

AFFINITY WITH AHAB

2 CHRONICLES 17-18

Text: 2 Chron. 18:1

(2 Chr 18:1) "Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab."

Introduction:

I read the story of a photographer who was sent to go get pictures of the forest fires in the western United States. He was told that a light plane would be waiting for him at a small local airport. When he arrived, he saw only one plane out on the tarmac, and a pilot waiting at the controls. Hurrying over to the plane he tossed his camera case behind the seat, introduced himself to the pilot, and said "let's go!"

In a few moments they were airborne. When the pilot asked for instructions, the photographer directed him to make 3 or 4 low passes over the fire. This had a pronounced effect on the pilot, who asks. "What for?" "To get pictures," answered the photographer. "That's what I'm here for!"

Nervously, the pilot asked, "You mean you're not the flying instructor?"

Many times people are not what we think they are. Tonight, we will look at one of the greatest King's Judah had after the Jewish nation was divided.

However, there was one major difference between this king and the two men in the airplane: Jehoshaphat knew exactly what kind of man he had trusted. He made a friend of wicked king Ahab:

- The one who saw his 450 prophets of Baal defeated and killed at Mt. Carmel
- The one who married Jezebel
- The one whom God said "did evil...above all that were before him."

Jehoshaphat was a good king, but he made a bad friend. He trusted one who should have remained a sworn enemy.

This text reminds us of the truth in James 4:4

(James 4:4) "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

1. JEHOSHAPHAT'S FAITH (2 CHRON 17:1-6)

(2 Chr 17:1-6) "And Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against Israel. {2} And he placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had taken. {3} And the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; {4} But sought to the LORD God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. {5} Therefore the LORD stablished the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance. {6} And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah."

A. He strengthens himself against the enemy.
(vs. 1-2)

1. It wasn't the people of Israel that made them his enemy.
2. It was their practices which made them his enemy.

(2 Chr 15:3) "Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law."

- They had left God
- They had abandoned His Word
- They had forsaken His Law

One of the things that make it so hard to remember that the world is our enemy is that which we have so much in common with - the people.

The people are not our enemies, but the world which has them in it's grip.

If we are not careful and stay on guard, we may find that our home has been invaded, our church infiltrated, and our life inundated and influenced by the things of the world

B. He sought the Lord God of his father. (vs. 3-4)

1. Faith affects our conduct.

- He separated himself unto the Lord and "His Commandments."

- He separated himself from Baalim and the doings of Israel.

2. Faith acquires courage (vs. 6)

The word's "lifted up" literally means to be encouraged, infused with courage.

The more that Jehosaphat learned to depend upon God, the more courage he received to live in the ways of God.

Jehosaphat was a man of great faith but he became a failure.

2. JEHOSEPHAT'S FAILURE (2 CHRONICLES 18:1-3, 28-32)

(2 Chr 18:1-3) "Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab. {2} And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramothgilead. {3} And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramothgilead? And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war."

(2 Chr 18:28-32) "So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramothgilead. {29} And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and will go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes. So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went to the battle. {30} Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that were with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel. {31} And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him; and God moved them to depart from him. {32} For it came to pass, that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again from pursuing him."

His Failure:

- A. It commenced with FRIENDSHIP with the enemy. (vs. 1)
- B. It continued into FELLOWSHIP with the enemy. (vs. 2-3)

There are three important statements we need to see in these verses.

(2 Chr 18:1-3) "Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab. {2} And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramothgilead. {3} And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramothgilead? And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war."

- The first involves DURATION, after certain years.
- The second involves DIRECTION, he went down to Ahab.
- The third involves a DECLARATION, I am as thou art.

1. Duration (much time)

The seeds of failure are planted in decisions we make.

If not recognized and dug out, they will germinate and spread their roots deeply into our lives.

When much time passes, they will be hard to uproot.

2. Direction (down)

The question is who is influencing who?

- We will never influence the world for good by adopting its music, incorporating its message or using its methods.
- We will never win the world by embracing secular philosophies and worldly practices.

Francis Shaffer wrote:

"The last 60 years have given birth to moral disaster, and what have we done? Sadly, we must say that the evangelical world has been part of the disaster, ... a large segment of the evangelical world has become seduced by the world spirit of this present age.

3. Declaration (I am as thou art)

His friendship with the world had blinded him to the differences that existed between them. He let affection for the People blind him to the ungodliness of their Practices.

C. It climaxed with him sharing the FALL of the enemy. (vss. 28-32; 19:1-3)

(2 Chr 18:28-32) "So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramothgilead. {29} And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise

myself, and will go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes. So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went to the battle. {30} Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that were with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel. {31} And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him; and God moved them to depart from him. {32} For it came to pass, that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again from pursuing him."

(2 Chr 19:1-3) "And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem. {2} And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD. {3} Nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God."

Had it not been for the grace of God, Jehoshaphat would have shared Ahab's fate.

We must maintain distinct, Biblical differences between the believer and the unbeliever. To do

otherwise leads to casualties fo faith and a compromised message.

Close:

This is a good time to check and see if we have planted any seeds of failure; a compromising relationship, a neglect of spiritual things, a habit of sin, a friendship with the world. It's also time to check our defenses and strengthen ourselves against our enemy.