

2 Chronicles 19

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[0:00] 2 Chronicles chapter 19. 2 Chronicles chapter 19. We will look at the chapter in its entirety, but it's not a very long chapter.

! Just 11 verses. 2 Chronicles chapter 19. As we just continue to make our way through Scripture, and in particular at this point studying through the book of 2 Chronicles.

So let's go to the Lord in prayer before we get started, and then we'll get right into our text with one another. Father, we thank you so much. We are so thankful for the opportunity we have of gathering together, and we thank you for this midweek service in which we can be encouraged by fellowship with one another, or we can be challenged by the reading and studying of your Word.

And Lord, we pray that you open up the Scripture to us. We pray that you continue to speak to our hearts and minds. We pray for those working with our children in the back. We pray for all that is going on around this place and in this place tonight.

Father, we ask that you be glorified through our study of your Word, and we pray that it would draw us closer to you as we come to a greater understanding of who you are and our response to that.

[1:12] And we ask that Christ be magnified in it. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. We are continuing to make our way through the book of 2 Chronicles, and in particular, we're continuing our study as it focuses on the king Jehoshaphat.

Jehoshaphat being the son of Asa. We'll get to that in just a moment. One of the great kings who did what was right in the sight of the Lord. It tells us that he walked in all the ways of his father David. He did what was pleasing in the sight of the Lord.

We don't find much as it pertains to him in the book of 1 Kings. He's mentioned at the end of 1 Kings as ascending the throne and reigning for a number of years, but there's not a lot mentioned as to really the quality and the goodness of his reign.

But we find it given a lot more detail in the book of 2 Chronicles. Sure, we are met with his faults, one of the grand faults of Jehoshaphat.

One that is mentioned in the book of 1 Kings is his partnership or the union he formed with the wicked king of the north, Ahab, from allowing his son to marry Ahab's daughter and therefore really introduced the seed of idolatry into the lineage of Judah because now we have a descendant of Omri.

[2:33] Omri is that wicked king from outside of the land of Israel that is the father of Jezebel, but we're kind of getting off subject there just a little bit. So we see that Jehoshaphat is not perfectly good.

He has mistakes. We'll meet another one later on. But yet we're seeing him do some amazing things. And really when we read this 19th chapter, we want to hold it kind of in parallel with the passage as it pertains to his father.

So hopefully I'll be able to clarify that for you in just a moment. So let's read again. Following the 18th chapter chronologically and even historically, this is really after that fateful day where he went to battle with Ahab and Ahab dies in that battle because a random man drew his bow and shot his arrow really at nothing and it ended up piercing the joint of the arm of Ahab and he died in the chariot.

But now we know that it was a random man who shot at nothing, but we also know the sovereignty of God directed that arrow because it had been decreed that Ahab would die in that battle. And so the fulfillment of the word of God is found in such a unique way.

But if you remember, right before that account where Ahab dies, when they go to battle, Jehoshaphat is dressed like the king that he is. Ahab disguises himself.

[3 : 53] And those that they were fighting against were told not to fight with the small or the great, but only to fight with the king. So they are pursuing Jehoshaphat. The book of 1 Kings tells us he cries out and they realize that he's not the king Ahab, so they turn from him.

2 Chronicles 18 tells us, So the Lord diverted them and removed them and protected him. So God delivers him even in the midst of his mess-ups and his mistakes. And so we're right there.

We want to have that in our minds as we read this 19th chapter. Then Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned in safety to his house in Jerusalem.

And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him and said to king Jehoshaphat, Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord, and so bring wrath on yourself from the Lord?

But there is some good in you, for you have removed the Asherah from the land and have set your heart to seek God. So Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem and went out among the people from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim and brought them back to the Lord, the God of their fathers.

[4 : 56] He appointed judges in the land of all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city. And he said to the judges, Consider what you are doing. For you do not judge for man, but for the Lord who is with you when you render judgment.

Now then let the fear of the Lord be upon you. Be very careful what you do, for the Lord our God will have no part in unrighteousness or partiality or the taking of a bribe. In Jerusalem also Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites and the priests and some of the heads of the fathers, households of Israel, for the judgment of the Lord and to judge disputes among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Then he charged them, saying, Thus you shall do in the fear of the Lord faithfully and wholeheartedly. Whenever any dispute comes to you from your brethren who live in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandments, statute and ordinances, you shall warn them, so that they may not be guilty before the Lord, and wrath may not come on you and your brethren.

Thus you shall do, and you will not be guilty. Behold, Amariah, the chief priest, will be over you in all that pertains to the Lord, and Zebediah, the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, in all that pertains to the king.

Also the Levites shall be officers before you. Act resolutely, and the Lord be with the upright. I want you to see this evening a proper response to discipline.

[6 : 22] A proper response to discipline. Now to really fully understand what's going on, we'll have to look back just a little bit. We won't take the time, I think, to turn there, but I will reference it for you.

And it is found in particular in 2 Chronicles chapter 16, and it deals specifically with Jehoshaphat's father, Asa. And you'll see the parallels in just a moment.

Here we see that Jehoshaphat has been the one who has set his heart after the Lord. In the chapters which precede this, we see that he does great reforms, he does great works in the land of Judah.

He reestablishes the work of the Levites and the priests. He restocks the storehouses of the temple. He enters into a union with Ahab or a partnership with him through marriage.

It is something that he should not have done. And then it tells us in some years later, because those partnerships with the world do not always bear fruit, but some years later, the fruit of that unrighteous deed bears itself in the battle that he goes to.

[7 : 25] And we find here really the disciplinary hand of the Lord resting upon him. When we read this, we call to mind Hebrews chapter 12. And in Hebrews chapter 12, it tells us not to despise the discipline of the Lord.

For those whom the Lord loves, he also disciplines. That he calls his children to himself, and he disciplines them. And it speaks very much of the disciplinary action of the Lord.

And it contrasts that with the discipline of the worldly fathers and the discipline of the heavenly father. But it tells us there in the 12th chapter of the book of Hebrews, that if we endure that discipline, and we allow it to have its work, then it will bear in us, or bear fruit within us, of righteousness, drawing us closer to the Lord.

And the implication is that there is a response to the discipline of the Lord. And here in particular in the book of 2 Chronicles, we see a parallel of what is an improper response and what is a proper

response.

Now, so that we don't get ahead of ourselves and paint Jehoshaphat in a better picture than he is, he will again fail the Lord at the end of his life. And we'll see that. And he will again fall with under the disciplinary hands of the Lord.

[8 : 40] And we call that humanity, right? Being imperfect and being man. So we're not looking for a perfect king because the perfect king, or we're not looking at a perfect king. The perfect king we're looking for is Jesus Christ.

We don't meet him until we get to the New Testament. And over and over again, as we have seen when we look through the books of 1 and 2 Kings, the kings that are lifted up for us to look at and to behold and to gaze upon just remind us that we do not find the king that our hearts desire among the seed of man.

We're looking for the king who is the seed of a woman, who is the king of kings and the Lord of lords, who is the perfect and righteous and holy one. But yet we also see how God interacts with these men and it gives us encouragement because it shows us as well how we should respond to the disciplinary hand of God.

The first thing that we notice about this discipline is that it comes with a confrontation of the word. It tells us, Then Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, returned in safety to his house in Jerusalem because the Lord spared him when he was being pursued by the warriors of the king of Aram.

And because he cried out and the Lord had pity upon him, even though he was there by his own choosing and his own mistakes, in contrast to the outcome of Ahab, Ahab doesn't return home, but in fulfillment of the prophetic word that is proclaimed in the 18th chapter by that prophet that Ahab despises because he never speaks in his favor.

[10 : 15] You go back and read that, where it says that there was one that was sown and all of these returned safety to their home. Jehoshaphat comes back home safely. From all appearances sake, it looks like he is just escaped by the skin of his teeth, so to say, and he has really freed himself from the consequences of his choices.

But then we are told that even though he returned home safely, God was not done with him because it says, Jehu, the son of Hananiah, pay attention to this, Jehu, the son of Hananiah, the seer, went out to meet him.

Now the wording there is, went to his face. He was confronted with the word of God. Now what is amazing is that this same prophet, Jehu, is used in a confrontation with one of the kings of the northern tribes and declares a condemnation sentence upon that king.

But what is even more telling is that we notice Jehu is the son of Hananiah. Hananiah is the seer who confronted Asa, Jehoshaphat's dad, when he entered into a wrongful alliance with the king of Aram to have the king of Israel removed from his border town.

When he feared because he saw the king of Israel fortifying the walls of the cities that neared the border of Judah. And he asked the king of Aram to break his alliance with the king of Israel and therefore removed him.

[11 : 48] And then Asa went back home in security and said, well I've accomplished what I wanted to accomplish. There was a seer whose name was Hananiah who went to Asa and declared a word from the Lord for him that he did wrong.

Now Asa's response is that he puts Hananiah in jail. We see this in 2 Chronicles 16 verses 7 and following. He responds to the confrontation of the word even though prior to that Asa was a king who did what was right in the sight of the Lord and done much good.

When he's confronted with the word of God based upon his wrong alliance he gets upset at the seer and it's really telling there because it tells us that he puts him in prison and then at the same time begins to mistreat some of his people.

Now we saw the application that how we respond vertically will always dictate how we live horizontally. And so Jehoshaphat's father is confronted by a prophet when he makes a mistake and his response is to imprison the prophet and never repents and never, until the end of his life, never repents to the Lord.

He ends up with a disease in his feet. He goes to the physician, never turns to the Lord. It's not saying we don't go to doctors. It's just saying this was a tool used of the Lord to call attention but he never got it. And now, we just go forward to the next generation and Jehoshaphat has done the same thing.

[13 : 09] And the son of the very prophet that was put in prison by his father now stands before him to his face and confronts him with the word.

It says, should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord and so bring wrath on yourself from the Lord.

What he is declaring to him is the clear word of God because discipline always, discipline always begins with the confrontation of the word.

God takes the word of God to prick the heart of man to reveal to him the consequences of his own sin.

It is the word that brings conviction. It is the word that calls us to correction. And it is the word of God that speaks directly to the sinful consequences that has taken place.

[14 : 10] Even today when God disciplines his people the reason the word of God one of the reasons the word of God is so important it is because it is the chosen instrument in which the Lord conforms and molds us more and more to be like him.

And part of that molding process is to discipline us for our wrongdoings. We are not looking for a seer or a prophet to come stand before us because the ministry of the prophet has ended.

John the Baptist is the last prophet according to the Old Testament times. And the book of Hebrews tells us in former times God spoke in various ways but in this latter day he has spoken to us through his son Jesus Christ.

The reason we don't need a seer or a prophet to come stand before us before our face is because we have the word of God before our face. And it is the fullness of the revelation of what God has said and it is this that brings conviction and brings correction to the life of the individual.

Discipline always happens with the confrontation of the word and make no mistake about it that is why some people don't like to be in the word. Every time I open it up I find something that I should or shouldn't be doing.

[15 : 29] Every time I open it up I find conviction and uneasiness well praise be to God he's correcting us. I would be concerned if I open up scripture and I never found one thing that needed to change in my life because those whom the Lord loves he disciplines.

If I ever open up scripture and there's no rebuke that is given to me no form of correction no calling of accounts before my own soul then the problem is not with the word the problem is with the one who is reading the word.

We find here the confrontation of the word of God. It is the word of God that calls us to account and it is to the word of God which we will respond.

Number two we see a correction of focus. When Asa heard the word of God confronting him regarding his sin his focus was on self and to maintain that focus he had to remove the hindrance of the word from himself and therefore imprisoned the prophet.

Jehoshaphat is confronted with the word and we see that he corrects his focus. It tells us in verse 4. So Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem and went out again among the people from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim.

[16 : 50] Now that is really just a way of saying from the southernmost to the northernmost portion of the land of Judah. It is telling because it says that he went out again. This was the thing that he was concerned about at the beginning of his ministry or at the beginning of his reign.

It was going among the people of the Lord and calling them back to the Lord. It was reminding them of their obligation to worship and for a period he seems to have been sidetracked and distracted from that because he entered into a political alliance with the wicked king of the north Ahab and he entered into something which he should not have done and then he was called into a battle which he should never have fought.

But because of the word of God he corrects that focus and is no longer focused externally. By the way just so you know when we get there the very next mistake that Jehoshaphat makes is when his focus begins to be outward again rather than inward.

He wants to expand his horizons and he gets in trouble because of the way he tries to expand his horizons rather than just being content with the place that God has called him and longs for him to be.

And we see here that he corrects that focus because again he goes out among the people. It is the people that God has called him to rule it is people that God has called him to reign over but it is also the people of the Lord.

[18:11] If you go back and you see during the reign of Asa that many people are coming into the land of Judah because they hear of the presence of God. So God is drawing his people there and now Jehoshaphat begins to focus here because look at what it says and brought them back to the Lord the God of their fathers.

This is the focus he had at the beginning of his reign and now it appears to be the focus he has in response to the correction of the word. When the word confronted him rather than pushing the word of God away from him he corrected what he was focusing on and began to look at the people of God and to call the people of God back to the Lord God.

And it says and he appointed judges in the land in all the fortified cities of Judah city by city. This had not been done since the reign of Solomon. So he begins to get back by the way this is declared to be or should have been the practice of the people of God in the book of Deuteronomy.

He gets back to God's standard for among his people that there would be a standard of judgment there would be a standard of reckoning that the word of God would dictate the affairs of man.

Remember the nation of Israel in particular now here as we even look at Judah as far as the chronicler is concerned is still looking at the entire nation of Israel.

[19:34] Now he tells us that because we are reminded over and over again when we read the books of 2 Chronicles that there is a representation of every person of Israel in the land of Judah so God is not just focusing on the southern tribes he is focusing on the entirety of his people but the nation of Israel exists in a theophany now theophany means God is king that he sets upon the throne and since they are under a theophany then it is God who dictates every affair of man now admittedly we do not live in a theophany right as Christians we live under the rule and reign of God but also according to the book of Romans Romans chapter 13 we also obey the laws of the land we recognize the ultimate ruler and reigner of all kings and all people but we do not live in a theophany in which it is the people of God judging among one another but the nation of Israel was to do so and now the focus seems to go back to what God had called them to do that is the standard of God that would dictate the affairs of man so we have the confrontation of the word we have a correction of focus number three we have a concern of faithfulness so when he is confronted with the word of God it would have been one thing for Jehoshaphat to say you're right I need to do better but he does not do that only he begins to focus on what he should have been focusing on but he also calls other people to a greater faithfulness when he appoints these judges it tells us in verse 6 he said to the judges consider what you are doing in my study of the passage really was telling over and over again this phrase just kept jumping out to me consider what you are doing too often man gets in trouble because of that one thing they don't do they don't consider they don't think they don't take a moment to be still and by man

I mean mankind and consider to consider what you are doing he is appointing judges and they are the ones who are called to judge between brothers and they have disputes they are the ones who are to set the standard of righteousness but the very first thing he tells them to do is to consider in new testament terminology we would say it this way do all that you do as unto the lord and not unto man consider what you are doing and for whom you are doing it the simple act of consideration of understanding that I am where I am because it is God who has called me and appointed me to be here whatever that is changes everything considerations done properly always change perspectives of the occupation

I remember one consideration that I had and it was reading some time ago and I was reading some of you know I've said it before I love Martin Lloyd Jones' writing I love his book preaching and pastors I love some of the things I wish I had the chance to meet him I didn't but anyhow Martin Lloyd Jones once said and this is just as it pertains to pastors he says the calling of a pastor he said if we believe the church is the bride of Christ he said then the calling of a pastor calling to be the pastor is the highest calling that you will ever hold in this world and I remember reading that going wow when I consider it that way than anything else and he said any other move is a demotion not a promotion when you're employed by the king of kings and anything else in the world is a demotion regardless of how man looks at you see consideration anytime let's move this beyond the pulpit right anytime we serve the Lord in any capacity be that in a secular job or be it in a opportunity we have to serve or just to pray and to go before the throne of God with boldness and we are laboring for the king it is the highest calling that one could ever hold on to and anything moved away from the service of the king is a demotion he says consider what you are doing and he doesn't only say that he says for you do not judge for man but for the Lord that is for who you are doing it who is with

you when you render judgment so there is this concern of faithfulness because of the presence of the Lord now then let the fear of the

Lord be upon you why be very careful what you do for the Lord our God will have no part in unrighteousness or partiality or the taking of a bribe I believe Jehoshaphat got the message of the confrontation of the word and what he does is he has a concern that even the men here that he appoints will be faithful why he says because the Lord will have no part in unrighteousness as reading some of you following the same reading plan read third third John today one short chapter but in that John says I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in faithfulness he's speaking about his children of the faith why because he says the Lord will have no part in unrighteousness or partiality or the taking of bribe so consider what you are doing and be concerned for faithfulness he goes on and he appoints others and he charges them in verse 9 then he charges them saying thus you shall do in the fear of the Lord faithfully and wholeheartedly Jehoshaphat's response to the discipline of the Lord is not just to make sure he is doing what is right but also to make sure that he has influence over his doing what is right he is concerned enough to call them to attention to remind them of the holiness of their calling and their appointment and he is concerned that they walk faithfully he is not just concerned that he does what is right because remember Asa begins to focus inwardly Jehoshaphat now is among the people of the Lord encouraging them and concerned for their faithfulness fourth and finally we see the confidence for the future we see the confidence that we can have in our response to discipline in the future that is before us Jehoshaphat reminds them that they are not alone he tells them in verse 11 by the way let's just back up and see this in verse 10 he tells them this consideration he tells them to walk faithfully because if they don't not only will their judgments cause harm to the ones they are judging between they will also be welcoming wrath upon themselves he says if they do then you would not be that you may not be guilty before the

[27 : 20] Lord and wrath may not come on you and your brethren what was the confrontation of the word the confrontation of the word was that Jehoshaphat did something that brought the wrath of the Lord upon him and now he passes that lesson on and says be careful because the action you take may be the very thing that welcomes that wrath upon yourself and upon your brethren and he tells them in verse 11 that he is leaving them with people that will help them Amariah the chief priest will be over you in all things that pertain to the Lord and Zebediah the son of Ishmael will be over the rulers of the house so you have a religious leader you have a political leader here you have people that are walking beside them and then it says there at the end of that 11th verse it reminds us of the confidence we can have because just to be honest quite often discipline can lead us to doubt discipline can cause us to say well if I failed once can't

I fail again or what if I make a mistake by the way Jehoshaphat does that can I really be confident in the Lord God's love and acceptance of me because I have already messed up once it says act resolutely now the word act resolutely or the phrase there literally means to be strong and do something to be courageous and take action to act why because you have confidence in the phrase that follows and the Lord be with the upright or in literal reading and the Lord will be with those who do good it is not a prosperity gospel type of mentality saying that God is a rewarder of the good and he'll be there and if we do enough good deeds he's with us what he is reminding us is the presence of the Lord in the midst of our faithfulness and that we can be confident even in the future before us as we respond properly to the discipline why and it goes back to the one verse that

I did not see or I did not look at all the way back at the end of chapter 3 or verse 3 but there is some good in you why did God deliver him but there is some good in you for you have removed the ashes from the land and here it is and you have set your heart to seek God the confidence comes in the reality that even when God knows our faults and our mistakes God also knows our heart and when we set our heart to seek after him surely in the flesh we will fail and we will make mistakes and we will come under that disciplinary hand of the Lord but God who disciplines us is also the God who knows our hearts and this is why it says in the book of Hebrews chapter 12 for those who allow that discipline to have its work within them it leads them to righteousness and faithfulness we have confidence because we know that

God's discipline upon us is not a discipline unto destruction but rather a discipline as to maturity he is working out the desire of our heart he is working out what we have a hard time living out he's not doing it because he's mad at us he's doing it because he loves us and he wants us to grow closer to him he wants us to have that influence and impact upon those around us we have confidence

because we know that we can act resolutely and the Lord will be with the upright he doesn't just cast us off and say well if you messed up I'm done with you one of the grand realities that we find in the Old Testament is that God uses the imperfect and then it pushes us to the New Testament and we find the imperfect very quickly there in the New Testament and we are so amazed at the reality that God uses the imperfect and he restores them and he renews them and he corrects them and he disciplines them and he is redeeming them and he is molding them and he is sanctifying them and he is calling them closer and closer and closer and closer to himself and all throughout scripture the confidence we find of the imperfect is not that they have it together but that they're trusting the one who is putting it all together and so we ask ourselves how do we respond to the lord's discipline in what way do we walk faithfully before him do we shut up the word and say i don't want to hear from it as asa or do we as jehoshaphat look inwardly and say there's some things that need to be changed in the second chronicles 19 we find a proper response to discipline thank you brothers