

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. JEHOSEPHAT 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, 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. You picked 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 your actions, do not look around for someone to blame, look at your 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. And the families of both
- D. The nation of Judah suffered for 14 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 example of their ruler.
 - 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 hard to mitigate the effects of bad choices

- d. Deal with it by considering where your choices will lead and choose more wisely
- e. Deal with it motivated by the knowledge that you 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