



## The Burning Bush - Online article archive

### The Sad Consequences Of Being Linked To Wicked Men

This morning my daily reading included the last chapter of 1st Kings, chapter 22. It features the sad departure of good King Jehoshaphat from the truth of God when he entered into a political allegiance with the evil King Ahab, a man notorious for his wickedness. Of Ahab we read: "And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him," 1 Kings 16:30-33.

#### Linked

For godly Jehoshaphat to link himself to such a man was the height of utter folly. The manner in which he entered this evil compromise only heaps derision upon Jehoshaphat! It was he who initiated the contact with Ahab, and that without apparent reason. "And it came to pass in the third year, that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel," 1 Kings 22:2. It was a 'come down' indeed!

But as is the case with all compromising by good men with evil, the slide accelerated very quickly. Jehoshaphat was most unctuous in his submissive willingness to ally himself with Ahab. "And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramothgilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses," verse 4. In replying as he did, he went beyond what common wit would have required of him. Folly is followed by greater folly when we step outside the rule and law of God! He laid himself and his kingdom at Ahab's feet.

The dying of Jehoshaphat's consciousness of God's will and purpose is further seen in his sad betrayal of one of God's great prophets. Jehoshaphat at first, while a spark of awareness of his being in the wrong company yet burned, meekly seeks for a man of God to be asked about the will of God regarding Ahab's proposed attack upon Syria. Ahab's honey-tongued, time-serving false prophets promised him great success. "Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king," verse 6.

However, Jehoshaphat still had some measure of discernment remaining and asked for a 'second opinion'! "And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him?" verse 7.

Micaiah the son of Imlah, a man hated by Ahab for his faithful witness to God's truth, verse 8, is sent for and he speaks plainly of what will be the outcome of this Ahab-inspired attack upon Syria, despite attempts to have him compromise and speak only that which would please Ahab, verse 13-14.

Micaiah declared plainly what the result of this foolish military enterprise will be. "And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace . . . Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee," verses 17, 23.

For this faithfulness he is cruelly imprisoned by Ahab but he speaks a final word of warning even as he is taken away. "And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; and say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace. And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, the LORD hath not spoken by me. And he said, Hearken, O people, every one of you," verses 26-28.

#### Shame

It is to the shame of Jehoshaphat that he silently acquiesces in this shameful cruelty to one of God's great men, but he then meekly consents to still go to battle despite the plain warning of God.



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That foolish subservience by Jehoshaphat is further evidence in one of the most inexplicable acts of folly recorded in the Bible!

"So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramothgilead. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and enter into the battle; but put thou on thy robes. And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle," verse 29-30.

As a result of utter foolhardiness, Jehoshaphat almost loses his life, but for the merciful intervention of the Lord.

"But the king of Syria commanded his thirty and two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it is the king of Israel. And they turned aside to fight against him: and Jehoshaphat cried out. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him," 31-33.

God's truth stood that day for we read in verse 34 and 35. "And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. And the battle increased that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot."

His death was a fulfillment of that spoken of the Lord by Elijah to Ahab after the wicked murder of Naboth.

"And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine," 1 Kings 21:19.

### Here In Ulster Today!

As I read this portion of God's Word this morning I could not but think of the situation in our Province. We recently have had fresh restrictions introduced which impact upon us all. This is the case whether or not the circumstances in all areas merit such restrictions.

Some areas, because of the defiant attitudes of their populace, born of their Republican hatred of all things British, have much higher rates of infections and are, it may rightly be concluded, the source of an increase in infections threatening us all. Ulster is, after all, a small area and one section of the community rejecting the sensible 'social distancing' regulations will have an impact upon everyone, no matter how diligent one may be in observing the regulations.

### GAA

In the past, there has been a complete ignoring of the regulations by Republicans at such events as funerals and Gaelic football matches. This was acknowledged by the GAA when it cancelled all matches after supporters ignored all efforts to have them avoid such things as celebratory pitch invasions. (See **here**)

Back on September 30th, I circulated amongst our readers the following report which appeared on the BBC news site.

*A "rebellious approach" to public health guidance may be fuelling the surge in coronavirus cases in NI's north west, a GP, Dr Nicola Duffy has warned.*

*There have been 1,030 confirmed cases in the Derry and Strabane Council area - 487 diagnosed in the past seven days.*

*The region's number of cases per 100,000 people is now among UK's highest.*



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*"We are struggling to get the basic information across to people at the moment," Dr Nicola Duffy said.*

*That includes information about handwashing and mask wearing, she said.*

*Dr Duffy told the BBC: "There seems to be a narrative almost like a rebellious approach to government guidance."*

*She said a rise in hospitalisations and of people "becoming extremely unwell" should be expected in the days ahead.*

*That can happen with some patients at "around day seven to day 10" following a positive test, Dr Duffy said.*

*"In terms of our behaviours, what we do now is going to impact what happens in the next two weeks," she added.*

### Seen By All

What this GP observed amongst her patients was evidenced for all to see in the rise in infections in most Nationalist areas.

It was to this Nationalist attitude that Stormont Executive DUP minister, Mr Edwin Poots made tentative reference in a recent statement.

We quote from the BBC report of his objections to the new restrictions which included the closure of schools for two weeks.

"The minister said he was 'deeply concerned' about the damage possible further restrictions will have on jobs and education.

'I think that it's hugely damaging for the economy, hugely damaging for people's mental health and the consequences of it could lead to tens of thousands of people on the dole. That is not good for the health of Northern Ireland,' Mr Poots said.

The minister questioned the reasoning behind imposing restrictions nationwide when many council areas were worse affected than others.

'It has risen in some council areas at a significantly greater rate than others, Mid and East Antrim is one tenth of that of Derry City and Strabane,' the minister said.

He also pointed the finger of blame at certain sporting activities and, in particular, post-match celebration events.

Asked if he was referring to the GAA, the minister replied: 'I am not labelling one particular group of people, but if people feel the cap fits that's entirely up to them.'

In a television interview Mr Poots said that the infection rate in nationalist areas was 6 to 1 of that in Unionist areas where the regulations were kept!

Republicans and their allies railed against Mr Poots for saying this and demanded that the DUP leadership discipline him. Subsequent to these demands, reports appeared claiming that the DUP supported what Mr Poots had said though there was no name to the reports!

On the **BBC Northern Ireland news site**, the following report has appeared just minutes ago. We quote it in full..

***DUP minister Edwin Poots should apologise for saying coronavirus is more common in nation-***



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**alist areas, Sinn Féin's John O'Dowd has said.**

*Last week Mr Poots said the difference in transmission between nationalist and unionist areas was 'around six to one'.*

*He has also criticised new lockdown restrictions imposed by the executive to manage the virus.*

*Mr O'Dowd said his comments about virus levels in different council areas were a 'disgrace' and should be withdrawn.*

*The agriculture minister had spoken to UTV on Friday, openly criticising the imposition of the new regulations, which are in place for the next four weeks.*

*'I will abide by the regulation and I will abide by the regulations, as have most people in my community,' said Mr Poots. What I'm saying is, those people who didn't abide by them, including the Sinn Féin leadership - because a lot of this started shortly after the Bobby Storey funeral. A lot of the problems started after that event, and people in that community saw the breaking of the rules.*

*That's why there is a difference between nationalist areas and unionist areas - and the difference is around six to one.'*

*The remarks have drawn criticism from other political parties at Stormont.*

It is utterly bewildering to any rational person that a Sinn Fein spokesman can make such demands and deny what has been documented repeatedly. Londonderry, Strabane and Newry, all very substantially Nationalist areas, have all reported higher than average infection rates with Londonderry/Strabane being the highest in the UK at one point!

### Aware

The controversy indicates that the DUP are aware of the treacherous attitudes of their Republican confederates in the 'power-sharing' set-up in Stormont. But, like Jehoshaphat of old, they can only offer a feeble protest against the wickedness of their allies. When Ahab displayed his hatred of God's servant, all Jehoshaphat could say by way of protest was a feeble, 'Let not the king say so,' verse 8.

That was hardly an appropriate response to the devil-inspired calumny of God's man!

Likewise, the DUP maintains its alliance with those that they appear to realise are working against the very best interests of Ulster, indeed they work for the destruction of Ulster. Instead of an all out rebuttal of Sinn Fein's denials, they maintain Sinn Fein in office and that in order to continue drawing the financial benefits that they enjoy as MLAs!

If Mr Poots and all within the DUP who realise just what it is Sinn Fein are seeking to do, were really exercised and concerned about the matter they would do what only can be done to end the opportunity that Irish Republicans enjoy through its position in the Stormont Executive to further its destruction of Ulster, and bring this sham of 'power-sharing' to an end immediately.

But, that is a forlorn hope for the DUP, like Jehoshaphat, are beguiled into continuing on this destructive path for reasons best known to themselves!!!

Rev Ivan Foster (Rtd)

19th October 2020.