

excellent for each of us to memorise.

- 6) Instead of humble repentance, Asa got angry (16:10). He put God's preacher in prison and he oppressed some of the people, probably those who defended the prophet.

**b. Asa died in a state of spiritual and physical disease.**

- 1) In his 39<sup>th</sup> year as king, God gave Asa a disease in his feet that was exceeding great.
- 2) In his disease, he refused to seek the Lord for help. Instead, he sought only the help of physicians.
- 3) The disease in his feet was so severe that within three years he died.
- 4) How sad! Here is a great man who for about 55 years lived for the glory and honour of God and God blessed him. Then he let his heart become spiritually cold and he died a premature miserable painful death.

**Conclusion:** From Asa's life, we can learn the value of seeking and serving the Lord. We learn that God sometimes allows trials to come that we might depend on Him and see Him help us. We learn from him that destroying all the idols in our lives brings God's blessing. We learn the wonderful truth that God is always looking for opportunities to show himself strong in the behalf of those whose heart is perfect toward him. Perhaps the most startling fact we learn from Asa is that good people can turn against the Lord if they do not stay close to Him.

If God has spoken to your heart about a particular need in your life, do not put it off. Deal with it right away.

**Song:** Cleanse Me - 166

# Keep a Perfect Heart

22 March 2020 PM - 2Chronicles 14:1-16:14 - Kings20 - Scott Childs

**Introduction:** Rehoboam's son, Abijah was an ungodly man and only reigned as king for three years. Amazingly, Asa, his son was a good king. He must have been young when crowned king, perhaps about 20. Through a majority of his life, he kept his heart right with God and God blessed him. Toward the end of his life, God reminded him of the importance of keeping his heart perfect with God.

**Transition:** Asa's life can be divided into three segments from which we can learn valuable lessons.

## 1. Asa Sought the Lord for 15 years (2Ch 14)

### a. Asa did good and right in God's eyes (14:2)

- 1) He pleased the Lord (14:2-3)
- 2) The land was quiet from war 10 years (14:1)
- 3) He commanded his people to seek the Lord (14:4). While we cannot force our spouse, our children or anyone else to seek the Lord, encouraging it by word and example is always right.
- 4) He removed idols (14:5). Today, we do not bow to idols, but often the "toys" of life act as idols rob our loyalty to God just as images did in those days. **Are there idols in your life that God wants you to break down?**
- 5) He gave God the glory for their rest (14:7). God loves it when you give Him glory for the blessings He gives you.

📖 *Asa was a great example for us to follow. He lived out the basic Bible principle that if we do good and right in God's eyes (not our own), He will bless us.*

### b. In trouble Asa cried to the Lord for help (14:11)

- 1) After 10 years of peace, why would God allow the Ethiopians to attack Judah? Perhaps their walk with God was becoming mechanical. God never wastes a trial. Every one is for our good. You can be sure that God has a purpose for allowing the coronavirus to spread.
- 2) Note how Asa responded to this threat. He cried unto the LORD his God (14:11). Notice the words of his prayer.
- 3) God answered Asa's prayer (14:12).

📖 *When trials and troubles threaten us, we need to spend more time in prayer. Pray as Asa prayed!*

## 2. Asa Served the Lord for another 20 years (2Ch 15)

### a. Prophet Azariah encouraged Asa (15:2-7)

- 1) He reminded Asa that God's blessing always hinges on man's obedience (15:2).
- 2) When we seek God, we will find Him (15:4).
- 3) God's faithful character and promises ought to motivate us to serve Him with the assurance that He will reward our service (15:7).
  - a) Asa had been doing right for 15 years. When the Ethiopians attacked Judah, he did right in crying out for God's help. The devil often attacks after a victory.
  - b) God knows that we frequently need a boost to keep us going in the right direction. I believe this is one of the reasons that God ordained the local church. We need regular preaching to challenges us and keep us on track.
  - c) Here are the words of the Apostle Paul to preacher Timothy, (2 Timothy 4:2) "*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*"
  - d) When you find a Christian who is off track or spiritually unstable, most of the time, he or she is not faithfully attending all the services of a good Baptist church.

### b. Asa took courage and served God faithfully

- 1) Hearing the motivating sermon of the prophet, Asa took courage and initiated more reforms.
  - a) He put away more idols (15:8).
  - b) He renewed the altar of the Lord (15:8).
  - c) He gathered the people to worship (15:9). Even god-fearing people from the northern 10 tribes came to worship the Lord. This revival took place in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of his reign.
- 2) The people experienced revival as they sought the Lord with their whole desire (15:15).

- a) The Lord was found of them.
- b) The Lord gave them rest from war.

- 3) Asa even removed Maachah from being queen because she had made an idol (15:16). Maachah is called his mother, but 2Ch 11:20-22 makes it clear that she is really his grandmother. Taking a stand for the Lord against opposing family members is one of the most difficult tasks a Christian may be called to perform.

📖 *Asa's example to us during his first 35 years as king of Judah is very encouraging. He was walking with the Lord and the Lord was blessing him and his nation. We can expect the same if we will seek the Lord and serve the Lord as Asa did.*

## 3. Asa Spurned the Lord for his last 6 years (2Ch 16)

### a. Asa lost his spiritual focus

- 1) God does not tell us what changed in Asa's heart, but in the 36<sup>th</sup> year of his reign Baasha king of Israel opposed him. Instead of turning to the Lord for help as he did 25 years earlier when the Ethiopians attacked, this time he took the treasures of the temple and of his own house and hired the Syrians to help him.
- 2) If Asa began his reign when he was about 20 years old (as some estimate), then at this time he would have been about 55 years old. After such a godly life, why would he suddenly turn away from the Lord? We do not know.
- 3) We must never assume that we are so spiritual that we would never turn from the Lord. The devil is cunning. We must always stay on guard and close to the Lord.
- 4) The Syrians did help him and he succeeded in stopping Baasha's advancement, but in doing so, he grieved the Lord and lost God's power.
- 5) God sent Hanani the prophet to rebuke him (16:7).
  - a) His message was clear and to the point.
  - b) His reminder of God's previous blessing was cutting (16:8).
  - c) His revelation of God's desire and passion was challenging (and still is for us today) (16:9). We have an amazing God. The first half of this verse would be