

## Session 6

August 25, 2019

### LEAVE A LEGACY

#### 2 Chronicles 17:1-13

Have you ever walked through a cemetery just reading the tombstones? Have you ever wondered what epitaph might one day be carved in your own? It's hard to imagine a life of seventy-some years being summarized in a few brief phrases. In reality, our hope is that some legacy exists beyond our tombstone; some lasting contributions to the lives that come behind us.

Overall, King Asa's legacy was pretty positive. He fought the idolatry that had plagued Israel and brought a national revival to Judah. But of all the contributions that Asa left behind, perhaps the most significant was his son, Jehoshaphat. In the twenty-five years that Jehoshaphat reigned as king, he took the best lessons from his father and improved them. He then left his own legacy for the generations who would follow. His legacy can be summed up in five words.

**Protection (vv. 1-2).** Like his father before him, King Jehoshaphat spent the first portion of his reign strengthening his cities and his armies. His primary concern was protecting the southern kingdom of Judah from the northern kingdom of Israel. Thus, the cities between, especially those close to Jerusalem, were fortified and supplied with soldiers. Protecting what his family had acquired in order to pass it on to the next generation was the first part of Jehoshaphat's plan.

**Purity (vv. 3-6).** That the Lord was *with* Jehoshaphat means that God was blessing him. The interesting construction that follows states the reasons for this in four declarations, two positive and two negative: the king *did* walk in the ways of David, the man after God's own heart (v. 3; see 1 Sam. 13:14); he *did not* seek after the false gods that surrounded them. He *did* seek after the one true God and follow His commands (v. 4); he *did not* rebel against God like the northern kingdom had (v. 4). The result? "Then all Judah brought him tribute, and he had riches and honor in abundance" (v. 5). Thus blessed, King Jehoshaphat continued his purging of idolatry (v. 6).

**Posterity (vv. 7-9).** The greatest gift the king could give his people was the knowledge of God. What should have been passed down from generation to generation through the family (see Deut. 6:1-9; Ps. 78:1-7), was now organized by the king's officials and taught by selected priests throughout Judah. This should not be seen as an attempt to take over the responsibility God assigned to the family, but rather to supplement it and insure "the book of the Lord's instruction" became the centerpiece of Judah's moral and spiritual life.

**Peace (vv. 10-11).** The spiritual blessings and material prosperity that characterized Judah stood in stark contrast to the corruption of the surrounding nations, and they all realized that God was with His people. While they no doubt envied the prosperity they saw in Judah, they more so feared the Lord who was providing it. It seems there is no better deterrent to foreign attack than having the One True God on your side! (see Josh. 6:1; 9:24). In his own way, and with God's obvious presence, King Jehoshaphat secured peace with even the most volatile neighboring peoples, some of whom offered their own tribute in order to preserve it (v. 11).

**Power (vv. 12-13).** God's blessing through the years allowed the king to grow in power and in influence. Because he walked in piety, God rewarded him. Where Jehoshaphat knocked down

pagan altars and high places (v. 6), God had him build fortresses and storage cities (v. 12), thus securing the nation and providing tangible evidence for the generations to come of God's faithfulness to those who are faithful to Him.