

Quiet Time with Jehoshaphat Part II II Chronicles 20:14-30 FBC Canton Sunday am January 18, 2026

Introduction: All of Judah has now gathered to hear what the Lord will say. V. 13

Jehoshaphat and the Israelites have faced the fear of the multitude of their enemies.

They have carried that burden to the Lord in prayer, fasting and gathering together.

They have their eyes focused on the Lord waiting for God to respond.

OUR GOD, WILL YOU NOT JUDGE THEM? FOR WE ARE POWERLESS BEFORE THIS VAST ARMY THAT COMES AGAINST US. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO, BUT OUR EYES ARE UPON YOU.”
- 2 CHRONICLES 20:12

4th service: 913 average after 2 Sundays.

Building paid off: 1.9 left...after applying 2025 excess to principle

Set alarm for prayer...7:14...2x a day

Fast for 21 days

Come by and walk around the building to pray.

New building plans: 1300 seats approx. 8 million. Thank you to the Long range...for bringing this down from 18 million!





The waiting is a faith challenge as God does not move on our time frames. Psalm 27:14

14 Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!

When God speaks you will have to believe it even if you don't understand it.
Matthew 16:11-12

11 How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? — but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

But go ahead and surrender: you will do what he says.

Unbelief would be disobedience. Hebrews 3:12-13

12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

When you believe the Word in your trial, you will know the fear of the Lord.
Proverbs 2:5

Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

Cultural, carnal believers will never develop this fear of the Lord.
Because they will not seek the Lord when the trial comes.

Because they depend on lesser sources for help...alcohol, drugs, sensuality, pride, income, friends...SELF!

I am calling on us today to choose the Fear of the Lord. I am calling you to develop a daily time in the Word!

I. The delivery is unique to create dependence on God, not a method. V. 14-17

Moses got a bush burning, Joshua got the commander of the army of the Lord, Balaam got a donkey...

The King and Israel got their message through the musicians...

a. Spoke by the musicians. Sons of Asaph.

i. Always by the Spirit in the Word.

They are assembled at the temple...word of God in the Ark, they are assembled for prayer and worship=Spirit.

ii. Never speaks out of fear, but to calm fears. 2x

iii. Never discourages, always encourages. 2x

iv. Never leaves us, always with us. 2x

b. Wisdom is specific, God is not vague.

i. Go down to the ascent of Ziz.

ii. You will find them at brook's end. And they will end there.

c. God is the one who will do the fighting, but we still have to go.

i. The difference between power and authority.

1. He has the power and gives us to the authority to win.

ii. Position yourselves

iii. Stand still.

iv. Go out against the enemies.

v. See the deliverance of the Lord.

II. Public Worship comes when the message is received and believed. V. 18-19

a. Bowed down, face to the ground.

i. King and people.

b. Stood up to praise with loud voices and high exaltation.

This is why many believers don't sing and celebrate their God in public worship.

III. After hearing, there must be doing. V. 20-22, James 1:22

a. Don't put off obedience, do the hard things first.

i. They went out early.

b. Renewing the mind is key to prosperity. Romans 12:1-2

Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established, believe his prophets and you shall prosper. V. 20

IV. God brings victory uniquely so that only He can get the Glory. v. 23-25

a. Praising God is the method of victory.

i. Praise forever mercy.

1. That does not mean our praise can take down Jericho walls.
2. It means that they are following the direct direction of the Lord.

ii. Praise the beauty of Holiness.

b. Ambush themselves because unbelievers do not have the fear of the Lord.

c. The spoils of victory bring gifts to God's people. Ephesians 4

Conclusion: We will be moved to rename the place because of God's work. V.

26-30

Joyful believers are those who know the fear of the Lord.

Singing with stringed instruments, harps and trumpets

The fear of God falls on all the other countries.

God gives you rest before the next trial begins.

Proverbs 10:27 The fear of the LORD prolongs days, But the years of the wicked will be shortened.

Proverbs 14:26 In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, And His children will have a place of refuge.

Proverbs 15:16 Better is a little with the fear of the LORD, Than great treasure with trouble.

Proverbs 15:33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, And before honor is humility.

Proverbs 16:6 In mercy and truth atonement is provided for iniquity; And by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.

Proverbs 19:23 The fear of the LORD leads to life, and he who has it will abide in satisfaction; He will not be visited with evil.

Proverbs 23:17 Do not let your heart envy sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day;

David Guzik Study Guide for 2 Chronicles 20

JEHOSHAPHAT'S VICTORY

A. Jehoshaphat's prayer.

1. **(2 Chronicles 20:1-2)** Hostile enemies gather against Judah.

It happened after this *that* the people of Moab with the people of Ammon, and *others* with them besides the Ammonites, came to battle against Jehoshaphat.

Then some came and told Jehoshaphat, saying, “A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from Syria; and they are in Hazazon Tamar” (which *is* En Gedi).

- a. **It happened after this:** This threat to Jehoshaphat and his kingdom happened after his return to seeking God, following his near-death when he allied himself with King Ahab of Israel.
- b. **The people of Moab with the people of Ammon, and others with them besides the Ammonites, came to battle against Jehoshaphat:** This **great multitude** was a significant

threat against Jehoshaphat, whose last experience on the field of battle was a narrow escape from death.

2. ([2 Chronicles 20:3-4](#)) The nation gathers to seek God together.

And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. So Judah gathered together to ask [help](#) from the LORD; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

a. **And Jehoshaphat feared:** There was certainly a sense in which Jehoshaphat feared the great multitude coming against him. Yet the sense here is that he **fear** the LORD, and was more awed at the power and majesty of God than at the destructive force of his enemies.

i. “**Jehoshaphat feared**”, partly from human frailty, and partly from the remembrance of his own guilt, and the wrath of God denounced against him for it, [2 Chronicles 19:2](#).” (Poole)

b. **And set himself to seek the LORD:** Jehoshaphat set the example by his own personal devotion. He would not call upon the people of Judah to seek the LORD in a way that he did not.

i. This is a recurring theme in 2 Chronicles: the leaders who seek the LORD. We can expect God to do great things when His people, and especially the leaders of His people, seek Him. Others who sought the LORD in 2 Chronicles include:

- The faithful remnant of Israel ([2 Chronicles 11:16](#)).
- The people of Judah under King Asa ([2 Chronicles 14:4](#), [15:12-13](#)).
- Jehoshaphat in the early part of his reign ([2 Chronicles 19:3](#)).
- King Hezekiah ([2 Chronicles 31:21](#)).
- King Josiah ([2 Chronicles 34:3](#)).

ii. “His attitude is summed up by the word ‘seek’, which occurs twice in Hebrew though it is variously translated.... This is a key word in Jehoshaphat’s reign, where it has the basic sense of ‘worship’, but also means to discover God’s will. It shows that Jehoshaphat has a higher trust in God than in his military resources.” (Selman)

c. **And proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah:** Jehoshaphat called the nation to express their humility and total dependence upon God through a public **fast** — that is, abstaining from all food for a period of time (typically a day or more) and drinking only water.

i. In [Mark 9:28-29](#), Jesus explained that prayer and fasting together were a source of significant spiritual power. It isn’t as if prayer and fasting make us more worthy to be blessed or do God’s work; it is that prayer and fasting draw us closer to the heart of God, and they put us more in line with His power. Fasting is a powerful expression of our total dependence on Him.

d. **So Judah gathered together to ask help from the LORD:** This showed the Spirit of God at work among His people, prompting them to **respond** to the call issued from their king, Jehoshaphat.

i. "To get this assistance, it was necessary to **seek** it; and to get such **extraordinary** help, they should seek it in an **extraordinary way**; whence he proclaimed a **universal fast**, and all the people came up to Jerusalem to seek the Lord." (Clarke)

3. (2 Chronicles 20:5-12) Jehoshaphat leads the assembly in prayer.

Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, and said: "O LORD God of our fathers, **are** You not God in heaven, and do You **not** rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand **is** **there not** power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You? **Are** You not our God, **who** drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever? And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying, 'If disaster comes upon us; sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine; we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your name **is** in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save.' And now, here are the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir; whom You would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and did not destroy them; here they are, rewarding us by coming to throw us out of Your possession which You have given us to inherit. O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes **are** upon You."

a. **Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem:** This large assembly representing the gathered kingdom needed a leader, and the godly Jehoshaphat was the logical one to unite the assembly together in prayer.

i. Adam Clarke called this "One of the most sensible, pious, correct, and as to its composition, one of the most elegant prayers ever offered under the Old Testament dispensation."

ii. "The late renowned Gustavus, king of Sweden, would pray ashore, in the field, in the midst of the battle; as if prayer alone were the surest piece of his whole armour." (Trapp)

b. **Are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations:** Jehoshaphat began his great prayer by recognizing the power of Yahweh over **heaven** and all **kingdoms of the nations**. Other peoples believed in **localized** deities — as if the Moabites had their god, the Philistines their god, the Ammonites their god, and so on. Jehoshaphat

recognized that the God of Israel was in fact the God of all **kingdoms**, of all **nations**, of all the earth and indeed of **heaven** itself.

c. **Are You not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people**

Israel: Jehoshaphat also prayed recognizing God's great works in the past on behalf of His people. The logic is clear: If God had done great things for His people in the past, He can be prevailed upon to do great things for His people at their moment of great need.

d. **We will stand in this temple and in Your presence**: Jehoshaphat stood on the ground of previous prayer and prior answers to prayer. This echoes the prayer Solomon prayed at the dedication of the temple and it calls upon God to answer not only Jehoshaphat's prayer but Solomon's also ([2 Chronicles 6:20-25](#)).

e. **Here are the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir; whom You would not let Israel**

invade when they came out of the land of Egypt: Jehoshaphat prayed with both knowledge and understanding of God's word. He remembered that God did not allow Israel to invade these peoples when they came from Egypt to the Promised Land ([Deuteronomy 2:8-9](#) and [2:19](#)). Since God did not allow Israel to destroy those peoples then, it would be unjust if He allowed them to destroy Judah now. He implicitly prayed that God would not allow His people to suffer as a consequence of their prior obedience.

i. "I like to plunge my hand into the promises, and then I find myself able to grasp with a grip of determination the mighty faithfulness of God. An omnipotent plea with God is: 'Do as thou hast said.'" (Spurgeon)

f. **For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we**

know what to do, but our eyes are upon You: Here Jehoshaphat — a king standing before his people — openly confessed that he did not have the answer. Their only answer was to trust in God, that His power and goodness would protect Judah when nothing else could.

i. "The final phrase, **We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you**, is one of the most touching expressions of trust in God to be found anywhere in the Bible." (Selman)

ii. "They said, 'Our eyes are upon thee.' What did they mean by that? They meant, 'Lord, if help does come, it must come from thee. We are looking to thee for it. It cannot come from anywhere else, so we look to thee. But we believe it will come, men will not look for that which they know will not come. We feel sure it will come, but we do not know how, so we are looking; we do not know when, but we are looking. We do not know what thou wouldest have us to do, but as the servant looks to her mistress, so are we looking to thee, Lord. Lord, we are looking.'" (Spurgeon)

B. God answers Jehoshaphat's prayer.

1. ([2 Chronicles 20:13-15](#)) The promise is given through a prophet.

Now all Judah, with their little ones, their wives, and their children, stood before the LORD. Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. And he said, “Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: ‘Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God’s.’”

a. Now all Judah, with their little ones, their wives, and their children, stood before the LORD: The sense is that after Jehoshaphat's great prayer, the people stood silently before the LORD, waiting upon Him for some sense of direction or encouragement.

i. “You could have heard the sound even of the wind among the trees at the time, for they were as hushed and as quiet as you were just now. Oh, when you know the Lord means to deliver you, bow your head and just give him the quiet, deep, solemn worship of your spirit.” (Spurgeon)

b. Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah...in the midst of the assembly: Out of this huge group gathered together, the Spirit of the LORD came upon one man to speak to the entire assembly. This was a spontaneous word of prophecy that came as God's people waited before Him and sought Him.

c. Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's: The threat was real — there really was a great multitude dedicated to destroying Judah. Yet the command was to not be afraid nor dismayed, because the battle was God's battle. He would fight on behalf of Judah against this great multitude.

2. (2 Chronicles 20:16-17) The command to stand and believe.

“Tomorrow go down against them. They will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the brook before the Wilderness of Jeruel. You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem! Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the LORD is with you.”

a. Tomorrow go down against them: This was an important command. One might think that because of the promise of 2 Chronicles 20:15, Judah would not even have to show up at the battle and perhaps God wanted them to stay in Jerusalem and pray. Yet, God wanted them to go out to battle against the enemy and He would use their participation in the battle.

b. They will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz: God knew the plans of the attacking armies precisely and He relayed this information to the king and people of Judah.

c. You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD: Judah did not need to fight in this battle, yet it did not mean there was nothing for them to do. It was a significant step of faith to position yourselves, to stand

still, and to believe that you would **see the salvation of the LORD** in the face of a large attacking army.

d. **Tomorrow go out against them**: There were any number of ways that God **could** have defeated these armies assembled against Judah, but He appointed a way that demanded the participation of faith on behalf of Judah. They had to work in a faith-partnership with God.

3. (2 Chronicles 20:18-19) The response of worship and praise.

And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with *his* face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the LORD, worshiping the LORD. Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with voices loud and high.

a. **Bowed before the LORD, worshiping the LORD**: Both king and people knew that the prophetic word through Jahaziel was a true message from God. Receiving it as a word from God, they worshipped the LORD who promised to save His people against this terrible threat. It was a logical response.

i. "They worshipped, but why did they do it? They were not delivered. No, but they were sure they were going to be delivered. Their enemies were not dead. No, they were all alive, but they were sure they would be dead, so they had worship, and their devotion rose from trustful and grateful hearts." (Spurgeon)

b. **Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with voices loud and high**: First they worshipped with the posture of their bodies and hearts; then with song led by the chorus of the Levitical worship leaders.

4. (2 Chronicles 20:20-21) The battle is led by singing worshippers.

So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper." And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying:

**"Praise the LORD,
For His mercy *endures* forever."**

a. **So they rose early in the morning and went**: This showed that they really did believe the prophecy from Jahaziel. It was one thing to profess faith among an excited assembly; it was another thing to actually walk out to meet the enemy armies.

b. **Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper:** With this exhortation, Jehoshaphat showed that he considered believing the **prophets** of God to be equal to believing **the LORD your God** Himself. This remains true; to believe God's word is to believe God Himself.

c. **And when he had consulted with the people:** Jehoshaphat was wise and good enough to know that since this crisis put **the people** at risk, then **the people** should be **consulted** regarding some of the details, including **those who should sing to the LORD.**

i. We should not think that at this moment the monarchy of Israel became a democracy. Instead, it fulfilled what it should have always been: a monarchy that was in touch with, and responsive to, the people and their needs and opinions.

d. **Who should praise the beauty of holiness:** God's holiness — His "set-apart-ness" — has a wonderful and distinct **beauty** about it. It is **beautiful** that God is God and not man; that He is more than the greatest man or a super-man. His holy love, grace, justice, and majesty are **beautiful**.

e. **As they went out before the army:** The singers and worshippers **led** the army into this battle. It was clear that Judah expected a battle because they brought the **army**. Yet it was also clear that they expected a supernatural battle because they let the singers and worshippers go **before the army**.

i. These worshippers obviously took a dangerous step of faith. If the unthinkable happened and God did not intervene, they would be the first ones slaughtered by a merciless enemy. No wonder King Jehoshaphat **consulted with the people** about who these singers and worshippers should be.

f. **And were saying: "Praise the LORD, for His mercy endures forever"**: This was the refrain of their song. They did not rest on their own merits or even the merits of Abraham, Moses, or David. They trusted and rested on the enduring **mercy** of God.

5. (2 Chronicles 20:22-30) Victory over the enemy and the plundering of the enemy.

Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated. For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy them. And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another. So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there were their dead bodies, fallen on the earth. No one had escaped. When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found among them an abundance of valuables on the dead bodies, and precious jewelry, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away; and they were three days gathering the spoil because there was so

much. And on the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berachah, for there they blessed the LORD; therefore the name of that place was called The Valley of Berachah until this day. Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat in front of them, to go back to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had made them rejoice over their enemies. So they came to Jerusalem, with stringed instruments and harps and trumpets, to the house of the LORD. And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of **those** countries when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. Then the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around.

a. **Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people...and they were defeated:** Just as God promised, the battle belonged to Him and He won the victory on behalf of Judah. We might say that it was not their **praise** that won the battle, rather it was their faith, yet their **praise** was sure **evidence** of their faith. When one really believes the words and promises of God, they cannot but help to **praise** Him.

i. "The form of the word for **ambushes** is slightly unusual and really means 'ambushers', and since it is said that God sent them, some have thought that they must be supernatural agents." (Selman)

b. **For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy them:** This describes **how** God **set ambushes** against the enemies of Judah. He prompted them to fight amongst themselves so that they defeated one another, and all Judah had to do was to collect the spoil.

i. "Some understand this ambushment of the holy angels, sent suddenly in upon them to slay them; whereupon they mistaking the matter, and supposing it had been their own companions, flew upon them, and so sheathed their swords in one another's bowels." (Trapp)

c. **So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there were their dead bodies:** It seems that the army of Judah, led by the singing worshippers, never actually engaged the enemy armies. Perhaps God spared them that particular test of faith and by the time they had actually met the enemy armies, they were already **dead**, and **no one had escaped**.

d. **On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berachah, for there they blessed the LORD:** They had assembled together to cry out to God for His deliverance; it was appropriate that they also assemble together to thank God and to bless His name, **for the LORD had made them rejoice over their enemies.**

e. **And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel:** The victory itself was a warning to the neighboring nations. This gave King Jehoshaphat and his kingdom **rest all around**.

- i. We notice that this did not become a **pattern** for warfare in Judah or an invitation to conquest, led by the “invincible army of praise.” This was in direct response to a specific word from God; to disobey would have been a sin, but it would have also been a sin to make it a standing pattern for all future warfare in Judah.
- ii. The **principle** of God fighting on behalf of His people and the glory of trusting-praise before the battle remained; **how** God wanted His people to participate in the battle would differ from circumstance to circumstance according to the leading of the Holy Spirit in their situation.
- iii. Most importantly, we can praise God that Jesus Christ has fought the battle for our salvation and to rescue us from the judgment of God that we so rightly deserved. This makes us **more than conquerors** in Jesus Christ because He fights the battle and defeats our foe, and we share in the spoil ([Romans 8:37](#)).

6. ([2 Chronicles 20:31-37](#)) The close of Jehoshaphat's reign.

So Jehoshaphat was king over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. And he walked in the way of his father Asa, and did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the sight of the LORD. Nevertheless the high places were not taken away, for as yet the people had not directed their hearts to the God of their fathers. Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, indeed they are written in the book of Jehu the son of Hanani, which is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel. After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who acted very wickedly. And he allied himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish, and they made the ships in Ezion Geber. But Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, “Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD has destroyed your works.” Then the ships were wrecked, so that they were not able to go to Tarshish.

- a. **He walked in the way of his father Asa:** Asa was a good king and Jehoshaphat his son followed in his footsteps and did **what was right in the sight of the LORD**.
- b. **Nevertheless the high places were not taken away:** Jehoshaphat did not do **everything** he should have as a king. Yet the Chronicler seems to tell us that this was largely because **the people had not directed their hearts to the God of their fathers**.
Jehoshaphat was a reformer, but the people would not be thoroughly reformed.

i. "The fault was not in Jehoshaphat, but in the people, who, though they did worship the true God, yet would not be confined to the temple, but for their own conveniency, or from their affection to their ancient customs, chose to worship him in the high places." (Poole)

c. **And he allied himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish:** [1 Kings 22:48-49](#) tells us that this initial partnership with **Ahaziah King of Israel** ended in disaster when **the ships were wrecked at Ezion Geber**. It also tells us that after the rebuke from **Eliezer the son of Dodavah**, King Jehoshaphat refused another offer of alliance with Ahaziah. He had learned his lesson and did not add error upon error.

i. "The phrase 'trading ships' interprets a more literal rendering of the Hebrew, i.e., 'ships that could go to Tarshish.' The thought is that these vessels belonged to the class of ships that went to Tarshish; their actual destination was Ophir (cf. on [2 Chronicles 8:18](#); [1 Kings 22:48](#))." (Payne)

d. **The LORD has destroyed your works:** This might seem cruel of God, but it was actually mercy. It prevented Jehoshaphat from another ungodly alliance, and yielding to this temptation had hurt him before.

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Updated: August 2022

Matthew Henry Commentary on 2 Chronicles 20

Chapter 20

We have here,

- I. The great danger and distress that Jehoshaphat and his kingdom were in from a foreign invasion ([v. 1, 2](#)).
- II. The pious course he took for their safety, by fasting, and praying, and seeking God ([v. 3-13](#)).
- III. The assurance which God, by a prophet, immediately gave them of victory ([v. 14-17](#)).
- IV. Their thankful believing reception of those assurances ([v. 18-21](#)).
- V. The defeat which God gave to their enemies thereupon ([v. 22-25](#)).
- VI. A solemn thanksgiving which they kept for their victory, and for a happy consequences of it ([v. 26-30](#)).
- VII. The conclusion of the reign of Jehoshaphat, not without some blemishes ([v. 31-37](#)).

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown Commentary on 2 Chronicles 20

The Second Book of the Chronicles
Commentary by ROBERT JAMIESON
CHAPTER 20

[2Ch 20:1-21](#). JEHOSHAPHAT, INVADED BY THE MOABITES, PROCLAIMS A FAST.

1. the children of Moab. . . Ammon, and with them other beside the Ammonites--supposed to be rather the name of a certain people called Mohammonim or Mehunim ([2Ch 26:7](#)), who dwelt in Mount Seir--either a branch of the old Edomite race or a separate tribe who were settled there.

2. from beyond the sea on this side Syria--Instead of "Syria," some versions read "Edom," and many able critics prefer this reading, both because the nomad tribes here mentioned were far from Syria, and because express mention is made of Mount Seir, that is, Edom. The meaning then is: this confederate horde was composed of the different tribes that inhabited the far distant regions bordering on the northern and eastern coasts of the Red Sea. Their progress was apparently by the southern point of the Dead Sea, as far as En-gedi, which, more anciently, was called Hazezon-tamar ([Gen 14:7](#)). This is the uniform route taken by the Arabs in their marauding expeditions at the present day; and in coming round the southern end of the Dead Sea, they can penetrate along the

low-lying Ghor far north, without letting their movements be known to the tribes and villages west of the mountain chain [ROBINSON]. Thus, anciently, the invading horde in Jehoshaphat's time had marched as far north as En-gedi, before intelligence of their advance was conveyed to the court. En-gedi is recognized in the modern Ainjidy and is situated at a point of the western shore, nearly equidistant from both extremities of the lake [ROBINSON].

3, 4. Jehoshaphat. . . proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah--Alarmed by the intelligence and conscious of his total inability to repel this host of invaders, Jehoshaphat felt his only refuge was at the horns of the altar. He resolved to employ the aid of his God, and, in conformity with this resolution, he summoned all his subjects to observe a solemn fast at the sanctuary. It was customary with the Hebrew kings to proclaim fasts in perilous circumstances, either in a city, a district, or throughout the entire kingdom, according to the greatness of the emergency. On this occasion, it was a universal fast, which extended to infants ([2Ch 20:13](#); see also [Joe 2:15, 16](#) [Jon 3:7](#)).

5-13. Jehoshaphat stood. . . in the house of the Lord, before the new court--that is, the great or outer court ([2Ch 4:9](#)) called the new court, probably from having been at that time enlarged or beautified.

6-12. And said, O Lord God of our fathers--This earnest and impressive prayer embraces every topic and argument which, as king and representative of the chosen people, he could urge. Then it concludes with an earnest appeal to the justice of God to protect those who, without provocation, were attacked and who were unable to defend themselves against overwhelming numbers.

14-18. Then upon Jahaziel. . . came the Spirit of the Lord--This prophet is not elsewhere mentioned, but his claim to the inspiration of a prophetic spirit was verified by the calm and distinct announcement he gave, both of the manner and the completeness of the deliverance he predicted.

16. they come up by the cliff of Ziz--This seems to have been nothing else than the present pass which leads northwards, by an ascent from En-gedi to Jerusalem, issuing a little below Tekoa. The wilderness of Jeruel was probably the large flat district adjoining the desert of Tekoa, called El-Husasah, from a wady on its northern side [ROBINSON].

18. Jehoshaphat bowed his head. . . and all Judah, &c.--This attitude was expressive of reverence to God and His Word, of confidence in His promise, and thankfulness for so extraordinary a favor.

19. the Levites. . . stood up to praise the Lord--doubtless by the king's command. Their anthem was sung with such a joyful acclaim as showed that they universally regarded the victory as already obtained.

20, 21. as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood. . . Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem--probably in the gate of Jerusalem, the place of general rendezvous; and as the people were on the eve of setting out, he exhorted them to repose implicit trust in the Lord and His prophet, not to be timid or desponding at sight of the enemy, but to remain firm in the confident assurance of a miraculous deliverance, without their striking a single stroke.

21. he appointed singers. . . that they should praise. . . as they went out before the army--

Having arranged the line of procession, he gave the signal to move forwards. The Levites led the van with their musical instruments; and singing the 136th Psalm, the people went on, not as an army marching against an enemy, but returning in joyful triumph after a victory.

[2Ch 20:22-30](#). THE OVERTHROW OF HIS ENEMIES.**22. when they began to sing and to praise the Lord set ambushments against the children**

of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir--Some think that this was done by angels in human form, whose sudden appearance diffused an uncontrollable panic. Others entertain the more probable opinion that, in the camp of this vast horde, composed of different tribes, jealousies and animosities had sprung up, which led to widespread dissensions and fierce feuds, in which they drew the sword against each other. The consequence was, that as the mutual strife commenced when the Hebrew procession set out from Jerusalem, the work of destruction was completed before Jehoshaphat and his people arrived at the battlefield. Thus easy is it for God to make the wrath of man to praise Him, to confound the counsels of His enemies and employ their own passions in defeating the machinations they have devised for the overthrow of His Church and people.

24-26. when Judah came toward the watchtower in the wilderness--Most probably the conical hill, Jebel Fereidis, or Frank Mountain, from the summit of which they obtained the first view of the scene of slaughter. Jehoshaphat and his people found the field strewed with dead bodies, so that they had not to fight at all, but rather to take possession of an immense booty, the collection of which occupied three days. On the fourth they set out on their return to Jerusalem in the same order and joyful mood as they came. The place where they mustered previous to departure was, from their public thanksgiving service, called, "The Valley of Berachah" ("benediction"), now Wady Bereikut.

[2Ch 20:31-37](#). HIS REIGN.**31. Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah**--(See [2Ch 24:1](#)).

32. walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it--He was more steadfast and consistently religious (compare [2Ch 15:18](#)).

33. the high places were not taken away--Those on which idolatry was practised were entirely destroyed ([2Ch 17:6](#)); but those where the people, notwithstanding the erection of the temple, continued to worship the true God, prudence required to be slowly and gradually abolished, in deference to popular prejudice.

35-37. after this did Jehoshaphat. . . join himself with Ahaziah. . . to make ships--A

combined fleet was built at Ezion-geber, the destination of which was to voyage to Tartessus, but it was wrecked. Jehoshaphat's motive for entering into this partnership was to secure a free passage through Israel, for the vessels were to be conveyed across the Isthmus of Suez, and to sail to the west of Europe from one of the ports of Palestine on the Mediterranean. Eliezer, a prophet, denounced this unholy alliance, and foretold, as divine judgment, the total wreck of the whole fleet. The consequence was, that although Jehoshaphat broke off-- in obedience to the divine will--his

league with Ahaziah, he formed a new scheme of a merchant fleet, and Ahaziah wished to be admitted a partner [[1Ki 22:48](#)]. The proposal of the Israelitish king was respectfully declined [[1Ki 22:49](#)]. The destination of this new fleet was to Ophir, because the Israelitish seaports were not accessible to him for the Tartessus trade; but the ships, when just off the docks, were wrecked in the rocky creek of Ezion-geber.

Chapter 20

Now in chapter 20, it records how that at this time three nations had gathered together to fight against Judah. The nation of Moab and Ammon, and those of Mount Seir, which would have been the Edomites. And word came to Jehoshaphat that Judah was being invaded by this confederacy of nations. That they had already come across the Dead Sea and they were in the area of Engedi. And they were approaching, actually, by the area of Engedi, which is the valley known also as the Valley of Passengers and became known as the Valley of Jehoshaphat, because this is where God wrought the victory for Jehoshaphat, and thus, it became known as the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

Now it is interesting, because God ultimately destroyed this invading army. And we'll get to that in a moment. But Ezekiel tells us that there is going to be another confederacy of nations that is going to attack Israel in the last days. A confederacy of nations led by Russia and there will be with her, of course, many of the eastern Europe nations, plus the Balkan nations, plus Iran, plus Saudi Arabia, and they also will be destroyed in this Valley of Passengers. So history will be repeated, and interestingly enough, much of the destruction will be in the same way this destruction took place. For in the destruction described in Ezekiel, one aspect of it, God said, "Every man's sword will be against his brother" ([Ezekiel 38:21](#)). So God speaks of an internal revolution that is going to take place among the communist states and nations at the time when which they seek to come against Israel, plus the judgment that God pours out.

But when, in time, people are passing through this Valley of the Passengers of Jehoshaphat, and they see the carcasses, the bones, they'll set a flag by it and so forth. So this same valley in which God once destroyed the enemies of Israel God is going to work again and destroy invading armies that are coming against Israel in that same area. I find that very fascinating indeed.

So Jehoshaphat, when he heard that these three nations were gathered together to invade the land, called the men of Judah together and he proclaimed a fast throughout all of Judah. And he set himself to seek the Lord. The people gathered together.

And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah there at the house of the Lord, in the new court, And he said, O LORD God of our fathers, you are the God of heaven or the God of the universe and the ruler over the earth ([2Ch 20:5-6](#)).

Now, in a sense God is the ruler over the earth because whatever happens on the earth happens because God has allowed it to happen. And yet, in a narrower sense, Jesus recognized that Satan was ruling the earth at the present time. Now, Satan only rules because God allows him to rule. So in an overall sense, yes, God rules, but God in His rule has allotted man free moral agency, self-determination, the power or capacity of choice. God has allowed man to choose who he desires to rule over him. And the majority of men have chosen that Satan should rule over their lives. And God has not violated man's choice. He's allowed him to make the choice and then respects the choice that man has made.

So in the world today, Satan is ruling. When Jesus came, Satan took Him up to a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and said, "All of these will I give to you and the glory of them if you will bow down and worship me. For they are mine and I can give them to whomever I will" ([Matthew 4:9](#)). Now Satan is boasting to Jesus that, "Hey, it's all mine. I have the power to give it to whoever I want." And Jesus did not dispute that claim. In fact, why did Jesus come? In order that He might redeem the world because it was under Satan's power. Now Jesus called Satan "the prince of this world." He said to His disciples the night He was betrayed, just before going to the garden where He was arrested by the soldiers, He said, "I have told you that I go to my Father. Now if you love Me, you would rejoice for my Father is greater than I. But now," He said, "the prince of this world cometh but he hath nothing in Me" ([John 14:28-30](#)). So Satan is referred to by Christ as the prince of the world.

Paul calls him "the god of this age." Referring to the sinners, he said, "The god of this age has blinded their eyes that they cannot see the truth" ([II Corinthians 4:4](#)). So in a narrow sense, Satan is ruling over the earth at the present time. This is his domain. This is his kingdom. When the antichrist comes on the scene, the book of Revelation, chapter 13 tells us that Satan, the dragon, is going to give to him his authority and his throne. Now Satan said to Jesus, "It's mine, I can give it to whomever I will." And he's going to give it to the antichrist who will rule over the world.

Now it is interesting how many of the world leaders have been involved in the occult. And, of course, one of the most notable of recent times was Hitler, who actually was controlled by what the men who were called the White Masters. Those men who were steeped in the art of white magic. Many of them after Hitler's fall fled to Peru where they still exercise quite a bit of power and control over the lives of many people. But Hitler was taking directions and following the advice of these men of the occult. And, of course, it doesn't give me comfort to hear our President say, or at least Jeanne Dixon say, that so many of the presidents call her for advice.

Now Satan one day is going to turn over the full authority and power of this earth that is his to the antichrist. But, of course, he knows that his time is short. The scriptures said he knows that his reign is about over, and so he's really doing his best to mess things up before he has to exit the scene.

Now Jesus said to His disciples, "When you pray you should say: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" ([Matthew 6:9-10](#)). We pray that His kingdom will come. We pray that His will be done here in the earth, because right now His kingdom has not come; His will is not being done. You do not see the world that God wants or God intends. He doesn't want a world that is filled with suffering and war and hardships and inflation and pollution and all of this. The Bible tells us that when He comes to establish His kingdom that righteousness will cover the earth as the waters do cover the sea. And that there won't be the physical maladies that men experience today. And that Satan during this period of time will be bound and be cast into the abyss while Jesus reigns upon the earth for a thousand-year period.

And so when Jehoshaphat said that You rule over the earth, that is only in an overall sense as God rules over the universe. But in the universe there is one planet that is in rebellion against the rule of God, and as the result of that rebellion against God's rule, that planet is hurting. It's suffering. And it's headed... it's on a head-on collision course with great calamity and disasters. And they are coming. There's no escaping it. But after this time of great disaster, then Jesus will come and He will reign, and God's kingdom will then extend and cover over the whole earth.

So Jehoshaphat in his prayer acknowledged the greatness of God. And then he acknowledged that God was the one that brought us into this land. He was the one that delivered this land to our fathers. For He had promised the land unto Abraham and to Abraham's seed. And God drove out the inhabitants that were there. And then he said, "They built this," and they were standing, remember, in the temple and he said, "They built this sanctuary for Thy name. That when calamity came, they might come to this place and call upon You." And here is where he makes reference to the prayer of Solomon in verse 9 when Solomon dedicated the temple.

And they dwelt in this land, they have built thee this sanctuary for thy name, saying ([2Ch 20:8](#)),

When they built it they said,

If, when evil comes upon us, as the sword, or judgment, or pestilence, or famine, and we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name is in this house,) and we cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help ([2Ch 20:9](#)).

And so he acknowledges first the greatness of God, the purposes of God in bringing them into the land and the promise of God. That when they were in trouble, when the sword was threatening or judgment, and they come into Your house and they pray, then that You would answer. Now he lays out the cause. "Lord, here they come, the Moabites, the Ammonites, and the Edomites and they're too many for us to handle. We don't have the power. We don't have the might against them." So he's asking God for help.

In verse 12:

O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that comes against us; neither do we know what to do: but our eyes are upon You ([2Ch 20:12](#)).

"God, we're facing an enemy that is stronger than we are. We don't know what to do, but we're looking to You for help." Now how many times I have been in a similar state. When the situation that I faced was overwhelming. I didn't know the answer. I didn't know what to do. And so I just turn to the Lord. "Lord, my eyes are upon You. I'm looking to You for wisdom, for guidance, for help." And so the Lord answered Jehoshaphat by this fellow Jahaziel who was the son of Zechariah. The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in the midst of the congregation.

And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid or dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's. To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and you will find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. You will not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you ([2Ch 20:15-17](#)).

And so the glorious promise of God. Commanding them to not be afraid or dismayed. "For the battle is not yours, but God's." It's so wonderful when God takes up our part. When God stands up for our defense. David said, "The Lord is my refuge and my strength. I will not fear though the mountains be removed and cast into the midst of the sea" ([Psalm 46:1-2](#)). How wonderful when God is my strength. God is my defense, my defender. "Don't be afraid. Don't be dismayed. This battle isn't yours, it's God's. Now you go down tomorrow by the cliff of Ziz where you get the overview of the valley of Jeruel there. And you just stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." And then again, "Don't be afraid, don't be dismayed for the Lord is with you."

The consciousness of the presence of God is always one of the greatest factors to dispel fear from our lives. I can be extremely frightened until I realize God is with me. Then all of a sudden I'm not afraid anymore. It's only when I lose the consciousness of God's presence with me. It's only when I get things out of perspective and I forget that my life belongs to Him, that this is His church, and I try to start carrying the burdens myself and losing that perspective of God's presence with me.

Sometimes I become terrified. As David said, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me?" ([Psalm 42:11](#)) And sometimes my soul gets cast down or very disquieted. It's because I have forgotten that it all belongs to God. That I am His, that He is with me. "Hopest thou in the Lord," David said, "He shall yet deliver thee." Hey, did you forget about God? Did you forget that God's on the throne? And how many times we forget that God is on the throne. And we try to take up the battle ourselves. And we try to do things ourselves until we get into the place of despair. God says, "Don't be afraid, don't be dismayed. I will be with you."

So as the result of this, of course,

Jehoshaphat bowed his face to the ground before the LORD: and all of the army, the men of Israel just fell on their faces before the LORD, and just worshipped the LORD ([2Ch 20:18](#)).

Oh, what good word this is. "Here we thought we were going to get wiped out. Here we thought there was no hope for our survival. And now the word of the Lord comes and says, hey, we're not going to even have to fight against this huge army that's invading the land. All we have to do is be a spectator. We're going to go down and watch God fight the battle." Ringside seats as God destroys the enemy.

And the priests, as the people were lying there before the Lord, worshipping God, the priests stood and they praised God with loud voices. The next morning, they left Jerusalem heading down through the valley of Hinnom and around towards the right going south towards Bethlehem, through the Shepherd's field, the valleys below the city of Bethlehem, again taking another southern turn over near the area of the Herodians. And then on past that area, turning now again east, coming down to the little village of Tekoa, the home of Amos the prophet. And there, just beyond Tekoa, the cliffs of Ziz that overlooked the wilderness area towards Engedi, this valley where the invading army was coming up from Engedi into the land. And yet, what a strange army it must have looked like, because out in front of the army were the choir, the singers, and they were singing praises unto God. And the people were responding to their praises. They would sing, "O praise the Lord for He is good." And the army would answer, "For His mercy endureth forever." And so they were going towards the battle to watch the victory of God singing praises of victory already unto the Lord, for His mercy endureth forever. It is possible for you to have the victory before you have the victory.

Paul talks about being "more than conquerors through Him who loves us" ([Romans 8:37](#)). What does that mean? More than a conqueror. I know what it means to be a conqueror, but what does it mean to be more than a conqueror? It means that you have the victory before you have the victory. You have the victory even before the battle starts. You have that glorious victory of God in your heart and spirit. You're rejoicing and praising God before you ever see the accomplished work of God. So here they were. Their hearts were lifted. They were rejoicing. They were praising the Lord, because they had the word of God and the promise of God that He was going to destroy their enemies.

Now even before they got to the battleground to see what God was doing, they were already rejoicing and shouting and praising God for the victory that had been promised unto them. Oh, what a glorious scene that must have been to see that valley full of men, probably some two hundred thousand strong being led by a choir as they were going down to see the work of God in delivering their enemies into their hand. The victory through praise. And it is at this point we read:

And as they praised the Lord, the LORD put ambushments against their enemies ([2Ch 20:22](#)).

As they were praising the Lord, the Lord began His work in destroying their enemies.

There can be glorious victory in your life through praise. As you learn to praise the Lord and just spend your time in praise of Him, for His promise, we need to take the promises of God and put them over against our situations. And then just praise the Lord for His promises that He's given to us of victory in our situations.

Now I don't think that you should praise the Lord that you have so many debts that you can't pay them all. But I think you should praise the Lord in that He has promised, "I will supply all of your needs according to my riches in glory by Christ Jesus our Lord" ([Philippians 4:19](#)). So I can't praise the Lord for these duns that I'm getting from the bill collectors, but I can praise the Lord that He has promised to supply my needs. So my praises are in the promises of God and as I am praising God for His promises, God begins a work. His work of mystery, many times. I don't know how He's going to do it. I don't know what He's going to do. But He begins His work and He begins to accomplish His work. And it's so glorious as they praise the Lord, the Lord put the ambushments against their enemies.

Now we do spend an awful lot of time complaining to the Lord about our situations, about our problems, about the circumstances of our life. If you would take that time that you spend complaining to the Lord and just start praising the Lord for His promise to watch over you and to deliver you and to keep you and to bless you, then you'd find that God would, while you are praising, bring you victory in your heart. Suddenly the whole perspective changes as I'm praising the Lord. As I'm thanking Him for His Word and for His promises, my whole attitude changes. It goes from one of fear and dismay and anxiety to one of confidence and victory. "All right, Lord. Go at them." And I just have that beautiful confidence that God is working.

So as they praised the Lord, the Lord put ambushments against their enemies so that when they got to the cliff of Ziz, and they began to look down in the valley, they saw the valley was full of all these dead bodies. For the men of mount Seir, the Edomites began to fight against those from Moab and it turned into a real brawl and a donnybrook. And the men of Ammon joined in. And so they were all fighting with each other and killing each other, so that by the time the children of Israel got there, they were all wiped out. Oh, God is so good.

I was talking with John who is one of our young men here in the church who is now a recruit in the Costa Mesa Police Department, and he was sharing how the other night the officer who was training him. He and the officer pulled a car over down here on Fairview and Fair Drive in the Exxon Station. And he said as they started pulling the guys out of the car, he said there were six big bikers. And he said that as they started pulling out the booze and as they started to get to some of the other things,

the guys jumped them. He said just the two of them officers against these six big bikers. And he said, "I heard one of them say, 'Grab his gun and we will shoot the brains out of these guys.'" And so he said he felt this guy tugging at his gun. He said, "Now the guns have a front throw on them. You have to pull them out front ways to get them out of the holster." This guy was trying behind him and trying to pull it up straight, couldn't get it out. and so he said he just took and elbowed the guy. And he said, "But boy," he said, "they were swinging, rolling on the ground and everything else." And of course, they put out the officer-in-distress call and he said, "But pretty soon," he said, "he and his partner were standing up and these guys were all brawling with each other." He said they were swinging away and hitting each other. He said they just stood there back to back watching these guys wiping out each other, you know. And after it was over, he said to his training officer, "Did you get hit?" And he said, "No." And he said, "Neither did I." In all of that swinging they never hit him. And he said he told his training officer, "Praise the Lord, you know. The Lord just put them to confusion. Got them fighting with each other and we were able to escape."

But, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" ([Hebrews 13:8](#)), and He could put the enemies to confusion. He can deliver His child out of distress, out of danger. He can keep you unscathed in the midst of a battle. The Lord is the same.

They went on down. They found that these guys had worn all their jewelry into the battle, all the precious gems and everything else these guys were wearing. So they began to strip the dead bodies of all of the valuables, the jewels, the ornaments and everything else, and there was so much that they could not even carry it all. It took them three days to strip all the bodies. And they came back with great rejoicing unto the Lord.

On the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah [which means, The Valley of Blessing]; for there they blessed the Lord ([2Ch 20:26](#)).

And so they named the valley, the Valley of Berachah unto this day.

Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat was in front of them, and they came back to Jerusalem with joy; for the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies. And as they came to Jerusalem with the psalteries and the harps and the trumpets unto the house of the LORD. The fear of God was in all of the kingdoms of those countries, when they heard how the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about. And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah: he was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for twenty-five years. He walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the sight of the LORD. Howbeit the high places were not taken away: for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers. Now the rest of the

acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, they are written in the book of Jehu who was a prophet, who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel ([2Ch 20:27-34](#)).

Now Jehoshaphat, then, once again joined affinity with Ahaziah, the king of Israel. Now Ahaziah was the son of Ahab. He also was an extremely wicked person, but Jehoshaphat had some strange drawing towards the kings of Israel. And so they made an agreement to build ships in order that they might go to Tarshish to get gold and all. But the ships broke up in a storm and they never made it to Tarshish. Actually Eliezer, a prophet, prophesied against Jehoshaphat saying, Because you have joined yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken in a storm; they were not able to go to Tarshish.

INVASION BY ENEMY NATIONS

It came to pass after this also, that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle.

Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is En-gedi.

And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah [2 Chron. 20:1–3].

You see, now this man has a normal reaction: he is afraid. He goes to God in prayer and sends word out to his people to join him in fasting and prayer.

And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court [2 Chron. 20:4–5].

JEHOSHAPHAT'S PRAYER

And said, O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?

Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever? [2 Chron. 20:6–7].

Jehoshaphat is doing something that his father, Asa, did not do. Asa did not rest upon the experiences of the past, which would have given him faith. Jehoshaphat, knowing what God has promised in the past and what God has done in the past, now rests upon the promises of God. He goes over this entire situation in his prayer to God and then he concludes his prayer:

O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.

And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children [2 Chron. 20:12–13].

What a scene! What a king! He casts himself entirely upon God in a helpless situation. What a wonderful thing it is.

GOD'S ANSWER

Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation [2 Chron. 20:14].

Notice how often genealogies are used in the Scripture to identify the prophets or some of the other men who are brought across the pages of the Bible. It is very important. I wonder if you know who your great-great-grandfather was. I haven't any idea who mine was. But these folk kept accurate genealogies.

Listen to the word of Jahaziel. He is God's spokesman now.

And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's [2 Chron. 20:15].

I need to remind myself of this. It is easy for me to forget that the ministry God has given me is the Lord's. I go at it like it is mine; I begin to carry the burden and face the problems and worry about the difficulties. Every now and then I have to remind myself that this is *God's* work. And since it is His (I say this reverently), He will have to work out the problems. The secret of prayer is to go to God in faith. As the hymn has it, "Take your burden to the Lord, and leave it there." The trouble with me is that I don't leave it there. I spread my problems out before the Lord, then I sack them up, put them right back on my back, and go on carrying them.

Oh, how wonderful God is! He says, "Don't be afraid, Jehoshaphat. The battle is not yours—you couldn't fight it; it is Mine." I find myself—and I'm sure you do also—in situations from which I cannot extricate myself. God says, "Turn it over to Me. I'll take care of it." Oh, that you and I might learn to turn it over to Him as Jehoshaphat did!

And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper [2 Chron. 20:20].

Now they are going out to meet the advancing enemy. Jehoshaphat encourages his troops to put their trust in the Lord.

God is saying to you and me, "Believe in Me. Rest in Me and believe My Word." Don't listen to what Mr. Ph.D. has to say; listen to what *God* has to say. "Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper."

And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever [2 Chron. 20:21].

This is an unusual way to organize an army! He didn't get out his atom bomb; he just organized a choir to go ahead and praise the Lord—for His mercy endureth forever.

This whole chapter is thrilling to read. Now notice what happened. The Lord gave them the victory. God won the battle for them.

And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah; for there they blessed the LORD: therefore the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah, unto this day [2 Chron. 20:26].

Berachah is a name which has been taken by several churches in this country. It is a good name for a church, by the way. It means “the place to bless the Lord” or “the place to praise the Lord.” Every church ought to be a Berachah church.

Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the forefront of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies.

And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the LORD.

And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they heard that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel.

So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about [2 Chron. 20:27–30].

It is God who gives rest and peace. Our nation hasn’t learned that. We think if we make this kind of an alignment, this kind of treaty, we won’t have to fight in war. Well, we have fought two world wars in order to bring peace in the world and all we have is war. Do you know why? Because God hasn’t given us peace. Our world is not trusting the Prince of Peace. This is the reason.

The chapter ends with the market alliance Jehoshaphat had with the son of Ahab, to which we have already referred. God could not bless this alliance with the ungodly son of Ahab.

Although Jehoshaphat was a great king, he was not perfect. God says that he “... departed not from it, doing that which was right in the sight of the LORD” (see v. 32).

Howbeit the high places were not taken away: for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers [2 Chron. 20:33].

Idolatry was the ultimate downfall of the nation.¹

JEHOSHAPHAT

(5.) The son and successor of Asa, king of Judah. After fortifying his kingdom against Israel (2 Chron 17:1,2), he set himself to cleanse the land of idolatry (1 Kings 22:43). In the third year of his reign he sent out priests and Levites over the land to instruct the people in the law (2 Chron 17:7-9). He enjoyed a great measure of peace and prosperity, the blessing of God resting on the people "in their basket and their store."

The great mistake of his reign was his entering into an alliance with Ahab, the king of Israel, which involved him in much disgrace, and brought disaster on his kingdom (1 Kings 22:1-33). Escaping from the bloody battle of Ramoth-gilead, the prophet Jehu (2

¹ J. Vernon McGee, [*Thru the Bible Commentary: History of Israel \(1 and 2 Chronicles\)*](#), electronic ed., vol. 14 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), 203–208.

Chron 19:1-3) reproached him for the course he had been pursuing, whereupon he entered with rigour on his former course of opposition to all idolatry, and of deepening interest in the worship of God and in the righteous government of the people (2 Chron 19:4-11).

Again he entered into an alliance with Ahaziah, the king of Israel, for the purpose of carrying on maritime commerce with Ophir. But the fleet that was then equipped at Ezion-gaber was speedily wrecked. A new fleet was fitted out without the co-operation of the king of Israel, and although it was successful, the trade was not prosecuted (2 Chron 20:35-37; 1 Kings 22:48-49).

He subsequently joined Jehoram, king of Israel, in a war against the Moabites, who were under tribute to Israel. This war was successful. The Moabites were subdued; but the dreadful act of Mesha in offering his own son a sacrifice on the walls of Kir-haresheth in the sight of the armies of Israel filled him with horror, and he withdrew and returned to his own land (2 Kings 3:4-27).

The last most notable event of his reign was that recorded in 2 Chron 20. The Moabites formed a great and powerful confederacy with the surrounding nations, and came against Jehoshaphat. The allied forces were encamped at Engedi. The king and his people were filled with alarm, and betook themselves to God in prayer. The king prayed in the court of the temple, "O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us." Amid the silence that followed, the voice of Jahaziel the Levite was heard announcing that on the morrow all this great host would be overthrown. So it was, for they quarrelled among themselves, and slew one another, leaving to the people of Judah only to gather the rich spoils of the slain. This was recognized as a great deliverance wrought for them by God (890 BC). Soon after this Jehoshaphat died, after a reign of twenty-five years, being sixty years of age, and was succeeded by his son Jehoram (1 Kings 22:50). He had this testimony, that "he sought the Lord with all his heart" (2 Chron 22:9). The kingdom of Judah was never more prosperous than under his reign.

(6.) The son of Nimshi, and father of Jehu, king of Israel (2 Kings 9:2,14).
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