

## 2 Chronicles Chapter 19

Verses 1-4: Unlike his father, Asa, who imprisoned the prophet “Hanani”, who had delivered the Lord’s rebuke to him, “Jehoshaphat” receives well Hanani’s “son Jehu” and responds with further spiritual zeal.

Having faced possible death that was diverted by God (18:31), Jehoshaphat was rebuked because of his alliances. The prophet condemned the king’s alliance with God’s enemy, Ahab (1 Kings 22:2), yet there was mercy mingled with wrath because of the king’s concern personally and nationally for the true worship of God.

**2 Chronicles 19:1 "And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem."**

From Ramoth-gilead, after Ahab was slain.

"To his house in peace to Jerusalem": To his palace there in safety, having narrowly escaped losing his life in the battle.

This is speaking of the fact that Jehoshaphat did not continue the battle with the Syrians. He came back home after the death of Ahab. It was probably an encouragement to the people to know that Jehoshaphat was not killed with Ahab.

**2 Chronicles 19:2 "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."**

The consequences of making an alliance with a wicked king was something that “Hanani”, the father of “Jehu”, had spoken of to the previous king, Asa, the father of “Jehoshaphat” (2 Chron. 16:7-9). Unfortunately, history repeated itself.

God's anger is not at what Jehoshaphat had done personally, but that he would help someone as wicked as Ahab. God did not like Jehoshaphat fellowshipping with Ahab. The Bible warns about fellowshipping with those of unbelief. This was as far as God was concerned, telling the world that he was opposed to God, because his friend Ahab opposed God. Jehu was a seer of God, the son of Hanani.

Verses 3-4: God knew that despite Jehoshaphat’s wrongful alliance, Jehoshaphat’s heart was prepared to “seek God”. Although Jehoshaphat had obeyed regarding the idols, he had been blind to his wrong regarding the alliance. Thankfully, God had addressed this blind spot so that Jehoshaphat could bring the people of Judah “back unto the Lord”.

**2 Chronicles 19:3 "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."**

Principles of grace, righteousness, and holiness, faith, love, zeal, and other graces, true and genuine, from whence sprung many good works done by him.

"In that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land": Cut down the groves of trees, and destroyed the idols and images in them.

"And hast prepared thine heart to seek God": Through the grace of God his heart was disposed to serve and worship the Lord, and to seek his honor and glory.

God had greatly blessed Jehoshaphat because he had destroyed the idols in his own land, and tried to get people back into the study of the law of God. He was a man after God's own heart. He had just made a very bad choice of friends.

Verses 4-11: Jehoshaphat put God's kingdom in greater spiritual order than at any time since Solomon. To insure this order, he set "judges" (verse 5), in place and gave them principles to rule by:

- (1) Accountability to God (verse 6);
- (2) Integrity and honesty (verse 7);
- (3) Loyalty to God (verse 9);
- (4) Concern for righteousness (verse 10); and
- (5) Courage (verse 11).

All are essential to spiritual leadership.

**2 Chronicles 19:4 "And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and he went out again through the people from Beer-sheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers."**

And went out no more to Samaria, nor concerned himself about the affairs of Israel, but attended to his own.

"And he went out again through the people": Took a tour throughout his dominions now, in his own person, as before by his princes, with the priests and Levites. He visited all his country and brought his people from idolatry to the knowledge of the true God.

"From Beer-sheba to Mount Ephraim": Beer-sheba was the southern boundary of the land of Judah, and Mount Ephraim lay to the north. And was the northern boundary of it since the division of the kingdom.

"And brought them back to the Lord God of their fathers": From idolatry to the pure worship of God, such who had relapsed since the first reformation, or had not been influenced by it.

It appears that Jehoshaphat saw the error in what he had done. He went back out into his land from city to city trying to get the people back into fellowship with God. He was doing everything he could to cause his land to conform to the ways of God. He did not have anything bad to say to Jehu, because he knew it was true. He took the advice of the seer and began his change immediately.

Verses 5-11: The details of Jehoshaphat's further religious and administrative innovations are not recorded by the author of Kings. Jehoshaphat introduced a system of local judges who both decided and applied justice "in the fear of the Lord". He also set up a system of appeals in "Jerusalem" over which the "chief priest" presided in spiritual matters. An official of the "king" administered civil affairs. This division of authority became a model for later Judaism (compare Zech. Chapters 3 and 4).

**2 Chronicles 19:5 "And he set judges in the land throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city,"**

Inferior judges in lesser courts of judicature than that at Jerusalem, and that in every city, that judgment and justice might be executed everywhere. Such were appointed by David, but had been neglected, and now restored (see 1 Chron. 26:29).

These judges were to judge within the law of God. It was not just in Jerusalem, but throughout the entire land that he set the judges.

**2 Chronicles 19:6 "And said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who [is] with you in the judgment."**

In judgment, that they judged righteous judgment according to the law of God, without partiality and respect of persons.

"For ye judge not for man, but for the Lord": Not for man only, but for the Lord. And not so much for man as for the Lord, whom they represented in judgment. Whose law was the rule of their judgment, and whose glory their end, and to whom they were accountable.

"Who is with you in the judgment": As to guide and direct you, so to observe how they behaved, and be a witness for or against them. The Targum is, "ye judge not before men, but before the Word of the Lord, whose Shekinah dwells with you in the affair of judgment."

This is a reminder to the judges that their judgement had better be just, because there was a Judge who would also judge them righteously in the end. They should keep in mind the wishes of God as they judged.

**2 Chronicles 19:7 "Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do [it]: for [there is] no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts."**

And act as having that before your eyes, and on your hearts.

"Take heed and do it": Do the commands enjoined them by him, and do judgment according to the law of God.

"For there is no iniquity with the Lord our God": None in his nature, nor in his law; none commanded nor approved of by him. And therefore none should be done by his representatives in judgment.

"Nor respect of persons": Whether high or low, rich or poor.

"Nor taking of gifts": He accepts not the faces of men, nor receives bribes, nor should his judges. This is forbidden by him (Deut. 16:19).

We see that Jehoshaphat was trying to see that his kingdom was ruled by the law of God. He did not want anyone who took bribes or was persuaded because of a person. The judgement of the land should be just and fair. God is not a respecter of persons, and neither should these judges be. They should judge as a servant of the LORD in truth and righteousness.

**2 Chronicles 19:8 "Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites, and [of] the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel, for the judgment of the LORD, and for controversies, when they returned to Jerusalem."**

This was the great court of judicature, consisting of princes, priests, and Levites, of ecclesiastics and political persons. For causes of both sorts were brought thither.

"For the judgment of the Lord": In things sacred, which related to the worship of God, and the support of it.

"And for controversies": Of a civil kind between man and man, whether pecuniary or capital, of a more private or public kind.

"When they returned to Jerusalem": That is, this court was set up at Jerusalem, when Jehoshaphat, the priests, Levites, and chief men that went with him, returned there.

The tribunal was re-established with the Levites as the head of it. What we would call the supreme court was in Jerusalem, and was judged by this group of men who were called of God for this job. This was comprised of several men like a jury in a court today would be. There were elders of the various families that sat on these juries, but the Levite in charge was like the judge. The Levites interpreted the law of the LORD in these cases.

**2 Chronicles 19:9 "And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do in the fear of the LORD, faithfully, and with a perfect heart."**

The members of the court at Jerusalem.

"Saying, thus shall ye do in the fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect heart": Judge righteously and impartially. As men fearing God, true to the trust reposed in them, and sincere and upright in heart and actions. Having nothing else in view but the glory of God, and the good of men.

They were in the service of the LORD as well as being in service to their community. God warned over and over in His Word that these men must be fair and just in all of their decisions. They must be guided by the law of God. They would have to answer to God for the decisions they made.

**2 Chronicles 19:10 "And what cause soever shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and judgments, ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the LORD, and [so] wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not trespass."**

Whether sacred or civil, that should come before them by way of appeal from, inferior courts in the country, where they could not be determined.

"Between blood and blood": One relation and another, or with respect to shedding of blood, whether ignorantly or purposely.

"Between law and commandment, statutes and judgments": Not rightly understood, and so pleaded on both sides.

"Ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the Lord": The persons engaged in controversy, that they take no false oath, nor bear false testimony. And act not stubbornly against any of the laws, when explained in court unto them.

"And so wrath come upon you and your children": Upon judges for the neglect of their duty in giving due warning. And upon the people for not taking it when given.

"This do, and ye shall not trespass": If the above charge in all its parts is strictly attended to.

These judges had a grave responsibility to be fair in their judgements. In the 17th chapter of Deuteronomy, we read of this very thing.

Deuteronomy 17:8-11 "If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, [being] matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the LORD thy God shall choose;" "And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment:" "And thou shalt

do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the LORD shall choose shall show thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee." "According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall show thee, [to] the right hand, nor [to] the left."

**2 Chronicles 19:11 "And, behold, Amariah the chief priest [is] over you in all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters: also the Levites [shall be] officers before you. Deal courageously, and the LORD shall be with the good."**

Perhaps Jehoshaphat was speaking as much to himself as he was to his leaders when he charged them: "Deal courageously, and the LORD shall be with the good". Jehoshaphat's trust was active, not passive. Trusting in the Lord did not mean sitting on his hands; he worked hard to organize the people and warn them.

This leaves no doubt at all who had the final word. The chief priest, Amariah, was the last and final say on a matter. The others here are under his command. Whoever was judged had to comply with whatever judgement they brought down. It was the law of the land, but it was taken from God's law.

## **2 Chronicles Chapter 19 Questions**

1. Where did Jehoshaphat go after, the death of Ahab?
2. What is meant by the peace in verse 1?
3. What was an encouragement to the people?
4. Who came to meet him?
5. What question did he ask Jehoshaphat?
6. Why was God angry with Jehoshaphat?
7. The Bible warns about \_\_\_\_\_ with those of unbelief.
8. In verse 3, what nice things did the seer say to Jehoshaphat?
9. What had he done that was good, that was not mentioned in verse 3?
10. Why did he go throughout the land?
11. What did Jehoshaphat do to the seer?
12. Where did he set up judges?

13. How were they to judge?
14. Who do the judges judge for?
15. Why was it so important for them to be just in their judgement?
16. In verse 7, what did he caution them to do?
17. They must judge as servants of the LORD in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
18. In verse 8, we read of the \_\_\_\_\_ being re-established?
19. Who was the head of it?
20. What is this tribunal like today?
21. They were in the service of the \_\_\_\_\_.
22. Where do we read more instructions on how they are to judge?
23. Who was the chief priest at this time?
24. Who were the officers?
25. Who was the final say in the judgements?