

A Legacy Lost: The Tragic Reign of Jehoram

Jehoshaphat, the good and godly king of Judah, passed away and was laid to rest in the city of David. His eldest son, Jehoram, took the throne after him. Jehoshaphat had been a generous father, giving his other sons valuable gifts—silver, gold, and cities to govern. But the kingdom, by tradition, went to Jehoram, the firstborn.

Unfortunately, once Jehoram was established as king, he did something unthinkable—he killed all his brothers, along with several influential leaders in Israel. He wanted no threats to his throne. Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he ruled for eight years—but those eight years were marked by rebellion, moral compromise, and deep spiritual decline.

Jehoram chose to follow in the footsteps of the northern kings of Israel—the ones who led the people away from God. Why? Because he married Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. And just like her mother, Athaliah brought corruption into the royal family. Jehoram abandoned the legacy of his father and grandfather—Jehoshaphat and Asa, who both followed the Lord—and embraced the toxic influence of his wife and her family.

Personal Application:

This story is a powerful warning to us as parents, leaders, and believers. Jehoshaphat had a good heart, but in trying to build political alliances with Ahab, he exposed his son to dangerous relationships. He probably thought, *“I can handle this; I’m strong enough to keep my integrity,”*—but his son couldn’t. Jehoram saw the glitz and glamour of Ahab’s world and fell for it—literally.

Parents, our compromises might not hit us directly, but they can devastate our children. The company we keep, the places we go, the people we connect our lives with—they all have the power to influence the next generation. Your children might not have the discernment you have, and they may end up paying a heavy price for the relationships you thought were “no big deal.”

Jehoram’s reign went downhill fast. The Edomites and Libnah rebelled against him. Then a letter arrived—one that shook him to the core. It was from the prophet Elijah. The message was clear: *“Because you’ve abandoned the way of your father Jehoshaphat and walked in the evil ways of Ahab, because you’ve led Judah into spiritual adultery and murdered your own brothers, God’s judgment is coming. Your people, your children, your possessions—they’ll all be struck. And you’ll suffer a slow, painful death.”*

And that’s exactly what happened. Foreign enemies invaded. The Philistines and Arabians swept through Judah, looted the royal palace, and took his wives and sons—leaving only one boy behind. Then came the disease. For two full years, Jehoram was eaten alive from the inside out until, finally, he died in agony.

Personal Application:

This is one of the most sobering reminders in Scripture: *“You reap what you sow.”* (Galatians 6:7) Jehoram sowed death, violence, and idolatry—and that’s exactly what came back to him. He left

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behind no legacy of faith, no mourners, no honor. Verse 20 puts it bluntly: *“He departed without being desired.”* No one missed him. He was buried in the city, but not among the honored kings.

This forces us to ask: *What will people remember about us when we’re gone? Will we leave behind a life that pointed people to God, or one that caused others to stumble? Will we be remembered with gratitude or with regret?*

Let’s take this story to heart. Stay close to God. Guard your heart, your family, and your influence. Be careful who you align yourself with, because their values may become your children’s reality. And remember: your choices today are shaping someone’s tomorrow.