Optional Studies

While these studies are optional, we encourage you to complete them as they help fill out the study of Jehoshaphat.

Below is a list of recommended resources for each topic. The articles and classes suggested will be uploaded to the Youth Conference website. *Avail yourselves of them – they are excellent!*

**Optional Studies**

Optional Study 1 - Principles of Unity - the Folly of Jehoshaphat and the Wisdom of Hezekiah

* Audio class of the same title – Bro. Roger Lewis

Optional Study 2 – Armageddon

* Libronix Digital Library System – *searchable database of The Christadelphian Magazine*

**Optional Study 1 - PRINCIPLES of UNITY**

In 2 Chronicles 18, the good motives of *‘helping and loving’* drove Jehoshaphat in his effort to unite with Israel. However, his efforts were unsuccessful because they were based on emotion and not Godly principles or requirements - he was helping and loving the ungodly and those who hate Yahweh. We’ll take a closer look at the principles of unity here and consider an example of the correct way to restore unity.

Under the rule of Ahab and Jezebel, the northern 10 tribes became steeped in the worship of Baal. According Easton’s Bible Dictionary, ‘baal’ is a generic title to describe the false gods of the nations. Each locality had its special Baal (‘lord’), and Baal-worship commonly involved fertility worship. The Israelites called this form of worship ‘Baal-peor’, and in Numbers 25 it had led them to commit mass fornication with the Moabite women. The adoption of the worship of false gods eventually led to Israel being taken into captivity!

1. Jehoshaphat had pledged his oneness and allegiance to Israel by implementing Ruth’s oath in 2 Chron. 18:3? Do you think that Jehoshaphat and Ahab were truly united? Why or why not?
2. Ahab and Jehoshaphat considered themselves united – but did God? How do we know *(****Hint****: consider the outcome of the events in ch. 18, and Jehu’s words in ch. 19)*
3. Psa. 133:1 says it is good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity. But it is only good and pleasant if the unity is based on Godly principles. Read the following passages and summarize their relevance to our study.
   * + ‘*unite’* – Psa. 86:11 –
     + ‘*unity’* – Eph. 4:1-3,12-15 –
     + *‘joined together’ -* 1 Cor. 1:10 –
     + *‘likeminded’ –* Philip. 1:27, 2:1-2 –
4. Were these requirements being followed by Jehoshaphat with Ahab?
5. What do the events of chapter 18 and the consequences in the generations after Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 21:6; 22:2-3,10) tell us about the inevitable result of ‘*unity’* built on compromise of God’s truth – whether in doctrine or in practice?

Principles of Restoring Unity

We have seen that Jehoshaphat’s efforts to restore unity were not based on Godly principles, and although his motives seem to have been good, his method was wrong. Both he and the generations to follow suffered the serious consequences. Left only with this example we might think that it’s impossible to restore unity on a Godly basis. Fortunately we are given an example of restoring unity based on Godly principles and requirements through the endeavours of Hezekiah, the good king of Judah who lived about 60 years after Jehoshaphat.

In 2 Chron. 30 Hezekiah made an effort to restore unity with those in Israel who were willing to come down to Judah and worship Yahweh on the basis of the law. Read 2 Chron. 30 and fill out the table below which contrasts how Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah went about trying to restore unity.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Jehoshaphat | What Was Difference In: | Hezekiah |
| 2 Chron. 18:1-2; 19:2; 20:35-37 | …**who** was consulted? | 2 Chron. 30:2,4,12 |
| 2 Chron. 18:2 | …**where** unity was made? | 2 Chron. 30:1-2,4,13 |
| 2 Chron. 19:2, 18:7 | …the **basis** of unity? | 2 Chron. 30:1,5,6-9,12,18  *(****Hint****: colour in idea of turning/ returning/yielding)* |
| 2 Chron. 18:31,33-34; 21:6; 22:10 | … the **result**? | 2Chron. 30:11-12,25-26; 31:1 |

1. It is interesting that both Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah make mention of the name of God – ‘LORD’ or Yahweh. It occurs 19x in 2 Chron. 18 and 19x in 2 Chron. 30. In 2 Chron. 18 ‘LORD’ is spoken by Micaiah 11 times, 3 times by the false prophets, twice by Ahab, *only twice* by Jehoshaphat, and once by the narrator. Look up who uses ‘LORD’ in 2 Chron. 30 and how often is it used by Hezekiah, or in relation to his initiatives? What does this tell us about the contrast in the focus between Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah?
2. 2 Chron. 30:2 – Before Hezekiah made the offer to Israel to join him for the Passover, what had he done?
3. 2 Chron. 17:7-8 lists many great many spiritually-minded men in Judah that Jehoshaphat had at hand, who could have provided spiritual counsel. Do we read anywhere in chapter 18 of Jehoshaphat engaging in any sort of spiritual discourse with others in Judah before initiating his unity effort?
4. 2 Chron. 30:6-9 – Summarize the invitation in 2 Chron. 30:6-9 that was sent out to Israel. On what basis was Hezekiah appealing for unity?
5. What was the expectation of the people of Israel before they could join Judah in the Passover fellowship? What idea comes up at least three times?
6. 2 Chron. 30:10-11 – Hezekiah was only able to achieve unity and reconciliation with a small number of Israelites. Does this mean his efforts were a failure?  *(****Hint****: Matt. 22:14)*
7. 30:22 - Hezekiah TAUGHT the good knowledge of the LORD. The word, or law, of the LORD was the basis of this unity. How is this idea echoed in the following verses?

* V. 1 –
* V. 5 –
* V. 12 –
* V. 18 –
* V. 22 –
* 31:3 –
* 31:4 –

1. What lessons can you take from some of the principles of unity we have looked at and the positive example of Hezekiah?

**Note**: For further study on this we recommend Bro. Roger Lewis’s class on *The Folly of Jehoshaphat and the Wisdom of Hezekiah*, available from [www.bibletalks4u.com](http://www.bibletalks4u.com). The following are some of the principles from this class that we learn from Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah.

Principles of Restoring Unity

* There is a vital difference between union and unity, between alliance and fellowship, between affinity and oneness
* Union is the careful pact of compromise for perceived common good, unity is the joyful acceptance and mutual admiration of divine standards
* Alliance is the tacit accommodation of differences for supposed joint benefit, fellowship is the kinship of fervent mutual assent to divine principles.
* Affinity is the strategic joining of resources for apparent combined advantage, oneness is the inseparable bond of mutual love for divine truth.

**Optional Study 2 - Jehoshaphat & Armageddon**

The only other occurrence of the word *Jehoshaphat* outside of Kings and Chronicles is in Joel 3:2,12, where we read of the *‘valley of Jehoshaphat’* in the context of Armageddon. In this brief study we will take a quick look at what Armageddon is and then see its type in the story of 2 Chron. 20.

The word Armageddon only occurs once in the Bible – in Rev. 16:16.

**Rev 16:14** ‘For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. 16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue **Armageddon**.’

The key to defining the meaning of Armageddon, then, is to look in the *‘Hebrew tongue’* and we find it’s a compound of three Hebrew words. The meaning of these words will help us identify what Armageddon is all about.

* **arma** – **'heap of sheaves'** *(used in Ruth 3:7 to describe the heap of corn Boaz lay down by)*
* **gai** – **'valley'** *(think of ‘****Gi****-henna’ – the ‘****valley*** *of the sons of Hinnom’)*
* **don** – **'judgement'** *(think of Dan-i-el – ‘God is my judge’)*

So Armageddon has something to do with a *‘heap of sheaves in a valley of judgement.*’ Right away we see a link to the *‘valley of Jehoshaphat’* in Joel, which in Hebrew translates to the *‘valley of Yahweh’s judgement.*’

If we were to make a list of themes or images linked with Armageddon, then, we’d likely come up with:

* a gathering
* at the time of the end *(‘behold I come as a thief’)*
* nations and their leaders
* harvest imagery
* a valley
* judgement, and
* a Hebrew/Israel connection *(‘in the Hebrew tongue’)*

Read Joel 3:1-16 and complete the table below identifying where this same language/imagery is used which tell us that Joel 3 is about Armageddon.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Armageddon Language | Joel 3 |
| A Gathering | V.2 ‘all nations’, V.9 ‘the Gentiles’; V.11 ‘assemble/gather yourselves…’ V.14 ‘multitudes, multitudes’ |
| Harvest imagery |  |
| Valley |  |
| Judgment |  |
| Hebrew/Israel Connection |  |

In the very context of the only other occurrence of ‘*Jehoshaphat’* *(Joel 3)* we have clear connections to Armageddon. We shouldn’t be surprised then to see an amazing type of Armageddon in the life of Jehoshaphat, and that is exactly what we do see in 2 Chron. 20. Fill in the table below, using the passages we have provided from the major Armageddon chapters, which together build a complete picture of Armageddon *(Ezekiel 38, Daniel 11, Zechariah 14, Joel 3, Revelation 16).*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2 Chron. 20 | Description | Reference |
| **‘Jehoshaphat’**  **V. 16 – brook means valley** | **‘Valley of Jehoshaphat’ (judgement)** | **Joel 3:2,12-14** |
| V. 1 |  | Eze. 38:1-2 |
| V. 2 |  | Eze. 38:4 |
| V. 2 |  | Gen. 14:7 (Gen. 14 is 1st type of Armageddon in the Bible) |
| Vs. 12,17 |  | Joel 3:6, Zech. 14:3 |
| Vs. 23-24 |  | Eze. 38:21 |
| V. 25 |  | Eze. 39:10, Zech. 14:14 |
| V. 24 |  | Eze. 39:4,11 |
| V. 2,12,15,24 | Multitude/’hamon’ | Eze. 39:11 |
| V. 29 |  | Zech. 14:3 |
| V. 21, 28 |  | Rev. 14:2,3 |

There are many other areas of scripture which speak of Armageddon or typify the events of Armageddon. Among those are Genesis 14, the life of Gideon, and Psalms 82-84. Interestingly all of these have links to 2 Chronicles 20, sometimes quite detailed. Take a look if you have extra time after completing the workbook!