

2 Chronicles 16:1 – 19:11

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III. God Preserves His Kingdom in Judah until the Return from Exile (2 Chronicles 10:1—36:23)

I. Asa's Last Years (16:1-14): So Asa reigned for 41 years:

1. 1-10: Peace; did what was good and right, *brought some reform*. (14:2-8)
2. 11: Since he trusted in the LORD, *the LORD defeated the Ethiopians*. (14:9-15)
3. 12: Encouraged by Azariah, *he brought more reform*. (15:1-16)
4. 12-35: Peace. “But the high places were not taken out of Israel. Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was wholly true all his days.” (15:17 ESV) Maybe Asa wanted complete reform, *but the people kept resisting him!*
5. 36: When Israel came against Judah, Asa sought help from the king of Syria☹; therefore: ⁷ “...Hanani the seer came to Asa...and said to him, ‘Because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped you. ⁸ Were not the Ethiopians... a huge army...? Yet because you relied on the LORD, he gave them into your hand. [Why?] ⁹ For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars.’ ¹⁰ Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the stocks in prison...” (ESV) Asa responded very poorly to the LORD’s discipline. How do you respond?
 - a. With anger and rejection.
 - b. With repentance (*sorrow for sin and trust in Jesus*).
6. 39-41: ¹² “In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased in his feet, and his disease became severe. Yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but sought help from physicians.” (ESV) Earlier in Asa’s reign he demonstrated much faith by bringing many God-pleasing reforms; nevertheless, *in the end*, “he did not seek the LORD...”
 - a. Which is more important?
 - i. A person’s relationship with the LORD at the *beginning* of his life.
 - ii. A person’s relationship with the LORD at the *end* of his life.
 - b. Repentance is important:
 - i. The LORD said to Ezekiel:
 - a) ¹² “...‘The righteousness of the righteous man will not save him when he disobeys, and the wickedness of the wicked man will not cause him to fall when he turns from it. The righteous man, if he sins, will not be allowed to live because of his former righteousness.’
 - b) ¹³ If I tell the righteous man that he will surely live, but then he trusts in his righteousness and does evil, none of the righteous things he has done will be remembered; he will die for the evil he has done.

c) ¹⁴ And if I say to the wicked man, 'You will surely die,' but he then turns away from his sin and does what is just and right-- ¹⁵ if he gives back what he took in pledge for a loan, returns what he has stolen, follows the decrees that give life, and does no evil, he will surely live; he will not die." (Ezekiel 33 NIV)

ii. **Ezekiel 33:10–20** "As a watchman for the Lord, Ezekiel carries God's Word to His people. God's Word remains effective: God's Law causes despair in sinful hearts, leading them to repent. Then, God's Word reaches out with the life-giving power of the Gospel to absolve the sinner and create a new life in Christ." (TLSB, 1363)

J. **Jehoshaphat Reigns in Judah (17:1-19)**: A chapter 17 summary from TLSB (688):

1. "The Lord established Jehoshaphat as king because he was faithful to God and His commands (vv. 1–6)." Note the *reoccurring* connection between faithfulness and blessing.
2. "Jehoshaphat not only abolished idolatry but also introduced a program of mass education in God's Law [or Instruction] (vv. 7–9)." May God's Word always have its way with us:
 - a. We approach the Bible knowing it is always true (Psalm 119:160).
 - b. Wherever we are falling short of God's will, we admit our sin (1 John 1:9), we are sorry (2Co 7:10), and we believe in Jesus as our only Savior (Acts 4:12).
 - c. We desire to live in harmony with the Bible (Psalm 119:9, 11) – *so that God is glorified (1Co 10:31) and others are blessed (2Co 3:2).*
3. "God's blessings were evident as Jehoshaphat grew strong and prosperous at home and abroad (vv. 10–19)." ¹⁰ "And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were around Judah, and they made no war against Jehoshaphat." (ESV)

K. **Jehoshaphat Allies with Ahab (18:1-27)**: Let's learn *and not repeat* these lessons:

1. ¹ "Now Jehoshaphat...made a marriage alliance with Ahab." "Such an alliance was common in the ancient world for political or financial reasons, **but** Jehoshaphat needed neither. The marriage of his son Jehoram to Ahab's daughter Athaliah (21:6) would bring disaster (22:10–12)." (TLSB, 689)
2. ² "After some years he went down to Ahab in Samaria." He went north to Samaria; "down" indicates the *lower elevation* of Samaria.
3. "...And Ahab...induced him [Jehoshaphat] to go up against Ramoth-gilead." Initially Jehoshaphat said "yes," but then he said: ⁴ "...Inquire first for the word of the LORD." ⁵ Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, four hundred men... 'Shall we go to battle against Ramoth-gilead...?' And they said, 'Go up, for God will give it into the hand of the king.'" Even though many said "yes," *they were false prophets!* Even today many give the impression of representing God when, in fact, they do not; *this is how we tell the difference: Acts 17:11.*

4. ⁶ “But Jehoshaphat said, ‘Is there not here another prophet of the LORD of whom we may inquire?’ ⁷ And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, ‘There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD, Micaiah...; but I hate him, for he never prophesies good concerning me, but always evil.’”
 - a. Many hear God’s Word; *then ignore it or hate it!*
 - b. Few hear God’s Word; *then listen and repent!* By God’s grace may we always be numbered among the few: [Matthew 7:13-14](#).
5. Finally, *after Micaiah was encouraged to agree with the false prophets*, he gave this answer to Ahab: ¹⁶ ...“I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd...” Even though Micaiah was under much pressure to say what Ahab wanted to hear, he told the truth. *Let us do the same!*
6. This was Ahab’s response: ²⁵ ...“Seize Micaiah...” ²⁶ “Put this fellow in prison and feed him with meager rations of bread and water until I return in peace.” ²⁷ And Micaiah said, ‘If you return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me.’” Since the LORD knows all that is to come ([Isaiah 46:10](#)), we can trust the words of His prophets – *even when they make no sense or seem impossible!*

L. The Defeat and Death of Ahab (18:28-34): The LORD will do whatever He says!

1. Jehoshaphat ♦was a godly man, ♦did request an answer from a prophet of the LORD, and ♦did hear an unfavorable outcome; *nevertheless*: ²⁸ “...the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead.”
2. Ahab, *possibly concerned about Micaiah’s prophecy*, ²⁹ “...said to Jehoshaphat, ‘I will disguise myself and go into battle, but you wear your robes.’” Furthermore, *Jehoshaphat agreed and was nearly killed, yet he did cry out to the LORD and He helped him!*
3. Earlier the king of Syria gave this command: ³⁰ “...Fight...only with the king of Israel.” So how would Micaiah’s prophecy, regarding Ahab’s death, ever be fulfilled? ³³ “...a certain man drew his bow at random and struck the king of Israel between the scale armor and the breastplate...” ³⁴ ...Then at sunset he died.” (ESV) *Let us never doubt God’s Word!*

M. Jehoshaphat’s Reforms (19:1-11):

1. When Jehoshaphat returned to Judah, Jehu the seer said to him: ² “...‘Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD? Because of this, wrath has gone out against you from the LORD.” ³ Nevertheless, some good is found in you, for you destroyed the Asheroth out of the land, and have set your heart to seek God.”
2. Jehoshaphat’s favorable response: ⁴ “...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.” (ESV) Even though we have all fallen far short of the LORD’s will for us, He forgives us through Jesus and calls us *now, today, going forward* to follow His Word!