

# ***International Bible Lessons Commentary***

## ***2 Chronicles 19:4-11***

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**Sunday, July 29, 2012**

**L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.**

The **[International Bible Lesson](#)** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, July 29, 2012**, is from **2 Chronicles 19:4-11**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lessons Commentary* (formerly, *Bible Lesson Forum*) below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further** discuss the five questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion; these hints are available on the **[International Bible Lessons Commentary](#)** website. For additional **International Bible Lesson Commentaries**, see the complete and comprehensive **[International Bible Lessons Commentary Index](#)**. The weekly **[International Bible Lesson](#)** is posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught at **<http://InternationalBibleLessons.org>** and in **[The Oklahoman](#)** newspaper.

### ***International Bible Lesson Commentary***

#### **2 Chronicles 19:4-11**

**(2 Chronicles 19:4)** Jehoshaphat resided at Jerusalem; then he went out again among the people, from Beer-sheba to the hill country of Ephraim, and brought them back to the LORD, the God of their ancestors.

When Ahab was King of Israel and Jehoshaphat was King of Judah, the two Kings went to war together and Ahab was killed as punishment for his sins. When Jehoshaphat returned to Jerusalem, the prophet Jehu warned him that the wrath of the LORD was against him for helping the wicked. Jehu also told him that he had some good in him because he set his heart to seek God. Then, Jehoshaphat went out among the people to bring them back to the LORD.

**(2 Chronicles 19:5)** He appointed judges in the land in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city,

Jehoshaphat as king did more than turn the people away from worshiping idols and back to worshiping the true God. He also established a government in the kingdom of Judah based on the type of government that God established when the Hebrews entered the Promised Land. He appointed judges in all of the fortified cities to hear cases brought before them and to settle disputes.

**(2 Chronicles 19:6)** and said to the judges, “Consider what you are doing, for you judge not on behalf of human beings but on the LORD’s behalf; he is with you in giving judgment.

Jehoshaphat also instructed them not to simply consider subjectively what they thought would benefit someone or just give the people what they thought they wanted. Instead, they needed to remember that they represented God and God's law and justice before the people. On the basis of God's objective laws, given to Moses, they were to judge as God guided them when they depended on God's help and His law for guidance.

**(2 Chronicles 19:7) Now, let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take care what you do, for there is no perversion of justice with the LORD our God, or partiality, or taking of bribes.”**

Jehoshaphat reminded these judges that God would hold them accountable if they judged illegally or unjustly. If they remembered how God had punished Ahab for his injustices and idolatries, they should have had reasons enough to fear the punishment of God if they misrepresented God or His laws. Jehoshaphat specifically mentioned what wrongs they might be tempted most to do as judges. Throughout history, judges have been tempted to commit these same sins.

**(2 Chronicles 19:8) Moreover in Jerusalem Jehoshaphat appointed certain Levites and priests and heads of families of Israel, to give judgment for the LORD and to decide disputed cases. They had their seat at Jerusalem.**

In addition to the judges who resided in the fortified cities, he specifically appointed Levites and priests (according to the law of Moses) who should know the laws of God because of their Temple service. He chose responsible heads of families (who should know about good government in families and how good families should function) to give judgment for the LORD (represent the LORD's judgments based on His laws in the Pentateuch, the first five books of Moses). By centralizing these judges in Jerusalem, the people would know where to go if they needed to appeal their cases to a higher authority.

**(2 Chronicles 19:9) He charged them: “This is how you shall act: in the fear of the LORD, in faithfulness, and with your whole heart;**

In addition to legally interpreting and enforcing the objective laws of right and wrong in the first five books of Moses, Jehoshaphat wanted the judges and leaders he appointed to be in a right relationship with God. According to the Scriptures that had been written up to his time in history, Jehoshaphat set the standards by which these judges were to act. Once again he emphasized the fear of the LORD, Who would justly judge them if they ruled unjustly. They were to demonstrate faithfulness to God and His laws by their obedience to God; thus also serving as good examples. They were to serve God wholeheartedly out of love for God; thus fulfilling the first commandment to love God with all their hearts.

**(2 Chronicles 19:10) whenever a case comes to you from your kindred who live in their cities, concerning bloodshed, law or commandment,**

**statutes or ordinances, then you shall instruct them, so that they may not incur guilt before the LORD and wrath may not come on you and your kindred. Do so, and you will not incur guilt.**

Jehoshaphat told them how to avoid being guilty before God as judges; so they could obey God and avoid God's just judgment. They were to instruct the people concerning the laws of God. If they rightly instructed those who came to them, then these people would learn the law of God and not violate His laws. If those responsible to teach God's laws to those who came to them for their judgments failed to obey God and do their duty, they themselves would incur guilt and be punished by God (the Highest Authority; the Governor of the universe).

**(2 Chronicles 19:11) See, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah son of Ishmael, the governor of the house of Judah, in all the king's matters; and the Levites will serve you as officers. Deal courageously, and may the LORD be with the good!"**

Jehoshaphat created a divided government between religious leaders and political leaders. He established a chain of command under himself as the king. In matters pertaining to religious practices, the judges were under the direction of the chief priest, who served as the chief interpreter of the Scriptures. In matters of government, Jehoshaphat appointed a governor under himself to be in charge. He commanded all those in leadership positions to be courageous; furthermore, they were to go to the LORD and ask Him to be with them and help them as they carried out their administrative tasks.

### **Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further**

1. What difference does it make whether or not leaders and judges love and serve the LORD or not?
2. Why should leaders understand that they are to lead on the LORD's behalf?
3. What encouragement did Jehoshaphat give to the judges that he appointed?
4. What can happen to the leader or judge that does not fear the LORD?
5. What did Jehoshaphat say were some of the consequences if leaders and judges did not give proper instruction to people?

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