

Ending Strong (7/26/09 AM)
2 Chronicles 14-16

Asa is the third king of Judah. His reign can be divided into three stages.

1. Peace and Prosperity (2 Chronicles 14:1-8)

A Ten Year Period of Peace

• **Asa** _____ **the false idols**

Asa acknowledged that it was the Lord who had given him this time of peace.

Peace Comes from _____

Proverbs 16:7, "He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him."

• **Asa** _____ **the true worship**

His father and grandmother had promoted idolatry. Asa led the people in obeying God's commandments and worshipping Him.

Obedience Brings _____

Psalm 25:12-13, "Who is the man that fears the Lord?"

• **Asa** _____ **for the enemy**

Like Nehemiah Asa trusted in the LORD but also prepared for an attack by his many enemies. Like Asa the believer is commanded to be vigilant, 1 Peter 5:8.

Faith Is _____ **through Testing**

2. Testing and Triumph (2 Chronicles 14:9-15:19)

True Faith Is Always Tested

James 1:2-4, "...knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience."

• **Asa's** _____ **circumstances**

(9-10) "Then Zerah the Ethiopian came out against them with an army of a million men and three hundred chariots..." The enemy has more men and more resources. Asa's army is outnumbered almost 2 to 1. Mareshah is about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem.

God's People Are Often Found in Times of

• **Asa's** _____ **of faith**

(11) "And Asa cried out to the Lord his God..."

His confidence in God's deliverance in time of trial was based upon his ten year relationship with the Lord in time of peace. Asa did not proclaim his name but the name of the LORD.

Asa _____ **Himself and Exalted His Savior**

• **God's** _____ **deliverance**

(12-14) "So the Lord struck the Ethiopians before Asa and Judah, and the Ethiopians fled... for the fear of the LORD came upon them..."

Sudden deliverance in the midst of battle is a repeated theme in 2 Chronicles.

God Didn't Just Defeat the Enemy He _____ **Them**

• **Asa's** _____ **dedication**

God sent the prophet Azariah to meet Asa as he was returning from this great victory (15:1-7). More than one king has succumbed to temptation after a great victory. God often gives us warnings through His Word and His servants.

(15:8-19) reveals Asa's response to this message. He restored the altar and he rededicated the people. 1 Kings 15:7-15 also records this time period.

1 Kings 15:12-13, "And he banished the perverted persons from the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. Also he removed Maachah

his grandmother from being queen mother, because she had made an obscene image of Asherah. And Asa cut down her obscene image and burned it by the Brook Kidron." Asa experiences 20 plus more years of peace and prosperity.

Renewed Obedience Brings Renewed _____

3. Decline and Discipline (2 Chronicles 16:1-14)

This Time When Tested Asa Failed

Because of Asa's dedication Israelites were leaving Israel and going to Judah. Bassaha wanted to stop this flow out of his kingdom. Ramah was a commanding point on the northern road between the two kingdoms.

- **Instead of praying Asa was _____**

He did not seek council of God. He decided to take the matter out of God's hands and put it into his own hands. He relied upon his own schemes instead of God's power. Proverbs 28:26, "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered."

- **Asa's Spiritual Decline Was Certainly _____**

Somewhere in the last 20 plus years he lost his focus upon the Lord and began focusing upon himself. He began to treasure his position and his possessions more than his savior.

Matthew 6:21, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Compromise will often give temporary relief. Beh-Hadad invaded Israel and stopped the work. Asa had the people of Judah take the materials from Baasha and fortify his own strongholds (6).

- **Instead of repenting Asa was _____**

20 years earlier Asa received the warning through Azariah the prophet.

Now his response to God's prophet is very different.

Asa out of pride imprisoned the prophet and oppressed the people.

- **Disobedience Creates _____ Opportunities**

(9) "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him."

- **Instead of seeking Asa was _____**

Asa was probably in his early 50's when he died. He stubbornly refused to acknowledge his sin and repent. What began with such promise ended in

misery. Asa's sin affected the entire nation. Syria became a constant problem to Judah. Why did Asa begin so well and end so poorly?

- **Material Prosperity Plus Spiritual Apathy and Human**

James 4:6, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."