

2Chronicles 21:1 ¶ Now Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

2Chronicles 21:2 And he had brethren the sons of Jehoshaphat, Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah: all these *were* the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel.

2Chronicles 21:3 And their father gave them great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things, with fenced cities in Judah: but the kingdom gave he to Jehoram; because he *was* the firstborn.

2Chronicles 21:4 Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself, and slew all his brethren with the sword, and *divers* also of the princes of Israel.

When Jehoshaphat died, his son Jehoram succeeded him to the throne. Jehoram had several brothers—Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, Michael and Shephatiah. In preparation for Jehoram, his firstborn son, becoming king, Jehoshaphat had given each of his other sons great gifts of silver, gold and precious things and had made them governors of fortified cities in Judah. The king had hoped that this would prevent jealousy from becoming a threat to Jehoram. Jehoram, however, did not trust his brothers and killed them all when he became king; he also killed some of the other recognized leaders in Israel. He tried to eliminate any possible threat to his throne.

2Chronicles 21:5 Jehoram *was* thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.

2Chronicles 21:6 And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought *that which was evil* in the eyes of the LORD.

2Chronicles 21:7 Howbeit the LORD would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give a light to him and to his sons for ever.

Jehoram was 32 years old when he began his 8-year reign in Jerusalem. He was an evil king that followed the ways of the kings of Israel because his wife was a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. However, the LORD would not destroy the house of David because of the promise He had made to David that his descendants would rule from the throne of David forever.

2Chronicles 21:8 In his days the Edomites revolted from under the dominion of Judah, and made themselves a king.

2Chronicles 21:9 Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots.

2Chronicles 21:10 So the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. The same time *also* did Libnah revolt from under his hand; because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers.

During Jehoram's reign, the Edomites rebelled against the rule of Judah and appointed their own king. Jehoram led his troops and chariots on a night attack against the rebellious Edomites. Though surrounded by the enemy, he and his

troops defeated the Edomites. His victory was not successful, however, in defeating their rebellion; they remained independent of Judah from that time forward.

The same thing occurred with the people of Libnah. These enemies were allowed to establish their independence because Jehoram had forsaken the LORD God of Israel.

I liked this application from Guzik comparing our passions to those enemies under tribute to Judah. Our passions can work to our benefit or detriment based on the strength of our relationship to the Savior. Guzik states it this way: "This applies to our *passions*; when we are properly submitted to God, our passions are properly submitted to us. When we come out from submission to God, we often find our passions flare up in seemingly overwhelming strength."

2Chronicles 21:11 Moreover he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication, and compelled Judah thereto.

Jehoram also reestablished idol worship in the high places on the mountains of Judah and led the people of Jerusalem and Judah to follow him in committing fornication in defiance before the LORD God. I believe the primary reference is to spiritual adultery, though we know that idolatry also included acts of physical fornication.

Clarke provides a good explanation: "The Israelites were considered as joined to Jehovah as a woman is joined to her husband: when she associates with other men, this is adultery; when they served other gods, this was called by the same name, it was adultery against Jehovah."

2Chronicles 21:12 ¶ And there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah,

2Chronicles 21:13 But hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself:

2Chronicles 21:14 Behold, with a great plague will the LORD smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods:

2Chronicles 21:15 And thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day.

The prophet Elijah sent Jehoram a letter that contained an ominous prophecy. This prophecy was a pronouncement of coming judgment for three things:

- Jehoram had chosen not to follow the example of his father Jehoshaphat or his grandfather Asa; he had chosen instead to follow the example of the house of Ahab.

- Jehoram also led the people of Jerusalem and Judah to practice the whoredom of the house of Ahab.
- Jehoram had murdered all of his brothers, each of whom the LORD to be better men than he.

Because of these actions the LORD would send a great plague against Jehoram's people, his children, his wives and his goods. He would develop a great sickness in his bowels that would eventually result in their falling out or ceasing to function properly (both possibilities from the Hebrew).

JFB provides this note concerning the identification of Elijah: "That prophet's translation having taken place in the reign of Jehoshaphat [2 Kings 2:11, 12], we must conclude that the name of Elijah has, by the error of a transcriber, been put for that of Elisha." Some commentators believe it is possible that Elijah had foreseen these events before his death and wrote a letter to be delivered at the appropriate time.

2Chronicles 21:16 Moreover the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that *were* near the Ethiopians:

2Chronicles 21:17 And they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.

The LORD also stirred up the Philistines and the Arabians that were near Ethiopia to attack Judah. In light of the plague, I assume, they were able to plunder the palace and take captive the king's sons and wives. Only the youngest son was left behind, Jehoahaz.

Jehoram had killed all his father's other sons, and that led to the loss of his own sons.

2Chronicles 21:18 And after all this the LORD smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease.

2Chronicles 21:19 And it came to pass, that in process of time, after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness: so he died of sore diseases. And his people made no burning for him, like the burning of his fathers.

After losing his family, the LORD struck Jehoram with the incurable disease in his bowels. I liked this observation from Guzik: "...this was a fitting judgment. There was a sense in which Jehoram was rotten spiritually from within; here, God simply caused the physical condition of his body to correspond to the spiritual condition of his soul...."

After two years, he died. The people did not honor him in death as they had his fathers.

The IVP Commentary provided this insight on a "burning" for the king: "The

funeral rites denied Jehoram were often quite elaborate and include the burning of spices in honor of the dead as well as a general lamentation and internment in the family tomb. The fire does not imply cremation of the body or an attempt to mask the odors associated with a diseased body, but was rather an expensive display of the king's wealth."

2Chronicles 21:20 Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and departed without being desired. Howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.

Jehoram was 32 years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. When he died, he was not mourned. He was buried in the city of David, but not in the designated area for graves of the kings.