

This study sheet belongs to:

Study 1. King Asa

READ: 2 Chronicles 14: 1-12, 15: 1-15, 16: 1-13



KEY VERSE:

2 Chronicles 15: 2

“Hear Me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin. The Lord is with you while you are with Him.”

King Asa was Rehoboam’s grandson and the third king to reign over Judah, following the division of the kingdom. (This is explained in Unit A - Study 4) His reign of 41 years, marked the first serious attempt at raising spiritual standards in Judah. In this study four key points are highlighted.

1) HIS COMMITMENT TO GOD: (2 Chronicles 14:2-5 & 11)

The prophet Azariah, spoke the striking words of the **Key Verse** to King Asa. Unlike his grandfather, Rehoboam, Asa sought to obey and promote God’s Word, rather than forsaking it. (Compare **2 Chronicles 14: 4** with **12: 1**) As a result of his fellowship with the Lord and his faithfulness in pleasing Him, (**verse 2**), God blessed him with peace and prosperity. For us today, the same principles hold good. **James 4: 8** says, **“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you”**. Keeping in touch with God, through His Word and prayer, are essentials, on a daily basis, if we want to enjoy His blessing in our lives.

An example of how the king’s commitment to the Lord proved most effective is seen when he is faced by an Ethiopian army, almost twice the size of his own! (It numbered one million soldiers and 300 chariots!) His prayer was concise and confident, as he believed that God would defeat them. **“Lord, it is nothing for You to help.” (verse 11)** How vital it is for us to develop characters that are marked by faith, trusting the Lord, even when the circumstances appear hopeless!

2) HIS COURAGE FOR GOD: (2 Chronicles 15: 1-9)

Following God’s victory against the Ethiopians, Asa received a challenging message from the Lord. The result was that the king **“took courage” (verse 8)** and sought to establish spiritual revival in his kingdom. Firstly he removed the false idols and repaired the altar of the Lord. (**verse 8**) When he gathered God’s people together, **“they saw that the Lord his God was with him”**. (**verse 9**) His

close contact with the Lord had increased his faith and had given him true courage to obey the Lord and the truth of His Word!

Maybe you have sung the words of this well-known hymn, which is based on King Asa’s prayer.

(2 Chronicles 14 : 11)

“We rest on Thee” - our Shield and our Defender!

We go not forth alone against the foe;

Strong in Thy strength, safe in Thy keeping tender,

“We rest on Thee and in Thy Name we go.”

Five young missionary men sang this hymn on January 3rd 1956, after a time of prayer, before making contact for the first time, with a group of Auca Indians, in the Ecuador jungle. Five days later they were savagely murdered as they attempted further contact with them. Their love for the Lord, His Word and people in spiritual need had led them to consecrate their lives to Him. Their close communion or fellowship with God had strengthened their faith and given them great courage to serve Him!

3) HIS COVENANT WITH GOD: (2 Chronicles 15: 10-15)

As the people gathered together in Jerusalem and offered sacrifices to the Lord, **“they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God ... with all their heart and with all their soul...” (verse 12)** What a commitment! They had expressed their true and wholehearted desire to be loyal and devoted to their God. (**verse 15**) As we consider this pledge made by King Asa and his subjects, we should all examine our own lives and ask ourselves, ‘What place has the Lord in my heart? Is He truly first in my desires, ambitions and life?’

4) HIS CONFIDENCE IN GOD: (2 Chronicles 16: 1-13)

Sadly, after 35 years of being a faithful king, Asa failed when he was at war with Baasha, king of Israel. Instead of seeking the Lord’s help and guidance as before, he resorted to confiding in a foreign, ungodly king. Read carefully the message of the Lord’s servant, Hanani, in **verses 7-10**. Asa had foolishly relied upon men, rather than upon God. We must beware of making the same mistake! Note the king’s reaction when He was confronted with the error of his ways. Perhaps we should ask ourselves, ‘How do I respond when I read the Word of God and it cuts right across my own actions?’ Do I ignore it, become angry, or humbly submit to it? His sad decline and failure to walk before the Lord is vividly pictured by his illness. (**verse 12**) Once again we note that **“he did not seek the Lord”**. What a tragic end to a life which, on the whole, had brought pleasure and glory to God!

Study 1. King Asa

Note for students: We suggest that you read the set Bible Readings for each Study at least two or three times to familiarise yourself with the story of each king before you attempt the Study and the Worksheet.

1 A) **OUTLINE IN YOUR OWN WORDS THE THINGS THAT ASA DID WHICH WERE "GOOD AND RIGHT IN THE EYES OF THE LORD."**

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B) **WRITE OUT A VERSE THAT SHOWS THAT ASA PLACED GREAT IMPORTANCE UPON THE WORD OF GOD BEING KNOWN IN HIS NATION.**

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2 **READ KING ASA'S PRAYER IN 2 CHRONICLES 14: 11. WHAT DOES IT TEACH US ABOUT THE LORD HIMSELF AND ALSO ABOUT ASA'S FAITH?**

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3 **ACCORDING TO AZARIAH, WHAT HAD ISRAEL BEEN WITHOUT FOR A LONG TIME?**

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4 **AS A RESULT OF HEARING GOD'S MESSAGE FROM AZARIAH AND FINDING FRESH COURAGE, WHAT DID ASA DO?**

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5 **WRITE OUT DEUTERONOMY 10: 12 TO DISCOVER HOW THE LORD'S REQUIREMENTS OF HIS PEOPLE WERE EXPRESSED BY MOSES.**

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6 **ASA WAS PREPARED TO REMOVE ONE OF HIS OWN RELATIVES FROM A POSITION OF INFLUENCE. WHO WAS THIS INDIVIDUAL AND IN WHAT WAYS DID ASA SHOW HIS DISAPPROVAL OF WHAT SHE WAS DOING?**

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7 A) **SUGGEST SOME REASONS WHY IT IS BETTER TO RELY ON THE LORD RATHER THAN UPON OTHERS OR ONESELF.**

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B) **WHAT GOOD QUALITIES WHICH WERE SEEN IN KING ASA SHOULD A YOUNG CHRISTIAN TODAY, TRY TO FOLLOW?**

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25

Total marks
for this study

This study sheet belongs to:

Study 2. King Jehoshaphat

**READ: 2 Chronicles 17: 1-9, 18: 1-4 & 28-32
19: 1-3, 20: 1-13 & 17-20**



KEY VERSE:

2 Chronicles 20: 20

“Jehoshaphat stood and said, ‘...Believe in the Lord your God and you shall be established.’”

Jehoshaphat reigned in place of his father, Asa, for 25 years. He truly loved the Lord but at times was inconsistent in his actions. If we are honest, his life probably mirrors that of our own! We seek to live for Christ, in obedience to His Word, yet because of the company we keep or the things we engage in, we fail God! Let us ask ourselves four questions as we study the life of this king.

ARE WE TRULY DIFFERENT?

One of the first positive points to note in Jehoshaphat's life was his desire to be **different**. He wanted to follow the godly example of David. **(17: 3)** It is not easy today to be seen to be different. We are pressured to think, speak and act as non-Christians do or risk being laughed at or shunned. However, we would do well to copy Jehoshaphat, whose **“heart took delight in the ways of the Lord”**. **(17: 6)** It should always be our aim to please Him rather than the people around us. Note how the Lord blessed him as a result. **(17: 3 & 5)**

ARE WE REALLY DILIGENT?

Jehoshaphat placed great importance upon God's Word. It is good to be **diligent** concerning the Scriptures. It is recorded that he **“walked in His commandments”** **(verse 4)** and that he sent leaders, Levites and priests **“to teach in the cities of Judah”**. **(verse 7-8)** The king desired that everyone should hear and know what God has said in His Word. As Christians, we must make it our priority to first study the Bible for ourselves and then to share it with others. **(Colossians 3: 16 & Acts 5: 42)**

ARE WE EASILY DIVERTED?

In **2 Chronicles 18** we have the first of two accounts of how Jehoshaphat was **diverted** from obeying the Lord. He entered into an alliance with Ahab, the ungodly king of Israel, and agreed to go into battle with him against the Syrians. **(18: 1 & 3)** As Ahab was dressed in disguise, Jehoshaphat was mistakenly thought by the enemy to be the king of

Israel and was attacked! We read, **“Jehoshaphat cried out, and the Lord helped him”**. **(verse 31)** It was a narrow escape for Jehoshaphat and on returning to Jerusalem he was reprimanded by Jehu the prophet. **(19: 2 & 3)** Unlike his father before him, he humbly accepted the correction and was determined to make amends for his sin.

Sadly, as we note from **2 Chronicles 20: 35-37**, this was not the last time that Jehoshaphat compromised himself! In fact there arose far reaching consequences from his actions, for his son, Jehoram, eventually married Ahab's daughter **(2 Kings 8: 16-18)**. **2 Chronicles 21: 4-6** records how Jehoram committed atrocious acts of wickedness! At all costs, we should guard against sinful associations which will divert us from a godly life, and lead only to spiritual disaster! **(Read 2 Corinthians 6: 14 & 15)**

ARE WE TOTALLY DEPENDENT?

One major incident during Jehoshaphat's reign is recorded in **2 Chronicles 20**. It refers to a time when Judah faced attack from a large army made up of forces from several surrounding nations. The king was severely tested and was under great pressure, but throughout this experience he resorted to the Lord and was **dependent** on Him alone! Naturally speaking, the situation was impossible; being conscious of this, he sought God's help. When faced with opposition from those who did not believe, the early Christians did the same. **(Acts 4: 21-31 & 12: 5-11)** Is this our attitude to difficulties?

Jehoshaphat led the nation in prayer and then received a wonderful answer from the Lord - see **verse 17!** Immediately Jehoshaphat bowed in worship and thanksgiving. The next morning, as we read in the **Key Verse**, the king encouraged the people and later that day they witnessed a great victory!

Following Christ, rather than the world, obeying His Word and being **dependent** upon Him will preserve us from our many spiritual enemies. If we set our goals high and say, with Paul, - **“For to me, to live is Christ”** **(Philippians 1: 21)**, then we shall enjoy God's richest blessings and victories in our lives, too.

Study 2. King Jehoshaphat

1 IN WHAT WAYS WAS JEHOSEPHAT PREPARED TO BE DIFFERENT FROM HIS CONTEMPORARIES? (2 CHRONICLES 17: 3-6)

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2 READ 2 CHRONICLES 17: 7-9 AND BRIEFLY ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

- i. What did all the men mentioned in these verses do for the king?.....
- ii. When did they commence this work?
- iii. What Book did they take with them?
- iv. Who were Elishama and Jehoram?

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3 WHY ARE THE SCRIPTURES ESSENTIAL READING FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS TODAY?

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4 WHAT IMPORTANT LESSON MAY BE LEARNT FROM THE INCIDENTS IN JEHOSEPHAT'S LIFE, WHEN HE COMPROMISED AND ALLIED HIMSELF FIRST WITH AHAB AND THEN WITH AHAZIAH? (2 CHRONICLES 20: 35-37)

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5 READ JEHOSEPHAT'S PRAYER IN 2 CHRONICLES 20: 6-12.

- i. What can be learnt about God, from this prayer?
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- ii. The last clause of the prayer shows the king's dependence upon God. Copy it out.
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6 'It doesn't matter who Christians choose to associate with !' IN THE LIGHT OF OUR STUDY ABOUT JEHOSEPHAT, IS THIS A FAIR STATEMENT? WRITE A SHORT PARAGRAPH TO GIVE YOUR ANSWER, INCLUDING SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO SUPPORT YOUR REASONS.

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Study 3. King Ahab

This study sheet belongs to:



KEY VERSE:

1 Kings 18: 18

“...I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and have followed the Baals.”

These Studies concentrate mainly on the kings of Judah. This Study, however, is about Ahab, the eighth ruler of Israel, the northern kingdom. Before Ahab became king, there had been a succession of weak rulers, and much violence and murder.

Ahab then entered the scene. Spiritual life in Israel reached an all time low in Ahab’s 22 year reign. He and his thoroughly evil wife, Jezebel of Tyre, introduced the corrupt worship of Baal. The Scriptures highlight the wickedness of this king, and his life is set in contrast to three men of God, Elijah, Elisha and Micaiah. Their faithfulness and courage are to be commended. We want to draw our lessons from their stand against the tide of evil that was surging through the land in Ahab’s time. In a word, Ahab was defiant - of both God’s character and His ways. Yet these three men were prepared to stand up for God, no matter what the cost! There is a challenge here for us! How willing are we, in today’s sinful world, to speak up for the Lord and to take a stand for Him?

(1) HIS DEFIANCE OF GOD’S NAME

(1 Kings 16: 29-33, 17: 1 & 18: 18-21)

In encouraging and openly participating in the worship of Baal, the false religion practiced by Jezebel, Ahab was rejecting the God of Israel. **(16: 30-33)** His actions truly angered the Lord, and showed how much he despised His Name! But God had Elijah ready to speak for Him. First Elijah was sent to pronounce judgment **(17: 1)** and then to prove to Ahab how great the Lord is. **(18: 1)** As Elijah confronted the king, he was fearless in his condemnation. (See **Key Verse**) Amazingly, Ahab agreed to Elijah’s contest against the false prophets of Baal. Along with the people, the king was challenged, **“How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him”.** **(18: 21)** Despite the three-fold manifestation of the Lord’s power, which proved beyond any doubt the uselessness of his idols, Ahab continued in his old ways.

READ: 1 Kings 16: 29-33, 17: 1, 18: 1, 16-21 & 37-39, 21: 1-4 & 16-24 and 22: 13-28

We should aim at being like Elijah, in that our lives faithfully show the truth about God and His power. We should **“not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord”.** **(2 Timothy 1: 8)**

(2) HIS DEFIANCE OF GOD’S WORD

(1 Kings 21)

Besides his blatant idolatry, which broke the first two commandments, Ahab ignored other laws set down by the Lord. **1 Kings 21: 3** illustrates that Naboth had a better grasp of the Scriptures than the king did. **Numbers 36: 9** stated that land was to remain within any given tribe, and was not to be used as a means of trade. Seizure, or compulsory purchase of land, was illegal in Israel. Such was the faithfulness of Naboth that he was not prepared to sell his land for royal favour or material gain. Are we as faithful to God’s Word as Naboth was?

Note the king’s reaction to this God-fearing man in **verse 4**. Ahab was resentful of people who stood for God’s Word. **(See also 1 Kings 20: 43)** Nowadays, unbelievers may resent a Christian who makes a stand for God, **(John 15: 19)** but God promises a reward. **(James 1: 3-12)** Following the murder of Naboth, Elijah was sent by God to pronounce judgment on the king and queen. **(vs. 19 & 23)** God held the king accountable and was true to His Word, for the punishment foretold in **21: 19** was fulfilled in **22: 38!**

(3) HIS DEFIANCE OF GOD’S SERVANTS

(1 Kings 21: 20 and 22: 8 & 27)

Both Elijah and Micaiah tried to counteract the sinful practices of King Ahab, but he only showed further defiance! Both prophets were faithful in their mission of exposing all that was wrong in the nation and courageous in telling Ahab what the Lord thought! To Ahab, these men were his enemies and he hated them! The world treated the Lord Jesus the same way, and as His followers, we can expect the same treatment! **(John 15: 18&19)** The more comfortable we feel in the world and the more enjoyable we find its practices, the less fellowship we are enjoying with the Lord! Remember the words of **Romans 12: 2**, **“Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould”.** *(Phillips’ Translation)*

Like each of these devoted men, we should base our convictions on God’s Word and not yield to any pressure to turn aside from it. **(Read 1 Corinthians 16: 13)**

Study 3. King Ahab

1 GIVE AN IN-DEPTH ANSWER TO SHOW HOW AHAB HAD "TROUBLED ISRAEL".

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2 IN WHAT THREE WAYS WAS IT PROVED CONCLUSIVELY TO AHAB THAT THE LIVING LORD, AND NOT BAAL, WAS THE TRUE GOD?

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3 IT MUST HAVE TAKEN A LOT OF COURAGE FOR ELIJAH TO CONFRONT AHAB WITH GOD'S MESSAGE! WRITE OUT WHAT PAUL SAYS IN ROMANS 1: 16 AND THEN SUGGEST HOW WE, AS CHRISTIANS, SOMETIMES ARE "ASHAMED".

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4 READ ACTS 6: 11-13 & 7: 58. WHAT SIMILARITIES CAN YOU SEE BETWEEN THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO NABOTH'S DEATH AND THAT OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR, STEPHEN?

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5 READ 1 KINGS 21: 25-29.

i. In what way was God merciful to Ahab?

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ii. Why was God merciful to him?

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iii. Why is God's mercy to Ahab so amazing?

Quote part of a verse to back up your answer

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6 DESCRIBE IN YOUR OWN WORDS HOW KING AHAB DIED. (See 1 KINGS 22: 29-35)

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7 J. B. PHILLIPS TRANSLATED ROMANS 12: 2 AS FOLLOWS - "DON'T LET THE WORLD AROUND YOU SQUEEZE YOU INTO ITS OWN MOULD". HOW CAN A CHRISTIAN SUCCESSFULLY OVERCOME THE PRESSURES OF THE WORLD'S WAYS THAT STAND IN DEFIANCE OF GOD'S WAYS?

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Study 4. Queen Athaliah & King Joash



KEY VERSE:

2 Chronicles 22: 12

“And he (Joash) was hidden with them in the house of God for six years, while Athaliah reigned over the land.”

Resulting from Jehoshaphat’s alliance with Ahab, (**2 Chronicles 18**) and the marriage of his son (Jehoram) to Ahab’s daughter (Athaliah), the nation of Judah experienced much spiritual decline. It was not until his great grandson, Joash, became king, that the nation began to return to the ways of the Lord once more.

MURDEROUS HANDS!

Joash’s life had a dramatic start! Following Jehu’s murder of his father, Ahaziah, his grandmother, Athaliah, set about killing **“all the royal heirs”**. (**22: 10**) How he escaped with his life will be considered shortly, but one thing is certain, his own family didn’t provide the best models, or examples, for him to follow! Athaliah followed in the footsteps of her mother, Jezebel. She evidently exerted a strong influence over her husband and later her son, Ahaziah. (**2 Chronicles 21: 6 & 22: 3**) Furthermore, motivated by Satan, she tried to exterminate the royal line of David, which ultimately would lead to the Lord Jesus Christ! No matter what our background or circumstances may be, we must, as Christians, follow the example of the Lord Jesus. Remember what Peter said about Him - **“leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps”**. (**1 Peter 2: 21**)

NARROW ESCAPE!

These were some of the darkest days in the nation’s history! Princess Jehoshabeath, Joash’s quick thinking and godly aunt, saved the royal baby’s life. She was the wife of Jehoiada, the priest. (**22: 11**) They cared for Joash in the house of God. As Athaliah ruled the southern kingdom for six years and promoted the idolatrous practices of Baal, (**2 Chronicles 24: 7**) young Joash secretly grew up in the Temple. Like Samuel before him, this would leave lasting impressions upon his young mind. Perhaps it was here that Joash observed Jehoiada’s concern for the Temple and this would influence his own opinions and interests. (**See 2 Chronicles 24: 4**)

READ: 2 Chronicles 22: 10-12, 23: 9-17, 21 and 24: 1-4, 15: 22

There could not have been better preparation for one who was soon going to be given the responsibility of ruling the nation and keeping the law, even at the very young age of seven!

DIFFERENT INFLUENCES!

Unquestionably, the influence that Jehoiada had over Joash was for good. This stood in stark contrast to the evil influence Athaliah had upon her family! During the lifetime of the faithful priest, the king not only pleased God in how he lived, (**24: 2**) but the nation once more restored the practice of Temple worship and offerings. (**verse 14**) This followed Joash’s decision to repair the Temple.

Spiritual friendships are a real blessing, but the test comes when we must stand alone. Sadly, for Joash, this was his weakness! He was as easily influenced to do evil after the priest’s death, as he was to do good before! (**verses 17-22**) We may be somewhat shocked to find that one who had been shown such kindness, who had a privileged upbringing in a godly environment and who had made such a promising start could fall away so quickly and do such a murderous act! (**See 24: 21**) Beware, for we are all vulnerable to Satan’s vicious attacks!

It is important that we develop ‘spiritual backbone’ and are able with conviction, to stand on the principles of God’s Word and be true to them, especially when those we look up to and follow, are no longer with us. We can’t depend on another person’s faith; we ourselves must trust God and live for Him!

Tragically, after a reign of some 40 years, Joash was assassinated by his own servants, as revenge for what he had done against Jehoiada’s son.

The lives of these Old Testament characters have been left on record for us to learn many spiritual and practical lessons. We need to take heed to their mistakes, and avoid the pitfalls. We should try to copy the features, which marked them as faithful servants of God. Today, the Lord is looking for young people who are willing to give Him first place in their lives, whatever the world may think!

Study 4. Queen Athaliah & King Joash

1 DESCRIBE IN YOUR OWN WORDS HOW JOASH WAS RESCUED FROM DEATH, GIVING FULL DETAILS OF THE CHARACTERS INVOLVED.

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2 GIVE A BRIEF SUMMARY OF HOW THE USURPER, QUEEN ATHALIAH, WAS OVERTHROWN AND HOW THE CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY WAS RESTORED BY A WELL-PLANNED COUP. (Key passage - 2 CHRONICLES 23: 3-11)

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3 CONTRAST THE INFLUENCE OF ATHALIAH WITH THAT OF JEHOIADA UPON THE ROYAL FAMILY.

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4 PUT THESE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE DEATH OF ATHALIAH IN THE CORRECT ORDER BY NUMBERING THEM 1 TO 5. (Read 2 CHRONICLES 23: 12-17)

- She cried, "Treason! Treason!"
- The people were praising the king.....
- She tore her clothes.....
- The people tore down the temple of Baal.
- Athaliah was killed outside the Temple.....

5

5 THERE ARE SOME SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS ASSOCIATED WITH THE STUDY. WRITE A BRIEF STATEMENT BESIDE EACH NUMBER, SHOWING THE CONTEXT IN WHICH IT IS FOUND AND GIVE A REFERENCE FOR A PROOF TEXT.

- i) 7 Chapter Verse.....
- ii) 40..... Chapter Verse.....
- iii) 6..... Chapter Verse.....

3

6 SUGGEST SOME WAYS IN WHICH CHRISTIANS CAN BE A GOOD INFLUENCE UPON BOTH FELLOW CHRISTIANS AND UNBELIEVERS.

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7 A) WRITE OUT 1 PETER 5: 8 WHICH TEACHES US HOW WE MUST BE ON OUR GUARD AGAINST SATAN.

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B) WRITE A SENTENCE EXPLAINING HOW JOASH FAILED AFTER JEHOIADA'S DEATH.

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100

Total marks for this Unit

Return your study sheets to:

25

Total marks for this study