

1. Only 2 more weeks of LifeLines - we'll resume after Easter!
2. LifeLines for 2/13 will be Psalm 90:12.

LifeLines February 6, 2023

Today's Scripture: 1 Verse

2 Chronicles 16:9

**For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the entire earth
To strengthen those whose heart is true to Him.
You have done foolishly in this & now you will be at war.**

WHY WE'RE HERE

2 Timothy 3:16-17, All scripture is inspired by God & is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, & for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

CONTEXT

Asa was a son of King David & reigned 41 year in Jerusalem. For a long time he did "what was right in the sight of the Lord," but on this occasion he sought help from allies instead of from God. God sent the prophet Hanani to confront King Asa, & Asa was angry with him for speaking so forthrightly. In fact, Asa put Hanani in prison & even oppressed some of the people. Our verse as recorded in the Message Bible, which is a translation, assists with the context, so we'll read that before the other translations & versions.

(Asa was an interesting guy & started his reign on a high note. He even removed his mother as queen mother because she made images to false gods & idols! 1 Kings 15:13.)

DIFFERENT VERSIONS (Versions not listed are similar to the NRSV.)

MSG

Just after that, Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah & said, "Because you went for help to the king of Aram & didn't ask God for help, you've lost a victory over the army of Aram. Didn't the Ethiopians & Libyans come against you with superior forces, completely outclassing you with their chariots &

cavalry? But you asked God for help & He gave you the victory. God is always on the alert, constantly on the lookout for people who are totally committed to Him. You were foolish to go for human help when you could have had God's help. Now you're in trouble – one round of war after another.”

EV (Contemporary English Version)

The Lord is constantly watching everyone, & He gives strength to those who faithfully obey Him. But you have done a foolish thing, & your kingdom will never be at peace again.

ESV

For the eyes of the Lord run to & 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.)

GW (God's Word Translation)

The Lord's eyes scan the whole world to find those whose hearts are committed to Him & to strengthen them. You acted foolishly in this matter. So from now on, *you* will have to fight wars. (*Italics are mine.*)

NCV (New Century Version)

The Lord searches all the earth for people who have given themselves completely to Him. He wants to make them strong. Asa, you did a foolish thing, so from now on you will have wars.

NIRV (New International Reader's Version)

The Lord looks out over the whole earth. He gives strength to those who commit their lives completely to Him. You have done a foolish thing. From now on you will be at war.

NIV

For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him. You have done a foolish thing, & from now on you will be at war.

NKJV

For the eyes of the Lord run to & fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. In this you have done foolishly; therefore from now on you shall have wars.

NLT (New Living Translation)

The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him. What a fool you have been! From now on you will be at war.

TLB

For the eyes of the Lord search back & forth across the whole earth, looking for people whose hearts are perfect toward Him, so that He can show His great power in helping them. What a fool you have been! From now on you shall have wars.

SELAH

BREAKING DOWN THE VERSE

For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the entire earth... Because God is omnipresent & omniscient, He is everywhere, sees everything & knows everything. Nothing escapes His notice. He is actively searching, watching unceasingly for occasions to help His faithful who have a heart for Him. To those He will show His strength.

to strengthen those whose heart is true to Him... God seeks those who will trust & obey even when they feel afraid. He is looking for those who rely on Him & know that they gain strength & wisdom from Him. God is on our side when we are humble, true to Him & seeking to do His will. When He sees devoted, committed, trusting, sincere, faithful, loyal followers who are upright in heart, He will support them, protect them, defend them & offer them grace.

God knows that His plans for us are good, even when we forget or question. He knows we'll be increasingly blessed as we move through any obstacles because we'll have His help. He promises blessings. He's looking for those who are ready for the next assignment, who will do His will, who are waiting for a word or for direction. A firm, lively faith brings us near to God & unites us to Him.

God is waiting to instruct our hearts & empower our obedience. He wants to enlarge our territory (remember Jabez?) & prosper us. Will He find what He's looking for in us?

You have done foolishly in this... Asa's faith floundered as pride in his own accomplishments grew. He stopped acknowledging God & thanking Him for the victories He enabled Asa to enjoy. Instead of trusting God, Asa decided to reach out to others, serving his own interests. Of course, this resulted in God's displeasure. God doesn't like being *distrusted*.

The world does the same thing to us. It teaches us to be independent & strong in our flesh. Most of us have faced the choice of accomplishing things in our own will or of submitting to God's will. Asa discovered too late that his trust was misplaced. We can't give lip service to God with outward worship if our inner worship isn't sincere.

& now you will be at war... The peace Asa hoped to secure through worldly ways would not be permanent for Judah. The chronicler, having finished his report on Asa's reign, drew that portion of history to a close.

SELAH

RELATED VERSES (Add other related verses as you think of them.)

1 Samuel 13:13-14a, Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which He commanded you. The Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever, but now your kingdom will not continue;

2 Samuel 24:10 (Background for this is 1 Chronicles 21:1, "Satan stood up against Israel & incited David to count the people of Israel." This displeased God who saw David's actions as prideful & self-reliant.) *But afterward, David was stricken to the heart because he had numbered the people. David said to the Lord, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done, But now, O Lord, I pray You, take away the guilt of Your servant; for I have done very foolishly."* (Verses 11-25 tell the rich conclusion of this story.)

1 Kings 15:11, Asa did what was right in the sight of the Lord, as his father David had done.

1 Chronicles 16:11, Seek the Lord & His strength, seek His Presence continually.

2 Chronicles 16:11-13, The acts of Asa, from first to last, are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah & Israel. In the 39th year of his reign Asa was diseased in his feet, & his disease became severe; yet even in his disease he did not seek the Lord, but sought help from physicians. Then Asa slept with his ancestors, dying in the 41st year of his reign.

2 Chronicles 25:7-8, But a Man of God came to him & said, “O king (Amaziah), do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the Lord is not with Israel – all these Ephraimites. Rather, go by yourself & act; be strong in battle, or God will fling you down before the enemy; for God has power to help or to overthrow.

Psalms 33:13-15, The Lord looks down from heaven; He sees all humankind. From where He sits enthroned He watches all the inhabitants of the earth - He who fashions the hearts of them all, & observes all their deeds.

Psalms 33:18-21, Truly the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him, on those who hope in His steadfast love, to deliver their soul from death & to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help & shield, Our heart is glad in Him, because we trust in His holy name.

Psalms 34:15, The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, & His ears are open to their cry.

Psalms 105:4, Seek the Lord & His strength, seek His Presence continually.

Psalms 121:4, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

Isaiah 40:28-29, Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, & strengthens the powerless.

Isaiah 41:10, 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.

Jeremiah 16:17, For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My Presence, nor is their iniquity concealed from My sight.

Zechariah 4:10c, (This is part of a prophecy.) “These seven are the eyes of the Lord, which range through the whole earth.”

Luke 1:37, For nothing will be impossible with God.

Romans 15:4, For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness & by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.

2 Corinthians 12:10, Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, & calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

Ephesians 3:16-19, I pray that, according to the riches of His glory, He may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through His Spirit, & that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted & grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is breadth & length & height & depth, & to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Philippians 4:13, I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Hebrews 4:12-13, Indeed, the Word of God is living & active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts & intentions of the heart. And before Him no creature is hidden, but all are naked & laid bare to the eyes of the One to whom we must render an account.

SUMMARY

The story of Asa is often referred to as *Asa's Folly*. King Asa reigned well until he succumbed to pride & complacency. When Israel's life of ease was threatened, he sought help from man rather than turning his trust back to God. God had proved Himself faithful, yet Asa sought human ways, self-sufficiency & independence. The prophet Hanani's message was warranted.

God looks for ways to defend true believers who will thank Him for the victories He enables, who are committed to Him & trust in Him, who worship Him in Spirit & in truth. He loves us & looks for ways to support us & show that love. He wants us to be entirely His.

CONCLUSION

God is our Rock, Supply, Source, Defender, Strength & Song. His eyes & ears are open to us. God watches over all of humanity. He is especially zealous about His people, His chosen. At times when we feel lonely or weak, God surprises us by showing up! He has placed His Holy Spirit in believers. He brings wisdom & mercy to help us carry on, supporting us all the way. He knows His own & reveals Himself to those who are truly committed. What experiences like this have you had?

He looks for those who are dependent on Him. Too often we exhaust all the worldly help – the government, bank balance, earthly relationships, our skills, even our winning personality – all the worldly avenues of hope, turning to the Lord as a last resort. We must guard against trusting anything *more than* we trust God. We are foolish to go for human help when God is a breath away.

Regardless of age, status, experience, let's be sure we leave this world as those who finish well through our thankful, whole-hearted devotion to God. May our hearts be perfect toward Him.

The eyes of the Lord are still searching for those whose heart is completely His. May our hearts be perfect toward God, so that... by grace through faith, Christ may be formed in us.

Let this verse be a *LifeLine* for you!
Let's Continue Learning!

SCRIPTURE IS OUR –
LifeLine!