



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Good Kings – Bad Kings Series, Lesson 18

Lesson Title: Jehoram's Awful Death

Take Home Point: If you ignore God – you'll go
"out of control!"

Warm-Up:

The final scenes are pathetic to normal eyes. After years of ruling with practically absolute power, Adolf Hitler was all but deserted by those around him in his final moments. Ignoring the ways of God during his violent dictatorship, Hitler truly was out of control. And the people who surrounded him were far more likely to care about losing their positions of power than about their leader. Historical evidence indicates that no one wanted to be with him in his Berlin bunker at the very end, but fear of "der Fuehrer" still overcame self-preservation. He ranted and raved about being betrayed, deserted, and hated, then died violently by his own hand. Was there anyone who mourned Hitler's passing? Anyone who regretted his death?

Read: 2 Chronicles 21:4-20; Psalm 143:10

Observation (What happened?):

What was it about Jehoram that caused God to retain him as king?

What phrase in verse 20 indicates how the people viewed Jehoram as their leader?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What do you learn about sin's consequences in what happened to Jehoram's family?

How do you think the Israelites viewed the increasing hostilities of the neighboring tribes?

Insight:

It is interesting that the writer of Chronicles singled out Jehoram to describe how his subjects regarded his death. Other kings were wicked during their reigns and no doubt despised by the people, but the words used for Jehoram are unique. He passed away "to no one's regret." The Israelites didn't mourn his passing; they didn't honor him with a bonfire as was the custom; they didn't even consider him worthy of a king's tomb. I expect that when he was alive, Jehoram thought he was literally God's gift to Judah, and demanded the deference and honor due his office. He probably received it, but only out of fear, not out of respect for him as a leader. Think of what verse 20 pronounces: Jehoram lived his life in such a way that not one person was grieved when it was over! (They were probably relieved!) It brings home the point that God is more concerned about how we live than our vocation or position in life. King or garbage collector, professional or blue collar, genius or of ordinary intelligence, our manner of living is what determines true greatness. And not just in God's eyes, either; people notice, too. How will you be remembered? If your story was written in scripture, how would the response to your passing be recorded?

Application (What does it mean to me?):

How can you protect yourself against ignoring God and his will for you?

Pray for the children in your small group to recognize that living God's way frees them from "going out of control."

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