

I wish to share this lesson (from my study) with beautifully clear present truth application—

On the road of the “Christian’s Experience” we are all going to be tested by God. He does this to develop and perfect our faith in Him so we can please Him (Heb 11:6). However, He never gives us a test that He knows we cannot pass, and He helps us to pass every test He gives us (1Cor 10:13).

Asa, of Judah, was a good king. For the first 10 years of his reign there was a revival and reformation and Judah kept the Sabbath (2Chr 14:1-5. In the first half of his reign his faith in God secured his victory over Egypt (under Zerah of Ethiopia, probably Pharaoh Osarkon I of the 22nd dynasty). God sent the prophet Azariah to encourage him (15:1-7), and in the 15th year of his reign (spring, 895BC) he brought Judah into a covenant “...to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul” (12), instituted the death penalty for willful idolatry by covenant-breakers (v13), though he only deposed the idol-worshipping queen-mother (his grandmother, v16). Judah had peace (no war) for another 21 years (16:1). Asa had passed the **first** test.

Now he (Asa) is besieged by his brothers (i.e. Israel—the Northern Kingdom). He forgets to call upon God, takes the gold and silver from the Temple and his palace to use as a bribe to get the allegiance of Syria in relief of the blockade (2Chr 16:1-6). Hanani, the prophet, told Asa that God was so sorely displeased with this ecumenical act of faithlessness, that from such time until the end of his reign there would be no peace (v9). Asa flunked this **second** test.

Two years before the end of his reign he “...was diseased in his feet”. This disease became (i.e. progressed) worse, “...yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians” (v12). It’s obvious that God had allowed this disease as a test of faith. It’s also obvious that as the disease progressed his reliance on human physicians increased and he forgot about the Great Physician (Christ—God). Asa flunked the **third** (covid) test.

However, the prologue (1Kgs 15:11; 2Chron 14:2) and epilogue (1Kgs 15:24) for Asa may suggest that he repented of his sin of faithlessness (2Chron 16:12) and did not die in his sin (see Eze 18:26).

Asa’s son, Jehoshaphat, was also tested by God. Like his fathers (Asa to David) he struggled, but his faith was anchored in God’s Word (in His law, and through His prophets). He “...sought the Lord God of his father, and walked in His commandments...” (17:4). He passed the **first** test. He selected princes to teach the people to know and keep the law of God (v7,9) and so experienced the covenant blessings of God (v10-12; see also Ex 23:27). But then he did the unthinkable by allowing his son Jehoram to marry Jezebel’s daughter, Athaliah (2Chron 18:1; 21:5-6; 22:2; PK192.3), who shaped her husband’s regency and steered him into idolatry (21:6). This **second** test Jehoshaphat failed.

His daughter-in-law’s father (Ahab) bribed him with regal hospitality into another unholy alliance to help him recapture Ramothgilead. Jehoshaphat did enquire and receive instructions from God through His prophet Micaiah that the mission was hopeless (2Chr 18:16, 27) but he allowed his family ties to overrule his actions. In inexplicable mercy God spared his (Jehoshaphat’s) life; Ahab died in his sins and fulfilled the prophecy of Elijah (1Kgs 21:19; 22:38; 2Chr 18:34). The prophet Jehu (son of the prophet Hanani, who rebuked the similar action of his father, Asa) made him aware of God’s displeasure and mercy. Jehoshaphat failed this **third** test.

He humbled himself and established a good legal system. Not long after the descendants of Lot and Esau “came against” Judah. Now the king first prayed to God for guidance and deliverance and God answered

him through His prophet Jahaziel who told him "...the battle is not yours but Gods" (20:15-17). The king prayed again and the "children of the Kohathites..." (see Numb 26:10-11) sang praises to God. In the morning of the battle, the king instructed his people "...believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper" (20:20). The battle formation (in which the singers went in front of the army) that demonstrated Judah's faith in God was rewarded by His divine intervention and the complete defeat of the triumvirate, and the fearful dissemination to all the nations around. Here, the king passed the **fourth** test.

Now his grandson Ahaziah tried and succeeded in getting him into the ferryboat business, but God mercifully through His prophet Eliezer warned him of the outcome and so destroyed the shipping business (20:37). Ahaziah tried to get him to resume the business but the king heeded the word of God through His prophet (2Kgs 22:49). The king passed this **fifth** and last recorded test.

Now timely (i.e. spend at least an hour) unravel the poignantly stark and amazingly clear present truth lessons.

Maranatha.

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