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21 Apr 2021 Message 2 of 2

NIV 15 Minutes

**The Destructive Alliance**

***2 Kings 8:16-24***

**Topic:** Alliances

**Subject:** We put our trust solely in the Lord

**Complement:** Rather than putting our trust on our alliances

**Purpose:** The listeners will put trust solely in the Lord rather than finding an alliance.

**Meditation:** Put a short passage here that can go in the church bulletin for pre-service prayer

**Reading:** Yet the Lord was not willing to destroy Judah, for the sake of David his servant, since he promised to give a lamp to him and to his sons forever (2 Kings 8:19)

**Song:** What is the best closing song you know that will reinforce your main idea?

**Benediction:** Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain (Ps 127:1)

# Paste Sermon Outline here to Develop Manuscript (Step 6b)

**Sermon Outline** (Simple inductive form)

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| --- | --- |
| **Intro:**   1. Arouse interest by sharing a problem | Alliance! What do you know about the word “alliance”? The Cambridge dictionary defines an alliance as “a group of countries, political parties, or people who have agreed to work together because of shared interests or aims”.  In our world, we have different types of alliances. For me, the first one that comes to mind is “Star Alliance”—a brand name of a network of airlines. It allows the different airlines’ passengers to earn mileage from whichever airline they fly within the network. So, whenever we travel, we will plan very carefully who to fly with to earn points for an upgrade or free ticket. The airlines can increase ticket sales through the alliance as they will reach a much bigger customer pool.  Political-wise, countries need to build alliances with other nations to optimise their interest and the power for trade, military, etc. It is such a complex and big topics that each government has many different units, engaged think tanks and universities with expert knowledge in the area. To study, observe, collect intelligence, analyse, plan, negotiate, build relationship etc., to come up with the policies. Even with all these efforts poured in, the international policy might not always be right nor fruitful. Or, the policy that goes wrong will cost the country hugely. |
| 1. Raise Need | Is alliance too far away from you? You might think, I am not a king, or queen, or a politician, or a CEO of a business. I don’t need to deal with this.  But, if we think again, we do not live alone. In one way or another, we need to build alliances with others who share the same interest and goal. Could this be your classmates (or project mates)? Or your ministry partner outside of church?  Alliance can be successful and achieve a lot. At the same time, alliance can do more damage than good. |
| 1. Subject Statement | Today, we will learn from a failing example from 2 Kings about *how wrong alliances can lead to destructive consequences.* |
| 1. Background | The southern kingdom, Judah had bad kings and good kings before the fourth and fifth king recorded here.  The fourth king, King Jehoshaphat, was a good one. The Lord was with Jehoshaphat as he walked the same way as David did. He inherited the kingdom from king Asa (also a good king) and continue building the nation. The nation and himself became richer and received great honour. God was behind the scene that he poured blessings and grace. |
| 1. Preview R, Passage   5.1 MPI  **5.1a**  **5.1b** | It sounds perfect – right? However, Jehoshaphat had made some severe mistakes. In his way of building a stronger kingdom, Jehoshaphat built alliances with other nations. Alliances should be good. So, what is wrong? Jehoshaphat followed his agenda rather than God’s. He allied with the wicked nations who hated God.  One of these terrible alliances was so destructive that it led to an irrecoverable disaster. |
| **I. The wrong alliance turned the best to the worst (8:16-19).**  In the first half of the passage of 2 Kings 8:16-24, it tells us that King Jehoshaphat appointed his son, Jehoram, to be his successor when Jehoram was 32 years old. Jehoram married the daughter of King Ahab, and he did evil in the sight of the Lord.  These verses give us a glimpse how the wrong alliance turned the best to the worst. |
| As mentioned, Jehoshaphat had followed the Lord in most of the ways in ruling the nation. With God’s help, he built a greater nation and had everything ready to pass on to his son, Jehoram.  Everything was well-planned. Jehoram co-reigned the nation with his father. He could learn from the father, and the transition should be smooth. But, something went very wrong. **The alliance created the worst outcome (8:18-19).**    To protect the kingdom, Jehoshaphat allied with King Ahab of Israel. They made a treaty - to have their son and daughter married. Unfortunately, Ahab was known to the most wicked king in the history of Israel. He worshipped Baal. The daughter became the Queen of Judah, then brought the idol-worshipping to Judah and influenced her husband.  Not long after, Jehoram did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. His evil acts were so horrible – that made the Lord about to destroy them but not yet, as the Lord could not do so as he promised to keep the dynasty to David’s family.  The second part of the passage then tells us the worst outcome that destroyed the nation and the family. |
| **5.2**  **5.2a**  **5.2b** | **B. The outcome destroyed the nation and the family (8:20-24).**  The wrong alliance led to a destructive outcome that destroyed everything that Jehoshaphat built.  **It destroyed the nation.**  The nations (Edom and Libnah) revolted against Jehoram’s leadership (8:20-22).  The two nations came under Judah’s control when Jehoshaphat was king. God gave them favours, “as the fear of the Lord fell upon these nations”.  But, the new king, Jehoram, did not fear God. He did the opposite. Both Edom and Libnah did not like what they saw. First, Edom started to set up their king. Knowing the plan, Jehoram took his army to Edom. He brought his chariot commanders to defeat the Edomites. But, ridiculously and humiliating, the army left midway and fled. Jehoram barely escaped saving his own life. A complete failure – and Edom revolted from that day onwards, which we learnt in the other OT books.  Libnah also chose to rebel as Jehoram turned away from the Lord.  It is tragically sad that the once-great nation had significantly weakened when this new king came on board.  The outcome not only destroyed the nation!  **It destroyed** **the family** (8:20-24).  God took the life of Jehoram at a young age, 40 years old, after 8 years on the throne.  Not long before, he had the most promising future, being a young king of a strong and peaceful kingdom. However, he went on the wrong path. He did not lead the nation in the right direction. Instead, he led the nation to turn its back away from the Lord. Eventually, the nation went downhill, from its glory days to a failing kingdom.  Jehoram had not enjoyed his time as king as well. He was humiliated and shamed by the neighbouring nations and his own people.  Such a wrong path. Jehoshaphat opened the door to a wicked alliance and ultimately destroyed his nation and the life of his son and their generations after. |
| **5.3** | **God reigned. He punished the wicked and put the evil era to an end (8:24)**  God is a sovereign God, then and now. He reigned. He would punish the wicked and put an evil era to an end which he did.  God punished the disobedient Jehoram and put him to death.  God is forever faithful that he kept his promise to David. He made Jehoram’s son Ahaziah continue the rulership of the dynasty. |
| APP | This is such an excellent example that picking the wrong alliance will lead to a destructive path. The wrong alliance destroyed all we built and have a detrimental impact on now and the future.  Who are our allies? I was thinking hard. At this moment, God has graciously placed you and me in SBC, surrounded by good schoolmates and faculty. So, we have the best alliance – for now, project and learning, for future ministries, for his kingdom work.  But, how about very soon when you are serving in a church, in a Christian organisation? Or being sent out as a missionary? Who will be your allies? Your ministry partners? Your donors? Your supporters?  Nobody works alone these days. Churches and organisations need to raise funds, work with partners who give us the resources or complement what we lack. Take Christian charities as an example. They need to raise funds or partner with a community centre to help the marginalised youth, the disabled, to do missionary work, etc.  Do you think Christian organisations should choose rightfully who the funders or partners they should tap into or partner with? Shall they work with any funders or any partners as long as they have deep pockets or what we need? This way we can hire more staff, pay back the bank loan, rent a bigger place, and purchase the most updated IT equipment or the best musical instruments.  Or, should we only work with the right ones? Might be they are not the richest nor the biggest ones, but they are the ones who are pleasing to the Lord. It will definitely take longer time. It will take faith and hard work.  Back at home in Hong Kong, I know some of the Christian charities would clearly NOT take money from the funders whose funds are gathered from horseraces and football gambling (as a matter of fact, they are one of the ten largest donors to charities in the world).  Their monies definitely provide convenience, can quickly solve problems, accelerate growth, and ultimately help more people. BUT, there are risks. There are many drawbacks that we could not imagine. Mostly, is this the way to honour God for the divine assignments that he has entrusted us with?  In today’s world, alliances have many grey areas that we won’t be able to explain and discuss in 30 seconds. But, I would like to challenge every one of us – do we have complete trust in our Lord who will provide and guide, who will fight for us and protect us? Or, are we like Jehoshaphat, who followed God in many ways? But yet, for our ambition, we will collaborate with those whom God does not approve?  When we don’t have the money to pay the rent for church/ office, to buy a new projector or a computer, or when the bank balance is so low that we cannot pay salaries—what do we do?  Or, when we want to grow the ministry so desperately but with so little in our hands…  Who should we go to? Our Lord or our alliance? Who should we trust? Our Lord or our alliance? Should we rely 100% on God, trusting that he will pave the way, he will pour favour and prepare all around for us, just like he did for Jehoshaphat? Or, should we find an ungodly alliance partner, just like Jehoshaphat did which ultimately destroyed everything? Obviously, we know the answer by today’s passage.  May our Lord help us – build our faith, give us wisdom, discernment, so whatever we do, we will be able to honour him.  Let’s pray. Dear Lord, you are our faithful God. Even though we fail you, you will never fail us. Forgive us if we have little faith. Help us to fix our eyes on you. Help us to put our entire trust in you, knowing that you will provide and lead. Help us to honour you in whatever we do. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen! |

# Study Questions (Step 1)

**16**In the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, when Jehoshaphat was king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, began to reign. **17**He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. **18**And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife. And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. **19**Yet the Lord was not willing to destroy Judah, for the sake of David his servant, since he promised to give a lamp to him and to his sons forever.

**20**In his days Edom revolted from the rule of Judah and set up a king of their own. **21**Then Jorampassed over to Zair with all his chariots and rose by night, and he and his chariot commanders struck the Edomites who had surrounded him, but his army fled home. **22**So Edom revolted from the rule of Judah to this day. Then Libnah revolted at the same time. **23**Now the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? **24**So Joram slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Ahaziah his son reigned in his place

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

### The story of Hazael murdered Ben-hadad (the king of Syria). Ben-hadad was sick, and he sent Hazael to seek help from Elisha.

### Elisha could foretell that he would murder Ben-hadad though Elisha should have appointed him as king of Syria (1 Kings 19:15).

### Ben-hadad was suffocated to death by Hazael, rather than dying naturally.

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

### It reminded God’s faithfulness and promise to David that his dynasty will continue in Jerusalem (v. 19).

### However, the Davidic dynasty is disciplined for covenant unfaithfulness. They lost dominion in Edom as Edom looked for independence and set up a king of their own (vv. 20-21). Libnah revolted at the same time.

### A record of the fifth king of Judah – king Jehoram. Before Jehoram, Judah has –

#### Rehoboam (son of Solomon and Naamah the Ammonite) – 41 years old became king. He reigned for 17 years. Did evil in the sight of the Lord (1 Kings 14:21-22)

### Abijam (son of Rehoboam and Maacah) – reigned for three years. Walked in all the sins that his father did before him and his heart was not wholly true to the Lord His God as the heart of David his father (1 Kings 15:1-3).

### Asa (had the same mother as Abijam, Maacah) – reigned for 41 years. Did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as David his father had done. He put away the male cult prostitutes… removed all the idols… removed Maacah his mother from being queen mother because she had made an abominable image Asherah (1 Kings 9-14).

### After Jehoram, the nation Judah was run by Athaliah (Jehoram’s wife) though his son, Ahaziah, was made the king. Ahaziah also did evil in the eyes of the Lord.

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

### Jehoram is the fifth king, taking after his father, king Jehoshaphat, the fourth king of Judah. King Jehoshaphat is described as a strong and peaceful king. Both Philistia and Arabia had feared and paid tribute to Jehoram’s father. The fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were around Judah and made no war against Jehoshaphat. …Philistines brought Jehoshapat presents and silver for tribute and the Arabians brought him 7700 rams and 7700 goats. Jehoshaphat grew steadily greater. He built in Judah fortresses and store cities, and he had large supplies in the cities of Judah. He had soldiers, mighty men of valor, in Jerusalem… (2 Chr. 17:10-19).

### To protect the kingdom, king Jehoshaphat has been building an alliance with the northern kingdom. “Now Jehoshaphat had great riches and honour, and he made a marriage alliance with Ahab The marriage of his son, Jehoram, is an arrangement of the treaty. Jehoram married Ahab's daughter (named Athaliah, granddaughter of Omri, king of Israel, 8:26b).

Ahab was the most wicked king in the history of Israel (1 Kgs 16:30). His sons-in-law Jehoram and Ahaziah brought his idolatrous ways into Judah (2 Kgs 8:16-19; 25;27; 2 Chr 21:6-22:9). The house of Ahab became knwn as a house of wickedness – opposite to the Davidic monarchy’s intentionso (2 Kgs 21:13). His evil behaviour resulted in God;s judgment upon his decendants (2 Kgs 9:1-10:31; 2 Chr 21:1-22:9).

Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah when he was 35 years old for 25 years in Jerusalem. He walked in the way of Asa his father and did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the sight of the Lord. The high places, however, were not taken away; the people had not yet set their hearts upon the God of his fathers (2 Chr 20:31-33).

### Though king Jehoshaphat is a good king, he has not been able to teach his son to walk in righteous ways. Instead, king Jehoram is more impacted by his wife and did what was evil in the sight of the Lord (8:18b). He had not set a good and holy example for his people either. He had not removed the high places so that his people did not set their hearts upon God.

### First Kings begins with King David's death (about 970 BC) and the reign of his son, Solomon. Solomon became unfaithful to God later in life due to the marriages with many foreign women (700 wives, princesses and 300 concubines) (1 Kings 11:1-8). God was angry with Solomon and raised enemies against him.

### The country is then divided after the death of Solomon. The division was prophesied by Ahijah (1 Kings 11:31-35). The country was divided into two –

* 5.1 Tribe of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin – formed the kingdom of Judah (the southern kingdom). Capital – Jerusalem; King – Rehoboam.
* 5.2 The other ten tribes and the remainder of the tribe of Benjamin – formed the kingdom of Israel (northern kingdom). Capital (HQ) – Initially Shechem but later Samaria; King – Jeroboam.

### King of Edom had helped king Jehoshaphat (Judah) and king Jehoram (Israel) to fight king Mesha of Moab (2 Kings 3:9). The king of Moab used to deliver to the king of Israel lambs and ram wool. But when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. (2 Kings 3:4-8). The Moabites were defeated. (2 Kings 21-27).

### Edom had come under Judah’s control when Jehoshaphat had defeated a coalition of kingdoms that included Edom (2 Chron. 20:1–29). At that time, an Edomite deputy may have been placed on the throne in place of an Edomite king (1 Kings 22:47).

### Libnah revolted because Jehoram had forsaken the Lord (2 Chr 21:11). **Libnah** was located southwest of Jerusalem near the border of Philistia. Its rebellion seems to have been precipitated by Philistine influence (2 Chron. 21:16). The Philistines invaded Judah in Jehoram’s day, and Judah suffered heavy losses at their hands (2 Chron. 21:16–17).

### The Arabians also rebelled.

# Sources Used

### Lissa M. Wray Beal, *1 and 2 Kings* (InterVarsity Press, 1988), 360-366.

### Marvin A. Sweeney, *I & II Kings A Commentary* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2013), 319-322.

### Thomas L. Constable. “2 Kings.” *The Bible Knowledge Commentary.* Eds. John F. Walvood and Roy B. Zuck. Victor Books, 1983. Logos.

# Questions & Answers (cf. p. 22 #1)

### Who is Jehoshaphat? He is the son of king Asa and himself king of Judah for 25 years; one of the best, most pious, and prosperous kings of Judah.

### Who is the wife of Jehoram, the daughter of Ahab? Her name is Athaliah. Jehoram married her as part of Jehoshaphat’s treaty with Ahab.

### What are the two significant events recorded in 2 Kings? Edom came under Judah’s control when Jehoshaphat defeated a coalition of kingdoms. Edom had helped Israel and Judah to fight against king Mesha of Moab (2 Kings 3:3-27). But, when Jehoram became king, Edom rebelled, Jehoram took his army to Zair to put down the rebellion, but he was unsuccessful and barely escaped with his life.

### What is the history of Libnah? Libnah was located southwest of Jerusalem near the border of Philistia. They came under Judah when Jehoshaphat was king, “the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were around Judah and they made no war against Jehoshaphat.”(2 Chron 17:10-12)

#### In 2 Chron 21:8-10, Libnah revolted from his rule was because he had forsaken the Lord, the God of his fathers. The kingdom built by Jehoshaphat (2 Chron 7:12-14) got weaker due to his wickedness.

### Why there were two names of Joram and Jehoram? Joram is another spelling of Jehoram. The similarity in names is likely the result of the interrelationship established between the house of Omri and the house of David when Jehoshaphat married his son to Athaliah, daughter of Ahab/Omri (v. 18; cf. 8:26).

### When Jehoram died very young (age 40), did any sons survive him? He was buried with his fathers in the city of David. Ahaziah his son, succeeded his place. God allowed his descendant to continue reign.

### 

**The Destructive Alliance**

***2 Kings 8:16-24***

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**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# Exegetical Idea (CPT): The result of Jehoshaphat having his son Jehoram marry Ahab’s daughter destroyed what he had built.

# I. The allied marriage arranged by king Jehoshaphat destroyed what he has built and led to destruction in the next generations (8:16-19).

## King Jehoshaphat has paved a good start for his son (8:16-17)

## The marriage with the daughter of Ahab caused Jehoram to do evil in the sight of the Lord (8:18b-19).

# II. The result of disobedience caused God to stir separation and revolt (8:20-24).

## The revolt of Edom diminished the power of the king of Judah (8:20-22a).

## The revolt of Libnah came due to Jehoram forsaking God (8:22b-23).

## God punished the wicked (8:24a).

## God kept his promises by giving the lamp to David’s son (8:19; 8:24b).

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will put trust solely in the Lord rather than finding an alliance.

**Sermon Outline** (Simple inductive form)—Steps 5-6

# Introduction

##### Interest: There are many alliances in today’s world – commercial, political, work or marriage. We have seen many successful ones and many failing ones.

##### Need: Inevitably, we need to work with people to form alliance in one way or another. Who should be our alliance partner? Should we go to God first or should we go to our alliance partner when we are in need?

##### Subject: Let’s find out the consequences of a destructive alliance. ?

##### Background: King Jehoshaphat has prepared the best path for his son, but he chose the wrong wife (daughter of Ahab) for him. The marriage was part of the king’s treaty with Ahab.

##### Preview: The passage (2 Kings 8:16-24) will show a destructive alliance and its devastating outcome.

##### Text: 2 Kings 8:16-24

(Let’s see how the best effort that the king has put in turned to ugly in the passage.)

# I. The wrong alliance turned the best to the worst (8:16-19).

## The the wrong alliance turned the best to the worst that the king father (Jehoshaphat) could have prepared for his son (8:16-17).

## The alliance created the worst outcome (8:18-19).

(The outcome was destructive that destroyed all that king Jehoshaphat had built.)

# II. The outcome destroyed the nation and the family (8:20-23.

## The nations (Edom and Libnah) revolted against Judah’s leadership (8:20-22).

## The son (king Jehoram) died at a young age after a short kingship (8:23).

(In this short passage, we witnessed how nations and the king turned from the greatest to the least.)

# III. God reigned – he punished the wicked and put the evil era to an end (8:24)

[God is our most reliable and most faithful alliance.]

## God punished the unfaithful and put this era to an end (8:24a).

## God was faithful and kept his promise (8:24b).

# Conclusion

##### MI: Picking the wrong alliance will lead to a destructive path.

##### MPs: A wrong alliance will destroy all we have built and have a detrimental impact now and in the future.

##### Exhortation: God reigns, and He is faithful. Always go to the Lord rather than seeking your own alliance.

###### Who are the funders/ supporters/ ministry partners that we should be partnering with?

###### Who should we put trust in, the alliance partners or God?