

# Jehoshaphat: A Good King with Bad Friends

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

## Introduction:

- A. 1Cor. 15:33 - "Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits."
- B. Lesser known facts about the days of the kings of Israel and Judah:
  - 1. The prophets of pagan kings were yes men. The prophets of the kings of Israel stood against their kings when they erred.
    - a. Amos and Jereboam - Amos 7:10-17
    - b. Micaiah and Ahab - 1Kings 22:14-28
  - 2. The king must know the law of God - Deut. 17:18-20
    - a. He had no other responsibility as king that was greater than this.
- C. Jehoshaphat was a good man who made bad alliances - 2Chron. 17-20

## I. JEHOSHAPHAT WAS A GOOD MAN

- A. Jehoshaphat was the best king Judah had since David - 2Chron. 17:3-6
- B. But, Jehoshaphat kept making sinful alliances.
  - 1. His reign in Judah coincided with the reigns of Ahab, Ahaziah, and Jehoram in Israel.
  - 2. Ahab was the worst king Israel ever had - 1Kings 16:30-33
  - 3. His sons were also wicked idolaters. Several times Jehoshaphat made alliances with these wicked kings.
- C. 2Chron. 18:1 - A marriage alliance Jehoshaphat made.
  - 1. His son, Jehoram, married Ahab's daughter, Athaliah, a woman who killed her own grandchildren in order to take the throne.
    - a. 2Chron. 21:5-6, 22:2
  - 2. 2Chron. 18:2-3 - Jehoshaphat allied with Ahab in war.
  - 3. 2Chron. 20:35-37 - Jehoshaphat allied with Ahaziah in business.
- D. Jehoshaphat was a good man. He was a good king. He was a faithful servant. He delighted in God's law.
  - 1. Is it possible to delight in God's word, but not trust His promises?
  - 2. Jehoshaphat's propensity for making alliances with evil men indicates that he did not have confidence in God's promise to protect, provide for, and deliver Judah.
  - 3. He may have learned that lesson, but it was too late in life to help him.
    - a. 1Kings 22:49-50
    - b. His bad choices came back to haunt him.

## II. BAD CHOICES HAVE CONSEQUENCES

- A. The war alliance Jehoshaphat made with Ahab to go up to Ramoth-Gilead ended in defeat - 2Chron. 18:28-34
  - 1. Jehoshaphat was rebuked by Jehu the son of Hanani the seer.
- B. In his business alliance with Ahaziah, Jehoshaphat lost his fleet.
  - 1. 2Chron. 20:35-37

- C. Making a bad choice is like picking up a snake by the tail. One picks up the harmless end, but with it also comes the dangerous end.
  - 1. There is no point in blaming God for the consequences of our choices.
  - 2. He is not obligated to remove consequences because we are good in other areas or because we have learned our lesson.
  - 3. When faced with consequences of our actions, do not look around for someone to blame; look at our own choices.

### III. BAD CHOICES IN FRIENDSHIP WILL AFFECT OUR FAMILIES

- A. Typically, our choices are not made in a vacuum and the consequences are not given in a vacuum either. Most of the time, our unwise choices will also affect our spouses and our children.
  - 1. We may complain that God allowed our family's lives to be ruined. But in the end, it comes to our choices and their consequences.
- B. By marrying Jehoram to Athaliah, Jehoshaphat affected the spiritual state of not only his son, but even his grandson - 2Chron. 21:5-6
  - 1. 2Chron. 22:2-4 - Ahaziah, his grandson.
  - 2. Jehoshaphat's choice brought on the deaths of the rest of his sons.
    - a. 2Chron. 21:4
  - 3. It brought death to all but one of his great-grandchildren.
    - a. 2Chron. 22:10-12
- C. Jehoshaphat's choices affected multitudes of people.
  - 1. The soldiers who died at Ramoth-Gilead - 2Chron. 18:28-34
  - 2. The sailors who died at Ezion Geber - 2Chron. 20:35-37
  - 3. As well as the families of both.
- D. The nation of Judah suffered for fifteen years during the reigns of Jehoram, Ahaziah and Athaliah -- idolatrous, wicked rulers.
  - 1. By the end of this period a temple had been built to worship Baal.
    - a. 2Kings 11:18
  - 2. The temple of God had been defaced, disgraced, and damaged.
    - a. 2Chron. 24:4, 7
  - 3. While the people made their own choices, we recognize they were greatly influenced by the examples of their rulers.
  - 4. Though Jehoshaphat himself led the people to do right (2Chron. 17:6; 19:4), his bad choices ultimately led the people into idolatry.
- E. Is this fair?
  - 1. We consider it unfair that all these people suffer consequences because of one man's bad choices.
  - 2. We are frightened to think that we may bear that level of responsibility for influencing others.
  - 3. Dealing with the consequences of our choices is one of the inevitable and unbreakable laws of Creation.
    - a. Deal with it by making better choices.
    - b. Deal with it by repenting of and changing bad choices.
    - c. Deal with it by working diligently to mitigate the effects of our bad choices on others and ourselves.

- d. Deal with it by considering where our choices will lead, and choose more wisely.
- e. Deal with it motivated by the knowledge that we will be held accountable for the bad effects of bad choices.

Conclusion:

- A. Jehoshaphat put practical concerns for his nation above the spiritual concerns of his family.
  - 1. Good people can avoid bad consequences of bad alliances if they put the spiritual before the practical.
  - 2. Trust that God will keep His promise of caring for the practical if you will keep your promise to choose the spiritual.