ... repaired the altar of the LORD (v. 8) ... sacrificed to the LORD (v. 11) ... entered into a covenant to seek the LORD (v. 12) ... [and] swore an oath to the LORD*” (v. 14). They immediately began to do what was right. They also responded enthusiastically, seeking God “*with all their heart and with all their soul*” (v. 12, cf. 15). News of this spiritual change in the south drew faithful Jews from the northern kingdom: “*... great numbers had deserted to him from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him*” (v. 9). When God’s people seek Him with enthusiasm, things change around them and it influences others to follow Him. Let’s seek Him today “*with all [our] heart and with all [our] soul.*”

Keep on Trusting! — Overall, King Asa was a good king, but his spiritual stature deteriorated late in his life, and like Solomon before him, he did not finish well. This chapter first describes his error in making a covenant with Syria, bribing them with the gold and silver from God’s temple in Jerusalem (v. 2). He did not respect what belonged to the Lord, and he did not rely on God to remove the threat caused by Israel’s king building the fortified city of Ramah on the main road to Jerusalem (see map from the ESV Study Bible). Too often, we Christians also seek human help before asking God for supernatural help. God didn’t like it, and He sent the prophet Hanani to rebuke King Asa for not trusting Yahweh. The all-seeing “*eyes of the LORD*” saw that Asa’s heart was not blameless (v. 9), which was demonstrated when “*Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the stocks in prison ... [and] inflicted cruelties upon some of the people at the same time*” (v. 10). What kind of an old person would you like to be? Don’t deteriorate! Keep trusting God!



Against the Trend — We read yesterday about Hanani, the prophet imprisoned by Judah’s King Asa because he had criticized the king’s dependance on Syria for protection against Israel’s threats. Today, we read about Hanani’s son, Jehu, who perhaps fled to the northern kingdom of Israel to prophesy against their king, Baasha, that God would wipe out his family for following the wicked way Jeroboam had ruled. Baasha’s rule would last for 24 years and his son’s for only two years, before being wiped out by Zimri’s rule of a mere seven days (v. 15). Israel’s army commander, Omri, then took over for 12 years, and his dynasty lasted for over 100 years. He was the one who built the city of Samaria (v. 24), which lasted for over 160 years. It is interesting that Omri “*did more evil than all who were before him*” (v. 25) and his son, Ahab, “*did evil ... more than all who were before him*” (v. 30). Like father, like son—but worse. That is the natural trend of mankind. We have a sinful nature, and we tend to drift in the direction of evil. For that reason, we must go against that trend and carefully and constantly guide our young children to follow the narrow path of righteousness.

First Things First — Chronicles has much more to say about King Jehoshaphat than does 2 Kings. He was a godly and courageous leader. Today's chapter emphasizes two positive qualities of Jehoshaphat, whose name means "Yahweh has judged." His first strength was that he "*sought the God of his father and walked in his commandments*" (v. 4). He sought God and obeyed Him. The same verse states the result of his actions: "*The LORD was with Jehoshaphat.*" His ancestor, David, had written earlier, "*The LORD looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God*" (Psa. 14:2). God is still looking for people who will seek and obey Him. Jehoshaphat's second strength was teaching the Law of God: "*...he sent his officials ... to teach in the cities of Judah; and with them the Levites ... and ... the priests ... they taught in Judah, having the Book of the Law of the LORD with them*" (2 Chron. 17:7-9). God's response to this action was to give Jehoshaphat strength and protection: "*...the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were around Judah, and they made no war ... and Jehoshaphat grew steadily greater*" (v. 10, 12). Jehoshaphat knew what was of most importance and he put first things first: he sought and obeyed God and he shared His Word. Those priorities ought to be ours as well.