

Lesson # 3 -- The Prayer of Asa - the Prayer for Deliverance.

Introduction

- A. One of the clearest expressions of our faith, love and hope is in prayer.
- B. Many of the trials which come into our lives are allowed so we may more fully learn to depend on God, I Peter 1:7,8.
- C. God exhorts us to call upon Him in our trials, so He may deliver us, and glorify Himself in our lives, Psalm 50:15; II Cor. 1:3,4. He delights in our prayers, Proverbs 15:8.
- D. King Asa, one of the 8 good kings of Judah, is an illustration of the importance and place of prayer. When he was attacked by Zerah, who led Egypt in battle against Judah, Asa cried out to God in prayer.  
II Chronicles 14-16

I. The Object of His Prayer, II Chronicles 14:11a.

A. Asa, an Old Testament believer, prayed to the LORD his God.

- 1. Christianity is a personal relationship between God and the saint. This is most clearly seen in prayer.
- 2. Prayer is not an emotional, contentless, irrational cry for help. Prayer has a clearly defined object. Asa prayed to the LORD God.

a. The two names used by Asa in his prayer are highly significant.

- 1). LORD is the King James translation of the Hebrew "Yahweh". It is "Jehovah" in the Revised Version. This name is probably taken from the verb "to become" and signifies that God will become whatever His people need to fulfill His will.
- 2). God is the translation of "Elohim". This declares God to be Supreme, Eternal and Almighty.

b. God describes Himself in His greatness to encourage us to pray.

Isaiah 42:5-8 --

Isaiah 45:1-8,18,19 --

c. One of the most serious complaints God brings against His people is that they have not called upon Him.

Psalm 81:8-16 --

Jeremiah 2:5-19 --

- B. There is a great principle here. In praying we are trusting God as the Infinite Person that He is. We are entrusting ourselves and our needs to Him. We are putting our confidence and faith in Him to meet us as His will may be. And, we are deriving even the strength of our faith from God Himself.

## II. The Content of His Prayer.

### A. The recognition of God's sovereignty, II Chronicles 14:11b.

1. This principle of prayer was clearly stated and understood by Asa. God is all-powerful and in absolute control of all things.
2. David understood this principle and it was the basis of his attack on Goliath, I Samuel 17:26-47.
3. Jehoshaphat practiced this truth, II Chronicles 20:14-23.
4. When we measure our doubt and prayerlessness with God's offer of His sovereignty - we understand how profoundly we are sinners.

### B. The rest in God's presence. II Chronicles 14:11c.

1. Prayer is answered by God - not by our finite manipulation.
2. Asa correctly expressed the true meaning of faith, ". . . we rest on Thee . . . . "
3. This "rest" or reliance on God is not passivity. It is an aggressive appropriation of the promises of God whereby we choose to trust God fully and to maintain that trust in spite of feelings and circumstances.
  - a. God has promised His people this rest, Hebrews 3:7-4:16.
  - b. Abraham exemplified this rest in the birth of Isaac, Romans 4:17-21; and also in his sacrifice, Hebrews 11:17-19.

### C. The response to God's revelation and provision, II Chronicles 14:11d.

1. Asa recognized and practiced the truth that the battle between Judah and the Egyptians was not his but God's.
2. Therefore, he went to battle as God's representative - confident of victory.
3. David went against Goliath in the name of the Lord, I Samuel 17:45.
4. God has promised to be with those who gather in His name, Matthew 18:20; we have been given authority over Satan through His name, Luke 10:17-20; we are exhorted to pray in His name, John 14:13,14; 16:23-26; we are instructed to serve in His name, Revelation 2:3; and, to live and serve in harmony with His name, Revelation 2:13.

D. The request regarding God's reputation, II Chronicles 14:11e.

1. Asa here puts the above principles into a request that God would defeat the Egyptians.
2. It would appear, since no man can prevail against God, that King Asa is thinking of God's reputation. What would people think of the True and Living God if the Egyptians won? The impression they would gain would be incorrect.
3. Moses reminded the Lord of this when He threatened to wipe out the Israelites because of their sin, Exodus 32:12; Numbers 14:13,14.
4. When God's people have been defeated or have failed, due to sin, God states that He will vindicate His holy name, I Kings 9:7-9; Ezekiel 20:9; 36:21,22,32.
5. It is tragic but true - we can cause God's name to be blasphemed by our sin, II Samuel 12:14; Romans 2:24.

III. The Answer to His Prayer, II Chronicles 14:12-15.

- A. The immediate army of the Egyptians was defeated, Vs 12,13.
- B. God placed His fear upon the Egyptians and Asa was thus able to take the cities far to the South of Judah, Vs 14,15.

IV. The Promise Related to His Prayer.

- A. The promise stated, II Chronicles 15:1-7.

Continual obedience and seeking of God's face will bring His strength and reward.

- B. The promise summarized, II Chronicles 15:1-7.

1. Asa was confronted with King Baasha of Israel making an attempt to fortify the city of Ramah so he could control the flow of traffic into Judah. Asa responded to this threat by buying the help of Benhadad, king of Syria. He is rebuked by Hanani the prophet.
2. The prophet summarized God's promise, II Chronicles 16:9.
  - a. God is looking for those to whom He can show Himself strong.
  - b. The qualification is a perfect heart.
    - 1). This is not a demand to be sinlessly perfect, II Chron. 15:17.
    - 2). The qualification refers to recognizing, in attitude and action that there is one God and giving Him His rightful place in one's life, Exodus 20:1-7; Colossians 1:18. The promise is made to all such believers.

c. Those who qualify for this promise need only to implement it, to mix it with faith, in prayer and the daily life.

1). This is what Asa did in regard to Zerah and the Egyptians and this is what he did not do in regard to Baasha and the Israelites.

2). King Asa serves as an illustration to us, both of an example of faith and an example of unbelief.

#### Conclusion

A. We must ask as to whether we qualify to claim the promises of God.

B. We must then ask as to whether we are claiming the promises of God in honest prayers of faith, love and hope. True faith cannot be separated from action.