

Jehoshaphat: A Good King with Bad Friends

1Cor. 15:33 - "Do not be deceived:
evil company corrupts good habits."

The Kings

- Lesser known facts about the days of the kings of Israel and Judah:
 - The prophets of pagan kings were yes men. The prophets of the kings of Israel stood against their kings when they erred.
 - Amos and Jereboam - Amos 7:10-17
 - Micaiah and Ahab - 1Kings 22:14-28

The Kings

- The king must know the law of God.
 - Deut. 17:18-20 - “Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. 19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, 20 that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.”
- He had no other responsibility as king that was greater than this.

Jehoshaphat Was A Good Man

- He was the best king Judah had since David.
 - 2Chron. 17:3-6 - “Now the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the former ways of his father David; he did not seek the Baals, 4 but sought the God of his father, and walked in His commandments and not according to the acts of Israel. 5 Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah gave presents to Jehoshaphat, and he had riches and honor in abundance. 6 And his heart took delight in the ways of the LORD; moreover he removed the high places and wooden images from Judah.”

Jehoshaphat Was A Good Man

- But Jehoshaphat kept making sinful alliances.
 - His reign in Judah coincided with the reigns of Ahab, Ahaziah and Jehoram in Israel.
 - Ahab was the worst king Israel ever had - 1Kings 16:30-33
 - His sons and grandsons were also wicked idolaters. Several times Jehoshaphat made alliances with them.

Jehoshaphat Was A Good Man

- 2Chron. 18:1 - “Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance; and by marriage he allied himself with Ahab.”
- His son, Jehoram, married Ahab’s daughter, Athaliah, a woman who later killed her own grandchildren in order to take the throne.
 - 2Chron. 21:5-6, 22:2

Jehoshaphat Was A Good Man

- 2Chron. 18:2-3 - “After some years he went down to visit Ahab in Samaria; and Ahab killed sheep and oxen in abundance for him and the people who were with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth Gilead. 3 So Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Will you go with me against Ramoth Gilead? And he answered him, I am as you are, and my people as your people; we will be with you in the war.”

Jehoshaphat Was A Good Man

- 2Chron. 20:35-37 - “After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who acted very wickedly. 36 And he allied himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish, and they made the ships in Ezion Geber. 37 But Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, ‘Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD has destroyed your works.’ Then the ships were wrecked, so that they were not able to go to Tarshish.”

Jehoshaphat Was A Good Man

- Jehoshaphat was a good man.
 - He was a good king.
 - He was a faithful servant.
 - He delighted in God's law.
- Is it possible to delight in God's law, but not trust His word?
 - 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.

Jehoshaphat Was A Good Man

- He may have learned that lesson, but it was too late in life to help him.
 - 1Kings 22:49-50 - “Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, ‘Let my servants go with your servants in the ships.’ But Jehoshaphat would not. 50 And Jehoshaphat rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David his father. Then Jehoram his son reigned in his place.”
- His bad choices came back to haunt him.

Bad Choices Have Consequences

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

Bad Choices Have Consequences

- 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.
- There is no point in blaming God for the consequences of our choices.
- He is not obligated to remove consequences because we are good in other areas or because we have learned our lesson.
- When faced with consequences of our actions, do not look around for someone to blame; look at our own choices.

Bad Choices In Friendship Will Affect Our Families

- By marrying Jehoram to Athaliah, Jehoshaphat affected the spiritual state of not only his son, but even his grandson.
 - 2Chron. 21:5-6 - “Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. 6 And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for he had the daughter of Ahab as a wife; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD.”

Bad Choices In Friendship Will Affect Our Families

- Ahaziah, his grandson
 - 2Chron. 22:2-4 - “Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri. 3 He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother advised him to do wickedly. 4 Therefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD, like the house of Ahab; for they were his counselors after the death of his father, to his destruction.”

Bad Choices In Friendship Will Affect Our Families

- Jehoshaphat's choice brought on the deaths of the rest of his sons.
 - 2Chron. 21:4 - "Now when Jehoram was established over the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself and killed all his brothers with the sword, and also others of the princes of Israel."

Bad Choices In Friendship Will Affect Our Families

- It brought death to all but one of his great-grandchildren.
 - 2Chron. 22:10-12 - “Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal heirs of the house of Judah. 11 But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king’s sons who were being murdered, and put him and his nurse in a bedroom. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of King Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest (for she was the sister of Ahaziah), hid him from Athaliah so that she did not kill him. 12 And he was hidden with them in the house of God for six years, while Athaliah reigned over the land.”

Bad Choices In Friendship Will Affect Our Families

- Jehoshaphat's choices affected multitudes of people.
 - The soldiers who died at Ramoth-Gilead - 2Chron. 18:28-34
 - The sailors who died at Ezion Geber - 2Chron. 20:35-37
 - As well as the families of both.

Bad Choices In Friendship Will Affect Our Families

- The nation of Judah suffered for fifteen years during the reigns of Jehoram, Ahaziah and Athaliah, idolatrous, wicked rulers.
 - By the end of this period a temple had been built to worship Baal - 2Kings 11:18
 - The temple of God had been defaced, disgraced and damaged - 2Chron. 24:4, 7

Bad Choices In Friendship Will Affect Our Families

- While the people made their own choices, we recognize they were greatly influenced by the examples of their rulers.
- Though Jehoshaphat himself led the people to do right (2Chron. 17:6; 19:4), his bad choices ultimately led the people into idolatry.

Is This Fair?

- We consider it unfair that all these people suffer consequences because of one man's bad choices.
- We are frightened to think that we may bear that level of responsibility for influencing others.

Deal With It

- Dealing with the consequences of our choices is one of the inevitable and unbreakable laws of Creation.
- Deal with it by making better choices.
- Deal with it by repenting of and changing bad choices.
- Deal with it by working hard to mitigate the effects of bad choices.
- Deal with it by considering where your choices will lead, and choose more wisely.
- Deal with it motivated by the knowledge that you will be held accountable for the bad effects of your bad choices.

Jehoshaphat: A Good King with Bad Friends

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