

Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2025.10.05

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Sermon recordings

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Speaker-AM: Steve Helterbrand

Title: Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt

Recording:



Speaker-PM: Patrick Hite

Title: Nature of Truth

Recording:



Do not fear, for I am with you,
do not be afraid, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the
way and the truth and the
life. No one comes to the
Father except through me.’”

— John 14:6

Article

Lessons from Asa, 10/5/2025 By Josh Vinyard

"For the eyes of the Lord roam throughout the earth, so that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His." These are the words of the prophet Hanani the seer to King Asa of Judah shortly after he failed to seek God when Baasha king of Israel threatened some of Judah's cities. These words are followed with the words, "you have acted foolishly in this."

If you read about the life of Asa, he had not always acted foolishly. In fact, in the sixty-three verses about Asa, we find out he was a good king, and he did what was right in the sight of the Lord. He removed idols, kicked the cult prostitutes out of Israel, knocked down idolatrous memorials, encouraged some from Israel to defect to Judah, and he even fired his momma from the position of queen mother. He not only fought against eliminating the evil around him, but he also commanded Judah to add God back into their lives by keeping the Law and being faithful to God (2 Chron. 14:2). We see his positive influence with the people when he led the people to renew their covenant with God in a scene much like the one at Sinai (2 Chron. 15:12). A visit from Azariah the prophet and the encouragement to be strong and courageous (1 Chron. 15:7) sound like the encouragement God gave Joshua before his many battles in the conquest of Canaan. Asa was brave and didn't really care who he offended for doing what was right...even if it was his sinful momma. He just did what was right.

What would cause him to act so foolishly? The Scriptures don't tell us that exactly. We know that he did seek God before his first battle against Zerah the Ethiopian. The mighty Zerah came to battle with 1 million soldiers and 300 chariots (the OT version of a tank), and Asa went into battle with God and 300,000 men who had swords and spears. Asa was outnumbered by almost 3 to 1 and knows he can't win this battle on his own. He takes the advice of Solomon (1 Chron. 6:14) and he prays to God, "Lord, there is no one besides You to help in the battle between the powerful and those who have no strength; help us, Lord our God, for we trust in You" (1 Chron. 14:11). God helps him win this battle, and there is peace for Asa and his people.

Some twenty years pass for Asa, and instead of seeking God, he takes some treasure from the house of the Lord and gets Benhadad of Aram to do his work for him. The Scriptures teach us that the plan worked flawlessly, but God rebukes Asa. The consequence is severe, and Asa will be at war for the rest of his time as king.

So, what can we learn from this context and the pronouncement, "For the eyes of the Lord roam throughout the earth, so that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His."

1. God wants to strongly support those hearts that are completely His. Asa sought out God when it was hard, and the odds were stacked against him. He was devoted to Him and God supported Him in his battles.
2. God wants to show Himself strong on the behalf of those whose hearts are completely His. Later, when the enemy wasn't near as strong, he just decided to come up with an idea on his own and just leave God out of it. He didn't allow God to show His strength.
3. It could be that the lesson is that God wants us to seek Him first and not be left out of the battle plans. If you read through the book of Joshua, it is hard to miss that God wants to fight our battles for us. The hard part is letting Him fight the little ones as well as the big ones.
4. Perhaps, this is telling us that Asa's heart was not right or completely devoted to God at this point in his life. Maybe he had lost that devotion to God in the twenty years that had passed since he decisively defeated the Ethiopians.

The rest of Asa's story is a very sad one. Asa was angry at this news and put the prophet who gave him bad news in prison, and he also started to be mean to some other people around him. He was the first in a long line of folks who persecuted the prophets. Here was this king who was a good man. He tore down altars and hated false worship. Now, someone comes to tell him that he did wrong, and God is upset with you. Asa isn't sorry. Asa doesn't repent. He throws the man of God in prison. A few years later, he is crippled and instead of seeking God to help him for his crippled feet, God points out that he seeks out the physicians first. God gave Asa another opportunity to seek Him first and he did not do it.

In Zachariah chapter four, the people were to rebuild the temple but notice what God tells them through Zachariah the prophet, "For who has shown contempt for the day of small things? But these seven will rejoice when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel—they are the eyes of the Lord roaming throughout the earth" (Zachariah 4:10). Here are almost the same words that Hanani told Asa. When Zerubbabel laid the foundation, what did most people think? They thought, that is nothing. That is terrible. That doesn't look like the old Temple.

God just says, shhh, shhhh shhhh – be quiet!

Do you despise the days of small things? Do you not understand what I can do with a weak person like Zerubbabel? Or a weak foundation like that? Do you not know that I can take an army of 300,000 led by Asa and take down an army of a million?

Maybe it sounds like this. Did you know that God can take a small group of Christians who have completely given their hearts to Him and save lots of lost souls? Did you know that that guilt you have from your past sins, I can take all of that away. Did you know that my eyes are wandering the earth looking for those who will allow the Lord to be strong in their lives?

God wants our hearts to be completely devoted to Him! He wants that heart to want to seek Him first when it gets hard for us. He wants to show Himself strong in our lives! Will we let him? If we do, we can have success like Asa and hopefully avoid his mistakes.