

“King Asa”

James 4: 1 – 10; 2nd Chronicles 15: 1 – 19; 2nd Chronicles 16: 7 – 14; **1st Kings 15: 8 – 24 (Sermon)**

Last week we talked about being committed to The Lord.

Today we will look at King Asa story because The Bible tells us that King Asa was known as a king that was committed to God.

We all need to learn the lessons from King Asa’s life.

1st Kings 15:9 states that *“In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa became king of Judah”*.

This would be 910 BC.

King Asa ruled over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 41 years.

In our lesson from 2nd Chronicles 15 we read that God sent His prophet Azariah to King Asa.

Listen carefully to The Word of The Lord that the prophet Azariah said because these words are also for us today. ***“The LORD is with you when you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you.”*** (2nd Chronicles 15:2)

King Asa listened to the words of the prophet Azariah and during the 34 first years of King Asa’s reign Asa led the Southern Kingdom of Judah back to The Lord.

King Asa ***“removed all of the detestable idols from the whole land of Judah and Benjamin and from the towns in Ephraim he had captured. He repaired the alter of The Lord in front of the portico of The Lord’s Temple”***. (2nd Chronicles 15:8)

During these first 34 years of King Asa’s reign God richly blessed Judah and Judah lived in peace while all the surrounding countries were at war (2nd Chronicles 15:5 - 6).

This is a powerful lesson for us today.

God will richly bless our country and God will give us peace when God’s people turn from our evil ways and we do ***“what is right in the eyes of the LORD”***.

Even though God said King Asa did what was right in the eyes of The Lord, The Bible also records some stupid mistakes that King Asa’s made.

These stupid mistakes brought an end to Judah’s peace and ultimately resulted in King Asa losing his life.

So we need to learn the lessons from King Asa.

Remember 1st Corinthians 10:6 & 11 tell us the examples in The Old Testament were written down as warnings for us and to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as the children of Israel did.

So, what were the tragic mistakes that King Asa made?

Asa's first tragic mistake was he compromised with the sin in his own household.

2nd Chronicles 15:16 tells us Asa's grandmother, Maacah, "*made a repulsive Asherah pole*".

Asherah was the mistress of Baal and Asherah was a chief goddess of the Canaanites.

The worship of Asherah glorified sex and war and was accompanied by male prostitution.¹

King Asa cut down the Asherah pole his grandmother made, broke it up, and burned it in the Kidron Valley.

Asa also deposed his grandmother from her position as queen mother.

But 2nd Chronicles 16:17 also tells us Asa did not remove the high places from Israel.

The high places were places that were dedicated to pagan worship.

In addition 1st Kings 12:31 tells us that King Jeroboam, the first king of the Northern Kingdom, built shrines in the high places and appointed priest who were not Levites.

Friends, if we are to live a life pleasing to The Lord we must remove all of the idols in our life, we must eliminate all of our sinful practices, and we must abstain from anything that is offensive to The Lord.

Remember sin separates us from God's presence, God's protection, God's provisions, and God's peace.

We must abstain from sin to have peace and to experience God's power in our life.

King Asa's second tragic mistake was he disobeyed God's command by made a military alliance with Ben-Hadad, the King of Aram.

When the Northern Kingdom of Israel threatened to invade Judah, King Asa put his trust in a military alliance with a pagan king instead of trusting The Lord to protect Judah and to deliver Judah from their enemies.

In Deuteronomy 7:3 God clearly warned the Israelites that they were to totally destroy all of the pagan people in the Promised Land and they were not to make any treaty with them.

Asa's third tragic mistake was he misused the silver and gold that had been dedicated to God.

The silver, gold, and temple articles were dedicated to God.

The silver, gold, and temple articles were taken from The Temple by Abijah during the war with King Jeroboam of Israel. (2nd Chronicles 13:16-17).

¹ NIV Life Application Bible p. 590

King Asa re- captured the silver, gold, and temple articles and returned them to The Temple when he defeated the Cushites (2nd Chronicles 14:12 -13).

But then in 2nd Chronicles 16:2 we are told Asa took the silver and the gold from the treasury of The Lord's Temple and used them to buy a military alliance with Ben-Hadad, the King of Aram.

We all need to remember that when something is dedicated to The Lord it is only to be used for that purpose.

Asa's fourth tragic mistake was he refused to repent when God sent His prophet Hanani to confront Asa with his sins.

Not only did Asa reject the prophet's message, he got mad at Hanani and put Hanani in prison for bringing him a message he did not want to hear. (2nd Chronicles 16:10).

Asa punished God's prophet instead of admitting his sin, repenting, and accepting God's discipline.

We all need to think about how we handle God's discipline.

How do we react when someone points out a sin that we have committed or something that we failed to do?

Asa's fifth tragic mistake was ***“he brutally oppressed some of the people”*** (2nd Chronicles 16:10b).

Asa also deflected his anger on his own people.

King Asa abused the power God had given to him rather than serving the people and leading the people in the ways of The Lord.

Asa's sixth tragic mistake was he chose to trust in the wisdom and abilities of human physicians to heal him of a severe disease rather than seeking help from The Lord. (2nd Chronicles 16:12)

The practice of medicine in Asa's day was a mixture of superstition and folk remedies. ²

We should avoid all pseudo medical treatment derived from occult sources.

We definitely should take advantage of modern medical help but as Christians we should only trust The Great Physician to heal us.

James 5:14 tells us, ***“Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of The Lord.”***

The point of pointing out Asa's mistakes is this; if we are not careful when we compromise with sin out commitment to The Lord will begin to slip away from us and will be gone before we realize it.

There are also several very powerful lessons for us in Asa's story.

² NIV Life Application Bible p. 259

The first lesson is that The Lord will deliver us from our enemies when we seek The Lord, pray, and solely depend upon The Lord.

2nd Chronicles 14:11 states, ***“Then Asa called to The Lord his God and said, “LORD, there is no one like you to help the powerless against the mighty. Help us, LORD our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this vast army. LORD, you are our God; do not let mere mortals prevail against you.”***

2nd Chronicles 14:12 tells us, ***“The Lord struck down the Cushites before Asa and Judah.”***

Listen to these powerful promises in 2nd Chronicles 15:2: ***“The Lord is with you when you are with Him. If you seek Him He will be found by you, but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.”***

The second lesson for us is Asa took The Lord’s word seriously.

After the prophet Azariah spoke to Asa, Asa began to remove the places of idol worship and repaired the temple of the Lord.

What about us.

Is our life changed after we hear God’s word proclaimed to us?

Do we change our behavior when God speaks to us through His word?

James 1:22 states; ***“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”***

When we respond to God’s Word The Holy Spirit molds us into the image of Jesus *Christ*.

Hebrews 4:12-13 tells us; ***“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight, everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”***

The third lesson for us is Asa led a spiritual revival in Judah.

2nd Chronicles 15:11 says: ***“the people sacrificed 700 head of cattle and 7,000 sheep and goats to The Lord from the plunder they brought back”.***

You see, The Lord gave those livestock to the people of Judah.

And the first thing those people did was to give a portion back to God.

This morning we all need to ask ourselves, *“What have I sacrificed to The Lord?”*

Remember everything we have came from The Lord.

Deuteronomy 8:18 clearly tells us it is The Lord who gives us the ability and the opportunity to earn money.

The Lord gives to us and The Lord expects us to show our appreciation to Him by giving back a portion to Him.

The fourth lesson for us is *“the people entered into a covenant to seek The Lord, the God of their fathers with all their heart and soul”* (2nd Chronicles 15:12).

Then in verse 13 we read; *“all who would not seek The Lord, The God of Israel, were to be put to death.”*

When we became a Christian we entered into a covenant with The Lord.

The Lord promised to save us from the penalty of our sins and to be with us both now and throughout eternity.

Our part of the covenant was to love The Lord, to obey The Lord, and to serve The Lord.

Every time we take communion we are renewing our covenant with The Lord.

So the question for each of us this morning is; *“How well am I fulfilling my covenant with The Lord?”*

2nd Chronicles 14:2 states, *“Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of The Lord his God.”*

And God’s word to us this morning challenges each of us to ask ourselves; *“would The Lord say I am doing what is right in the eyes of The Lord?”* **AMEN**