

Asa: The Necessity of Present Grace

September 29, 2019



Open: Do you think it becomes easier or harder to remain faithful to God the longer you're in relationship with Him? Why?

Read & Discuss: 2 Chronicles 14:1-7

1. According to verses 1-7, what are some of Asa's spiritually positive choices? Why do you think pagan altars, idols and places of worship were a common problem in Judah and Israel? What do you do to guard yourself against idolatry?

Read & Discuss: 2 Chronicles 16:1-13

2. In verses 16:1-10, Asa renewed an alliance with Syria against Baasha, king of Israel. How does his payment to Baasha (v. 2) suggest a compromised motive? His father had a similar alliance (v. 3). Have the practices or choices of other people in your family or friendships influenced poor choices on your part? Explain.
3. Asa is confronted by a prophet for not trusting God in the face of a military threat (vv. 7-8). How had he previously manifest faith in God under similar circumstances? (*Read 14:9-12*). What does Asa's reaction to the prophet tell us about Asa's spiritual condition? How would you explain the connection between one's spiritual health and response to correction? What should motivate us to be receptive to constructive criticism?
4. How would you paraphrase the first sentence of verse 9 in your own words? In what ways is this principle still true today?
5. How does verse 12 further reveal Asa's spiritual condition at this time in his life? How should we understand the relationship between trusting God and using practical means to care for our physical needs? Do you think it was wrong for Asa or us to seek the help of physicians? What was a recent situation in which you could have or should have sought God's help, but didn't?

Apply: What's one area of your life where you could be more diligent to seek after God? What could you do to seek progress in that area?

Pray: Pray that we would be people who faithfully pursue God to the very end.

2 Chronicles 14:1-7

¹ Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David. And Asa his son reigned in his place. In his days the land had rest for ten years. ² And Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. ³ He took away the foreign altars and the high places and broke down the pillars and cut down the Asherim ⁴ and commanded Judah to seek the Lord, the God of their fathers, and to keep the law and the commandment. ⁵ He also took out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the incense altars. And the kingdom had rest under him. ⁶ He built fortified cities in Judah, for the land had rest. He had no war in those years, for the Lord gave him peace. ⁷ And he said to Judah, "Let us build these cities and surround them with walls and towers, gates and bars. The land is still ours, because we have sought the Lord our God. We have sought him, and he has given us peace on every side." So they built and prospered.

2 Chronicles 16:1-13

¹ In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. ² Then Asa took silver and gold from the treasures of the house of the Lord and the king's house and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Syria, who lived in Damascus, saying, ³ "There is a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Behold, I am sending to you silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me." ⁴ And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali. ⁵ And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah and let his work cease. ⁶ Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them he built Geba and Mizpah.

⁷ At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the Lord your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped you. ⁸ Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the Lord, he gave them into your hand. ⁹ For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars." ¹⁰ Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the stocks in prison, for he was in a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties upon some of the people at the same time.

¹¹ The acts of Asa, from first to last, are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ¹² In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased in his feet, and his disease became severe. Yet even in his disease he did not seek the Lord, but sought help from physicians. ¹³ And Asa slept with his fathers, dying in the forty-first year of his reign. (ESV)