

RATHMINES BIBLE SCHOOL- 2006

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JEHOIADA THE PRIEST

Speaker: Brother Jim Cowie

Study #1 - The rise of a teaching priest in Israel

Thanks very much, brother Stephen, and good morning brethren and sisters.

It might take me a while to get down to it here in the sessions this morning, because I just had a wonderful session with the teenagers and I was on fire, and of course, when you're on fire you get pretty hot, so I came into Shane's session rather wet, and I couldn't even think about my session because he engaged my mind for the 35 minutes that I was here, and I think that was a very wonderful second session as well.

It works out then as we come to our third session, that we can engage our minds with these things, because there is a lot of exhortations here for us, as we look at ourselves, b&s, against a mirror of the scriptures and the characters that appear in therein . One of them, of course, is this wonderful man, Jehoiada the priest. I'd like you to turn to 2 Chronicles 24, because here we have Jehoiada's epitaph. Now if at the end of the day, I could have an epitaph of my life, anything remotely like this, I'd be happy! And here's the record of the death of this man in 2 Chronicles 24 and verse 15, 'But Jehoiada waxed old and was full of days' (words which mean, filled to satisfaction, Rotherham translates it, he became satisfied with days. '130 years old was he when he died'. Even if Christ didn't come in our life time, none of us are going to make 130, unless you are particularly unique; the oldest person in the world today is 112. But here was a man who was certainly full of days, but the great thing about it, b&s, was that those 130 years bar a handful in childhood was spent in faithful, diligent service to his God, and that is something that not every Christadelphian arrives at, at the end of their life.

The great challenge of our times, is to remain steadfast and faithful to the things that we espouse in our early days, which we knew were right; to remain firm and rock-like, steady to the end. How many of our number have made shipwreck of their lives in their last days. This year, I along with many of you, have suffered the loss of mentors and of close friends. I'll tell you something, b&s, I find it hard to think about, because when I do, it breaks me up.

Are you going to be steadfast to the end of your days? Is God going to write an epitaph over your life like this one? That's our challenge! In verse 16 it says, 'and they buried him in the city of David among the kings'. They buried him among the kings because he was effectively the king. He'd been the king during the early years of Joash, he was the man upon whom Joash depended absolutely for guidance and direction, and of course, when Jehoiada died, Joash collapsed, and they buried him among the kings, but they didn't bury Joash among the kings! Because he had been a king, and we're going to see as we proceed in our studies, that this theme of **king - priest**, will underline all of the studies. When we get, God willing, to our final study, as we said the other day, to

Uzziah who in his pretention wanted to be a king and a priest, we're going to see how that theme was like a vein of gold which Shane was talking about, runs through this series, and it culminates, of course, not only in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ the great King-Priest, but those who share that wonderful privilege with Him, who will be kings and priests in the age shortly to dawn.

We're going to be talking as I said, about events subsequent to the return of Christ in our studies in due time, God willing. It says in this record, 'that they buried him among the kings because he had done good in Israel'. Now, b&s, you've got to read carefully, Jehoiada, as far as I know, never went anyway near Israel in the north, he remained in Jerusalem, or at least thereabouts for the best part of his life; but when God looks down upon the life of this man and He says, 'he had done good in Israel', you and I, if we were writing this record, we would have written, he did good in Judah, wouldn't you? but not what God says. You see, the message is coming home to us, b&s, is that if we stand for what is right, if we are unmoved by the degeneration of society and the brotherhood (and that's happening) if we stand firm for the things we know are right, we might never go near 90% of the brotherhood, but we'll have an effect upon them. The good of Jehoiada was effective in **all of Israel**. Those in the north who had any inkling of truth in them, when they looked down upon their cousins, their brethren in the south in Judah, would have heard about Jehoiada, 'oh, he's that one that sticks with the foundations of the truth; you can't budge him, don't even bother trying!' You know, he's the one that was there that guided Joash through his first 30 years of rulership, and as soon as he died, apostasy settled into Judah. He had an effect upon the rest of the brotherhood, and that's the way that God looked upon him.

He did good in Israel! and then it says in the record in verse 16, 'both toward God and toward His house', and there is the keeping of the two great commandments of scripture. The first great commandment is, thou should love Yahweh thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and strength', God has to come first, b&s, in everything; He must be first, but there is a second great commandment which is allied to it. For no one can love God and not love their brethren. If they do not give their lives for the salvation of their brethren, then they do not understand the love of God. If you love God, you will behave like God, and **He is dedicated to the salvation of all men**, He doesn't want to see anyone perish. So this man, Jehoiada had observed the two great commandments; he loved God and put Him first in every consideration, and those who belonged to Him, toward His house, the brotherhood, the ecclesia. B&S, it's that kind of epitaph that's going to be written over your life? If Christ comes as soon as we believe He will, is that the last entry that will go into the record of our lives? You know, the individual book or record that is kept by the angels who have been sent to overshadow our life, keeping a record, David believed that, Malachi says that's what happening chapter 3 verse 16, 'angels before our God recording what we do in life, recording the significant things that indicate character. Is this going to be the last entry in your record, that sees your name preserved in the book of life? that you have done good in Israel both toward God and toward His house? I can't answer that for you, but can only answer it for myself, and I'll tell you something, there are moments in the last decade or so of my life, when I seriously wondered about that. When you look around and see what's happening, none

of us would be foolish enough to think it's not going to come to pass, as it did in the life of king Asa, who we will consider this morning; for we won't be like Joash! because it is happening to people, and that's the seriousness of the warning that we have before us.

Now let's have a look at the life of this man. Here's a chart which I think many of you may have seen, the chronology of the Kings of Israel and Judah. When you look at the life span

of Jehoiada, it covers the period from somewhere in the reign of Rehoboam when he was born, and goes right through to the end of the reign of Joash, a 130 years. As you can see, if you follow the green line, that is the history of Judah; this man's life is creeping up towards not quite half but well over a third of the period of the history of the nation of Judah, he was there from birth to death. Yet all we know about him is from the time of the rise of Athaliah through to the time of his death during the reign of Joash. At least, that is all that we are told plainly about him; but I think that we can find and search out that he was there and God knew he was there, and in fact, refers to him.

I want to come back now to 2 Chronicles 14, let's skip back to the time when I believe, Jehoiada emerges as an effective force in the ecclesia of Judah. Here are some brief details about king Asa; Asa's name, of course, means 'physician' (609) and he was certainly that as we shall see. We're going to see that he ruled for 41 years and most of that was in faithfulness; but unfortunately, as I said a little earlier, this man collapsed, his faith disintegrated, his confidence in his God failed towards the end of his life, and yet he was, b&s, a great reformer, in fact, he was Judah's first reformer. You know, it's always hardest to be the first reformer; when you come into a scene like he came into as a young man, where the most dominant person in the kingdom was the favourite wife of his grandfather, Rehoboam. You know, it's one of the significant things (and you've got to pick this up when you're reading the scriptures, you have to look hard and pick up these things, and ask the question, why is it that we're normally given the name of the wife of the kings of Israel and Judah? but in this case we're not given the name of the wife of Asa). You see, when you read in the record of 2 Chronicles 15 and verse 16 these words, 'And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove'. In fact, this woman that's referred to here, Maachah, was the favourite wife of Rehoboam, and was actually his grandmother. No mention of his wife, only a focus upon this dominant woman; she's called a 'principal lady', that word 'queen' (1377) has the idea of the principal lady of the kingdom. So here is a woman who is in absolute control, she has got an iron grip on the kingdom of Judah, just as Athaliah was to have in due time. And Maachah was an idolater, it says there in verse 16 that he removed her from being the principal lady because she had made an idol, this means a 'terror' or 'a cause of trembling' (4656), Rotherham translates it, a monstrous thing, and I won't go into details, I don't think I need to go into details. We all know what the cult worship of the Caananites was like, b&s, they would make even the worst inventors of internet sites blush. It was filthy stuff, openly and publicly displayed and they practised things there in the presence of those images, that would make the modern world blush. Yahweh said of this people who practised these things, that even a man spued them out of his mouth because of their filth; and here she was in control of the ecclesia. We know in the times of Rehoboam

that there were sodomites in the land. But there were some good things, but corruption was in control and the first thing that king Asa did was to stamp out that idolatry, to unseat the principal lady, to destroy her idolatry, and to set out on a new course. It's very hard to do that, you know, it's the old story, 'that blood is thicker than water', this is his grandmother! So, b&s, we need to appreciate here that this Asa, this physician, was a wonderful and he devoted the best part of his life, to instituting a reformation in Judah that was unequalled in history. I'm not saying that he was the greatest reformer because, of course, at the end of his life he failed. Josiah was unquestionably the greatest reformer, whose reformation only had an effect on a few people, essential and critical for the divine purpose. But only on a few people (it was generally a failure) and the great thing about Asa was that his reformation was universally successful. There wasn't one single person in the ecclesia that wasn't 100% behind it. When have you seen a reformation where a 100% of the brotherhood is fully committed? It doesn't happen, does it? but it did happen in the days of king Asa and we'll have a look at that briefly here this morning.

So here is Judah's first reformer. Now there are not so significant references in the life of king Asa as this one, 2 Chronicles 21 verse 12, and if you would turn to it, we'll have a quick look at it. They're kind of writing to him and the him here is king Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat; this is some 12 or 13 years after Elijah had been taken away in the story of 2 Kings 2, and this is a writing that came from Elijah the prophet who was somewhere perhaps over in Gilead and Jehoram receives this letter. 'Thus saith Yahweh God of David thy father, because thou hast not walked in all the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah.' So as far as God was concerned, king Asa although his personal faith and confidence in God failed, he had one thing that could be said about him, he at least had never turned to idolatry, he never turned away from his God and serve another God, like so many of the kings of both Judah and Israel did. He had that about him, there just was a sadness about his end.

Whenever we read the record of this man's life, if you come back to 2 Chronicles 15 and verse 17, it says this about him; 'the high places were not taken away out of Israel, nevertheless the high places were not taken away out of Israel, nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.' This doesn't seem to line up with the facts, does it? because when we read chapter 16, when he makes the critical mistake of sending to Ben-hadad king of Syria, to ask for help against Baasha king of Israel who was threatening his northern borders and tried to stop the immigration from the north to the south, he made that mistake and Yahweh sent to him a prophet who said, 'look, you've made a very serious mistake here, Asa, and you're not going to prosper in this, because you have relied upon Gentile help and not upon Me, which you did in your earlier life; you did rely on Me then, why are you changing horses here?'. Asa was unable to accept the rebuke and we know what happened, he slapped the prophet in the stocks, locked his feet in the stocks, he bound the word of God, and Yahweh smote him poetically in his feet and he died of a disease, a dreadful disease in his feet. Feet, that's about walk, isn't it? his feet were corrupt, his walk had been corrupted yet he never turned to idols; is this beginning to sound familiar, b&s, some of the things we've been seeing going on? And this is what worries me, I don't think I'll abandon my God and turn to idols, but what

I fear this act; I fear that I might lose my personal confidence in God and cease to lean upon Him as Asa had done!

So when we read this phrase, 'he was perfect all his days', it's not talking about being perfect in every aspect, it's talking about one thing he didn't do, he didn't turn away to idolatry. That word 'perfect' (8003) 'shalem' means to 'be complete or safe' and we read in the record at 1 Kings 11 verse 4 that Solomon's heart was not perfect with Yahweh his God, as was the heart of his father David, because Solomon turned away and built altars to false gods, so that language is also used in Deuteronomy 18. So what do we have here in this man? he's a man who lost his faith and trust but did not turn to strange gods.

I want you to consider with me how the scripture portrays the 2 aspects of the balance of king Asa's life. You have a look with me at the end of chapter 14 of 2 Chronicles - just a brief word, I haven't got time to go into all the detail, and I'm sure that most of you are familiar with the story anyway, but this is what happened in Asa's life. When he came to the throne he ejected the principal lady, he cleaned up idolatry, Yahweh gave him peace, the kingdom was quiet before him in verse 5, he built fenced cities, he was given rest, he appeals to his people in verse 7, 'we sought Yahweh our God, we sought Him and He hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered', when you read this kind of language, read it in 2006, we believe this is starting now, and this is what we should be doing in ecclesial life, this is what ecclesial reformation is about! It's about people going back to the foundations, reestablishing them, making sure they're firm, building in the house of God; do you know what happens? God gives you relative peace. Is your ecclesia peaceful? If it's troubled, it's probably troubled because you have people who are undermining the foundations. They're wanting to point in a different direction, who are wanting to allow in things that didn't use to be allowed in. That's why you get trouble; when the foundations are firm and everyone is heading in the same direction, normally you get peace. Yes, times of testing will come along because God wants to know how **firm that faith and confidence in Him really is**, so He will test it and He does, because that's what happens in 2 Chronicles 14, He built up the ecclesia, He built up the army in verse 8, they prospered and then in verse 9, Zerah the Ethiopian comes against them. 'Zerah' means 'a rising of light' (2226) and I believe, he's the ancient equivalent of the modern humanistic theories that are destroying the foundations of society and are undermining the ecclesias. It appears to be light, doesn't it! it appears to be a rising of light, and when they talk, these humanists. it sounds so feasible! all men are one! we're all equal and fraternal! you know, we can bring all these people from foreign countries and put them in Australia and we'll all live as a happy family! There won't be any barbeques, and anyway, we all live very happy as one big family! Sounds great, doesn't it? it doesn't work, but it sound great; and the brotherhood is being attacked by those principles, you know, liberty, equality and fraternity, those principles are undermining the standards and principles by which ecclesias have lived for so long. It happens!

So what did Asa do? He cried to Yahweh in verse 11, there was a million men in this Ethiopian army and the Ethiopian is not going to change his spots. He couldn't resist

this power in his own strength and he knew it. So in verse 11, 'He cried to Yahweh and said, 'It is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Yahweh our God, for we rest on Thee'. Now if you haven't marked this in your bible, it's a little thing that you can do, that word **rest** there is the Hebrew word 'shaan' (8172) and it means 'to support oneself or to lean on one'. Rotherham translates it, 'on Thy do we lean', (I'm so exhausted from speaking with the teenagers that I'm leaning on the lectern) 'on Thy do we lean, we need His support; He understood his need and if we are going to confront the devastating influences of Zerah the Ethiopian today, we're going to have to lean upon our God. We can't handle this in our own strength; he knew that, so Yahweh smote (5062) the Ethiopians, it says in verse 12, and it says in verse 13, 'and they were **destroyed** (7665) before Yahweh, and the word means 'to burst', and a million men were scattered and he chased them out of the ecclesia.

'He stopped at the border of Gerar'; he wasn't going to go into the wilderness, he just chased them out of the brotherhood and then he came home. Again, you have to read carefully, that word 'rest' there in verse 11 'shaan' is used again in chapter 16 verse 7 twice, when Hanani the seer comes to Asa king of Judah he said unto him, 'because thou hast relied on the king of Syria', that word 'relied' is the same Hebrew word rendered 'rest' in chapter 14 verse 11; it's used again in chapter 16 verse 7, and it's not relied on Yahweh thy God. In verse 8, 'Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst **rely**, because you **leaned** upon Yahweh, He delivered them into thine hand'. Don't you remember that Asa? What was the time difference between what happened in 14 and what happened in chapter 16? Twenty years! that's how long it took, b&s, for his confidence in his God to be undermined, 20 years!

When you come back to chapter 14 it says this in verse 15, at the end of verse 14 it says, 'there was exceeding much spoil that they took. They smote also the tents of cattle, and carried away sheep and camels in abundance. And returned to Jerusalem'. Now it's pretty obvious when you cast your eye across to verse 11 of the next chapter when it says, 'they offered unto Yahweh at the same time, of the spoil 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep'; okay, you don't read of oxen in chapter 14 verse 15, do you? You only read of 2 animals, sheep and camels; that's all God is interested in telling us about, do you know why? because as you can see, the sheep and the camel represent the two phrases of Asa's life! Sheep will hearken to the shepherd's voice as Asa did to Yahweh's prophet as we're going to see in chapter 15 verse 8, but camels are notoriously self willed and give the appearance, don't they, of being totally disinterested in receiving commandments? You've seen the look on a camel's face, sometimes it's like talking to some teenagers, isn't it? 'who? me! you mean me? he just goes to Sunday morning meetings, he never opens his bible in the middle of the week! Sheep listen, the camel disinterested! Sheep depend on the shepherd to lead them to still waters and green pastures like Asa did in his early years; but the camel is self reliant, a camel can go a week without water, has nothing to do with his daily readings. You know the Christadelphian camel, he just goes to Sunday morning meetings and may have a sleep as well, he just goes for the meeting; he never opens his bible in the middle of the

week. A camel can lose up to 1/3 of its body weight in fluid and not perish but humans 1/8th; sheep are submissive and trusting as Asa was, we rest on thee, whereas camels are complacent, self reliant as Asa became in his final years. Sheep are **clean** under the Law, they were offered in sacrifice, they represented Asa in the first part of his reign, but camels were unclean under the Law, why? well, they chewed the cud, but they were not cloven-hoofed, they were unclean in their feet like Asa when he died, he was corrupt in his feet. You see, when God chooses the imagery, He's telling us something! the two sides, the two cautions of the life of this man. One of them fabulous! exemplary! the other one a serious warning to every Christadelphian. It can happen to us.

So let's come back then to what happened in the first part of Asa's life. He had this marvellous victory in chapter 14 over Zerah the Ethiopian, and as he was coming back with all the spoil in chapter 15 verse 1, it says this, 'And the spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded. He went out to meet Asa and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin', now the verses I'm going to quote to you and emphasize, verse 2 and then again in verse 7, are the kinds of verses that can go on plaques on the wall in your home, they're that kind of passages of scripture. Critical! and here's the message, verse 2, 'Yahweh is with you while ye be with Him', David had said that in 1 Chronicles 28 verse 9 in talking to Solomon, 'Yahweh is with you while ye be with Him; if you seek Him, He will be found of you (this isn't rocket science, is it?) 'but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you'. The conclusion, we are the arbitrators of whether or not God is with us; we decide but He is absolutely consistent, if you seek Him you will find Him, if you forsake Him, He will forsake you. And it happened in Asa's life, and the record goes on to say, verse 3, 'Now for a long season Israel hath been, he says, without the true God and without a teaching priest and without law'. So when you come to read those words again, Israel clearly, (it's not just talking about Judah because Judah at this time consisted of many who had come from Israel, so it was a microcosm of the whole nation in that sense) but God looked down upon the whole brotherhood; there was Judah and Israel in the north, and they were in apostasy and weren't any different, But God looked upon the whole thing and said, 'at least, at least here in Judah there is something that is sound upon which building can be done'. For a long season, He says, Israel has been without the true God, that term 'true' is the Hebrew word 'emeth' (571) that's the word used in Exodus 34 verse 6, of the stability, the firmness, the faithfulness, the **truth** which is the essence of the character of God; He is incorruptible, He cannot be undermined, you can't corrupt Him, He's always consistent! There's nothing you can do to stop Him from being true to Himself. Our problem is to be like Him! But being without the true God and without law, God's law was not the focus of life in Judah in the times of Rehoboam or even Abijah, Asa's father.

Then it says the outcome of this in verses 5 and 6, verse 4 says, 'But when they in their trouble did turn unto Yahweh God of Israel, and sough Him, He was found of them'. This is proof of verse 2 then, isn't it? Verse 5, 'In those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries'. That's what happens when there is apostasy. Verse 6, 'And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city; for God did vex them with all adversity'. That is the outcome! b&s, there are simple lessons in that, aren't there? very simple lessons.

I want to step back now to that phrase in verse 3, that 'Israel had been without a teaching priest'. This word 'teaching' in verse 3, is the Hebrew word 'yarah' (3384) it means to show, point out, to direct, to teach'; to instruct has the idea of therefore, teaching or instructing. Now I want you to keep something in 2 Chronicles 15 and quickly come back to 2 Kings 12, here I believe is a simple little clue given by the Spirit in the choice of this word in these two contexts, to demonstrate that Jehoiada was active in teaching, back in the days of king Asa of Judah. We read in 2 Kings 12 verse 2, 'That Joash did that which was right (which is Joash the king) in the sight of Yahweh all his days, wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him'. This is a long way down the track in the time of the boy-king Joash and it says, 'wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him', there is our Hebrew word 'yarah' (3384), the word that is used in 2 Chronicles 15 verse 3, so when we come back to 2 Chronicles 15, I believe there's a hint there, that the teaching priest (it doesn't say priest), it says a teaching priest was now in Judah, and this was the basis of the great reformation of king Asa.

What was he teaching? He was teaching about verse 2, **how to seek Yahweh**, because the whole context is about the outcome of that! that when you do what verse 2 is saying we should do, this is the outcome if you seek Him, **He will be found of you!** Verse 4 has told us that that's the outcome will be! It is a wonderful story, b&s, and I believe, Jehoiada is right in the thick of it. Jehoiada at this time was about 30 or 31 years of age. Priests began their service at the age of 30, and the priests' lips we are told in Malachi 2 verse 7, 'should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law of Yahweh at His mouth'. There's absolutely no doubt, given what we know of Jehoiada towards the end of his life, that he was there. Now I can't say with absolute certainty that I'm prepared to accept a little hint that is given by the use of that word 'yarah', this is a reference to Jehoiada the priest in his early days, at the beginning of his ministry. He was consistent with what we know of him later in life.

So then, let's have a quick look at this great reformation of Asa. Come down to verse 7, 'Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak; for your work shall be rewarded'. There's our second plaque! Do you want to put a plaque up on your wall? this is not a bad one! **be ye strong, and let not your hands be weak;** Asa feet became weak, you'll remember, because his hands stopped working. **for your work shall be rewarded**, because we serve a true God, a God who is faithful to His promises; you seek Me, you will find Me! He won't hide Himself, He will reward your work. Verse 8, 'When Asa heard these words, he took courage. We need that, don't we? b&s, we need to take courage. 'And he put away the abominable idols (there was a reformation here!) 'he renewed the altar of Yahweh' (sacrifice was reintroduced as a principle of living the truth). Verse 9, 'He gathered all Judah and Benjamin and all the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh' (so there was a collection of the entire brotherhood; people had come down from the north and had settled in Judah) so they were involved in this. So the whole nation is gathered together in verse 9, and what did they do? well, verse 12 tells us what they did! they entered into a covenant to seek Yahweh God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul', who do you think was teaching them that? the man of whom it was said, that he had done good in Israel both toward God and toward His house! Two great commandments. But whosoever

would not seek Yahweh God of Israel should be put to death'. So there were deadly sanctions for the unwilling. Now I'm not suggesting that we issue a decree and if you don't reform after this bible school, we'll send around the mafia! That's not what this is about, b&s, but you see, these people, if I might use a term that they would never have heard of, they were fair dinkum. When I use that overseas, people look at me with blank stares, it's an Australia ism, isn't it? they were fair dinkum and that's what we need to be'; they meant it, that whosoever would not seek Yahweh God of Israel should be **put to death!** small and great, man or woman.

Verse 14, 'And they swore unto Yahweh with a loud voice; and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought Him with their whole desire (that word 'desire' means 'pleasure' or 'delight'. It was a delight for them to do this, and look at the outcome, b&s? this is not Asa's summary of what happened in his reformation, this is God's summary. 'He was found of them, and Yahweh gave them rest roundabout' verse 15; reformations can work and they usually work for two reasons. Someone points out the way with a sound undeniable basis in the scriptures, can't deny it! it's so obvious, someone points the way, a teaching priest in this case and people who are determined that that is for them, go away imbued with the spirit of reformation that they are going to make something of this. That they're going to go home from this bible school and get out that book, and read it and study it, like they've never done before. I have to say, that it is unlikely to happen in every case, because out there, sometimes in our homes, there are so many other things we can do; so many buttons that can be pressed, so many images and sounds that get in the way. So many things you can be doing, so many places that you can go, so much money swishing around in the pockets; because you see, I've been through this before. I've gone home from bible schools, b&s, determined to do something about it, and wake up 2 months later and wonder what had happened. That's our problem, we are unlikely to see a reformation like this, but wouldn't it be terrific if it could come to pass? because it's as true today as it was then, that if you seek Yahweh with all your heart and soul and strength, you will find Him!

And what will that mean for your life? You know, it will take you into the kingdom! That b&s, is the story of the reformation of Asa, the greatest in Judah's history; sadly, for the reformer, it was not to be quite like that at the end of his life. Here's a chart and it's rather arbitrary, I'll admit, a chart of the spiritual state of Judah, and you will see when you look at this chart, that Jehoiada's influence upon it was enormous. He's born back here in the time of Rehoboam when they were at a very low ebb, his reformation brought Judah to the greatest height of its history, and they failed a little bit, of course, because of his personal failure, but Jehoiada's sons were determined to restore the spiritual state of Judah, and went out with a campaign of education. Then there was a slippage, of course, coming in the reign of Athaliah, Judah came to a very low state. Then, of course, we had the revival through the work of Jehoiada, as he guided Joash in his early years. Then it's Athaliah again, then Uzziah comes along and so it goes up and down and isn't that so true of the history of the brotherhood? It's like that, isn't it? but you and I can play our part in that, here is one massive figure, who stood there like the rock of Gibraltar, unmoveable and steadfast and the impact he had on the

brotherhood was enormous. You need to think about it, but most of us, of course, do not think we can contribute all that much; do you know what? you can contribute enormously if you stay true to the things that you know to be true, and remain unmoveable to the end.

Well, it's a typical story, isn't it? Jehoshaphat, I'd like to talk about his campaign of teaching in deliberate opposition to Jezebel's. She was noted, of course, in Revelation 2 verse 20 as 'teaching my servants to commit fornication', seducing them in that direction and here, of course, we have the original Jezebel doing that in the times of Jehoshaphat king of Judah. He sent out 5 princes, 9 Levites and 2 priests to teach the entire nation in the law of Yahweh. There were 2 priests involved, Elishama (my God is heard)(476) is the meaning of his name and Jehoram (Yahweh raised)(3088), so where was Jehoiada in all this? If he's the teaching priest why wasn't he prominent in the times of Jehoshaphat the son of king Asa? Well, I feel he probably was preparing to become the high priest, because about 25 years later he became the high priest of Judah. So he was in apprenticeship you might say, to Amariah the chief priest at this time, and he was there, b&s, ready to take that role. When the time came for him to overthrow Athaliah and to put an end to that dark period in Judah's history.

So I want to conclude where I wasn't going to conclude, and that is, at the end of the life of king Asa. I want you to come, b&s, to 2 Chronicles 16 and I want to read from verse 12. This is the man who locked up God's prophet in the stocks, we find that in the record of verse 10, 'Asa was wroth with the seer who had told him that the eyes of Yahweh run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him. You've done foolishly, therefore, thou should have wars, he is told, so he puts the prophet in the stocks (that's what that word 'prison house' means, 'mahpeketh' (4115) in the Hebrew, a wrench or the stocks; he binds the feet of the prophet, he stops the word of God walking through the land. So God smites him in his feet, verse 12, in the 39 year of his reign was he diseased in his feet; until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to Yahweh, but to the physicians.' He went to the human physicians, not to the divine Physician, and that's what his name means, Asa, (609) 'the physician', the doctor, who had done so much to cure the diseases of the ecclesia of Judah. What a tragic end that is! B&S, there is a simple lesson out of this study, Yahweh is with you, while you are with Him; if you seek Him, He will be found of you; if you forsake Him, He will forsake you!.