

Mayhem & Motherhood

(The Story of Jehosheba – MOTHERS' DAY 2020)



Introduction:

- Mothers' Day is difficult for some people –
 - Those who want to be mothers but who were unable to -
 - Whether biology / medical or social circumstances, it is a hurt, an ache, that never really goes away
 - There are those who were mothers, but have lost a child –
 - Distance, dysfunction or Death—pain of that loss lasts a lifetime
 - There are those wish they could be with their mother, but can't
 - Again, death, distance or dysfunction mean you can't see her
 - Lastly, there are those whose memory of their mother is more thorns than roses... your battle against anger & rejection is unrelenting.
- I have good news for you! The Bible addresses ALL those issues.... But today, we're looking at the thorny side of all those Mother's Day flowers.
- Mothers have a profound influence on us, and our outcomes in life... whether we like it or not.
 - I have real problems with the philosophers, counsellors & even prayer warriors who ask: '*what was your relationship with your mother like....?*'
 - It gives me an excuse to blame mum for my idiosyncrasies BUT
 - It means I've profoundly damaged my own offspring....and I'M to blame for all their shortcomings....
- However, there is no mistake that Mum's influence shapes your world-view – for better or for worse.
 - There are TWO question this story addresses:
 - How can we overcome a negative beginning?
 - How can we positively shape the children in our care?

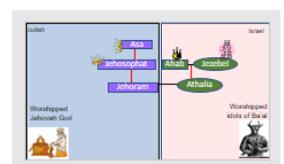
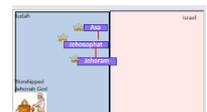
1. Your past does not define your future!

- Our story is about Jehosheba, mentioned only briefly in both 2Kings11:2 and 2Chronicles 22:11. (timelines & context!)
 - her name meant ‘God’s oath / God’s promise’ but her early life, while one of privilege, was far from promising.
 - her home life would have been one constant tug of war.
- I am an avid reader – but this story defies the plot of most fiction!
 - Involves
 - A wicked stepmother & an evil queen...
 - Mayhem & Murder
 - Idolatry & witchcraft
 - Political intrigue & religious persecution
 - Arranged marriages for consolidating power, not love
 - Manipulative women (queens)
 - Profligate procreation by kings
 - Contrasted with steadfast worship of, and trust in, an unchanging God, by an ageing High Priest & his young wife
- To better understand Jehosheba, we need to understand her family background... FASTEN YOUR SEATBELTS!



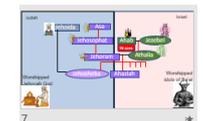
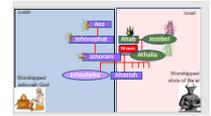
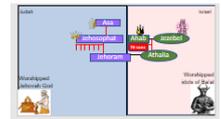
(A) Background of her family and their belief systems

- About 150 years after Solomon
 - Kingdom divided – “Judah” and “Israel”
- God-fearing kings in Judah – Asa & Jehosaphat amongst best (God-fearing) kings of Judah
 - Worshipped a forgiving and caring God
 - worship involved substitution atonement through blood of lambs
- Baal worship in Israel
 - encouraged by Queen Jezebel & husband Ahab
 - appeasement of many capricious gods
 - involved shedding of blood (animal and human) and child sacrifice
 - fertility rites (male & female prostitution) were central to “worship”



(B) Background to where Jehosheba fitted into the family tree, and the evil influences of her grandparents

- The 'rot' set in when good King Jehosaphat's son, Jehoram, married Queen Jezebel's daughter Athaliah for political alignment.
- Athaliah was driven by insecurity, and influence on Jehoram was pure evil:
 - he joined her in Baal worship (not Jehovah God)
 - Jehoram killed his 6 brothers when he became king
- Jehoram & Athaliah had at least 5 sons, youngest was Ahaziah
 - Ahaziah born when Jehoram was 18
 - All their older sons killed in uprising by Philistines and Arabs
- Jehosheba only named daughter ... probably had different mother??
 - Jehosheba about 12 when grandfather Jehosaphat died
 - arranged marriage to High Priest (politics?)
- Jehoida was High Priest – about the same age as ASA! (G_G_Dad)
 - Jehosaphat and Jehoiada were probably good friends
- Jehosheba about 12-16 when she was married to 80-85yr old Jehoida
 - Jehosheba had rejected the family worship of Baal to worship Jehovah God
 - Jehosheba CHOSE to live in God's presence & support her husband
 - How do we know this? (Timeline and context)



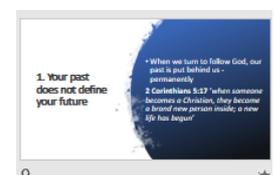
Leviticus 21:13 *'the woman a high priest marries must be a virgin... from among his own people...'*

Leviticus 24:16 *'anyone who blasphemes the name of the Lord must be put to death. The entire assembly must stone him...'*

- *The priest must be holy to his God. You must keep him holy, for he presents the offering to your God... He must be holy, for I am God - I am holy and I am making you holy" (Lev. 21)*

- When we turn to follow God, our past is put behind us - permanently

2 Corinthians 5:17 *'when someone becomes a Christian, they become a brand new person inside; a new life has begun'*



- Your past – whether it is what YOU did, or what OTHERS did to you, can be just that – past, forgiven, put behind you.

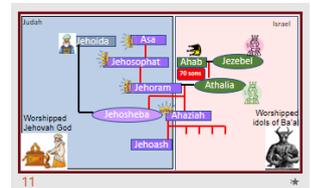


- LEAVE IT BEHIND – don't bring it with you into your new life.
 - Forgiveness is the key – Ask God for forgiveness;
 - forgive yourself
 - forgive others.

2. God can use you wherever you are

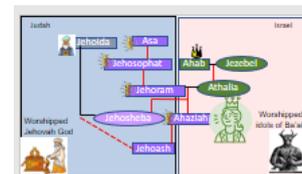
(A) BACKGROUND: Jehosheba was born to wealth and privilege – but lived in violent, chaotic, immoral times with all her immediate family involved in pagan worship

- Death of Jehoram (40-illness) – 22yo Ahaziah now king
 - by now Ahaziah had several children.
- 1 yr later, Ahaziah called to battle in Israel –fighting with (uncle)King Joram
- Ahaziah killed in battle in Israel
 - Joram and all his brothers (70 sons of Ahab) killed in same insurrection
 - These were all siblings of Athaliah (and uncles of Jehosheba)
 - Jezebel (mother/grandmother) also killed at this time



(B) Athaliah's reaction

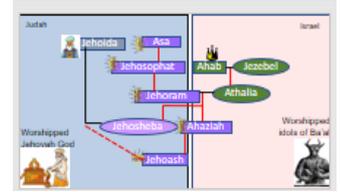
- Didn't take time to mourn mother, brothers, son....
- Takeover by Athaliah – declared HERSELF queen.
 - Needed to consolidate her power
 - Slaughtered all her grandchildren by Ahaziah



(C) Jehosheba's response

- Jehosheba rescued Jehoash from certain death
 - he was a baby at the time (slept through carnage?)
 - hid him & nurse in palace storage cupboard!
 - text uncertain whether he was left for dead, or snatched up before the killings commenced

- Jehoash raised in temple (hidden) for 7 years with J&J
 - Taught and trained by Jehosheba
- Athaliah assassinated 7 years later
 - Jehoash anointed / crowned as king by Jehoida



(D) Jehosheba's Secret:

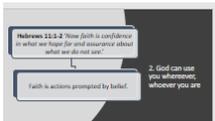
- Jehosheba had learned to trust God, not her wealth and power

Psalm 147:11 *'the LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love'*

- only faith in God could have given her the courage to act as she did



Hebrews 11:1-2 *'Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.'*



- Her name meant 'God's promise' and she ALSO knew God's promise about David's line on the throne...ACTED on God's promise
- Faith is more than belief – it is actions prompted by belief.
- We may not be in a palace or a temple, but wherever our home, God wants us to protect children and teach them of His love and purposes.

3. Our choices influence the NEXT generation:

- Jezebel and Athaliah influenced the following generations for evil
 - Athaliah influenced her husband first, then the children, to follow Baal; to murder for political gain; showed no mercy even to her grandchildren.
 - We read that Ahaziah (Jehosheba's brother) followed in the wicked ways of his parents.
 - **whatever you grow up with is "normal" to you.**



ILLUSTRATION: Scott in Grade 1 – learning about roles and rules in families

Asked: "What job does Dad have to do at home?" Answer: "Kiss Mum!"

Nearly 40 years later, his wife wakes to "a kiss, a cuddle, and a cup of tea"!!

- If you grow up with parent knocking back 6pack & cone – that's "normal"
- If you grow up with parent with "anger management issues" OR a control freak – that's "normal" to you – and you will replicate that behaviour
 - UNLESS a deliberate CHOICE made to alter generational lifestyles

- Jehosheba rejected the evil ways (lifestyle) of her parents and served the true God in her home. (You always have a choice!)
 - She was responsible for the teaching of Jehoash until he was 7yrs old
 - what are we teaching our babies, toddlers, pre-schoolers?
 - Her influence changed a nation – As king, Jehoash restored the Temple and led the people of Judah back into worship of God.
 - As long as Jehoida lived (until 130!) Jehoash was a good king.
 - ALSO, 3 of next 4 kings also worshipped Jehovah God
 - 178 years of influence by this unlikely godly couple
- Jehoash was not Jehosheba's biological child.
 - Don't opt out because it is not your child / not your business!
 - On Mother's Day, remember:

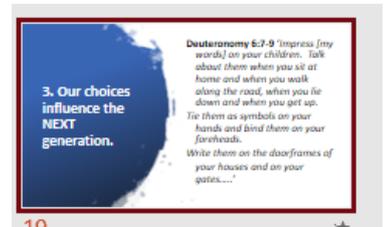


- “Mother” is a VERB (to nurture) as well as a noun (biology)
- we must maximise the finite time allotted to us to spend with children.
- teachers, parents, grandparents, uncles & aunts; neighbours...
- make the most of every opportunity!

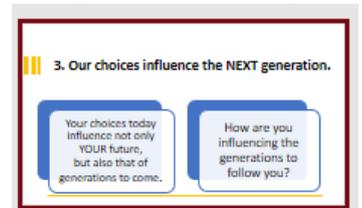
Deuteronomy 6:7-9 'Impress [my words] on your children.

Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.

Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.....'



- Whether a teenager (like Jehosheba) or an octogenarian (like Jehoida)
 - How will YOUR choices TODAY influence not only YOUR future, but also that of the next generation (or three...)
 - Jehoida and Jehosheba influenced 5 generations of kings – 178 years!
 - How are YOU influencing the generations that follow you?



PRAY