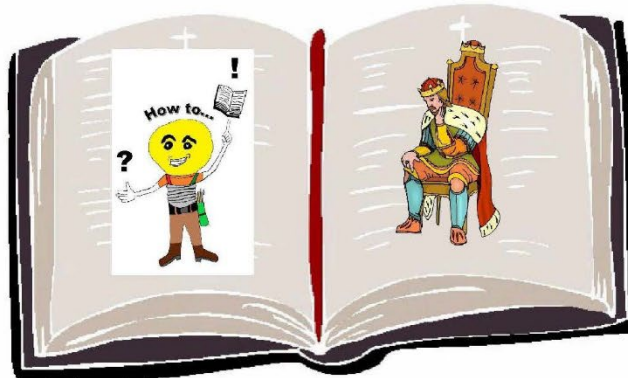


II Chronicles

Chapter 8

From the  
***Blessing of God***  
to the  
**JUDGEMENT OF GOD**

A Commentary on  
II Chronicles



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## Lessons from the Reign of King Asa

### *II Chronicles 14-16*

King Asa reigned for forty-one years. See *II Chronicles 16:13*.

God's comment on his life and work is in *I Kings 15:11* and *II Chronicles 14:2*.

*I Kings 15:11* “And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father.”

*II Chronicles 14:2* “And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God:”

King Asa comes to the kingdom during a time of peace. The first ten years of his reign are peaceful. His actions during this time of peace are very instructive to good leadership during calmness and should be followed. Where leaders fail is during this time of peace! Since no immediate action is needed, no action is what happens, and it leads to future failure. So, what do you do during this time? Learn from King Asa and follow his good decisions. He did make some mistakes toward the end of his reign. So, learn from these mistakes as well and avoid them!

**Get people back**

**to the true way**

**to worship God.**

Here it is important to show the distinction between the Old and New Testament and the superiority of the New Testament. In

the Old Testament, the way God did it was through the nation. The laws and commandments were to snuff out evil and promote dependence and worship of God. When the ruler got right, he led the nation to get right. In the New Testament, God's organization is the Church. The way to get people right with God on a national scale is by giving liberty to allow the churches to prosper. The idea of separation of church and state will only work when the churches take the liberty to assume the responsibility to lead people back to God and the Bible! A successful modern leader will first get himself right with God. Then his family and friends. Then his community. He does this by getting back to the Bible and back to being an active member of a local church!

The way King Asa did this is given in *II Chronicles 14:3-5*

**“For he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves:**

**And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment.**

**Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him.”**

The way to get rid of these strange gods and images today is through example. If you don't emphasize them as important and then remove them from your life, others will choose to follow you.

As a leader, always make decisions that help the church and Christianity and discourage heathenism and worldliness!

As a leader it is extremely important to get people back to following the precepts of the Bible and seeking and following the God of the Bible and not to follow and worship other gods! Make the Bible your standard and attempt to put it into practice. Make decisions on what God shows you out of the Bible.

**The second thing King Asa did  
that shows good leadership  
During times of peace was to  
prepare for war.**

He did this by using the quietness and prosperity to build important things for defense. He built things and he trained men. There was a purpose behind his building. It wasn't just for show or to exclaim how blessed they were. It was to defend! The purpose of having superior weapons is not to take over other countries or civilizations. It is for defense of the right way. If you lead successfully, others will want to follow you and learn from you. The way to change them is through the example that you show. However, some will get envious as God blesses you and those that follow you. They will want to take the blessings by force! Take this time to prepare your defense.

**II Chronicles 14:6-7 “And he built fenced cities in Judah: for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the LORD had given him rest.**

**Therefore he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls, and towers, gates, and bars, while the land is yet before us; because we have sought the LORD our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered.”**

Don't make the mistake many make of taking the peace and wasting it on inactivity or squandering it away on yourself. Use the time and resources to prepare for future battles that surely are coming. Build up fences, walls, towers, gates, and bars! Fences and walls are not only to keep enemies out but to keep the innocent and inexperienced in! Every wall needs a gate to allow entrance and exit. Entrance to allow those in that need to learn and grow in the good things that you have! There must be a way out to find those that need help! Towers to see out and be warned when the enemy is

attacking. Bars to allow the breezes in but not the small enemies that will destroy.

# **The third good thing that King Asa did in the time of peace was to train men.**

It is important to have the physical things in place like the defended cities, but it is more important to have trained men to be able to fight the battles with success. There is no substitute for experienced men that know what to do and how to do it.

**II Chronicles 14:8 “And Asa had an army of men that bare targets and spears, out of Judah three hundred thousand; and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these were mighty men of valour.”**

As a leader, use the time of peace and prosperity to train men. Men that can fight the battles and make good decisions are a necessity when times get bad. If they are properly trained in the good times, they will be prepared when hard times hit! Notice that the training was varied. They didn't all train in the same tactics. Some bore targets and spears and some bore shields and drew bows. They were given weapons of defense as well as offense. My study of American history shows that the Great Awakenings occurred during a time of peace, but that war followed. God had prepared the leaders that were needed for the war during the time of peace.

Sure enough, this is what happened to King Asa. A huge army from Ethiopia came to take over Judah. But Asa had prepared and was ready.

**II Chronicles 14:9 “And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah.”**

Now here is where Asa’s great leadership shines forth! Even though he had trained men, he didn’t depend on them. He cast his help on the Lord! Here is also where he changed his leadership style from a servant to a hero!

**II Chronicles 14:10, 11 “Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.**

**And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.”**

It is always important to pray and ask for God’s help when going to battle! Notice that God is described as “his” God. He had a

personal relationship with God before the battle! Notice also that he prayed to God before the battle started not after to ask for help in picking up the pieces and cleaning up the mess. Many failures will be averted if the leader develops a personal relationship with God in times of peace and prays before everything starts to fall apart. This “Boy Scout” idea of being prepared is essential. It is not just being prepared physically but being prepared spiritually! Notice the admonition in *Proverbs 21:31*:

**“The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD.”**

God answers and gives them not only the victory but blesses them physically because of their dependence on Him!

*II Chronicles 14:12-15* **“So the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.**

**And Asa and the people that were with him pursued them unto Gerar: and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not**

**recover themselves; for they were destroyed before the LORD, and before his host; and they carried away very much spoil.**

**And they smote all the cities round about Gerar; for the fear of the LORD came upon them: and they spoiled all the cities; for there was exceeding much spoil in them.**

**They smote also the tents of cattle, and carried away sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem.”**

**II Chronicles 15** shows the time of revival in Judah because God gave them the victory and they acknowledge and sought God. The hallmark of this is condensed in Asa’s life in **II Chronicles 15:17-19**.

It shows the reality of the incompleteness of revival and Asa’s personal pursuit of God. It also shows God’s direction of the desired peace of the nation.

## **King Asa’s Final Failure**

**II Chronicles 15:17-19 “But the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.**

**And he brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels.**

**And there was no more war unto the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.”**

Here is where Asa’s life takes a decidedly turn. It would have been great if his life would have just finished with this victory. Life is not like that though. There are always battles to fight. As long as you are in this life, you are in a battle. The war goes on. The thing to do is to learn the lessons of life. Asa sought and depended on the LORD early in his reign, but as time wore on, he lost the edge. We are not given the character flaws that led to this, but it is obvious by his reaction to the seer that God sent his way, that he thought more of himself. He probably got used to the peace and prosperity and

thought it would just continue. He didn't transition from the hero back to the servant! Like many leaders, the enemy that develops during success is pride. His pride caused his downfall. *II Chronicles 16* is the tale of the results of not listening to God and thinking too highly of yourself! It shows the danger of "taking it easy" during the time of peace that follows a victory. Since there is no need to depend on God, the leader changes and starts depending on his good decisions and lives in the past victories. When another enemy shows up, King Asa makes the bad decision to trust in Syria's army instead of his God! He thought he could "buy" his way out of trouble. In the New Testament we are given the admonition of not depending on our riches. Prosperity ruins more than poverty!

*1 Timothy 6:17* **"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;"**

The thing that ruined King Asa was the prophecy that God laid before him in *II Chronicles 15:1-2*.

**“And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded:**

**And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.”**

This is the problem and challenge during times of success and peace. There is a tendency to take God’s blessings for granted and to stop seeking and trusting Him. Sometimes victory causes a person to think the battle is over. That particular battle may be done, but there are others that are just around the corner! Many leaders make the mistake of claiming the first part of the prophecy and forgetting the last part!

When Israel, the northern kingdom, came against Judah, King Asa decided to take the short cut. It seemed like a good plan. Pay

someone else to fight the battle. That way you get the victory without going to war. As a fall back, if they lose, you still have your army as a backup plan. The easy way is seldom God's way! The purpose of fighting the battles are not always for your personal victory! The purpose of fighting the battles is for learning dependence on God! God gets the victory when He wins the battle for you! It teaches dependence on God not independence from God! When God gets the victory, we get the victory because the real victory is leaning on Him! God raises up enemies for our benefit. The battles come first and then the blessings. Don't let the blessings cause you to forget and not fight the next battle.

Here it may be helpful to review King Asa's timeline:

When he begins his reign, there are ten years of peace. He uses this time of peace to prepare for war. He gets the victory in the war with Ethiopia and God sends physical and spiritual revival. There is then fifteen years of peace. It was during this time of peace

that they no longer prepared for war. They stopped seeking God. In the thirty-sixth year of his reign Israel, the northern kingdom, invades. Asa hires Syrians to defeat Israel.

When God sends a prophet, Asa gets mad and puts the prophet in jail and oppressed some of the people. Notice how the leader's rebellion and lack of repentance not only affects him personally, but affects the whole nation as well. He goes from servant to hero to tyrant. He doesn't fight God's battle God's way and as a result he loses his personal battles! He gets diseased feet. During this time God judges Judah and King Asa for not depending on Him. In the Thirty-ninth year of his reign his feet are diseased. Two years later he is dead. He did well for the majority of his reign, but he did not finish well. As a leader it is extremely important to learn the lessons of leadership, keep using them by depending on God, and finish strong! Please learn from King Asa's success, but also learn from his mistakes!



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