

# Jehoshaphat

Jehoshaphat [meaning “*Yahweh has judged*”] was the fourth king of Judah and the son and successor of Asa.

**In the lives of people that are recorded in the Word of God, the Christian Bible, we find that the influence of parental example is powerful and long-lasting.**

**For much of his life Jehoshaphat seems to have been a son who learned from his father Asa’s mistakes and followed his positive actions.**

But on several occasions Jehoshaphat’s decisions reveal a negative response to his father’s example.

When the challenges were obvious, like the need for religious education of the people, [2 Chronicles 17:3-9] or the threat of war with a vast army, [2 Chronicles 17:1-2, 10, 12-19], Jehoshaphat turned to God for guidance and made the right choices, when the odds were clearly against him.

**It was depending on God for the day-to-day plans and actions that Jehoshaphat was weak.**

**Jehoshaphat allowed his son Jehoram to marry Athaliah, the daughter of the wicked Ahab and Jezebel of Israel, who did her best to be as evil as her parents, [2 Chronicles 22:1-3].**

This marriage could have been part of the alliance that Jehoshaphat made with the house of Ohri, king of Israel, [1 Kings 22:44].

While it was clearly to Ahab’s advantage to have an ally instead of an enemy on his southern border in view of the ever-present threat of Syria, Jehoshaphat had little to gain and, as events were to prove, much to lose by such an alliance.

**This marriage bore evil fruits in later years and brought the Davidic line to the edge of extinction, [2 Kings 11:1-3].**

**Jehoshaphat also became involved with an unwise shipbuilding venture with Ahab’s son Ahaziah, [1 Kings 22:48; 2 Chronicles 20:37].**

Jehoshaphat continued to reorganise the judiciary, assigning judges to all the more important cities of his kingdom, the establishment of a special mixed court of appeal in Jerusalem composed of Levites, priests and elders was a landmark in the legal history of the nation, [2 Chronicles 19:5-11].

**What can we learn from Jehoshaphat’s life?**

**2 Corinthians 6:14-15** [New King James] *“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?”*

**We should not make any agreements or partnerships with unbelievers as Jehoshaphat did with Ahab and Ahaziah.**

**We repeat Jehoshaphat’s error when we only seek the Creator God’s help in big decisions or when things get out of hand and not in the day-to-day small decisions we have to make in our personal relationships with other people.**