

## **A DIFFERENT DRUMMER**

### **2 Chronicles 13-20**

#### **"Everybody's out of step but my Johnny!"**

Sometimes it's *true* that when the world's going along in harmony with one another we need to march to a different beat.

Not out of stubbornness.

Not out of ignorance.

But out of conviction that God's way and man's way have parted company.

God's people ought to be committed to follow God's way, rather than man's

–to march to the beat of a different drummer!

Thoreau asks: "Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed, and in such desperate enterprises? If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears

.....  
**God's people ought to listen to God's voice rather than to people who follow a different drummer.**

**We have been considering how godly leaders led God's people to worship Him.**

**David** is called "a man after God's own heart," because he seeks *Him* with all his heart and wants to follow HIS ways..

He's the ultimate worshiper.

Not because he follows our style—his style is very different from ours.

His poetry isn't the style WE would choose.

His instruments aren't the ones we would include in our praise team.

He dances, and shouts, and claps, as He praises the Lord.

I suspect we'd become a bit uncomfortable with David's worship in our midst!

But God approves, because he can see David's heart fixed on seeking the Lord.

**Solomon** builds God's house.

His kind of architecture doesn't look anything like ours.

But GOD shows up at their worship service!

His worship pleases God, because He seeks to please God and glorify Him.

Even **Rehoboam** pleases God during the first three years of his reign, when he joins with those who set their heart on seeking the Lord.

God becomes displeased, when Rehoboam turns away and stops seeking Him.

These worshipers demonstrate that **people whose hearts are committed to seek the Lord, please Him when we worship Him.**

Near the end of Solomon's reign,

his fame and glory attracted international attention.

Mixed political marriages slowly nudge him away from the Lord.

His unfaithfulness leads to the division of the nation during Rehoboam's time

and causes the entire country to imitate his unfaithfulness.

Rehoboam's ambivalent attitude toward God

establishes a precedent that his son observes and imitates.

### **ABIJAH'S REIGN 13-14:1**

His dad's failures continue down through Abijah's kingdom.

**1 Ki. 15:3**

**His reign is categorized as evil from God's perspective.**

Chronicles doesn't mention that failure.

Chronicles only mentions his role in defeating Jeroboam.

That was a *positive* function.

He stops the advance of Jeroboam's self-centered push for power.

**Judah was victorious, because "they relied on the Lord." 13:18**

However, when he succeeds, that same old "cycle of blessing" returns:

**His success leads to pride and to his departure from the Lord.**

Ultimately, God looks back on Abijah's reign and calls it evil.

### **ASA'S REIGN 14:2-16:14**

When Asa comes to the throne, he reforms Judah's degenerate condition.

**God characterizes Asa's reign as good.**

His desire to seek Yahweh and obey Him stands out. **14:2-4**

He does away with the pagan customs introduced by his father and grandfather.

Facing pagan armies, he leads his people in trusting the Lord. **14:11-12**

**God's perspective: His strength:**

**His heart is totally committed to the Lord. 15:17**

God is glorified in his reign because he leads his people to seek the Lord.

God's Word allows us to see the dark side of the king who seeks the Lord.

With the exception of one dark blemish that ends his career, Asa seeks to follow the Lord faithfully.

**His failure:** When Baasha of Israel attacks,

**Asa takes funds from the Lord's treasury and makes a treaty with Ben-Hadad of Syria to protect himself.**

God sends Hanani the seer to reprove him. **16:7-9**

Asa oppresses the people and dies an angry man.

In the end, this king who seeks the Lord, never turns back to seek the Lord. **16:12**

Nevertheless, the impact of his reign remains:

his heart was faithful to worship the Lord and to motivate the people to seek Him.

Asa's reign serves as a warning: We can spend our life seeking the Lord, and still come to the place where we stop seeking Him, and try to do things our way.

Asa ends up a bitter, angry, old man.

## **JEHOSHAPHAT'S REIGN 17-20**

### **His obedience to the Lord 17:1-19**

Jehoshaphat also leaves a positive spiritual heritage because of his faithfulness to the Lord.

He is a good king.

He seeks the Lord and dedicates himself to serving Him.

#### **17:3-5**

**Jehoshaphat seeks the Lord and follows His commands.**

God confirms his kingdom and gives him riches and glory.

### **His alliance with Ahab 18-19:3**

#### ***Alliance confirmed 18:1-3***

Again we see the cycle: Peace and prosperity lead to problems.

They motivate him to enlarge his kingdom and accomplish great things.

He makes a marriage alliance with Ahab, king of Israel.

#### **18:1, 3**

### ***Consultation with God 18:4-13***

Jehoshaphat insists on consulting with God before they launch their plan. **18:4**

He's caught between his desire to do something great and his desire to do God's will.

He already knows what *HE* wants to do, so he asks for God's blessing on *his* plan.

To impress Jehoshaphat, Ahab brings four hundred professional prophets.

They're paid to tell the king whatever he wants to hear.

They're *his prophets*. **18:5**

They all repeat like parrots: "*Go, for God will give it into the king's hand.*"

Jehoshaphat isn't taken in by that tactic.

He asks whether there isn't a *prophet of the Lord* they might ask **18:6**

Ahab responds: **18:7**

One of the Lord's prophets is still around, that they *could* ask, but he hates him because he always speaks evil about him.

While they go to get Micaiah, the other prophets keep reconfirming the message: they ought to go up to fight against Syria.

They even make visual aids to support their position.

If they lived today, they'd have a PowerPoint presentation!

They assure them that God approves of the kings' plans (18:8-11).

Along the way, those who go to get Micaiah urge him to join the other prophets and confirm their plan. **18:12-13**

After all, "*it's not worth the effort to cause problems for everyone else; just go along with the rest. Don't be a fool, man!*"

Micaiah refuses to give in to the pressure.

He must say what God tells him to say, whether anyone else does or not.

He can't confirm in God's name what people want him to say.

*Warning issued 18:14-27 18:14-15*

Ahab *knows* the Lord is against him and opposes *his* plan!

Everything Ahab stands for is opposed to Yahweh.

How could God approve his plan to make himself greater?

That's why Ahab didn't call Micaiah in before this.

That's why he tries to prepare Jehoshaphat for a negative message.

He doesn't want him to pay attention.

Then Micaiah proclaims God's message: 18:16-17

The result of this campaign will be that Israel will end up without a head.

It's exactly what Ahab expected all along from God's spokesman.

He *knows* God is against him.

However, Ahab doesn't take that as a reason to repent.

He goes right on with his plan, as if he never heard.

18:18-22

The prophets are lying agents, sent to provoke their disobedience and death.

The other prophets aren't real pleased with Micaiah's explanation!

Their spokesman, Zedekiah, strikes him and insults him.

18:23-24

When the prophecy is fulfilled it will be evident to whom God has spoken.

Ahab's rejection of the message is demonstrated by throwing Micaiah into jail.

Ahab thinks he'll make the prophet suffer until he gets back from the battle; then he'll come back and make fun of him or take vengeance against him.

He still doesn't believe the Lord, or His message.

**18:25-26**

The prophet responds that if they literally fulfill his words, as he pronounced them against Micaiah, this will be a death sentence.

If Ahab comes back alive, his prophecy is false and he will deserve to die.

***Warning ignored 18:28-32***

Neither king pays attention.

Jehoshaphat should have known better.

He doesn't take into account Ahab's shrewdness.

His failure to heed God's warning almost costs him his life.

The evil king is willing to let God's king die in his place!

***Warning fulfilled 18:33-34***

Even with all the shrewdness, Ahab can't escape God's judgment.

An arrow shot through the air "accidentally" kills him, as God planned.

The enemy doesn't even know who they hit.

***Alliance condemned 19:1-3***

Since he's a good king, God doesn't kill Jehoshaphat.

He does reprove him for his alliance with an evil king like Ahab. **19:2-4**

God knows that his heart seeks Him.

In spite of mistaken alliances,

the global effect of Jehoshaphat's reign leaves a positive result.

He teaches God's people to follow the Lord.

**JEHOSHAPHAT LEADS THE PEOPLE TO GOD**  
**FIVE STEPS TO SPIRITUAL FAILURE**, as modeled by Jehoshaphat:

- 1) **We forget to distinguish between God's people and people who follow (march to the beat of) a different drummer 18:1-3; 19:2** Jehoshaphat makes an oath of loyalty with the pagan Ahab.

He affirms: *"I am as you are, and my people as your people"*

But they *aren't* the same! He ignores the distinction.

Soon they're all part of "one big happy family."

**2 Cor. 6:14-16**

- 2) **We close our eyes to the truth 18:4-7**  
**"There is no man so blind as the man who will not see."**

Ahab's comments should have served as a warning to Jehoshaphat.

Instead of noting the danger, he walks headlong and determined into the enemy's trap.

Jehoshaphat prefers to act like he hasn't heard anything.

The process of consulting with God is converted into a mere ritual.

He's going to do what *he* wants to do, whether God approves or not:

*"Don't confuse me with the facts; my mind is made up."*

***He's more concerned about keeping a friend,  
 than about listening for danger signs.***

**He wants God to put His stamp of approval on his own plan.**

If we can get God to approve of what we want to do, it will all work out alright.

- 3) **We listen to people who aren't walking according to God's Word.**

*"Tell yourself something often enough and you'll begin to believe it!"*

He already knows what God thinks.

He lets them pressure him to go along with their plan.

[Pastoral pressure (people pressure) to get on the bandwagon is tremendous!]

#### 4) **We stop paying attention to God's Word**

18:16-26

The one who trusts the Lord and who should pay attention is Jehoshaphat.

*He doesn't pay attention to God's Word either."*

He lets himself be more influenced by human opinion than by what God says.

*He stays quiet in front of those who don't accept God's Word.*

#### 5) **We disobey God's Word** 18:28

This study reminds us of the importance of seeking God above all else.

God cares more about the commitment of our heart than he does about the *form* of our worship!

True worshipers are those whose heart is fixed on seeking the Lord—people who want to please and glorify Him, more than anything else!

God desires people who worship Him *in spirit and in truth*—NOT just people who go through the motions!

Even when we *want* to follow God, it's possible to give in to the counsel of people around us and depart from what God wants us to do.

### **His faith in the face of an impossible problem 20**

Jehoshaphat lives during a time of political conflict and spiritual deterioration.

The nation is facing conflict by their **enemies from the outside.**

Two nations from sons of Lot, Moab and Ammon, form an alliance

They're much more powerful. Israel could *never* beat them on battlefield.

The nation is also facing *internal disintegration*.

The people have compromised with the pagans around them.

They have accepted the value system of their neighbors.

The nation is falling apart morally and spiritually.

They aren't far from the end. God is about to judge them.

They have little reason to hope for anything good.

### **Their dilemma 20:1-13**

The enemy is on their doorstep, ready to attack 20:1-2

Their desperation forces them to seek the Lord. 20:4

They acknowledge that He controls the nations. 20:6

He deserves the glory.

This isn't about us—it's about God!

The people have obeyed God—but now it has blown up in their face. 20:10-11

**They don't have the strength to win. 12a**

**They don't know what to do. 12b**

**But their eyes are on God. 12c**

### **God's answer 20:14-17**

**Don't be afraid!** Don't be discouraged.

**This battle isn't yours. It's God's! 15**

It's His reputation that's at stake.

He's going to fight the battle, not us!

**Watch God work!**

See what God is about to do for you! 16

### **Their victory 20:18-30 *How do they achieve victory?***

**The first thing they do is worship! 20:18-19**

He hasn't done anything visible to deliver them yet!

He has promised to deliver them.

They trust His promise.

So they SHOUT praise!

They believe God will do what He says.

## **They put the worshipers at the front of the battle.**

### **20:20-21**

Worshippers go first! Either worship is most important,  
[ Or, someone wants to get rid of the praise team!]  
When they begin to praise, God gives them victory.

### **20:22, 24-25**

Worshippers lead God's people to victory!

## **Victory comes from God.**

They acknowledge what God has done and praise Him.

### **20:26-29**

## **God receives the glory.**

The surrounding peoples realize what God has done.  
These two major incidents from Jehoshaphat's reign remind us  
of the **tension between God's way and man's way.**

This exciting story of Jehoshaphat's trust in God and the  
victory God gives, is *bracketed* by **two great compromises.**  
The king who trusts God when you can't see any other way  
out, plans his own way out and makes alliances with the  
pagans, on both sides.

You'd think this great victory would teach him not to fall back  
on the world's way of doing things. Why would he ever make  
another alliance with pagans?

Yet he goes right back and makes another alliance with  
Ahab's son!

The logical way to do it is to make a strategy  
–to team up with other powerful kings and help each  
other.

God wants them to TRUST HIM!

They keep falling back on the natural way out.

Don't we respond that way too?

We keep falling back on *our* logical strategies.

God wants us to trust Him to accomplish His plans, so that  
HE gets the glory.

*Have YOU ever faced an impossible situation? Maybe you're facing one now?!!*

We obey God.

It blows up in our face. We wonder if God has forgotten about us.

We'd better come up with a *strategy* to *make things happen*. We've all had times like that.

We forget that . . .

**God allows us to face impossible problems so that He might receive worship.**

Jesus is blunt about where society is headed.

He tells us to accept the truth:

***“In the world you will have trouble!”***

The International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, reminds us again of that truth.

Satan is aggressively seeking to defeat God's people.

That's not going to get any better!

This week's election causes us to wonder even more.

*Where are we headed?*

Count on it! ***In the world you will have trouble!***

God has always been up front about pain and tough times.

But we serve a powerful God, Who has overcome the world.

There's plenty of reason to fear the direction our society is going, if we focus on the disintegration of society, the moral and spiritual decay, the loss of values, the political and economic pressures we face. We could become frozen with fear.

If that's what we're going to focus on, I have little hope to offer.

But *that's not where we ought to be focusing our attention*.

**When we get the right perspective,  
When we fix our attention on Him,  
the fears melt.**

God says, “Don't be afraid!”

“Don’t be discouraged!”

We can face the enemy, knowing that the battle belongs to the Lord.

Trust Him!

Focus on Him!

Go face the enemy.

And watch God give us victory.

The battle belongs to the Lord.

God tells Jehoshaphat and His people: *“Do not be afraid. Do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you.”*

When we realize how great our God is, . . .

When we see His hand at work in our life, . . .

it ought to motivate us to worship Him.

***People who commit themselves to seek the Lord end up worshiping Him!***

Even when we face impossible situations,

We can worship Him.

God specializes in dealing with impossible situations!

We can trust Him! That confidence will lead us to worship Him.