****

**KING JEHOSHAPHAT**

**Known for:** Turning to God when fearful

**Scriptures to study:** 1 Kings 15:24 – 22:50, 2 Chronicles 17:1 – 21:1

Jehoshaphat in the Bible was the fourth king of Judah. He became one of the country’s most successful rulers for one simple reason: He followed the commands of God. At age 35, Jehoshaphat succeeded his father, Asa, who was the first good king over Judah. Asa also did what was right in God’s eyes and led Judah in a series of religious reforms.

When Jehoshaphat took office, about 873 BC, he immediately began to abolish the idol worship that had consumed the land. He drove out the male cult prostitutes and destroyed the Asherah poles where the people had worshiped false gods. To solidify devotion to God, Jehoshaphat sent prophets, priests, and Levites throughout the country to teach people God's laws. God looked with favor on Jehoshaphat, strengthening his kingdom and making him wealthy. Neighboring kings paid tribute to him because they feared his power.

But Jehoshaphat also made some bad decisions. He allied himself with Israel by marrying his son Jehoram to King Ahab’s daughter Athaliah. Ahab and his wife, Queen Jezebel, had well-deserved reputations for wickedness. At first, the alliance worked, but Ahab drew Jehoshaphat into a war that was against God’s will. The great battle at Ramoth Gilead was a catastrophe. Only through the intervention of God did Jehoshaphat escape. Ahab was killed by an enemy arrow. Following that disaster, Jehoshaphat appointed judges throughout Judah to deal fairly with the people’s disputes. That brought further stability to his kingdom.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Key thoughts:**

* Obeying God's commands is a wise way to live.
* Putting anything ahead of God is idolatry.
* Without God's help, we can do nothing worthwhile.
* Consistent dependence on God is the only way to succeed.



* What do you fear most in life or leadership? How do you deal with that fear?
* What can you do to encourage those around you to live right and to fear God?
* What are some ways that you depend on God each day, in your life, family and at work?



* Read 2 Kings 18:6. What role did God plan in Jehoshaphat’s leadership. How did this help or hurt his reign?
* Read 2 Chronicles 20:1-12. What did Jehoshaphat do when coming into battle against a great enemy?
* Read 2 Chronicles 20:3. What is significant about Jehoshaphat’s reaction to fear?
* Read 2 Chronicles 20:18-21. How did Jehoshaphat prepare for battle?
* Read 2 Chronicles 20:22-25. What was the result of the battle following Jehoshaphat’s preparations?
* Read 2 Chronicles 20:27-30. Who did Jehoshaphat credit with winning the battle?



* How can you invest in your relationship with God this week in a way that helps you to overcome fears?
* What can you do to encourage those around you to turn to God? Can this be a function of your role as a leader?
* What might you change in your life and leadership that will help you become more dependent on God each day?
1. https://www.learnreligions.com/jehoshaphat-king-of-judah-4114131 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)