

2 Chronicles 17 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

- 2 Chronicles 17:1
- 2 Chronicles 17:2
- 2 Chronicles 17:3
- 2 Chronicles 17:4
- 2 Chronicles 17:5
- 2 Chronicles 17:6
- 2 Chronicles 17:7
- 2 Chronicles 17:8
- 2 Chronicles 17:9
- 2 Chronicles 17:10
- 2 Chronicles 17:11
- 2 Chronicles 17:12
- 2 Chronicles 17:13
- 2 Chronicles 17:14
- 2 Chronicles 17:15
- 2 Chronicles 17:16
- 2 Chronicles 17:17
- 2 Chronicles 17:18
- 2 Chronicles 17:19

SECOND CHRONICLES						
The Kingdom of Israel						
From Splendor to Disaster						
Splendor			Disaster			
King Solomon of Judah 2 Chronicles 1-9			Successive Kings of Judah 2Chr 10-36			
Kingdom United			Kingdom Divided 2Chr 10:1-19	Rulers of the Southern Kingdom of Judah After the Split		The Exile of Judah 2Chr 36:17-23
Inaugural 2Chr 1:1-17	Solomon's Temple 2Chr 2:1-7:22	Solomon's Glory 2Chr 8:1-9:31				
Building of the Temple			Decline & Destruction of the Temple			Temple Destroyed
~40 Years			~393 Years			

Click chart to enlarge
Chart from [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission
[Click Chart from Charles Swindoll](#)

TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES						
1107	1011	971	931	853	722	586
1Samuel	2 Samuel	1Kings	1Kings	2 Kings		

31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25
1 Chronicles 10		1Chr 11-19		1Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36	

Legend: B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "**Judah**" and the Northern Kingdom as "**Israel**." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.

(NOTE: Many consider Amaziah and Hezekiah as "good" kings)

SEE ALSO:

[ESV chart - kings of Israel - more information](#)

[ESV chart - kings of Judah - more information](#)

[Another Chart with Variable Dates for Reigns of Kings](#)

2 Chronicles 17:1 Jehoshaphat his son then became king in his place, and made his position over Israel firm.

NET 2 Chronicles 17:1 His son Jehoshaphat replaced him as king and solidified his rule over Israel.

CSB 2 Chronicles 17:1 His son Jehoshaphat became king in his place and strengthened himself against Israel.

ESV 2 Chronicles 17:1 Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place and strengthened himself against Israel.

NIV 2 Chronicles 17:1 Jehoshaphat his son succeeded him as king and strengthened himself against Israel.

NLT 2 Chronicles 17:1 Then Jehoshaphat, Asa's son, became the next king. He strengthened Judah to stand against any attack from Israel.

NRS 2 Chronicles 17:1 His son Jehoshaphat succeeded him, and strengthened himself against Israel.

- **Jehoshaphat** : 1Ki 15:24 22:41 1Ch 11:10 Mt 1:8
- **made his position over Israel firm.** 2Ch 12:1 26:8 32:5 1Sa 23:16 Eze 7:27 Eph 6:10
- See [BELOW FOR BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR 1-2 CHRONICLES](#) - adapted from [Paul Apple's Bible Outlines](#)

Related Passages:

1 Kings 15:24 And Asa slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father; and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place.

1 Kings 22:1-3 Three years passed without war between Aram and Israel. 2 In the third year Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel. 3 Now the king of Israel said to his servants, "Do you know that Ramoth-gilead belongs to us, and we are still doing nothing to take it out of the hand of the king of Aram?"

1 Kings 22:41 Now Jehoshaphat the son of Asa became king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.

JEHOSHAPHAT STRENGTHENED JUDAH AGAINST ISRAEL

Here is a summary from Nave's Study Bible - Jehoshaphat, succeeding Asa, reigns well, and prospers. 2Ch 17:7 He sends Levites with the princes to teach in Judah. 2Ch 17:10 His enemies bring him presents and tribute. 2Ch 17:12 His greatness, and his captains and armies.

Jehoshaphat ("Jehovah is Judge" - reigned 873-848 BC) **his son then became king in his place, and made his position over Israel firm** - NIV, ESV, CSB = "strengthened himself **against** Israel." NLT = "He strengthened Judah to stand against any attack from Israel." The story of Jehoshaphat is described primarily in 2 Chronicles 17-20 and is not found in detail in Kings. Jehoshaphat reigned 25 years from about 872-848 BC (873-848 BC) Jehoshaphat was probably co-regent with Asa for three years (872-869 b.c.) because of Asa's illness (2Ch 16:11-14).

Mackintosh on made his position over Israel firm - "This is worthy of notice. Israel and Israel's king were ever a snare to the heart of Jehoshaphat. But in the opening of his course (BEGINNING OF HIS REIGN), in the season of his early freshness, he was able to fortify his kingdom against the power of Israel. **Now, one frequently observes this in the history of Christians; the evils which in after life prove their greatest snares are those against which there is the greatest watchfulness at first.** Most happy it is when the spirit of watchfulness increases with our increasing knowledge of the tendencies and capabilities of our hearts".

THOUGHT - To paraphrase **Mackintosh** - Often in the lives of Christians, the very sins or temptations that eventually become their greatest struggles are the ones they were most cautious and careful to avoid early on in their walk with God. At the beginning of the Christian life, there may be zeal and caution toward certain sins. But over time, that watchfulness fades, and the once-feared temptation creeps in subtly. What was once actively resisted is eventually tolerated, and even embraced. Dear older saint, can you identify with this statement? Unfortunately I dare say I can! Remember that it is a fact that most of the good kings of Judah did not finish as well as they began! WOE! LOOK OUT septugenarians, etc! See [Backsliding](#). See also Rodgers' comment on [David's earlier days](#).

Iain Duguid: Of all the accounts of the kings after Solomon, the account of Jehoshaphat's reign is second in length only to Hezekiah's (2 Chronicles 29–32), and only he, Hezekiah, and Josiah are likened to David (17:3; 29:2; 34:2). Jehoshaphat is presented as a prominent example of good leadership throughout the land, leading to prosperity and peace, but alongside this narrative is prophetic criticism of his alliance with the "wicked" northern kingdom. While he exhibits parallels with the reign of his father, Asa, Jehoshaphat's reforms are greater, involving arrangements for teaching the "Law of the Lord" and for a justice system throughout the land (17:7–9; 19:5–11). His failings receive less censure because he "set [his] heart to seek God" (19:3; cf. 17:4; 20:32; 22:9).

Andrew Hill: Jehoshaphat is portrayed favorably as a man of faith and prayer and a religious reformer. The narrative in Chronicles is apparently intentionally shaped to demonstrate the parallels between the reigns of Jehoshaphat and his father Asa. His rule is not without problems, however, and like all the kings of Judah he receives a "mixed" theological review from the biblical historian (cf. 17:3–4, 6; 19:3; 20:33). Although the narrative summarizing Jehoshaphat's kingship lacks a rigid chronological framework, the dates for his twenty-five-year reign are between 872 and 848 B.C. On the basis of comparative analysis of the date formulas for Jehoshaphat's length of reign, it is generally understood he rules for three years as a coregent with his father prior to his own twenty-two-year tenure on the throne (from 869–848 B.C.; cf. 2 Kings 3:1; 8:16; 2 Chron. 20:31). (See [First and Second Chronicles - Page 143](#))

J.A. Thompson: The story of Jehoshaphat is presented in four phases: (1) character and organization (17:1–19), (2) alliance with the Northern Kingdom (18:1–34), (3) God's rebuke and Jehoshaphat's reformation (19:1–11), and (4) Jehoshaphat's piety rewarded (20:1–37; 21:1). (See [1, 2 Chronicles: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

Iain Duguid: The opening chapter has provided a comprehensive picture of success and strength, a combination of seeking God evidenced in religious reforms and a nationwide teaching strategy, strong defenses, and peace with surrounding peoples, all evidence that "the Lord was with Jehoshaphat." This becomes the literary background for the surprising alliance with the northern kingdom that follows. Deuteronomy warns of the danger of forgetting God when he has blessed (cf. Deut. 6:10–15); the tendency to pride, even arrogance, is only too common. Jehoshaphat provides a positive example of one whose "seeking the Lord" persisted after he received "riches and honor." The "high" of God's ways to which he set his "heart" is paralleled later by Paul's exhortation, "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above" (Col. 3:1–2). Jehoshaphat's organizing of teaching that went to where the people lived recognized that following God, worshiping him alone, is a matter not only of religious activity (sacrifices and corporate gatherings) but of all of life, how and where one "walks" (2 Chron. 17:3–4; John 8:12; Rom. 6:4; Eph. 4:1–3).

Raymond Dillard: The chapter is structured by further explicit elaborations on the general statements introduced in 17:1–6 (Williamson, 280): - Jehoshaphat's army and fortifications (17:2) are developed in 17:12b–19; - his wealth and honor (17:5) are described in 17:10–12a; - aspects of his religious devotion (17:3, 6) are elaborated in 17:7–9. The Chronicler begins his account of Jehoshaphat by presenting him in an entirely favorable light. The chapter should be read with an eye to the author's efforts to effect a parallel between Asa and Jehoshaphat. The Chronicler reminds his post-exilic audience once again that God never fails to reward fidelity. He calls attention to the importance of the public teaching of the law; the path to honor among the nations is found in obedience to it. (BORROW [2 Chronicles](#))

August Konkell: The last years of Asa's reign were characterized by internal uprising and oppression. Jehoshaphat needed to consolidate his power within Judah to restore it to peace and stability. Israel had been an enemy during the days of Asa, but Jehoshaphat soon entered into alliance with Ahab (18:1–2). He established control over Israel (17:2), which included territory in Ephraim that Asa had taken over. Jehoshaphat's international status, building enterprises, and army characterized the greatness of

his rule. Archaeological excavations have revealed extensive fortification in rural Judah. A line of highway forts in the Jordan Valley near the Dead Sea date to the time of Jehoshaphat (Mazar: 416-17; Japhet 1993: 751). ([Multipart Video Series on 1-2 Chronicles](#))

Geoffrey Kirkland: Thesis — What are proper priorities for a godly leader? Jehoshaphat models 3 for us: I. HE PRIORITIZED THE PROTECTION OF GOD'S PEOPLE (1-2, 10-19) II. HE PRIORITIZED THE PURSUIT OF GOD'S GLORY (3-6) III. HE PRIORITIZED THE PREACHING OF GOD'S WORD (7-9)

Ron Daniel - 17:1-6 Jehoshaphat Follows David's Example - David is always the standard by which the kings' devotion to God is measured. In this case, David's great-great-great-grandson Jehoshaphat is said to have followed his example. He didn't turn to idolatry, but sought the Lord and followed His Word. Some may find fault with the fact that Jehoshaphat "took great pride in the ways of the Lord," saying that pride is a sin. But to clarify, pride is a sin when you are prideful of your own power (Lev. 26:19) and being contemptuous of others (Psa. 31:18). But it is not wrong to be proud of the Lord and His ways. Remember, that the apostle Paul said,

1Cor. 1:29 ...no man may boast before God.

1Cor. 1:31 ..."LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD."

Made...firm (strengthened) ([02388](#))(**chazaq**) conveys the basic meaning of to be or become strong, to make strong or strengthen, in the Hiphil to take hold of or seize ("retain His anger" - Mic 7:18⁺), in the Hithpael to strengthen oneself (to take courage 1 Sa 30:6). To be courageous. To overpower. **Chazaq** describes strength - severity of a famine (a "strong" famine) (2 Ki 25:3, Jer 52:6), strength of humans to overpower (David and Goliath 1 Sa 17:50, cf 1 Sa 17:35 = seized; Amnon and Tamar = 2 Sa 13:14), in a battle, to capture (2 Chr 8:3), Samson's last demonstration of supernatural strength he prays "please **strengthen** me" (Jdg 16:28). Used in the charge "**Be strong** and courageous" (Josh 1:6, 7, 9, 18, Josh 10:25, "be firm" = Josh 23:6; "**Be strong** and courageous" = Dt 31:6-7, 23). **Chazaq** used 12 times in Ex 4-14 of hardening Pharaoh's heart (cf similar use in Josh 11:20). In a great passage in Da 11:32⁺ we read "'By smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but **the people who know their God** will display **strength (chazaq)** and take action.'"

CHAZAQ - FREQUENTLY USED IN KINGS AND CHRONICLES - 1 Ki. 1:50; 1 Ki. 2:2; 1 Ki. 2:28; 1 Ki. 9:9; 1 Ki. 16:22; 1 Ki. 20:22; 1 Ki. 20:23; 1 Ki. 20:25; 2 Ki. 2:12; 2 Ki. 3:26; 2 Ki. 4:8; 2 Ki. 4:27; 2 Ki. 12:5; 2 Ki. 12:6; 2 Ki. 12:7; 2 Ki. 12:8; 2 Ki. 12:12; 2 Ki. 12:14; 2 Ki. 14:5; 2 Ki. 15:19; 2 Ki. 22:5; 2 Ki. 22:6; 2 Ki. 25:3; 1 Chr. 11:10; 1 Chr. 19:12; 1 Chr. 19:13; 1 Chr. 21:4; 1 Chr. 22:13; 1 Chr. 26:27; 1 Chr. 28:7; 1 Chr. 28:10; 1 Chr. 28:20; 1 Chr. 29:12; 2 Chr. 1:1; 2 Chr. 7:22; 2 Chr. 8:3; 2 Chr. 11:11; 2 Chr. 11:12; 2 Chr. 11:17; 2 Chr. 12:13; 2 Chr. 13:7; 2 Chr. 13:8; 2 Chr. 13:21; 2 Chr. 15:7; 2 Chr. 15:8; 2 Chr. 16:9; 2 Chr. 17:1; 2 Chr. 19:11; 2 Chr. 21:4; 2 Chr. 23:1; 2 Chr. 24:5; 2 Chr. 24:12; 2 Chr. 25:3; 2 Chr. 25:8; 2 Chr. 25:11; 2 Chr. 26:8; 2 Chr. 26:9; 2 Chr. 26:15; 2 Chr. 26:16; 2 Chr. 27:5; 2 Chr. 27:6; 2 Chr. 28:15; 2 Chr. 28:20; 2 Chr. 29:3; 2 Chr. 29:34; 2 Chr. 31:4; 2 Chr. 32:5; 2 Chr. 32:7; 2 Chr. 34:8; 2 Chr. 34:10; 2 Chr. 35:2

Jehoshaphat

I. His policy as a statesman.

1. It was protective (2Ch 17:1-2).
2. It was wise.
3. It was eminently patriotic.

II. His character as a man.

1. He was distinguished for true piety.
 - (1) In his every-day life (2Ch 17:3).
 - (2) In his private devotions (2Ch 17:3-4).
 - (3) In his obedience to God (2Ch 17:4).
2. The inspiration of his heart came from the consciousness of his obedience to God (2Ch 17:6).

III. His wisdom as a ruler.

1. He removed temptation from his people (2Ch 17:6).
2. He provided for his people the highest means of good (2Ch 17:7-9). (Metropolitan Pulpit.)

W. Gustafson - (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#)) Dillard draws attention to a number of ways in which we see in Asa and Jehoshaphat, "like father, like son".

1. Both took away the high places where idols were worshipped (2Ch 14:3; 17:6). Both spared the high places where they

worshipped the Lord their God (2Ch 15:8; 20:33). See the Appendix to Chapter 30 regarding the high places.

2. Each enjoyed the rewards of their piety in building (2Ch 14:7; 17:2, 12), peace (2Ch 14:1; 17:10), and large armies (2Ch 14:8; 17:12-19). The Lord was with both (2Ch 15:9; 17:3), and the fear of the Lord was on the surrounding nations (2Ch 14:14; 17:10; 20:29).
3. Prophets rebuke each for foreign alliances (2Ch 16:7-9; 19:1-3; 20:37).
4. Two prophets prophesied during the reign of each. Azariah and Hanani for Asa, Jehu and Eliezer for Jehoshaphat. Like Asa and Jehoshaphat, the relationship between two of the prophets was that of father and son—Hanani (2Ch 16:7) was the father of Jehu (2Ch 19:2; 20:34).
5. Twice the Chronicler compares Jehoshaphat to his father Asa (2Ch 17:4; 20:32). Elijah pairs Asa and Jehoshaphat together as a standard of comparison against Jehoram (2Ch 21:12).

Payne has three more likenesses.

1. As Asa accomplished his first reform (2Ch 14:1-8) so Jehoshaphat removed idolatry, taught the Law of the Lord throughout Judah, and strengthened his kingdom (2Ch 17).
2. Azariah encouraged Asa, which led to further reform (2Ch 15:1-7). So also the rebuke of Jehu (2Ch 19:2-3) led to further reform in Jehoshaphat's reign.
3. Each had a miraculous deliverance from a large army by trusting God (2Ch 14:9-13 and 2Ch 20:1-30).

*No other father and son among the kings of Judah
did so well in pleasing God as these two.*

Gustafson adds "One could add two more likenesses: each sought God (Asa in 2Ch 14:4, 7; Jehoshaphat in 2Ch 17:4; 19:3; 20:3; 22:9), and no other father and son among the kings of Judah did so well in pleasing God as these two. The writer of the Chronicles gives the same message in chs. 17–20 about Jehoshaphat as he did in chs. 14–16 about Asa. That message emphasizes the supreme importance of depending on God, the blessing of loyalty and the danger of disobedience. (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

Matthew Henry Notes: Chapter: 17 Here begin the life and reign of Jehoshaphat, who was one of the first three among the royal worthies, one of the best that ever swayed the sceptre of Judah since David's head was laid. He was the good son of a good father, so that, as this time, grace ran in the blood, even in the blood-royal. Happy the son that had such a father, to lay a good foundation in him and for him. Happy the father that had such a son, to build so wall upon the foundation he had laid! Happy the kingdom that was blessed with two such kings, two such reigns, together! In this chapter we have,

- I. His accession to and establishment in the throne (v. 1, 2, 5).
- II. His persona piety (v. 3, 4, 6).
- III. The course he took to promote religion in his kingdom (v. 7-9).
- IV. The mighty sway he bore among the neighbours (v. 10, 11).
- V. The great strength of his kingdom, both in garrisons and standing forces (v. 12-19). Thus was his prosperity the reward of his piety and his piety the brightest grace and ornament of his prosperity.

2Ch 17:1-9 Here we find concerning Jehoshaphat,

I. What a wise man he was. As soon as he came to the crown he strengthened himself against Israel, 2Ch 17:1. Ahab, an active warlike prince, had now been three years upon the throne of Israel, the vigour of his beginning falling in with the decay of Asa's conclusion. It is probable that the kingdom of Israel had, of late, got ground of the kingdom of Judah and began to grow formidable to it; so that the first thing Jehoshaphat had to do was to make his part good on that side, and to check the growing greatness of the king of Israel, which he did so effectually, and without bloodshed, that Ahab soon courted his alliance, so far was he from giving him any disturbance, and proved more dangerous as a friend than he could have been as an enemy. Jehoshaphat strengthened himself not to act offensively against Israel or invade them, but only to maintain his own, which he did by fortifying the cities that were on his frontiers, and putting garrisons, stronger than had been, in the cities of Ephraim, which he was master of, 2Ch 17:2. He did not strengthen himself, as his father did, by a league with the king of Syria, but by fair and regular methods, on which he might expect the blessing of God and in which he trusted God.

II. What a good man he was. It is an excellent character that is here given him.

1. He walked in the ways of his father David. In the characters of the kings, David's ways are often made the standard, as 1 Ki.

15:3, 11; 2 Ki. 14:3; 16:2; 18:3. But the distinction is nowhere so strongly marked as here between his first ways and his last ways; for the last were not so good as the first. His ways, before he fell so foully in the matter of Uriah (which is mentioned long afterwards as the bar in his escutcheon, 1 Ki. 15:5), were good ways, and, though he happily recovered from that fall, yet perhaps he never, while he lived, fully retrieved the spiritual strength and comfort he lost by it. Jehoshaphat followed David as far as he followed God and no further. Paul himself thus limits our imitation of him (1 Co. 11:1): Follow me, as I follow Christ, and not otherwise. Many good people have had their first ways, which were their best ways, their first love, which was their strongest love; and in every copy we propose to write after, as we must single out that only which is good, so that chiefly which is best. The words here will admit another reading; they run thus: He walked in the ways of David his father (Hareshonim), those first ways, or those ancient ways. He proposed to himself, for his example, the primitive times of the royal family, those purest times, before the corruptions of the late reigns came in. See Jer. 6:16. The Septuagint leaves out David, and so refers it to Asa: He walked in the first ways of his father, and did not imitate him in what was amiss in him, towards the latter end of his time. It is good to be cautious in following the best men, lest we step aside after them.

2. He sought not to Baalim, but sought to the Lord God of his father, 2Ch 17:3, 4. The neighbouring nations had their Baalim, one had one Baal and another had another; but he abhorred them all, had nothing to do with them. He worshipped the Lord God of his father and him only, prayed to him only and enquired of him only; both are included in seeking him.

3. That he walked in God's commandments, not only worshipped the true God, but worshipped him according to his own institution, and not after the doings of Israel, 2Ch 17:4. Though the king of Israel was his neighbour and ally, yet he did not learn his way. Whatever dealings he had with him in civil matters, he would not have communion with him, nor comply with him in his religion. In this he kept close to the rule.

4. His heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord (2Ch 17:6), or he lifted up his heart. He brought his heart to his work, and lifted up his heart in it; that is, he had a sincere regard to God in it. Unto thee, O Lord! do I lift up my soul. His heart was enlarged in that which is good, Ps. 119:32. He never thought he could do enough for God. He was lively and affectionate in his religion, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, cheerful and pleasant in it; he went on in his work with alacrity, as Jacob, who, after his vision of God at Bethel, lifted up his feet, Gen. 29:1, margin. He was bold and resolute in the ways of God and went on with courage. His heart was lifted up above the consideration of the difficulties that were in the way of his duty; he easily got over them all, and was not frightened with winds and clouds from sowing and reaping, Eccl. 11:4. Let us walk in the same spirit.

III. What a useful man he was, not only a good man, but a good king. He not only was good himself, but did good in his generation, did a great deal of good.

1. He took away the teachers of lies, so images are called (Hab. 2:18), the high places and the groves, 2Ch 17:6. It is meant of those in which idols were worshipped; for those that were dedicated to the true God only were not taken away, ch. 20:33. It was only idolatry that he abolished. Nothing debauched the nation more than those idolatrous groves or images which he took away.

2. He sent forth teachers of truth. When he enquired into the state of religion in his kingdom he found his people generally very ignorant: they knew not that they did evil. Even in the last good reign there had been little care taken to instruct them in their duty; and therefore Jehoshaphat resolves to begin his work at the right end, deals with them as reasonable creatures, will not lead them blindfold, no, not into a reformation, but endeavours to have them well taught, knowing that that was the way to have them well cured. In this good work he employed,

(1.) His princes. Those about him he sent forth; those in the country he sent to teach in the cities of Judah, 2Ch 17:7. He ordered them, in the administration of justice, not only to correct the people when they did ill, but to teach them how to do better, and to give a reason for what they did, that the people might be informed of the difference between good and evil. The princes or judges upon the bench have a great opportunity of teaching people their duty to God and man, and it is not out of their province, for the laws of God are to be looked upon as laws of the land.

(2.) The Levites and priests went with the princes, and taught in Judah, having the book of the law with them, 2Ch 17:8,9. They were teachers by office, Deu. 33:10. Teaching was part of the work for which they had their maintenance. The priests and the Levites had little else to do. But, it seems, they had neglected it, pretending perhaps that they could not get the people to hear them. "Well," says Jehoshaphat, "you shall go along with the princes, and they with their authority shall oblige the people to come and hear you; and then, if they be not well instructed, it is your fault." What an abundance of good may be done when Moses and Aaron thus go hand in hand in the doing of it, when princes with their power, and priests and Levites with their scripture learning, agree to teach the people the good knowledge of God and their duty! These itinerant judges and itinerant preachers together were instrumental to diffuse a blessed light throughout the cities of Judah. But it is said, They had the book of the law of the Lord with them.

{1.} For their own direction, that thence they might fetch all the instructions they gave to the people, and not teach for doctrines the commandments of men.

{2.} For the conviction of the people, that they might see that they had a divine warrant for what they said and delivered to them that only which they received from the Lord. Note, Ministers, when they go to teach the people, should have their Bibles with them.

IV. What a happy man he was.

1. How happy he was in the favour of his God, who signally owned and blessed him: The Lord was with him (2Ch 17:3); the word of the Lord was his helper (so the Chaldee paraphrase); the Lord established the kingdom in his hand, 2Ch 17:5. Those stand firmly that have the presence of God with them. If the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, that will establish the work of our hands and establish us in our integrity.

2. How happy he was in the affections of his people (2Ch 17:5): All Judah brought him presents, in acknowledgment of his kindness in sending preachers among them. The more there is of true religion among a people the more there will be of conscientious loyalty. A government that answers the end of government will be supported. The effect of the favour both of God and his kingdom was that he had riches and honour in abundance. It is undoubtedly true, though few will believe it, that religion and piety are the best friends to outward prosperity. And, observe, it follows immediately, His heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord. Riches and honour in abundance prove to many a clog and a hindrance in the ways of the Lord, an occasion of pride, security, and sensuality; but they had a quite contrary effect upon Jehoshaphat: his abundance was oil to the wheels of his obedience, and the more he had of the wealth of this world the more was his heart lifted up in the ways of the Lord.

James Smith - JEHOSEPHAT, THE BACKSLIDER - 2 CHRONICLES 17; 18

“The whole Cross is more easily carried than the half. It is the man who tries to make the best of both worlds who makes nothing of either.”—Drummond.

Of how many of God's people it may be said, as was said of the Galatians, “Ye did run well: who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?” Although there are always about us hindrances in abundance, that is no reason why those gifted with the wings of faith should be hindered in their spiritual life. Jehoshaphat, like Asa, began well, but his bright morning soon became clouded with the sorrows of failure. His character affords us both encouragement and warning. We see him—

I. Highly Honoured.

“The Lord was with him” (chap. 17:3). The presence of God with us is an absolute guarantee of success and sufficiency. The reason why God accompanied with him was “because he walked in the first ways of his father David.” The first ways of David, and of his father Asa, were their best days, when their hearts were simple and perfect toward the Lord. He did not make their sins an excuse for not following after the righteousness of God. The blemishes of others are often made a stumbling-block to their virtues. Christ is the only perfect example.

II. Greatly Encouraged.

“His heart was encouraged in the ways of the Lord” (v. 6, margin). When Uzziah was made strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction (chap. 26:16). When pride lifts the heart, it is lifted out of the ways of the Lord into the way that leads to defeat and death. It is while we are in the ways of the Lord that we may confidently expect His uplifting. The Lord is not going to encourage that man whose manner of life is opposed to His will. “Delight thyself in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart” (Psa. 37:4).

III. Unequally Yoked.

“Now Jehoshaphat joined affinity with Ahab” (2Ch 18:1). Now, when he “had riches and honour in abundance.” Ahab was well known as an enemy to Jehovah. “He did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings that were before him” (1 Kings 16:33). After the friendship was formed there came, of course, the fellowship. “He went down to Ahab to Samaria.” The ungodly Ahab's are ever ready enough to have the servants of God to come down to their level. Nehemiah joined no affinity with Tobiah and Sanballat. His answer to them was, “I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down.” Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers. What fellowship hath light with darkness? The darkness may need the light badly, but the light can have no fellowship with the darkness. While Christ lived on earth He was constantly walking amidst the dense darkness of human sin and guilt, but He had no fellowship with it. No more can ye.

IV. Wholly Surrendered.

Not to God, but to the scheming, unprincipled Ahab. How are the mighty fallen? “Wilt thou go with me,” said Ahab, and Jehoshaphat answered him, “I am as thou art” (2Ch 18:3). Compromising has resulted in a voluntary captivity. Yet, at bottom, this answer is false, for the man who has known the power and fellowship of God can never be as that man who has ever been a stranger to God. We sell our liberty in Christ whenever we become the bondslaves of any man, or the tool of prejudice or fashion. The fear of man bringeth a snare. As long as Jehoshaphat was pledged to help Ahab, he was useless to help the cause of God. One is your Master, even Christ. Say to Him, “I am as Thou art” (2 Chron. 18:3).

V. Secretly Dissatisfied.

When Jehoshaphat proposed that inquiry should be made at the Word of the Lord, Ahab at once “gathered together of prophets four hundred men” (2Ch 18:5). These unsent prophets were quite unanimous that it was the mind of Jehovah (whom they knew nothing about) that they should “go up.” To the king of Judah the testimony of those four hundred prophets sounded so formal and hollow that he knew there was no message from God in it. Neither numbers nor unanimity can constitute the authority of God. Ahab's prophets were ordained to preach “smooth things,” and they did it. Jehoshaphat said, “Is there not a prophet of the Lord besides that we may inquire of him?” (2Ch 18:6). Four hundred worldly, men-pleasing preachers may be enough to keep an ecclesiastical machine going, but they are not enough to meet the needs of one single anxious soul who desires to know the mind and will of God. Words are not enough to bring settled conviction into the soul. The Christian who is satisfied with a formal powerless ministry has gone farther away from God than Jehoshaphat.

VI. Shamefully Exposed.

“The captain of the chariots compassed him about, but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the Lord helped him” (2Ch 18:30, 31). The king of Israel disguised himself, but an arrow shot at a venture found him out. Jehoshaphat confessed and was saved. Be sure your sin will find you out. But what a sorry part the king of Judah plays in this affair! What a picture of abject helplessness in the face of the enemy—he is utterly demoralised. Who is so powerless in the presence of temptation or opposition as the backslider? Yet, when their sin and folly is acknowledged before God, how ready He is to stretch forth His hand and help. Unbelief makes cowards of us all (v. 32).

A Devoted Heart

He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. — 2 Chronicles 20:32

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Chronicles 17:1-11

A successful Christian businessman shared his story with us at church. He was candid about his struggles with faith and abundant wealth. He declared, “Wealth scares me!”

He quoted Jesus' statement, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God” (Luke 18:25 niv). He cited Luke 16:19-31 about the rich man and Lazarus and how in this story it was the rich man who went to hell. The parable of the “rich fool” (Luke 12:16-21) disturbed him.

“But,” the businessman stated, “I've learned a lesson from Solomon's verdict on the abundance of wealth. It's all ‘meaningless’ ” (Eccl. 2:11 niv). He determined not to let wealth get in the way of his devotion to God. Rather, he wanted to serve God with his assets and help the needy.

Throughout the centuries, God has blessed some people materially. We read of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 17:5, “The Lord established the kingdom . . . so that he had great wealth and honor.” He did not become proud or bully others with his wealth. Instead, “his heart was devoted to the ways of the Lord” (v. 6). Also, “he followed the ways of his father Asa and did not stray from them; he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord” (20:32).

The Lord is not against wealth for He has blessed some with it—but He's definitely against the unethical acquisition and wrong use of it. He is worthy of devotion from all His followers. By: Lawrence Darmani (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Giving thanks to God often helps us learn contentment with what we do have. What are you thankful for?

Wealth or no wealth, devoted hearts please the Lord.

QUESTION - Who was King Jehoshaphat in the Bible?

ANSWER - King Jehoshaphat was the fourth king of Judah under the divided monarchy, the son of [Asa](#). We are first introduced to

him in 1 Kings 15:24 but are told nothing more than that he succeeded Asa. Later, 1 Kings 22:42 tells us that he was 35 years old when he began his reign and that he reigned 25 years (from 873 to 848 BC). 1 Kings 22 gives a brief account of his reign with 2 Chronicles 17–22 giving a more comprehensive account.

Spiritually, Jehoshaphat began his reign in a positive way. 2 Chronicles 17:3–6 gives this commendation: “The Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the ways of his father David before him. He did not consult the Baals but sought the God of his father and followed his commands rather than the practices of Israel. The Lord established the kingdom under his control; and all Judah brought gifts to Jehoshaphat, so that he had great wealth and honor. His heart was devoted to the ways of the Lord; furthermore, he removed the high places and the Asherah poles from Judah.” In addition, Jehoshaphat sent men throughout the kingdom to teach the people the Law of God (2 Chronicles 17:7–9).

Militarily, Jehoshaphat fortified his defenses, primarily against the northern kingdom of Israel (2 Chronicles 17:1–3). The surrounding nations feared Judah and brought tribute (2 Chronicles 17:10–19).

After making peace with Israel, Jehoshaphat apparently tried to reach out to [Ahab](#), the king of Israel. Ahab was one of the wickedest kings of Israel, and Jehoshaphat could not have been ignorant of his character. 1 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 18 relate the following account: Ahab asks Jehoshaphat to help him attack Syria. Jehoshaphat wisely requests that they consult the LORD on the matter. Ahab gathers 400 of his prophets who encourage the attack. Jehoshaphat recognizes that these are not genuine prophets of the LORD, and the exchange that follows between Jehoshaphat and Ahab is almost comical: “But Jehoshaphat asked, ‘Is there no longer a prophet of the Lord here whom we can inquire of?’ The king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, ‘There is still one prophet through whom we can inquire of the Lord, but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah.’”

So, Micaiah is summoned, and the question is posed. Micaiah responds with high irony: “Attack and be victorious, . . . for the Lord will give it into the king’s hand.” This answer exasperates King Ahab: “How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord?” Micaiah then tells Ahab the hard truth: “I saw all Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd, and the Lord said, ‘These people have no master’” (1 Kings 22:15–18).

In spite of what seems to be an acknowledgement that Micaiah speaks for the LORD, Jehoshaphat joins Ahab in the attack. Ahab is killed, and Jehoshaphat narrowly escapes. When Jehoshaphat returns home, he is reprimanded by a prophet of the Lord for his collaboration with Ahab: “Jehu the seer, the son of Hanani, went out to meet him and said to the king, ‘Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord? Because of this, the wrath of the Lord is on you. There is, however, some good in you, for you have rid the land of the Asherah poles and have set your heart on seeking God’” (2 Chronicles 19:2–3).

Jehoshaphat continues to make reforms, appointing judges throughout the land to handle disputes and charging them to make righteous judgments and to fear the Lord (2 Chronicles 19:4–11).

In 2 Chronicles 20, an alliance of nations decides to march against Judah. Jehoshaphat seeks the Lord and asks all Judah to fast (verse 3). Through a man named Jahaziel, the Lord tells Jehoshaphat that He will deliver Judah without a fight (verses 14–17). Jehoshaphat goes out to battle with singers leading the way, singing praise to the Lord. The alliance of nations turn against each other and begin to kill each other (verses 22–23). The men of Judah spend three days collecting the spoils of war that were abandoned by their enemies (verse 25).

Although Jehoshaphat started his reign by removing the idolatrous high places, at the end of his reign, there were still high places that had not been taken away (1 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 20). Jehoshaphat started well, but his diligence flagged, and the idol-worship returned. First Kings 22:41–50 and 2 Chronicles 20:35–37 record a joint ship-building venture that Jehoshaphat attempted with the wicked king Ahaziah of Israel. Jehoshaphat, who had already been chastised for an alliance with Ahab, is once again confronted by a prophet with a warning. It seems that Jehoshaphat heeded the warning and did not allow Ahaziah’s men to sail with the Judeans, but the judgment still came to pass: the fleet was wrecked, and Jehoshaphat’s foolish investment with Ahaziah proved futile.

Jehoshaphat is still considered a good and godly king, but his reign ended rather badly. He kept trying to build an alliance with Israel, even though the kings of Israel were obviously wicked. Jehoshaphat worshiped the Lord and led his people in seeking the Lord, but the hearts of the people were never fully changed. They reverted to pagan practices. King Jehoshaphat was unable to pass his faith on to his son [Jehoram](#) who reigned after him. Jehoram started by killing all of his brothers, and he then made an alliance with Israel by marrying the daughter of Ahab (2 Chronicles 21:4–6). [GotQuestions.org](#)

2 Chronicles 17:2 He placed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim which Asa his father had captured.

- **He placed troops:** 2Ch 11:11,12 Nu 35:8,
- **Garrisons** 1Sa 13:3.
- **in the cities:** 2Ch 15:8
- **Judah** 2 Chr 11:17

Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 11:17 They strengthened the kingdom of Judah and supported Rehoboam the son of Solomon for three years, for they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years.

2 Chronicles 13:19+ Abijah pursued Jeroboam and captured from him several cities, Bethel with its villages, Jeshanah with its villages and Ephron with its villages.

2 Chronicles 15:8+ Now when Asa heard these words and the prophecy which Azariah the son of Oded the prophet spoke, he took courage and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from **the cities which he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim** He then restored the altar of the LORD which was in front of the porch of the LORD.



JEHOSHAPHAT STRENGTHENS JUDAH AGAINST INVASION

He placed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim which Asa his father had captured - Jehoshaphat readied the nation for war if the northern tribes would attack. In 2 Chronicles 15:8 we saw that King Asa had extended his control northward to the hill country of Ephraim (see map above).

Walton - cities of Ephraim - (SEE MAP ABOVE) It seems a natural continuation of this policy for Jehoshaphat to fortify these unspecified cities. There is also no specific mention of the number of troops stationed here. We know from the Lachish letters of a later period that regular correspondence was maintained with these types of outposts and that fire signals were used as an early warning system. (Online [IVP Background Commentary - OT - page 437](#))

NIV Study Bible (BORROW) on the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim- Abijah (2Ch 13:19), Asa (2Ch 15:8) and now Jehoshaphat had managed to hold these cities; they would be lost under Amaziah (2Ch 25:17-24).

Frederick Mabie: While Jehoshaphat's military efforts in the tribal area of Ephraim might be seen as provocative, the relationship between the northern kingdom and southern kingdom is characterized as one of peace solidified via a political marriage alliance. (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary: 1 Chronicles-Job - Page 234](#))

2 Chronicles 17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father David's earlier days and did not seek the Baals,

KJV 2 Chronicles 17:3 And the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim;

BGT 2 Chronicles 17:3 καὶ γένητο κύριος μετ' Ἰωσαφάτ· τί πορεύθη ὡς τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ ταῖς πράξεσιν καὶ οὐκ ἐξέζησεν τὸ εἰδωλολάτρεον·

LXE 2 Chronicles 17:3 And the Lord was with Josaphat, for he walked in the first ways of his father, and did not seek to idols;

NET 2 Chronicles 17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he followed in his ancestor David's footsteps at the beginning of his reign. He did not seek the Baals,

CSB 2 Chronicles 17:3 Now the LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the former ways of his father David. He did not seek the Baals

ESV 2 Chronicles 17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the earlier ways of his father David. He did not seek the Baals,

NIV 2 Chronicles 17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because in his early years he walked in the ways his father David had followed. He did not consult the Baals

NLT 2 Chronicles 17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father's early years and did not worship the images of Baal.

NRS 2 Chronicles 17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the earlier ways of his father; he did not seek the Baals,

NJB 2 Chronicles 17:3 Yahweh was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father's earlier days and did not have recourse to Baal,

NAB 2 Chronicles 17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat, for he walked in the ways his father had pursued in the beginning, and he did not consult the Baals.

YLT 2 Chronicles 17:3 And Jehovah is with Jehoshaphat, for he hath walked in the first ways of David his father, and hath not sought to Baalim,

GWN 2 Chronicles 17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat, who lived in the old way like his ancestor David. Jehoshaphat didn't dedicate his life to serving other gods-the Baals.

BBE 2 Chronicles 17:3 And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he went in the early ways of his father, not turning to the Baals,

RSV 2 Chronicles 17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the earlier ways of his father; he did not seek the Baals,

NKJ 2 Chronicles 17:3 Now the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the former ways of his father David; he did not seek the Baals,

ASV 2 Chronicles 17:3 And Jehovah was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto the Baalim,

- **The LORD was with Jehoshaphat** 2Ch 15:2,9 Ge 39:2,3,21 Ex 3:12 4:12 Jos 1:5,9 Judges 2:18 6:12 2Sa 5:10 1Ch 22:18 Ps 46:7,11 Isa 8:10 41:10 Mt 1:23 18:20 Mt 28:20 2Ti 4:22
- **he followed the example** 2Sa 8:15 1Ki 11:6 15:3,4 2Ki 14:3 16:2 18:3 22:2 Ps 132:1-5
- **of his father David's earlier days**, 2Ch 14:2-5,11 15:8-13
- **did not seek the Baals**, Judges 2:11 8:33 Jer 2:23

Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 15:9 He gathered all Judah and Benjamin and those from Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon who resided with them, for many defected to him from Israel when they saw that the **LORD his God was with him**.

YAHWEH WAS WITH JEHOSHAPHAT

The LORD was with Jehoshaphat - This has to be one of the most desirable and powerful descriptions of any man, king or

otherwise.

because (important term of explanation) **he followed** (walked in) **the example** (derek - road, way, manner) **of his father David's earlier days and did not seek the Baals** (first mention in Chronicles) - Note the phrase "**did not seek the Baals**" implies that he did not consult the idols (as did Ahab a Baal worshiper)! It is worth noting that "**baal**," can mean "lord" or "husband," (as in Isaiah 54:5 God describing Himself as "Husband" of His wife "Israel") and we see that idolatry in the eyes of Israel's Husband is unfaithfulness or spiritual adultery (See Israel the Wife of Jehovah).

Rodgers on David's earlier days - Perhaps the most remarkable of all the references made to it (TO GREATER WATCHFULNESS AGAINST SIN IN OUR YOUNGER DAYS FALTERING IN OLDER DAYS) is one made incidentally and by implication in 2Ch 17:3 where we read that Jehoshaphat '**walked in the first ways of his father David**' (Young's Literal). Here it is clearly suggested that even in David's case his first ways were his best...His sin with Uriah's wife occurred after he had settled down in his kingdom, and his pride which led him to number his people developed in an even later stage of his life" (INTERESTING THOUGHT TO PONDER, especially if you've walked with Jesus a few decades!)

PHRASE "LORD WAS WITH..." - 16V - Ge 39:2; Ge 39:3; Ge 39:21; Ge 39:23; Jos. 6:27; Jdg. 1:19; Jdg. 1:22; Jdg. 2:18; 1Sa 3:19; 1Sa 18:12; 1Sa 18:14; 1Sa 18:28; 2Ki. 18:7; 1Ch 9:20; 2Ch 17:3; Acts 11:21. **See related discussion** - [The Hand of the Lord](#)

God "with" others - 1Chr. 11:9; 2Sa 5:10 2Ch 1:1 2Ch 15:9 Acts 7:9; Acts 10:38

Dillard on Baals - The term Baal is plural in its grammatical form, either (1) as an "emphatic plural" similar to the use of 'elohim with a singular referent, or conceivably (2) as a reference to local representations of Baal worshiped under a variety of designations. (See [2 Chronicles, Volume 15 - Page 133](#))

Walton says **seek the Baals** refers "to asking the deity for oracles. This would usually occur at a shrine dedicated to the deity, and the oracle would be mediated by the priests of that deity. In the ancient world oracular answers were often given by diviners, who would read favorable or unfavorable answers in the entrails of a sacrificed animal (ED: THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN GOD GIVES MEN OVER TO A DEPRAVED MIND BECAUSE OF REJECTING HIM - See Romans 1:28ff+). Even while the Israelites fully acknowledged Yahweh as their national patron deity, some were inclined to continue to associate Baal with fertility and to consult him regarding agricultural issues. Also on daily issues such as sickness and health, they sometimes chose to look for information from Baal rather than from Yahweh (see 2 Kings 1:2). ([IVP Background Commentary - OT - page 438](#))

THOUGHT - Who do we consult on daily issues of life? God or the "baals" of this world? Do we go to google, to AI or to God? Of course Google and AI can be helpful, but we should never replace consulting with the God especially on significant life issues.

Utley on the **baals** - Ba'al was the male fertility god of the Canaanite pantheon. This worship could be expressed as a singular (cf. 1 Kgs. 16:31) or a plural, as here (cf. 1 Kgs. 18:18). This fertility god was worshiped by imitation magic at local high places (i.e., ritual sex). Every town and village had their own high place.

W Gustafson - In 2Ch 18:3 we read that the **LORD was with** him, as He was with Solomon (2Ch 1:1), Abijah and Judah (2Ch 13:12), and Asa (2Ch 15:9). The Lord's presence in blessing and in help is mentioned three other times (19:6, 11; 20:17).(Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

Baals(01168) **ba'al** (See this entry for **detailed discussion of baal and related words**) refers to the pagan god who was called by the name "Baal". Elijah contended with and exterminated the prophets of Baal (1 Ki 18:18, 19, 21, 22, 25, 26, 40). "Baal" was the Canaanite name for the Syrian god Hadad, god of storms and wars. The plural "Baals" (be'ālim) suggests the many local varieties of the worship of Baal (cf. Baal Peor, Num. 25:3; Baal Gad, Josh. 11:17; Baal-Berith, Judges 9:4; Baal-Zebub, 2 Kings 1:2). In Canaan the goddess Ashtoreth was the consort of Baal, known in Syria as 'Athtart and in Babylonia as Ishtar. Ashtoreth was the goddess of fertility. Baal worship involved the most debasing immorality imaginable. One of the more incredible mentions of Baal is Jehu's eradication of them from the northern kingdom (see 2 Ki 10:18-28). Before God would use Gideon to deliver His people from the Moabites, He first had him tear down his father's backyard altar to Baal (Jdg 6:25, 28, 30-31 [note](#)). As a result Gideon was named Jerrubball ("Let **Baal** contend against him" - Jdg 6:32 [note](#)). Under Gideon Israel was set free from Moabite oppression, but apparently they people were not set free from the "seed" of Baal worship in their hearts for "Then it came about, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the sons of Israel again played the harlot (SPIRITUAL ADULTERY!) with the **Baals**, and made **Baal-berith** their god" (Jdg 8:33 [note](#))! Wow! Our hearts are more deceitful than all else and are desperately sick (Jer 17:9)! In 1 Sa 7:4 we see that "Israel removed the **Baals** and the Ashtaroth and served the LORD alone" but they must have backslide because we see their cry in 1 Sam 12:10! Little children, **guard** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves from idols. (1 John 5:21+)

Note Baal most often found in times of the Kings and Chronicles! Num. 22:41; Jos. 13:17; Jdg. 2:11; Jdg. 2:13; Jdg. 3:7; Jdg. 6:25; Jdg. 6:28; Jdg. 6:30; Jdg. 6:31; Jdg. 6:32; Jdg. 8:33; Jdg. 10:6; Jdg. 10:10; 1 Sam. 7:4; 1 Sam. 12:10; 1 Ki. 16:31; 1 Ki. 16:32; 1 Ki. 18:18; 1 Ki. 18:19; 1 Ki. 18:21; 1 Ki. 18:22; 1 Ki. 18:25; 1 Ki. 18:26; 1 Ki. 18:40; 1 Ki. 19:18; 1 Ki. 22:53; 2 Ki. 3:2; 2 Ki. 10:18; 2 Ki. 10:19; 2 Ki. 10:20; 2 Ki. 10:21; 2 Ki. 10:22; 2 Ki. 10:23; 2 Ki. 10:25; 2 Ki. 10:26; 2 Ki. 10:27; 2 Ki. 10:28; 2 Ki. 11:18; 2 Ki. 17:16; 2 Ki. 21:3; 2 Ki. 23:4; 2 Ki. 23:5; 2 Chr. 17:3; 2 Chr. 23:17; 2 Chr. 24:7; 2 Chr. 28:2; 2 Chr. 33:3; 2 Chr. 34:4; Jer. 2:8; Jer. 2:23; Jer. 7:9; Jer. 9:14; Jer. 11:13; Jer. 11:17; Jer. 12:16; Jer. 19:5; Jer. 23:13; Jer. 23:27; Jer. 32:29; Jer. 32:35; Hos. 2:8; Hos. 2:13; Hos. 2:17; Hos. 11:2; Hos. 13:1; Zeph. 1:4

Bob Utley has summary of why the LORD was with Jehoshaphat There are several reasons given.

1. He followed the example of early David, 2 Chr. 17:3 (i.e., the Davidic covenant of 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17 is the theological key, cf. 2 Kgs. 2:2; 2 Chr. 34:2).
 2. He did not practice fertility worship, 2 Chr. 17:3.
 3. He sought the God of David, 2 Chr. 17:4 (see note at 2 Chr. 7:14).
 4. He obeyed YHWH's commandments, 2 Chr. 17:4 (see Special Topic: Keep).
 5. He did not act like the northern tribes, 2 Chr. 17:4.
 6. He took pride in the ways of the Lord, 2 Chr. 17:6 (lit. "his heart was high in the ways of YHWH").
 7. He removed the high places, 2 Chr. 17:6.
 8. He sent
 1. five officials
 2. nine Levites (cf. 2 Chr. 35:3)
 3. two priests into the cities of Judah to teach the Law of Moses, 2 Chr. 17:7-9 (cf. Deut. 6:4-9; 33:10).
-

Is Fear Healthy?

The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom. —Proverbs 15:33

During a severe thunderstorm, a mother tucked her child into bed and turned off the light. Frightened by the tempest, he asked, "Mommy, will you sleep with me?" Hugging him, she replied, "I can't, dear. I have to sleep with Daddy." Stepping out of the room, she heard, "That big sissy!"

Fear is real. But it's not always negative. In 2 Chronicles 17:3-10, we read about a healthy, positive fear that prevented neighboring countries from going to war against Judah. What had caused this fear? We are told that "the fear of the Lord fell on all the kingdoms of the lands that were around Judah, so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat" (v.10).

A respectful fear of the Lord was also what King Jehoshaphat desired for his own people. So he made it a priority that they be taught God's Word. He knew that if the people were in awe of the Almighty, they would humble themselves and obey Him. Doing what was right would bring prosperity to Judah and respect from neighboring countries.

Proverbs 15:33 declares, "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom." Those who fear Him act with wisdom; they walk faithfully before Him as they obey His commands. —Albert Lee (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

God dwells in light and holiness,
In splendor and in might;
And godly fear of His great power
Can help us do what's right.
—D. De Haan

The right kind of fear will keep us from doing wrong.

2 Chronicles 17:4 but sought the God of his father, followed His commandments, and did not act as Israel did.

NET 2 Chronicles 17:4 but instead sought the God of his ancestors and obeyed his commands, unlike the Israelites.

CSB 2 Chronicles 17:4 but sought the God of his father and walked by His commands, not according to the

practices of Israel.

ESV 2 Chronicles 17:4 but sought the God of his father and walked in his commandments, and not according to the practices of Israel.

NIV 2 Chronicles 17:4 but sought the God of his father and followed his commands rather than the practices of Israel.

NLT 2 Chronicles 17:4 He sought his father's God and obeyed his commands instead of following the evil practices of the kingdom of Israel.

- **sought the God of his father:** Lu 1:6 1Th 2:12 4:1
- **did not act as Israel did:** 1Ki 12:28,30,33 13:33,34 16:31-33 2Ki 8:18 17:19 Jer 3:7,8 Ho 4:15

JEHOSHAPHAT'S OBEDIENCE

but sought the God of his father, followed His commandments, and did not act as Israel did- The NLT has "instead of following the evil practices of the kingdom of Israel," so this use of "Israel" refers to the Northern Kingdom. Note the threefold description - sought God, kept His commandments and did not do evil. It is notable that we see another "like father, like son" comparison, for the theme of "seeking God" (2Ch 14:4) occurs nine times in the three chapters devoted to the reign of Asa!

THOUGHT - Undoubtedly there was pressure to condone (even follow) the ways of the Northern Kingdom (because his wife had been raised in a Baal worshiping home!) but Jehoshaphat resisted the temptation. Why? I submit the answer is in this pattern - seeking God and obeying God. As he sought God, he realized there was no such thing as another god which is the essence of idols. In effect Jehoshaphat put into practice the powerful spiritual dynamic of [Expulsive Power of a New Affection](#). In fact 2Ch 17:6 says "His heart was devoted to the ways of the LORD" (2Ch 17:6NIV), which would enable expulsion of tempting idols, etc. That pattern is still powerful today. Read the article [Expulsive Power of a New Affection](#).

W. Gustafson writes "How sad that Jehoshaphat began so well and yet, ironically, he changed his thinking about Israel in 2Ch 18:1.... **Seeking** (SOUGHT), in 2Ch 17:4, is a favourite expression of the Chronicler for evaluating spirituality: "But (he) sought to the Lord God of his father". Jehu praised him with the words of 2Ch 19:3: "thou ... hast prepared thine heart to seek God". 2Ch 20:3 says that "Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord". The last mention of the king is in 2Ch 22:9, as one (JEHOSHAPHAT) "who sought the Lord with all his heart". (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#).)

THOUGHT - One of my favorite verses in Chronicles is 1Ch 16:11 '**Seek the LORD and His strength. Seek His face continually.**' I pray for myself and you dear believing reader that this passage becomes the watchword for our short time on earth. For the glory of the Lamb. Amen.

A Father To Follow

[Jehoshaphat] sought the God of his father, and walked in His commandments. —2 Chronicles 17:4

Today's Scripture: 2 Chronicles 17:1-10

When I think of my father, I think of this saying: "He didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and he let me watch him do it." During my youth, I watched my dad walk with God. He participated in Sunday morning church services, taught an adult Bible-study class, helped with counting the offering, and served as a deacon. Outside of church, he faithfully defended the gospel and read his Bible. I saw him express his love for the Lord through outward actions.

Asa, king of Judah, modeled devotion to God for a season in his life (2 Ch 14:2). He removed the idols from his kingdom, restored the altar of the Lord, and led the people into a covenant with God (2Ch 15:8-12). Asa's son Jehoshaphat carried on this legacy by seeking "the God of his father and walk[ing] in His commandments" (2Ch 17:4). Jehoshaphat purged the land of idol worship (2Ch 17:6) and sent out priests and Levites to teach God's law in all of the cities of Judah (2Ch 17:7-9).

Jehoshaphat's reign resembled that of his father; he faithfully honored Asa's godly example. Yet even more important, Jehoshaphat's "heart took delight in the ways of the Lord" (2Ch 17:6). Today, if you're looking for a father to follow, remember your heavenly Father and take delight in His ways. By: Jennifer Benson Schuldt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

We magnify our Father God
With songs of thoughtful praise;
As grateful children we confess
How perfect are His ways.
—Ball

*We honor God's name when we call Him our Father
and live like His Son.*

2 Chronicles 17:5 So the LORD established the kingdom in his control, and all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor.

NET 2 Chronicles 17:5 The LORD made his kingdom secure; all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he became very wealthy and greatly respected.

CSB 2 Chronicles 17:5 So the LORD established the kingdom in his hand. Then all Judah brought him tribute, and he had riches and honor in abundance.

ESV 2 Chronicles 17:5 Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand. And all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor.

NIV 2 Chronicles 17:5 The LORD established the kingdom under his control; and all Judah brought gifts to Jehoshaphat, so that he had great wealth and honor.

NLT 2 Chronicles 17:5 So the LORD established Jehoshaphat's control over the kingdom of Judah. All the people of Judah brought gifts to Jehoshaphat, so he became very wealthy and highly esteemed.

NRS 2 Chronicles 17:5 Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand. All Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor.

NJB 2 Chronicles 17:5 Because of this, Yahweh put him in secure control of the kingdom, while all Judah gave Jehoshaphat presents until ample riches and honour were his.

NAB 2 Chronicles 17:5 As a result, the LORD made his kingdom secure, and all Judah gave Jehoshaphat gifts, so that he enjoyed great wealth and glory.

- **the Lord:** 2Sa 7:25,26 1Ki 9:4,5 Ps 127:1 132:12 1Pe 5:10
- **tribute:** 2Ch 32:23 1Sa 10:27 1Ki 4:21 10:25 Ps 68:29 72:10 76:11 Mt 2:11
- **he had riches:** 2Ch 1:15 9:27 18:1 32:27-29 Ge 13:2 26:13,14 De 8:13,14 1Ki 10:27 Job 42:12 Mt 6:33

SUPERNATURAL FAVOR TO JEHOSHAPHAT

So - (ESV - THEREFORE) - Term of conclusion. This conclusion in effect links the natural with the supernatural. Jehoshaphat's part was to walk like David and seek the LORD, which made way for the supernatural blessing of Yahweh. This is in essence a fulfillment of the promise to David "When your days are fulfilled that you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up one of your descendants after you, who will be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom." (1Ki 16:31+)

THOUGHT- You can mark it down that obedience always brings blessing (and you can mark down the converse pattern also!)

The LORD established the kingdom in his control- NET = "The LORD made his kingdom secure" Even here we see the juxtaposition of God's sovereign power and Jehoshaphat's exercise of the power God had given him. One is reminded of Psalm 127:1 which clearly demonstrates the repeated pattern in Scripture of God's part and man's part, the "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)". Do you see the pattern in Solomon's psalm?

Unless the **LORD builds** the house,
They labor in vain who build it;
Unless the **LORD guards** the city,
The watchman keeps awake in vain.

And all Judah brought tribute ([minchah](#)) to Jehoshaphat - The LORD had given him favor with all the people. In modern terms, he had an outstanding approval rating with the populace.

And he had great riches and honor - Yahweh blessed Jehoshaphat's obedience. In the OT obedience was often associated with material blessings (e.g., Dt 28:1-6. Lev 26:3-13, Ps 1:3), whereas in the NT the focus is on receiving spiritual blessings (e.g., Eph 1:3) and even includes the promise of suffering for Christ (2Ti 3:12, Php 1:29, Mt 5:10-12, 2Co 4:17)

Raymond Dillard: Wealth, honor, and fame are part of the repertoire of themes which show divine favor in Chronicles. Not only do **David** and **Solomon** enjoy these tokens of God's pleasure (1 Chr 29:2-5, 28; 2 Chr 9:13-27), but so do **Jehoshaphat** (2Ch 17:5; 18:1), **Uzziah** (2Ch 26:8, 15), and **Hezekiah** (2Ch 32:27). (BORROW [2 Chronicles](#) or see [2 Chronicles, Volume 15 - Page 133](#))

[Utley](#) notes "YHWH blessed Jehoshaphat by

- (1) establishing his kingdom, 2 Chr. 17:5,
- (2) all Judah bringing tribute, 2 Chr. 17:5,
 - (2a) expected gifts to a new king
 - (2b) taxes, cf. 1Sa 10:27; 1Ki 10:25
- (3) great riches and honor, 2Ch 17:5
- (4) protection from attack by the surrounding nations because of their dread of YHWH, 2Ch 17:10
- (5) gifts brought by Philistines, 2Ch 17:11
- (6) animals brought by Arabians, 2Ch 17:11 (Josephus, Antiq. 8.15.1., says they brought more every year)
- (7) he grew greater and greater, 2 Chr. 17:12 - built cities, large army

Jehoshaphat's prosperity

I. **ITS MEASURE.** Everything indicates that it was great and genuine. Not an element of true prosperity is wanting, whether we consider him individually or as identified with the realm. It involved--

- 1. The safety of the kingdom.
- 2. Wealth.
- 3. Honour from abroad.
- 4. The love and confidence of his own people.

II. **ITS ORIGIN.** This was partly natural, partly supernatural.

1. **Natural.**

(1) The roots of his prosperity lay largely in himself. He was a man of correct instincts and good convictions. A man of worth and weight of character. By these he won the love and secured the co-operation of his people.

(2) He was wise in management.

2. **Supernatural.** "The Lord established the kingdom in his hand." It was a reward of piety. He honoured God, and God honoured and exalted him.

Lessons:

(1) The union of prudence and piety. Each is helpful to the other; neither is sufficient without the other. Prudence gives tone and practicality to piety; piety gives sweetness and mellowness to prudence. Piety alone tends to feebleness and inefficiency; prudence alone inclines to coldness and covetousness. United they round out the character in beauty and strength.

(2) Reform through religion and law. Jehoshaphat united the civil and religious power in securing national reform. How necessary is this union in the great struggle with intemperance and other moral defilements. (Monday Club Sermons.)

2 Chronicles 17:6 He took great pride in the ways of the LORD and again removed the high places and the Asherim from Judah.

NET 2 Chronicles 17:6 He was committed to following the LORD; he even removed the high places and Asherah poles from Judah.

CSB 2 Chronicles 17:6 His mind rejoiced in the LORD's ways, and he again removed the high places and

Asherah poles from Judah.

ESV 2 Chronicles 17:6 His heart was courageous in the ways of the LORD. And furthermore, he took the high places and the Asherim out of Judah.

NIV 2 Chronicles 17:6 His heart was devoted to the ways of the LORD; furthermore, he removed the high places and the Asherah poles from Judah.

NLT 2 Chronicles 17:6 He was deeply committed to the ways of the LORD. He removed the pagan shrines and Asherah poles from Judah.

NRS 2 Chronicles 17:6 His heart was courageous in the ways of the LORD; and furthermore he removed the high places and the sacred poles from Judah.

NJB 2 Chronicles 17:6 He was so enthusiastic about obeying Yahweh that once again he abolished the high places and sacred poles in Judah.

NAB 2 Chronicles 17:6 Thus he was encouraged to follow the LORD'S ways, and again he removed the high places and the sacred poles from Judah.

YLT 2 Chronicles 17:6 and his heart is high in the ways of Jehovah, and again he hath turned aside the high places and the shrines out of Judah.

- **He took great pride:** De 28:47 Job 22:26
- **in the ways:** Ps 18:21,22 119:1 138:5 Ho 14:9 Ac 13:10
- **removed the high places and the Asherim:** 2Ch 14:3 15:17 19:3 20:33 31:1 34:3-7 1Ki 22:43

Related Passage:

Deuteronomy 8:14 then (CONTEXT Dt 8:11-13 - WHEN YOU ARE PROSPEROUS) **your heart will become proud** and you will forget the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

2 Chronicles 26:16 But when he (UZZIAH) became strong, **his heart was so proud** that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the LORD his God, for he entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense.

2 Chronicles 32:25-26 But Hezekiah gave no return for the benefit he received, because **his heart was proud**; therefore wrath came on him and on Judah and Jerusalem. 26 However, Hezekiah humbled **the pride of his heart**, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD did not come on them in the days of Hezekiah.

1 Kings 22:43 He (JEHOSHAPHAT) walked in all the way of Asa his father; he did not turn aside from it, doing right in the sight of the LORD. However, **the high places** were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense on the high places.

2 Chronicles 20:33 The **high places**, however, were not removed; the people had not yet directed their hearts to the God of their fathers.

REMOVAL OF DEPRAVED FALSE WORSHIP

He took great pride in the ways of the LORD - This reads literally "**his heart was lifted up**," which was positive and not negative like most of the mentions of this phrase (God's warning in Dt 8:14; Uzziah in 2Ch 26:16; Hezekiah in 2Ch 32:25)

THOUGHT - Oh, that the Spirit would give each of us reading these notes a spirit of pride (a lifting up of our hearts) in the ways of the LORD God Almighty. In Jesus' Name and for His honor. Amen

Dillard on took great pride - This is the only passage in Chronicles where the phrase ויגבה לבו, "**his heart was lifted up**," must have a positive sense; its ordinary use in Chronicles (2Ch 26:16; 32:25) and in the rest of the OT is negative, "be haughty." (See [2 Chronicles, Volume 15 - Page 133](#))

Gustafson on took great pride (literally "his heart was lifted up") - The verb "lifted up" means to be high, and, when used with "heart" elsewhere, means to have a high, haughty, and proud attitude; but here it refers to his high ideals or high spiritual ambition to follow the Lord. "Ambition is a virtue when practised within the guidelines of 'the ways of the Lord' " (Leslie C. Allen). Jehoshaphat's

high aims are seen in destroying the idols and in his wanting all of God's people to be instructed in the law of the Lord (2Ch 17:7–9). 2Ch 17:1–6 can be summed up in these words: Jehoshaphat sought God and found God in His goodness in his life and reign. (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

And again removed the high places ([bamah](#)) and the Asherim ([Asherah](#)) from Judah - I like the **NJB** "He was so enthusiastic about obeying Yahweh that once again he abolished the high places and sacred poles in Judah." Asa had made an attempt to rid the land of the high places, but apparently the people kept reopening them (cf. 2 Chr. 15:17; 20:33) thus the phrase again removed (Hezekiah 2Ki 18:4 and Josiah 2Ki 23:4-8 also removed the high places). Sadly despite Asa's and Jehoshaphat's efforts to remove the high places they reappeared (2Ch 20:33).

[ESV Study Bible \(borrow\)](#) - Reform of worship is characteristic of faithful kings in Chronicles (see 2Ch 14:3, 5; 15:8; 34:4). (See [ESV Study Bible \(Ebook\) - Page 1445](#))

And the Asherim - Asherah poles were Canaanite fertility symbols which played an important role in the people's depraved nature religion and were probably images of Asherah, Baal's mother and El's consort, and may have served as incense stands in Baal worship. It is in the period of the divided monarchy that the Asherah cult flourished both in Israel and Judah, though its existence before is documented by the command in Exodus 34:13, the prohibition of Deut. 16:21, and the incident at the threshold of Gideon's life of service to God, Judges 6:25ff. [See below to note](#) that many of the uses of the word **Asherim** ([Asherah](#)) were in the depraved times of the Judges and the following times of the Kings and Chronicles.

Adam Clarke on the apparent discrepancy in **1 Kings 22:43** "However, the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense on the high places." -- In 2 Chronicles 17:6, it is expressly said, that he *did take away the high places*. Allowing that the text is right in 2 Chronicles the two places may be easily recognized. There were *two kinds of high places* in the land: 1. Those used for *idolrous* purposes. 2. Those that were *consecrated to God*, and were used before the temple was built. The former he did take away, the latter he did not."

NIV Study Bible note on **High Places** - Upon entering Canaan, the Israelites often followed the Canaanite custom of locating their altars on high hills, probably on the old Baal sites. The question of the legitimacy of Israelite worship at these high places has long been a matter of debate. It is clear that the Israelites were forbidden to take over pagan altars and high places and use them for the worship of the Lord (Nu 33:52; Dt 7:5; 12:3). It is also clear that altars were to be built only at divinely sanctioned sites (see Ex 20:24; Dt 12:5,8,13-14). It is not so clear whether multiplicity of altars was totally forbidden provided the above conditions were met (see 19:10,14; Lev 26:30-31; Dt 12; 1Sa 9:12). It seems, however, that these conditions were not followed even in the time of Solomon, and pagan high places were being used for the worship of the Lord. This would eventually lead to religious apostasy and syncretism and was strongly condemned (2Ki 17:7-18; 21:2-9; 23:4-25). because a temple had not yet been built. Worship at a variety of places was apparently considered tolerable prior to the building of the temple (see Jdg 6:24; 13:19; 1Sa 7:17; 9:12-13). (See [NIV Study Bible](#))

Peter Pett discusses the problematic **high places** - There was now the Temple and there were legitimate high places (such as formerly on Mount Carmel - 1 Kings 18:32) where the worship was kept pure by the priests and prophets, but along with these there were many syncretised high places, which were ancient local sanctuaries, often also containing a Baal pillar and an Asherah pole/image, where the worship became a mixture of Yahwism and Baalism. These did not retain the purity of worship of the Temple and the legitimate high places, and would in fact later lead the people of Judah into grosser sin. But Jehoshaphat's position was complicated, as we might have expected when considering such a complicated situation. And it would appear from 2 Chronicles 17:6; 2 Chronicles 19:3-4 that he did make an effort to remove those which had become too obviously syncretistic, and came to his attention. What was lacking was a full-scale purge.

Believer's Study Bible - v. 6-9) The heart desire of Jehoshaphat was to follow after the Lord (cf. vv. 3-5). His desire was so pronounced that the unusual expression "his heart took delight in the ways of the Lord" is used to describe it. He recognized the need for constant vigil against idolatry. Even during the reign and revival in the days of Asa, idolatry continued to recur in Judah (cf. 1Ki 15:1, note). In order to accomplish his spiritual warfare against idolatry, Jehoshaphat removed high places and idols and sent out prophets and Levites to teach the leaders of Judah in "the Law of the Lord" (vv. 7-9). The expression "the Book of the Law of the Lord" probably refers to the Pentateuch, or Torah (cf. 2Ch 34:14; 1 Chr. 29:29, note; Ps. 119).

Iain Duguid: The interplay of human and divine action is seen in the statement that "The Lord established the kingdom in his hand" (2Ch 17:5), balancing the opening statement that Jehoshaphat "strengthened himself" (2Ch 17:1). It is God's "kingdom," and the Lord placed it "in the hand of the sons of David" (2Ch 13:8)—until God later gave it "into [the] hand" of the "king of the Chaldeans" (2Ch 36:17). The statement that "His heart was courageous" (lit., "His heart was high") elsewhere describes **negatively** the pride and arrogance of Uzziah and Hezekiah after they had become strong and enjoyed benefits (2Ch 26:16; 2Ch 32:25, 26; cf. Ps. 131:1;

Prov. 16:5). What stands out uniquely regarding Jehoshaphat is that after he received "great riches and honor," his "pride" was "in the ways of the Lord" as he removed the "high places"

On the Asherim see [FERTILITY WORSHIP OF THE ANE](#)

High places (01116) [bamah](#) Six activities seem to be related to high places -- burning of incense, sacrificing, eating of sacrificial meals, praying, prostitution, child sacrifice (cf. bama in the valley, Je 7:31). The first use in Lev 26:30 is God's declaration to Israel "I will destroy your high places." In Dt 32:13 speaking of Jacob (Israel) He declared "He made him ride on the **high places** of the earth," so clearly some uses of bamah are not negative. In a similar use God says Israel "you will tread upon their (Israel's enemies') **high places**." Another positive use is Psalm 18:33 where David declared Jehovah "makes my feet like hinds' feet, And sets me upon my **high places**." (cp Hab 3:19 - [NET Note](#) = David "compares his agility in battle to the ability of a deer to negotiate rugged, high terrain without falling or being injured.", cp Isa 58:14) We see the effect of Israel's high places on Jehovah in Ps 78:58 = "For they provoked Him with their high places and aroused His jealousy with their graven images."

A sad phrase that is repeated again and again (speaking of Israel) is "the **high places** were not taken away" (1Ki 15:14, 2Chr 15:17 = King Asa but notice he did remove some of them - 2Chr 14:3, 5, 1Ki 22:43, 2Chr 20:33 = King Jehoshaphat, 2Ki 12:3 = King Jehoash, 2Ki 14:4 = King Amaziah, 2Ki 15:4 = King Azariah, 2Ki 15:35 = King Jotham son of Uzziah and look what his son did in 2Ki 16:1-4!, 2Chr 20:33). In many of these passages the context was of a king doing "spiritual house cleaning" so to speak and yet still failing to remove the high places. Isn't sin that way? We confess one or two sins but we have a little pet sin (better a "venomous viper") that we just don't have the heart to kill! God grant us spiritual eyes and hearts to learn from Israel's mistakes. Amen! Some kings like **Hezekiah** (1Ki 18:4, 2Chr 31:1, Isa 36:7) and **Josiah** (2Ki 23:4,8, 13, 15, 19-20, 2Chr 34:3 cp prophecy about **Josiah** 300 years earlier = 1Ki 13:2) did destroy the high places, but in Hezekiah's case his own son **Manasseh** rebuilt them (2Ki 21:1-2, 3, 2Chr 33:3) and in Josiah's case the people rebuilt them!

We see the spiritual effect of high places on the people when King Jehoram (2Chr 21:5-10) "made **high places** in the mountains of Judah, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot and led Judah astray." (2Chr 21:11)

One of the most incredible (and saddest) verses in the OT (in my opinion) is "Then Solomon built **a high place** for **Chemosh** the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon." (1Ki 11:7, cp 1Ki 3:3 = Solomon had "half a heart" for God!) This was too much for Jehovah and He declared that the 12 tribes would be split as a result of Solomon's sin! Sin is costly. You may think you are getting away with it, but you are not! You may think you are the wisest man in the world (like Solomon) but you are really the most foolish (as Solomon was)! There was one high place that was not idolatrous (at least not at the outset) - "Then Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place which was at Gibeon; for God's tent of meeting was there, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness." (2Chr 1:3, cp 1Chr 16:39-40, 21:29).

Asherim (0842) [Asherah](#) refers to "poles" representing and/or associated with the goddess Asherah - these poles could be cut down and burned (Jdg. 6:25-26). They were made (1Ki 14:15) and set up (1Ki 14:23) after being carved (2Ki 21:7). In many cases, Asherah clearly refers to the deity and not to an image or symbol (Judg. 3:7, 1 Ki. 18:19 and 2 Ki. 23:4). **W E Vine** - **ashērâ** refers to a cultic object representing the presence of the Canaanite goddess Asherah. When the people of Israel entered Palestine, they were to have nothing to do with the idolatrous religions of its inhabitants.

Asherah - **40v** - Exod. 34:13; Deut. 7:5; Deut. 12:3; Deut. 16:21; Jdg. 3:7; Jdg. 6:25; Jdg. 6:26; Jdg. 6:28; Jdg. 6:30; 1 Ki. 14:15; 1 Ki. 14:23; 1 Ki. 15:13; 1 Ki. 16:33; 1 Ki. 18:19; 2 Ki. 13:6; 2 Ki. 17:10; 2 Ki. 17:16; 2 Ki. 18:4; 2 Ki. 21:3; 2 Ki. 21:7; 2 Ki. 23:4; 2 Ki. 23:6; 2 Ki. 23:7; 2 Ki. 23:14; 2 Ki. 23:15; 2 Chr. 14:3; 2 Chr. 15:16; 2 Chr. 17:6; 2 Chr. 19:3; 2 Chr. 24:18; 2 Chr. 31:1; 2 Chr. 33:3; 2 Chr. 33:19; 2 Chr. 34:3; 2 Chr. 34:4; 2 Chr. 34:7; Isa. 17:8; Isa. 27:9; Jer. 17:2; Mic. 5:14

F B Meyer - **Sursum corda! Lift up your hearts!** How beautiful is this ejaculation in the Communion Service of the Church of England, and the response, "We lift them up unto the Lord." I never hear it without the thrill of a holy impulse passing through me. It is possible, and it is meet and right, to lift up our hearts from the sordid cases and pressing responsibilities of daily life, into the calm, serene presence of God our Father.

Lift up your heart to God, as a child its face to be kissed. Lift it up free from mistrust and sinful stain, and unkind feeling toward any. Lift it up in holy joy and inspiration. Lift it up as a censer filled with the hot coals, from which sweet fragrance exhales. And God will bend down to lift it higher, and fill it with His peace and joy and purity.

In hours of depression look up, be lifted. Sursum corda! When the foe is pressing you most severely, look up, your redemption draweth nigh. When the river has to be crossed, when the last farewell must be said, when the flesh fails, let your mind and heart thither ascend, and there continually dwell where Jesus has entered as your Forerunner.

If you would lift up your heart, you must be in the ways of the Lord, as the good Jehoshaphat. You must seek the Lord God, and walk in His commandments. You must take away the high places and groves of idolatry and impurity. Beware of the world's birdlime! Shake yourself from the bands and bonds that would detain you. Oh, heart of mine, why is thy flight so low? Lift thyself up and sit down with Christ in the heavenly places! "Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. Let not mine enemies triumph over me!"

Raymond Dillard on the problem of high places removed and not removed. This comment is from the description of Jehoshaphat's father King Asa (2Ch 14:1-4) - That Asa "removed the foreign altars and high places" (2Ch 14:1 [2]) is in tension with the statement that "he did not remove the high places from Israel" (2Ch 15:17); many regard these two statements as fiat contradictions or a measure of the author's incompetence as a historian. Rather than quickly dismiss efforts to ease the apparent contradiction as unconscionably harmonistic, it would be more plausible to assume that in the author's mind the two statements were not in tension; it is unlikely that either the author or a later editor would contradict himself in such short compass.

(1) Since 2Ch 15:17 occurs toward the end of Asa's reign, presumably in some proximity to his thirty-fifth year from the narrator's viewpoint (2Ch 15:19), and 2Ch 14:2 refers to early reforms, an intervening period of up to thirty years is possible. The two statements could be understood as no more than evidence of the resilience of the indigenous cults which plagued Judah's history and required repeated reformation.

(2) It is also possible that the Chronicler's insertion of the words "from Israel" in 2Ch 15:17 (not in the // at 1 Kgs 15:14) is intended to indicate that Asa did not remove the high places from the cities earlier belonging to the Northern Kingdom and then under his sway; contrast the explicit statement that he removed the high places "**from all the cities of Judah**" (2Ch 14:4 [5]).

Rudolph (241) criticizes two other solutions, that 2Ch 15:17 be understood as saying that Asa did "not completely" remove the high places (Theodoret), or that the high places in 2Ch 14:2 were the high places of the foreign deities also mentioned, whereas the subsequent reference was to Yahwistic worship centers (Noordtzijs)—both solutions which are admittedly less plausible. This difficulty is not unique to the Chronicler's account of Asa, but recurs in his statements that Jehoshaphat did (2Ch 17:6) and did not (2Ch 20:33) remove the high places. The destruction of the pillars and Asherah poles, the high places and altars is in accord with the injunctions of Deut 7:5; 12:3; 16:21–22. (See [2 Chronicles, Volume 15 - Page 117](#))

2 Chronicles 17:7 Then in the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah;

- **he sent:** De 4:5 Ps 34:11 51:13 Ec 1:12 12:9,10 Isa 49:23
- **to teach:** 2Ch 15:3 30:22 35:3 De 33:10 Ne 8:7,8,13,14 9:3 Mt 4:23 Mk 4:2 Lu 4:43,44 Ac 1:1

TAUGHT THE LAW IN THE LAND

Then - Time phrase marking progression in the narrative - He had followed David, did not seek Baals, sought God, followed God's commandments and did not act as Israel did. It is therefore not surprising that in light of this description of Jehoshaphat that now he seeks to establish the Word of the Lord in all of Judah.

In the third year of his reign - ~870 BC. Some think this is the first year of his sole reign following coregency with his ailing father King Asa (2Ch 16:12)

Gustafson - Jehoshaphat had a true shepherd's heart. What he knew of God's ways and commandments (vv. 3–4), he wanted all of God's people to know. Jehoshaphat was an ideal shepherd king who was subject to the law himself and wanted all of God's people to be subject to it also. He initiated an itinerant Bible teaching team. This is the first time in Chronicles that such a ministry is explicitly mentioned....Various parts of the Old Testament describe priests teaching, but this is the first time that we read of Levites doing so. (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah - Teaching is the

key thought (keyword) in 2Ch 17:7-9. In these verses we have an account of a remarkable itinerant ministry established by Jehoshaphat, in which three classes of men were employed his officials, the Levites and the priests.

McConville makes a good point about his officials that this "shows that the king was prepared to organize his whole kingdom for the purpose of propagating the law" (See [I and II Chronicles - Page 179](#))

TSK - We may presume that the **Princes** (OFFICIALS) instructed the people in the nature of the civil law and constitution of the kingdom; that the **Levites** instructed them in every thing that appertained to the temple service, and ritual law; and that the **Priests** instructed them in the nature and design of their religion. Thus the nation became thoroughly instructed in their duty to God, to the king, and to each other; they therefore became as one man; and against a people thus united, on such principles, no enemy could be successful.

Raymond Dillard - Jehoshaphat's teaching mission portrays him in the light of the ideal king of Deut 17:18–20. It is an ideal of royal responsibility for law and justice which is pervasive in the ancient Near East (Whitelam, Just King, 17–38, 207–18). The teaching duty of the cultic personnel is well established in biblical tradition (Deut 33:10; Lev 10:11; Jer 18:18; Mal 2:7; Hos 4:6; cf. 2 Chr 15:3). Though the five officials would have served primarily as representatives of the crown, their presence assigns and legitimates a teaching role also for laity. The Chronicler's interest in the lay members may reflect the practice of the emergent synagogues in the post-exilic period. (See [2 Chronicles, Volume 15 - Page 134](#))

Iain Duguid: Early in his reign, Jehoshaphat initiated a broad program of teaching, involving lay officials (who would represent royal authority), Levites, and priests in an itinerant task "through all the cities of Judah."

Andrew Hill: The curriculum consists of the "Book of the Law," presumably some form of the Pentateuch – perhaps more specifically the Covenant Code (Ex. 19-24) or even what we now know as the book of Deuteronomy. . . The verb "to teach" (lmd; 2 Chron. 17:8, 9) is a common word for instruction in the Old Testament (cf. Deut. 4:10; 5:1). It implies that education is a process of assimilation, not the dumping of information. The teacher stimulates the learner to imitate the desired action or behavioral response by word and example. The program appears to have been one of unrestricted access to religious education, as the "people" of Judah are the target audience of this "tuition-free" instruction (2 Chron. 17:9). (See [NIVAC](#))

Geoffrey Kirkland: The priorities in the teaching: 1. Instruct the MIND — teach/instruct/impart/preach/proclaim 2. Engage the PEOPLE — all the cities, in Judah, of Judah 3. Know the WORD — had the Law WITH THEM** 4. Teach the WORD — they taught... they taught... they were teaching... 5. Keep the MISSION — they *went* throughout ALL the cities 6. Maintain the PRIORITY — they were teaching the people (didn't get sidetracked or distracted)

Frederick Mabie: It is noteworthy that these individuals go out to teach God's Word (in analogy to the going forth built into the Great Commission; cf. Mt 28:19-20), rather than expecting the people to come to them. (See [1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

Ron Daniel - Jehoshaphat knew that the Word of God was vitally important to his nation. And so he sent officials and Levites to teach the people the book of the law of the Lord.

2 Chronicles 17:8 and with them the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah and Tobadonijah, the Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests.

- **priests**: Ezr 7:1-6 Mal 2:7

Related Passages:

Leviticus 10:11 (TO AARON, A LEVITE) and so as to teach the sons of Israel all the statutes which the LORD has spoken to them through Moses."

Deuteronomy 33:10 They (LEVITES) shall teach Your ordinances to Jacob, And Your law to Israel. They shall put incense before You, And whole burnt offerings on Your altar.

Malachi 2:7 "For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

LEVITES AND PRIESTS ALSO TEACH THE WORD OF GOD

and with them the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah and

Tobadonijah, the Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests - I call these men the "Sweet 16," for they gave out the living Word, which David said is "Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb." (Ps 19:10). The Levites, especially the priests from the tribe of Levi, were directly tasked with teaching God's law to the people as spiritual educators.

ESV Study Bible - It was God's intention from Israel's beginning that his people be thoroughly conversant with the law (see Deut. 6:6-9). Besides administering sacrifices, it was the duty of priests in particular to instruct the people in the law (see Lev. 10:11; Deut. 33:10; Jer. 18:18; Mal. 2:7). On the role of the Levites in teaching the law, see Neh. 8:7-9.

David Boyd Long writes regarding the "Sweet 16", "This would give balance and variety to all the teaching, something best done through different types of teachers rather than a stereotyped one-man-ministry type of arrangement".

Knapp - "By this little band of princes, Levites and priests, sixteen in all, Jehoshaphat did more toward impressing the surrounding nations with a sense of his power than the largest and best-equipped standing army could have secured to him"

2 Chronicles 17:9 They taught in Judah, having the book of the law of the LORD with them; and they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

- **They taught in Judah:** 2Ch 35:3 Ne 8:7
- **the book of the law of the LORD** De 6:6-9 31:11-13 Jos 1:7,8 Isa 8:20 Mt 15:2-9 28:19,20 Lu 4:17-19 Joh 5:39,46 Ac 13:15 15:21 28:23 Ro 3:2 1Pe 4:11
- **they went throughout all the cities:** Mt 10:23 11:1 Ac 8:40

They taught in Judah, having the book of the law of the LORD with them; and they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

G Campbell Morgan - With the accession of Jehoshaphat to the throne of Judah, a period of very definite reformation commenced within the kingdom. In this chapter we have, first, the account of his own relationship to God, and the resulting blessing that came to him. Then follows this most interesting account of how he made known the law of Jehovah anew throughout the land. The method adopted was what in these modern times we might describe as the holding of Special Missions throughout the cities of Judah, for the specific purpose of proclaiming and interpreting "the book of the law of Jehovah." Those who went forth to this work were priests, Levites, and representatives of the princes. Thus Jehoshaphat put into practice himself and, by these special methods, provoke his people to put into practice, the principle which Azariah had declared to his father. Coincident with this activity within the kingdom, a remarkable fear of Jehovah fell upon their enemies round about, so that they ceased to make war upon Jehoshaphat. Thus God was with the man who was with Him. The result was that there was opportunity for strengthening the kingdom within, by the building of castles and cities, by commerce, and by the carrying out of many works. This story has a present value. No better service can be rendered to the nation than that of proclaiming the Word of Jehovah to the people, in cities, towns, villages, and hamlets. By such proclamation the heart of the people may be turned to Jehovah, and so He be enabled to do for them all that is in His heart.

2 Chronicles 17:10 Now the dread of the LORD was on all the kingdoms of the lands which were around Judah, so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat.

- **Now the dread of the LORD:** 2Ch 14:14 Ge 35:5 Ex 15:14-16 Jos 2:9-11
- fell: Heb. was
- so that: 2Ch 16:9 Ex 34:24 Pr 16:7

Related Passages:

Genesis 35:5 As they journeyed, there was a great terror upon the cities which were around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob.

Exodus 15:14-16 "The peoples have heard, they tremble; Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia. 15"Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed; The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them; All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. 16"Terror and dread fall upon them; By the greatness of Your arm they are motionless as stone; Until Your people pass over, O LORD, Until the people pass over whom You have purchased.

Joshua 2:9-11 and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. 10"For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11"When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.

1 Chronicles 14:17+ Then the fame of David went out into all the lands; and **the LORD brought the fear of him on all the nations.**

2 Chronicles 14:14 They destroyed all the cities around Gerar, for the dread of the LORD had fallen on them; and they despoiled all the cities, for there was much plunder in them.

Psalms 33:12 **Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD** The people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.

Proverbs 14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a disgrace to any people.

DREAD OF THE LORD

Now the **dread** of the LORD was on all the kingdoms of the lands which were around Judah, so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat - Note it was not dread of Jehoshaphat but of Jehoshaphat's LORD, which was brought about by the LORD himself (1Ch 14:17+). Jehoshaphat was a righteous and God-fearing king and Yahweh reciprocated (blessed him) by honoring his obedience with protection for the nation. The surrounding nations were spiritually restrained from attacking — not by diplomacy or strength, but by God's sovereign influence. In short, Jehoshaphat's faithfulness to the Word and worship of the LORD brought about God's supernatural protection.

*When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD,
He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.*

-- Proverbs 16:7

Dread means fear, which can be a good thing when it is reverential. In this context the pagans did not have a reverential fear but a shaking fear of Jehovah. The result was they were afraid to attack Judah. This is a manifestation of the protective hand of Jehovah (see [The Hand of the Lord](#)) in response to Jehoshaphat's efforts of spiritual renewal.

Remember that Chronicles is a post exilic book, and the nation of Israel at that time was relatively weak and impoverished so this would have been an encouraging verse to the post-exilic community.

W Gustafson - Verses 1–9 tell of his concern for the things of God. Now the following verses tell of the resultant blessing. "And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah" (v. 10). They had a healthy respect for Jehoshaphat. We also read of this for **David** (1 Chr 14:17), **Asa** (2 Chr 14:14), and again for **Jehoshaphat** (2Ch 20:29). God promised in Deuteronomy 11:22–25: "For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments ... the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land". Immediately after Jacob commanded his family to put away the strange gods that were among them, we read in Genesis 35:5 that "the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob". In Joshua's day God did similarly (Josh 2:9, 11; 5:1). Proverbs 16:7 states, "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him". In Acts 2 (right after we learn of the believers' steadfastness) we read in v. 43, "And fear came upon every soul". After Ananias and Sapphira died in judgment, Acts 5:11 states, "And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things". Because of the fear in Jehoshaphat's day, "they made no war against Jehoshaphat". (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

Raymond Dillard - The Chronicler notes the dread of Yahweh on the part of the nations for both Jehoshaphat (20:29) and Asa (14:14; cf. 1 Chr 14:17), and he makes the point regarding both that they enjoyed periods of peace. Peace is one of the tokens of divine favor in Chronicles (14:1; cf. 1 Chr 22:9) (See [2 Chronicles, Volume 15 - Page 134](#))

Iain Duguid: A sign of blessing is the response of the "kingdoms of the lands that were around" (cf. 1 Chron. 29:30). When others see physical signs that God is with his people, the "fear of the Lord" is often the response. While commonly following military victory (2 Chron. 14:14; 20:29; 1 Chron. 14:17; cf. Josh. 2:8–11), such response may also flow from blessings that accompany walking in God's commandments (2 Chron. 7:4; cf. Deut. 4:5–8; Matt. 5:16). Here "tribute" is brought that reflects the life of the peoples: "presents and silver" from the coastal Philistines and "rams and goats" from the Arabian herdsmen to the south (cf. 2 Chron. 26:6–8; contrast 21:16–17). Like David (1 Chron. 11:9), Jehoshaphat grows in prominence.

Frederick Mabie: The tribute brought from Philistines and Arabs, together with statements of military fortifications, implies that the southern kingdom now has hegemony over the caravan routes across the Arabah and Negev to the Coastal highway. This control provides a lucrative source of tax and tribute income for the southern kingdom during Jehoshaphat's administration. This economic and political stability in turn allows for further military strengthening, building projects, and governmental expansion (see 17:12-19). The Arabs noted here are likely semi-nomadic tribes in the desert regions to the south of the Judean Negev and portions of the Sinaitic and (perhaps) Arabian Peninsulas.

Ron Daniel -10-11 The Nations Fear Judah. In the book of Deuteronomy, God made a promise to the Jews. If they were careful to keep the commandments, loved the Lord, and walked in His ways, then...Deut. 11:25 *"No man will be able to stand before you; the LORD your God will lay the dread of you and the fear of you on all the land..."* God is keeping His word because Judah was keeping the Word.

Matthew Henry Notes: 2Ch 17:10-19 We have here a further account of Jehoshaphat's great prosperity and the flourishing state of his kingdom.

I. He had good interest in the neighbouring princes and nations

Though he was not perhaps so great a soldier as David (which might have made him their terror), nor so great a scholar as Solomon (which might have made him their oracle), yet the fear of the Lord fell so upon them (that is, God so influenced and governed their spirits) that they had all a reverence for him, 2Ch 17:10. And,

1. None of them made war against him. God's good providence so ordered it that, while the princes and priests were instructing and reforming the country, none of his neighbours gave him any molestations, to take him off from that good work. Thus when Jacob and his sons were going to worship at Bethel the terror of God was upon the neighbouring cities, that they did not pursue after them, Gen. 35:5, and see Ex. 34:24.

2. Many of them brought presents to him (2Ch 17:11), to secure his friendship. Perhaps these were a tribute imposed upon them by Asa, who made himself master of the cities of the Philistines, and the tents of the Arabians, 2Ch 14:14, 15. With the 7700 rams, and the same number of he-goats, which the Arabians brought, there was probably a proportionable number of ewes and lambs, she-goats and kids.

II. He had a very considerable stores laid up in the cities of Judah.

He pulled down his barns, and built larger (2Ch 17:12), castles and cities of store, for arms and victuals. He was a man of business, and aimed at the public good in all his undertakings, either to preserve the peace or prepare for war.

III. He had the militia in good order.

It was never in better since David modelled it. Five lord-lieutenants (if I may so call them) are here named, with the numbers of those under their command (the serviceable men, that were fit for war in their respective districts), three in Judah, and two in Benjamin. It is said of one of these great commanders, Amasiah, that he willingly offered himself unto the Lord (2Ch 17:16), not only to the king, to serve him in this post, but to the Lord, to glorify him in it. He was the most eminent among them for religion, he accepted the place, not for the honour, or power, or profit of it, but for conscience' sake towards God, that he might serve his country,. It was usual for great generals then to offer of their spoils to the Lord, 1 Chr. 26:26. But this good man offered himself first to the Lord, and then his dedicated things. The number of the soldiers under these five generals amounts to 1,160,000 men, a vast number for so small a compass of ground as Judah's and Benjamin's lot to furnish out and maintain. Abijah could bring into the field but 400,000 (2Ch 13:3), Asa not 600,000 (2Ch 14:8), yet Jehoshaphat has at command almost 1,200,000. But it must be considered,

1. That God had promised to make the seed of Abraham like the sand of the sea for number.
2. There had now been a long peace.
3. We may suppose that the city of Jerusalem was very much enlarged.
4. Many had come over to them from the kingdom of Israel (2Ch 15:19), which would increase the numbers of the people.
5. Jehoshaphat was under a special blessing of God, which made his affairs to prosper greatly. The armies, we may suppose, were dispersed all the country over, and each man resided for the most part on his own estate; but they appeared often, to be mustered and trained, and were ready at call whenever there was occasion. The commanders waited on the king (2Ch 17:19) as officers of his court, privy-counsellors, and ministers of state.

But, lastly, observe, It was not this formidable army that struck a terror upon the neighbouring nations, that restrained them from attempting any thing against Israel, or obliged them to pay tribute, but the fear of God which fell upon them when Jehoshaphat reformed his country and set up a preaching ministry in it, 2Ch 17:10. The ordinances of God are more the strength and safety of a kingdom than its military force-its men of God more than its men of war.

2 Chronicles 17:11 Some of the Philistines brought gifts and silver as tribute to Jehoshaphat; the Arabians also brought him flocks, 7,700 rams and 7,700 male goats.

- brought: 2Ch 17:5 9:14 26:8 2Sa 8:2 2Ki 3:4

NATIONS BRING TRIBUTE TO JUDAH

Some of the [Philistines](#) brought gifts and silver as tribute to Jehoshaphat; the Arabians ([note](#)) also brought him flocks, 7,700 rams and 7,700 male goats - This was another evidence of the blessing of Jehovah on Jehoshaphat because of his faithfulness to seek the LORD (He is an OT example of the promise of Jesus in Mt 6:33+!). The Arabians were the peoples who inhabited the fringes of the Syrian desert, extending also into the Negev and the Arabian peninsula.

Gustafson sees a NT parallel - The assurance is given in the New Testament to the Corinthians that if they prophesied in an orderly way, unbelievers or unlearned would fall on their faces and acknowledge that God was truly in the midst of the assembly (1 Cor 14:24–25). (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

Walton - Arabs begin to be mentioned in Assyrian royal inscriptions at about this time (for instance, they were one of the allies in the [Battle of Qarqar](#)) ([IVP Background Commentary - OT - page 438](#))

2 Chronicles 17:12 So Jehoshaphat grew greater and greater, and he built fortresses and store cities in Judah.

NET 2 Chronicles 17:12 Jehoshaphat's power kept increasing. He built fortresses and storage cities throughout Judah.

CSB 2 Chronicles 17:12 Jehoshaphat grew stronger and stronger. He built fortresses and storage cities in Judah

ESV 2 Chronicles 17:12 And Jehoshaphat grew steadily greater. He built in Judah fortresses and store cities,

NIV 2 Chronicles 17:12 Jehoshaphat became more and more powerful; he built forts and store cities in Judah

NLT 2 Chronicles 17:12 So Jehoshaphat became more and more powerful and built fortresses and storage cities throughout Judah.

NRS 2 Chronicles 17:12 Jehoshaphat grew steadily greater. He built fortresses and storage cities in Judah.

NJB 2 Chronicles 17:12 Jehoshaphat became more and more powerful. He built fortresses and storage towns in Judah.

- waxed great: 2Ch 18:1 1Ch 29:25
- in Judah: 2Ch 8:2-6 11:5-12 14:6,7 26:6-9 27:4 32:5,27-29
- castles: or, palaces

GROWTH OF JEHOSEPHAT'S POWER AND PRESTIGE

So Jehoshaphat grew greater and greater, NET = "Jehoshaphat's power kept increasing." One might ask "Why?" I think Ezra 7:9-10+ gives us the answer...

For on the first of the first month he began to go up from Babylon; and on the first of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, because **the good hand of his God was upon him**. 10 For (STRATEGIC TERM OF EXPLANATION - EXPLAINS WHY GOOD HAND WAS UPON HIM!) Ezra had set his heart to **study the law**

of the LORD and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel. (THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT JEHOSEPHAT DID! O God, give us a heart of Ezra and Jehoshaphat to study, practice and teach Your Holy Word to all around us, for their good and Your great glory. In the mighty Name of Jesus. Amen. (See [The Hand of the Lord](#))

and he built fortresses and store cities in Judah - The building projects bolstered Judah's military prowess and the store cities assured supplies for military and the people, presumably when harvests were less productive. Jehoshaphat was forward thinking in these areas. Yes, Jehoshaphat built, but Yahweh caused the blessing, because "Unless the LORD builds the house (FORTRESSES, STORE CITIES), They labor in vain who build it " (Ps 127:1) (See "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)")

Barber summarizes the blessing of the Lord upon Jehoshaphat. "(1) God protected His people by filling their enemies with fear; (2) former enemies began to bring him tribute; (3) and Jehoshaphat increased in material and numerical strength".

Walton - Archaeological evidence of a line of fortresses in the Jordan Valley and adjacent to the Dead Sea may be associated with his reign. Supply centers were meant to stockpile food and other necessities in case of siege or famine. ([IVP Background Commentary - OT - page 438](#))

2 Chronicles 17:13 He had large supplies in the cities of Judah, and warriors, valiant men, in Jerusalem.

- **He had large supplies in the cities:** 2Ch 26:10-15 1Ch 27:25-31

MATERIAL BLESSING AND MILITARY MIGHT

He had large supplies in the cities of Judah, and warriors, valiant men ([gibbor](#)), in Jerusalem - This is further evidence of the good had of the LORD on Jehoshaphat's reign.

2 Chronicles 17:14 This was their muster according to their fathers' households: of Judah, commanders of thousands, Adnah was the commander, and with him 300,000 valiant warriors;

- **This was their muster** Ge 12:2 13:16 15:5
- **according to their fathers' households:** Nu 1:2,18
- **300,000 valiant warriors:** 2Ch 11:1 13:3 14:8 26:13

Related Passages:

1 Chronicles 21:5 Joab gave the number of the census of all the people to David. And all Israel were 1,100,000 men who drew the sword; and Judah was 470,000 men who drew the sword.

This was their muster according to their fathers' households: of Judah, commanders of thousands, [Adnah](#) was the commander, and with him 300,000 valiant warriors ([gibbor](#)) - This is the first listing of considerable numbers of warriors, evidence of God's blessing of Jehoshaphat and Judah. If the numbers are simply totaled, Jehoshaphat is presented as having a standing army in Jerusalem composed of 1.16 million men, exactly twice as many as the total for Asa's army in 2Ch 14:8 (580,000)! For more on these numbers see the two articles by **J Barton Payne** - [The Validity of the Numbers in Chronicles, Part 1](#) and [The Validity of the Numbers in Chronicles, Part 2](#). Payne states ""The claims so often repeated about impossible numbers in Chronicles simply are not true".

From a practical point Jehoshaphat's forces were very likely much more robust than King Ahab's because of the 3 year drought Israel had experience. Therefore Ahab would have been very desirous to have Jehoshaphat's 1.16 million army to shore up his own forces and in Ahab's mind would surely guarantee victory over the Arameans.

Guzik - He trained and equipped a sizeable army (2 Chronicles 17:14-19) that was able to quell a Transjordan invasion (2 Chronicles 20:1-30).

Walton - The conscript army of Jehoshaphat is exactly twice as large as that of his father Asa, well over one million men (see 2 Chron 14:7). For discussion of army sizes see comment on 13:2-20. Its divisions into clans follows the pattern found in other levies

(1 Chron 27:1). Looking beyond the large numbers, the style of listing the contingents suggests a form of regimentation and a careful report reflecting proper protocol with regard to rank and organization. ([IVP Background Commentary - OT - page 438](#))

Raymond Dillard on the large numbers of soldiers - However the problem with such large numbers is solved, it is clear that large armies are an index of royal piety for the author (2Ch 13:3; 14:8; 25:5; 26:11–15). The figure assigned to Jehoshaphat is roughly triple that assigned to Abijah, Asa, Amaziah, and Uzziah, and approximately the same as the number of fighting men in the Northern tribes according to the Chronicler's account of David's census (1Ch 21:5). The Chronicler is seeking to show the degree to which divine favor rested on Jehoshaphat. (See [2 Chronicles, Volume 15 - Page 135](#))

2 Chronicles 17:15 and next to him was Johanan the commander, and with him 280,000;

- next to him: Heb. at this hand, 2Ch 17:15

and next to him was [Johanan](#) the commander, and with him 280,000;

ESV Study Bible - Large armies are regularly a sign of God's blessing in Chronicles, but the author will show that they are no certain defense if priorities are wrong and faith is misplaced (cf. Ps. 33:16-19). (See [ESV Study Bible - Page 1445](#))

2 Chronicles 17:16 and next to him Amasiah the son of Zichri, who volunteered for the LORD, and with him 200,000 valiant warriors;

BGT 2 Chronicles 17:16 κα μετ α τ ν Αμασιας το Ζαχρι προθυμο μενος τ κυρ κα μετ α το διακ σιαι χιλι δες δυνατο δυν μεως

LXE 2 Chronicles 17:16 And after him Amasias the son of Zari, who was zealous for the Lord; and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of strength.

NET 2 Chronicles 17:16 and Amasiah son of Zikri, who volunteered to serve the LORD, led 200,000 skilled warriors.

CSB 2 Chronicles 17:16 next to him, Amasiah son of Zichri, the volunteer of the LORD, and 200,000 brave warriors with him;

ESV 2 Chronicles 17:16 and next to him Amasiah the son of Zichri, a volunteer for the service of the LORD, with 200,000 mighty men of valor.

NIV 2 Chronicles 17:16 next, Amasiah son of Zicri, who volunteered himself for the service of the LORD, with 200,000.

NLT 2 Chronicles 17:16 Next was Amasiah son of Zicri, who volunteered for the LORD's service, with 200,000 troops under his command.

NRS 2 Chronicles 17:16 and next to him Amasiah son of Zichri, a volunteer for the service of the LORD, with two hundred thousand mighty warriors.

- **who volunteered:** Judges 5:2,9 1Ch 29:9,14,17 Ps 110:3 2Co 8:3-5,12

Related Passages:

1 Chronicles 29:9 Then the people rejoiced because they had offered so willingly, for they made their offering to the LORD with a whole heart, and King David also rejoiced greatly.

VOLUNTEERING FOR THE LORD

and next to him [Amasiah](#) the son of [Zichri](#), who volunteered for the LORD, and with him 200,000 valiant warriors([gibbor](#)) - Note Amasiah surrendered his will to the will of the Lord!

THOUGHT - God grant us by Thy good Spirit the desire to imitate Amasiah and to daily "present our bodies a

living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is our spiritual service of worship." (Romans 12:1+) In Jesus' Name. Amen!

Rodgers - "Amasiah the son of Zichri, who willingly offered himself unto the Lord". He is the only one of Jehoshaphat's men of whom this is said. The first two captains had more men than Amaziah did, "but no service could be done with a higher motive than his. We are told of him that he 'willingly offered himself as a freewill offering', not merely to Jehoshaphat, but unto the Lord"

Gustafson - This is similar to the Macedonians in 2 Corinthians 8:1–5. They gave more than Paul expected, and they gave beyond their power. Paul gives us the secret of their giving in v. 5: "they ... first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God". If one first gives himself to the Lord, the Lord has everything: one's time, one's treasure, and one's talents. This is the same order as characterized Amasiah—it was "unto the Lord" first. Other captains may have done their "military duties as Amasiah did, because of loyalty to Jehoshaphat's person, or from a sense of duty, or even because of a warlike disposition. But he did it because he believed it to be the work the Lord had for him to do; it was for the Lord's land, and for the Lord's people" (Rodgers). Rossier suggests that Amasiah's willing service is one of the fruits of the teaching of the law of the Lord in 2Ch 17:7–9. (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

2 Chronicles 17:17 and of Benjamin, Eliada a valiant warrior, and with him 200,000 armed with bow and shield;

- **armed** : 2Ch 14:8 2Sa 1:21,22

and of Benjamin, [Eliada](#) a valiant warrior ([gibbor](#)), and with him 200,000 armed with bow and shield

2 Chronicles 17:18 and next to him Jehozabad, and with him 180,000 equipped for war.

and next to him [Jehozabad](#), and with him 180,000 equipped for war.

2 Chronicles 17:19 These are they who served the king, apart from those whom the king put in the fortified cities through all Judah.

- **put in**: 2Ch 17:2,12 11:12,23

A LARGE ARMY BUT A LARGER GOD

These are they who served the king, apart from those whom the king put in the fortified cities through all Judah- Jehoshaphat had a mighty military force which undoubtedly contributed to the dread of the surrounding nations in 2Ch 17:10, but as with David, ultimately it was was the LORD Who generated this fear!

*The Chronicler reminds his post-exilic audience once again
that God never fails to reward fidelity*

Raymond Dillard has a good concluding point on this chapter of Yahweh's blessing writing "The Chronicler reminds his post-exilic audience once again that God never fails to reward fidelity. He calls attention to the importance of the public teaching of the law; the path to honor among the nations is found in obedience to it." (See [2 Chronicles. Volume 15 - Page 135](#))

BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR 1-2 CHRONICLES

NOTE: SOME CAN BE BORROWED FROM ARCHIVE.ORG

Archer, Gleason L. Jr. [A survey of Old Testament introduction](#) (BORROW). Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1964.

Baxter, J. Sidlow. Explore the Book [Vol. 2 Judges to Esther](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1960.

Boda, Mark J. [Cornerstone Biblical Commentary – 1-2 Chronicles \(Digital version\)](#) Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2010.

Braun, Roddy. Word Biblical Commentary – Volume 14 – [1 Chronicles](#) (BORROW). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018.

Cooper, Derek. [Reformation Commentary on Scripture – Old Testament V – 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles. \(Digital version\)](#) Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016.

Constable, Thomas - [1&2 Chronicles](#) (ONLINE)

Daniel, Ron - Teaching Notes - [1 Chronicles](#); [2 Chronicles](#) (ONLINE)

Dillard, Raymond B. Word Biblical Commentary – Volume 15 – [2 Chronicles](#) (BORROW) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018.

Ellison, H. L. [The New Bible commentary, revised](#) – 1 & 2 Chronicles (BORROW). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970.

Guzik, David. Enduring Word Bible Commentary [1 Chronicles](#); [2 Chronicles](#) (ONLINE)

Hill, Andrew E. [The NIV Application Commentary – 1 & 2 Chronicles \(Digital version\)](#) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.

Keil, C. F. and Delitzsch, F. Commentary on the Old Testament – [1 Chronicles](#) & [2 Chronicles](#). Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975.

Konkel, August H. [Believers Church Bible Commentary – 1 & 2 Chronicles \(Multipart video series also available\)](#) Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2016.

Mabie, Frederick J. [The Expositor's Bible Commentary Revised Edition – 1 & 2 Chronicles. \(Digital Version\)](#) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.

MacArthur, John. [The MacArthur Study Bible](#) (BORROW). Nelson Bibles, 2006.

Olley, John W. (ED: IAIN DUGUID) [ESV Expository Commentary, Vol. III – 1 Samuel – 2 Chronicles \(Digital Version\)](#) Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019.

Payne, J. Barton. [The Expositor's Bible Commentary – 1 & 2 Chronicles](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988.

Schultz, John. - [1 Chronicles](#) (177 pages), [2 Chronicles](#) (239 pages) (ONLINE)

Selman, Martin J. [Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries – 1 Chronicles](#) (BORROW) Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994.

Selman, Martin J. [Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries – 2 Chronicles](#) (BORROW) Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994.

Sherwin, Simon & Mabie, Frederick J. [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary -- 1 & 2 Chronicles. \(Digital Version\)](#) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009.

Thompson, J.A. [The New American Commentary – Volume 9 – 1, 2 Chronicles. \(Digital Version\)](#) Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 1994.

Utey, Bob. [1 Chronicles Table of Contents](#); [2 Chronicles Table of Contents](#)

http://www.freebiblecommentary.org/old_testament_studies/VOL07BOT/VOL07BOT.html

Walton, John, et al - [The IVP Bible Background Commentary Old Testament IVP](#) - InterVarsity Press 2000.

Wiersbe, Warren W. [Be Restored – Trusting God to See Us Through – OT Commentary – 2 Samuel & 1 Chronicles](#). (BORROW) Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2010.

Wiersbe, Warren W. [Be Distinct – Standing Firmly Against the World's Tides – OT Commentary – 2 Kings & 2 Chronicles](#). (BORROW) Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2010.

Williamson, H.G.M. [New Century Bible Commentary – 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers 1982.

Wood, Leon. [A Survey of Israel's History](#). (BORROW) Grand Rapids: MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970.

