



King Jehoshaphat – Commitment and Compromise
2 Chronicles 17-20

Commitment to God’s Word (2 Chronicles 17)

Jehoshaphat was a king that “sought the God of his father and walked by his commands, not according to the practices of Israel” (2 Chron 17:4) He wanted to make sure the people knew God’s commands so that they could obey them. His plan was like the division of the land in Joshua’s day. Each tribe allocated four cities for the Levites with the apparent purpose of instructing the people throughout the land in the law and worship of God (Num 35:1-8; Josh 21). God greatly blessed Jehoshaphat. He was wealthy, militarily strong, and even the Philistines and Arabs brought him silver, and animals as tribute.

Commitment to Prayer and Praise (2 Chronicles 20)

During his reign, Jehoshaphat was confronted with the armies of the Moabites, Ammonites and Meunites. He was afraid so he sought the Lord, fasted and prayed. He called Judah to do the same and they gathered in Jerusalem at the temple where Jehoshaphat prayed. The prophet Jahaziel announced that God would give them the battle without having to fight. With that news Jehoshaphat and the people bowed in worship to God and sang praise to him. The next day, Jehoshaphat told the people to **believe God’s word**. He appointed people to sing praises to God in front of the army as they went out to battle. Once they started singing God defeated the armies by causing them to fight each other. When the army of Judah arrived, all they had to do was collect the plunder.

Compromise (2 Chronicles 18 and 19)

Jehoshaphat’s walk with God was stellar except for three compromises he made. The first was marrying his son, Jehoram to the daughter of the wicked King Ahab and Jezebel (2 Chron 18:1; 21:4-7; 1 Kings 22:44; 2 Kings 8:16-19). As a result, when Jehoram ruled he followed in the wicked ways of his wife and her father Ahab. This first compromise led to a second compromise when King Ahab asked for Jehoshaphat’s help in a battle with the nation of Aram. Jehoshaphat joined Ahab in the battle even though it seems obvious it was Ahab’s plan to have Jehoshaphat killed in the battle and then combine the kingdoms under the rule of himself and his son-in-law Jehoram. God spared Jehoshaphat from his foolishness while Ahab himself was killed in the battle. The third compromise was a greedy business venture where he joined forces with Ahab’s son, Ahaziah (1 Kings 22:48-49; 2 Chron 20:31-37) and tried to get rich importing foreign goods. God destroyed the ships before they could make a voyage and rebuked Jehoshaphat for his sinful alliance. Jehoshaphat’s battle compromise was before his battle victory. When Jehu the prophet rebuked him for his compromise, he sought the Lord. He brought judicial reforms so that there would be righteous application of the commands of God.