

# When a King Repents

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple sources)

## Introduction:

A. Lessons from the Reign of King Asa - 1Kings 15:8-24

B. Background

1. Asa was the third king of the Kingdom of Judah and the fifth king of the House of David. He was the son of Abijam, grandson of Rehoboam, and great-grandson of Solomon.
2. He reigned 41 years between 913-910 BC to 873-869 BC. He was succeeded by Jehoshaphat, his son by wife Azubah. When Asa became ill, he made Jehoshaphat coregent. He died two years later.
3. Late in his reign he became zealous in maintaining the traditional worship of God, and in rooting out idolatry, with its immoralities.
4. He was successful militarily. After a battle with Zerah of Egypt in the 10th year of his reign, there was peace in Judah (2Chron. 14:1, 9) for the next 25 years. (2Chron. 16:1).
5. In his 36th year he was confronted by Baasha, king of Israel. He formed an alliance with Ben-Hadad I, king of Syria, and using a bribe, convinced him to break his peace treaty with Baasha and invade the Northern Kingdom. (2Chron. 16:2-6)
6. When he died, he was honored by the people, and was considered a mostly righteous king. However, his reign was marred by his treaty with Ben-Hadad.

C. He purged Judah of idolatry

1. Azariah son of Oded, a prophet, exhorted Asa to reinforce strict national observance of Judaism, and Asa obeyed. He purged the land of pagan worship, all the sites of idol worship were destroyed and the nation entered into an oath to serve Jehovah.
2. The Queen Mother, Maacah, was also deposed for having been involved with false gods, worships, and beliefs
3. He banned religious prostitution and prosecuted all offenders.
4. He ordained a religious feast in Jerusalem at Solomon's Temple (2Chron. 15:10-11). At that time, many northerners, particularly from the tribes Ephraim and Manasseh, migrated to the Kingdom of Judah because of the golden age in Judah, and the conflict in Israel after the fall of the dynasty of Jeroboam I.
5. In later years, Hanani the Seer, rebuked Asa for relying on the King of Syria as opposed to Divine help in defeating Baasha (2Chron. 16:7-10). Asa became very angry and threw Hanani in jail. He drifted from the good man he had been and oppressed some of the good people.
6. In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa developed a severe disease in his feet, for which he sought the help of physicians, not the Lord (2Chron. 16:12).
7. He died two years later and was buried with his ancestors in Jerusalem, in the grave he had dug for himself (2Chron. 16:13-14).

## I. ASA WAS A GOOD MAN IN THE PAST

- A. His father, Abijam, only reigned three years.
  - 1. Abijam was not a good king as God defines goodness - 1Kings 15:3
  - 2. The only thing Abijam accomplished was that he managed to raise a good son - 1Kings 15:4
- B. Asa's reign began peacefully - 2Chron. 14:1-6
  - 1. He removed many idols and decreed the worship of God only
  - 2. He strengthened Judah's cities.
  - 3. He had one major battle with southern Egypt in his tenth year
    - a. Though he was out numbered two to one, he turned to God and was victorious - 2Chron. 14:11-12
- C. God promised to be with Asa as long as he remained faithful - 2Chron. 15:1-7
- D. As a result, Asa threw himself into the work of purifying Judah - 2Chron. 15:8
  - 1. People began to flock to him. Many left Israel and Jeroboam's temple to return to worshiping God in Judah - 2Chron. 15:9
  - 2. They committed themselves to serving God - 2Chron. 15:12-15
  - 3. Asa did not even let family ties stop him - 2Chron. 15:16
- E. He wasn't perfect, but he followed God with all of his heart - 2Chron. 15:17
- F. Peace continued for another 25 years until Asa's 35th year.
  - 1. Baasha, Israel's king, became frustrated with number of people leaving his territory, so he closed the borders and began building a fortified city
    - a. 2Chron. 16:1
  - 2. It is at this time that Asa's attitude began to change. 25 years of peace and prosperity, and he became relaxed and complacent
    - a. Instead of relying on God's help a he had in the past, Asa took the wealth of God's house as well as his own and used it to bribe the king of Syria to attack Israel on the north - 2Chron. 16:2-5
  - 3. God sent a prophet to rebuke Asa - 2Chron. 16:7-9
  - 4. Asa didn't like the message, so he threw the messenger in prison
    - a. 2Chron. 16:10
- G. A few years later, Asa feet began to give him trouble - 2Chron. 16:12
  - 1. He was still angry with God and would not seek His help. He sought out doctors, but not God
  - 2. Two years later he died - 2Chron. 16:13

## II. LESSONS

- A. God meant it when He forbade idolatry - Ex. 20:2-6
  - 1. The ban against idolatry not only forbids worshiping false gods, God also expects His people to depend on Him in times of trouble.
  - 2. Worshiping God cannot be in words only. It must be matched by the life lived - Jer. 7:4-11
  - 3. Relying on our own wisdom instead of God's is a form of idolatry
    - a. 1Cor. 3:18-20
    - b. Religious organizations vote on which commands of the Lord they will keep.

- c. Individual members of the Lord's church often decide for themselves which commands they will keep or not. This, too, is a form of idolatry
- B. Trusting God means seeking and accepting God's solution in all things
  - 1. Asa strayed when he began solving problems with his own answers.
  - 2. Prov. 3:5-7; Jer. 10:23; Rom. 12:16
- C. Be willing to listen to rebuke regardless of position or experience
  - 1. A wise man listens to correction - Prov. 13:1
  - 2. Learning from a rebuke makes a deep, lasting impression - Luke 17:10
  - 3. When someone strays, we must be willing to rebuke them - Luke 17:3
  - 4. It is a manifestation of true care - Prov. 27:5
  - 5. Asa was a fool to dismiss the warning from God and mistreat God's messenger.
- D. Be willing to repent of mistakes
  - 1. Some reported to Jesus the evil done by others. Jesus used the occasion to warn them about their own needs - Luke 13:1-5
    - a. Often we see evil done by others and congratulate ourselves for being so much better.
    - b. Why do our sins appear less evil to us than someone else's?
      - 1) 1Cor. 11:31
    - c. Sin is sin. My sins can keep me out of heaven just as my neighbor's sins will condemn him.
  - 2. All men, everywhere need to repent - Acts 17:30; 1John 1:8-10