

LESSON 2

KING ASA

OBJECTIVES

1. To learn about the strengths and weaknesses of King Asa.
2. To understand the importance of having lifelong trust in and obedience to God.
3. To realize that we should not rely on our own wisdom and insights.

MEMORY VERSE

"I will lift up my eyes to the hills—from whence comes my help?
My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth."

(Psalm 121:1-2)

PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for guiding us into Your presence on this holy Sabbath Day. Thank You, Lord, for being there for us whenever we have a problem. However, we have not always put our total trust in You, but have turned our trust to other people and things instead. Teach us that it is You alone who can truly deliver and protect, heal and bless. You are the Creator who made heaven and earth, and nothing is impossible with You.



Overview

1. Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

- a. Asa, the Loyal King
 - Asa removed idolatry in Judah
 - Asa fortified the cities of Judah
 - Asa relied on the Lord during battle
 - Asa and the people made a covenant to seek God
- b. Asa Fails the First Test
- c. Asa Fails the Second Test

2. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs—The Holy Bible

3. Life Application—Whom do you trust?

4. Activity—"Trust" Wall Hanging



Background Knowledge for Teachers

Queen Mother

The Bible has two references to the queen mother during Asa's reign: 1 Kings 15:13 and 2 Chronicles 15:16. 1 Kings states that King Asa removed his "grandmother" from being queen mother while 2 Chronicles states that he removed his "mother" from being queen mother. Regardless of whether the queen mother was his mother or grandmother, the significant point here is that King Asa considered maintaining loyalty to God as a priority over pleasing his family members.



Reaching Out to Your Students

Before children learn about trusting in a God they cannot see, children learn about trust firsthand from their parents, loved ones, and authority figures. Children learn about trust when they experience their parents supply their needs and wants. Through the deep love and affection shown to them, children are reassured that they will be protected and cared for. Children also know about trust through the examples of godly lives that are set for them and through their parents' responsible actions and kept promises. When children trust, they grow as healthy human beings, develop positive attitudes toward life, and have a lesser need to be in control to make things turn out right.

Similarly, in order for children to establish trust in God, they need to experience God in their lives. Through daily Bible reading and through everyday experiences, children can learn about the kind of God they worship. They will learn that God is a God who eagerly hears and answers prayers. By starting with trusting God in small things, children can learn to trust in God in bigger matters. Your students should be encouraged to keep a journal where they can record all their experiences of God and His marvelous works.



Opener

5 Minutes

Bean Bag Toss

Do you ever worry? What do you worry about? Is there anyone that you go to when you have worries?

Let's play a game. It's called the "People I Can Depend On" bean bag toss.

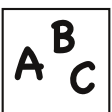
We will take turns tossing a bean bag into a pail. For each successful toss, I want you to complete the sentence: "I can trust a person who..."

Repeat the activity, but this time complete the sentence: "People can trust me because..."

Lastly, have the students complete this final sentence: "I can trust in God because..."

After the game, have students share the qualities God and the people they trust have in common.

Our story today is about a king who began his reign trusting and obeying God. He trusted God in the most difficult of times. Sadly, at the end of his life, he lost that trust in God and instead turned to others for help.



Vocabulary

fortify: to make strong

Asherah: a sea goddess and the mother of several gods, including Baal

loyal: to be true, faithful, and committed to someone or something



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out Bible Discovery Worksheet #1 to the students. The students will fill in the blanks and answer the questions as you teach the lesson. Pause to allow the students to answer the questions. Keep a copy of the Teacher Version for reference.

I. Asa, the Loyal King

We have learned before how the kingdom of Israel was divided into two separate nations. The kingdom of Israel in the north was ruled by Jeroboam, while Rehoboam ruled the kingdom of Judah in the south. After Rehoboam died, his son Abijam became king. After Abijam died, his son Asa became king, the third to reign in Judah.

The life of King Asa is recorded in two Bible passages: 1 Kings 15 and 2 Chronicles 14-16. Let's turn to 1 Kings 15:11, 14. What kind of king was Asa? He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just like King David. Let's look at 1 Kings 15:14 and see what else we can learn about King Asa. It mentions here that Asa was loyal to the Lord all his days.

What does being loyal mean? [Have students respond. Write responses on the board.] When we are loyal, we are faithful to someone or something, no matter in good or bad times and no matter how we feel. Asa was loyal to God, so his heart was faithful, committed, and true to God. He obeyed God's teachings and did what was pleasing to God.

Let's find out what Asa did to show his loyalty to God.

A. Asa Removed Idolatry in Judah

Read 2 Chronicles 14:1-5.

The people in Asa's kingdom had turned their hearts from the one true God to other gods. They were worshipping the same gods that the pagans were worshipping. This greatly displeased God. Asa reminded the people that they had to return to God and observe His laws. Anything that takes our heart off of God and has more control of our lives than God is idolatry. What are some things we may need to remove from our lives so that God is given first place in our lives? [Allow students to respond. Possible answers: TV, friends, video games, sports, etc.]

B. Asa Fortified the Cities of Judah

Turn to 2 Chronicles 14:6-8.

Because Asa removed the wicked practices that were offensive to God, God gave the southern kingdom peace from their enemies. Why do you think peace is a great blessing to a country?

What did Asa do in times of peace? Asa used the peaceful times to strengthen and fortify the cities with walls, towers, gates, and bars. Why was this a wise thing to do? Asa used the times of peace to prepare for the day when enemies would come against them. The moment that enemies attack, it is already too late to try to prepare defenses.

Most likely, we will not face the attack of a physical army. However, as children of God, we have an enemy, Satan, who is always prowling around, seeking for an opportunity to attack us (1 Pet 5:8). The only way we can stand against his attacks is by strengthening our faith every day and obeying God's words. When God gives us times of peace, we should stay focused on Him and not neglect to pray, read the Bible, and memorize Scripture daily. Through fortifying our faith, we will have a greater resistance to temptation and sin.

C. Asa Relied on the Lord During Battle

Read 2 Chronicles 14:9-15.

When trouble did come, Asa was prepared for it. Who came to attack King Asa, and how large was his army? Zerah the leader of the Ethiopians came to attack King Asa and the kingdom of Judah. He had an army of one million men and three hundred chariots. How many fighting men did Asa have? (580,000.)

How did Asa show that his heart was loyal to God in this event? Read 2 Chronicles 14:11. As Asa faced the great Ethiopian army, he did not rely on his strong defenses. God was his shield and only defense, and he called on the mighty name of God to deliver him from his enemy. How did God enable him to be greatly victorious? Read 2 Chronicles 14:14-15.

If we want to overcome life's difficulties and troubles, we have to seek and trust God first in every circumstance. We should not rely on our own wisdom or abilities, but ask God to direct us, as He knows what is best for us.

D. Asa and the People Made a Covenant to Seek God

After the battle, God sent the prophet Azariah to encourage Asa. What was God's message to Asa? Read 2 Chronicles 15:2-7.

- God instructed Asa that if he continued to seek after Him, God would find him.
- For a long time, God had not abided with Israel because of her rebelliousness. As a result, there was no peace, problems troubled the land, crime increased, and there were constant wars.
- If Asa kept up the good work and remained strong, God would reward him for his work.

How did Asa respond to God's encouragement? Read 2 Chronicles 15:8-9, 16.

- When Asa heard God's encouragement, he was moved to cleanse his kingdom of evil.
- He removed his grandmother Maachah from being queen mother because she had built an idol of Asherah.
- He gathered all the people, and they offered a huge sacrifice from the plunder they had captured in the battle.
- They also made a covenant to worship only the Lord God with all their heart and soul.
- He brought back into the Temple the silver and gold bowls that were dedicated to the Lord.

These actions greatly pleased God, and He blessed Asa and the nation. How did God bless him? Read 2 Chronicles 15:10, 19. From the time they made the covenant to follow God, until the 35th year of Asa's reign, there was peace in the land for a period of twenty years. To have peace, we need to remove the things in our lives that keep us from having a heart fully committed to the Lord.

II. Asa Fails the First Test

On the 36th year of Asa's reign, King Baasha of Israel declared war against Judah. Sometimes troubles come upon us to test our faith and obedience to God. When the Ethiopians attacked Judah, we saw how King Asa put his faith completely on God.

How did King Asa respond to King Baasha's threats? Read 2 Chronicles 16:1-6.

Sadly, King Asa did not trust in God as he had before. On this occasion, Asa took the silver and gold from the temple and sent it to King Ben-hadad of Syria, asking him to break his alliance with the king of Israel and to help him instead. King Ben-hadad agreed, and he

mobilized his army to attack Israel. When Baasha king of Israel realized what was happening, he gave up his plan to attack Judah.

Although Asa was successful in stopping King Baasha's attack, God was not pleased that Asa had placed his trust in man instead of the Lord. What was worse, Asa had sought help from Ben-hadad, who was an enemy of Judah (Jer 17:5).

Asa Rejects God's Warning

God then sent the prophet Hanani to speak to King Asa. Read 2 Chronicles 16:7-10. What did the prophet say to King Asa?

- The prophet reminded Asa that because he had relied on the king of Syria instead of the Lord, Asa had allowed the king of Syria, his enemy, to escape.
- God reminded Asa how God had delivered him from the vast armies of the Ethiopians and the Libyans, but because he did not rely on the Lord, from now on, Asa would have wars in his kingdom.

How did Asa respond to God's correction? Read 2 Chronicles 16:10. Asa was so angry that he threw the prophet into jail, and he began to oppress the people.

III. Asa Fails The Second Test

In the 39th year of Asa's reign, Asa became seriously diseased in his feet, but Asa committed the same wrong again. Read 2 Chronicles 16:12. Once again, Asa placed his trust in man and sought the help of doctors instead of seeking God first. It is not wrong to go to a doctor, since there are times when God will use doctors to help heal our sicknesses, but we must also remember to rely on God in our times of sickness. Asa's actions displeased God because he didn't go to God for help, but placed his entire faith in the doctors.

Asa reigned in Judah for forty years. For thirty-four years, Asa was loyal and obedient to God, and as a result, his kingdom prospered and was at peace. However, in the last six years of his reign, Asa's heart turned from God. This reminds us the importance of holding onto our faith until the very end. It is not enough to have a good beginning. We can only be saved if we are true and loyal to God to the very end (Eccl 7:8; Heb 3:14).

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out Bible Discovery Worksheet #2 to the students. Allow students to complete it. Then, explain that we can only be saved if we are true and loyal to God to the very end.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

The Holy Bible

The Holy Bible, the word of God, not only gives us wisdom for salvation, but also gives us instruction on how to live lives pleasing and faithful to God. When Asa obeyed God and relied on God, God granted him periods of peace and protection. Likewise, when we follow the word of God and rely on Him, He will also grant us periods of peace. Then, we can use these periods of peace to strengthen our defenses against Satan by reading the Bible, praying, and memorizing Scripture.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

- 1. What were some of the things that Asa did that pleased God?** He removed foreign altars and idols; he removed Maachah as queen mother; and he made a covenant to seek after God.
- 2. How did God bless Asa when he followed God's teachings? Why is this a great blessing?** He granted the kingdom of Judah periods of peace and protection. These times of peace allowed Asa to build up the defenses for when the enemies attacked.
- 3. Asa fortified the cities to protect against the enemies' attacks. How can we strengthen our faith against the attacks of Satan?** We can strengthen our faith by reading the Bible, praying to God, and memorizing Scripture.
- 4. Name the two times when King Asa relied on others rather than on God.** Asa relied on Ben-Hadad when the king of Israel came up against him. He also put his total trust in the doctors when his feet were diseased.
- 5. Why was God displeased that King Asa went to Ben-Hadad for help?** God was displeased when King Asa put his trust in man and not in God.
- 6. How did Asa react when the prophet Hanani came to speak to him about seeking help from the king of Syria?** He became upset and threw Hanani in jail. Then, he started oppressing the people.



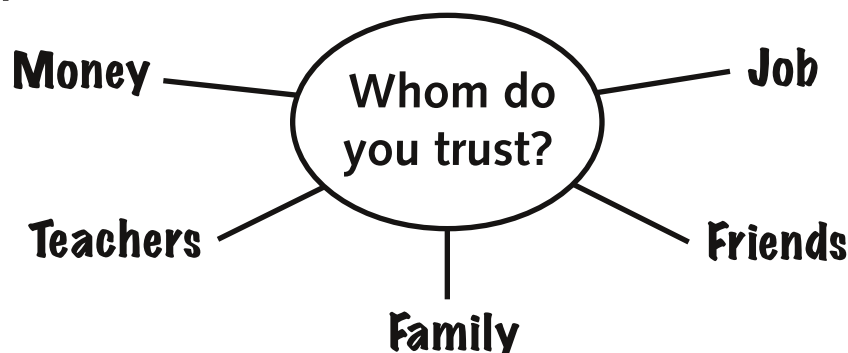
Life Application

10 Minutes

WHOM DO YOU TRUST?

Early in his reign, Asa trusted God and pleased God in all that he did. Unfortunately, towards the latter part of his reign, Asa's confidence and faith in God failed. He turned to other kings and doctors to help deliver his country and cure his diseased feet.

What are some of the things that people put their confidence or trust in today? [Have students brainstorm and write their answers on the board. Some possible answers: money, own abilities or knowledge, parents and friends, doctors, teachers, careers, etc.]



Why do we place our trust in these things instead of in God?

1. We Trust in Things/People We Can See

It's easy to trust in things or people that we can see. God, on the other hand, cannot be seen. Although God cannot be seen, His Spirit is everywhere, and He is all-powerful and all-knowing. While man's wisdom and resources are very limited, God can cause extraordinary and impossible things to happen.

2. To Be in Control

We all like to do things our own way and to be in control. Placing our trust in God seems harder because we have to humble ourselves, let go of our own will, and submit to God's way. But sometimes, doing things our own way can get us into a bigger mess than before. God doesn't want us to go through that. He wants us to trust in Him. Since He is our heavenly Father, He will always take care of us and do what is best for us.

3. To Get Quick Answers

We depend on man for the answers to our problems because we want quick answers, but quick answers may not be the best answers. Have you ever tried trusting in someone, who genuinely wants to help you, only to find out eventually that they can't help? Maybe you receive so many different views that you're not sure which one is the best for you, and you become more confused. Instead of quick answers, we ought to seek for real answers to our problems, answers that can come only from trusting in God.

4. We Forget that God Is Almighty

Although God has placed people in our lives to support or help us, He doesn't want us to rely on them solely. God wants us to remember that He is an almighty and powerful God and that, ultimately, He is in control of the outcome. In our daily lives, we need to think about God's wonderful deeds so that we will know to turn to Him in times of need.

I. Scenarios

Instructions

1. Have students read the following scenarios.
2. Divide the students into groups of two or three. Have each group pick and act out a scenario. Each group will work on the problem and decide the outcome to the scenario. They may choose to provide an outcome where the characters end up putting their trust in other things/people. Have them think about the consequences of making such a decision. Or, groups may choose to provide an outcome where the characters place their trust in God. Remind the students to try and find wise solutions and to have the mind of Christ as they explore the value of trust.
3. Allow enough time at the end for students to present their skits.

Scenario #1

You are on vacation at a place you've never visited before. You become separated from your parents and can't find them in the crowd. You are really worried and scared.

Scenario #2

Evan is new at the school. His teacher has placed him in a desk in front of a boy called Zach. Zach notices that Evan has large ears. "Hey, Dumbo," Zach hisses. Evan chooses to ignore him. However, every day, Zach teases Evan in this way, and when the teacher isn't looking, Zach throws things at him. Evan has told him to stop, but Zach seems to enjoy seeing Evan get upset.

Scenario #3

Abby has been scheduled to play the piano during the Friday night church service for the first time. Abby enjoys playing hymns, but she doesn't like playing in front of people because she gets very nervous and makes a lot of silly mistakes. Abby is so nervous that she has even dreamed of herself playing very badly.

II. What does the Bible say about trusting in God?

1. Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit (Jer 17:7-8).
2. Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many, and in horsemen because they are very strong, but who do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the Lord! Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses are flesh, and not spirit. When the Lord stretches out His hand, both he who helps will fall, and he who is helped will fall down; they all will perish together (Isa 31:1, 3).



Activity

"Trust" Wall Hanging

10-15 Minutes

Objective: To reinforce the teaching that we can trust in God in times of need.

Materials

- Long roll of butcher paper or individual pieces of blank paper
- Markers

Instructions

1. Lay a long roll of paper down in the middle of a large table. Alternatively, you can have students work alone on individual sheets of drawing paper.
2. Have the students write today's memory verse along the edges of the paper.
3. Ask students to draw pictures of a time when they trusted in God. It can be taken from their own lives or they can choose to draw a Bible character who turned to God in times of need.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. True
2. False
3. True
5. A
6. B
7. C
8. We can strengthen our faith by reading the Bible, praying, and memorizing Scripture.
9. Answers may vary.

King Asa

The Bible describes Asa as a loyal king. How did Asa show his loyalty?

Instructions: Read the following Bible passages and fill in the blanks.

A. Read 2 Chronicles 14:1-5.

Asa removed idolatry in Judah.

What are some things you need to remove from your life so that God is first place in your life?

B. Read 2 Chronicles 14:6-8.

Asa fortified the cities of Judah with walls, towers, gates, and bars.

Why was this a wise thing to do? (Asa used the times of peace to prepare for the day when enemies would come against them. The moment that enemies attack, it is already too late to try to prepare defenses.)

How can we fortify our hearts to defend against Satan's attacks? (We can strengthen our faith every day by reading the Bible, praying, and memorizing Scripture.)

C. Read 2 Chronicles 14:9-15.

Asa relied on the Lord during battle.

How did Asa demonstrate his trust in God? (Asa did not rely on his strong defenses. He called on the mighty name of God to deliver him from his enemy.)

How can we rely on God in times of trouble? (We need to seek and trust God first in every circumstance. We should not rely on our own wisdom or abilities, but ask God to direct us, as He knows what is best.)

D. Read 2 Chronicles 15:2-7.

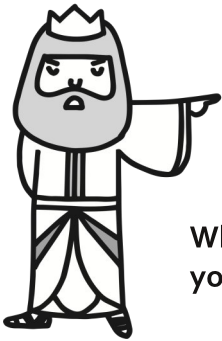
Asa and the people made a covenant to seek God.

How did God bless Asa and the nation of Judah? (God brought peace upon the land.)

King Asa

The Bible describes Asa as a loyal king. How did Asa show his loyalty?

Instructions: Read the following Bible passages and fill in the blanks.



A. Read 2 Chronicles 14:1-5.

Asa removed _____ in Judah.

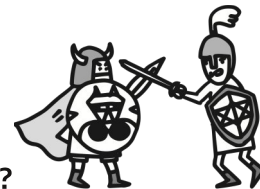
What are some things you need to remove from your life so that God is first place in your life?

B. Read 2 Chronicles 14:6-8.

Asa _____ the _____ of Judah with _____, _____, _____ and _____.

Why was this a wise thing to do?

How can we fortify our hearts to defend against Satan's attacks?



C. Read 2 Chronicles 14:9-15.

Asa _____ on the _____ during _____.

How did Asa demonstrate his trust in God?

How can we rely on God in times of trouble?

D. Read 2 Chronicles 15:2-7.

Asa and the people made a _____ to _____ God.

How did God bless Asa and the nation of Judah?

Asa Fails Two Tests



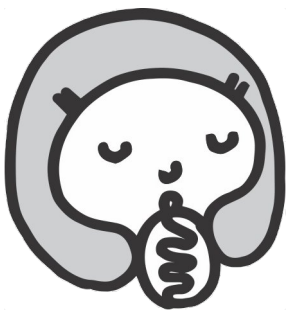
1. In the space below, draw or describe how King Asa failed the test in his 36th year.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a student to draw or describe how King Asa failed the test in his 36th year.

2. In the space below, draw or describe what caused King Asa to fail his second test.

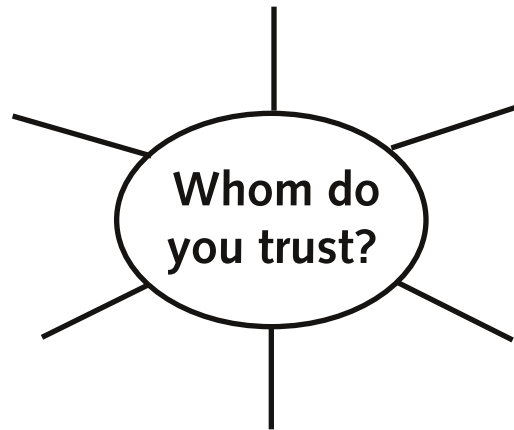
A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a student to draw or describe what caused King Asa to fail his second test.

3. Even though Asa trusted God in the beginning of his reign, what lessons can we learn from his later years?



Whom Do You Trust?

a. In the circle below, write down the things that people trust in today.

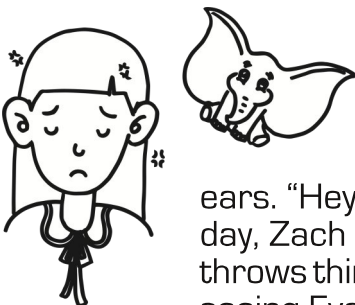


b. Why do we place our trust in these things instead of on God?

Scenarios

Scenario #1

You are on vacation at a place you've never visited before. You become separated from your parents and can't find them in the crowd. You are really worried and scared.

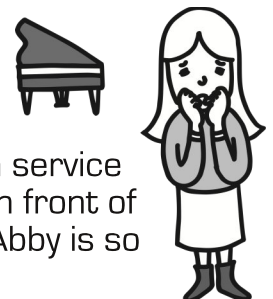


Scenario #2

Evan is new at the school. His teacher has placed him in a desk in front of a boy called Zach. Zach notices that Evan has large ears. "Hey, Dumbo," Zach hisses. Evan chooses to ignore him. However, every day, Zach teases Evan in this way, and when the teacher isn't looking, Zach throws things at him. Evan has told him to stop, but Zach seems to enjoy seeing Evan get upset.

Scenario #3

Abby has been scheduled to play the piano during the Friday night church service for the first time. Abby enjoys playing hymns, but she doesn't like playing in front of people because she gets very nervous and makes a lot of silly mistakes. Abby is so nervous that she has even dreamed of herself playing very badly.



What Does the Bible Say about Trusting God?

Instructions: Read the two Bible verses and fill in the contrasting consequences of those who trust and don't trust in God.

[Jeremiah 17:7-8]

Blessed is the man who _____ in the Lord, and whose _____ is the Lord. For he shall be like a _____ planted by the waters, which spreads out its _____ by the river, and will not _____ when _____ comes; but its leaf will be _____, and will not be _____ in the year of _____, nor will cease from yielding _____.



[Isaiah 31:1, 3]

Woe to those who go down to _____ for help, and _____ on _____, who _____ in _____ because they are many, and in _____ because they are very _____, but who do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the Lord! Now the Egyptians are _____, and not God; and their horses are _____, and not spirit. When the Lord stretches out His hand, both he who helps will _____, and he who is helped will _____; they all will perish together.

E2 Year 3 Book 4 Lesson 2—King Asa

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Weekly Bible Reading: _____

Bible Reading: Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

Prayer: Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (**Psalm 121:1-2**)

True or False

- Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of God; he removed foreign altars and idols and made a covenant to seek after God. _____
- When Baasha, king of Israel, attacked Asa, King Asa fully trusted in God to deliver him. _____
- Because King Asa did not seek after God and relied on Ben-Hadad for help, God punished him with wars. _____

Multiple Choice

- _____ : When Asa was loyal and obedient, God _____.
 - Granted peace throughout his kingdom
 - Granted him great riches and military power
 - Gave him many sons and daughters
- _____ : When the prophet corrected Asa for seeking help from Ben-Hadad King of Syria, Asa _____.
 - Humbled himself and repented before God
 - Was angry with the prophet and had him put in prison
 - Sulked and refused to eat
- _____ : Towards the end of his life, Asa did not trust in God _____.
 - When his enemies invaded the country
 - When his sons and daughters were captured by enemies
 - When he was afflicted with a disease in his feet

Short Answer

7. Asa fortified the cities to protect against attacks from enemies. How can we strengthen our faith against the attacks of Satan?

8. Why does God want us to rely on Him? Share a time when you relied on the Lord.