

**People of the Promise:  
Jehoshaphat: Courage and Compromise  
2 Chronicles 17-20**

**Introduction**

NJFK—broom and dustpan, hammer and screwdriver; renovation requires demolition as well as construction. Same in our lives. Get rid of the sinful habits; build righteous habits.

1. Courageous Heart for Yahweh's Ways (2 Chronicles 17, 19)
2. Compromising Alliances with Yahweh-Haters (2 Chronicles 18)
3. Complete Reliance on Yahweh in Crisis (2 Chronicles 20)

**1. Courageous Heart for Yahweh's Ways  
(2 Chronicles 17, 19)**

2 Chronicles 17:1-6

<sup>1</sup> Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place and strengthened himself against Israel. <sup>2</sup> He placed forces in all the fortified cities of Judah and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim that Asa his father had captured. <sup>3</sup> The LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the earlier ways of his father David. He did not seek the Baals, <sup>4</sup> but sought the God of his father and walked in his commandments, and not according to the practices of Israel. <sup>5</sup> Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand. And all

Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor. <sup>6</sup> His heart was courageous in the ways of the LORD. And furthermore, he took the high places and the Asherim out of Judah.

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 He walked in the earlier ways of his father David.  
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 His heart was courageous in the ways of the LORD.  
 He took the high places and the Asherim out of Judah

He showed pastoral concern for the entire nation by sending officials and Levites to teach God's law to the people.

2 Chronicles 17:7-9

<sup>7</sup> In the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah; <sup>8</sup> and with them the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tobadonijah; and with these Levites, the priests Elishama and Jehoram. <sup>9</sup> And they taught in Judah, having the Book of the Law

of the LORD with them. They went about through all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

He appointed judges who would make righteous judgments in the fear of Yahweh.  
2 Chronicles 19:4-7 (8-11)

<sup>4</sup> Jehoshaphat lived at Jerusalem. And he went out again among the people, from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim, and brought them back to the LORD, the God of their fathers. <sup>5</sup> He appointed judges in the land in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city, <sup>6</sup> and said to the judges, "Consider what you do, for you judge not for man but for the LORD. He is with you in giving judgment. <sup>7</sup> Now then, let the fear of the LORD be upon you. Be careful what you do, for there is no injustice with the LORD our God, or partiality or taking bribes."

<sup>8</sup> Moreover, in Jerusalem Jehoshaphat appointed certain Levites and priests and heads of families of Israel, to give judgment for the LORD and to decide disputed cases. They had their seat at Jerusalem. <sup>9</sup> And he charged them: "Thus you shall do in the fear of the LORD, in faithfulness, and with your whole heart: <sup>10</sup> whenever a case comes to you from your brothers who live in their cities, concerning bloodshed, law or commandment, statutes or rules, then you shall warn them, that they may not incur guilt

before the LORD and wrath may not come upon you and your brothers. Thus you shall do, and you will not incur guilt. <sup>11</sup> And behold, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the governor of the house of Judah, in all the king's matters, and the Levites will serve you as officers. Deal courageously, and may the LORD be with the upright!"

Jehoshaphat (Yahweh is judge, has judged) followed David's righteous example (as did his father, Asa), sought Yahweh, lived daily life in obedience to Yahweh, was courageous in the ways of Yahweh, destroyed what was used for idolatry, established righteous teachers and judges in the land.

- What godly examples has God given you to imitate?
- How are you seeking God in your life?
- How does your daily life show obedience to God's commands?
- How are you showing courage to walk in God's ways?
- What are ways you are getting rid of whatever turns your heart from God?
- In what ways are you bringing the influence of God's Word into the lives of others?

## **2. Compromising Alliances with Yahweh-Haters (2 Chronicles 18)**

The Bible is frank and honest with us in its record of even good leaders. God praises the good, but confronts the evil.

### **Marriage (political)**

Athaliah, daughter of Ahab

2 Chronicles 18:1

Now Jehoshaphat had great riches and honor, and he made a marriage alliance with Ahab.

It was common in the ancient world to establish political alliances through marriage. Jehoshaphat evidently longs to see all Israel reunited, but goes about it in a way that proves tragic for multiple generations.

2 Chronicles 21:4-6

<sup>4</sup> When Jehoram had ascended the throne of his father and was established, he killed all his brothers with the sword, and also some of the princes of Israel. <sup>5</sup> Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup> And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife. And he did what was evil in the sight of the LORD.

2 Chronicles 22:1-3

<sup>1</sup> And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son, king in his place,

for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had killed all the older sons. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned. <sup>2</sup> Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah, the granddaughter of Omri. <sup>3</sup> He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother was his counselor in doing wickedly.

### **Military (2 Chronicles 18:2-34)**

Ahab—war at Ramoth-gilead (Ahab killed)

2 Chronicles 18:2-3

<sup>2</sup> After some years he went down to Ahab in Samaria. And Ahab killed an abundance of sheep and oxen for him and for the people who were with him, and induced him to go up against Ramoth-gilead. <sup>3</sup> Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "Will you go with me to Ramoth-gilead?" He answered him, "I am as you are, my people as your people. We will be with you in the war."

Rebuke from the Lord—2 Chronicles 19:1-3

<sup>1</sup> Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned in safety to his house in Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> But Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD? Because of this, wrath has gone out against you from the LORD. Nevertheless,

some good is found in you, for you destroyed the Asheroth out of the land, and have set your heart to seek God.”

### **Commercial (2 Chronicles 20:35-37)**

<sup>35</sup> After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah joined with Ahaziah king of Israel, who acted wickedly. <sup>36</sup> He joined him in building ships to go to Tarshish, and they built the ships in Ezion-geber. <sup>37</sup> Then Eliezer the son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, “Because you have joined with Ahaziah, the LORD will destroy what you have made.” And the ships were wrecked and were not able to go to Tarshish.

Marriage, military, commercial—common alliances that can corrupt a person, family, or nation

### 2 Corinthians 6:14-16a

<sup>14</sup> Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? <sup>15</sup> What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? <sup>16a</sup> What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God.

- What friendships, connections, or practices have a harmful effect on your

walk with God or draw you into a corrupt lifestyle?

### **3. Complete Reliance on Yahweh in Crisis (2 Chronicles 20)**

#### **Prayer to God**

2 Chronicles 20:1-12

<sup>1</sup> After this the Moabites and Ammonites, and with them some of the Meunites, came against Jehoshaphat for battle. <sup>2</sup> Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A great multitude is coming against you from Edom, from beyond the sea; and, behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar" (that is, Engedi). <sup>3</sup> Then Jehoshaphat was afraid and set his face to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. <sup>4</sup> And Judah assembled to seek help from the LORD; from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD. <sup>5</sup> And Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, <sup>6</sup> and said, "O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you. <sup>7</sup> Did you not, our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel, and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend? <sup>8</sup> And they have lived in it and have built for you in it a sanctuary for your name, saying, <sup>9</sup> 'If

disaster comes upon us, the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house and before you—for your name is in this house—and cry out to you in our affliction, and you will hear and save.’ <sup>10</sup> And now behold, the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom you would not let Israel invade when they came from the land of Egypt, and whom they avoided and did not destroy— <sup>11</sup> behold, they reward us by coming to drive us out of your possession, which you have given us to inherit. <sup>12</sup> O our God, will you not execute judgment on them? For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”

### **Promise of God**

2 Chronicles 20:15-17

<sup>15</sup> And he said, “Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the LORD to you, ‘Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God’s. <sup>16</sup> Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the valley, east of the wilderness of Jeruel. <sup>17</sup> You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand firm, hold your position, and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.’ Do not be afraid and do not be

dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, and the LORD will be with you.”

### **Worship of God**

2 Chronicles 20:20-23

**20** And they rose early in the morning and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. And when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, “Hear me, Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be established; believe his prophets, and you will succeed.” **21** And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the LORD and praise him in holy attire, as they went before the army, and say, “Give thanks to the LORD, for his steadfast love endures forever.”

**22** And when they began to sing and praise, the LORD set an ambush against the men of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, so that they were routed. **23** For the men of Ammon and Moab rose against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, devoting them to destruction, and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they all helped to destroy one another.

### **Fear of God**

2 Chronicles 20:29-30

**29** And the fear of God came on all the kingdoms of the countries when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies

of Israel. <sup>30</sup> So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around.

- What should you be praying to God about?
- When do you worship God?
- How does your life encourage fear of God (show that God is at work)?

## **Conclusion**

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