

Don't Mix The Good With The Bad
2 Chronicles 20:31-37
12/7/10

Introduction: When we bake a cake, we only use good, fresh ingredients and not the spoiled or bad ingredients. In fact, we avoid mixing any bad, spoiled or outdated ingredients with the good items. For instance, if the recipe calls for 3 eggs, we do not use two good eggs and one rotten one thinking that the freshness of the good eggs will diminish the bad ingredient's effect. We know that such mixing will spoil the entire cake. In the Bible, we are taught the same concept of not mixing the good with the bad (**Matthew 6:24**). In other words, we should not mix God's Words with the ways of the world. Today, we are going to learn from a season in King Jehoshaphat's life. We will observe him mixing the good and the bad. This story should cause us to carefully evaluate our lives.

Verses 31-32

The Past

We see King Jehoshaphat's past, which shows his rise to **power**. The text tells us that he was the son of Asa, the king of Judah. By the time Jehoshaphat had become the king, the kingdom of Israel was divided into two kingdoms. Jehoshaphat followed in the ways of his father, Asa. His father honored God while building the kingdom (**2 Chronicles 14:4-7**). In the same pattern, Jehoshaphat honored God through his obedience, by removing false worship in the land, by sending out **teachers** who taught the people the law of the Lord and by not following false gods. This should cause all (especially parents) Christians to live their lives realizing that we can have the same positive effect on those close to us. We are not living on an island alone. The Bible teaches that we can either be a stumbling block or a stepping stone for others (**Romans 14:13**) (**1 Thessalonians 5:11**). Let's ask ourselves whether our actions are promoting or **prohibiting** Christ in others? Once we accept Christ, we are expected to honor God, and remove our false gods as well. Some of us (of little faith) may be keeping our gods just in case the **true** God does not come through for us. We read that Jehoshaphat did what was right in the "sight of the Lord". In other words, he chose Godly ways over seeking the **praise** of men (**John 12:42-43**). Whom do we cater to or look up to for approval? As Christians, we should live for the applause of the Almighty God.

Verses 33-36

The Problem

Even though Jehoshaphat walked right before God, there was a problem. In these verses, we see that he was mixing the good with the bad. The text says that he did not take the high places away. The high places are the places of **pagan** worship. At the high places, the people offered sacrifices (to God), which was in direct disobedience to God's command because they were to offer them at the temple/tabernacle (**Deuteronomy 12:5-6, 13-14**). As a leader, Jehoshaphat had the opportunity to influence many people in his kingdom. He removed the idol worship, but did not remove or close down the place of idol worship. He did not follow through completely. The high places were a **distraction** of the past and leaving them there could have drawn the Israelites back to idolatry. In our spiritual walk, when we detach ourselves from our old evil ways, we should make sure that the things and/or people who could lead us astray are left behind as well. Otherwise, such a connection could be used by the devil to lead us back to our old ways (**Ephesians 4:22-24**) (**Colossians 3:8-10**). Notice the acts of Jehoshaphat were written in a book (vs. 34). Likewise, the Bible teaches us that all of our actions on earth are recorded. Christ will evaluate the believers' lives and non-believers will face judgment for **rejecting** Christ as their personal savior (**2 Corinthians 5:9-10**) (**Romans 2:16**). So, what have we been doing lately? Let's prepare ourselves to meet our Savior by spending time with Him and showing His love towards others. In verses 35 and 36, Jehoshaphat mixed the good with the bad when he made a business **alliance** to build ships with Ahaziah, the wicked king of Israel.

Verse 37

The Prediction

Here we see the prediction against Jehoshaphat by Eliezer. The ships were built to get gold from Ophir (**1 Kings 22:48**) (**1 Kings 9:28**). Jehoshaphat sought to **emulate** Solomon's fleet and wealth, but was unsuccessful. The Lord destroyed Jehoshaphat's fleet because of his alliance with Ahaziah. Let us recognize that life is all about choices and sometimes our past choices may limit our future **opportunities**. Let us realize that no matter how well we plan, how hard we try, or what resources we have, if the Lord is not in the mission, the mission will be impossible or **unsuccessful**. Our first and foremost goal should be to seek God, then the blessings will follow (**Matthew 6:33**) (**Luke 10:27**). In this study, we noticed that Jehoshaphat started his spiritual journey well, but the Bible shows us his **missteps** as well. Let this be a lesson for us that in order to avoid the same missteps, we should not mix the good with the bad (**1 John 2:15**).