

Ahaz

Ahaz is the abbreviated form of Jehoahaz which means “*he has grasped.*” He became king of Judah on the death of his father, Jotham, [2 Kings 16:1-4].

Ahaz followed the pagan example of the kings of Israel and did evil in the sight of the true God, even to the extent of offering his son as a burnt sacrifice to the pagan god of the Canaanites.

Early in his reign Pekah, king of Israel and Rezin, king of Syria, tried to force Ahaz to join their anti-Assyrian alliance, [2 Kings 16:5-6].

Failing in this, the two invaded Judah, who suffered heavy casualties and many taken prisoner.

King Ahaz foiled this plan by unexpectedly asking Assyria to come to his aid, [2 Kings 16:8-9].

Ahaz went to Damascus to thank the king of Assyria and pay him with treasures from the temple in Jerusalem, [2 Kings 16:17-18].

On this visit he saw a pagan altar and insisted that Uriah the priest built a similar one in Judah, [2 Kings 16:10-16], and set it up near the temple in Jerusalem.

Ahaz’s pact with the king of Assyria brought him more trouble than help, [2 Chronicles 28:20-21].

All these physical troubles that Ahaz had led to total spiritual collapse, [2 Chronicles 28:22-25]. All this provoked God to anger.

What can we learn from the life of Ahaz?

When we face trials we should not turn to other people to solve them, but to the Creator God who can use such times for our spiritual growth.

James 1:2-4 [New King James] *“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”*

The end product can be patience.

Hebrews 12:1-11 [New King James] *“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: ‘My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.’ If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”*

When we see our trials as course correction from our loving Heavenly Father the end product can be becoming holy [complete in every way] as our Creator God is, [1 Peter 1:15-16] taking on His character through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, [Galatians 5:22-25].

If we are quick to please others, as Ahaz did in his weakness, rather than pleasing the Creator God we are making people more important in our lives than God.

Ahaz's poor example caused the people to turn their back on the true Creator God and follow pagan ways. What influence does our example have on other people?

Ahaz's son Hezekiah became king of Judah after his death and was given a big challenge to re-focus the worship of the people of Judah.