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9-1-2022

GOD AND SEXUAL PERVERSION – LESSON 6

KING ASA

We saw yesterday in 1 Kings 14 how God judged David's grandson and successor to the throne. Rehoboam was judged for idolatry and for the rampant sodomy (homosexuality) that he permitted throughout the southern kingdom. When he died, his son Abijam became king. Abijam continued all the sins of Rehoboam during his short reign of three years before his death. 1 Kings 15 carries this story. In verse 4 something remarkable is said.

Verse 4 says that because Abijam's great grandfather, King David, was a righteous king that God would give Abijam ***"a lamp in Jerusalem"*** by setting up his son following him to bring the light of God to Judah. That "lamp" was Abijah's son Asa, who was David's great-great grandson.

Verse 11 says that ***"Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father.*** (His great-great grandfather.)" God blessed Asa with the longest reign of any of the kings, forty-one years.

What are some of the things Asa did? One was that he removed his pagan queen mother from her royal position and destroyed her idols. He also restored all the gold, silver, and sanctified vessels to the temple that had been taken by Shishak and Egypt during the reign of his grandfather Rehoboam. He removed all the idols that his fathers before him had made.

Verse 12 speaks of one of his most noteworthy actions. It says, ***"And he took away the sodomites out of the land..."*** Asa was the first of three kings of Judah who were commended by God for doing this by following God's commandment in Deuteronomy 23:17-18.

It is interesting in verse 14 that it says, "But the high places were not removed. Nevertheless, Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD (Jehovah) all his days." This was the greatest affirmation Asa could have received from God.

But you may ask about a criticism regarding the high places. What was that really about?

The "high places" were not the "groves" of idol worship. They were places generally on a high hill, where altars of stone were erected for the worship of Jehovah long before Solomon built the Temple in Jerusalem. David had moved the tabernacle, a temporary structure, from Shechem to Jerusalem, but there was no permanent temple at that time. During the United Kingdom of Israel's twelve tribes, Jerusalem was such a long journey for many of them (as much as three days) that altars were established where they could go to sacrifice and worship Jehovah. These existed during the time of Samuel, Saul, David and into Solomon's reign.

In Deuteronomy 12:5, 11-14, God had foretold there would be a city and a place where they would go to sacrifice and worship. This was fulfilled as we see in 2 Chronicles 7:12 with

Solomon's temple built in Jerusalem. Once built, the temple in Jerusalem became the proper place for worship.

Asa did not force people to do a one-way journey of two or three days for their worship. He allowed them to go to the long-established altars closer to their homes. The worship places were still dedicated to Jehovah. Asa still had his heart in the right place. He put away the perversion from the land.