

05

1 KINGS 15:9-22

SIN'S RIPPLE EFFECT



THIS WEEK'S **focus**

Some people think this world is more evil than it's ever been, but sin has been around since the garden of Eden. What really matters is not how much sin we see in the world, but what we choose to do when we are tempted to participate. Giving in and going with the flow might seem like a good idea in the moment; it might even bring a little bit of temporary relief, thrill, or happiness. However, the long term effects of decisions that don't honor God are never worth the payoff. The only way you will ever find true joy and peace in the middle of the madness is to trust God and let Him guide you step by step from this day forward. Leave the past in the past and give God your future, and you'll discover, like King Asa, that when we repent, we can stop sin's ripple effect.



CENTRAL **truth**

When we repent, we can stop sin's ripple effect.



EXPLORE

scripture

1 KINGS 15:9-22

1 KINGS 15:9-15

9 In the twentieth year of Israel's King Jeroboam, Asa became king of Judah, **10** and he reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem. His grandmother's name was Maacah daughter of Abishalom. **11** Asa did what was right in the LORD's sight, as his ancestor David had done. **12** He banished the male cult prostitutes from the land and removed all of the idols that his ancestors had made. **13** He also removed his

grandmother Maacah from being queen mother because she had made an obscene image of Asherah. Asa chopped down her obscene image and burned it in the Kidron Valley. **14** The high places were not taken away, but Asa was wholeheartedly devoted to the LORD his entire life. **15** He brought his father's consecrated gifts and his own consecrated gifts into the LORD's temple: silver, gold, and utensils.

1 KINGS 15:16-19

16 There was war between Asa and King Baasha of Israel throughout their reigns. **17** Israel's King Baasha went to war against Judah. He built Ramah in order to keep anyone from leaving or coming to King Asa of Judah. **18** So Asa withdrew all the silver and gold that remained in the treasuries of the LORD's temple and the treasuries of the royal palace and gave it to his servants.

Then King Asa sent them to Ben-hadad son of Tabrimmon son of Hezion king of Aram who lived in Damascus, saying, **19** "There is a treaty between me and you, between my father and your father. Look, I have sent you a gift of silver and gold. Go and break your treaty with King Baasha of Israel so that he will withdraw from me."

1 KINGS 15:20-22

20 Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel. He attacked Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah, all Chinnereth, and the whole land of Naphtali. **21** When Baasha heard about it, he quit building Ramah and

stayed in Tirzah. **22** Then King Asa gave a command to everyone without exception in Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and the timbers Baasha had built it with. Then King Asa built Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah with them.

DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE 1 KINGS 15:11

7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about man?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

1 KINGS 15:9-15

DWELL

As king, Asa had a choice to make: he could repeat the sins of his father and grandfather, or he could choose to follow God. Unlike his father and his grandfather, Asa chose God, as his ancestor David had done. He didn't completely remove the high places of pagan worship, but in the forty-one years that he reigned over Judah, he removed the idols his ancestors had built as well as the practice of sacred cult prostitution, and removed his idolatrous grandmother from her position of authority in the kingdom.



What kind of pressure do you think Asa felt from his family to participate in pagan practices? Do you think it was difficult for him to do things differently?



When you feel pressure from friends or family to participate in sin, how can you stay devoted to your faith?

MEMORIZE

Print out 1 Kings 15:11 and read it slowly, highlighting key words and phrases that stand out to you. Review this printout throughout the week.

PRAY

Ask God to give you the courage to stand firm in your faith, even if the people around you do not.

day 2

1 KINGS 15:16-19

DWELL



Where did King Asa get the gold and silver that he sent to Ben-hadad to secure their treaty? Why was this a big deal?



Why is it so easy for us to doubt God's ability to provide for us? How can you respond when you are tempted to doubt?

Even though King Asa was more faithful to the Lord than the kings before him, he wasn't perfect. When King Baasha of Israel went to war against Judah, Asa used the gold and silver from the temple treasuries to make a treaty with the king of Aram for protection. Instead of relying on God's protection, he did what people have done all throughout history when they doubted God's ability to provide: he took matters into his own hands.

MEMORIZE

Split 1 Kings 15:11 into 4-5 sections, and write each section on a different note card. Try to memorize a different note card each day.

PRAY

Thank God that even when we doubt Him. He is good, faithful, and able to do more than we can imagine.

day 3

1 KINGS 15:20-22

DWELL

On the surface, it seemed like the treaty with Aram worked out in Judah's favor. Ben-hadad, the king of Aram, accepted the gifts that Asa gave him and attacked the cities of Israel, forcing Baasha to retreat. Asa was able to strengthen his own kingdom and its fortifications in case of future attacks. But what was the cost? Asa didn't give credit to the Lord for these successes, and the temple's treasuries were empty. How much greater would his victory have been if he had leaned on God?



What might Asa's actions have communicated to Aram, Israel, and the other nations about his relationship with God?



Do you trust God to provide for you in times of trouble? How do your words and actions back that up?

MEMORIZE

Add reminders to your phone, computer, or calendar to read 1 Kings 15:11 every morning and night this week.

PRAY

Ask God to help you demonstrate your trust in Him not just through your words, but through your actions.



day 4

LUKE 14:25-27

DWELL

Following Jesus is simple, but it's not easy. It comes with a cost, and Jesus didn't hesitate to remind His followers of this. Following Jesus can't be half-hearted—we can't follow Him while also making compromises for the other people in our lives. If we only give half of our attention and devotion to Him—only following Him when it doesn't interfere with the rest of our lives—then we aren't showing devotion to Him at all. “Hating” our “father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters” doesn't mean feeling hatred for them—it means that we need to place Jesus first without exception.

↓ Why might Jesus's words have been difficult for His followers to hear? How do you find these words difficult to accept?

→ What might it look like to follow Jesus this way in your day-to-day life?

MEMORIZE

Write 1 Kings 15:11 on a sticky note and post it somewhere you will see it often, like a bathroom mirror or notebook. Read it to yourself each time you see it.

PRAY

Thank God for inviting you to follow Him as a disciple, and ask for the strength to follow even when it feels difficult.

day 5

MATTHEW 12:46-50

DWELL

In the kingdom of God, “family” takes on a new meaning. Our family is no longer defined by just the people we grow up with, live under the same roof with, or the people we share genetics with. These can still be true things, but more importantly, our family becomes the body of believers around the world who follow Jesus faithfully. Like King Asa, we can decide that just because our relatives behaved a certain way in the past, we don't need to follow that same path. Instead we can choose to join with other believers in the family of God, doing His will and following His ways.

↑ Was Jesus being disrespectful to his mother and brothers when He said these things? Why or why not?

↔ How do you personally live out life in the family of God? What does that look like?

MEMORIZE

Write 1 Kings 15:11 on the center of a piece of paper, then add drawings or doodles around the edges that relate to the Scripture.

PRAY

Thank God that He gives us a community of other believers to encourage, support, and love us.