

2 Chronicles 20 Commentary

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SECOND CHRONICLES The Kingdom of Israel From Splendor to Disaster			
Splendor	Disaster		
King Solomon of Judah 2 Chronicles 1-9	Successive Kings of Judah 2Chr 10-36		
Kingdom United	Kingdom Divided 2Chr 10:1-19	Rulers of the Southern Kingdom of Judah After the Split	The Exile

Inaugural 2Chr 1:1-17	Solomon's Temple 2Chr 2:1-7:22	Solomon's Glory 2Chr 8:1-9:31		of Judah 2Chr 36:17-23
Building of the Temple			Decline & Destruction of the Temple	Temple Destroyed
~40 Years			~393 Years	

Click chart to enlarge
Chart from [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission
Click Chart from [Charles Swindoll](#)

TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES									
1107	1011				971	931	853	722	586
1 Samuel	2 Samuel				1 Kings	1 Kings	2 Kings		
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25	
1 Chronicles 10		1Chr 11-19		1Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36		

Legend: B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "**Judah**" and the Northern Kingdom as "**Israel**." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.

(NOTE: Many consider Amaziah and Hezekiah as "good" kings)
SEE ALSO:
[ESV chart - kings of Israel - more information](#)
[ESV chart - kings of Judah - more information](#)
[Another Chart with Variable Dates for Reigns of Kings](#)

2 Chronicles 20:1 Now it came about after this that the sons of Moab and the sons of Ammon, together with some of the Meunites, came to make war against Jehoshaphat.

- **Now it came about after this:** 2Ch 19:5,11 32:1
- **Moab:** Ps 83:5-8 Isa 7:1 8:9,10 16:6
- **against:** 2Ch 19:2 Jer 10:24 Rev 3:19
- See [BELOW FOR BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR 1-2 CHRONICLES](#) - adapted from [Paul Apple's Bible Outlines](#)



ESV Global Study Bible

TEST TIME: PAGANS UNITE TO ATTACK

Outline:

- Judah Invaded - 2Ch 20:1-4
- Jehoshaphat's Prayer 2Ch 20:5-12
- Jahaziel Answers the Prayer 2Ch 20:13-19
- Enemies Destroy Themselves 2Ch 20:20-25
- Triumphant Return to Jerusalem 2Ch 20:26-34
- Alliance Displeases God 2Ch 20:35-37

Note that vv1-30 are not found in the 1 Kings account. The remainder, except 2Ch 20:37, runs parallel with 1 Ki. 22:41-49.

Iain Duguid: The importance of this narrative is enhanced by the way each aspect is intensified: the enemy was a **"great multitude/horde"** (2Ch 20:2, 12, 15, 24); **"all Judah"** was involved, including **"their little ones, their wives, and their children"** (2Ch 20:4, 13); praise was **"with a very loud voice"** (2Ch 20:19); afterward, **"none [of the enemy] had escaped"** (2Ch 20:24) and the bounty was such that **"they could carry no more. They were three days in taking the spoil, it was so much"** (2Ch 20:5); and, finally, **"Fear of God came on all the kingdoms of the countries"** (2Ch 20:29). God-given victory is emphatically linked with piety, centered in trusting praise.

Now it came about after this - Time phrase. **After** what? This would seem to be after Jehoshaphat had established order in the land (religious and civic order - see 2Ch 19:1-11) and after he had fortified the cities. However, one wonders when and why the **dread of the LORD** of the surrounding nations seems to have dissipated "so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat." (2Ch 17:10+).

Steven Cole on **after this** - He had just instituted a number of reforms to bring the nation back to the Lord. The text states, "Now it came about after this" (2Ch 20:1). After what? After his reforms (2Ch 19:4-11)!.....In 2Ch 20:1-4 we see their great need; in 2Ch 20:5-13, Jehoshaphat's prayer reveals their great God; and in 2Ch 20:14-30 we see their faith in their great God and the victory He brought about.....Another natural reaction would have been for Jehoshaphat to trust in his army. 2Ch 17:12-19 tells about the organization and might of his forces. He was equipped for war. It would have been easy to think, "This is the sort of thing we're prepared for. Call out the army! Let's go get them!" But Jehoshaphat, rather than trusting in his army, publicly admits his lack of strength and calls on God as his only help in this crisis.

I agree with the [ESV Study Bible \(page 768 - borrow\)](#) which counters the premise by some writers that this encroaching eastern coalition was the result of Yahweh's discipline for Jehoshaphat's unequally yoking in a military alliance with Ahab writing "The invasion followed Jehoshaphat's religious and judicial reforms (2Ch 19:1-11), and so was not an instance of divine punishment (cf. 2Ch 12:2) but rather an opportunity to exercise faith (see 2Ch 32:1).

[David Guzik](#) adds another thought - 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.

Iain Duguid: The Moabites probably initiated the attack, joined by their northern neighbors on the Transjordanian plateau, the Ammonites. The third group accompanying them are commonly read as "Meunites," following the Septuagint rather than the Masoretic Text's repetition of "Ammonites." They were possibly associated with Ma'an, which was south of Petra and so loosely matching "Mount Seir" (vv. 10, 23), a general description of the region of Edom and the southern borders of Judah (cf. 26:7; 1 Chron. 4:41). Later it was this third group on which the others turned (2 Chron. 20:23). The attacking armies came from the southeast.

That the sons of Moab and the sons of Ammon (see map above), **together with some of the Meunites**, came to make war ([milchamah](#)) against Jehoshaphat - A coalition of anti-Semitic nations attacks Judah. **Meunites** apparently refers to troops from Edom (see map above and 2Ch 20:10 where "Mount Seir" = Edom) were an Arabian tribe living in Edom and elsewhere east and south of the Dead Sea.

Meunites - 5v - Meunim(2), Meunites(3) - 1 Chr. 4:41; 2 Chr. 20:1; 2 Chr. 26:7; Ezr. 2:50; Neh. 7:52

Frederick Mabie adds that "The **Meunites** were an Arabian tribe living in the southern region of Transjordan and parts of the Sinai, a tribe of people who were able to control some of the trade routes stemming from the southern portion of the King's highway. . . There is alarm in Judah when it is reported that the eastern coalition has reached **En Gedi** (only twenty-five miles southeast of Jerusalem). Nonetheless, this rebellion is thwarted by infighting prompted by Yahweh, who subsequently gives Jehoshaphat rest all around (2Ch 20:22-30). (SEE [1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

Ron Daniel - The Moabites and the Ammonites were long-time enemies of the Jews. These were the descendants of that terrible union between Lot and his daughters (Gen. 19). As for the Meunites, we don't know a lot about them, other than that they were from the area of Mount Seir (2Chr. 20:10). These three armies had come from the east to attack Judah. (**ED: MORE ACCURATELY PROBABLY FROM THE SOUTH EAST, SOUTH OF THE DEAD SEA**).

Geoffrey Kirkland: When the Unexpected & Enormous Moment Invades Your Life, Learn How to Respond like Jehoshaphat!

- The Sudden Battle (2Ch 20:1-4) (INVASION)
- The Steadfast Petition (2Ch 20:5-13) (PETITION)
- The Spirit-Given Assurance (2Ch 20:14-19) (REVELATION)
- The Sure Victory (2Ch 20:20-34) (CONSECRATION)
- The Sinful Alliance (2Ch 20:35-37) (CAUTION!)

Related Resources:

- [Sermon below by Steven Cole - Confidence In The Crisis \(2 Chronicles 20:1-30\)](#)
- [Who were the Moabites?](#)
- [When did Moab and Ammon eventually worship the Lord?](#)

Meunim, Meunite. People living in Edom (Mt Seir, 1 Chr 4:42) who were dispossessed of their rich pasturelands by the Simeonites (v 41). Later, Meunites from Edom attacked Judah's King Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:1); later still, King Uzziah of Judah defeated them (2Ch 26:7, KJV Mehunims). Their original land possession, association with Arabs and Ammonites, and prolonged hostility recall Jdg 10:11, 12, where "Maonites" are named oppressors of Israel. This word, by Hebrew rules of vocalization, could well become "Meunites," suggesting Maon (Ma'in, Maan) in the Edomite area south of the Dead Sea as their home.

The Meunim are listed among the families of temple servants returning to Jerusalem following the exile (Ezra 2:50, KJV Mehunim; Neh 7:52). However, because ancient enemies seem unlikely temple servants, some suggest that these Meunim were descendants of the Caleb clan within Judah to whom another town named Maon, west of the Dead Sea and south of Hebron, was allotted (Jos 15:20, 55; cf. 1Sa 30:14). 1Ch 2:45 suggests the city's name became eponymous; "Meunite," like the modern Khirbet Ma'in, could derive from it. This Maon gave David refuge and another wife (1 Sam 23:24-28; 25).

This reconstruction involving two groups, two Maons, and temple servants with very foreign names, is tentative. An alternate view holds that hostile foreigners, formerly captured to become temple slaves (cf. Jos 9:7; Ez 44:6-8), attained freedom during exile and

Make war (04421) milchamah means "war" or "battle." a formal military combat declared and engaged in by peoples and nations. While milchāmāh always implies military action, it could refer to a specific action, thus a "battle" (e.g., 1 Sam. 17:1), or a more prolonged series of battles, and thus a "war" (e.g., Deut. 20:12). Battles and wars of many different types constantly punctuated the history of Israel and of the ancient world. Some wars were offensive or aggressive (Deut. 2:24), while others were wars of revenge (e.g., Num. 31:14, 21, 27f, 49). The Lord was a "man of war" on behalf of His people (Ex. 15:3); a mighty one of battle (Ps. 24:8); the one in charge of the battle (1 Sam. 17:47; Ps. 76:3[4]); for they were His battles (1 Sam. 18:17).

Vine - milchamah - war," the over-all confrontation of two forces (Gen. 14:2). It can refer to the engagement in hostilities considered as a whole, the "battle": "...And they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim" (Gen. 14:8). This word is used not only of what is intended but of the hand-to-hand fighting which takes place: "And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp" (Exod. 32:17). Milhāmā sometimes represents the art of soldiering, or "combat": "The Lord is a man of war..." (Exod. 15:3). There are several principles which were supposed to govern "war" in the Old Testament. Unjust violence was prohibited, but "war" as a part of ancient life was led (Judg. 4:13) and used by God (Num. 21:14). If it was preceded by sacrifices recognizing His leadership and sovereignty (1 Sam. 7:9) and if He was consulted and obeyed (Judg. 20:23), Israel was promised divine protection (Deut. 20:1-4). Not one life would be lost (Josh. 10:11). God's presence in "battle" was symbolized by the ark of the covenant (1 Sam. 4:3-11). His presence necessitated spiritual and ritualistic cleanliness (Deut. 23:9-14). Before and during "battle," trumpets were blown placing the cause before God in anticipation of the victory and gratitude for it (Num. 10:9-10), as well as to relay the orders of the commanders. A war cry accompanied the initiation of "battle" (Josh. 6:5). At the beginning Israel's army consisted of every man over twenty and under fifty (Num. 1:2-3). Sometimes only certain segments of this potential citizens' army were summoned (Num. 31:3-6).

There were several circumstances which could exempt one from "war" (Num. 1:48-49; Deut. 20:5-8). Under David and Solomon there grew a professional army. It was especially prominent under Solomon, whose army was renowned for its chariotry. Cities outside Palestine were to be offered terms of surrender before being attacked. Compliance meant subjugation to slavery (Deut. 20:10-11). Cities and peoples within the Promised Land were to be utterly wiped out. They were under the ban (Deut. 2:34; Deut. 3:6; Deut. 20:16-18). This made these battles uniquely holy battles (a holy war) where everything was especially devoted and sacrificed to God. Israel's kings were admonished to trust in God as their strength rather than in a great many horses and chariots (Deut. 17:16). Her armies were forbidden to cut down fruit trees in order to build siege equipment (Deut. 20:19-20). Soldiers were paid by keeping booty won in "battle" (Num. 31:21-31). The entire army divided the spoil, even those in the rear guard (Num. 31:26-47; Judg. 5:30). God, too, was appointed a share (Num. 31:28-30). ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

Walter Kaiser - milchamah - Battle, war. Of the 319 occurrences of this noun, our interest centers on the battles in which Yahweh was involved. While much has been made of the concept of "holy war" popularized by von Rad, the demure of men like A. Weiser must be raised. There is greater breadth to the concept than simply the fulfillment of an ancient sacral ordinance.

True, Yahweh is a "man of war" (Exodus 15:3) and his name Yahweh šebā'ōt, "Lord of hosts" does on occasion reflect the fact that he is commander-in-chief of Israel's armies (1 Samuel 17:26, 45). David acknowledged that "the Lord saves not with the sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's" (1 Samuel 17:47). And there was a book containing "the wars of the Lord" (Numbers 21:14). However, not every battle was a war of ḥerem wherein everything in the captured city was devoted to destruction.

Further, many of Israel's wars were fratricidal wars between the tribes (Judges 19-21) and even selfish wars of aggression (2 Samuel 24; 1 Kings 22; Judges 17). Israel also fought defensive wars (Numbers 31; 1 Samuel 11-17; 1 Samuel 28-30; 2 Samuel 5, 8) and offensive wars (Numbers 21:21-35; Deut. 2:26—Deut. 3:17; Joshua 6-12).

Just before Yahweh makes "wars to cease" (Psalm 46:9a [H 10]) and forever destroys the implements of war (Psalm 46:9b [H 10]; Isaiah 2:1-5; Micah 4:1-5) the nations shall raise their arms against Israel and their Messiah, but to no avail (Psalm 2; Psalm 45:3ff. [H 4]; Zech. 14). ([TWOT](#))

Milchamah - 308v - attacked(1), battle(148), battle*(1), battles(6), fight(2), military(1), onslaught(1), soldiers* (3), time of war(1), wage war (1), war (136), warfare (1), warrior (4), warriors (4), wars (9), weapons of war (1).

Gen. 14:2; Gen. 14:8; Exod. 1:10; Exod. 13:17; Exod. 15:3; Exod. 17:16; Exod. 32:17; Num. 10:9; Num. 21:14; Num. 21:33; Num. 31:14; Num. 31:21; Num. 31:27; Num. 31:28; Num. 31:49; Num. 32:6; Num. 32:20; Num. 32:27; Num. 32:29; Deut. 1:41; Deut. 2:9; Deut. 2:14; Deut. 2:16; Deut. 2:24; Deut. 2:32; Deut. 3:1; Deut. 4:34; Deut. 20:1; Deut. 20:2; Deut. 20:3; Deut. 20:5; Deut. 20:6; Deut. 20:7; Deut. 20:12; Deut. 20:20; Deut. 21:10; Deut. 29:7; Jos. 4:13; Jos. 5:4; Jos. 5:6; Jos. 6:3; Jos. 8:1; Jos. 8:3; Jos. 8:11; Jos. 8:14; Jos. 10:7; Jos. 10:24; Jos. 11:7; Jos. 11:18; Jos. 11:19; Jos. 11:20; Jos. 11:23; Jos. 14:11; Jos. 14:15; Jos. 17:1; Jdg. 3:1; Jdg. 3:2; Jdg. 3:10; Jdg. 8:13; Jdg. 18:11; Jdg. 18:16; Jdg. 18:17; Jdg. 20:14; Jdg. 20:17; Jdg. 20:18; Jdg. 20:20; Jdg. 20:22; Jdg. 20:23; Jdg. 20:28; Jdg. 20:34; Jdg. 20:39; Jdg. 20:42; Jdg. 21:22; 1 Sam. 4:1; 1 Sam. 4:2; 1 Sam. 7:10; 1 Sam. 8:12; 1 Sam. 8:20; 1 Sam. 13:22; 1 Sam. 14:20; 1 Sam. 14:22; 1 Sam. 14:23; 1 Sam. 14:52; 1 Sam. 16:18; 1 Sam. 17:1; 1 Sam. 17:2; 1 Sam. 17:8; 1 Sam. 17:13; 1 Sam. 17:20; 1 Sam. 17:28; 1 Sam. 17:33; 1 Sam. 17:47; 1 Sam. 18:5; 1 Sam. 18:17; 1 Sam. 19:8; 1 Sam. 23:8; 1 Sam. 25:28; 1 Sam. 26:10; 1 Sam. 29:4; 1 Sam. 29:9; 1 Sam. 30:24; 1 Sam. 31:3; 2 Sam. 1:4; 2 Sam. 1:25; 2 Sam. 1:27; 2 Sam. 2:17; 2 Sam. 3:1; 2 Sam. 3:6; 2 Sam. 3:30; 2 Sam. 8:10; 2 Sam. 10:8; 2 Sam. 10:9; 2 Sam. 10:13; 2 Sam. 11:7; 2 Sam. 11:15; 2 Sam. 11:18; 2 Sam. 11:19; 2 Sam. 11:25; 2 Sam. 17:8; 2 Sam. 18:6; 2 Sam. 18:8; 2 Sam. 19:3; 2 Sam. 19:10; 2 Sam. 21:15; 2 Sam. 21:17; 2 Sam. 21:18; 2 Sam. 21:19; 2 Sam. 21:20; 2 Sam. 22:35; 2 Sam. 22:40; 2 Sam. 23:9; 1 Ki. 2:5; 1 Ki. 5:3; 1 Ki. 8:44; 1 Ki. 9:22; 1 Ki. 12:21; 1 Ki. 14:30; 1 Ki. 15:6; 1 Ki. 15:7; 1 Ki. 15:16; 1 Ki. 15:32; 1 Ki. 20:14; 1 Ki. 20:18; 1 Ki. 20:26; 1 Ki. 20:29; 1 Ki. 20:39; 1 Ki. 22:1; 1 Ki. 22:4; 1 Ki. 22:6; 1 Ki. 22:15; 1 Ki. 22:30; 1 Ki. 22:35; 2 Ki. 3:7; 2 Ki. 3:26; 2 Ki. 8:28; 2 Ki. 13:25; 2 Ki. 14:7; 2 Ki. 16:5; 2 Ki. 18:20; 2 Ki. 24:16; 2 Ki. 25:4; 2 Ki. 25:19; 1 Chr. 5:10; 1 Chr. 5:18; 1 Chr. 5:19; 1 Chr. 5:20; 1 Chr. 5:22; 1 Chr. 7:4; 1 Chr. 7:11; 1 Chr. 10:3; 1 Chr. 10:13; 1 Chr. 11:13; 1 Chr. 12:1; 1 Chr. 12:8; 1 Chr. 12:19; 1 Chr. 12:33; 1 Chr. 12:35; 1 Chr. 12:36; 1 Chr. 12:37; 1 Chr. 12:38; 1 Chr. 14:15; 1 Chr. 18:10; 1 Chr. 19:7; 1 Chr. 19:9; 1 Chr. 19:10; 1 Chr. 19:14; 1 Chr. 19:17; 1 Chr. 20:4; 1 Chr. 20:5; 1 Chr. 20:6; 1 Chr. 22:8; 1 Chr. 26:27; 1 Chr. 28:3; 2 Chr. 6:34; 2 Chr. 8:9; 2 Chr. 11:1; 2 Chr. 12:15; 2 Chr. 13:2; 2 Chr. 13:3; 2 Chr. 13:14; 2 Chr. 14:6; 2 Chr. 14:10; 2 Chr. 15:19; 2 Chr. 16:9; 2 Chr. 17:13; 2 Chr. 18:3; 2 Chr. 18:5; 2 Chr. 18:14; 2 Chr. 18:29; 2 Chr. 18:34; 2 Chr. 20:1; 2 Chr. 20:15; 2 Chr. 22:5; 2 Chr. 25:8; 2 Chr. 25:13; 2 Chr. 26:11; 2 Chr. 26:13; 2 Chr. 27:7; 2 Chr. 32:2; 2 Chr. 32:6; 2 Chr. 32:8; 2 Chr. 35:21; Job 5:20; Job 38:23; Job 39:25; Job 41:8; Ps. 18:34; Ps. 18:39; Ps. 24:8; Ps. 27:3; Ps. 46:9; Ps. 76:3; Ps. 89:43; Ps. 120:7; Ps. 140:2; Ps. 144:1; Prov. 20:18; Prov. 21:31; Prov. 24:6; Eccl. 3:8; Eccl. 8:8; Eccl. 9:11; Cant. 3:8; Isa. 2:4; Isa. 3:2; Isa. 3:25; Isa. 7:1; Isa. 13:4; Isa. 21:15; Isa. 22:2; Isa. 27:4; Isa. 28:6; Isa. 30:32; Isa. 36:5; Isa. 41:12; Isa. 42:13; Isa. 42:25; Jer. 4:19; Jer. 6:4; Jer. 6:23; Jer. 8:6; Jer. 18:21; Jer. 21:4; Jer. 28:8; Jer. 38:4; Jer. 39:4; Jer. 41:3; Jer. 41:16; Jer. 42:14; Jer. 46:3; Jer. 48:14; Jer. 49:2; Jer. 49:14; Jer. 49:26; Jer. 50:22; Jer. 50:30; Jer. 50:42; Jer. 51:20; Jer. 51:32; Jer. 52:7; Jer. 52:25; Ezek. 7:14; Ezek. 13:5; Ezek. 17:17; Ezek. 27:10; Ezek. 27:27; Ezek. 32:27; Ezek. 39:20; Dan. 9:26; Dan. 11:20; Dan. 11:25; Hos. 1:7; Hos. 2:18; Hos. 10:9; Hos. 10:14; Joel 2:5; Joel 2:7; Joel 3:9; Amos 1:14; Obad. 1:1; Mic. 2:8; Mic. 3:5; Mic. 4:3; Zech. 9:10; Zech. 10:3; Zech. 10:4; Zech. 10:5; Zech. 14:2

Here is a great comment on 2 Chronicles 20 from **Martin Selman** 'The battle is not yours, but God's' (2Ch 20:15).

Chapter 20 contains one of the outstanding stories not only in Chronicles but in the whole Bible. It describes **first** of all a unique Israelite victory. Though on other occasions God enables Israelite forces to be victorious, here the credit is due entirely to God while the army is reduced to the level of spectators. **Secondly**, it is the showpiece of Chronicles' account of the Divided Monarchy (2Ch 10–36). Israel's faith and trust and God's actions on Israel's behalf are presented in particularly glowing terms. Even the triumphs of other kings (e.g. 2Ch 13:3–19; 14:9–15; 26:6–15) pale into insignificance in comparison with what is achieved here. **Thirdly**, the chapter creates the impression of a luxuriant literary and theological tapestry in the way its themes are interwoven. Although it focuses on God's victorious action (2Ch 20:15, 17, 29), this is closely linked with other themes such as prayer and worship, prophecy, the temple and its officials, the assembly of the people, the nature of God, and God's relationship with the nations. **Fourthly**, the central themes of Chronicles as a whole seem to come together in a climactic fashion. Here the Davidic line, as represented by Jehoshaphat (cf. 1 Chr. 17), and the various elements of temple worship (cf. 2 Chr. 6–7) combine to show God's people responding to him through his gifts. **Finally**, the chapter quotes extensively from other parts of the Old Testament, either directly or through frequent allusions. Although this is most explicit in prayer (2Ch 20:6–12), prophecy (2Ch 20:15–17) and praise (2Ch 20:21), almost every verse reflects some element of Old Testament vocabulary, style, or theology. It is as though God's work through Moses and David, in the psalms and the prophets, were all rolled together in this one incident. It is not immediately easy to see how this chapter fits into the Bible's overall portrayal of Jehoshaphat. Though in 2Ch 20:1–30 his faith is exemplary, in 2Ch 20:33, 35–37 Chronicles has also sharpened the examples given in Kings of Jehoshaphat's willingness to compromise (cf. 2Ch 18:1–2; 19:1–3). In other words, the positive results of 2Ch 20:1–30 have not been achieved at the expense of losing touch with serious weaknesses in Jehoshaphat's life. (Borrow [2 Chronicles - A Commentary page 420](#))

NIV Study Bible (page 692 borrow) - This episode held special interest for the Chronicler since the restored community was being harassed by the descendants of these same peoples (see Ne 2:19; 4:1–3, 7–9; 6:1–4; 13). He uses it to encourage his contemporaries to trust in the Lord and his prophets, as Jehoshaphat son of David had exhorted (v. 20). The account is significantly structured. Apart from the outer frame, which highlights the reversal of circumstances (vv. 1–4, 28–30), it falls into three divisions: (1) Jehoshaphat's prayer (vv. 5–13), (2) the Lord's response (vv. 14–19), (3) the great victory (vv. 20–27). At the center of each is its crucial statement, and these are all linked by a key word: v. 9, "we will stand in your presence before this temple"; v. 17, "stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you"; v. 23, "The men of Ammon and Moab rose up (lit. 'stood up') against the men from Mount Seir to destroy ... them."

Matthew Henry Notes: Chapter: 20

We have here,

- I. The great danger and distress that Jehoshaphat and his kingdom were in from a foreign invasion (2Ch 20:1, 2).
- II. The pious course he took for their safety, by fasting, and praying, and seeking God (2Ch 20:3-13).
- III. The assurance which God, by a prophet, immediately gave them of victory (2Ch 20:14-17).
- IV. Their thankful believing reception of those assurances (2Ch 20:18-21).

V. The defeat which God gave to their enemies thereupon (2Ch 20:22-25).

VI. A solemn thanksgiving which they kept for their victory, and for a happy consequences of it (2Ch 20:26-30).

VII. The conclusion of the reign of Jehoshaphat, not without some blemishes (2Ch 20:31-37).

Verses: 2Ch 20:1-13

We left Jehoshaphat, in the foregoing chapter, well employed in reforming his kingdom and providing for the due administration of justice and support of religion in it, and expected nothing but to hear of the peace and prosperity of his reign; but here we have him in distress, which distress, however, was followed by such a glorious deliverance as was an abundant recompence for his piety. If we meet with trouble in the way of duty, we may believe it is that God may have an opportunity of showing us so much the more of his marvellous loving-kindness. We have here,

I. A formidable invasion of Jehoshaphat's kingdom by the Moabites, and Ammonites, and their auxiliaries, 2Ch 20:1.

Jehoshaphat was surprised with the intelligence of it when the enemy had already entered his country, 2Ch 20:2. What pretence they had to quarrel with Jehoshaphat does not appear (ED: SOMETIMES GOD ALLOWS TESTS THE REASONS OF WHICH ARE NOT CLEAR.); they are said to come from beyond the sea, meaning the Dead Sea, where Sodom had stood. It should seem, they marched through those of the ten tribes that lay beyond Jordan, and they gave them passage through their borders; so ungrateful were they to Jehoshaphat, who had lately put his hand to help them in recovering Ramoth-Gilead. Several nations joined in this confederacy, but especially the children of Lot, whom the rest helped, Ps. 83:6-8. The neighbouring nations had feared Jehoshaphat (2Ch 17:10), but perhaps his affinity with Ahab had lessened him in their esteem, and they had some intimation that his God was displeased with him for it, which they fancied would give them an opportunity to make a prey of his kingdom.

II. The preparation Jehoshaphat made against the invaders.

No mention is made of his mustering his forces, which yet it is most probable he did, for God must be trusted in the use of means (ED: THAT MAY BE TRUE BUT THE TEXT IS SILENT ON MILITARY FORCES OF WHICH HE HAD SUBSTANTIAL. CLEARLY HE CHOSE NOT TO RELY ON THEM BUT ON GOD!). But his great care was to obtain the favour of God, and secure him on his side, which perhaps he was the more solicitous about because he had been lately told that there was wrath upon him from before the Lord, 2Ch 19:2. But he is of the mind of his father David. If we must be corrected, yet let us not fall into the hands of man.

1. **He feared.** Consciousness of guilt made him fear. Those that have least sin are the most sensible of it. The surprise added to the fright. Holy fear is a spur to prayer and preparation, Heb. 11:7.

2. **He set himself to seek the Lord, and, in the first place, to make him his friend.** Those that would seek the Lord so as to find him, and to find favour with him, must set themselves to seek him, must do it with fixedness of thought, with sincerity of intention, and with the utmost vigour and resolution to continue seeking him.

3. **He proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah, appointed a day of humiliation and prayer, that they might join together in confessing their sins and asking help of the Lord.** Fasting from bodily refreshments, upon such extraordinary occasions, is a token of self-judging for the sins we have committed (we own ourselves unworthy of the bread we eat, and that God might justly withhold it from us), and of self-denial for the future; fasting for sin implies a resolution to fast from it, though it has been to us as a sweet morsel. Magistrates are to call their people to the duty of fasting and prayer upon such occasions, that it may be a national act, and so may obtain national mercies.

4. **The people readily assembled out of all the cities of Judah in the court of the temple to join in prayer** (2Ch 20:4), and they stood before the Lord, as beggars at his door, with their wives and children; they and their families were in danger, and therefore they bring their families with them to seek the Lord. "Lord, we are indeed a provoking people, that deserve to be abandoned to ruin; but here are little ones that are innocent, let not them perish in the storm." Nineveh was spared for the sake of the little ones, Jonah 4:11. The place they met in was the house of the Lord, before the new court, which was perhaps lately added to the former courts (that, as some think, which was called the court of the women); thus they came within reach of that gracious promise which God had made, in answer to Solomon's prayer, 2Ch 7:15. My ears shall be attentive to the prayer that is made in this place.

5. **Jehoshaphat himself was the mouth of the congregation to God, and did not devolve the work upon**

his chaplains. Though the kings were forbidden to burn incense, they were allowed to pray and preach; as Solomon and Jehoshaphat here. The prayer Jehoshaphat prayed, upon this occasion, is here recorded, or part of it; and an excellent prayer it is.

(1.) **He acknowledges the sovereign dominion of the divine Providence, gives to God the glory of it and takes to himself the comfort of it** (2Ch 20:6): "Art not thou God in heaven? No doubt thou art, which none of the gods of the heathen are; make it to appear then. Is not thy dominion, supreme over kingdoms themselves, and universal, over all kingdoms, even those of the heathen that know thee not? Control these heathen then; set bounds to their daring threatening insults. Is there not in thy hand the power and might which none is able to withstand? Lord, exert it on our behalf. Glorify thy own omnipotence."

(2.) **He lays hold on their covenant-relation to God and interest in him** "Thou that art God in heaven art the God of our fathers (2Ch 20:6) and our God, 2Ch 20:7. Whom should we seek to, whom should we trust to, for relief, but to the God we have chosen and served?"

(3.) **He shows the title they had to this good land they were now in possession of; an indisputable title it was:** "Thou gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend. He was thy friend (this is referred to, James 2:23, to show the honour of Abraham, that he was called the friend of God); we are his seed, and hope to be beloved for the father's sake," Rom. 11:28; Deu. 7:8, 9. "We hold this land by grant from thee. Lord, maintain thy own grant, and warrant it against all unjust claims. Suffer us not to be cast out of thy possession. We are tenants; thou art our landlord; wilt thou not hold thy own?" 2Ch 20:11. Those that use what they have for God may comfortably hope that he will secure it to them.

(4.) **He makes mention of the sanctuary, the temple they had built for God's name** (2Ch 20:8), not as if that merited any thing at God's hand, for of his own they gave him, but it was such a token of God's favourable presence with them that they had promised themselves he would hear and help them when, in their distress, they cried to him before that house, 2Ch 20:8, 9. "Lord, when it was built it was intended for the encouragement of our faith at such a time as this. Here thy name is; here we are. Lord, help us, for the glory of thy name."

(5.) **He pleads the ingratitude and injustice of his enemies:** "We are such as it will be thy glory to appear for; they are such as it will be thy glory to appear against; for,

{1.} They ill requite our ancient kindnesses. Thou wouldst not let Israel invade them, nor give them any disturbance." Deu. 2:5, 9, 19, Meddle not with the Edomites, distress not the Moabites, come not nigh the children of Ammon, no not though they provoke you. "Yet now see how they invade us." We may comfortably appear to God against those that render us evil for good.

{2.} "They break in upon our ancient rights. They come to cast us out of our possessions, and seize our land for themselves. O! our God, wilt thou not judge them? 2Ch 20:12. Wilt thou not give sentence against them, and execute it upon them?" The justice of God is the refuge of those that are wronged.

(6.) **He professes his entire dependence upon God for deliverance.** Though he had a great army on foot, and well disciplined; yet he said,

"We have no might against this great company, none without thee, none that we can expect any thing from without thy special presence and blessing, none to boast of, none to trust to; but our eyes are upon thee. We rely upon thee, and from thee is all our expectation. The disease seems desperate: we know not what to do, are quite at a loss, in a great strait. But this is a sovereign remedy, our eyes are upon thee, an eye of acknowledgment and humble submission, an eye of faith and entire dependence, an eye of desire and hearty prayer, an eye of hope and patient expectation. In thee, O God! do we put our trust; our souls wait on thee."

2 Chronicles 20:2 Then some came and reported to Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, out of Aram and behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar (that is Engedi)."

NET 2 Chronicles 20:2 Messengers arrived and reported to Jehoshaphat, "A huge army is attacking you from the other side of the Dead Sea, **from the direction of Edom**. Look, they are in Hazezon Tamar (that is, En Gedi)."

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:2 People came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast number from beyond the Dead Sea and **from Edom** has come to fight against you; they are already in Hazazon-tamar" (that is, En-gedi).

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:2 Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A great multitude is coming against you **from Edom**, from beyond the sea; and, behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar" (that is, Engedi).

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:2 Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the Sea. It is already in Hazazon Tamar" (that is, En Gedi).

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:2 Messengers came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast army from Edom is marching against you from beyond the Dead Sea. They are already at Hazazon-tamar." (This was another name for En-gedi.)

NRS 2 Chronicles 20:2 Messengers came and told Jehoshaphat, "A great multitude is coming against you from Edom, from beyond the sea; already they are at Hazazon-tamar" (that is, En-gedi).

NJB 2 Chronicles 20:2 Jehoshaphat received the following intelligence, 'A vast horde is advancing on you from the other side of the Sea, from Edom; they are already at Hazazon-Tamar, that is, En-Gedi.'

- **beyond the sea:** Ge 14:3 Nu 34:12 Jos 3:16
- **Hazazon tamar:** Ge 14:7
- **Engedi:** Jos 15:62 1Sa 23:29 Song 1:14

[See Another More Detailed Map](#)

UNUSUAL ROUTE OF INVASION CATCHES JEHOSEPHAT OFF GUARD!

Then some came and reported to Jehoshaphat - What is surprising is that such a **great multitude** could have made it this close (Engedi is less than 25 miles south of Jerusalem) to the capital of Judah without being discovered before. Note on the map above, this **multitude** would have had to travel about 30-40 miles "incognito" in the territory of Judah (probably taking about 4 days)! The fact that this enemy horde was that close to Jerusalem without having been discovered would strongly suggest that this was a providential act of Yahweh. He was bringing a "test" to King Jehoshaphat's doorstep and as we will see the King was up for the challenge!

Saying, "A great multitude (cf size of enemies in 2Ch 13:8+, 2Ch 14:9+, 2Ch 32:7+) **is coming against you from beyond the (DEAD) sea, out of Aram** (probably more accurately "Edom") **and behold** ([hinneh](#); [Lxx](#) - [idou](#)), **they are in Hazazon-tamar (that is Engedi).**" - **Beyond the sea** indicates they are coming from the southeast of the Dead Sea (see Map above), a route less often used enemy forces invading Judah. **Engedi** is approximately at the midpoint of the eastern Dead Sea ([see map](#)).

Note that the phrase **out of Aram** is more correctly rendered **from Edom** (as in [all the translations listed above](#)), because in 2Ch 20:22-23 we read "Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah." In Gen 32:3 "the land of **Seir**" is equated with "the field of **Edom**."

NET Note adds that "Most Hebrew Manuscripts read "**from Aram**" (i.e., Syria), but this must be a corruption of '**Edom**,' which is the reading of the LXX and Vulgate. The invaders marched around the S end of the Dead Sea."

*When the world smiles, we are in danger of being attracted;
but when it frowns, we are driven away from it into our stronghold;
and this is both happy and healthful*

Mackintosh has an interesting thought that ""We are in far less apprehension for Jehoshaphat when we behold him the object of the enemies' hostilities than when we beheld him the subject of Ahab's kindness and hospitality. And very justly so, for in the one case he is about to be cast simply on the God of Israel, whereas in the other he was about to fall into the snare of Satan ... When the world smiles, we are in danger of being attracted; but when it frowns, we are driven away from it into our stronghold; and this is both happy and healthful""

Gustafson - (**ED**: As alluded to above) Some commentators believe that the invasion was the expression of God's wrath of which Jehu spoke to Jehoshaphat in 2Ch 19:2: "... therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord". If that is so, then "this is a fine instance of a guilty servant seeking refuge in the bosom of the very God Who is justly smiting him" (Williams). (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

HAZAZON-TAMAR [ISBE] - haz'-a-zan-ta'-mar (chatsatson tamar; the King James Version Hazezon Tamar): "Hazazon of the palm

trees," mentioned (Gen 14:7) as a place of the Amorites, conquered, together with En-mishpat and the country of the Amalekites, by Chedorlaomer; in 2 Ch 20:2 it is identified with EN-GEDI (which see); and if so, it must have been its older name. If this identification be accepted, then Hazazon may survive in the name Wady Husasah, Northwest of `Ain Jidy. Another suggestion, which certainly meets the needs of the narrative better, is that Hazazon-tamar is the Thamara of Eusebius, Onomasticon (85 3; 210 86), the Thamaro, of Ptol. xvi.3. The ruin Kurnub, 20 miles West-Southwest of the South end of the Dead Sea--on the road from Hebron to Elath--is supposed to mark this site. E. W. G. Masterman

Never Act in Panic - The great preacher F. B. Meyer gave some sound advice on what to do in a crisis. He wrote, "Never act in panic, nor allow man to dictate to you; calm yourself and be still; force yourself into the quiet of your closet until the pulse beats normally and the 'scare' has ceased to disturb. When you are most eager to act is the time when you will make the most pitiable mistakes. Do not say in your heart what you will or will not do, but wait upon God until He makes known His way. So long as that way is hidden, it is clear that there is no need of action, and that He accounts Himself responsible for all results of keeping you where you are." -H. G. Bosch

2 Chronicles 20:3 Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:3 And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:3 κα φοβηθη κα δωκεν Ιωσαφατ τ πρ σωπον α το κζητσαι τ ν κριον κα κρυξεν νηστεαν ν παντ Ιουδα

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:3 And Josaphat was alarmed, and set his face to seek the Lord earnestly, and he proclaimed a fast in all Juda.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:3 Jehoshaphat was afraid, so he decided to seek the LORD's advice. He decreed that all Judah should observe a fast.

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:3 Jehoshaphat was afraid, and he resolved to seek the LORD. Then he proclaimed a fast for all Judah,

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:3 Then Jehoshaphat was afraid and set his face to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:3 Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah.

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:3 Jehoshaphat was terrified by this news and begged the LORD for guidance. He also ordered everyone in Judah to begin fasting.

- **Jehoshaphat was afraid:** Ge 32:7-11,24-28 Ps 56:3,4 Isa 37:3-6 Jon 1:16 Mt 10:28
- **turned his attention to seek the LORD:** 2Ch 11:16 2Ch 19:3
- **proclaimed:** Judges 20:26 1Sa 7:6 Ezr 8:21-23 Es 4:16 Jer 36:9 Da 9:3 Joe 1:14 2:12-18 Jon 3:5-9

Related Passages:

Proverbs 29:25 The fear of man brings a snare, But **(JEHOSHAPHAT)** he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.

Judges 20:26+ Then all the sons of Israel and all the people went up and came to Bethel and wept; thus they remained there before the LORD and fasted that day until evening. And they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.

1 Samuel 7:6 They gathered to Mizpah, and drew water and poured it out before the LORD, and **fasted on that day and said there, "We have sinned against the LORD."** And Samuel judged the sons of Israel at Mizpah.

Ezra 8:21 Then I **proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava,** that we might humble ourselves before our God to seek from Him a safe journey for us, our little ones, and all our possessions.

2 Chronicles 11:16 Those from all the tribes of Israel who set their hearts on seeking the LORD God of Israel followed them to Jerusalem, to sacrifice to the LORD God of their fathers.

2 Chronicles 17:4+ (**JEHOSHAPHAT SEEKING GOD**) but sought the God of his father, followed His commandments, and did not act as Israel did.

2 Chronicles 18:4+ (**JEHOSHAPHAT SEEKING GOD**) Moreover, Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Please inquire first for the word of the LORD."

2 Chronicles 19:3+ (**JEHOSHAPHAT SEEKING GOD**) "But there is some good in you, for you have removed the Asheroth from the land and you have set your heart to seek God."

JEHOSHAPHAT'S FIRST RESPONSE TAKE UP THE WEAPON OF PRAYER

Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention (More literally "set his face") **to seek** ([darash](#); Lxx = [ekzeteo](#) intense seeking) **the LORD** (frequent description of Jehoshaphat! 2Ch 17:4+, 2Ch 18:4+, 2Ch 19:3+), **and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah** - Fear of man was real but fear of God "intervened" to prompt him to set his face toward Yahweh. He did not seek to gather his generals but he instead sought an audience with the Captain of the Hosts! The king led out in personal devotion. The people would follow (cf the pattern in Jdg 5:2+). One is reminded of the passage in Judges 5:2 "That the leaders led in Israel, That the people volunteered, Bless the LORD! "

*When I am afraid,
I will put my trust in You.*
-- David in Psalm 56:3

THOUGHT - Dear pastor, small group leader, worship leader, etc, are you leading the people on a trek they would desire to follow? We need revival in America, but I do not hear many pastors leading out even though the hour is becoming very dark in America. Would you begin to have your flock praying for revival, following your lead?

THOUGHT - On a more personal note, Jehoshaphat's "reflex reaction" (seeking Yahweh in crisis) begs the question of where do I go when the crisis comes (note "when" not "if" - it will come for all of us). The crisis is in a sense a TEST of our hearts, for it reveals who/what/where we seek when the crisis comes. God desires as Jesus said that we seek Him first and His Kingdom and all the things we really need (not want but need) will be provided (Mt 6:33+). And while this chapter describes physical warfare, the pattern is applicable to spiritual warfare which every saint experiences on a daily basis. Perhaps before we "go to war" each morning we too might seek the Captain of the Hosts. Just saying (as I speak to myself!) (Related topic - [Schemes of the Devil](#))

*Jehoshaphat has a higher trust in God
than in his military resources*

SEEK THE LORD - 29X/29V - Deut. 4:29; Deut. 12:5; 1 Chr. 16:10; 1 Chr. 16:11; 1 Chr. 22:19; 2 Chr. 12:14; 2 Chr. 14:4; 2 Chr. 15:12; 2 Chr. 15:13; 2 Chr. 16:12; 2 Chr. 20:3; 2 Chr. 20:4; Ezr. 6:21; Ps. 34:10; Ps. 105:3; Ps. 105:4; Prov. 28:5; Isa. 9:13; Isa. 31:1; Isa. 51:1; Isa. 55:6; Hos. 3:5; Hos. 5:6; Hos. 10:12; Amos 5:6; Zeph. 2:3; Zech. 8:21; Zech. 8:22; Acts 15:17

NOTE - VERB FOR SEEK = [DARASH](#) - FREQUENT WITH JEHOSHAPHAT - 2Chr. 17:3; 2Chr. 17:4; 2Chr. 18:4; 2Chr. 18:6; 2Chr. 18:7; 2Chr. 19:3; 2Chr. 20:3;

Martin Selman - "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." (BORROW [2 Chronicles : a commentary](#))

Gustafson - Christians are not exempt from fear, but thankfully they have a God to whom they can take their fears....**Seek** is a keyword in his reign (2Ch 17:3, 4; 18:4; 19:3; 22:9). There was a good response to his proclamation. "**All Judah**" is repeated (2Ch 20:3, 13, 15, 18, 27) and the reference to "all the cities of Judah" (2Ch 20:4) and all the women and children (2Ch 20:13) speak of a wonderful response. His going throughout the land (2Ch 19:4) as well as setting judges throughout all the fenced cities of Judah (2Ch 19:5) **probably built up good will towards Jehoshaphat so they readily responded to his call for a fast**. Special fasts were sometimes held to seek God's help in particular circumstances (Jdg 20:26; 1 Sam 7:6; Ezra 8:21-23). (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

Spurgeon - An angry God is to be sought (ED: CLEARLY SPURGEON FAVORS THE ENEMY INCURSION AS YAHWEH'S DISCIPLINE OF THE KING). Even though he smite us, we must turn to him. It is from the hand that wields the rod that we are to expect deliverance, if it ever come at all.

*King Jehoshaphat had laid a strong foundation of preparation...
he'd sent the priests throughout Judah to teach the Word of God to the people*

Ron Daniel - Upon hearing this news, King Jehoshaphat was terrified. When I put myself in his place, I have to realize that it is times like that when I am most liable to make wrong decisions. To act impulsively in the flesh. And it is because of that very thing that we need to have prepared ourselves. To lay a strong foundation of preparation. - The musician must practice his piece until he can be petrified with stage fright and yet still perform. - The soldier must work with his weapon until his accuracy is not affected by adrenaline. - The Christian must practice righteousness until his very senses are trained to discern good and evil (Heb. 5:14), so that he doesn't respond to surprise attacks in the wrong way. King Jehoshaphat had laid a strong foundation of preparation. Remember that we saw in our last study that he'd sent the priests throughout Judah to teach the Word of God to the people. It is no wonder then, that not only the king, but all of Judah, gathered together to seek help from the Lord.

Bob Utley - "**to seek the Lord**" This VERB (BDB 205, KB 233) is used many times in 2 Chronicles as an idiom for a person drawing near to YHWH. In the NIV it is translated inquire (seek information) – from YHWH – 2 Chr. 1:5; 18:4,6,7; 20:3,4; 34:21,26 from priests/Levites – 2 Chr. 24:6; 31:9 seek (seek YHWH Himself) – 2 Chr. 12:14; 14:4,7; 15:2,12,13; 17:4; 22:9; 26:5; 30:19; 31:21; 34:3 seek (seek help) – 2 Chr. 16:12; 20:4 seek (Ba'al) – 2 Chr. 17:3 (negated); 19:3; 25:15,20 A synonymous VERB (BDB 134, KB 152) appears in 2 Chr. 20:4 (twice); 7:14; 11:16; 15:4,15. Both VERBS express a human desire to know, obey, and worship the Holy One of Israel; the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the God of the Exodus, and Conquest!

*We can expect God to do great things when His people,
and especially the leaders of His people, seek the Him.*

David Guzik - 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 the 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+, 2Ch 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+)

Proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah Corporate fasting was a means of spiritual preparation and a way to focus on God (i.e., 1Sa 7:6; Ezra 8:21; it even worked for pagans in Jonah 3:5-9; We do not hear of any fast having been "proclaimed" by a king before this.

THE PHRASE "ALL JUDAH" - 18X/18V in 2 Chronicles 20 out of a total of 28 uses in the entire Bible - Interesting! - 1 Ki. 15:22; 2 Ki. 22:13; 2 Chr. 15:2; 2 Chr. 15:9; 2 Chr. 15:15; 2 Chr. 16:6; 2 Chr. 17:5; 2 Chr. 17:19; 2 Chr. 20:3; 2 Chr. 20:13; 2 Chr. 20:15; 2 Chr. 20:18; 2 Chr. 23:8; 2 Chr. 31:1; 2 Chr. 31:20; 2 Chr. 32:9; 2 Chr. 32:33; 2 Chr. 34:9; 2 Chr. 35:18; 2 Chr. 35:24; Neh. 13:12; Jer. 13:19; Jer. 17:20; Jer. 20:4; Jer. 26:19; Jer. 44:11; Jer. 44:24; Jer. 44:26

Surely this concentration of **ALL JUDAH** in chapter 20 is significant. One thing it suggests is that the nation was unified and of one mind under Jehoshaphat. This must relate to 2 Chronicles 19:4 which says "So Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem and went out again among the people from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim and brought them back to the LORD, the God of their fathers."

*We can be confident in a time of crisis
if we let our great need drive us to prayer and faith in our great God.*
-- Steven Cole

David Guzik - 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.

Adam Clarke - "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."

Seek (inquire, sought, require, search)(01875) **darash** means to seek, to inquire of, to examine, to require, consult, ask. One of the most frequent uses of this word is in the expression "to inquire of God," which sometimes indicates a private seeking of God in prayer for direction (Gen. 25:22), and often it refers to the contacting of a prophet who would be the instrument of God's revelation (1 Sam. 9:9; 1 Kings 22:8). At other times this expression is found in connection with the use of the Urim and Thummim by the high priest as he sought to discover the will of God by the throwing of these sacred stones (Nu 27:21).

We can get a good sense of one aspect of the meaning of **darash** when God says "You will **seek** (**baqas**; Lxx = **ekzeteo** intense seeking) Me and find Me when you search (**darash**; Lxx = **zeteo**) for Me **with all your heart.**" (Jer. 29:13) What is the condition of seeking Yahweh and finding Him? It is seeking with one's whole heart!

We see a similar nuance in Dt 4:29: "But from there you will seek (**baqas**; Lxx = **zeteo**) the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you search (**darash**; Lxx = **ekzeteo** intense seeking) for Him **with all your heart and all your soul.**"

DARASH IN KINGS AND CHRONICLES - 1 Ki. 14:5; 1 Ki. 22:5; 1 Ki. 22:7; 1 Ki. 22:8; 2 Ki. 1:2; 2 Ki. 1:3; 2 Ki. 1:6; 2 Ki. 1:16; 2 Ki. 3:11; 2 Ki. 8:8; 2 Ki. 22:13; 2 Ki. 22:18; 1 Chr. 10:13; 1 Chr. 10:14; 1 Chr. 13:3; 1 Chr. 15:13; 1 Chr. 16:11; 1 Chr. 21:30; 1 Chr. 22:19; 1 Chr. 26:31; 1 Chr. 28:8; 1 Chr. 28:9; 2 Chr. 1:5; 2 Chr. 12:14; 2 Chr. 14:4; 2 Chr. 14:7; 2 Chr. 15:2; 2 Chr. 15:12; 2 Chr. 15:13; 2 Chr. 16:12; 2Chr. 17:3; 2Chr. 17:4; 2Chr. 18:4; 2Chr. 18:6; 2Chr. 18:7; 2Chr. 19:3; 2Chr. 20:3; 2 Chr. 22:9; 2 Chr. 24:6; 2 Chr. 24:22; 2 Chr. 25:15; 2 Chr. 25:20; 2 Chr. 26:5; 2 Chr. 30:19; 2 Chr. 31:9; 2 Chr. 31:21; 2 Chr. 32:31; 2 Chr. 34:3; 2 Chr. 34:21; 2 Chr. 34:26;

ILLUSTRATION - **Cyril Barber** - The news caused Jehoshaphat to summon all Judah to prayer. In this respect his action set a precedent that was followed in World War II. Hitler's army was only a week or two away from crossing the British Channel and invading England when King George called the nation to prayer. The people were fearful, but had resolved to defend their tiny island to the bitter end. Churches were left open twenty-four hours a day so that people could enter them and pray. Some stayed for a long while whereas others could spend only a few minutes in intercession. **God, however, heard their prayers and, using the forces of nature as well as Hitler's unstable personality, He turned the tide of war and miraculously delivered His people.** (This story has finally been told by J. Lukas in **Five days in London, May 1940** - BORROW New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999, 236pp.)

Greg Laurie - **AGAINST ALL ODDS** - BORROW [For every season : daily devotions](#)

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. (2 Chronicles 20:3-4)

Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, faced a terrifying dilemma. His enemies greatly outnumbered him. To make matters worse, his enemies had joined forces with Judah's other enemies and were coming to destroy him.

One day, someone came to King Jehoshaphat and warned him that a gigantic army was headed his way, bent on his destruction. It was hopeless. There was no way that he could meet this mighty army with what he had. It looked for all the world like doomsday for the little nation of Judah.

What did Jehoshaphat do? The Bible says that he "set himself to seek the Lord." He prayed, "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" (2 Chronicles 20:12).

The Lord told Jehoshaphat, "Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's.... Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you" (2 Chronicles 20:15, 17).

Jehoshaphat and his army went out to meet their enemies, but they put the worship team out in front of the soldiers! The Bible says that when they began to sing and praise the Lord, the enemy started fighting among themselves and destroyed each other.

Maybe you are facing what seems like an impossible situation right now. You may not be able to see a way out. But God can. Call on Him. Then stand still and see what He will do.

Fasting - [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery - Page 944](#) - In modern society fasting is seen primarily as a means of protest or threat of self-destruction to put the pressure on higher authorities in order to attain the benefits or claims of the people involved. In other words, it is political in its character. Mahatma Gandhi of India during his fight against British rule, Young Sam Kim of Korea in his

protest against the military dictatorship and the comedian Dick Gregory in his struggle against the violation of the civil rights of Native Americans exemplify this.

In the biblical context, however, fasting carries a different meaning. It is not a way of asserting one's will but a means of opening oneself to the work of God, expressing profound grief over sin and pointing to one's ultimate dependence on God for all forms of sustenance. Fasting is the act of abstaining from food for spiritual reasons and primarily connotes an openness to divinity and a posture of humility. It involves prayer, grief, penance, seeking guidance and piety. But fasting was widely abused, so it can also carry the imagery of hypocrisy and religious display (Is 58; Mt 6).

One of the most familiar examples of fasting in the Bible is Jesus' fasting for forty days in the wilderness in order to prepare for his ministry (Mt 4:2). This is obviously the antitype of Moses' fasting for forty days on Mount Sinai in order to receive the law and guidance in the wilderness (Ex 34:28; Deut 9:9). Jehoshaphat proclaims a fast throughout all Judah to seek the Lord when the sons of Moab and Ammon come to make war against him (2 Chron 20:3). While the church of Antioch fasts and prays (Acts 13:3–4), they are commanded by the Holy Spirit to send Paul and Barnabas as missionaries. Fasting and prayer are frequently associated with people seeking and preparing themselves for divine communications. Through fasting, they can devote themselves to communion with God.

Fasting bears the imagery of grief. When Saul and Jonathan are killed on the battlefield, the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead bury their bones and fast seven days (1Sa 31:13). David mourns and weeps and fasts when he hears of the deaths of Saul, Jonathan and Abner (2 Sam 1:12; 3:36). Nehemiah fasts at the news of the fall of Jerusalem (Neh 1:4). When Haman issues the edict to kill the people of Mordecai, the Jews fast, weep and wail for their destiny (Esther 4:3). Fasting is associated with sincere grief and mourning, particularly with the death of the beloved, a sudden calamity and threat of death. It is an expression of deep sorrow and anger.

Fasting carries the imagery of penitence (see REPENTANCE). For example, Ahab, the king of Israel, fasts at Elijah's threat to destroy his household for having taken Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21:27). He tears his clothes, puts on sackcloth and goes about despondently. Ahab humbles himself before the Lord and seeks his mercy. The Lord sees this and withdraws the evil he had proclaimed against him (v. 29). Israel as a corporate group fasts on the occasion of repentance. Particularly on the Day of Atonement, the people of Israel are commanded to fast in repentance (Lev 16:29, 31; 23:27, 29, 32). At the time of Nehemiah the people of Israel assemble in sackcloth with dirt on them and fast. They confess their sins and the iniquities of their fathers (Neh 9:1–3; 1 Sam 7:6; 2 Sam 12:16). Fasting is practiced during the course of repentance of sins as a symbol of humility and as a means of seeking the mercy of the Lord.

Fasting is used as a means of piety. The psalmist confesses that he humbled his soul with fasting (Ps 35:13) and that when he wept in his soul with fasting, he was publicly insulted (Ps 69:10). In the NT, Anna, a prophetess and a widow to the age of eighty-four, never leaves the temple, serving night and day with fasting and prayer (Lk 2:37). The disciples of John the Baptist and the Pharisees fast regularly. Particularly, the Pharisees are reported to fast twice a week (Lk 18:12; see extrabiblical sources Didache; 8.1; Psalms of Solomon 3:8). Fasting is conducted for the sake of personal piety and spiritual discipline.

The imagery of piety goes together with fasting; however, fasting also bears the opposite imagery, that of hypocrisy. Isaiah 58:3–6 shows that the fasting of the Israelites as a religious devotion does not match their behavior toward their neighbors. They do evil in the sight of the Lord even during the period of fasting. They only fast to display their godliness to men and gain their admiration. They do not do it for the glory of God. Therefore the Lord proclaims that he will not accept them (Jer 14:2). The same phenomenon can be observed in the NT. The Pharisees disfigure their faces in order that their fasting may be seen by men and are exposed for their hypocrisy by Jesus, who advises them to anoint their heads and wash their faces so that their piety and devotion might be directed only to God (Mt 6:16–17). Fasting itself is not condemned, but if it is conducted as a means of seeking self-glory, it is an image of hypocrisy.

Generally, fasting does not carry positive and bright imagery. The Hebrew expression for fasting, "afflicting the soul," fits well with the imagery of disfiguring the face, weeping, lying on the ground, putting ashes on the head and putting on sackcloth.

See also ASHES; FOOD; GRIEF; MOURNING; PRAYER; WEEPING.

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[SPECIAL TOPIC: FASTING](#)

[Operating with Prayer](#)

Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the Lord. 2 Chronicles 20:3

When my son needed orthopedic surgery, I was grateful for the doctor who performed the operation. The doctor, who was nearing retirement, assured us he'd helped thousands of people with the same problem. Even so, before the procedure, he prayed and asked God to provide a good outcome. And I'm so grateful He did.

Jehoshaphat, an experienced national leader, prayed too during a crisis. Three nations had united against him, and they were coming to attack his people. Although he had more than two decades of experience, he decided to ask God what to do. He prayed, "[We] will cry out to you in our distress, and you will hear us and save us" (2 Chronicles 20:9). He also asked for guidance, saying, "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you" (v. 12).

Jehoshaphat's humble approach to the challenge opened his heart to God's involvement, which came in the form of encouragement and divine intervention (vv. 15–17, 22). No matter how much experience we have in certain areas, praying for help develops a holy reliance on God. It reminds us that He knows more than we do, and He's ultimately in control. It puts us in a humble place—a place where He's pleased to respond and support us, no matter what the outcome may be. By: Jennifer Benson Schuldt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

How has prayer helped you? What current challenge in your life might benefit from prayer?

Dear God, thank You for listening and responding to prayer. I worship You as the all-knowing, all-powerful God. Please help me in each challenge I face today.

Learn how to [pray effectively](#).

Kay Arthur - Seek the Lord - 2 Chronicles 20:3 - Beloved, when you fear for your welfare...or when you shudder at the thought of what the future may hold...or when you simply hurt because others have come against you, you must do what Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, did when he heard that a great multitude was coming against him. (BORROW [Powerful moments with God](#))

P G Matthew (from Daily Delight) -

Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the Lord, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. —2 Chronicles 20:3

When we are afraid and troubled, we must pray—earnestly, humbly, and in repentance and faith. Great trouble requires focused, persevering prayer. In 2 Chronicles 20, we read that when trouble came, not only did Jehoshaphat determine to seek the Lord, but the people did also. What a wonderful blessing when the Spirit of the living God unites his people in seeking him! The Spirit of God guided people from throughout Judah to come to the temple to pray and fast. They came by the thousands to stand before the Lord for hours—men, women, children, and infants. They were not like modern Christians who need comfortable pews and entertainment to keep their minds occupied. Out of eagerness to seek help from the covenant Lord, these people stood and prayed.

Unlike his father Asa, Jehoshaphat remained loyal to Yahweh and refused to ask for assistance from Syria, Samaria, or Assyria. He resolved to seek help only from the covenant Lord of Israel. He brought together all the people in unity to meet with God and ask him to solve their huge problem. They needed deliverance, and they knew that only the Lord could save them. God guarantees that everyone who calls on his name in this manner will be saved.

Additionally, the Israelites showed their earnestness by fasting. It is good to fast, especially when faced with a life crisis. Too often we do not cry out to the Lord because we think, "I can handle this problem myself. Why should I bother God?" But consider the directive of the prophet Joel: "Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord" (Joel 1:14).

The prayer of Jehoshaphat was not only earnest and emotional, but it was also intelligent and biblically informed. He based his petition upon God's previous promise to help his people: "For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him" (2 Chron. 16:9). God is always watching those who trust in him, in order to deliver and guide them. When we face problems, before we go to the doctor or lawyer, we should cry out to God. He is our problem solver.

Don Fortner - "Jehoshaphat ... set himself to seek the LORD" 2 Chronicles 20:3

2 Chronicles 20–22 gives us a brief history of the reigns of Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah. Jehoshaphat was a great, remarkable, godly king; but his sons Jehoram and Ahaziah were reprobate men who walked in the ways of Ahab. Those wicked kings, Jehoshaphat's sons, died "without being desired", but Jehoshaphat "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord". Thus we

are again reminded of the fact that grace is not a family possession. It does not run in bloodlines. Sinners obtain God's salvation only by God-given personal faith in the Lord Jesus. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12, 13).

Desiring to serve God our Saviour in our generation as Jehoshaphat did in his, let us carry the memory of this man and his conduct, as here given by the Spirit of God, through this day.

Jehoshaphat's Prayer

All Judah stood before the Lord God with their king and joined him in prayer. Men, women, and children; all the nation was led in prayer by their king, and joined him in praying to the Lord God, seeking his mercy and grace.

First, king Jehoshaphat pleaded God's sovereignty. Then he turned Jehovah's covenant relationship with Abraham, his friend, and the covenant engagements as Abraham's God into an argument for present mercies. Next, King Jehoshaphat and Israel together renewed their devotion to God as the objects of his choice, looking to the temple, the mercy-seat, and to Christ represented in those typical things, as Solomon had taught them. They looked to the merits of Christ's blood and righteousness, to the Lamb as the Substitute God had given them and by which they knew they had claim to God's favour.

After stating these things as the ground of their hope and confidence in God's protection, Jehoshaphat presented Israel's need at the time as reason for God's intervention and their deliverance. Throwing himself and his people upon the sovereign goodness of the Lord God, Jehoshaphat and his nation obtained "mercy and grace to help in time of need".

We will be wise to read this prayer as a word of instruction from God the Holy Spirit for us. Salvation in Christ Jesus is by the sovereign mercy of the Triune Jehovah. In everlasting love and infinite wisdom he predestined the salvation of elect sinners. Calling chosen, redeemed sinners like us to life and faith in Christ, the Triune God puts himself into the closest possible covenant-relationship with us. By the blessing of God upon his Word, by God-given eyes of faith, we behold gospel mercies in the finished redemption of Christ shadowed forth in that ancient time. Thank you, blessed Holy Spirit, for showing us the things of Christ in the Book of God.

Jehoshaphat's Victory

King Jehoshaphat's only weapon by which he engaged the heathen who opposed him was God-given faith. Such is ever the weapon of God's church against those who oppose God's cause and God's worship. He went forth depending upon the Lord his God. Believing God, Jehoshaphat began his preparation for battle with a song of victory. So all the soldiers of Christ should go forth against Satan and all that opposes God and our souls. The victories of God's church are not won by sword, nor by the ballot box, nor by vain philosophy, but by the Spirit of God. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6). If it is in his strength that we fight, the outcome is sure. The battle is, in fact, already over. Christ has conquered, and his people overcome by his blood.

"The battle is not yours, but God's". Judah had no hand in the matter. Applying this piece of history to ourselves, let us rejoice to remember that the gospel of our God declares plainly and forcibly that "salvation is of the Lord". We have no hand in the matter. Our mighty Saviour's right arm has gotten himself the victory. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

Our Refuge

Where shall souls fly for refuge in time of trouble? To our covenant God in Christ. As the children of Ammon and Moab, and the multitudes of foes beyond the sea arose as one in opposition to Jehoshaphat, the world, the flesh and the devil, all the corruptions of our own nature and all the powers of darkness come against our souls day by day. Our very existence in this world is a relentless warfare; and our greatest foes are those within our own evil hearts! Instead of trying to muster human strength, let us, like Jehoshaphat, take refuge in God our Saviour continually, looking to him alone for righteousness and strength, trusting his grace, looking altogether outside ourselves to him for all our salvation!

As God the Holy Ghost gives us grace thus to look to Christ alone for hope, making his blood, his righteousness, his grace our boast, we shall find every place the valley of Berachah, the place of blessing and praise to our God!

2 Chronicles 20:4 So Judah gathered together to seek help from the LORD; they even came from all the cities of Judah to seek the LORD.

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:4 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.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:4 κα συν χθη Ιουδα κζητσαι τν κριον κα π πασ ν τ ν π λεων Ιουδα λθον ζητσαι τ ν κριον

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:4 And Juda gathered themselves together to seek after the Lord: even from all the cities of Juda they came to seek the Lord.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:4 The people of Judah assembled to ask for the LORD's help; they came from all the cities of Judah to ask for the LORD's help.

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:4 who gathered to seek the LORD. They even came from all the cities of Judah to seek Him.

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:4 And Judah assembled to seek help from the LORD; from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:4 The people of Judah came together to seek help from the LORD; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him.

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:4 So people from all the towns of Judah came to Jerusalem to seek the LORD's help.

- **help from the LORD:** Ps 34:5,6 50:15 60:10-12
- **the cities:** 2Ch 19:5 Ps 69:35

THE NATION GATHERS AT THE CALL OF JEHOSHAPHAT

So - Term of conclusion. What led to this conclusion? The leader called the people to seek the LORD.

Judah gathered together to seek ([baqas](#); Lxx = [ekzeteo](#) intense seeking) **help from the LORD; they even came from all the cities of Judah to seek the LORD** - The key word in time of sudden attack is "seek" (2Ch 20:3 and twice here).

THOUGHT - Where do you turn when you encounter sudden, unexpected trouble? Or better yet, who do you seek?

Spurgeon - The host of enemies were so enormous that they threatened to eat up all the land. The men of Judah could not keep them out. They would soak and storm and burn and destroy right and left. You see the great peril. What a heavy chastisement it must have been to the king to see his land thus in danger of being destroyed. But they had begun to pray.

Seek (search) ([01245](#)) [baqas](#) expresses a person's earnest seeking of something or someone which exists or is thought to exist with the intention that it will be found or acquired. It pictures one searching earnestly until the object of the search is located. The [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) translates [baqas](#) with the verb [zeteo](#) which implies giving attention and priority to and deliberately pursuing after. Webster says that to seek means to go in search or quest of, to look for, to try to discover, to search for by going from place to place. **Zeteo** in classical Greek is often used as a technical term for philosophical investigation, something "examined, considered" or "deliberated."

For example, **baqas** describes seeking for Moses' life (Ex 4:19 Lxx = [zeteo](#)), Absalom seeking to kill David ([2Sa 16:11](#)), those seeking to kill Pharaoh and Zedekiah (Jer 44:30)

Baqas describes an earnest search until the object of the search is located. Thus peace is to be searched for earnestly (Ps 34:14⁺). The Lord's face (His presence) must especially be sought (Ps 27:4, 8⁺) On the other hand, we are not to seek the occult (Lev 19:31). Naomi sought for security for her daughter-in-law Ruth (Ru 3:1⁺). Jehovah "**sought out** for Himself a man after His own heart." (1Sa 13:14)

C H Spurgeon - Sermon Notes - 2Ch 20:4—"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."

The sudden news of a great invasion came to Jehoshaphat, and, like a true man of God, he set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast. The people came together with all speed, and the whole nation earnestly cried to the Lord for his aid.

Let us notice carefully—

I. HOW THEY ASKED HELP.

They expressed their confidence; Jehoshaphat cried, "Art not thou God in heaven? In thine hand is there not power and might?" (Verse 6.)

They pleaded his past acts. "Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land?" (Verse 7.)

They urged the promise given at the dedication of the temple. Read verse 9. "Thou wilt hear and help."

They confessed their condition: humbly did they acknowledge their danger and their impotence. They had—

No power. "We have no might against this great company."

No plan. "Neither know we what to do." (Verse 12.)

No allies. Their wives and their little ones only increased their care. (Verse 13.)

They then lifted their souls to God. "Our eyes are upon thee." Where could they look with more certainty?

II. HOW THEY RECEIVED IT.

By renewed assurance. "The Lord will be with you." (Verse 17.)

By the calming of their fears. "Be not afraid." "Fear not, nor be dismayed." Courage keeps the field, but fear flies.

By urging them to greater faith. "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established." (Verse 20.)

By distinct direction. "To-morrow go ye down against them; ye shall find them at the end of the brook." (Verse 16.)

By actual deliverance. The Moabites and Ammonites slew the Edomites, and Israel triumphed without striking a blow.

It shall be greatly to our joy to see the right hand of the Lord getting us the victory.

III. HOW THEY ACTED BY THIS HELP

They worshipped. With every sign of reverence, the king and his people bowed before Jehovah (verse 18). Worship girds us for warfare.

They praised. Before they received the mercy, "He appointed singers unto the Lord." Read verse 21.

They went forth, preceded by the singers, till they reached "the watch-tower in the wilderness." (Verse 24.)

They saw the promise fulfilled. "They looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies." (Verse 24.)

They gathered the spoil. "They were three days in gathering, of the spoil, it was so much." (Verse 25.)

They blessed the Lord. (Verse 26.) The valley of Berachah heard their joyful notes, and then they returned to the house of the Lord with harps and psalteries and trumpets.

They had rest. "So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about" (Verse 30.) God's victories end the war. The fear of God fell on all the kingdoms, and they dared not invade Judah.

Let us when in difficulties have immediate resort to the Lord.

Let us do this in the spirit of confidence and praise.

Is there not a cause for our assembling even now to plead against the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites of superstition, worldliness, and infidelity?

OBSERVATIONS

This chapter, which begins with danger, fear, and trouble all round, ends with joy, peace, quiet, and rest. Two words seem to stand out in this chapter—PRAISE and PRAYER—twin sisters which should always go together. One word links them here—FAITH.

"Jehoshaphat set himself to seek the Lord." His good example was soon followed. "Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the Lord: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord." What a prayer-meeting—a real one, a united one, with a definite object, and the king presiding! Notice the prayer (verse 5). It is a pattern one. Jehoshaphat felt his weakness and need; but he recognized that God is all, and over all, and has all power and might. He brings forward every plea and argument He appeals to God's power and promises, to his justice and love, and winds up with simple yet prevailing faith in God himself. "We have no might, neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon thee" (verse 12). Placing all the responsibility on God, and they just looking to him, waiting for him: God answered at once.—Captain Dawson, in "Thoughts in the Valleys."

2 Chronicles 20:5 Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD before the new court,

- **Jehoshaphat:** 2Ch 6:12-13 2Ch 34:31 2Ki 19:15-19

Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 6:12-13+ Then he (SOLOMON) **stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel** and spread out his hands. 13 Now Solomon had made a bronze platform, five cubits long, five cubits wide and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court; and he stood on it, knelt on his

knees in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven.

JEHOSHAPHAT STANDS IN TEMPLE COURT TO PRAY

Then - Marks progression in narrative and a very important progression in the present context.

Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD(SOLOMON'S TEMPLE) before the new court - Here begins Jehoshaphat's great prayer (2Ch 20:5-13), the third king's prayer in 2 Chronicles (Solomon = 2Ch 6:14-42; Asa 2Ch 14:11). **The new court** is probably the "great court" described in 2Ch 4:9+. Recall that in Solomon's prayers he had made allusion to prayer "toward this place" (TEMPLE) (2Ch 6:29+) In 2Ch 7:15+ God promised "Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to the prayer offered **in this place** (TEMPLE)

SEE PHRASE **TOWARD THIS HOUSE** - 6X/6V - 1 Ki. 8:29; 1 Ki. 8:38; 1 Ki. 8:42; 2 Chr. 6:20; 2 Chr. 6:29; 2 Chr. 6:32

Cyril Barber - Jehoshaphat did not delegate the prayer for the people to the high priest, but led the people in prayer himself; and his prayer incorporated a realization of God's sovereignty, praise for His gift of the land and the Temple, recognition of His covenant with David, reminder of the history of his people, and an entreaty for Him to show forth His power and deliver them.

August Konkell: In this instance, Jehoshaphat followed the petitions of Solomon's prayer (2 Chron 20:3-13; cf. 2Ch 6:34-35). In time of war, he gathered the people together to seek deliverance from God. The prayer of Jehoshaphat does not appeal to compassion or divine favor; it was a petition that God would keep his promises against the attack of his adversaries. Powerful and treacherous invaders had taken advantage of a powerless and righteous people. The prayer has typical elements of lament; it includes a lengthy invocation, a confession, a statement of assurance, and the petition itself. ([Multipart Video Series on 1-2 Chronicles](#)) (See [1 & 2 Chronicles](#))

Ron Daniel - 20:5-9 In The House Of The Lord - The people came to the temple, to the house of the Lord. People who are prepared with the Word of God will go to the House of God in times of crisis. This is one of the reasons for having a place like this. When Solomon dedicated this temple, he prayed,

2Chr. 6:24-25 "If Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You, and they return to You and confess Your name, and pray and make supplication before You in this house, then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You have given to them and to their fathers.

He also prayed,

2Chr. 6:34-35 "When Your people go out to battle against their enemies, by whatever way You shall send them, and they pray to You toward this city which You have chosen and the house which I have built for Your name, then hear from heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

And so, whether we are attacked or defeated, the house of God is the place to go.

Warren Wiersbe (page 244) - Seek the Lord. When you see big problems on the horizon, seek the Lord before you do anything else. What does that mean? It means to do what Jehoshaphat and Judah did. They remembered who God is (v. 6), what He did in the past (v. 7) and what He said He would do in the future (vv. 8-9). It means to trust Him and keep your eyes on Him by faith (v. 12).

Hear the Lord. God always has a special word for those who turn to Him for help. When you face a battle, spend much time in His Word and in prayer, for then He will give you that needed word of encouragement.

Praise the Lord. The battle was won by the singers, standing in the most dangerous place of all—between two armies. But they sang the Lord's praises and routed the enemy. The choir praised God after God gave the word (v. 19), before the battle (v. 21), and after the victory (vv. 26-28), a good pattern for us to follow in our praise.

In Hebrew, Berachah means "blessing" (v. 26). Even a valley can become a place of blessing if we learn how to praise the Lord. "Prayer changes things" is a familiar saying that is certainly true. But it is also true that "praise changes things." Why? Because true praise changes people, and God can work in and through people who praise Him. True praise involves faith, hope, and love, the strongest weapons in the Christian armory.

2 Chronicles 20:6 and he said, "O LORD, the God of our fathers, are You not God in the heavens? And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand so that no one can stand against You.

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:6 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?

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:6 κα ε πεν κ ριε θε ς τ ν πατ ρων μ ν ο χ σ ε θε ς ν ο ραν κα σ κυριε εις πασ ν τ ν βασιλει ν τ ν θν ν κα ν τ χειρ σου σχ ς δυναστε ας κα ο κ σ τιν πρ ς σ ντιστ ναι

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:6 And he said, O Lord God of my fathers, art not thou God in heaven above, and art not thou Lord of all the kingdoms of the nations? and is there not in thy hand the might of dominion, and there is no one who can resist thee?

NET 2 Chronicles 20:6 He prayed: "O LORD God of our ancestors, you are the God who lives in heaven and rules over all the kingdoms of the nations. You possess strength and power; no one can stand against you.

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:6 He said: Yahweh, the God of our ancestors, are You not the God who is in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand, and no one can stand against You.

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:6 and said, "O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you.

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:6 and said: "O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you.

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:6 He prayed, "O LORD, God of our ancestors, you alone are the God who is in heaven. You are ruler of all the kingdoms of the earth. You are powerful and mighty; no one can stand against you!

- **O LORD:** Ex 3:6,15,16 1Ch 29:18
- **God in the heavens:** De 4:39 Jos 2:11 1Ki 8:23 Ps 115:3 Isa 57:15,16 66:1 Mt 6:9
- **And are You not ruler** 1Ch 29:11,12 Ps 47:2,8 Jer 27:5-8 Da 4:17,25,32-35
- **in Your hand:** 1Ch 29:11-12 Ps 62:11 Mt 6:13
- **no one can:** Ac 11:17

Related Passages:

1 Chronicles 29:11-12+ (DAVID'S PRAYER) "Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You exalt Yourself as head over all. 12"Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all, and **in Your hand is power and might**; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone.

Revelation 7:12+ saying, "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and **power and might**, be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

JEHOSHAPHAT ACKNOWLEDGES YAHWEH'S SOVEREIGNTY AND POWER

and he said, "O LORD, the God of our fathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), **are You not God in the heavens?** This is a rhetorical question which expects a "yes" response. It is a way of placing emphasis or reinforcing what Jehoshaphat was saying (next verse also a rhetorical question).

NET Note - Heb "are you not God in heaven?" The rhetorical question expects the answer "yes," resulting in the positive statement "you are the God who lives in heaven" employed in the NET translation.

Gustafson - Chronicles emphasizes that God is in heaven because that is where He hears prayer. This is seen especially in Solomon's prayer (2Ch 6:21, 23, 25, 27, 30, 33, 35, 39; cp. Ps 11:4; 103:19; 115:3). (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

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.”

John Trapp - “The late renowned [Gustavus, king of Sweden](#), would pray ashipboard, ashore, in the field, in the midst of the battle; as if prayer alone were the surest piece of his whole armour.”

And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Rhetorical question which expects a "yes" response. See Table of Nations in Genesis 10.

Power and might are in Your hand (cf 1Ch 29:12) - **Power and might** acknowledge YHWH's ability to accomplish His will in all the universe and certainly against the imminent threat of the great multitude in Engedi. Jehoshaphat's acknowledgement of God's power is appropriate in view of his following acknowledgement that they are powerless before this great multitude. (2Ch 20:12).

So that (term of purpose or result) **no one can stand against You** - This is an absolute statement. How could the creation stand against its Creator? Sadly we can rebel against Him, but that is an issue of personal will/choice and not divine omnipotence. And of course it never pays to rebel against Him, except of course by paying with negative consequences.

Morris - The nations may have rejected the true God Who made the heavens, but He still rules over them, whether they know it or not.

[Believer's Study Bible](#) - 2Ch 20:6-13) Jehoshaphat's prayer contains five basic elements: (1) an invocation to the "God of our fathers" (2Ch 20:6); (2) an acknowledgment that the land now threatened was a divine gift (2Ch 20:7); (3) an assertion that he was turning to God in time of need (2Ch 20:8, 9); (4) an indictment of the enemy for their base ingratitude -- Israel had refrained from attacking them (Ammon, Moab, and Edom) at the time of the Exodus and wilderness wandering (2Ch 20:10, 11; cf. Nu 20:17-21; Deut. 2:4, 5); and (5) an admission of Judah's utter dependence upon God (2Ch 20:12).

[Life Application Study Bible \(borrow\)](#) note - Jehoshaphat's prayer had several essential ingredients. (1) He committed the situation to God, acknowledging that only God could save the nation. (2) He sought God's favor because his people were God's people. (3) He acknowledged God's sovereignty over the current situation. (4) He praised God's glory and took comfort in his promises. (5) He professed complete dependence on God, not himself, for deliverance.

Joni Eareckson Tada - First-Line Defense (BORROW [More precious than silver : 366 daily devotional readings](#))

O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you...We have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you. —2 Chronicles 20:6, 12

By all rights it was a battle God's people should never have won. The odds against King Jehoshaphat and his outnumbered troops were astronomical. The frightened king had no strategy, no chariots, no allies, no time, and no army worth writing home about.

But he had a secret weapon. He gathered the people and poured his heart out before God. He didn't rattle his saber or make a patriotic speech. He just prayed as though his life depended on it—and it did. God answered, “Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's” (2 Chron. 20:15). Within days the enemy was completely routed. The secret weapon? Praise!

When it comes to a frontline defense against the Devil's attacks, we often bypass praise and scramble to do something—anything—to remedy, rectify, or resolve the problem. Make lists, set goals, get counseling, go shopping, raid the fridge, read a book on the subject, or talk about it with others. But praise? Yet we learn from Jehoshaphat that praise must always be our first line of defense.

Try memorizing, if you haven't already, the doxology:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Now say it! Sing it in the shower as you start your day. Think about it while you're waiting in line...at the fast-food drive-in, the bank window, or the grocery store checkout. Say it at the dinner table to replace your usual blessing for the food. Finally, whisper it as you feel yourself drifting off to sleep at night.

Nancy Cretacci - Ruler of All Kingdoms - For His Name's Sake

You are ruler of all the kingdoms of the earth. 2Ch 20:6NLT

I ESTABLISHED JEHOSHAPHAT'S CONTROL OVER the kingdom of Judah (2 Chronicles 17:5) because he led with prayer. When Jehoshaphat heard the news of vast enemies marching against him (2 Chronicles 20:2), what did he do? Did he don his armor to confront his enemies? No, he did not! Jehoshaphat was terrified by the news (2 Chronicles 20:3). Does this mean that he was a coward? No, he was not! It simply tells you that, as a king, he was just a human being like you. What made him extraordinary is that he gave his fear to fast and prayer—community prayer. His prayer was not about the enemy's strength but about acknowledging My name: LORD, our God, God in heaven, Ruler of all the kingdoms of the earth, powerful and mighty, and what I have done for My people (2 Chronicles 20:6-12).

This is where the power of prayer comes from. By shifting attention from your enemies to who I AM, your fear is transformed to strength. Jehoshaphat found his strength in My answer to his prayer: "Do not be afraid! Do not be discouraged by this mighty army, for the battle is not yours, but God's" (2 Chronicles 20:15). How did My words affect Jehoshaphat? He defeated his enemies with his singing army.

How do you deal with your enemies? Remember, as a child of the Ruler of All Kingdoms, you are also an extraordinary king.

Kay Arthur - 2 Chronicles 20:6 - **Ruler Over All** - When you feel overwhelmed because of the forces that are coming against you, remember what Jehoshaphat did (2 Chronicles 20:6-12). He focused on God, His sovereignty, His power; then he made his request according to the promises of God. This was written for your encouragement. It's an example you can follow today. (BORROW [Powerful moments with God](#))

Puritan Daily Readings - The Hand of God

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? 2 Chronicles 20:6

The church, in all the works of mercy, owns the hand of God: "Lord, thou also hast wrought all our works in (or for) us" (Isa. 26:12). And still it has been the pious and constant practice of the saints in all generations to preserve the memory of the more famous and remarkable providences that have befallen them in their times as a precious treasure. Thus Moses, by divine direction, wrote a memorial of that victory obtained over Amalek as the fruit and returns of prayer, and built there an altar with this inscription, Jehovah-nissi "The Lord my banner" (Exod. 17:14, 15). Thus Mordecai and Esther took all care to perpetuate the memory of that signal deliverance from the plot of Haman, by ordaining the feast of Purim as an anniversary "throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; that these days of Purim should not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them perish from their seed" (Esther 9:28). For this end you find Psalms indicted, "to bring to remembrance" (Ps. 70, title). You find parents giving suitable names to their children, that every time they looked upon them they might refresh the memory of God's mercies (1 Sam. 1:20). You find the very places where eminent providences have appeared, given a new name, for no other reason but to perpetuate the memorial of those sweet providences which so refreshed them there. Thus Bethel received its name. And that well of water where Hagar was seasonably refreshed by the angel in her distress, was called Beer-lahai-roi: "the well of him that liveth and looketh on me" (Gen. 16:14).

Tony Evans - The Power of Praise

O LORD, the God of our fathers...Power and might are in Your hand...We are powerless before this great multitude...nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on You. 2 Ch 20:6,12

In 2 Chronicles 20, the nation of Judah received horrible news. A vast army had gathered to destroy them, and King Jehoshaphat had no idea how they could survive such a vicious attack. However, he did know there was only one Person he could turn to, and that was God.

God quickly answered his prayer. He told him the battle was not Judah's but His. Then Jehoshaphat set up the battle plan. Instead of having warriors lead the way, the king placed the choir up front and instructed them to march into battle singing praises to the Lord. I would have loved to have seen the singers' faces when they heard that plan. No arrows or tar-and-pitch rockets were to fly through the air—only praises to God.

Regardless of what he felt inside, the king's actions demonstrated that he trusted God. Before Judah reached the battlefield, God had thrown the enemy into such confusion that they turned on one another. The army of Judah never lifted a bow because God defeated its enemies.

If you're facing difficulty of any kind or size, begin to sing songs of praise to the Lord, and you will see your enemies defeated. Not only that, but your heart will be lifted, and you will sense a peace inside like nothing you have known. God wants to restore the peace you have lost. If you will let Him, He will give you a fresh touch of His peace, love, and grace when you praise Him.

2 Chronicles 20:7 "Did You not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?"

- **our God:** 2Ch 14:11 Ge 17:7 Ex 6:7 19:5-7 20:2 1Ch 17:21-24
- **drive out the inhabitants:** Ex 33:2 Ps 44:2
- **give it to:** Ge 12:7 13:15 Jos 24:3,13 Ne 9:8
- **friend:** Isa 41:8 Joh 11:11 John 15:15 Jas 2:23

ACKNOWLEDGING GOD'S PAST FAITHFULNESS AND COVENANT

Did You not, O our God, drive out ([yarash](#); Lxx - [exolethreuo](#) - utterly destroyed) **the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel** - This is another rhetorical question which expects a positive response. Jehoshaphat remembers God's past mercies to Israel and His power to fight for them. The Canaanites were driven out of the Promised Land by the hand of the Lord (yes, He used Joshua, but the ultimate power was from Yahweh). If You did it before God, You can do it again!

THOUGHT- America experienced great outpourings of God in the First and Second Great Awakenings. Lord, You have done it before, so we beseech You to please do it again in our nation. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Spurgeon -"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.' "

and give it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend (Ge 18:17+; Jas 2:23+) **forever** (permanently)? - This promise was part of the Abrahamic covenant in Ge 15:18-21+. [The Promised Land](#) was given to Israel. Note the important time phrase "**forever**." Israel as the chosen of God will possess the land **forever**. This is not a reference to the Church. The Church was never promised this land. The Church (in my opinion) was promised something far better than a everlasting land, for we have been promised an **everlasting life in Christ!** (cf Eph 1:3+) Israel has not been replaced by the Church as is sadly taught in so many pulpits in America. See [What is replacement theology / supersessionism / fulfillment theology? | GotQuestions.org](#).

Abraham Your friend - This is quite an affirmation for a sinful human being to be called the **friend** of God, a truth repeated in cf. Isa. 41:8; James 2:23+.

THOUGHT - And with whom are believers friends? Jesus declared ""No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but **I have called you friends**, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you." (John 15:15+) Do you believe this is true? Are you living as if it is true? Do you speak frequently with your friend who is closer than a brother?

Gustafson - The rhetorical questions of 2Ch 20:6-7 reinforce the certainty of what is said. Jehoshaphat appealed to facts from God's Word, including reference to Abraham 1,000 years before. This appeal to the Word of God in his prayer recalls our Lord's words in John 15:7+: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you". May the Lord help every Christian to love the Word of God and to trust God as Jehoshaphat clearly did. (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

[Good Buddy](#)

You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. — John 15:14

Today's Scripture: John 15:9-17

The congregation listened intently as the pastor began to pray: "Dear heavenly Father . . ." Suddenly he was interrupted by a voice saying, "Hey there, good buddy!"

Everyone began to laugh when they realized the voice was coming from the organ. It was picking up the conversation of a truckdriver on his CB radio! Not much was accomplished in the service that day, because the congregation continued to chuckle about the voice that made them think God was responding to their pastor and calling him His "good buddy."

Moses knew what it was like to be a friend of God—a relationship that went beyond buddies. The Lord often talked with Moses “face to face, as a man speaks to his friend” (Exodus 33:11). **The patriarch Abraham was also called God’s friend** (2 Chronicles 20:7).

But can you and I be a friend of God? In our Bible reading for today, Jesus, the supreme example of loving friendship, called His disciples friends (John 15:13,15). He put it simply: “You are My friends if you do whatever I command you” (v.14).

And what does He command? That we love Him with all our heart and love others as ourselves (Mark 12:30-31). That’s how we can be God’s friend. By: Anne Cetas (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Friendship with Jesus,
Fellowship divine,
Oh, what blessed, sweet communion,
Jesus is a friend of mine.
—Ludgate

The dearest friend on earth is but a mere shadow compared to Jesus.
—Chambers

2 Chronicles 20:8 “They have lived in it, and have built You a sanctuary there for Your name, saying,

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:8 And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying,

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:8 κα̅ κα̅τ̅ κη̅σαν̅ ν̅ α̅τ̅ κα̅̅ κο̅δ̅ μ̅η̅σαν̅ ν̅ α̅τ̅ γ̅ α̅σ̅μα̅ τ̅ ν̅ μα̅τ̅ σου̅ λ̅ γ̅ον̅τες̅

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:8 And they dwelt in it, and built in it a sanctuary to thy name, saying,

NET 2 Chronicles 20:8 They settled down in it and built in it a temple to honor you, saying,

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:8 They have lived in the land and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name and have said,

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:8 And they have lived in it and have built for you in it a sanctuary for your name, saying,

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:8 They have lived in it and have built in it a sanctuary for your Name, saying,

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:8 Your people settled here and built this Temple to honor your name.

- **built:** 2Ch 2:4 2Ch 6:10

Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 6:20+ that Your eye may be open **toward this house** day and night, **toward the place** of which You have said that You would put **Your name** there, to listen to the prayer which Your servant shall pray **toward this place**.

2 Chronicles 6:29+ whatever prayer or supplication is made by any man or by all Your people Israel, each knowing his own affliction and his own pain, and spreading his hands **toward this house**,

2 Chronicles 6:32+ “Also concerning the foreigner who is not from Your people Israel, when he comes from a far country for Your great name’s sake and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm, when they come and **pray toward this house**,

A SANCTUARY FOR YAHWEH'S NAME

They have lived in it, and have built You a sanctuary there for Your name, saying - Jehoshaphat appeals is to the words of Solomon’s prayer (1 Ki. 8:33-45; 2 Chr. 6:24-35). For Your name signifies “for Your honor (or reputation).” One reason (among man) that the Temple was built was to cause people to honor the Name of God (cf 2Ch 6:32-33).

Recall that in Solomon’s prayers he had made allusion to prayer “toward this place” (TEMPLE) (2Ch 6:29-) In 2Ch 7:15+ God promised “Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to the prayer offered **in this place** (TEMPLE)

SEE PHRASE **TOWARD THIS HOUSE** - 6X/6V - 1Ki. 8:29; 1Ki. 8:38; 1Ki. 8:42; 2Chr. 6:20; 2Chr. 6:29; 2Chr. 6:32

Rawlinson - "Jehoshaphat made a threefold appeal: (1) 'Art thou not the true God who is omnipotent and able to help us in our helplessness?'; (2) 'Art thou not our God who hast given us this land forever and so art bound to help us against enemy invaders?'; (3) 'Art thou not the God especially of this temple and promised Solomon that thou wouldst answer prayer from this place?'

2 Chronicles 20:9 'Should evil come upon us, the sword, or judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house and before You (for Your name is in this house) and cry to You in our distress, and You will hear and deliver us.'

AMPC If evil comes upon us, the sword of judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house and before You—for Your Name [and the symbol of Your presence] is in this house—and cry to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save.

CSB "If disaster comes on us—sword or judgment, pestilence or famine—we will stand before this temple and before you, for your name is in this temple. We will cry out to you because of our distress, and you will hear and deliver."

ERV They said, 'If trouble comes to us—the sword, punishment, sicknesses, or famine—we will stand in front of this Temple and in front of you. Your name is on this Temple. We will shout to you when we are in trouble. Then you will hear and save us.'

EXB 'If ·trouble [disaster; evil] comes upon us, or ·war [^Lthe sword], ·punishment [judgment; ^Cthis term should perhaps be combined with the previous one to read "the sword of judgment"], ·sickness [plague; pestilence], or ·hunger [famine], we will stand before you and before this ·Temple [^Lhouse] ·where you have chosen to be worshiped [for your name is in this house]. We will cry out to you ·when we are in trouble [in our distress]. Then you will hear and ·save [rescue; ^Tdeliver] us.'

ICB 'Trouble may come to us. It may be war, punishment, sickness or a time of hunger. If it comes, we will stand before you and before this Temple where you have chosen to be worshiped. We will cry out to you when we are in trouble. Then you will hear and save us.'

MSG 'When the worst happens—whether war or flood or disease or famine—and we take our place before this Temple (we know you are personally present in this place!) and pray out our pain and trouble, we know that you will listen and give victory.'

NLT They said, 'Whenever we are faced with any calamity such as war, plague, or famine, we can come to stand in your presence before this Temple where your name is honored. We can cry out to you to save us, and you will hear us and rescue us.'

- **evil**: 2Ch 6:28-30 1Ki 8:33,37
- **before You** Mt 18:20
- **name**: 2Ch 6:20 Ex 20:24 23:21

Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 6:28-30+ If there is **famine** in the land, if there is **pestilence**, if there is blight or mildew, if there is locust or grasshopper, if their enemies besiege them in the land of their cities, whatever plague or whatever sickness there is, 29 whatever prayer or supplication is made by any man or by all Your people Israel, each knowing his own affliction and his own pain, and spreading his hands **toward this house**, 30 then **hear** from heaven Your dwelling place, and **forgive**, and **render** to each according to all his ways, whose heart You know for You alone know the hearts of the sons of men,

2 Chronicles 7:13-15 "If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, 14 and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land. 15 "Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to **the prayer offered in this place**.

PRAYING TOWARD THE TEMPLE

Should evil come upon us, the sword, or judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house(see note above) and before You (for Your name is in this house) and cry to You in our distress, and You will hear and deliver us.'²- This verse (especially the afflictions) is a good summary of Solomon's prayer in 2Ch 6:14-42+. **Your name** stands for the Person, for the attributes, etc of God. (cf. 2Ch 6:20+). See [Name of the LORD is a Strong Tower](#).

Thankfulness for the past gives fresh assurance for the future, especially in times of stress.

Gustafson - Recalling earlier promises of God is also a feature of other prayers in Chronicles (1 Chr 17:21–22; 29:15, 18; 2 Chr 6:5–17). Using promises of God from His Word in intercessory prayer is a principle of effective prayer. Thankfulness for the past gives fresh assurance for the future, especially in times of stress. (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

Bob Utley on **sword, or judgment, or pestilence, or famine** - This is a list of the problems caused by covenant disobedience (i.e., Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28). the sword (i.e., war, invasion; MT, "the sword of judgment"), judgment, usually just #1, 3, 4 summarize YHWH's judgment; the NEB, REB, emend this to "flood"; following the LXX (L.), pestilence, famine (often #1, 3, 4 are used together as a summary of God's judgment (this is one of the specific predictions of "the curses" in Lev. 26:25-26 and also Deut. 28:17,21-24,25-26; it appears often in Jeremiah – Jer. 14:12; 21:9; 24:10; 27:8,13; 29:17-18; 32:24,36; 34:17; 38:2; 42:17,22; 44:13 Ezekiel – Ezek. 5:12; 6:11-12; 7:15; 12:6 Repentance would bring forgiveness and release (i.e., 1 Kings 8; 2 Chronicles 6).

Kay Arthur - Talk to God - 2 Chronicles 20:9,12 - In trying times, the best thing we can do is submit to God. Talk aloud to God. Confirm again your desire to serve and follow Him fully. Tell Him that your one and foremost passion is to be found pleasing to Him. (BORROW [Powerful moments with God](#))

The Valley of Blessing

If calamity comes . . . [we] will cry out to you in our distress, and you will hear us. 2 Chronicles 20:9

Read: 2 Chronicles 20:1,13–22

French artist Henri Matisse felt his work in the last years of his life best represented him. During that time he experimented with a new style, creating colorful, large-scale pictures with paper instead of paint. He decorated the walls of his room with these bright images. This was important to him because he had been diagnosed with cancer and was often confined to his bed.

Becoming ill, losing a job, or enduring heartbreak are examples of what some call "being in the valley," where dread overshadows everything else. The people of Judah experienced this when they heard an invading army was approaching (2 Chronicles 20:2–3). Their king prayed, "If calamity comes . . . [we] will cry out to you in our distress, and you will hear us" (2Ch 20:9). God responded, "Go out to face [your enemies] tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you" (2Ch 20:17).

When Judah's army arrived at the battlefield, their enemies had already destroyed each other. God's people spent three days collecting the abandoned equipment, clothing, and valuables. Before leaving, they assembled to praise God and named the place "The Valley of Berakah," which means "blessing."

God walks with us through the lowest points in our lives. He can make it possible to discover blessings in the valleys. —Jennifer Benson Schuldt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Dear God, help me not to be afraid when I encounter difficulty. Help me to believe that Your goodness and love will follow me.

Looking for hope in the middle of difficult circumstances? Read [Hope: Choosing Faith Instead of Fear](#).

2 Chronicles 20:10 "Now **behold**, the sons of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom You did not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt (they turned aside from them and did not destroy them),

- **whom You:** Nu 20:17-21 De 2:4,5,9,19 Judges 11:15-18

Related Passages:

Numbers 20:17-21+ 'Please let us pass through your land. We will not pass through field or through vineyard; we will not even drink water from a well. We will go along the king's highway, not turning to the right or left, until we pass through your territory.'" 18 Edom, however, said to him, "You shall not pass through us, or I will come out with the sword against you." 19 Again, the sons of Israel said to him, "We will go up by the highway, and if I and my livestock do drink any of your water, then I will pay its price. Let me only pass through on my feet, nothing else." 20 But he said, "You shall not pass through." And Edom came out against him with a heavy force and with a strong hand. 21 Thus Edom refused to allow Israel to pass through his territory; so Israel turned away from him.

Deuteronomy 2:4; 5; 9; 19+ and command the people, saying, "You will pass through the territory of your brothers the sons of Esau who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. So be very careful; 5 do not provoke them, for I will not give you any of their land, even as little as a footstep because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession....(2:9) "Then the LORD said to me, 'Do not harass Moab, nor provoke them to war, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I have given Ar to the sons of Lot as a possession.'...(2:19) 'When you come opposite the sons of Ammon, do not harass them nor provoke them, for I will not give you any of the land of the sons of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the sons of Lot as a possession.'

THE "REWARD" FOR SHOWING GRACE TO THESE NATIONS

Now behold ([hinneh](#); [Lxx](#) - [idou](#)), **the sons of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir** (EDOM) - This supports the premise that "Aram" in 2Ch 20:2 should in fact be "Edom."

[Walton](#) on **Mount Seir** - Mount Seir was in Edom. Seir is generally considered the mountainous central region of Edom (elevations generally over five thousand feet) between Wadi al Ghuwayr on the north and Ras en-Naqb on the south. In this case, the term probably referred to the entire land of Edom itself.

Whom You did not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt (they turned aside from them and did not destroy them) - The point is that Yahweh had instructed Israel not to harm the very nations that were now seeking to do them harm.

[Ron Daniel](#) - As King Jehoshaphat prays to the Lord, he makes mention that this enemy had previously been shown grace. As Moses was leading the Israelites from the wilderness wandering and towards the Promised Land, they were going north, on the eastern side of the Dead Sea and the Jordan River. They were going right through the territory of these nations. The Lord had said to Moses as they were going through the wilderness of Moab,

Deut. 2:9 ..."Do not harass **Moab**, nor provoke them to war, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession..."

Then, as they continued north, right next to the territory of the Ammonites, God told Moses,

Deut. 2:19 "When you come opposite the sons of **Ammon**, do not harass them nor provoke them, for I will not give you any of the land of the sons of Ammon as a possession..."

Jehoshaphat says, "Lord, this is the reward, the repayment, that we are receiving from them."

2 Chronicles 20:11 see how they are rewarding us by coming to drive us out from Your possession which You have given us as an inheritance.

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:11 Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:11 κα ν ν δο ατο πιχειρο σιν φ μς ξελθε ν κβαλε ν μς π τς κληρονομ ας μ ν ς δωκας μ ν

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:11 yet now, behold, they make attempts against us, to come forth to cast us out from our inheritance which thou gavest us.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:11 Look how they are repaying us! They come to drive us out of our allotted land which you assigned to us!

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:11 Look how they repay us by coming to drive us out of Your possession that You gave us as an inheritance.

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:11 behold, they reward us by coming to drive us out of your possession, which you have given us to inherit.

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:11 See how they are repaying us by coming to drive us out of the possession you gave us as an inheritance.

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:11 Now see how they reward us! For they have come to throw us out of your land, which you gave us as an inheritance.

NRS 2 Chronicles 20:11 they reward us by coming to drive us out of your possession that you have given us to inherit.

NJB 2 Chronicles 20:11 see how they reward us, by coming to drive us out of your possession which you allotted to us!

NAB 2 Chronicles 20:11 See how they are now repaying us by coming to drive us out of the possession you have given us.

YLT 2 Chronicles 20:11 and lo, they are recompensing to us -- to come in to drive us out of Thy possession, that Thou hast caused us to possess.

GWN 2 Chronicles 20:11 They are now paying us back by coming to force us out of your land that you gave to us.

BBE 2 Chronicles 20:11 See now, how as our reward they have come to send us out of your land which you have given us as our heritage.

RSV 2 Chronicles 20:11 behold, they reward us by coming to drive us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.

- **how they are rewarding:** Six of Dr. Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS. and {raah}, "evil:" "Behold they reward us evil:" which is also the reading of the Targum. Ge 44:4 Ps 7:4 35:12 Pr 17:13 Jer 18:20
- **to drive us out:** Judges 11:23,24 Ps 83:3-12

ATTACK IS UNDESERVED

See (ESV - behold - [hinneh](#); [Lxx](#) - [idou](#)) **how they are rewarding us by coming to drive us out from Your possession which You have given us as an inheritance** - NLT = "Now see how they reward us! For they have come to throw us out of your land, which you gave us as an inheritance." Notice how he emphasizes it is **Your possession** and Your gift! The implication is that the adversary was in a sense coming against God Himself (unbeknownst of course to their pagan mindset). Jehoshaphat's also is saying that it would not be consistent for God to allow these nations who had been spared by Israel to now ungratefully attack Israel and take the possession He had given them. In other words, in a sense, Jehoshaphat was calling on God to honor Israel's former obedience.

[ESV Study Bible \(page 768 - borrow\)](#) - In the juridical style of the so-called psalms of lament (see Psalms 44; 74), Jehoshaphat then complains to God against the injustice of the invaders.

Mackintosh points out that "The prayer is most precious and instructive—full of divine intelligence. They come, says he, 'to cast us out of thy possession, which thou has given us to inherit'. How simple! They would take what God has given! This was putting it, as it were, upon God to maintain His own covenant."

2 Chronicles 20:12 "O our God, will You not judge them? For we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on You."

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:12 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.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:12 κ ρ ι ε θε ς μ ν ο κ ρ ι ν ε ς ν α τ ο ς τ ι ο κ σ π ι ν μ ν σ χ ς τ ο ν τ ι σ τ ν α ι π ρ ς τ π λ θ ο ς τ
πολ το το τ λ θ ν φ μ ς κ α ο κ ο δ α μ ε ν τ ποι σω με ν α τ ο ς λ λ π σο ο φ θ α λ μ ο μ ν

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:12 O Lord our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no strength to resist this great multitude that is come against us; and we know not what we shall do to them: but our eyes are toward thee.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:12 Our God, will you not judge them? For we are powerless against this huge army that attacks us! We don't know what we should do; we look to you for help."

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:12 Our God, will You not judge them? For we are powerless before this vast number that comes to fight against us. We do not know what to do, but we look to You.

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:12 O our God, will you not execute judgment on them? For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:12 O our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you."

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:12 O our God, won't you stop them? We are powerless against this mighty army that is about to attack us. We do not know what to do, but we are looking to you for help."

- **O our God, will:** De 32:36 Judges 11:27 1Sa 3:13 Ps 7:6,8 9:19 43:1 Isa 2:4 42:4 Joe 3:12 Rev 19:11
- **we have:** 2Sa 14:11 1Sa 14:6 2Co 1:8,9
- **neither:** 2Ki 6:15
- **our eyes:** Ps 25:15 121:1,2 Ps 123:1,2 Ps 141:8 Jon 2:4

Related Passages:

Psalm 25:15+ My eyes are continually toward the LORD, For He will pluck my feet out of the net.

Psalm 121:1-2+ A Song of Ascents. I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; From where shall my help come? My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.

Psalms 123:1-2+ A Song of Ascents. To You I lift up my eyes, O You who are enthroned in the heavens! 2 Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, As the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, So our eyes look to the LORD our God, Until He is gracious to us.

Psalms 141:8+ For my eyes are toward You, O GOD, the Lord; In You I take refuge; do not leave me defenseless.

Psalm 107:27-28 They reeled and staggered like a drunken man, And were at their wits' end. 28 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, And He brought them out of their distresses.

2 Chronicles 14:11+ Then Asa called to the LORD his God and said, "LORD, there is no one besides You to help in the battle between the powerful and those who have no strength; so help us, O LORD our God, for we trust in You, and in Your name have come against this multitude. O LORD, You are our God; let not man prevail against You."

Hebrews 12:1-2+ Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **fixing our eyes on Jesus**, the Author and Perfecter of faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

POWERLESS AND UNCERTAIN, OUR EYES ARE ON YOU!

"**O our God, will You not judge them?** Jehoshaphat is calling on the Judge of all mankind to make a righteous judgment. What is the basis for his plea? In 2Ch 20:6 he acknowledges God rules over all the kingdoms of the nations and thus has the right and the might to judge. God had made His covenant with Abraham as an everlasting covenant to give Israel the land which is now in danger of being lost to the invaders. God had said he would hear their prayers when they cried out in trouble (2Ch 6:34-35). Jehoshaphat is saying, in effect "These enemies are invading the land You gave us. You promised to hear us from this sanctuary which we prayer

toward — will You not now act?" In 2Ch 20:10–11, Jehoshaphat reminds God that these specific nations (Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir) had been spared by Israel during the wilderness journey (see Dt 2:4; 5; 9; 19+). In so doing Jehoshaphat is pointing out "We showed them mercy — now they're attacking us unjustly and without provocation." In other words, Jehoshaphat's plea for Yahweh to judge the invading hordes is grounded in the moral imbalance of the situation of an undeserved attack from nations Israel had previously honored. In summary, in their powerlessness, Jehoshaphat is appealing to God's justice, trusting God to make wrong things right.

For (term of explanation) **we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on You.**" - They confessed their weakness and as so often happens, in their weakness, they set their eyes on the Lord! See the great truth of Vertical Vision that empowers horizontal living.

THOUGHT - This is a powerful principle. Humbling ourselves before Yahweh and confessing our utter weakness opens the door to experiencing His power. As Paul discovered in 2Co 12:9-10+ "And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong." Are you (am I) willing to acknowledge your (my) powerlessness so that His powerfulness might hold sway in the midst of the adversity, affliction or trial? (See [Spiritual Paradoxes in the Christian Life](#))

OUR EYES ARE YOU....to which we respond with....

AMEN

(Sing this to HIm)

Behold, Jehovah, seated on the throne

Abba, Father, the Well that overflows

The God Who was and is and shall be forevermore

Holy is the Lord

CHORUS:

Amen, Amen

Blessing and honor and glory and power amen

Amen, amen

Blessing and honor and glory and power amen

But - What a great term of contrast! Judah powerless and confused as to what to do, this term of contrast marks the turning point between walking by sight (eyes on the great multitude) and walking by sight (eyes of their heart on their Great God!) What changes after "**but**"? Not the circumstances — the multitude is still there! Not the resources — they still have no strategy! What changes is their focus. The **BUT** marks their choice to change from despair to dependence, from confusion to clarity and from fear to faith.

THOUGHT - You are either in a trial, coming out of one, or getting ready to go into one (the Christian life!). The question is where (or where will be) your focus in the trial (affliction)? Where are your eyes? On the circumstances or on the LORD? The former will lead to anxiety, the latter to peace that passes all human understanding. And one addendum point, are you being thankful in your trial? (Php 4:6-7+)

Our eyes are on You - Here Jehoshaphat is expressing the OT parallel of walking by faith and not by sight (2Co 5:7+) because clearly he could not see Yahweh (although possibly the Shekinah glory cloud was present - that's speculative as no specific text states that it was there). Here he expresses a faith like that of his father Asa

Then Asa called to the LORD his God and said, "LORD, there is no one besides You to help in the battle between the powerful and those who have no strength; **so help us**, O LORD our God, for **we trust in You**, and **in Your name** have come against this multitude. O LORD, You are our God; let not man prevail against You." (2Chr 14:11+).

John Olley - The current situation, however, was one of injustice: the Israelites had obeyed God and not invaded the territories of Moab, Ammon, and Edom (Dt 2:1– 19; Jdg 11:15–18), but now these peoples were seeking to "drive us out," the language again focusing on what God had said and done in the past. This prayer in an emergency is not penitential but exudes confidence in God, appealing to him to "execute judgment." The pairings are explicit: at one level a "great horde" was facing a "powerless" people, but the prayer affirms the reality that treacherous invaders had come against a just God who "rules over all the kingdoms of the nations." There was thus expectancy: "our eyes are on you" to see what God would do. ([ESV Expository Commentary: 1 Samuel–2 Chronicles](#))

*When the trial comes
keep your eyes on God not the trial*

Spurgeon - What a prayer it is! How argumentative! How it pleads his case as an advocate in a court of law, appealing to the mercy of God as logically as if it were to be argued out of the divine heart. Oh, how good it would be if we learnt to pray like this, — in this earnest, importunate fashion! Say the Lord teach us to pray as he taught his disciples!

Gustafson - Christians should never be without hope. The saints' response in the darkest hour should be: "our eyes are upon thee". Jehoshaphat's prayer revealed great confidence in God and thankfulness for past deliverances. Philippians 4:6–7 is a precious promise, but it is important that the two words in v. 6 there, "with thanksgiving", are not forgotten. Thanking God for help in the past helps Christians to enjoy the peace of God in the present. (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#).)

*To recognize one's weakness
is a position of much strength*

Martin Selman - "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. To recognize one's weakness is a position of much strength (compare John 15:5; 2 Corinthians 12:9)" (BORROW [2 Chronicles : a commentary](#))

Wilcox - "It is at Wits' End Corner that you meet the miracles, says the Psalmist (Ps 107:27–28)"

*Faith ends where worry begins,
and worry ends where faith begins.*

Spurgeon - "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 wouldst have us to do, but as the servant looks to her mistress, so are we looking to thee, Lord. Lord, we are looking.'

*The enemy gathers, fierce and near,
As we lift our faces, even in fear.
So here we wait with hearts bowed low,
As faith takes root and questions go.
The battle is Yours—our hands are few,
But our eyes, our eyes... are set on You.*

Ron Daniel - 20:12 We Are Powerless. It is important to remember that at this time, Jehoshaphat was great in the eyes of the world (2Chr. 17:12). We read in chapter 17 that he had been able to muster over a million men (2Chr. 17:14-18) in recent years. This could have actually been a big problem. You see, many of the kings fell away from God after building large armies. Remember that... 2Chr. 12:1 When the kingdom of Rehoboam was established and strong, he and all Israel with him forsook the law of the LORD. This happens to believers all the time. When we're poor, we pray. But we get some money and suddenly we're saying, "Who is the Lord?" (Prov. 30:8-9). When business is bad, we're crying out to God for help. But the business gets bigger and more stable, we depend on the client list instead of the Lord. Ministries that start with only pennies and a lot of prayer turn into corporate entities that no longer seek God. In other words, our strength can actually become our biggest weakness. But Jehoshaphat refuses to make that mistake. He will not put his trust in his large militia. Instead he prays, "We are powerless. Our eyes are on You."

Alexander Maclaren - We have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee". (2Ch 20:12KJV)

"Our text is the close and climax of Jehoshaphat's prayer, and as the event proved, it was the most powerful weapon that could have been employed, for the rest of the chapter tells the strangest story of a campaign that was ever written ...

We see here the confidence of despair. the very depth of despair sets them to climb to the height of trust ... firm is the trust which leaps from despair!...

Wise and happy shall we be if the sense of helplessness begets in us the energy of a desperate faith. For these two, distrust of self and glad confidence in God, are not opposites, as naked distrust and trust are, but are complementary ...

We see here the peaceful assurance of victory that attends on faith". Jahaziel told them in v. 15, 'the battle is not yours, but God's', and in v. 17, 'stand ye still and see the salvation of the Lord with you'. No wonder that the message was hailed as from heaven, and put new heart into the host, or that, when the messenger's voice ceased, his brother Levites broke into shrill praise as for a victory already won ...

For if we begin our warfare with an appeal to God, and with prayerful acknowledgment of our own impotence, we shall end it with thankful acknowledgment that we are 'more than conquerors through him that loved us' " (Rom 8:37) (Read the full sermon - A Strange Battle)

[James Butler - Sermon Starters](#) - SEEKING HELP FROM GOD 2 Chronicles 20:12

"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" (2 Chronicles 20:12).

This text is part of a prayer which Jehoshaphat king of Judah prayed to God when Judah was invaded by an enemy army. Jehoshaphat had his faults, but one of them was not this prayer.

FIRST—THE PUNISHMENT OF EVIL

"Wilt thou not judge them?" The invading armies which were from Ammon, Moab, and Edom, were nations Israel was not permitted to invade and war against when they came out of Egypt (2 Chronicles 20:10). Yet here they would return the favor by invading Judah. Hence, the plea of Jehoshaphat for Divine judgment upon these nations. This question is often asked by God's people. Sometimes it looks like evil men, evil nations, and evil politics will gain control permanently. And the godly ask God if He notices and will therefore judge these evil people and groups. The answer is a resounding, Yes. The context of this verse emphasizes the affirmative answer to this question. God does indeed judge evil even though it seems at times that evil is ruling the roost. Many of us asked this question during World War II when Germany, Japan and Italy and their wicked rulers seemed to control the world in an embrace of evil. But today we do not question God's judgment upon them, for these three nations bit the dust in ignominy and ruin as God brought judgment. Wickedness seems to have the upper hand in our nation today. But God will judge and evil will be condemned in due time by the Almighty.

SECOND—THE PROBLEM OF WEAKNESS

"We have no might against this company that cometh against us" Jehoshaphat recognized his weakness. Pride often refuses to humble itself and admit it can't do it alone. But unless we humbly admit our inability, we will never pray for God's ability. God often allows us to come into situations that overwhelm us so we will seek His help. Do not be discouraged if your troubles overwhelm you and you see no way out. Seek the Lord and ask Him for help. He can and will help!

THIRD—THE PERCEPTION OF DUTY

"Neither know we what to do." Jehoshaphat not only had a problem with lack of power, but he also had a problem in perceiving his duty. He did not know what to do. We all come to that place in our life more often than we like to admit. Our wisdom matches our weakness. But "if any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God" (James 1:5). God can show you what to do just as easy as He can overcome your evil enemy. Seek Him.

FOURTH—THE PRACTICE OF WORSHIP

"Our eyes are upon thee." You may be overwhelmed by your problems, but keep your eyes upon the Lord and seek him in your troubles. Jehoshaphat sought God and won a great victory.

Streams in the Desert - "Neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon thee." (2 Chron. 20:12.)

A LIFE was lost in Israel because a pair of human hands were laid unbidden upon the ark of God. They were placed upon it with the best intent, to steady it when trembling and shaking as the oxen drew it along the rough way; but they touched God's work presumptuously, and they fell paralyzed and lifeless. Much of the life of faith consists in letting things alone.

If we wholly trust an interest to God, we must keep our hands off it; and He will guard it for us better than we can help Him. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass."

Things may seem to be going all wrong, but He knows as well as we; and He will arise in the right moment if we are really trusting Him so fully as to let Him work in His own way and time. There is nothing so masterly as inactivity in some things, and there is nothing so hurtful as restless working, for God has undertaken to work His sovereign will.—A. B. Simpson.

“Being perplexed, I say,
‘Lord, make it right!
Night is as day to Thee,
Darkness as light.
I am afraid to touch
Things that involve so much;
My trembling hand may shake,
My skillless hand may break;
Thine can make no mistake.’

“Being in doubt I say,
‘Lord, make it plain;
Which is the true, safe way?
Which would be gain?
I am not wise to know,
Nor sure of foot to go;
What is so clear to Thee,
Lord, make it clear to me!’ ”

It is such a comfort to drop the tangles of life into God’s hands and leave them there.

Martin Manser - All eyes on God! (Walking with God)

‘We have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you.’ (2 Chronicles 20:12)

Imagine how you would feel if you were suddenly faced with a coalition of three hostile nations marching against you. This was what faced Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. It would have been so easy for him in that situation to fix his eyes on the ‘vast army’ (2 Chronicles 20:2) of Moabites, Ammonites and Meunites coming against him. But instead, he called for ‘all eyes on God’.

He quickly set the tone of what was needed at such a time, and the people followed his example. ‘Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to enquire of the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. The people of Judah came together to seek help from the LORD’ (2 Chronicles 20:3–4). The mention of his alarm is realistic; but he didn’t get stuck with his alarm. His prayer that follows is utterly focused on God, and not on the circumstances. He remembers the greatness of God; he remembers how he rules over all the nations of the earth; he remembers what God has done for his people in the past; and then he throws himself on God in the words of our opening verse for today. And then, an amazing thing happens!

‘Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendour of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: “Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures for ever.” As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated’ (2 Chronicles 20:21–22). What an amazing victory—brought about simply through praise!

Jehoshaphat understood the importance of praising God, even in difficult circumstances. He knew that praise kept them focused on God; and in keeping focused on him, they were focusing on the one thing that could change their situation. Let’s seek to do the same ourselves today.

‘O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no-one can withstand you.’ (2 Chronicles 20:6)

Vance Havner - STRANDED ON OMNIPOTENCE

Neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee. 2 Chronicles 20:12.

Jehoshaphat had reached that human extremity which is God’s opportunity. Jeremiah (Lamentations 5) and Micah (7) were shut up to God in holy desperation. Throughout the Bible, those who received God’s blessing were desperate. Consider Jacob at Jabbok, Moses at the Red Sea, Gideon and his three hundred, David and Goliath, the four lepers in the gate of Samaria, or Bartimaeus, the Syrophenician woman, Jairus. The Rich Young Ruler missed his blessing because he was not shipwrecked on God nor stranded on omnipotence!

Vance Havner - Looking Up

Neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee. 2 Chronicles 20:12.

Jehoshaphat is faced by a powerful combination of Moabites, Ammonites, and others. In his desperation he turns to God: "O God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us."

Are we not often in this plight? Do these lines fall under the eye of someone sore beset by an alliance of evil confederates, whether in the flesh or of the unseen world of principalities and powers? You do not know what to do. We never do. We have no might against the Moabites.

But we can take Jehoshaphat's way out: "Our eyes are upon thee." We may not know what to do, but God always knows what He is going to do. He is never caught off guard or taken by surprise. Commit your case to Him. You can lie down at night and sleep, although tomorrow the Moabites will arrive. Many a saint has pillowed his head on a promise when all hope seemed gone. And when the dreaded day arrived God had handled the Moabites in His own way.

"Our eyes are upon thee." "Looking unto Jesus." We know not what to do, but He knows. No sleeping pill can rest a man like knowing that

Vance Havner - Is Thy God Able?

When Dr. Blank had his nervous breakdown a specialist advised him to stop preaching, shut up his study, put away his books, and get his mind off religion. When Mrs. Doe suffered similar exhaustion the expert told her to give up church interests, join a club, go to the movies, and change her mind completely. Along the same line was the counsel given by one preacher to a very conscientious fellow minister: "You ought to smoke a big cigar and learn to cuss a little."

We freely grant that one can become too absorbed in religious matters and may need to balance these with other interests. Certainly getting outdoors, fishing, golf, a new hobby, a change of scenery, all these have therapeutic value and aid in restoring body, mind, and spirit. But turning to worldly pursuits, to the theatre instead of church, replacing devotions with dancing, having a fling to offset too much serious living, this is the counsel of men and not of God and I do not buy it.

If a man cannot turn to God in the hour of his deepest need and come boldly to the throne of grace for help in such a time, then the gospel means nothing and Christian experience is a delusion. I do not find David seeking relief from his troubles in some ungodly diversion. He had tried one foray into sex that scarred his soul forever. Our Lord set no example of turning to the world in the hour of trial. He said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation [pressure]: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." The New Testament does not advocate relaxing one's conduct to let the hair down when in distress. There should be healthy and happy enjoyment of life's innocent pleasures indeed, but we need not call in Satan under the guise of a specialist or renounce our holy walk because our nerves have failed. The Twenty-Third Psalm has comforted more distraught, sick souls than all the clever tricks offered by the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Our God is a very present help in trouble and just when we need Him Jesus is near. I remember one bleak evening during these weeks of testing when I came into a lonely motel room where I was to stay while I preached (or a few days. The Bible lay open on the table at Psalms 42 and this precious verse:

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.

Call that coincidence if you will but I call it Providence!

When Jeremiah and Micah saw conditions at their lowest ebb and the outlook was bleakest they saw the way out: "Thou, O Lord, remainest forever" (Lamentations 5:19); "Therefore I will look unto the Lord" (Micah 7:7). And when worst comes to worst we can say with Jehoshaphat, "...we [know not] what to do: but our eyes are upon thee" (2 Chronicles 20:12). Our God is not a fair-weather friend. He is accessible and available in the darkest hour. We need not turn to this world where all around us we see change and decay. We can pray with confidence, "O Thou who changest not, abide with me."

Darius asked Daniel in the lion's den, "Is thy God... able to deliver thee from the lions?" (Daniel 6:27). If He is not able in life's darkest hour, He is not able, period. The Hebrew children said, "Our God... is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace..." (Daniel 4:17). He was and He still is!

"We Do Not Know, But Our Eyes Are on You"

In the court of the house where Your Name abides,
Stood a king with the weight of a kingdom inside.

The armies were coming, fierce, without end,
But he called not his captains — he called on a Friend.

“O Lord, God of Heaven, are You not the One,
Who rules over nations, whose will shall be done?
Power and might are held in Your hand,
None can withstand You, by sea or by land.”

“You gave us this place, this promise, this land,
Drove out the foes with Your mighty hand.
We built You a house, where Your glory could stay,
Where Your people would gather and seek You and pray.”

“In pestilence, sword, or in famine’s dark gloom,
We cry from this house, and You hear from Your room.
For You are our God — in You we have trust,
Though the dust rise around us, You are still just.”

“O see, Lord, the hordes that are coming like flood,
To drive out Your people, Your promise, Your blood.
We have no strength, no wisdom to guide,
But our eyes are on You — not the sword at our side.”

So the king stood still, and the people were still,
Hearts laid bare on the slope of God’s will.
And Heaven leaned low, for mercy to move—
When the weak cry in faith, the strong One will prove.

Unconventional Tactics

We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you. 2 Chronicles 20:12

Today’s Scripture: 2 Chronicles 20:1-13

In 1980, a woman hopped on a subway during the Boston Marathon. No big deal, except for one small detail. She was supposed to be running the marathon! Later, witnesses saw her jump into the race less than a mile from the finish line. She finished well ahead of all the other female runners, and oddly, she wasn’t winded or even sweating much. For a brief time she looked like the winner.

In a conflict long ago, a people who were losing a battle found a more honorable way to win. When messengers told King Jehoshaphat, “A vast army is coming against you from Edom,” he was terrified (2 Chron. 20:2-3). But instead of turning to typical military tactics, Jehoshaphat turned to God. He acknowledged God’s supremacy and admitted his own fear and confusion. “We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you” (2Ch 20:12). Then the king chose singers to lead the army into battle. Instead of a war cry, they sang of God’s love (2Ch 20:21). The result was startling. Their enemies turned on each other (2Ch 20:22-24). In the end, “The kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side” (2Ch 20:30).

Life can ambush us with overwhelming challenges. Yet our fear and uncertainties give us the opportunity to turn to our all-powerful God. He specializes in the unconventional. By: Tim Gustafson (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, You are not the source of confusion or fear, but of strength and peace. We exchange our panicky plans for Your amazing answers. Encourage us as we wait for You.

Our God is never predictable, but He is unfailingly reliable.

What Now?

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. — 2 Chronicles 20:12

Today’s Scripture: 2 Chronicles 20:5-17

During the years that I taught junior high students in an overcrowded school, I used to say (only slightly in jest) that my morning

prayer was in 2 Chronicles 20:12—"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."

When Judah's King Jehoshaphat spoke those words, it was a matter of life and death. As a coalition of armies marched against Jerusalem, the people of Judah gathered to seek God's guidance and help (2Ch 20:13).

During threatening times of disruption and change, we need to ask, "Lord, what do You want to do with this moment?" And like King Jehoshaphat, we should begin our prayer with praise to our sovereign and powerful Father in heaven (2Ch 20:5-9).

God told the king and his people: "Do not be afraid nor dismayed . . . , for the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow go down against them. . . for the LORD is with you" (2Ch 20:15-17).

In stressful, confusing situations, we might ask a worried "What now?" But if we look to the Lord and trust in His care, our fear will be replaced with peace. By: David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

O Lord, whenever we're afraid,
We'll put our trust in You
To lead, protect, and guide our way,
And help us make it through.
—Sper

Faith ends where worry begins, and worry ends where faith begins.

2 Chronicles 20:13 All Judah was standing before the LORD, with their infants, their wives and their children.

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:13 And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:13 κα π ς Ιουδα ς στηκ ς ναντι κυρ ου κα τ παιδ α α τ ν κα α γυνα κες

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:13 And all Juda was standing before the Lord, and their children, and their wives.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:13 All the men of Judah were standing before the LORD, along with their infants, wives, and children.

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:13 All Judah was standing before the LORD with their infants, their wives, and their children.

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:13 Meanwhile all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:13 All the men of Judah, with their wives and children and little ones, stood there before the LORD.

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:13 As all the men of Judah stood before the LORD with their little ones, wives, and children,

- **all Judah:** De 29:10 Ezr 10:1 Jon 3:5 Ac 21:5

Related Passage:

Deuteronomy 20:2-4 "When you are approaching the battle, the priest shall come near and speak to the people. 3 "He shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. **Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before them,** 4 for **the LORD your God is the one who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'**

WAITING BEFORE THE LORD

All Judah was standing before the LORD, with their infants, their wives and their children- It is as if they were silently waiting for Him to answer from Heaven!

I am reminded of Isaiah 40:31+ "Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength (EXCHANGE THEIR STRENGTH FOR HIS STRENGTH); They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary."

THOUGHT - Waiting is not passive. Waiting may be standing still on the outside, but it is trusting on the inside! How are you (am I) at waiting on the LORD to answer prayer?

Spurgeon writes "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." (ED: AND INDEED THE "WIND" DID COME, THE SPIRIT OF GOD, WHO JESUS SAYS MOVES LIKE THE WIND! Jn 3:8)

Bob Utley points out that "It would be unusual for the whole family to be before the new court of the temple (2 Chr. 20:5). This illustrates the intensity of the request and need!

Spurgeon - It must have been a wonderful sight — the vast crowd — the pleading king — his voice heard afar, and the men and the women; but, to my mind, the most touching thing of all is the little children standing there, making their silent appeal to God that he would not let the babes be destroyed — that he would not suffer the young children to be slain by the cruel hosts that now threatened the land. Young children's prayers are powerful. Little ones, may God teach you how to pray.

*Having laid their concerns before the Lord,
the people waited humbly on Him*

J.A. Thompson: Having laid their concerns before the Lord, the people waited humbly on Him. The expression to **"stand before the Lord"** is found frequently in Scripture (cf. Gen 19:27; Lev 9:5; Deut 4:10; 2Chr 18:20). The divine response to Jehoshaphat's prayer came by way of Jahaziel, a Levite with an unusually long genealogy reaching back to Asaph in the days of David. He addressed King Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah and Jerusalem with an oracle of salvation containing three main components: (1) the addressees, (2) a "fear not" element at the beginning and again at the end (cf. v. 3), and (3) the substantiation ("the battle is not yours, but God's"; cf. 1 Sam 17:47; 1 Chr 5:22) Here was the perspective of the "holy war" and the speech of the priest before battle (Deut 20:2-4). The literary forms of the salvation oracle and the holy war are woven together in one speech. Even if there was a disparity in the forces, with the Lord fighting for Israel they were assured of success. The substance of the oracle is restated in v. 17 with a quotation from Exod 14:13. The God who had parted the Red Sea had not changed in hundreds of years, and he is still the same today (cf. Isa 52:10; Zech 9:9). The assurance of God's presence was more than a theological statement; it was to be a source of strength. (SEE [1, 2 Chronicles: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

Ron Daniel - 2Ch 20:13-17 The Battle Is Not Yours But God's. Yakh-az-ee-ALE was a Levite, of the sons of Asaph. Remember that the sons of Asaph were the ones whom David had put in charge of the worship music and singing (1Chr. 25). The Spirit of the Lord came upon Yakh-az-ee-ALE and he began to prophesy. The Lord was telling the people of Judah that He was going to fight for them. The following day, they would find and face the enemy, but would not fight them.

G Campbell Morgan - 2Chr. 20:13 - This chapter gives us a story which reveals most graphically the simplicity, and therefore the perfection, at this point, of the faith of Jehoshaphat. His kingdom was threatened with powerful and terrible invasion. In his extremity he gathered his people about him, and, prayed. It is indeed a great and arresting picture this, of the king surrounded by the whole nation; fathers and mothers with their little ones—that is, the very little ones, the babies; and their children—that is, the elder sons and daughters. It was a genuine national act of simple and direct acknowledgment of God. In the hour of national danger, the nation sought the help of the one true King—Jehovah. The prayer of Jehoshaphat was a powerful outpouring of the soul in the consciousness of need. He pleaded the past evidences of the faithfulness of Jehovah, confessed his sense of his own inability to cope with the danger, and definitely sought the help of God. 1 he answer was not delayed. The Spirit of God came upon Jahaziel, and in the Name of Jehovah he uttered a promise, and made the announcement that all Judah had to do, was to stand still and see the salvation of Jehovah. Then followed the united worship of the people and the solemn chanting of the praise of God. Discomfiture fell upon the foe. It was a moment bright with light amid the darkness. This is ancient history, but we have seen in our days events which can have no other explanation. When after stress and strain our own nation did definitely cry unto Cod, He heard and wrought deliverance, and that with a suddenness and completeness which amazed us.

2 Chronicles 20:14 Then in the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite of the sons of Asaph;

- **Then in the midst of the assembly:** Isa 58:9 65:24 Da 9:20,21 Ac 10:4,31

■ **Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel** 2Ch 15:1 2Ch 24:20 Nu 11:25-26 Nu 24:2

Related Passages:

Numbers 11:25-26+ Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him; and He took of **the Spirit who was upon him and placed Him upon the seventy elders. And when the Spirit rested upon them**, they prophesied. But they did not do it again. 26 But two men had remained in the camp; the name of one was Eldad and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them (now they were among those who had been registered, but had not gone out to the tent), and they prophesied in the camp.

Numbers 24:2+ And Balaam lifted up his eyes and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe; and **the Spirit of God came upon him**.

Judges 3:10 The **Spirit of the LORD came upon him** (OTHNIEL), and he judged Israel. When he went out to war, the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand, so that he prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

Judges 6:34 So the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon; and he blew a trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called together to follow him.

Judges 11:29 Now the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, so that he passed through Gilead and Manasseh; then he passed through Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead he went on to the sons of Ammon.

Judges 14:6 The Spirit of the LORD came upon him (SAMSON) mightily, so that he tore him as one tears a young goat though he had nothing in his hand; but he did not tell his father or mother what he had done.

Judges 14:19 Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him (SAMSON) mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of them and took their spoil and gave the changes of clothes to those who told the riddle. And his anger burned, and he went up to his father's house.

Judges 15:14 When he came to Lehi, the Philistines shouted as they met him. And **the Spirit of the LORD** came upon him (SAMSON) mightily so that the ropes that were on his arms were as flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds dropped from his hands.

1 Samuel 10:10 When they came to the hill there, behold, a group of prophets met him; and **the Spirit of God came upon him** (SAUL) mightily, so that he prophesied among them.

1 Samuel 11:6 Then **the Spirit of God came upon Saul** mightily when he heard these words, and he became very angry.

1 Samuel 16:13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

1 Samuel 19:20 Then Saul sent messengers to take David, but when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing and presiding over them, **the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul**; and they also prophesied.

1 Samuel 19:23 He (SAUL) proceeded there to Naioth in Ramah; and **the Spirit of God came upon him** also, so that he went along prophesying continually until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

1 Chronicles 12:18 Then **the Spirit came upon Amasai**, who was the chief of the thirty, and he said, "We are yours, O David, And with you, O son of Jesse! Peace, peace to you, And peace to him who helps you; Indeed, your God helps you!" Then David received them and made them captains of the band.

1 Chronicles 16:5 Asaph the chief, and second to him Zechariah, then Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-edom and Jeiel, with musical instruments, harps, lyres; also Asaph played loud-sounding cymbals,

2 Chronicles 15:1-2 Now the **Spirit of God came on Azariah** the son of Oded, 2and he went out to meet Asa and said to him, "Listen to me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: the LORD is with you when you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.

2 Chronicles 24:20 Then the Spirit of God came on Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest; and he stood above the people and said to them, "Thus God has said, 'Why do you transgress the commandments of the LORD and do not prosper? Because you have forsaken the LORD, He has also forsaken you.'"

SPIRIT OF THE LORD COMES UPON JAHAZIEL

Then - This time sensitive word marks progression in a narrative and what a great progression in this context! In the silence of this great throng of souls, the Almighty spoke by His Spirit through a man! God clearly answers their prayer through Jahaziel.

In the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite of the sons of Asaph - Jahaziel's ancestry is traced with unerring precision, tracing his pedigree back five generations to **Asaph** the chief Levitical musician (composer of 12 psalms - Ps 50; Ps 73–83) when David organized the Temple personnel (1 Chr 16:5+). God showed up in the midst of the assembly. A Spirit empowered man gives a divine response to Jehoshaphat's prayer. See [SPIRIT IN THE BIBLE](#).

THOUGHT- You will sometimes feel as though you are in an all-out spiritual war, but you must remember that you're not alone, for God is not just presence in your midst (which He is), but literally present IN YOU! (Col 1:27+, 1Co 6:19+). God is your [Covenant Defender](#) and He will fight for you (2Ch 20:15). Your responsibility is to believe in Him and His protection for you and stand fast in the midst of the struggle (cf Jas 4:7+, 1Pe 5:8-9+). (See discussion of [Covenant Defender](#))

Jahaziel the son of Zechariah - Interesting meaning to his name = "whom God watches over" or "beheld of God." He was a Levite of the Bene-Asaph in the reign of Jehoshaphat. (circa B.C. 896.) This is all we know about this man who was faithful to fill his calling on this great occasion.

Spurgeon - Perhaps he had never delivered a prophecy before. This is his first sermon; but the Spirit of God was with him, and he could not hold his tongue.

2 Chronicles 20:15 and he said, "Listen, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: thus says the LORD to you, 'Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's.

- **Do not fear or be dismayed** 2Ch 32:7,8 Ex 14:13,14 De 1:29,30 20:1,4 31:6,8 Jos 11:6 Ne 4:14 Ps 17:1,2 Isa 41:10-16 43:1,2
- **the battle:** 2Ch 32:8 1Sa 17:47

Related Passages:

1 Samuel 17:47+ (DAVID TO GOLIATH) and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for **the battle is the LORD'S** and He will give you into our hands."

Joshua 1:9+ "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! **Do not tremble or be dismayed**, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

DO NOT FEAR THE BATTLE IS GOD'S!

and he said, "**Listen**, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: thus says the LORD to you, '**Do not fear or be dismayed** ([chathath](#) - again in 2Ch 20:17) **because of** (term of explanation) **this great multitude**, **for** (what a great term of explanation) **the battle is not yours but God's** - The reason not to fear for Jehoshaphat (and us) is that the **battle is the Lord's!** Does this mean we are simply to "Let go, let God?" No, even in as this story unfolds, Judah played their part by offering praise in light of the fact that the battle was the Lord's (the Levitical singers actually led the army before the battle 2Ch 20:21). I like to say it is not "Let go, let God," (totally unscriptural and inaccurate) but "Let God, let's go!" Judah was to "go down against" the strong enemy (2Ch 20:17), they were to "stand and see the salvation of the LORD," and "when they began singing and praising," (THEIR RESPONSIBILITY), "the LORD set ambushes against" the strong enemy (2Ch 20:22) (GOD'S PART/PROVISION). Of course to carry out their part in the battle, they had to have faith and believe what the prophet had spoken from God was true. God's Word is always the Word of Truth. We can stake our life and our eternity on it! (See [Andy Naselli's article on Let Go, Let God.](#))

Do not fear in the Septuagint is a command in the [present imperative with a negative](#) calling for them to stop fearing or not to begin to fear. **Dismayed** ([chathath](#)) in the Septuagint is the verb [ptoéo](#) which means to be terrified, frightened, startled, alarmed (cf use in Lk 12:4+).

THOUGHT - This important spiritual principle saturates both the old and new testaments - Let God, let's go! God's sovereignty, provision and power, and our responsibility (faith and obedience = trust and obey). This is the pattern for victory in our warfare over our strong enemies the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and the [devil](#). Are you losing the battles dearly beloved? The reason may just be you do not understand this spiritual dynamic, which is the "secret" of victory over our strong foes! See more discussion of "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)" (100/100).

[Bob Utley](#) summarizes the prophetic statements by the Spirit empowered Levite - The Levite makes several emphatic statements in YHWH's name (much like Exod. 14:13-14).

1. listen, 2 Chr. 20:15 – BDB 904, KB 1151, *Hiphil* IMPERATIVE
2. do not fear, 2 Chr. 20:15,17 – BDB 431, KB 432, *Qal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
3. do not be dismayed, 2 Chr. 20:15,17 – BDB 369, KB 365, *Qal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
4. go down against them, 2 Chr. 20:16 – BDB 432, KB 434, *Qal* IMPERATIVE
5. station yourselves, 2 Chr. 20:17 – BDB426, KB 427, *Hithpael* IMPERATIVE
6. stand, 2 Chr. 20:17 – BDB 763, KB 840, *Qal* IMPERATIVE
7. see, 2 Chr. 20:17 – BDB 906, KB 1157, *Qal* IMPERATIVE
8. go out to face them, 2 Chr. 20:17 – BDB 422, KB 425, *Qal* IMPERATIVE

YHWH's people will clearly see His deliverance (cf. Joshua 8:1; 2 Chr. 32:7).

[Our God, Our Help in Ages Past](#)

by Isaac Watts

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.

**Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.**

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home.

Not a Private Fight - Selwyn Hughes - BORROW [Every day with Jesus : one year bible : the Bible in 365 readings](#)

Do not be afraid or discouraged ... for the battle is not yours, but God's.—2 Chr 20:15

The spiritual application of the helmet of salvation is not so much the enjoyment of our present salvation (though it includes that) as it is the assurance that a sure salvation is coming—and is even now at work.

This is what we need to know if we are to prevent the Devil from bringing us into a state of mental distress—not merely that things will finally end right, but that God's plan is being worked out now. "History," writes Ray Stedman, an American Bible teacher, "is not a meaningless jumble but a controlled pattern, and the Lord Jesus Christ is the one who is directing these events."

The attack of Satan on the mind proceeds differently. He says to us: "Just look around you at the state of the world. God seems powerless to put things right. He has given lots of promises that things will one day get better, but none has come to pass. Hadn't you better give up this foolish idea that it's all going to work out right?"

If you were to let your mind dwell on that kind of satanic argument, you would soon find yourself in distress. The answer is to put on the helmet, the hope of salvation. You must remind yourself that things are not as they appear. The battle is not ours, but the Lord's. We may be individual soldiers fighting in the army of God, but the ultimate cause is sure and the end is certain. We need not be unduly troubled by what is happening in the world, for our commander is not just winning—He has already won!

Prayer Lord Jesus, I am grateful that the Cross is the guarantee that neither sin nor Satan will ever defeat You. Your victory at

Calvary has settled forever the question of who has the final word in the universe. I am so deeply, deeply thankful. Amen.

Further Study

- Lk 21:10-28; Jn 14:1-4; 16:33
- How did Jesus describe the world?
- What did He say to His disciples

[Here is a link entitled "Jehoshaht," an excellent, very practical sermon preached by Pastor Halim Suh of Austin Stone](#) a church I attend in Austin, Texas - Text is 1 Kings 22:1-53 | 2 Chronicles 20:1-37

Here is the Discussion Guide that goes with the sermon:

1. **What is one situation in your life that is currently stirring up a lot of fear in you?** How is it shaping the way you think, act, and experience life right now? Practically, how are you managing that fear?
2. Read From Asa to Jehoshaphat and An Overview of Jehoshaphat. Briefly, what stands out to you about King Jehoshaphat?
3. Read 2 Chronicles 20:1-4. Jehoshaphat set his face to seek the LORD. What do you think it means to "seek the LORD"? Practically, what does that look like, and why is it often difficult to do when you're feeling afraid?
4. Read 2 Chronicles 20:5-12 and 2 Chronicles 20:15-17. In the face of a seemingly hopeless situation, the king gathered God's people to pray. What do you notice about Jehoshaphat's prayer? What does his prayer reveal about the kind of God he believes in? Make some observations about the beginning, middle, and end of his prayer. Even though 2 Chronicles 20:15-17 was a specific message given by God at a specific time to a particular people, what transcendent truths about God do you see in Jahaziel's message that are important to know and trust today?
5. **Fear can either drive us to panic or to prayer—and only one of those paths leads to peace.** Jehoshaphat gives us a practical portrait of faith in the face of fear: "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you" (2 Chronicles 20:12). In closing, think about the situation you identified earlier that is stirring up great fear in you. Together, spend a few moments seeking God and lifting the eyes of your heart to Him. In your own words, pray this to God: "I do not know what to do, but my eyes are on you." Pray for yourselves and for one another. Like Jehoshaphat, fill your prayers with not only requests for help but also proclamations about who God is and what He's able to do!

David Jeremiah - [WHEN WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO](#)

Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's. . . . You will not need to fight in this battle. 2 Chr 20:15, 17

In 2 Chronicles 20, King Jehoshaphat suddenly learns a great army is coming against him. In alarm, he gathers the people before the Temple and leads them in earnest prayer: "O our God," he says, "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" (2Ch 20:12).

Just then a prophet declares a message from the Lord: "Do not be afraid nor dismayed . . . for the battle is not yours, but God's. . . . Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you" (2Ch 20:15, 17).

The next day, King Jehoshaphat puts the choir at the head of his army, and the nation goes to war armed with hymns of praise. The enemy, falling into chaos, slaughters itself, leaving the spoils and plunder to the people of Judah.

Sometimes our best strategy in facing a trial or temptation is to pray, "Lord, I don't know what to do, but my eyes are on You." Our Advocate has a way of fighting on our behalf as we position ourselves and sing songs of praise.

Anticipate your battles, fight them on your knees before temptation comes,
and you will always have the victory.
--R. A. TORREY

William MacDonald - [Truths to Live By](#)

"The battle is not yours, but God's." (2 Chron. 20:15)

If a man is a soldier of the Cross, he can expect to be attacked sooner or later. The more courageously he declares the truth of God and the more accurately he exemplifies the truth in his own life, the more he will be subjected to assault. An old Puritan said, "He that standeth near his Captain, is a sure target for the archers."

He will be accused of wrongs he did not do. He will be savaged by gossip, slander and backbiting. He will be ostracized and

ridiculed. This treatment will come from the world and, sadly enough, it may sometimes come from fellow-Christians.

At such times, it is important to remember that the battle is not ours, but God's. And we should claim the promise of Exodus 14:14: "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." What this means is that we don't have to defend ourselves or fight back. The Lord will vindicate us at the proper time.

F. B. Meyer wrote, "How much is lost by a word! Be still; keep quiet; if they smite thee on one cheek, turn the other also. Never retort. Never mind your reputation or character—they are in his hands, and you mar them by trying to retain them."

Joseph stands out as an example of one who did not try to vindicate himself when falsely accused. He committed his cause to God, and God cleared his name and promoted him to great honor.

An aged servant of Christ testified that he had been wronged many times over the years. But he prayed in the words of Augustine, "Lord, deliver me from the lust of always vindicating myself." He said that the Lord had never failed to justify him and to expose his accusers.

The Lord Jesus, of course, is the supreme Example. "...when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Pet. 2:23).

This, then, is the message for today. We don't have to defend ourselves when we are falsely accused. The battle is the Lord's. He will fight for us. We should hold our peace.

Ian Paisley - Battle Strategy ([A Text a Day Keeps the Devil Away](#))

"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." II Chronicles 20:15

God is the God of battles. He alone giveth the victory. Without Him we perish, with Him we win. How slow we are in learning the sovereignty and strength of God in His, war strategy.

We need to learn three lessons.

The Battle Is Not by Our Strength

Man in conflict is always preoccupied by numbers. The numbers game is the game man excels in playing. His arm is the arm of flesh. His dependency is Saul's armour. His trust is in His chariots.

What utter folly to match the strength of man against the strength of God. Some trust in chariots and some in horses but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.

The Battle Is Not by Our Soldiers

What a mighty army of soldiers Sennacherib marshalled against Jerusalem. He boasted that his soldiers would soon wipe Hezekiah off the face of the earth and utterly destroy Jerusalem. But the battle was not to his soldiers. Read the end of the story.

"And the Lord sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria, So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword. Thus the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side." II Chronicles 32:21-22.

The Battle Is Not by Our Strategy

Israel, after passing over Jordan, was faced with the high walls of Jericho. How could these walls be scaled and the great obstacle to victory be removed? What strategy could man devise to give success to Israel.

God's strategy was simple. March round the wall once in each of the first six days and then on the Sabbath day, seven times. Then shout and sound the trumpets and the city is yours, It seemed a foolish and impossible strategy but it succeeded. Why? Because the battle is not ours but God's. Make this your stay and strength as you face life's battle each day.

[Nothing Left But God](#)

Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's. — 2 Chronicles 20:15

Today's Scripture: 2 Chronicles 20:3-17

A wise Bible teacher once said, "Sooner or later God will bring self-sufficient people to the place where they have no resource but Him—no strength, no answers, nothing but Him. Without God's help, they're sunk."

He then told of a despairing man who confessed to his pastor, "My life is really in bad shape." "How bad?" the pastor inquired. Burying his head in his hands, he moaned, "I'll tell you how bad—all I've got left is God." The pastor's face lit up. "I'm happy to assure you that a person with nothing left but God has more than enough for great victory!"

In today's Bible reading, the people of Judah were also in trouble. They admitted their lack of power and wisdom to conquer their foes. All they had left was God! But King Jehoshaphat and the people saw this as reason for hope, not despair. "Our eyes are upon You," they declared to God (2 Chron. 20:12). And their hope was not disappointed as He fulfilled His promise: "The battle is not yours, but God's" (v.15).

Are you in a position where all self-sufficiency is gone? As you turn your eyes on the Lord and put your hope in Him, you have God's reassuring promise that you need nothing more. By: Joanie Yoder (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Charles Stanley - Journey to the Battlefield (BORROW [On holy ground : a daily devotional](#))

REPRESENTING: Having confidence to face enemies

KEY VERSE: 2 Chronicles 20:15 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."

Anytime a man chooses God's way, it won't be long until that commitment is challenged, and that was exactly what happened to Jehoshaphat. In 2 Chronicles 20 we find a great and formidable enemy advancing toward this godly King of Judah to destroy the kingdom. Jehoshaphat had no battle plan. No strategy. No secret weapons. But God promised victory.

Like that of Jehoshaphat, your commitment to God will be continually challenged. When conflicts arise, you must face a spiritual enemy with spiritual strategies. This month, we will journey to the spiritual battlefield and learn how to confront the enemy. We will learn to use our spiritual weapons. We will discover how to be victorious in the face of the temptations and pressures of life. We will learn strategies for casting down vain imaginations, controlling the mind, and winning the victory. Most important—we will learn to never give up!

Are you ready? God's army is moving out for the battlefield. Forward march! (See [Schemes of the Devil](#))

THE BATTLE IS GOD'S. 2 Chronicles 20:15 - C H Spurgeon

Receive a fresh assurance of God's goodness, "Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's" (2 Chr. 20:15). May the Holy Spirit bear witness to this sweet promise. May He strengthen and comfort you, and may you be delivered even before deliverance comes.

The main business is to be saved from the fear of trouble. If you are quiet, calm, and assured, you are really saved from the trial's sting. The trial is nothing if it does not sting your soul. If your heart is not troubled, then there is no trouble. All the poverty and all the pain in the world would not prevail if the evil of it did not enter your soul.

In the twentieth chapter of Second Chronicles, Judah received actual deliverance. When they came to face their foes, there were none, for they were all dead (2 Chr. 20:24). In the same manner, God will deliver you. In answer to prayer, He will be your defense; therefore praise His name.

He delivered you when you went out to meet the great army of your sins. You saw that Christ had put them away and your heart danced. You could say, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1). He has slain our sins and they can curse us no more.

This is the case with a great many troubles that have appeared to overwhelm you. When you come to them, they disappear. They have been removed as you have advanced. Now you have nothing to do but praise the name of the Lord.

[A Dangerous Challenge](#)

The battle is not yours, but God's. —2 Chronicles 20:15

Today's Scripture: 2 Chronicles 20:1, 15-22

While millions watched on television, Nik Wallenda walked across Niagara Falls on a 1,800-foot wire that was only 2 inches in diameter. He took all the precautions he could. But adding to the drama and danger of both the height and the rushing water below, a thick mist obscured Nik's sight, wind threatened his balance, and spray from the falls challenged his footing. Amid—and perhaps because of—these perils, he said that he “prayed a lot” and praised God.

The Israelites also praised God in the middle of a dangerous challenge. Theirs involved a large group of warriors who had gathered to fight them (2 Chron. 20:2). After humbly asking God for help, King Jehoshaphat appointed a choir to march out into battle in front of the Israelite army. The worshipers sang: “Praise the Lord, for His mercy endures forever” (v.21). When they began to sing, the Lord caused the enemy forces to attack and destroy each other.

Praising God in the midst of a challenge may mean overriding our natural instincts. We tend toward self-protection, strategizing, and worry. However, worshiping can guard our hearts against troubling thoughts and self-reliance. It reminds us of the lesson the Israelites learned: “The battle is not [ours], but God’s” (v.15). By: Jennifer Benson Schuldt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, I praise You, for Your mercy is everlasting. Help me to remember that every battle in this life is Yours. The outcome belongs to You because You are sovereign.

*No matter what is in front of us,
God is always behind us.*

2 Chronicles 20:16 ‘Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the valley in front of the wilderness of Jeruel.

- **Ziz:** The cliff of Ziz was probably near Ziza, which Ptolemy places in Arabia Petrae, long. 69 11/24 degrees lat. 31 degrees.
- **the wilderness:** The wilderness of Jeruel seems, from ver. 20, to have been a part of the wilderness of Tekoa.

Source: [ESV Study Bible \(page 768\) Borrow](#)

YAHWEH REVEALS ENEMY BATTLE PLAN

Tomorrow go down against them. Behold (hinneh; Lxx - idou) , they will come up by the ascent of Ziz (see map above), and you will find them at the end of the valley in front of the wilderness of Jeruel. - Jahaziel told them exactly where to find the enemy.

2 Chronicles 20:17 ‘You need not fight in this battle; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.’ Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the LORD is with you.”

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:17 Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye 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.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:17 ο χ μ ν σπιν πολεμσαι τα τα σ νετε κα δετε τ ν σωτηρ αν κυρ ου μεθ μ ν Ιουδα κα Ιερουσαλημ μ φοβε σθε μηδ πποθη τε α ριον ξελθε ν ε ς π ντησιν α το ς κα κ ριος μεθ μ ν

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:17 It is not for you to fight: understand these things, and see the deliverance of the Lord with you, Juda and Jerusalem: fear not, neither be afraid to go forth to-morrow to meet them; and the Lord shall be with you.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:17 You will not fight in this battle. Take your positions, stand, and watch the LORD deliver you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Don't be afraid and don't panic! Tomorrow march out toward them; the LORD is with you!"

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:17 You do not have to fight this battle. Position yourselves, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD. He is with you, Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid or discouraged. Tomorrow, go out to face them, for Yahweh is with you."

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:17 You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand firm, hold your position, and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, and the LORD will be with you."

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:17 You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you.' "

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:17 But you will not even need to fight. Take your positions; then stand still and watch the LORD's victory. He is with you, O people of Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid or discouraged. Go out against them tomorrow, for the LORD is with you!"

- **not need:** 2Ch 20:22,23 Ex 14:13,14,25
- **stand:** Ps 46:10-11 Isa 30:7,15 La 3:26 3:26
- for the Lord: 2Ch 15:2 32:8 Nu 14:9 Ps 46:7,11 Isa 8:9,10 41:10 Am 5:14 Mt 1:23 Mt 28:20 Ro 8:31 2Ti 4:22

Related Passages:

Joshua 1:5-9+ (GOD'S PATTERN FOR VICTORY IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE) "No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, **I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you.** 6 **"Be strong and courageous,** for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. 7 **"Only be strong and very courageous;** be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. 8 "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. 9 "Have I not commanded you? **Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.**"

Exodus 14:13-14+ But Moses said to the people, **"Do not fear!** Stand by and **see the salvation of the LORD which He will accomplish for you today;** for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. 14 "The LORD will fight for you while you keep silent."

THE THREE "S's"

You need not fight in this battle; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation (deliverance - [yeshua](#); Lxx - [soteria](#)) **of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.'** - Note God issues three commands through His prophet. As discussed above God is not saying "Do absolutely nothing." This is not "Let go, let God," as practiced by the [Quietists](#) in past years (and even by some today). That is not the road to victory, but will end ultimately in defeat. Note that even the three "S" actions were their responsibility to obey (**Station...stand...see**) and to which was added another "S" - Sing (2Ch 20:21,22).

*Let God and let's go is the pattern
for victory then and now!*

Warren Wiersbe says it this way "This does not mean we are spectators and not combatants, for we must put on the armor, take the sword and shield (Eph 6:10–20), and resist the devil, trusting Jesus because of the victory he has already won (Jn 16:33, 1Co 15:57). Are we overcomers or overcome?" ([Bible Exposition Commentary - Old Testament](#))

Martin Selman - "Exodus 14:13–14+ offers a particularly close analogy, which suggests that the Chronicler saw this incident as a unique parallel to the exodus itself. Only in these two passages are the following phrases combined: 'do not be afraid', 'take your stand', 'see the Lord's deliverance', while the two statements in vv. 15 and 17 that Judah does not have to fight are but a negative version of 'the Lord shall fight for you' (Ex 14:14)" (See [2 Chronicles: An Introduction and Commentary - Page 446](#))

Do not fear or be dismayed ([chathath](#) in 2Ch 20:15); **tomorrow go out to face** (ESV - "against") **them** (JUDAH'S RESPONSIBILITY), **for** (term of explanation) **the LORD is with you."** - He repeats the command of 2Ch 20:15 to **not fear or be dismayed**, which is very similar to the charge God spoke to Joshua ([see passage above](#)) before he went in to secure the Promised Land against the strong entrenched enemy, the Canaanites. Note the critical term of explanation **for**, which explains why they need not fear or be dismayed.

Do not fear in the Septuagint is a command in the [present imperative with a negative](#) calling for them to stop fearing or not to begin to fear. **Dismayed** ([chathath](#)) in the Septuagint is the verb [ptoéo](#) which means to be terrified, frightened, startled, alarmed

(cf use in Lk 12:4+).

The LORD is with you - The Septuagint for "with" is meta a preposition with a basic meaning in the midst of or among! They might not be able to see Him, but the Captain of the LORD's host is there just as He was with Joshua (Josh 5:13-15+)!

THOUGHT - In spiritual warfare (which is continuous in all our lives) we are not to fear or be dismayed. Why? Because we "are from God, little children, and **have overcome** ([nikao](#) - perfect tense - at the Cross the enemies were defeated and the victory endures) them; because (another great term of explanation - explains why we are "more than conquerors through Christ" Ro 8:37KJV+) greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world." (1Jn 4:4+)!

*Judah's response must **not be mere passivity**:
Tomorrow go down against them is "fighting talk,"*

ESV Study Bible (page 768 - [borrow](#)) - Judah's response must not be mere passivity: Tomorrow go down against them is "fighting talk," but Judah's part in this instance is not to take up arms but to exercise faith and to offer prayer and praise (see Eph. 6:10-18+). (**NOTE**: The ESV comment supports the premise that the chapter is not speaking of the aberrant instruction "Let go and let God," which is passivity. Instead the correct "formula" is "Let God and let's go," so to speak!)

Spurgeon - Oh, how those words must have fallen on the weary ears of those who were in such trouble! And how glad those ears must have been to hear such a message of wondrous mercy, and so near at hand, too! "To morrow." Imminent danger brings eminent mercy, and when the lion is about to leap upon his prey, then comes the lionslayer and breaks his teeth, and delivers his lamb even from between his jaws. Glory be to God for such promises as he gives to his people in times of trouble, even such promises as he gave here.

Dismayed (discouraged)([02865](#)) [chathath](#) basically refers to breaking or shattering like a boe (Jer 51:56) or ground cracked by drought (Jer 14:4). This idea of shattering is used figuratively of God shattering nations (Isa 7:8). It can also mean to fright or terrify (Isa 30:31, Job 7:14) **Standing in awe** of God's Name (Mal 2:5). Summary - to be shattered, be dismayed, be broken, be abolished, be afraid. In Hiphil to cause to be dismayed, to terrify, to shatter.

Chathah - 47v - Deut. 1:21; Deut. 31:8; Jos. 1:9; Jos. 8:1; Jos. 10:25; 1 Sam. 2:10; 1 Sam. 17:11; 2 Ki. 19:26; 1 Chr. 22:13; 1 Chr. 28:20; 2 Chr. 20:15; 2 Chr. 20:17; 2 Chr. 32:7; Job 7:14; Job 31:34; Job 32:15; Job 39:22; Isa. 7:8; Isa. 8:9; Isa. 9:4; Isa. 20:5; Isa. 30:31; Isa. 31:4; Isa. 31:9; Isa. 37:27; Isa. 51:6; Isa. 51:7; Jer. 1:17; Jer. 8:9; Jer. 10:2; Jer. 14:4; Jer. 17:18; Jer. 23:4; Jer. 30:10; Jer. 46:27; Jer. 48:1; Jer. 48:20; Jer. 48:39; Jer. 49:37; Jer. 50:2; Jer. 50:36; Jer. 51:56; Ezek. 2:6; Ezek. 3:9; Obad. 1:9; Hab. 2:17; Mal. 2:5

Salvation (help, deliverance) ([03444](#))([yeshua](#)) is from a root in Arabic = "make wide" or "make sufficient" sarar = "narrow," = "be restricted" or "cause distress." The idea of wide connotes freedom from distress and ability to pursue one's objectives. It means to move from distress (enemies, natural catastrophies, plague or famine, sickness) to safety which requires deliverance. Generally deliverance comes from some an outside source. The one who brings deliverance is known as the "savior." Yeshua may be used in everyday life free of theological overtones at a well Moses saved daughters of Reuel (Ex 2:17) but generally has strong religious meaning. And so we read Yahweh wrought deliverance - God of our salvation Ps 68:19-20. Yeshua can also describe salvation through human agents empowered by God. While the NT idea of salvation is primarily forgiveness of sin, deliverance from sin's power and defeat of Satan, the OT only begins to point in this direction. And so in the OT the majority of references to salvation speak of Yahweh granting deliverance from real enemies and out of real catastrophies.

It is surprising that there is only one other use of yeshua in Kings and Chronicles - 1 Chronicles 16:23 "Sing to the LORD, all the earth; Proclaim good tidings of His **salvation** from day to day."

Yeshua - 77v - Ge 49:18; Ex 14:13; Ex 15:2; Dt 32:15; 1Sa 2:1; 1Sa 14:45; 2Sa 10:11; 2Sa 22:51; 1Ch 16:23; 2Ch 20:17; Job 13:16; Job 30:15; Ps. 3:2; Ps. 3:8; Ps. 9:14; Ps. 13:5; Ps. 14:7; Ps. 18:50; Ps. 20:5; Ps. 21:1; Ps. 21:5; Ps. 22:1; Ps. 28:8; Ps. 35:3; Ps. 35:9; Ps. 42:5; Ps. 42:11; Ps. 43:5; Ps. 44:4; Ps. 53:6; Ps. 62:1; Ps. 62:2; Ps. 62:6; Ps. 67:2; Ps. 68:19; Ps. 69:29; Ps. 70:4; Ps. 74:12; Ps. 78:22; Ps. 80:2; Ps. 88:1; Ps. 89:26; Ps. 91:16; Ps. 96:2; Ps. 98:2; Ps. 98:3; Ps. 106:4; Ps. 116:13; Ps. 118:14; Ps. 118:15; Ps. 118:21; Ps. 119:123; Ps. 119:155; Ps. 119:166; Ps. 119:174; Ps. 140:7; Ps. 149:4; Isa. 12:2; Isa. 12:3; Isa. 25:9; Isa. 26:1; Isa. 26:18; Isa. 33:2; Isa. 33:6; Isa. 49:6; Isa. 49:8; Isa. 51:6; Isa. 51:8; Isa. 52:7; Isa. 52:10; Isa. 56:1; Isa. 59:11; Isa. 59:17; Isa. 60:18; Isa. 62:1; Jon. 2:9; Hab. 3:8

Nearly 1,000 missionary personnel under the China Inland Mission were trapped in China when the Communists took over in the 1940s. CIM ordered a total evacuation in January, 1951, but was it too late? Communists are not averse to killing.

Arthur and Wilda Mathews applied for exit visas on January 3. Their living conditions had deteriorated to a bare kitchen where, in the corner, Wilda had converted a footlocker into a prayer nook. Days passed with no action on their requests. Meanwhile citizens were executed every day, and from her kitchen Wilda could hear the shots. The strain grew unbearable. "The imagination is what jumps around into all sorts of places it ought to keep out of," Arthur wrote to his parents.

He was told at last that his wife and child could leave if he would secretly work for the Communists. Arthur refused. Day after day he was summoned and grilled. Day after day he said good-bye to Wilda, wondering if he would ever see her again. Finally Arthur bluntly told the authorities, "I am not a Judas. If you expect me or anyone else in the China Inland Mission to do that kind of thing, you had better not try because we cannot do it."

Wilda was utterly overcome by fear and doubt. Sunday, March 21, 1951 was, as she called it later, Black Easter. Wilda sneaked into an Easter church service, but when she opened her mouth to sing "He Lives!" no words came out. Returning home, she fell at the trunk and her trembling fingers found 2 Chronicles 20:17: You won't even have to fight. Just take your position and watch the LORD rescue you from your enemy. Don't be afraid.... Wilda clamped onto that verse, and two weeks later she wrote, "The conflict has been terrible, but peace and quiet reign now."

It was two years before she exited the country, and even longer for Arthur who became the last CIM missionary to leave China. But miraculously, all of them got out without a single one being martyred. It was the greatest exodus in missionary history. (BORROW [From this verse : 365 inspiring stories about the power of God's word](#))

Charles Stanley - Marching into Battle (BORROW [Into His presence : an In Touch devotional](#))

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 Chronicles 20:1–19

KEY VERSE: 2 Chronicles 20:17 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.

The massive enemy army was coming. We can only imagine how news traveled in Jehoshaphat's day—by messenger on foot or by rider on horseback. One day life was normal, filled with regular activity. The next day the nation of Judah awoke to news of enemy invasion.

Reports of the threat spread quickly, igniting feelings of panic. Even King Jehoshaphat became fearful, but he also recognized that no enemy was stronger than the Lord God.

He immediately proclaimed a fast, and then he called the people together to pray. The Lord's Spirit filled the temple area where the people were praying and spoke through the prophet Jahaziel: "Listen, all you of Judah ... 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 ... Position yourselves ... and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you' " (2 Chron. 20:15–17).

God instructed Jehoshaphat to place the choir in front of the people as they marched into battle. What an act of faith by Jehoshaphat!

Can you do what Judah did—march into battle singing? They heard the word of the Lord and understood that the victory was theirs. All they were called to do was to watch, pray, and praise. When we praise Him, God works in miraculous ways!

Lord, as I march into the battles of this day, I praise You! The victory is mine!

Charles Stanley - A God-Centered Prayer (BORROW [Into His presence : an In Touch devotional](#))

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 Chronicles 20:13–30

KEY VERSE: 2 Chronicles 20:17 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.

Jehoshaphat's prayer was God centered. He did not indulge in negativism by dwelling on the details of the difficulty. God wants you to be specific about a problem, His desire is to move your focus onto His power. Name your concern and begin with praise for His action and blessing in the past; then express the truth of His omnipotence.

The king was no novice in rulership, and that wasn't the first kingdom problem. He had learned the value of coming to God in absolute humility, acknowledging his utter dependence. So complete was his trust that he never lapsed into self-reliance.

In other words, he could have quickly thanked God and then spread out the battle maps to make plans with his commanders. In your situation, the temptation to figure it out yourself may be the same, but God wants you to let Him handle the strategy.

What is even more awesome is that while the king prayed, God already had their deliverance under way. By the time the army of Judah arrived on the scene, what they beheld was a field of corpses. Not one foe was left standing. God provided what they needed, and He supplied them with gracious abundance.

Trusting Him to provide the resources for every demand makes you a God-centered person.

Lord, thank You for Your faithfulness in the past. I praise You for what You will do in the future. I lay my problems, plans, and issues before You right now.

Charles Stanley - Pour Out Your Heart (BORROW [On holy ground : a daily devotional](#))

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 Chronicles 20:13–17

KEY VERSE: 2 Chronicles 20:17 “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.

Jehoshaphat had a huge problem. The armies of the Moabites and Ammonites and Meunites were about to march on him and his people (2 Chron. 20:1 NASB). It was a time of national emergency, and most leaders would have called their advisers or mustered the army—but not King Jehoshaphat.

“Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention to seek the LORD” (2 Chron. 20:3 NASB). He didn’t falter, complain, or waste time in pessimistic thinking. Instead, he immediately called the people together for a time of prayer with fasting.

Notice the attributes of God he named at the beginning of his prayer: “O LORD, the God of our fathers, art Thou not God in the heavens? And art Thou not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Thy hand so that no one can stand against Thee” (2 Chron. 20:6 NASB).

The king recognized God’s ultimate power and authority, and therefore he was not afraid of what mere men might do to him. Furthermore, he showed that he was willing to be involved in the process of God’s answer. The king didn’t mouth a halfhearted, unemotional statement; he prayed with interest and passion and sincerity.

Have you ever poured forth your heart to the Lord? He wants you to cry out to Him and actively seek His deliverance.

O God, You handle the strategy. Provide the resources for my battles. I know that even while I am praying, my deliverance is on the way.

Fear of Confrontation

“Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the LORD is with you.” 2Ch 20:17 NASB

Intimidation has worked in the past. As a youngster, I cowered in fear when a raised voice was aimed at me. An angry stare would tongue-twist any clever comeback I might conjure up. My fear of confrontation followed me into adulthood until God reminded me that I’m not a doormat. I am His child.

In fear, Jehoshaphat sought the Lord’s guidance and protection in the expected attack from his enemies. He proclaimed a nationwide fast, then glorified God before requesting His help.

Chapter 20 in 2 Chronicles gave me new confidence when faced with a dreaded confrontation. I give God the glory, then ask Him to strengthen, guide, and protect me.

Whether confronting a well-meaning friend, a bully, or a fierce enemy, let us turn to the Lord in prayer—first in praise, then in supplication.

Lord God, we turn to You before facing our enemies and pray for the right attitude and words, as well as courage to confront them with Christlike graciousness. (Fear Less, Pray More)

C H Spurgeon - Faith's Checkbook - 2Ch 20:17.

THIS was a great mercy for Jehoshaphat, for a great multitude had come out against him; and it will be a great mercy for me, for I have great need, and I have no might or wisdom. If the Lord be with me, it matters little who may desert me. If the Lord be with me, I shall conquer in the battle of life, and the greater my trials the more glorious will be my victory. How can I be sure that the Lord is with me?

For certain he is with me if I am with him. If I trust in his faithfulness, believe his words, and obey his commands, he is assuredly with me. If I am on Satan's side God is against me, and cannot be otherwise; but if I live to honour God I may be sure that he will honour me.

I am quite sure that God is with me if Jesus is my sole and only Saviour. If I have placed my soul in the hands of God's Only-begotten Son, then I may be sure that the Father will put forth all his power to preserve me, that his Son may not be dishonoured.

Oh for faith to take hold upon the short but sweet text for to-day! O Lord, fulfil this word to thy servant! Be with me in the house, in the street, in the field, in the shop, in company, and alone. Be thou also with all thy people.

Ken Hemphill - BUT GOD... Will Do Your Fighting (BORROW [But God : devotions empowered by biblical statements of faith](#))

2 Chronicles 20:15 Do not be afraid or discouraged ... for the battle is not yours, but God's.

Have you ever looked at your circumstances and sighed, "If the Lord doesn't provide a miracle, I'm sunk"? Guess what, you have something in common with an ancient king named Jehoshaphat.

This chapter opens with a somber warning—that a vast multitude of armies, consisting of some of the day's most threatening and deadly nations, had marshaled their armies against Israel.

Jehoshaphat's first reaction was fear, an altogether reasonable response given the circumstances. It is not wrong to be afraid. The question is how we respond to our fear. Notice, then, the second response of Jehoshaphat: he resolved to seek the Lord. This mighty king called the people to pray and also led them in prayer. Jehoshaphat knew how to deal with his fear.

His prayer is worthy of our attention. "Lord God of our ancestors, are You not the God who is in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand, and no one can stand against You" (20:6). Notice that Jehoshaphat didn't focus on his dire circumstances but on the power and majesty of God. Listen to his confidence: "We will cry out to You because of our distress, and You will hear and deliver" (v. 9). I love both his honesty and his tenacity: "We do not know what to do, but we look to You" (v. 12).

Once the king and the people had brought their petition before the Lord, they stood patiently before him. Jahaziel, a Levite who could trace his lineage back to the psalmist Asaph, was inspired to give God's divine response. He began and ended with the same emphasis — "Do not be afraid or discouraged."

The counsel "do not fear" occurs 365 times in the Bible, as one commentator reports, giving us one for every day of the year. This is a convincing number of times to remind us why we can take courage. We do not face our enemies alone. The battle is not ours but God's.

Henry Blackaby - Praise before Victory (BORROW [Experiencing God Day-By-Day](#))

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Mark 14:26

Praise is greatly honoring to God! In the Old Testament account of King Jehoshaphat, God's people faced a seemingly insurmountable enemy who was determined to destroy them. Yet God assured them that they would "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord" (2 Chron. 20:17). The people of Judah believed God. Their army was led by singers, offering praises to the Lord for their promised victory, and the victory came. When King David led the procession bringing the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem, he praised God with all of his strength (2 Sam. 6:12–23). David's praise was pleasing to God, and God's powerful presence remained in David's kingdom to give him victory against every enemy.

Jesus was about to go to Gethsemane and to the cross, where God's greatest victory would be accomplished. He led His disciples to sing a hymn. The disciples were all about to fail Him, and Jesus was about to be cruelly executed, yet Jesus insisted that they praise God. Their praise looked beyond the cross to God's ultimate victory. Praise is rooted not in circumstances of the moment but in the nature and trustworthiness of God.

You ought to rejoice when God asks you to proceed in the work of His kingdom because you know the victory is already secured. Don't focus on the problems and failures of others. Focus on God's assurance of victory. If you have trouble praising God with a song in your heart as you serve Him, it may be that your focus is not on God, but on your circumstances.

[Anywhere With Jesus](#)

Do not fear or be dismayed; . . . for the LORD is with you. —2 Chronicles 20:17

Today's Scripture: Exodus 33:12-17

When our son Brian was small, I took him with me to pick up our babysitter. As I approached the house, I noticed that her dog, usually penned in the backyard, was lying on the front porch. At first glance, the dog looked benign. But to my alarm he sprang to his feet and attacked Brian, who leaped for my leg, shinnied up to my waist, and somehow ended up wrapped around my neck and shoulders.

I, on the other hand, was left to fend off the dog. We danced for a while—the dog trying to get in a bite and I a kick—until, to my relief, the owner came around the house and called off the beast. All of us—dog, boy, and I—escaped unscathed.

Later, as we were walking to the car, Brian looked up to me and said, “Dad, I’ll go anywhere with you.” His confidence was misplaced; I can fail him. But I often think of his words when I grapple with fear.

As Moses faced uncertain circumstances, he implored God, “Show me now Your way, . . . that I may find grace in Your sight” (Ex. 33:13). The Lord replied, “My Presence will go with you” (v.14).

Whenever we enter frightening circumstances or face furious assaults, we can say with confidence, “Lord, I’ll go anywhere with You.”
By: David H. Roper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Anywhere with Jesus I am not alone,
Other friends may fail me—He is still my own;
Though His hand may lead me over dreary ways,
Anywhere with Jesus is a house of praise.
—Pounds

You need not fear where you’re going when God is going with you.

2 Chronicles 20:18 Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshiping the LORD.

- **bowed his head:** 2Ch 7:3 Ge 24:26 Ex 4:31
- **fell before:** Job 1:20 Ps 95:6

WORSHIP IN RESPONSE TO THE SURE WORD OF TRUTH

Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshiping the LORD - This is a proper response when we have received a word from the LORD! The prayer meeting was turned into a praise meeting. Notice once again, the people follow their leader (cf Jdg 5:2+) This is an amazing verse for Jehoshaphat accepted by faith what he could not understand (cf Hebrews 11:1, 6+, 2Cor 5:7+). In other words based on God's Word of Promise, Jehoshaphat and all the people regarded the victory as already won!

THOUGHT - When we begin our morning with a **quiet time** (not too quiet though), listening to His Spirit in His written Word (our "Jahaziel" today), our proper response during that time should be to bow in our hearts and worship our Creator and Redeemer and Friend.

Spurgeon - 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 - What a sight! That is the kind of ritualism one likes — when the posture is suggested by the feelings — when the man feels that there is nothing else to do but to bow before the Lord. The king could not speak, he was too full of gratitude — too joyous at the thought that God had so appeared for him. And he felt that the only thing he could do was in silence to bow his head, and prostrate himself before God. Have not you sometimes felt so full of gratitude that you could not express yourself? "A sacred silence checks our songs and praise sits silent on our tongues." Now, while they were worshipping, and just as they had finished that silent adoration, the joy-strains were heard. They had taken breath.

Ron Daniel - 20:18-19 Worship Before Warfare. There are a lot of things packed into these verses of which we should take notice:

#1) Jehoshaphat bowed first. Parents often wonder why their children don't love the Lord the way we want them to. Why they don't worship with the intensity that we wish they had. Have you considered that they are looking to you for the example? Don't expect your kids to pray more than you do, or to be any more devoted to God than you are.

#2) In church today, we call the style of music we play, "Worship." But in fact, "worship" is a verb. And it is important to notice that worship happened (v.18) BEFORE the music started (v.19). They were bowing down, prostrating themselves before God. Saints, worship is much more than singing. Paul the apostle said that our spiritual service of worship is to present our whole selves, our lives and bodies, to Him (Rom. 12:1).

#3) Notice who was singing praise: They were Levites, from the Kohathite clan. But more specifically, they were the descendants of Korah. You may recall that Korah was the one who led the rebellion against Moses in the wilderness (Num. 16). He and everyone who stood with him were judged by God.

Num. 16:31-33 ...the ground that was under them split open; and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households ... So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to Sheol; and the earth closed over them...

The Kohathites could have considered themselves second-rate citizens, not worthy to do any ministry of value. Yes, their kin had formerly been in rebellion, but now they are in fellowship and worship.

People often feel that their past hinders their ability to worship God, that discipline from God is a permanent separation from the people of God. Always remember that it was the Kohathites who stood up to praise.

2 Chronicles 20:19 The Levites, from the sons of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel, with a very loud voice.

- **Levites:** 1Ch 15:16-22 16:5,42 23:5 25:1-7
- **sons of the Korahites:** Ps 44:1 49:1
- **a loud:** 2Ch 5:13 Ezra 3:12,13 Ne 12:42,43 Ps 81:1 95:1,2

A PRAISE RESPONSE

The **Levites**, from the sons of the **Kohathites** and of the sons of the **Korahites**, stood up to praise (**halal**) the LORD God of Israel, with a very loud voice - Their praise was loud. Oh, how wonderful to have been there to hear the thundering voices singing praises to the great God. Their praise is their proper response to receipt by faith of the sure word of truth from Jehovah!

THOUGHT - Do you respond with praise (even a loud voice) when you receive assurance from His Word that the battle is the Lord's and the victory is sure?

Spurgeon - Here, again, we seem to be carried by great waves of excitement and devotion. One moment we are sinking down in adoration, now all rising up to listen to the loud voice of God's priests and Levites. But they have to wait for the morrow.

Praise (verb) (**01984**) (**halal**, **הָלַל**) has the root meaning of "giving off of light by celestial bodies." Halal means to shine, to flash, to radiate, have bright or clear light be visible from a source (as in Job 29:3; 31:26; 41:18; Isa 13:10). To praise is the meaning of the intensive form of the halal, which in its simple active form means to boast (Related to God = "My soul shall make its **boast** in the LORD" Ps 34:2, Boasting related to men = 1Ki 20:11). **Halal** connotes genuine appreciation for the great actions or the character of its object. **Halal** is occasionally used to indicate "**praise**" of people (the king = 2Ch 23:12; Absalom = 2Sa 14:25). More often **halal** refers to the "**praise**" of God (first use in this way = 2Sa 22:4). In fact in some texts not only living things are to praise God but all created things, including the sun and moon, are to praise Him (Ps 148:2-5, 13; 150:1).

Halal in Kings and Chronicles - 1 Ki. 20:11; 1 Chr. 16:4; 1 Chr. 16:10; 1 Chr. 16:25; 1 Chr. 16:36; 1 Chr. 23:5; 1 Chr. 23:30; 1 Chr. 25:3; 1 Chr. 29:13; 2 Chr. 5:13; 2 Chr. 7:6; 2 Chr. 8:14; 2 Chr. 20:19; 2 Chr. 20:21; 2 Chr. 23:12; 2 Chr. 23:13; 2 Chr. 29:30; 2 Chr. 30:21; 2 Chr. 31:2

2 Chronicles 20:19 Don't Drown in a Mud Puddle

A saintly Christian man who was talking about the spiritual dimension of life said, "If you're going to drown, don't do it in a mud puddle." He simply meant that he could understand why a person would struggle with his faith as a result of going through unusually deep waters of pain or grief. But he considered it utterly absurd that a believer would allow his testimony to be marred and his

service rendered useless because of resentment over a small hurt or an ordinary disappointment.

In our text for today, King Uzziah let pride and envy cause him to break God's clearly prescribed law regarding worship. He apparently resented the fact that he as king could not perform the task assigned to the high priest. So with presumption he intruded into the sanctuary, and God afflicted him with leprosy. After about 50 years of excellent rule, he had "drowned in a mud puddle." How tragic!

Christians today can fall prey to a similar lack of discernment. A deacon lost the respect of his neighbors because he started a big ruckus with the unsaved man next door over a bush on their lot line. Another man was hurt and left the church in a huff because the class he had been leading for a long time wanted another teacher. Both men allowed little problems to mar their witness.

How do you handle the hurts, disappointments, rebuffs, griefs, and irritations that are common to all of us? Be careful to maintain balance! You don't want to drown in a mud puddle.-H. V. Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

2 Chronicles 20:20 They rose early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa; and when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, put your trust in the LORD your God and you will be established. Put your trust in His prophets and succeed."

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:20 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.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:20 κα ρηρισαν πρω κα ξ λθον ε ρ τ ν ρημον Θεκωε κα ν τ ξελθε ν στη Ιωσαφατ κα β ησεν κα ε πεν κο σατ μου Ιουδα κα ο κατοικο ντες ν Ιερουσαλημ μπιστε σατε ν κυρ θε μ ν κα μπιστευθ σεσθε μπιστε σατε ν προφ τ α το κα ε οδωθ σεσθε

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:20 And they rose early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Thecoe: and as they went out, Josaphat stood and cried, and said, Hear me, Juda, and the dwellers in Jerusalem; put your trust in the Lord God, and your trust shall be honored; trust in his prophet, and ye shall prosper.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:20 Early the next morning they marched out to the Desert of Tekoa. When they were ready to march, Jehoshaphat stood up and said: "Listen to me, you people of Judah and residents of Jerusalem! Trust in the LORD your God and you will be safe! Trust in the message of his prophets and you will win."

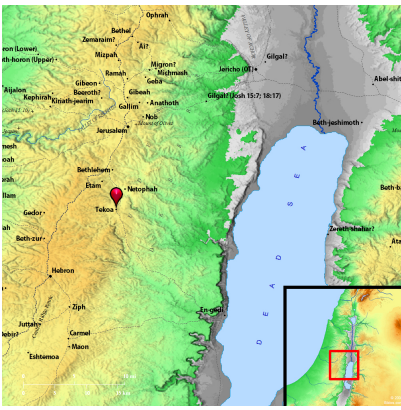
CSB 2 Chronicles 20:20 In the morning they got up early and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa. As they were about to go out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in Yahweh your God, and you will be established; believe in His prophets, and you will succeed."

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:20 And they rose early in the morning and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. And when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be established; believe his prophets, and you will succeed."

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:20 Early in the morning they left for the Desert of Tekoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful."

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:20 Early the next morning the army of Judah went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. On the way Jehoshaphat stopped and said, "Listen to me, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be able to stand firm. Believe in his prophets, and you will succeed."

- **Tekoa:** 2Ch 11:6 2Sa 14:2 1Ch 4:5 Jer 6:1, Hear ye, 2Ch 20:15
- **put your trust in the LORD your God** Isa 7:9 26:3 Joh 11:40 14:1 Ro 8:31 Heb 11:6
- **Put your trust:** Ex 14:31 Lu 16:31 Joh 5:46,47 13:20



Location of Tekoa

JEHOSHAPHAT'S "SHEMA" HEAR O JUDAH

They rose early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa (S of Bethlehem - map above or [more detailed map](#)); **and when they went out** - First, note they were able to sleep with an overwhelming enemy at their door! That's evidence that they believed the prophet's promises. Jehoshaphat had come from fear in 2Ch 20:3 to confidence in God's word of victory. Second, they went out to **the wilderness of Tekoa** which is south of Jerusalem, again the fact that they were willing to go out to meet the enemy is further evidence that they believed God's Word. This act also demonstrates that they were not passive in this battle. One other point is that the wilderness of Tekoa is about 10-12 miles south of Jerusalem ([see map](#)) which if accurate indicates the eastern enemy coalition is now very close to Jerusalem compared to when they were first identified at Engedi.

Edersheim - "Early the next morning they prepared to obey the Divine direction (v. 20). It was to be a battle such as had never been witnessed since Jericho had fallen at the blast of the trumpet of the Lord when His ark compassed its walls. And they prepared for it in such manner as host going to battle had never done ... If never before an army had so marched to battle, never, even in the marvelous history of Israel, had such results been experienced"

Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen (shama) to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, put your trust (aman) in the LORD your God and you will be established. Put your trust (aman; Lxx - empisteuo from pisteuo - aorist imperative = Just Do It!) in His prophets and succeed (NET = "you will win.")" - ESV = "Believe in the LORD your God." A leader who believes God is a powerful instrument in the hands of the LORD and a blessing to his subjects! This was Jehoshaphat's "Shema" to his people - "Hear O Judah!" The king says believe God and His prophets (plural). Believe His word! That's a timeless prescription for God's people of all ages!

The king's command is to trust the Word of the Lord. While one cannot force one to believe, one can certainly issue the charge to believe. The people had already followed the lead of their king and as noted above had expressed belief, so they would surely follow these commands.

[ESV Study Bible \(page 768 - borrow\)](#) - **Believe** here means the active and obedient trust that God rewards (see Heb. 11:6+), acting on the revealed word of his prophets, including

Gustafson - "The thought may be paraphrased. Trust in the Lord your God and you will find Him trustworthy. There is in the exhortation a call to commitment. The trustworthiness of the Lord cannot be known until one begins to make decisions on the basis of His promises, staking wealth and welfare on the outcome" (McConville). The Hebrew wordplay could also be rendered, "Have firm faith and you will stand firm". (Digital - [What the Bible Teaches: 1 and 2 Chronicles](#) or book - [WTBT 1 and 2 Chronicles](#))

Bob Utley - The king admonishes his people to obey and trust YHWH. (1) listen – *Qal* IMPERATIVE (different word from 2 Chr. 20:15), (2) put your trust in the Lord your God – Hiphil IMPERATIVE, (3) (if you do) you will be established – this is the same root as #2, but in the Niphal IMPERFECT form, (4) put your trust in His prophets – this is the same root as #2, (5) (if you do) you will succeed – Hiphil IMPERATIVE; this VERB is used often in 2 Chronicles (a) Abijah's message to Jeroboam I, 2 Chr. 13:12, (b) YHWH gave Asa rest, 2 Chr. 14:6, (c) Joash abandons YHWH and goes after the Ba'als; this disobedience causes a lack of success, 2 Chr. 24:20, (d) used of Hezekiah in 2 Chr. 31:21 and 2Ch 32:30, (e) success is dependant on covenant obedience, cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28

1. (if you do) you will succeed – BDB 852, KB 1026, Hiphil IMPERATIVE; this VERB is used often in 2 Chronicles
 1. Abijah's message to Jeroboam I, 2 Chr. 13:12
 2. YHWH gave Asa rest, 2 Chr. 14:6

3. Joash abandons YHWH and goes after the Ba'als; this disobedience causes a lack of success, 2 Chr. 24:20
4. used of Hezekiah in 2 Chr. 31:21 and 32:30
5. success is dependant on covenant obedience, cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28

Raymond Dillard: The modern historian may be tempted "to poke fun at Jehoshaphat in Chronicles for sending out the temple choir to meet an invading army; it is still funnier when the choir puts the foe to flight and causes great slaughter with a few well-directed psalms" (W. Stinespring, JBL 80 [1961] 209). Though the role of the musicians may be enlarged or enhanced in the eyes of a modern historian, one must not forget the role of music in warfare ancient and modern; armies through the millennia have gone into battle to musical cadence. Particularly within Israel's tradition of holy war music has been assigned an important function (13:11–12; Josh 6:4–20; Judg 7:18–20; Job 39:24–25); music accompanies the appearance of the divine warrior to execute judgment (Ps 47; 96; 98). Yahweh marches at the head of the armies of heaven and Israel (Deut 33:2–5, 26–29; Josh 5:13–15; Judg 5; Ps 68:8–13; 2 Kgs 6:15–19; 7:6; Isa 13:1–13; 4:9–12]; Hab 3); his appearance on the Day of Yahweh is marked by a trumpet blast (Exod 19:16, 19; Isa 18:3; 27:13; Amos 2; 2; Zeph 1:14–16; Zech 9:14; Matt 24:31; 1 Cor 15:52; Rev 8–9; 10:7; 11:15). (BORROW [2 Chronicles](#))

August Konkell: It is not normally good military strategy to meet a mighty foe with a choir, yet this is the appropriate method of divine warfare. In this case the prophets were the Levitical musicians, such as Jahaziel; musical praise for the battle march was itself prophetic. Through the millennia music has had a vital role in warfare, but in the context of divine warfare, it was a declaration that God was at the head of the army. As at Jericho, the battle belonged to the Lord; the task of the human army was simply to stand still and wait for the outcome of the battle. The battle cry was replaced by a chorale. The Lord set ambushes against the enemy. The Chronicler is saying that the heavenly army confused the enemy armies so they turned on each other in the rough terrain. The army of Jehoshaphat returned to the temple, confirming the answer to prayer; they ended where they began. ([Multipart Video Series on 1-2 Chronicles](#))

Ron Daniel - 20:20 Where Is Your Trust? The next day, they started to head out. But as they did, King Jehoshaphat told everyone, "Put your trust in the LORD your God and you will be established. Put your trust in His prophets and succeed." Why did he do this? I believe it is because it was the next day. Yesterday had been a dynamic worship service, and God had spoken. But we have a tendency to wake up and doubt the spiritual nature of yesterday. - God speaks powerfully on Sunday, but on Monday, we begin to doubt whether it was the Lord. - On a Thursday night, we gather the courage to do what is right because we've been taught the Word of God. But somehow on Friday morning, we've lost that edge. Jehoshaphat reminds the people, "Trust God, and trust his prophets. We're going to win this."

Before the Face of God - The question often arises when reading the books of Chronicles, Why are these stories told twice in Scripture? We already read about David, Solomon, and the other kings in the books of Samuel and Kings. It is helpful to know the purpose of the writer of the Chronicles. Many do not realize that these books were written long after Samuel and Kings—in fact, after the exile. They are the last two books in the Hebrew Bible, concluding the third division of literature known as "the writings."

Although telling the same stories, the writer's perspective differed radically from that found in the earlier historical books. This writer looked with the eye of a historian on the events of the reigns of Israel's and Judah's sinful kings and the godless national decline.

As the historical account unfolded, the writer knew that in the end Israel had fallen into the depths of degradation. But he also knew that wasn't the end of God's work, for even then his nation was finally regrouping after returning from a generation of exile in another land. The writer wanted his people to realize that their heritage was important. Although they no longer had a king and there was no visible reason for national pride, theirs was a wondrous national heritage. The people were still connected, both by a physical and a spiritual lineage, to everlasting promises made by Yahweh the Great King.

Further, continuing faith in Yahweh could yet make all the difference. In fact, the difference in perspective could be summarized by saying that, if the books of Kings teach that sin leads to defeat and ultimate downfall, Chronicles teaches that faith can lead to recovery and new victories.

For several reasons tradition has held that Ezra was the writer of Chronicles, not the least being the close similarity between the ending of Chronicles (2 Chron. 36:22–23) and the beginning of Ezra (1:1–3). The long genealogies he recorded were intended to show the bridge that connected the former times with the latter times. The consistent positive outlook on God's continuing promises was meant to encourage people to maintain hope for the messianic fulfillment which was finally and fully met in Jesus of Nazareth hundreds of years later.

Coram Deo In the same way as at the writing of the Chronicles, it is important for us to look both back in time (remembering the connection we have with our spiritual forerunners) and forward (continuing to look for the ultimate messianic fulfillment promised to us by that same Jesus). Think of your own heritage, where you came from both spiritually and naturally. Thank God for his past faithfulness. What kind of legacy are you leaving for those coming after you?

Kay Arthur - 2 Chronicles 20:20 - **Trust God** - Though King Jehoshaphat was afraid and didn't know what specific action to take against the coming army, he knew where to look. And it's the same place you, Beloved, can look today. (BORROW [Powerful moments with God](#))

Matthew Henry Notes: Verses: 2Ch 20:20-30

We have here the foregoing prayer answered and the foregoing promise performed, in the total overthrow of the enemies' forces and the triumph (for so it was rather than a victory) of Jehoshaphat's forces over them.

I. Never was army drawn out to the field of battle as Jehoshaphat's was.

He had soldiers ready prepared for war (2Ch 17:18), but here is no notice taken of their military equipment, their swords or spears, their shields or bows. But Jehoshaphat took care,

1. That faith should be their armour. As they went forth, instead of calling them to handle their arms, and stand to them, to keep ranks, observe orders, and fight valiantly, he bade them believe in the Lord God and give credit to his word in the mouth of his prophets, and assured them that they should prosper and be established, 2Ch 20:20. That is true courage which faith inspires a man with; nor will any thing contribute more to the establishing of the heart in shaking times than a firm belief of the power, and mercy, and promise of God. The heart is fixed that thus trusteth in the Lord, and is kept in perfect peace. In our spiritual conflicts, this is the victory, this is the prosperity, even our faith.

2. That praise and thanksgiving should be their vanguard 2Ch 20:21. Jehoshaphat called a council of war, and it was resolved to appoint singers to go out before the army, to charge in the front, who had nothing else to do but to praise God, to praise his holiness, which is his beauty, to praise him as they did in the temple (that beauty of holiness) with that ancient and good doxology which eternity itself will not wear thread-bare, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever. By this strange advance towards the field of battle, Jehoshaphat intended to express his firm reliance upon the word of God (which enabled him to triumph before the battle), to animate his own soldiers, to confound the enemy, and to engage God on their side; for praise pleases God better than all burnt offering and sacrifice.

II. Never was army so unaccountably destroyed as that of the enemy; not by thunder, or hail, or the sword of an angel, not by dint of sword, or strength of arm, or any surprising alarm, like that which Gideon gave the Midianites; but the Lord set ambushments against them, either hosts of angels, or, as bishop Patrick thinks, their own ambushments, whom God struck with such confusion that they fell upon their own friends as if they had been enemies, and every one helped to destroy another, so that none escaped.

This God did when his people began to sing and to praise (2Ch 20:22), for he delights to furnish those with matter for praise that have hearts for it. We read of his being angry at the prayers of his people (Ps. 80:4), but never at their praises. When they did but begin the work of praise God perfected the work of their deliverance. What ground there was for their jealousies one of another does not appear, perhaps there was none; but so it was that the Ammonites and the Moabites fell foul upon the Edomites and cut them off, and then they fell out with one another and cut one another off, 2Ch 20:23. Thus God often makes wicked people instruments of destruction to one another; and what alliances can be so firm as to keep those together whom God designs to dash in pieces one against another? See the mischievous consequences of divisions which neither of the contending parties can give any good account of the reason of. Those are wretchedly infatuated, to their ruin, that fall foul upon their friends as if they were enemies.

III. Never was spoil so cheerfully divided, for Jehoshaphat's army had nothing to do besides; the rest was done for them.

When they came to the view of this vast army, instead of finding living men to fight with, they found them all dead men, and their carcasses spread as dung upon the face of the earth, 2Ch 20:24. See how rich God is in mercy to those that call upon him in truth, and how often he out-does him in truth, and how often he out-does the prayers and expectations of his people. Jehoshaphat and his people prayed to be delivered from being spoiled by the enemy; and God not only delivered them, but enriched them with the spoil of the enemy. The plunder of the field was very great and very rich. They found precious jewels with the dead bodies, which yet could not save them from being loathsome carcasses. The spoil was more than they could carry away at once, and they were three days in gathering it, 2Ch 20:25. Now it appeared what was God's end in bringing this great army against Judah; it was to humble them and prove them, that he might do them good in their latter end. It seemed at first a disturbance to their reformation, but it proved a recompence of it.

IV. Never was victory celebrated with more solemn and enlarged thanksgivings.

1. **They kept a day of praise in the camp, before they drew their forces out of the field** Many thanksgivings, no doubt, were offered up to God immediately; but on the fourth day they assembled in a valley, where they blessed God with so much zeal and fervency that that day's work gave a name to the place, the valley of Berachah, that is, of blessing, v. 26. The remembrance of this work of wonder was hereby perpetuated, for the encouragement of succeeding generations to trust in God.

2. **Yet they did not think this enough, but came in solemn procession, all in a body, and Jehoshaphat at the head of them,** to Jerusalem, that the country, as they passed along, might join with them in their praises, and that they might give thanks for the mercy where they had by prayer obtained it, in the house of the Lord, 2Ch 20:27, 28. Praising God must not be the work of a day only; but our praises, when we have received mercy, must be often repeated, as our prayers were when we were in the pursuit of it. Every day we must bless God; as long as we live, and while we have any being, we must praise him, spending our time in that work in which we hope to spend our eternity. Public mercies call for public acknowledgments in the courts of the Lord's house, Ps. 116:19.

V. Never did victory turn to a better account than this; for,

1. Jehoshaphat's kingdom was hereby made to look very great and considerable abroad, 2Ch 20:29. When they heard that God fought thus for Israel, they could not but say, There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, and Happy art thou, O Israel! It begat in the neighbours a reverence of God and a cautious fear of doing any injury to his people. It is dangerous fighting against those who have God with them.

2. It was made very easy and quiet at home, 2Ch 20:30.

(1.) They were quiet among themselves. Those that were displeased at the destroying of the images and groves were now satisfied, and obliged to own that since the God of Israel could deliver after this sort he only is to be worshipped, in that way only which he himself has appointed.

(2.) They were quiet from the fear of insults from their neighbours, God having given them rest round about. And, if he give rest, who can give disturbance?

Alexander Maclaren - Holding Fast and Held Fast

As they went forth Jehoshaphat stood and said, Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established.— 2 Chronicles 20:20

Certainly no stronger army ever went forth to victory than these Jews, who poured out of Jerusalem that morning with no weapon in all their ranks, and having for their van, not their picked men, but singers who 'praised the beauty of holiness,' and chanted the old hymn, 'Give thanks unto the Lord, for His mercy endureth for ever.' That was all that men had to do in the battle, for as the shrill song rose in the morning air 'the Lord set liers in wait for the foe,' and they turned their swords against one another, so that when Jehoshaphat and his troops came in sight of the enemy the battle was over and the field strewn with corpses—so great and swift is the power of devout recognition of God's goodness and trust in His enduring mercy, even in the hour of extremest peril.

The exhortation in our text which is Jehoshaphat's final word to his army, has, in the original, a beauty and emphasis that are incapable of being preserved in translation. There is a play of words which cannot be reproduced in another language, though the sentiment of it may be explained. The two expressions for 'believing' and 'being established' are two varying forms of the same root-word; and although we can only imitate the original clumsily in our language, we might translate in some such way as this: 'Hold fast by the Lord your God, and you will be held fast,' or 'stay yourselves on Him and you will be stable.' These attempts at reproducing the similarity of sound between the two verbs in the two clauses of our text, rude as they are, preserve what is lost, so far as regards form, in the English translation, though that is correct as to the meaning of the command and promise. If we note this connection of the two clauses we just come to the general principle which lies here, that the true source of steadfastness in character and conduct, of victory over temptation, and of standing fast in slippery places, is simple reliance, or, to use the New Testament word, 'faith,' 'Believe and ye shall be established.' Put out your hand and clasp Him, and He puts out His hand and steadies you. But all the steadfastness and strength come from the mighty Hand that is outstretched, not from the tremulous one that grasps it.

So, then, keeping to the words of my text, let me suggest to you the large lessons that this saying teaches us, in regard to three things, which I may put as being the object, the nature, and the issues of faith; or, in other words, to whom we are to cling, how we are to cling, and what the consequence of the clinging is.

I. To whom we must cling.

'Stay yourselves on the Lord your God,' Well, then, faith is not believing a number of theological articles, nor is it even accepting the truth of the Gospel as it lies in Jesus Christ, but it is accepting the Christ whom the truth of the Gospel reveals to us. And, although we have to come to Him through the word that declares what He is, and what He has done for us, the act of believing on Him is something that lies beyond the mere understanding of, or giving credence to, the message that tells us who He is and what He has done. A man may have not the ghost of a doubt or hesitation about one tittle of revealed truth, and if you were to cross-question him, could answer satisfactorily all the questions of an orthodox inquisitor, and yet there may not be one faintest flicker of faith in that man's whole being, for all the correctness of his creed, and the comprehensiveness of it, too. Trust is more than assent. If it is a Person on whom our faith leans, then from that there follows clearly enough that the bond which binds us to Him must be something far warmer, far deeper, and far more under the control of our own will than the mere consent or assent of our brains to a set of revealed truths. 'The Lord your God,' and not even the Bible that tells you about Him; 'the Lord your God,' and not even the revealed truths that manifest Him, but Him as revealed by the truths—it is He that is the Object to which our faith clings.

Jehoshaphat, in the same breath in which he exhorted his people to 'believe in the Lord, that they might be established,' also said, 'Believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper.' The immediate reference, of course, was to the man who the day before had assured them of victory. But the wider truth suggested is, that the only way to get to God is through the word that speaks of Him, and which has come from the lips either of prophets or of the Son who has spoken more, and more sweetly and clearly, than all the prophets put together. If we are to believe God, we must believe the prophets that tell us of Him.

And then there is another suggestion that may be made. The Object of faith proposed to Judah is not only 'the Lord,' but 'the Lord your God.' I do not say that there can be no faith without the 'appropriating' action which takes the whole Godhead for mine, but I doubt very much whether there is any. And it seems to me that to a very large extent the difference between mere nominal, formal Christians and men who really are living by the power of faith in God as revealed in Jesus Christ, lies in that one little word, 'the Lord your God.' That a man shall put out a grasping hand, and say, 'I take for my own—for my very own—the universal blessing, I claim as my possession that God of the spirits of all flesh, I believe that He does stand in a real individualizing relation to me, and I to Him,' is surely of the very essence of faith. There is no presumption, but the truest wisdom and lowliness in enclosing, if I may so say, a part of this great common for ours, and putting a hedge about it, as it were, and saying, 'That is mine.' We shall not have understood the sweetness and the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ until we have pointed and condensed the general declaration, 'He so loved the world,' into the individualizing and appropriating one, 'He loved me, and gave Himself for me.' Oh! if we could only apply that process thoroughly to all the broad glorious words and promises of Scripture, and feel that the whole incidence of them was meant to fall upon us, one by one, and that just as the sun, up in the heavens there, sends all his beams into the tiniest daisy on the grass, as if there was nothing else in the whole world, but only its little petals to be smoothed out and opened, I think our Christianity would be more real, and we should have more blessings in our hands. God in Christ and I, the only two beings in the universe, and all His fullness mine, and all my weakness supported and supplemented by Him—that is the view that we should sometimes take. We should set ourselves apart from all mankind, and claim Him as our very own, and so be filled with the fullness of God.

This, then, is the Object of faith, a Person who is all mine and all yours too. The beam of light that falls on my eye falls on yours, and no man makes a sunbeam the smaller because he sees by it; and in like manner we may each possess the whole of God for our very own property.

II. How we cling.

The metaphor, I suppose, is more eloquent than all explanations of it. 'Believe in the Lord'; hold fast by Him with a tight grip, continually renewed when it tends to slacken, as it surely will, and then you will be established.

We might run out into any number of figurative illustrations. Look at that little child beginning to learn to walk, how it fastens its little dimpled hands into its mother's apron, and so the tiny tottering feet get a kind of steadfastness into them. Look at that man lying at the door of the Temple, who never had walked since his mother's womb, and had lain there for forty years, with his poor weak ankles all atrophied by reason of their disuse. 'He held Peter and John.' Would not his grasp be tight? Would he not clasp their hands as his only stay? He had not become accustomed to the astounding miracle of walking, nor learned to balance himself and accomplish the still more astounding feat of standing steady. So he clutched at the two Apostles and was 'established.' Look at that man walking by a slippery path which he does not know, holding by the hand the guide who is able to direct and keep him up. See this other in some wild storm, with an arm round a steadfast tree-stem, to keep him from being blown over the precipice, how he clings like a limpet to a rock. And that is how we are to hold on to God, with what would be despair if it were not the perfection of confidence, with the clear sense that the only thing between us and ruin is the strong Hand that we clasp.

And what do we mean by clasping God? I mean making daily efforts to rivet our love on Him, and not to let the world, with all its delusive and cloying sweets, draw us away from Him. I mean continual and strenuous efforts to fix our thoughts upon Him, and not

to allow the trivialities of life, or the claims of culture, or the necessities of our daily position so to absorb our minds as that thoughts of God are comparative strangers there, except, perhaps, sometimes on a Sunday, and now and then at the sleepy end, or the half-awake beginning, of a day. I mean continually repeated and strenuous efforts to cleave to Him by the submission of our will, letting Him 'do what seemeth Him good,' and not lifting ourselves up against Him, or perking our own inclinations, desires, and fancies in His face, as if we would induce Him to take them for His guides! And I mean that we should try to commit our way unto the Lord, 'to rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.' The submissive will which cleaves to God's commandments, the waiting heart that clings to His love, the regulated thoughts that embrace His truth, and the childlike confidence that commits its path to Him—these are the elements of that steadfast adherence to the Lord which shall not be in vain.

III. The blessed effects of this clinging to God.

'So shall ye be established.' That follows, as a matter of course. The only way to make light things stable is to fasten them to something that is stable. And the only way to put any kind of calmness and fixedness, and yet progress—stability in the midst of progress, and progress in the midst of stability—into our lives, is by keeping firm hold of God. If we grasp His hand, then a calm serenity will be ours. In the midst of changes, sorrows, losses, disappointments, we shall not be blown about here and there by furious winds of fortune, nor will the heavy currents of the river of life sweep us away. We shall have a holdfast and a mooring. And although, like some light-ship anchored in the Channel, we may heave up and down with the waves, we shall keep in the same place, and be steadfast in the midst of mobility, and wholesomely mobile although anchored in the one spot where there is safety. As the issue of faith, of this throwing the responsibility for ourselves upon God, there will be quietness of heart, and continuance and persistence in righteousness, and steadfastness of purpose and continuity of advancement in the divine life. 'The law of the Lord is in his heart,' says one of the Psalms, 'none of his steps shall slide.' The man who walks holding God's hand can put down a firm foot, even when he is walking in slippery places. There will be decision, and strength, and persistence of continuous advance, in a life that derives its impulse and its motive power from communion with God in Jesus Christ.

There will be victory, not indeed after the fashion of that in this story before us. In it, of course, men had to do nothing but 'stand still and see the salvation of God.' That is the law for us, in regard to the initial blessings of acceptance, and forgiveness, and the communication of the divine life from above. We have to be simple recipients, and we have no co-operating share in that part of the work of our own salvation. But for the rest we have to help God. 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you.' But none the less, 'This is the victory that over-cometh the world, even our faith,' and if we give heed to Jehoshaphat's commandment, and go out to battle as his people did, with the love and trust of God in our hearts, then we shall come back as they did, laden with spoil, and shall name the place which was the field of conflict 'the valley of blessing,' and return to Jerusalem 'with psalteries, and harps, and trumpets,' and 'God will give us rest from all our enemies round about us.'

2 Chronicles 20:21 When he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who sang to the LORD and those who praised Him in holy attire, as they went out before the army and said, "Give thanks to the LORD, for His lovingkindness is everlasting."

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:21 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.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:21 κα βουλε σατο μετ το λαο κα στησεν ψαλτ δο ς κα α νο ντας ξομολογε σθαι κα α νε ν τ για ν τ ξελθε ν μπροσθεν τ ς δυν μεω ς κα λεγον ξομολογε σθε τ κυρ πι ε ς τ ν α να τ λεο ς α το

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:21 And he took counsel with the people, and set appointed men to sing psalms and praises, to give thanks, and sing the holy songs of praise in going forth before the host: and they said, Give thanks to the Lord, for his mercy endures for ever.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:21 He met with the people and appointed musicians to play before the LORD and praise his majestic splendor. As they marched ahead of the warriors they said: "Give thanks to the LORD, for his loyal love endures."

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:21 Then he consulted with the people and appointed some to sing for the LORD and some to praise the splendor of His holiness. When they went out in front of the armed forces, they kept singing: Give thanks to the LORD, for His faithful love endures forever.

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:21 And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the LORD and praise him in holy attire, as they went before the army, and say, "Give thanks to the

LORD, for his steadfast love endures forever."

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:21 After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: "Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures forever."

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:21 After consulting the people, the king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army, singing to the LORD and praising him for his holy splendor. This is what they sang: "Give thanks to the LORD; his faithful love endures forever!"

[EXB](#) Jehoshaphat listened to the advice of [consulted/conferred with] the people. Then he chose [appointed] men to be singers to the Lord, to praise him because he is holy and wonderful [for his holy splendor; or in their holy/sacred vestments/robes]. As they marched in front [went ahead] of the army, they said, "Thank [Give thanks to; Praise] the Lord, because his love [unfailing love; lovingkindness; loyalty] continues [endures] forever [Ps. 136]."

[MSG](#) After talking it over with the people, Jehoshaphat appointed a choir for God; dressed in holy robes, they were to march ahead of the troops, singing, Give thanks to God, His love never quits.

[NCB](#) After conferring with the people, Jehoshaphat appointed some to sing to the Lord and praise the splendor of his holiness as they marched forth at the head of the army: "Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever."

[NCV](#) Jehoshaphat listened to the people's advice. Then he chose men to be singers to the Lord, to praise him because he is holy and wonderful. As they marched in front of the army, they said, "Thank the Lord, because his love continues forever."

[NIRV](#) Jehoshaphat asked the people for advice. Then he appointed men to sing to the Lord. He wanted them to praise the Lord because of his glory and holiness. They marched out in front of the army. They said, "Give thanks to the Lord. His faithful love continues forever."

- **consulted:** 1Ch 13:1,2 Pr 11:14
- **appointed:** 2Ch 29:25-30 30:21 Ezr 3:10,11 Ne 12:27
- **praised Him in holy attire,** 1Ch 16:29 Ps 29:2 50:2 90:17 96:9
- **Give thanks to the LORD** 2Ch 5:13 7:3,6 1Ch 16:34,41 Ezra 3:11 Ps 106:1 107:1 136:1-26 Jer 33:11

Related Passages:

Psalms 20:7 Some boast in chariots and some in horses, But we will boast in the name of the LORD, our God.

1 Chronicles 16:29 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come before Him; Worship the LORD in **holy array**.

FIGHTING THE ENEMY WITH PRAISE AND SONG

When he had consulted with the people - Consulted (yaas) is translated in Septuagint with [bouleuo](#) This shows the humility of this man. He was not saying "my way or the highway." He was willing to listen to the advice of the people who were also placing their lives on the line. It is interesting that nowhere in this story do we see the king consult his military men. In fact we later see he sends the singers out in front of the army! (2Ch 20:21). Now that is walking by faith, not sight! He was sold out completely to the promises of God's deliverance.

he appointed those who sang to the LORD and those who praised Him in holy attire(KJV - "beauty of holiness" 1Ch 16:29KJV; 2Ch 20:21KJV; Ps. 29:2KJV; Ps. 96:9KJV), **as they went out before the army and said, "Give thanks to the LORD, for His lovingkindness (hesed) is everlasting."** - This is one of those amazing passages in the Bible that is jaw dropping! Singers going before their own army and going before a strong enemy with songs and praises! That would be utterly ridiculous if they did not firmly believe God's Word to them that the battle was His! Their going out with praise was an act of obedience which demonstrated their trust in Jehovah and His Word! Both king and country were walking by faith, not by sight (a good pattern to imitate! - 2Co 5:7+)! And this may have been why the king consulted with the people, to be sure they understood the implications of what he was asking them to do! But fast forward to the great victory God gave them! What would that have done to their faith? That's relatively rhetorical for surely it would have enlarged their faith in Yahweh and His Word. So great was their trust that the singing choir went in front of the army.

THOUGHT - Note how they were dressed for battle - **holy attire!** Is this not how we are to fight our spiritual war against our invisible enemies? That's rhetorical. Of course it is, for our "general" the apostle Paul commands us to "**Put on** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) **the full armor of God**, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, **take up** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) **the full armor of God**, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. **Stand firm** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) **therefore**, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF **RIGHTEOUSNESS**," (Eph 6:11-16+) That's a synopsis of our holy attire. The corollary is don't go into battle with unholy attire! Confess and repent before you fight! If necessary, do a Ps 139:23,24 "checkup!" Then stand and see the deliverance of the LORD. (2Ch 20:17)!

Bob Utley - This theme of shared decision-making reappears in 2 Chr. 1:2; 30:2; 32:3. It must be related to the truth of Exod. 19:5-6. Israel was a holy people. The phrase "His lovingkindness is everlasting" is a theological mantra (cf. 1 Chr. 16:34,41; 2 Chr. 5:13; 7:3,6; 20:21; Ezra 3:11; Ps. 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 118:1; Jer. 33:11).

Spurgeon - So you can see them marching out of the city gate with the king at their head, and, as they go out, the army is marching with banners and with songs and hosannas. This is their style of going out to meet the foe.

Ron Daniel - 20:21 Singers Before The Army This was an odd troop configuration: lining up the singers before the soldiers? What was the king thinking? This must have given his military strategists a reason to wonder!

Warren Wiersbe - The combination of prayer (20:3–13), prophecy (20:14–17), and praise (20:18–22) brought him the victory. (We wonder how the choir of Levites felt about going out before the army. But worship is a great weapon against the enemy.) ([Bible Exposition Commentary - Old Testament](#))

Lovingkindness (02617) [hesed/chesed/heced](#) is the idea of faithful love in action and often in the OT refers to God's lovingkindness expressed in His covenant relationship with Israel (His "loyal love" to His "Wife" Israel [cp Hos 2:18, 19, 20-see [note](#), Is 54:5, Je 31:32] = His "loyalty to covenant"). Hesed is loyal, steadfast or faithful love and it stresses the idea of the belonging together of those involved in the love relationship. In 2Ch 20:21 it connotes God's faithful love for His unfaithful people! God's **hesed** His denotes persistent and unconditional tenderness, kindness, and mercy, a relationship in which He seeks after man with love and mercy (cp God immediately seeking man Ge 3:9, who was immediately hiding Ge 3:8 trying to cover their shame Ge 3:7 - contrast God's lovingkindness manifest by spilling blood to provide skins to cover their shame! Ge 3:21). **Hesed** expresses both God's loyalty to His covenant and His love for His people along with a faithfulness to keep His promises.'

Hesed in Kings and Chronicles - 1 Ki. 2:7; 1 Ki. 3:6; 1 Ki. 8:23; 1 Ki. 20:31; 1 Chr. 16:34; 1 Chr. 16:41; 1 Chr. 17:13; 1 Chr. 19:2; 2 Chr. 1:8; 2 Chr. 5:13; 2 Chr. 6:14; 2 Chr. 6:42; 2 Chr. 7:3; 2 Chr. 7:6; 2 Chr. 20:21; 2 Chr. 24:22; 2 Chr. 32:32; 2 Chr. 35:26;

Kay Arthur - The Lord Will Ambush the Enemy - 2 Chronicles 20:21 - Give every situation to your God. Then go forth singing His praises! The Lord will ambush the enemy. You watch. I have seen the reality of this truth many times in my own life and in the lives of others. (BORROW [Powerful moments with God](#))

F B Meyer - Dost thou praise the beauty of holiness? Is holiness beautiful to thee? Art thou in love with it as it is presented in the glorious Lord? Canst thou turn from the noise and anxiety of life's battle to dwell on the loveliness of God and of the devout life, and to praise Him whose mercy endureth forever? It is a rare accomplishment, acquired only through the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. In each of us there should be the priest-side of character as well as the warrior: the love for what is beautiful in holiness as well as for the strong and active in service.

But the special characteristics of this battle was that the good king put the singers in the forefront of the army, and praised for a victory which was only assured to him by faith. Yet so sure was he of it, that he could praise before he entered into the battle.

There is much to help us here in our daily combat for God and truth. Let us fill the morning hour with holy song, in the heart, if not with the voice; let a psalm or hymn be part of the daily reading; let there be the confidence that God is going to bless, which cannot restrain its jubilant expression. So in all prayer, wait on God till you feel that you can praise Him for what you have asked Him to bestow.

When they began to praise, the Lord did all the rest. Before the onset of His Divine reinforcements the enemy fled. His people bad

of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir to start fighting among themselves.

- **began singing and praising:** Judges 7:22 1Sa 14:16,20 2Ki 6:17 Ps 35:5,6 Isa 19:2 Eze 38:21

Related Passages:

Judges 7:22+ When they blew 300 trumpets, the LORD set the sword of one against another even throughout the whole army; and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the edge of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath.

SINGING IS SIGN FOR GOD TO ACT

When they began singing and praising, the LORD set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir(Edom), **who had come against Judah; so they were routed** - Note Judah's part was to sing and praise, while God's undertook to ambush and route the enemy. Not let go, let God, but let God, let's go! The battle is the LORD's and He will win the victory. We cannot be certain how the LORD set ambushes, although some writers suggest God used heavenly hosts who took on human form. We should avoid conjecture and focus on the fact that (1) Judah sang, Yahweh took action and (2) Yahweh routed the enemy. Perhaps in heaven we will see an instant replay!

*When they did but begin the work of praise,
God perfected the work of their deliverance*
-- Matthew Henry

Martin Selman has an interesting comment - "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." (See [2 Chronicles: An Introduction and Commentary - Page 447](#))

John Trapp adds "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."

Bob Utley - "**When they began singing and praising**" Normally this was reserved until the victory but here it precedes the victory (cf. 2 Chr. 20:21). By faith YHWH's covenant people knew He would do what He promised (i.e., vv. 14-19). This is their act of faith! The priests and Levites (1) call on Judah to trust YHWH (2 Chr. 20:20), (2) proclaimed the covenant theology (20:21; v. 6, Jehoshaphat's faith affirmation), (3) sang and praised YHWH for His promised victory (2 Chr. 20:20,22) "**the Lord set ambushes**" This is "holy war" imagery and YHWH as "the divine warrior" (i.e., Isa. 42:13; 49:24-26; 52:10; 59:16-17; also allusions in Eph. 6:14). As in the exodus, conquest, and judges periods, YHWH causes confusion within the enemy camp and often they destroy themselves (i.e., Jdg 7:22; 1Sa 14:20).

Jack Hayford - Victory in Praise July 3 - BORROW [Living the spirit filled life](#)

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 out against Judah; and they were defeated. 2 Chronicles 20:22

Here is a great lesson on the power of praise. Judah was confronted by mortal enemies, Moab and Ammon. The people sought God in prayer and with faith in His Word (2 Chr. 20:1-14). Then came the prophet's word: "Do not be afraid... for the battle is not yours, but God's" (v. 15).

The victory came in a strange but powerful manner. The Levites stood and praised "the Lord God of Israel with voices loud and high" (v. 19). Then some of them were appointed to precede the army as they headed into the battle and, as they went, they were to sing to the Lord and praise Him in the beauty of holiness.

The result of this powerful praise was total victory! As they began to sing and to praise God with the expectancy that He would fight for them, the enemies were defeated. This incident is not unique, but has parallels in other Old Testament victories (see Josh. 6:10, 20; Jdg. 7:18-22; 2 Kin. 7:3-16; 19:35). Whenever and wherever God's people praise Him, He reigns among them and does miraculous things on their behalf.

Worship—Part 1 September 3

Now when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and

Mount Seir,... and they were defeated. 2 Chronicles 20:22

In this text, Judah is about to be overwhelmed by a confederation of three opposing armies. Its armies are hopelessly outnumbered and face certain defeat, but God has a plan—Worship!

Worship puts God in His proper place as Creator of the universe, Redeemer of our life, and Provider of everything we need. Because we know whom we worship, our worship releases the Lord to perform His purpose within us. Worship is not blissful ignorance or vain superstition in the face of present need. It is confirming God's desire to work in the lives of His people.

Spiritual power is released through praise! Here the enemies of Judah (literally "praise" in Hebrew) are confused and begin to slaughter each other as the people of God begin to sing and worship. Jehoshaphat, Judah's king, never sends the army to fight, only the choir! In the same way, the Lord promises that as we face each challenge with praise, He will confuse and scatter the enemy.

Whatever today may bring, no matter how large the obstacle, the beginning point of breakthrough is worship.

David Jeremiah - VANGUARD OF VICTORY

Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon. 2Ch 20:22

When King Jehoshaphat faced the combined armies of Moab, Ammon, and Edom, he proclaimed a national fast and begged for God's help. "We have no power against this great multitude . . .," he prayed, "nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You" (2 Chronicles 20:12). A prophet named Jahaziel gave this reply: "Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's" (v. 15).

It was then that Jehoshaphat realized he had a secret weapon. He appointed choirs to go before the armies of Judah. With all their hearts, these royal musicians sang and praised God for His assured victory. As this unlikely vanguard neared the battlefield, the Lord threw their enemies into confusion, and Judah won the battle—not with soldiers, but with songs.

How often we need to echo Jehoshaphat's prayer! Sometimes there are problems we can't solve. Sometimes our pressures are beyond us. "Oh Lord," you can pray, "I don't know what to do, but my eyes are on You."

Praise is the Christian's secret weapon. Satan is allergic to praise; he just can't remain where God is being glorified. (Morning and Evening Devotions)

Jesus' Ultimate Victory

As they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes . . . and they were defeated. 2 Chronicles 20:22

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Chronicles 20:15–22

At some military camps across Europe during World War II, an unusual type of supply was air-dropped for homesick soldiers—upright pianos. They were specially manufactured to contain only 10 percent of the normal amount of metal, and they received special water-resistant glue and anti-insect treatments. The pianos were rugged and simple but provided hours of spirit-lifting entertainment for soldiers who gathered around to sing familiar songs of home.

Singing—especially songs of praise—is one way that believers in Jesus can find peace in the battle too. King Jehoshaphat found this to be true when he faced vast invading armies (2 Chronicles 20). Terrified, the king called all the people together for prayer and fasting (vv. 3–4). In response, God told him to lead out soldiers to meet the enemy, promising that they'd "not have to fight this battle" (v. 17). Jehoshaphat believed God and acted in faith. He appointed singers to go ahead of the soldiers and sing praise to God for the victory they believed they would see (v. 21). And as their music began, He miraculously defeated their enemies and saved His people (v. 22).

Victory doesn't always come when and how we want it to. But we can always proclaim Jesus' ultimate victory over sin and death that's already been won for us. We can choose to rest in a spirit of worship even in the middle of a war zone. By: Karen Pimpo (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

How can you praise God right where you are today? How can you press into the victory that Jesus has won for you?

You're stronger than my enemies, dear God. I lift up Your name in faith today.

Streams in the Desert - "When they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushments ... and they were smitten." (2 Chron. 20:22)

OH, that we could reason less about our troubles, and sing and praise more! There are thousands of things that we wear as shackles which we might use as instruments with music in them, if we only knew how.

Those men that ponder, and meditate, and weigh the affairs of life, and study the mysterious developments of God's providence, and wonder why they should be burdened and thwarted and hampered—how different and how much more joyful would be their lives, if, instead of forever indulging in self-revolving and inward thinking, they would take their experiences, day by day, and lift them up, and praise God for them.

We can sing our cares away easier than we can reason them away. Sing in the morning. The birds are the earliest to sing, and birds are more without care than anything else that I know of.

Sing at evening. Singing is the last thing that robins do. When they have done their daily work; when they have flown their last flight, and picked up their last morsel of food, then on a topmost twig, they sing one song of praise.

Oh, that we might sing morning and evening, and let song touch song all the way through.—Selected.

"Don't let the song go out of your life
Though it chance sometimes to flow
In a minor strain; it will blend again
With the major tone you know.

"What though shadows rise to obscure life's skies,
And hide for a time the sun,
The sooner they'll lift and reveal the rift,
If you let the melody run.

"Don't let the song go out of your life;
Though the voice may have lost its trill,
Though the tremulous note may die in your throat,
Let it sing in your spirit still.

"Don't let the song go out of your life;
Let it ring in the soul while here;
And when you go hence, 'twill follow you thence,
And live on in another sphere."

Battle Praise

When they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushes against the people . . . who had come against Judah. —2 Chronicles 20:22

Today's Scripture: 2 Chronicles 20:1-22

Visitors to the Military Museum in Istanbul, Turkey, can hear stirring music that dates back to the early years of the Ottoman Empire. Whenever their troops marched off to war, bands accompanied them.

Centuries earlier, worship singers led the people of Judah into battle, but there was a big difference. Whereas the Ottomans used music to instill self-confidence in their soldiers, the Jews used it to express their confidence in God.

Threatened by huge armies, King Jehoshaphat of Judah knew that his people were powerless to defend themselves. So he cried out to God for help (2 Chronicles 20:12). The Lord's answer came through Jahaziel, who said, "Do not be afraid nor dismayed . . . , for the battle is not yours, but God's" (v.15).

Jehoshaphat responded by worshiping and then by appointing singers to lead the army (vv.18,21). As the people sang, "Praise the Lord, for His mercy endures forever," God confused the invaders and they killed one another (vv.22-24).

No matter what battles we may face today, the Lord will help us when we cry out to Him. Instead of retreating in fear, we can march ahead with confidence in God's power and sing praise to Him. By: Julie Ackerman Link (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Does all the world seem against you
And you're in the battle alone?
It's often when you are most helpless
That God's mighty power is known.
—Anon.

Praise is the voice of faith.

2 Chronicles 20:23 For the sons of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir destroying them completely; and when they had finished with the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:23 For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:23 καὶ ἐστῆσαν ὁ οὖο Ἀμμων καὶ Μωαβ πρὸς τοὺς κατοικοῦντας ἐν τῷ ὄρει Σειρ ἵνα καταστρέψωσιν αὐτοὺς ὅτε ἐπέσταν ἐπὶ τοὺς κατοικοῦντας ἐν τῷ ὄρει Σειρ καὶ ἐπέσταν ἑξ ἑαυτῶν ἵνα καταστρέψωσιν αὐτοὺς

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:23 Then the children of Ammon and Moab rose up against the dwellers in mount Seir, to destroy and consume them; and when they had made an end of destroying the inhabitants of Seir, they rose up against one another so that they were utterly destroyed.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:23 The Ammonites and Moabites attacked the men from Mount Seir and annihilated them. When they had finished off the men of Seir, they attacked and destroyed one another.

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:23 The Ammonites and Moabites turned against the inhabitants of Mount Seir and completely annihilated them. When they had finished with the inhabitants of Seir, they helped destroy each other.

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:23 For the men of Ammon and Moab rose against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, devoting them to destruction, and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they all helped to destroy one another.

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:23 The men of Ammon and Moab rose up against the men from Mount Seir to destroy and annihilate them. After they finished slaughtering the men from Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:23 The armies of Moab and Ammon turned against their allies from Mount Seir and killed every one of them. After they had destroyed the army of Seir, they began attacking each other.

- **mount Seir:** Ge 14:6 36:8,9 De 2:5 Jos 24:4 Eze 35:2,3

THE ENEMY FIGHTS THE ENEMY

For - Term of explanation. The writer is explaining how the ambush occurred.

The sons of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir (Edom) destroying them completely; and when they had finished with the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another - This was self-destruction orchestrated by Jehovah! While God is not a God of confusion for believers, He clearly is able to send confusion on non-believers.

Spurgeon - There were three or four nations, and some jealousy or mistrust must have manifested itself, or some mistake had been made, and the motley host divided itself into self-destroying bands. The Israelites had nothing to do but to sing. Perhaps their very singing was the cause of that disruption among the bands. They could not make it out. They had seen the people rush to battle with discordant cries; but these were marching along as if they were coming to a wedding-feast, singing hymns and chants. That was a new style of fighting. So the Moabites and the Ammonites thought that there must be something wrong. "Surely there must be some confederates in the camp," they would say. They suspected each other, as bad men very soon do, and so they fell foul of one another and spared the Israelites all the trouble of killing them.

Bob Utley - "**destroying them completely**" This is the Hebrew root *hrm* (BDB 356, KB 353), which is a common element in Holy War, where some land, city, people, thing is given to YHWH and becomes "too holy" for human use. Therefore, it must be destroyed. Sometimes this "given to" is positive (sacrificial system) or negative (destruction). (1) a country – 2 Kgs. 19:1; Isa. 11:15; 34:5;

48:28; Jer. 50:21,26; 51:3 (2) a people (often #1 and #2 are synonymous) – Josh. 6:21; 8:26; 10:28,35,37,39,40; 11:11,12,20,21; Jdgs. 21:11; 1 Chr. 4:41; Isa. 15:3,8,20; 34:2; Jer. 25:9 (3) a city – Num. 21:2,3; Deut. 2:34; 3:6; 13:15; 20:17; Josh. 6:17,18; 7:1,11,12,13,15; 10:1,28; 22:20, (4) things given to YHWH – Lev. 27:21,28,29; Num. 18:14; Deut. 13:17; Josh. 6:18, (5) idols destroyed – Deut. 7:26; 2 Chr. 32:14 [SPECIAL TOPIC: CURSE](#)

2 Chronicles 20:24 When Judah came to the lookout of the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude, and behold, they were corpses lying on the ground, and no one had escaped.

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:24 And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:24 κα Ιουδας λθεν π τ ν σκοπι ν τ ς ρ μου κα π βλεψεν κα ε δ εν τ π λ θος κα δ ο π ν τ ς νεκρο πεπτωκ τ ς π τ ς γ ς ο κ ν σ ζ μενος

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:24 And Juda came to the watch-tower of the wilderness, and looked, and saw the multitude, and, behold, they were all fallen dead upon the earth, not one escaped.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:24 When the men of Judah arrived at the observation post overlooking the desert and looked at the huge army, they saw dead bodies on the ground; there were no survivors!

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:24 When Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked for the large army, but there were only corpses lying on the ground; nobody had escaped.

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:24 When Judah came to the watchtower of the wilderness, they looked toward the horde, and behold, there were dead bodies lying on the ground; none had escaped.

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:24 When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and looked toward the vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground; no one had escaped.

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:24 So when the army of Judah arrived at the lookout point in the wilderness, all they saw were dead bodies lying on the ground as far as they could see. Not a single one of the enemy had escaped.

- **they were corpses lying on the ground:** Ex 14:30 1Ch 5:22 Ps 110:6 Isa 37:36 Jer 33:5
- **no one had escaped:** Ezr 9:14

COMPLETE ROUTE! NOT ONE SURVIOR!

When Judah came to the lookout of the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude, and behold ([hinneh](#); [Lxx](#) - [idou](#)), they were corpses lying on the ground, and no one had escaped. - Note the word "**behold**," which is a call for special attention, in this case be amazed and in awe at the power of Jehovah and His faithfulness to perfectly perform His word of promise! There was not a single enemy survivor! This scene recalls Israel's sight of the dead Egyptians in Ex. 14:30+ ("Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.")

[David Guzik](#) - 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.

[Ron Daniel](#) - 20:24 Discovering The Dead -- Instead of seeing an army dressed for war, the people of Judah saw an army decimated by war. Every one of them was dead. God had been specific and accurate.

2 Chronicles 20:25 When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take their spoil, they found much among them, including goods, garments and valuable things which they took for themselves, more than they could carry. And they were three days taking the spoil because there was so much.

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:25 And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped

off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:25 κα λθεν Ιωσαφατ κα λα ρ α το σκυλεσαι τ σκ λα α τ ν κα ε ρον κτ νη πολλ κα ποσκευ ν κα σκ λα κα σκε η πιθυμητ κα σκ λευσαν αυτο ρ κα γ νοντο μ ραι τρε ρ σκυλευ ντων α τ ν τ σκ λα τι πολλ ν

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:25 And Josaphat and his people went out to spoil them, and they found much cattle, and furniture, and spoils, and precious things: and they spoiled them, and they were three days gathering the spoil, for it was abundant.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:25 Jehoshaphat and his men went to gather the plunder; they found a huge amount of supplies, clothing and valuable items. They carried away everything they could. There was so much plunder, it took them three days to haul it off.

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:25 Then Jehoshaphat and his people went to gather the plunder. They found among them an abundance of goods on the bodies and valuable items. So they stripped them until nobody could carry any more. They were gathering the plunder for three days because there was so much.

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:25 When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take their spoil, they found among them, in great numbers, goods, clothing, and precious things, which they took for themselves until they could carry no more. They were three days in taking the spoil, it was so much.

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:25 So Jehoshaphat and his men went to carry off their plunder, and they found among them a great amount of equipment and clothing and also articles of value--more than they could take away. There was so much plunder that it took three days to collect it.

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:25 King Jehoshaphat and his men went out to gather the plunder. They found vast amounts of equipment, clothing, and other valuables-- more than they could carry. There was so much plunder that it took them three days just to collect it all!

- **they found:** Ex 12:35,36 1Sa 30:19,20 2Ki 7:9-16 Ps 68:12 Ro 8:37
- **valuable things:** Ex 3:22 Nu 31:15 Judges 8:24-26 Pr 3:15
- **it was so much:** Eze 39:8,9

THE SPOILS OF JEHOVAH'S VICTORY

When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take their spoil ([shalal](#)), they found much among them, including goods, garments and valuable things which they took for themselves, more than they could carry. And they were three days taking the spoil because there was so much - More than they could carry is just like our God! He is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we could ask or think! (Eph 3:20+)

Treasury of Scripture knowledge - KJV = "they found among them in abundance both riches with the **dead bodies**" Instead of {pegarim,} "dead bodies," eight MSS. and several ancient editions read {begadim,} "garments." None of the ancient versions, except the Chaldee, have dead bodies: garments would therefore appear to be the true reading; and the succeeding clause should be rendered, "which they seized for themselves."

Bob Utley - "**take their spoil**" Usually in Holy War all the spoils belonged to YHWH, but here it was given to the Judean soldiers who watched YHWH's victory. These spoils included (1) goods, (2) garments (MT, JPSOA "corpses"/"garments" comes from Vulgate [while LXX has "baggage" or "armor"]) (a) corpses – פגרים (b) garments (3) valuable things (BDB 479 CONSTRUCT BDB 326; probably weights of precious metals and gemstones, since clothes appear in #2)

Spoil ([07998](#)) [shalal](#) is a masculine noun which means spoils, plunder, booty, all referring to what is taken by force or violence usually in the context of war and taking spoils was sometimes one of the principle motivations for going to war. Military raids were sometimes ill-disguised plundering expeditions, such as the ill-fated Amalekite raid against Ziklag described in [1](#) Samuel 30:16, 19, 20, 22, 26. Sometimes shalal was seized as an act of political aggression (Esther 3:13; 8:11). Taking plunder or spoil was an act of aggression by the wicked on the weak or righteous (Pr 1:13).

SHALAL - 65V - **booty(11), gain(1), plunder(3), possessions(1), spoil(57), spoiler(1)**. Gen. 49:27; Exod. 15:9; Num. 31:11; Num. 31:12; Deut. 2:35; Deut. 3:7; Deut. 13:16; Deut. 20:14; Jos. 7:21; Jos. 8:2; Jos. 8:27; Jos. 11:14; Jos. 22:8; Jdg. 5:30; Jdg. 8:24; Jdg. 8:25; 1 Sam. 14:30; 1 Sam. 14:32; 1 Sam. 15:19; 1 Sam.

15:21; 1 Sam. 30:16; 1 Sam. 30:19; 1 Sam. 30:20; 1 Sam. 30:22; 1 Sam. 30:26; 2 Sam. 3:22; 2 Sam. 8:12; 2 Sam. 12:30; 2 Ki. 3:23; 1 Chr. 20:2; 1 Chr. 26:27; 2 Chr. 14:13; 2 Chr. 15:11; 2 Chr. 20:25; 2 Chr. 24:23; 2 Chr. 28:8; 2 Chr. 28:15; Est. 3:13; Est. 8:11; Ps. 68:12; Ps. 119:162; Prov. 1:13; Prov. 16:19; Prov. 31:11; Isa. 8:1; Isa. 8:4; Isa. 9:3; Isa. 10:2; Isa. 10:6; Isa. 33:4; Isa. 33:23; Isa. 53:12; Jer. 21:9; Jer. 38:2; Jer. 39:18; Jer. 45:5; Jer. 49:32; Jer. 50:10; Ezek. 7:21; Ezek. 29:19; Ezek. 38:12; Ezek. 38:13; Dan. 11:24; Zech. 2:9; Zech. 14:1

Charles Stanley - Your Enemy (BORROW [On holy ground : a daily devotional](#))

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 Chronicles 20:25–30

KEY VERSE: 1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Just as Jehoshaphat faced the enemy, you have a formidable enemy. His name is Satan. He was created full of wisdom and beauty (Ezek. 28:12–17). He was given a place on God's holy mountain. He was created a holy and righteous being. However, pride was the beginning of his fall; in the end it led him to exalt himself to the position of God. In his vanity he declared, "I will be like God."

He is our fiercest adversary (Zech. 3:1; 1 Peter 5:8); accuser (Rev. 12:10); Lucifer, or light bearer (Isa. 14:12), which means "to deceive"; dragon (Rev. 12:7); slanderer (1 Peter 5:8); murderer and liar (John 8:44); deceiver (Rev. 20:10); prince of this world (John 12:31); prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2); destroyer (Rev. 9:11); tempter (Matt. 13:38); and god of this age (2 Cor. 4:4).

Never take Satan's ability or evil intent lightly. He was created with tremendous power. However, the Lord also equipped us with "divinely powerful" spiritual weapons that, when used correctly, can overthrow Satan's work against us (2 Cor. 10:3–5 NASB).

Satan's future is one of eternal death (Isa. 14:15; Rev. 12:7–10), yet he remains a force that needs to be reckoned with. Our only effective course of action is through the power and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Never battle the enemy on your own. Even the angels use the mighty name of Jesus when warring against his evil (Jude 9).

Lord, Your power is my defense against the adversary. Your blood secures my victory. Let Your name, Your power, and the blood of Jesus reign over the circumstances of my life.

2 Chronicles 20:26 Then on the fourth day they assembled in the valley of Beracah, for there they blessed the LORD. Therefore they have named that place "The Valley of Beracah" until today.

- **blessed:** Ex 15:1-19 2Sa 22:1 Ps 103:1,2 107:21,22 Lu 1:68 Rev 19:1-6
- **the name:** Ge 28:19 32:20 Ex 17:15 1Sa 7:12 Isa 62:4 Ac 1:19
- **to this day:** 2Ch 5:9

THREE DAYS OF REAPING CALLS FOR BLESSING THE LORD

Then - Marks progression in the narrative.

On the fourth day they assembled in the valley of [Beracah](#), for there they blessed the LORD. Therefore (term of conclusion) **they have named that place "The Valley of [Beracah](#)" until today - [Beracah](#)** means "blessing" which gives the appropriate name "Valley of Blessing," for here God blessed Judah with victory and spoils and Judah responded with blessing to the LORD, reciprocal blessings so to speak. Of course, it wall begins with the blessing of the LORD!

*This is the Valley of Blessing: surely an appropriate name
worthy of long remembrance.*

-- C H Spurgeon

Beracah: Blessing, Having previously sought deliverance by fasting and prayer, and received the assurance of it with grateful joy, Jehoshaphat and his army returned immediate and fervent thanks and praise to the Lord, who had in so wonderful a manner performed his promise. Scott, who quotes the following from Bp. Patrick: "They did not return every man to his own home; but first went back to Jerusalem, to bless the Lord again for hearing their prayer and making good his promises."

Frederick Mabie: Without any action on the part of Jehoshaphat's army, the eastern coalition is destroyed. The plundering of enemies is one of the ways in which God showed his sovereignty over the nations and favor for his people (cf. Ex 12:35-36; Hag

2:22). It is likely that the location of the valley where the army assembled to praise God for his blessings was renamed Valley of Beracah (= Valley of Blessing) in the light of the victory given by God. (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary: 1 Chronicles-Job - Page 245](#))

Williams - "The assemblage of v. 4 was to ask help of the Lord. The assemblage of v. 26 was to bless the Lord. The 'fear' that Moab inspired preceded the prayer meeting of v. 4; the 'joy' that God inspired (v. 27) followed the praise meeting of v. 26"

Ron Daniel - 20:26 Blessing The Lord. When they were done receiving the blessings that God had provided, they remembered to bless the Lord. That's why the valley was renamed "Ber-aw-KAW," "the Valley of Blessing." I have found that there have been too many times in my life that God gave me blessings, but I failed to bless God in return. That sort of thankless, ungrateful behavior reminds me of Jesus' travels that took Him between Samaria and Galilee. It was there that He found ten lepers, all crying out for mercy.

Luke 17:14-17+ When He saw them, He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they were going, they were cleansed. Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine—where are they?"

I wonder if God would use this tonight to remind us of a blessing we've received recently, but failed to bless God in return.

2 Chronicles 20:27 Every man of Judah and Jerusalem returned with Jehoshaphat at their head, returning to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies.

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:27 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.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:27 κα π στρεψεν π ς ν ρ Ιουδα ε ς Ιερουσαλημ κα Ιωσαφατ γο μενος α τ ν ν ε φροσ ν μεγ λ τι ε φρανεν α το ς κ ριο ς π τ ν χθ ρ ν α τ ν

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:27 And all the men of Juda returned to Jerusalem, and Josaphat led them with great joy; for the Lord gave them joy over their enemies.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:27 Then all the men of Judah and Jerusalem returned joyfully to Jerusalem with Jehoshaphat leading them; the LORD had given them reason to rejoice over their enemies.

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:27 Then all the men of Judah and Jerusalem turned back with Jehoshaphat their leader, returning joyfully to Jerusalem, for the LORD enabled them to rejoice over their enemies.

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:27 Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat at their head, returning to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had made them rejoice over their enemies.

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:27 Then, led by Jehoshaphat, all the men of Judah and Jerusalem returned joyfully to Jerusalem, for the LORD had given them cause to rejoice over their enemies.

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:27 Then all the men returned to Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat leading them, overjoyed that the LORD had given them victory over their enemies.

- **at their head:** Heb. head, 2Sa 6:14,15 Mic 2:13 Heb 6:20
- **the LORD:** 1Sa 2:1 Ne 12:43 Ps 20:5 30:1 Isa 35:10 51:11 Rev 18:20

VICTORY FOLLOWED BY REJOICING

Every man of Judah and Jerusalem returned with Jehoshaphat at their head, returning to Jerusalem with joy, for(term of explanation - what's writer explaining?) **the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies-** Note that phrase **every man** signifies there was not even one casualty which is a striking contrast with the enemy which had not one survivor! This passage reminds me of Neh 8:10 that declares the joy of the LORD is our strength. Judah now experienced His joy and a supernatural joy that sustains one, especially in hard or uncertain times.

Spurgeon - Another march of hosannas. What a wonderful sight it must have been! We have read of the Battle of the Spurs; but

here is the Battle of the Song — the battle of praise. How wondrously it was won! Jehoshaphat is now in the forefront of those who go back singing. He feels he must sing the loudest who has had such signal mercy after his sin.

[Ron Daniel](#) - 20:27-30 Returning With Joy And Harps. As the people of Judah returned to Jerusalem, they once again sang praises. Notice this: they had worshiped before, during, and after the war. They believed the promises of God, and so they worshiped. They moved out with faith in God, and so they worshiped. They experienced the miraculous deliverance and blessing of God, and so they worshiped. Tell me, saints. When do you worship? Do you worship when you hear the Word, but then never move out in faith? Do you only worship after God has come through, having already delivered and blessed? May we be a people who are known for the fact that we worship before, during, and after the war.

2 Chronicles 20:28 They came to Jerusalem with harps, lyres and trumpets to the house of the LORD.

- with psalteries: Instead of celebrating his own heroism or the valour of his troops on this memorable occasion, this excellent prince sung with his whole army the praises of Jehovah, the God of hosts, who disposes of the victory according to his pleasure. This conduct was becoming the descendant and successor of David, the man after God's own heart, and of a religious people, the peculiar inheritance of Jehovah. 2Sa 6:5 1Ch 13:8 23:5 25:6 Ps 47, Ps 57:8 92:3 149:3 150:3-5 Rev 14:2,3

THE SOUND OF VICTORY RETURNING WITH REJOICING

They came to Jerusalem with harps, lyres and trumpets to the house of the LORD- The return to the Temple where this scene had begun (2Ch 20:5), for from Him, through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen. (Ro 11:35+)

[ESV Study Bible \(page 768 - borrow\)](#) - The return to Jerusalem takes the form of a triumphal procession, which ends appropriately in the temple, where the people had first sought God's deliverance (2 Chron. 20:5).

Spurgeon - Now, it is a long piece we have read, but I think it would not be complete if I did not read you the song which they sang. In all probability it was the 47th Psalm. You can almost hear them singing it as they march back.

Psalm 47+ For the choir director. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. O clap your hands, all peoples; Shout to God with the voice of joy. 2 For the LORD Most High is to be feared, A great King over all the earth. 3 He subdues peoples under us And nations under our feet. 4 He chooses our inheritance for us, The glory of Jacob whom He loves. Selah. 5 God has ascended with a shout, The LORD, with the sound of a trumpet. 6 Sing praises to God, sing praises; Sing praises to our King, sing praises. 7 For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with a skillful psalm. 8 God reigns over the nations, God sits on His holy throne. 9 The princes of the people have assembled themselves as the people of the God of Abraham, For the shields of the earth belong to God; He is highly exalted.

2 Chronicles 20:29 And the dread of God was on all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel.

- **the dread of God** 2Ch 17:10 Ge 35:5 Ex 23:27 Jos 5:1 2Ki 7:6
- **they heard:** Ex 15:14-16 Jos 2:9-11 9:9-11

Related Passages:

1 Chronicles 14:17 Then the fame of David went out into all the lands; and **the LORD brought the fear of him on all the nations.**

2 Chronicles 14:14 They destroyed all the cities around Gerar, for **the dread of the LORD had fallen on them**; and they despoiled all the cities, for there was much plunder in them.

2 Chronicles 17:10+ (AS A RESULT OF SEEKING THE LORD AND TEACHING HIS WORD IN JUDAH) Now **the dread of the LORD was on all the kingdoms of the lands which were around Judah** so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat.

DREAD OF GOD ON NATIONS

And the dread of God was on all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel - Once again **dread** was on the nations as it had been in 2Ch 17:10+ (See also Ex 23:27; Nu 22:3; Jos 2:9-11; 9:9, 10). Note the dread was specifically on the **God** of Judah, not on the nation per se. And the explanation is that the kingdoms somehow had heard that the battle was the LORD's and He had fought for Israel (~Judah in this context). What is fascinating is that there were no survivors of the battle, and yet somehow the word circulated that this was a supernaturally charged defeat of the eastern coalition. In short, Yahweh was glorified among the nations as the result of this battle. One always has to wonder if some of the pagans in those kingdoms came to their senses and saw that Yahweh was the One to be worshiped? We will have to wait to heaven to see if any of them did as the Thessalonian pagans who, upon hearing the Gospel, "turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God." (1Th 1:9+)

Utley on **dread** - This is also "holy war" terminology (i.e., Ex 15:16; 23:27; Dt. 2:25; 11:25; Josh. 2:9), dread of YHWH – 1Sa 11:7; 2Ch 14:14; 19:7; 20:29, dread of *Elohim* – Ps. 36:1; Isa. 2:10,19,21.

Raymond Dillard: The rhetorical question of Jehoshaphat's prayer had been answered (2Ch 20:6)—Yahweh does rule over the kingdoms of the nations. Two tokens of divine blessing in the Chronicler's theology are prominent in these verses. (1) The righteous king enjoys victory over the nations, is held in awe by them, and receives their tribute (1 Chr 14:17; 18:2, 6; 2 Chr 9:22–23; 17:10; 32:23). (2) Rest from enemies and times of peace are rewards for righteousness (14:4, 6 [5, 7]; 15:15; 1 Chr 22:9). (BORROW [2 Chronicles](#))

2 Chronicles 20:30 So the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God gave him rest on all sides.

KJV 2 Chronicles 20:30 So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about.

BGT 2 Chronicles 20:30 κα ε ρ νευσεν βασιλε α Ιωσαφατ κα κατ παυσεν α τ θε ς α το κυκλ θεν

LXE 2 Chronicles 20:30 And the kingdom of Josaphat was at peace; and his God gave him rest round about.

NET 2 Chronicles 20:30 Jehoshaphat's kingdom enjoyed peace; his God made him secure on every side.

CSB 2 Chronicles 20:30 Then Jehoshaphat's kingdom was quiet, for his God gave him rest on every side.

ESV 2 Chronicles 20:30 So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around.

NIV 2 Chronicles 20:30 And the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side.

NLT 2 Chronicles 20:30 So Jehoshaphat's kingdom was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side.

- **his God gave:** 2Ch 14:6,7 15:15 Jos 23:1 2Sa 7:1 Job 34:29 Pr 16:7 Joh 14:27

DIVINE REST ON ALL SIDES

So the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace([shaqat](#)) **for** (term of explanation) **his God gave him rest on all sides.** - This was the blessing of trusting God's promises. God gave them rest from surrounding nations and the result was peace for all in Judah. Peace and rest in a nation are ultimately gifts from the LORD. In this context it was because Judah lived out the old hymn "Trust and obey!"

Utley - **Jehoshaphat** had peace and rest (cf. 2Ch 14:6-7; 15:15) because of YHWH's covenant commitment and Judah's covenant obedience

2 Chronicles 20:31 Now Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

- **Jehoshaphat:** 1Ki 22:41-44

Related Passages:

1 Kings 22:41-44 Now Jehoshaphat the son of Asa became king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. 42 Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. 43 He walked in all the way of Asa his father; he did not turn aside from it, doing right in the sight of the LORD. However, the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense on the high places. 44 Jehoshaphat also made peace with the king of Israel.

SUMMARY OF THE KING'S LIFE

Now Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi - This number can be verified by 2Ki 3:1 and 2Ki 8:16 plus a three year co-reign with his father, Asa.

Ron Daniel - 20:31-37 Right And Wrong. Lastly, we see the humanity of Jehoshaphat. He had a heart for God, but was not able to accomplish everything he wanted to do. Though he'd rid the land of idols, they were not all removed. He also showed that he could make the same mistake twice. Even after the disastrous alliance with King Ahab of Israel, he again made the same mistake with Ahab's son Akh-az-YAW. This time, it was not an alliance of force, but an alliance of commerce. But God didn't let it happen. The ships were destroyed, and once again, a prophet was sent to rebuke Jehoshaphat. Do we write Jehoshaphat off then, as a bad king. No. Once again, we see a man who makes mistakes, but is quick to repent. 1 Kings 22 tells us that after the ships were broken,

1 Kings 22:49 Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat was not willing.

A second ungodly alliance was repented for after God's second rebuke. Saints, remember that nobody's expecting a walk free of stumbling. But God is expecting a heart that seeks after Him. If and when you do stumble, simply be quick to repent when rebuked by the Lord, and you're going to be all right.

Matthew Henry Notes: Verses: 31-37

We are now drawing towards the close of the history of Jehoshaphat's reign, for a further account of which those who lived when this book was published were referred to an authentic history of it, written by Jehu the prophet (2Ch 19:2), which was then extant, 2Ch 20:34. This was the general character of his reign, that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, kept close to the worship of God himself and did what he could to keep his people close to it. But two things are here to be lamented:-

1. The people still retained a partiality for the high places, 2Ch 20:33. Those that were erected to the honour of strange gods were taken away (2Ch 17:6); but those where the true God was worshipped, being less culpable, were thought allowable, and Jehoshaphat was loth to disoblige the people so far as to take them away, for as yet they had not prepared their hearts to serve the God of their fathers. They complied with Jehoshaphat's reformation because they could not for shame do otherwise, but they were not hearty in it, did not direct their hearts to God in it, did not act in it from any good principle nor with any zeal or resolution: and the best magistrates cannot bring to pass what they would, in reformation, when the people are cool in it.

2. Jehoshaphat himself still retained a partiality for the house of Ahab, because he had married his son to a daughter of that family, though he had been plainly reprov'd for it and had like to have smarted for it. He saw and knew that Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, did very wickedly, and therefore could not expect to prosper; yet he joined himself with him, not in war, as with his father, but in trade, became his partner in an East India fleet bound for Ophir, 2Ch 20:35, 36. There is an emphasis laid upon the time-after this, after God had done such great things for him, without any such scandalous and pernicious confederacies, given him not only victory, but wealth, yet after this to go and join himself with a wicked king was very ungrateful. After God had given him such a deliverance as this should he again break God's commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? What could he expect but that God should be angry with him? Ezra 9:13, 14. Yet he sends to him, to show him his error and bring him to repentance,

(1.) By a prophet, who foretold the blasting of his project, 2Ch 20:37. And,

(2.) By a storm, which broke the ships in the port before they set sail, by which he was warned to break

off his alliance with Ahaziah; and it seems he took the warning, for, when Ahaziah afterwards pressed him to join with him, he would not, 1 Ki. 22:49. See how pernicious a thing it is to join in friendship and society with evil-doers. It is a hard matter to break off from it. A man may much better keep himself from being taken in the snare than recover himself out of it.

2 Chronicles 20:32 He walked in the way of his father Asa and did not depart from it, doing right in the sight of the LORD.

- **he walked:** 2Ch 17:3-6
- **the way:** 2Ch 14:2-5,11-13 1Ki 15:11
- **did not depart:** 2Ch 16:7-12 Ps 18:21 36:3

Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 17:3-6+ The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he **followed the example of his father David's earlier days** and did not seek the Baals, 4 but **sought the God of his father, followed His commandments, and did not act as Israel did.** 5 So (STRATEGIC TERM OF CONCLUSION) the LORD established the kingdom in his control, and all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor. 6 He took great pride in the ways of the LORD and again removed the high places and the Asherim from Judah.

1 Kings 15:14+ But the high places were not taken away; nevertheless **the heart of Asa was wholly devoted to the LORD all his days.**

LIKE FATHER LIKE SON

He walked in the way of his father Asa and did not depart from it, doing right in the sight of the LORD This is a gracious statement of Jehoshaphat's life for two reasons. First, Asa himself was not a paragon of virtue in his last 5 years so God's mercifully did not focus on his failures (1Ki 15:14+). Second, Jehoshaphat chose to make ungodly alliances with idol worshipers (Ahab in 2Ch 18:1-34 and Ahaziah in 2Ch 20:35-37).

Bob Utley on "**doing right in the sight of the Lord**" NIDOTTE, vol. 2, p. 566, mentions that this is a standard phrase referring to godly kings who acted like David (i.e., 1 Kgs. 11:13,38; 14:8; 15:15), as one who kept and revered YHWH's law (cf. Deut. 6:18; 12:8,25,28; 13:18; 21:9; 1 Kgs. 11:38).

1. Asa – 1 Kgs. 15:11; 2 Chr. 14:2
2. Jehoshaphat – 1 Kgs. 22:43; 2 Chr. 20:32
3. Jehu – 2 Kgs. 10:30
4. Jehoash – 2 Kgs. 12:2; 2 Chr. 24:2
5. Joash – 2 Kgs. 14:3; 2 Chr. 24:2
6. Amaziah – 2 Chr. 25:2
7. Azariah – 2 Kgs. 15:3; 2 Chr. 26:4 (Uzziah)
8. Jotham – 2 Kgs. 15:34; 2 Chr. 27:2
9. Hezekiah – 2 Kgs. 18:3; 2 Chr. 29:2; 31:20
10. Josiah – 2 Kgs. 22:2; 2 Chr. 34:2

A Devoted Heart

He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. —2 Chronicles 20:32

Today's Scripture & Insight: 2 Chronicles 17:1-11

A successful Christian businessman shared his story with us at church. He was candid about his struggles with faith and abundant wealth. He declared, "Wealth scares me!"

He quoted Jesus' statement, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:25 niv). He cited Luke 16:19-31 about the rich man and Lazarus and how in this story it was the rich man who went to hell. The parable of the "rich fool" (Luke 12:16-21) disturbed him.

“But,” the businessman stated, “I’ve learned a lesson from Solomon’s verdict on the abundance of wealth. It’s all ‘meaningless’ ” (Eccl. 2:11 niv). He determined not to let wealth get in the way of his devotion to God. Rather, he wanted to serve God with his assets and help the needy.

Throughout the centuries, God has blessed some people materially. We read of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 17:5, “The Lord established the kingdom . . . so that he had great wealth and honor.” He did not become proud or bully others with his wealth. Instead, “his heart was devoted to the ways of the Lord” (v. 6). Also, “he followed the ways of his father Asa and did not stray from them; he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord” (20:32).

The Lord is not against wealth for He has blessed some with it—but He’s definitely against the unethical acquisition and wrong use of it. He is worthy of devotion from all His followers. By: Lawrence Darmani (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Giving thanks to God often helps us learn contentment with what we do have. What are you thankful for?

Wealth or no wealth, devoted hearts please the Lord.

2 Chronicles 20:33 The high places, however, were not removed; the people had not yet directed their hearts to the God of their fathers.

[GW](#) But the illegal worship sites on the hills were not torn down. The people still didn’t have their hearts set on the God of their ancestors.

[GNT](#) but the pagan places of worship were not destroyed. The people still did not turn wholeheartedly to the worship of the God of their ancestors.

[ICB](#) But the places where false gods were worshiped were not removed. And the people did not strongly desire to follow the God their ancestors had followed.

[MSG](#) he failed to get rid of the neighborhood sex-and-religion shrines—people continued to pray and worship at these idolatrous god shops.

[NLT](#) During his reign, however, he failed to remove all the pagan shrines, and the people never fully committed themselves to follow the God of their ancestors.

- the high places: 2Ch 14:3 17:6
- had not: 2Ch 12:14 19:3 30:19 De 29:4 1Sa 7:3

Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 29:4+ “Yet to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear.

2 Chronicles 17:6 He took great pride in the ways of the LORD and again removed the high places and the Asherim from Judah.

The high places ([bamah](#)), however, were not removed - Both Asa and Jehoshaphat had sought to remove the high places.

[Life Application Study Bible \(borrow\)](#) note on **high places** - This summary says that Jehoshaphat did not remove the pagan shrines, while 2Ch 17:6 and 2Ch 19:3 say he did remove them. Jehoshaphat destroyed most of the Baal and Asherah idols, but since he did not succeed in wiping out the corrupt religions practiced at the shrines, they were probably rebuilt each time he had them removed.

[ESV Study Bible](#) (page 770 - borrow) - Some have claimed that 2 Chron. 20:33 is inconsistent with 2Ch 17:6, which says that Jehoshaphat “took the high places... out of Judah,” but both statements can be true if 2Ch 17:6 refers to Jehoshaphat’s official actions and 2Ch 20:33 indicates that the people’s commitment to Jehoshaphat’s reforms was not wholehearted in every place (cf. 1 Kings 22:43). The Chronicler explains why: **the people had not yet set their hearts upon the God of their fathers** (2 Chron. 20:33).

The people had not yet directed their hearts to the God of their fathers(Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) - The high places seem to have reappeared after they were removed (2Ch 17:6). In context this seems to be because of the people of Judah had a heart

problem. They had a commitment problem! They had a faith problem! So while the people had followed Jehoshaphat's example in the defeat of the enemies, they did not "agree" with his destroying their **high places** ([bamah](#)).

THOUGHT - This shows just how powerful are the lusts of the flesh and how sin resists our attempts to kill it (Col 3:5+). Unfortunately Sin is powerful and resilient. The only force that can kill it is the Holy Spirit (Ro 8:13+)! Even then, it crawls back from the dead (so to speak) and will do so until the day we die. In the meantime, we must daily, continually walk by the Spirit and when we do we will not carry out the desires of the flesh! (Gal 5:16, 17+). Paul does not say we won't have the desires of the flesh, but that we will not act on those desires! That's the fine line between temptation to sin and committing the sin (cf Jas 1:13-16+). Take that tempting thought captive immediately in obedience to Christ (2Co 10:5+).

John Trapp - For as yet the people had not prepared their hearts - They could not find in their hearts, though Jehoshaphat had been at much pains with them, {2Ch 19:4} to part with their accustomed sacrificing in those high places; nor could the king yet bring them to it.

The [EXB](#) renders this verse "But the ·places where gods were worshiped [high places; 2Ch 11:15+] were not removed, and the people ·**did not really want** to follow [had not committed/devoted themselves to; had not set their hearts on] the God of their ·ancestors [fathers]."

2 Chronicles 20:34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first to last, behold, they are written in the annals of Jehu the son of Hanani, which is recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel.

- **the rest:** 2Ch 12:15 13:22 16:11
- **Jehu the son of Hanani:** 2Ch 19:2 1Ki 16:1,7

Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first to last, behold ([hinneh](#); [Lxx](#) - [idou](#)), **they are written in the annals of Jehu the son of Hanani, which is recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel.**

2 Chronicles 20:35 After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah king of Israel. He acted wickedly in so doing.

- **Jehoshaphat:** 1Ki 22:48-49
- **He acted wickedly in so doing:** 2Ki 1:2-16

Related Passages:

1 Kings 22:48-49+ Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but they did not go for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber. 49 Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat was not willing.

ANOTHER UNHOLY ALLIANCE

After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah king of Israel(see 1Ki 22:51–2Ki 1:16.) - Why would such a godly king who had seen God move so mightily within his midst make such a foolish decision. In fact he had already been reprovved by Hanani for his alliance with King Ahab, Ahaziah's father! And not only was he reprovved but he almost lost his life against the Arameans! He did not learn his lesson. One answer that he was related to Ahaziah by marriage to his sister. Another is that **Jehoshaphat** had a touch of "heart disease." And he appears to have had a change of heart after initially turning down Ahaziah's offer (1Ki 22:48-49+) Jeremiah 17:9 says "The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?"

THOUGHT - Are you walking worthy of the Lord today, walking in the power of His Spirit, walking according to His Word? That is wonderful, but beware of the ever present danger for **ALL** of us that in our fallen flesh there is the ever present danger of compromising our integrity and lapsing into sin! Oh gracious God, please guard us and by Thy Spirit enable us to keep us from falling into sin like godly Jehoshaphat did. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Here's a corollary thought - **"THEREFORE** let him who thinks he stands **take heed** (CONTINUALLY!) = [present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) that he does not fall." (1Co 10:12+)

[Life Application Study Bible \(borrow\)](#) adds - Before entering into partnerships, ask: (1) What are my motives? (2) What problems am I avoiding by seeking this partnership? (3) Is this partnership the best solution, or is it only a quick solution to my problem? (4) Have I prayed or asked others to pray for guidance? (5) Are my partner and I really working toward the same goals? (6) Am I willing to settle for less financial gain in order to do what God wants?

[ESV Study Bible](#) (page 770 - borrow) Adapted and expanded from 1 Kings 22:48-49. Jehoshaphat repeats his error of making an alliance (this time, a commercial one) with the northern king, Ahab's son **Ahaziah**. The Chronicler has added the prophetic denunciation by **Eliezer**.

He acted wickedly in so doing- There is no doubt how God felt about Jehoshaphat's unholy alliance! How did this happen especially in light of the words of his prayer "Our eyes are on You"? There could be other reasons, but it seems that Jehoshaphat took his gaze off of the glory of the Most High God and was attracted by the possibility of maritime profits in trade with Ophir.

Morris - Both Jehoshaphat and his father Asa were good kings of Judah, men who never ceased to worship the true God. But both Asa (2 Chronicles 16:2,3) and Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 18:1) hindered God's full blessing on their lives and reigns because they compromised by joining up with pagans and apostates. The Biblical norm has always been: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Corinthians 6:14).

*Jehoshaphat's devout life did not sanctify this venture;
rather, Ahaziah's corrupt life defiled it.*

J.A. Thompson: Ahaziah, king of Israel, offered help in a joint venture, which Jehoshaphat at first refused (1 Kgs 22:48-49). Yet once again Jehoshaphat was drawn into an alliance with the king of Israel. He sought a human ally and not God. There is no mention of the Lord's help. Jehoshaphat agreed on an alliance to make ships to go to Tarshish (a fleet of trading ships). Jehoshaphat's devout life did not sanctify this venture; rather, Ahaziah's corrupt life defiled it. (See [1, 2 Chronicles: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

Gleason Archer - Is there not a contradiction between 1 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 20, as to Jehoshaphat's ill-fated fleet at Ezion-geber?

1 Kings 22:48 agrees with 2 Chronicles 20:35–36 that a fleet of ocean-going merchantmen ("ships of Tarshish") was constructed at the Red Sea port of Ezion-geber, for the purpose of engaging in trade with Ophir—a trade that Solomon had found very profitable back in the previous century (1 Kings 9:28). They also agree that Ahaziah the son of Ahab, king of Israel, was somehow involved in this venture. Apparently the plan originally agreed on by both rulers (2 Chron. 20:35–36) was that this would be a joint commercial venture, with both the costs and the profits to be shared by both governments. 1 Kings 22:49 says: "Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, 'Let my servants go with your servants in the ships.' But Jehoshaphat was not willing" (NASB). But 2 Chronicles 20:35–36 contributes the interesting information that Jehoshaphat actually was at first quite willing for Ahaziah to join with him in this undertaking, even though it was wrong for him to act in partnership with a degenerate Baal-worshiper like the son of Ahab and Jezebel. It was only under the pressure of the prophet Eliezer son of Dodavahu, who denounced the alliance as highly displeasing to God, that Jehoshaphat finally backed away from the agreement. 2 Chronicles 20:37 tells us that Eliezer predicted that Yahweh would destroy all the ships that Jehoshaphat had built, and then the Lord apparently proceeded to do so by sending a violent storm on the harbor of Ezion-geber. There is really no basic contradiction between the two accounts, even though there is perhaps a difference in emphasis. But we still cannot be quite certain whether Jehoshaphat notified Ahaziah that the deal was off at some time before the storm struck or whether it was after it had smashed up the ships. In the latter case, the only thing that Jehoshaphat could have vetoed, so far as Ahaziah was concerned, was a project to attempt a rebuilding of the ruined fleet as a joint venture for a second time. ([Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties](#))

The Discipline of Destruction By Dr. Denis Lyle

Scripture: 1 Kings 22:41–53; 2 Chronicles 20:35–37, especially 1 Kings 22:48:

Jehoshaphat made merchant ships to go to Ophir for gold; but they never sailed, for the ships were wrecked at Ezion Geber.

Introduction: What particular object occupies most of your thinking, planning, and energy? Chances are, we're like most people and spend our time thinking about a house, a car, furniture, a bank account, an investment, property, land, and so on. We are creatures committed to things. Things are marvelous servants but terrible masters. Yes, often we get all wrapped up in things, and sometimes

God has to employ drastic methods to teach us invaluable lessons. He dashes our hopes to the ground, using the discipline of destruction. Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, experienced this, as we will see in this study.

1. Do Not Initiate Selfish Schemes (1 Kin. 22:48). Geographically, Ophir was probably located in southwest Arabia. Evidently gold reserves in Judah were low, and Jehoshaphat decided to build ships in order to send them to Ophir for gold. By importing more gold, Jehoshaphat thought he would strengthen his position financially and economically. Perhaps he desired to restore the glory of Judah as it was in the days of Solomon (see 1 Kin. 9:26–28). Jehoshaphat was generally steadfast (see 1 Kin. 22:43, 2 Chron. 17:3–6). In this case he got sidetracked. He began building ships right away (20:36) and initiated an alliance with Ahaziah (22:40), proving his ambition was materialistic (22:48). However, God had already laid down the law that the king should not "... greatly multiply silver and gold for himself" (Deut. 17:17). What schemes have you initiated in your heart? multiplying your wealth? attaining worldly possessions or power? Wealth and possessions are not wrong, but when they become master over you, the Lord may very well destroy what you put your faith in to redirect you to Himself, the only true treasure.

2. The Message We Must Heed (2 Chron. 20:37) Eliezer was God's "man on the spot." What a man and what a message! Commissioned by the Lord, he came into the palace of Jehoshaphat and confronted the erring king. He was no crank or coward. Faithfully and fearlessly he delivered the divine message to Jehoshaphat. We notice that: a ruin is predicted, "... the Lord has destroyed your works." Secondly, a reason is provided, "Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah ..." This was the son of the notorious Ahab, Ahaziah "who did evil in the sight of the Lord" (1 Kin. 22:52–53). How often we lay aside our convictions for our comfort; we trade our morality for materialism! Is the Lord speaking to you this morning? Do you hear, and will you heed the message? Do not scheme with evil men for selfish gain!

3. The Loss We Will Sustain (1 Kin. 22:48; 2 Chron. 20:37) Notice the phrase, "... the ships were wrecked, so that they were not able to go" (2 Chron. 20:37). God was disciplining his wayward servant! The ships were built; their keels were laid; their hulls were formed; the masts were placed in position; the ships were fitted out; they were manned by the men of Judah. Before they could set sail for Ophir, they were destroyed on the rocks that lay in jagged ranges on each side of the port of Ezion-Geber. God's Word was fulfilled. What God did in the life of Jehoshaphat He has done and continues to do in the life of His children. He intervenes to break our pet schemes and our cherished intentions. He breaks them on the rocks of judgment. He permits storms to arise that wreak havoc with our selfish ambitions.

4. The Profit We Can Derive (1 Kin. 22:49) After the ships were broken at Ezion-Geber, Ahaziah approached his partner in the shipbuilding enterprise and urged Jehoshaphat to permit Ahaziah's servants to go with Jehoshaphat's servants in the ships. Apparently, Ahaziah wanted a new fleet built, but this one would be manned by Israelites. We read, "... Jehoshaphat would not" (1 Kin. 22:49). It seems that the king of Judah had learned his lesson. Perhaps some are here today who have been through this experience, or maybe you're being disciplined through destruction right now. The Lord offers His mercy to you.

Conclusion: Has God wrecked your ships? Broken your plans? Ruined your projects? Won't you step down off the throne of your life? Let's lay down our materialism and selfish ambition on the altar today and crown Jesus as our Lord, our Savior, and our treasure (Matt. 6:19–21).

2 Chronicles 20:36 So he allied himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish, and they made the ships in Ezion-geber.

- **So he allied himself:** "At first Jehoshaphat was unwilling, 1 Ki 22:48-49."
- **Ezion geber:** 1Ki 9:26

Related Passages:

1 Kings 22:48-49+ Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but they did not go for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber. 49 Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat was not willing.

AN UNHOLY SHIP BUILDING VENTURE

So he allied himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish, and they made the ships in Ezion-geber- Ezion-geber is also

known as Elath and was on the north end of the Gulf of Aqaba ([picture](#)). In 2Ch 8:17 it was the location of Solomon's fleet. Note that it is somewhat difficult to explain how 2Ch 20:36-37 fit with 1Ki 22:48-49. See [Gleason Archer's explanation](#) above.

*How often we lay aside our convictions for our comfort;
we trade our morality for materialism!*
-- Denis Lyle

2 Chronicles 20:37 Then Eliezer the son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat saying, "Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD has destroyed your works." So the ships were broken and could not go to Tarshish.

- **Because:** 2Ch 19:2 Jos 7:11,12 Pr 13:20
- **the LORD has destroyed your works:** 2Ch 16:9 Pr 9:6 13:20 Heb 12:6 Rev 3:19
- **the ships:** 1Ki 22:48
- **to Tarshish:** 2Ch 9:21

A SHIPWRECKED VENTURE

Then Eliezer the son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat saying, "Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD has destroyed your works." - What a dramatic contrast with the prophecy of Jahaziel who prophesied victory because Jehoshaphat was obedient but now Eliezer prophesies destruction because of disobedience. In effect Yahweh "shipwrecked" this alliance and all the work they had done building the ships. Oh, the wages of sin! And don't miss the boldness of Eliezer to confront a king with a reproof! After all Jehoshaphat's father did not take kindly to Hanani's rebuke (2Ch 16:7-10+)

So - Dramatic, definitive term of conclusion which would bring the unholy ship building venture to a divinely ordained shipwreck!

The ships were broken and could not go to Tarshish - Wrecking the ships was a way for God to break up an unholy alliance! There is no evidence they made it out of the harbor! This verse is somewhat confusing for 1Ki 22:48 says "Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold." Here it says they "could not go to Tarshish" which was west and not toward Ophir. One writer suggests the idea is that "ships of Tarshish" was descriptive of ships that had the ability to make the longer sea journey to Tarshish (cf 2Ch 9:21). Ultimately, we cannot be dogmatic (in my opinion) about the meaning of "go to Tarshish."

Frederick Mabie: Previous lucrative maritime trade from this port during the time of Solomon no doubt prompted Jehoshaphat's ill-fated attempt to restart maritime trade from this port through yet another ill-advised alliance with an ungodly northern kingdom king. In short, this episode amounts to another example of faith compromise on the part of Jehoshaphat that reveals a heart not fully aligned with the ways of God. This prompts a prophetic rebuke from an otherwise unknown prophet (Eliezer), who announces God's coming judgment on this upstart maritime alliance. The connection with the time of Ahaziah of Israel places this maritime project in ca. 853 or 852 BC (cf. Thiele, 98-99). (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary: 1 Chronicles-Job - Page 247](#))

2 Chronicles 21:1-3 gives the conclusion to reign of Jehoshaphat.

Then Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Jehoram his son became king in his place. 2 He had brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azaryahu, Michael and Shephatiah. All these were the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel. 3 Their father gave them many gifts of silver, gold and precious things, with fortified cities in Judah, but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram because he was the firstborn.

C H Spurgeon - Morning and Evening - Solomon's ships had returned in safety, but Jehoshaphat's vessels never reached the land of gold. Providence prospers one, and frustrates the desires of another, in the same business and at the same spot, yet the Great Ruler is as good and wise at one time as another. May we have grace to-day, in the remembrance of this text, to bless the Lord for ships broken at Ezion-geber, as well as for vessels freighted with temporal blessings; let us not envy the more successful, nor murmur at our losses as though we were singularly and specially tried. Like Jehoshaphat, we may be precious in the Lord's sight, although our schemes end in disappointment.

The secret cause of Jehoshaphat's loss is well worthy of notice, for it is the root of very much of the suffering of the Lord's people; it was his alliance with a sinful family, his fellowship with sinners. In 2 Ch. 20:37, we are told that the Lord sent a prophet to declare,

“Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works.”

This was a fatherly chastisement, which appears to have been blest to him; for in the verse which succeeds our morning's text (1 Kings 22:49) we find him refusing to allow his servants to sail in the same vessels with those of the wicked king. Would to God that Jehoshaphat's experience might be a warning to the rest of the Lord's people, to avoid being unequally yoked together with unbelievers! **A life of misery is usually the lot of those who are united in marriage, or in any other way of their own choosing, with the men of the world.** O for such love to Jesus that, like him, we may be holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners; for if it be not so with us, we may expect to hear it often said,

“The Lord hath broken thy works.”

Paul Apple - DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS: (page 502)

1. Why are we so easily tempted to align ourselves in unholy alliances?
2. Why would Jehoshaphat have agreed to go into battle wearing his royal robes and thus making him a target while Ahab disguised himself?
3. What distinctions do you see in this text between true and false prophets?
4. What improbably victories or deliverances has the Lord accomplished for you?

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Raymond Dillard: (BORROW [2 Chronicles](#)) The OT appeals to a variety of criteria for distinguishing true from false prophecy. These criteria can be gathered under three heads as criteria focusing - (1) on the revelatory means, - (2) on the message, and - (3) on the man himself. All three come into play to a greater or lesser extent in the Micaiah narrative.

(1) A variety of revelatory means are sanctioned or forbidden in the OT (e.g., Num 12:6; Deut 13:1; 18:9–13). Preeminently the prophet was to be a man possessed by the spirit (Num 11:16–30; 24:2; 1 Sam 10:5–13; 19:17–24; 2 Kgs 2:7–14; Mic 3:8; Zech 7:12; 2 Chr 20:14, et al.); his message derived from his access to the heavenly council to hear the words of God (Num 12:8; Isa 6; Ezek 1–2; Jer 1:4–10; 23:18–22; Zech 3:7). Both the possession of the spirit (18:23–24) and the heavenly council (18:18–21) figure in the debate over true prophecy in the Micaiah narrative.

(2) The prophet's message was not to be in the name of other gods (Deut 13:1–5) or to contradict previous revelation (1 Kgs 13). The true prophet is recognized because his words come to pass (Deut 18:14–22; 2 Chr 18:16, 25–27); he stands against the tide and the vox populi.

(3) The canonical prophets appeal also to a moral criterion to invalidate the claims of their opponents to have the true word of God (Jer 14:14; 23:10–14; 29:21–23; Ezek 13:21–22; Mic 2:11; cf. Matt 7:15–20; 2 Tim 3:6). Though there are a number of examples of violence on the part of prophets in the OT, the NT invokes the moral criteria for the man of God (1 Tim 3:1–13; Titus 1:6–9; James 3:13–18) in saying that he is not to be violent, “a striker” (KJV—Titus 1:7; 1 Tim 3:3). His conduct should contrast to that of Zedekiah (18:23).

While the passage abounds in criteria distinguishing true from false prophecy, it also enigmatically affirms divine responsibility for false prophecy (Deut 13:3; 2 Chr 18:18–22). The passage speaks eloquently of the sovereignty of God. It was not Ahab who ruled over Israel, seated on his throne surrounded by his flattering prophets, but Yahweh sitting on his throne surrounded by the host of heaven.

Steven Cole: When Christians Compromise with the World Big Idea: Compromise with the world brings disastrous consequences to God's people. The outward damage may not be apparent for a while. But just as driving your car on salted roads in the winter brings inevitable, although not immediate, damage to your car, so compromise with the world brings inevitable corruption into your life and into the church. Four observations from the story of Jehoshaphat:

1. Compromise with the world is a danger for even the most godly of believers.
2. Compromise with the world is a danger because of its subtlety.
3. Compromise with the world sucks you in through wrong relationships.
 - (1) Wrong marriage relationships
 - (2) Wrong social relationships
 - (3) Wrong spiritual relationships

(4) Wrong political relationships

(5) Wrong business relationships

4. Compromise with the world brings disastrous results.

Conclusion One of the most significant books I read last year was David Wells' *No Place for Truth* (Or "Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?") [Eerdmans]. He argues convincingly that the evangelical church in America has lost its theological foundation, its God-centeredness. Instead of being "truth brokers" who help their flocks come to know and live in submission to the holy God, pastors have become business managers who market the church and psychologists who help people find personal fulfillment and good feelings. He points out how if the Apostle Paul were looking for a pastorate today, he might be hard pressed because few would warm to his personality and, "... most pastors stand or fall today by their personalities rather than their character" (p. 290). He argues that the church has blended in with "modernity," promoting God and the gospel as just another self-help method.

Iain Duguid: Jehoshaphat's story is an example of godly leadership, while also serving as warning of the dangers of "joining with" those who do not share a common commitment to God. Paul challenged the Corinthians concerning being "unequally yoked" (2 Cor. 6:14–7:1). Throughout history, varied examples have been debated; however, Jehoshaphat's decisions suggest the basic criterion: does the "joining" lead to actions contrary to allegiance to God and his Word?

Raymond Dillard: The persistence of holy war themes in a work addressed to the small restoration community is striking. They were a politically subservient nation existing by the grace of their Persian overlords. The Chronicler reiterated through his appeal to holy war motifs that numbers and power do not count when Yahweh fights for Israel. These holy war motifs in Chronicles make little sense if the community was content with the status quo, ready to live as a hierocracy under foreign rule. To the contrary, the Chronicler's inclusion of holy war narratives bespeaks the presence of an eschatological hope, a longing for the Day of Yahweh, when the divine warrior would conquer in behalf of his people as he had done so often so long ago. The Chronicler, as an advocate of the temple and its personnel, could nevertheless have an eschatological program; hierocracy in the status quo is not necessarily opposed to eschatology and apocalypticism, but can exist in the same individuals without being assigned to separate sociological support groups. Ultimately the divine warrior does definitively fight for his people and frees them from alien domination (Rev 19:11–21; cf. T. Longman III, "The Divine Warrior: The New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif," *WTJ* 44 [1982] 290–307). (BORROW [2 Chronicles](#)) (See [2 Chronicles, Volume 15 - Page 161](#))

Raymond Dillard: Several ways that Jehoshaphat's reign paralleled that of Asa: (1) Both kings' reigns follow similar patterns of reform, victory in battle, and transgression. (2) Both kings are said to have suppressed (14:2-5; 17:6) and to have failed to suppress (15:17; 20:33) the high places. (3) Both enjoyed prosperity, great building programs, and victory as a result of their obedience. (4) Both were involved in foreign alliances. (5) The two kings are linked together as the standard of piety to which Jehoram failed to attain. . .

Peter Wallace: Should You Love Those Who Hate the LORD? Some people struggle with this, because they think about how we are supposed to love even our enemies! But I hope that you can see that there is a distinction. You are supposed to love all people – because they are created in the image of God – and because they may be restored to that image! But that does not mean that you are to help them attain what they desire!

Ahab wants to squash the true worship of Yahweh throughout Israel. Should you help him? Should you form an alliance with him that will encourage and further his goals?

"You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?" (James 4:4) Friendship in the biblical sense of the term refers to a relationship that has a common end – a common goal – a common direction that you pursue together. You cannot be friends with the world. If your closest relationships – if the relationships that define your existence – are hostile to God – then you will be hostile to him as well!

You cannot love those who hate God. If they hate that which you most love, then you cannot possibly ally with them in any ultimately meaningful way. You can love them for what they were created to be. You can love them for what they may yet become.

Jehoshaphat was trying to bring peace between Israel and Judah. He was a reforming king—a good king—who had good intentions for reuniting Israel and Judah. But in his good intentions for reuniting the church, he overlooked the problem of idolatry. Indeed, Jehoshaphat's alliance with Ahab will nearly result in the end of the house of David, because one fruit of his alliance is that his son, Jehoram will marry Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab. He may have thought that this was a good way to try to bring Israel back into the fold, but you do not bring about reformation by intermarrying with idolaters!

Steven Cole - Confidence In The Crisis (2 Chronicles 20:1-30)

A bricklayer in the French West Indies sent this letter to his boss, explaining why he needed to take some sick leave:

I arrived at the job after the storm, checked the building out and saw that the top needed repairs. I rigged a hoist and a boom, attached the rope to a barrel and pulled bricks to the top. When I pulled the barrel to the top, I secured the rope at the bottom. After repairing the building, I went back to fill the barrel with the leftover bricks. I went down and released the rope to lower the bricks, and the barrel was heavier than I and jerked me off the ground. I decided to hang on.

Halfway up, I met the barrel coming down and received a blow to the shoulder. I hung on and went to the top, where I hit my head on the boom and caught my fingers in the pulley. In the meantime, the barrel hit the ground and burst open, throwing bricks all over. This made the barrel lighter than I, and I started down at high speed. Halfway down, I met the barrel coming up and received a blow to my shins. I continued down and fell upon the bricks, receiving cuts and bruises. At this time I must have lost my presence of mind, because I let go of the rope and the barrel came down and hit me on the head. I respectfully request sick leave.

Have you ever had a day like that? Some of you are thinking, "A day like that? That describes a typical week for me, if not physically, at least emotionally! It's just one thing after another, until I'm left feeling battered." Whether our trials are of the crisis sort or whether they are the more steady, relentless pressures that just wear away our resistance, we've all got them. And, while most of us know that we should pray more and trust God more, for some reason, we don't do it. I struggle with the question, "Why don't I pray as I ought to?"

The answer, I think, is fairly simple: I don't pray as I ought to because I'm self-sufficient, which the Bible calls pride. My pride makes me think, erroneously, that I can handle things by myself, with a little help now and then from God. So, I rely mostly on myself and a little bit on God. I don't really believe the words of Jesus, "Without Me, you can do nothing" (John 15:5). So God graciously brings me trials to show me my great need so that I will look to my great God in prayer and trust Him to work on my behalf.

The story of Jehoshaphat (2Ch 20:1-30) shows us how to have confidence in a crisis--not confidence in ourselves (the American way), but confidence in God.

The story of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 20:1-30) shows us how to have confidence in a crisis--not confidence in ourselves (the American way), but confidence in God. As we saw, Jehoshaphat had a character flaw of making wrongful alliances with the godless King Ahab, but he was a man who followed the Lord and brought spiritual reform to the nation (2Ch 19:4-11). But, then Jehoshaphat was shaken one morning when his intelligence sources came running in with the horrifying news, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, out of Aram [or, better, Edom] and behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar (that is Engedi)" (2Ch 20:1, 2). This meant that this enemy coalition was about 15 miles south of Jerusalem (**ED**: 15-25 MILES), on the western shore of the Dead Sea. Jehoshaphat's life and his entire kingdom were on the brink of extinction! Talk about a reason to panic!

So what did he do? What would you do if you heard some threatening news that affected your future and maybe your life? This godly king did the right thing: He called a national prayer meeting and encouraged the people to trust God in the face of this overwhelming crisis. They did it, and literally won the war by prayer alone, without swinging a single sword! Their story teaches us that ...

We can be confident in a time of crisis if we let our great need drive us to prayer and faith in our great God.

In 2Ch 20:1-4 we see their great need; in 2Ch 20:5-13, Jehoshaphat's prayer reveals their great God; and in 2Ch 20:14-30 we see their faith in their great God and the victory He brought about.

1. A recognition of our great need should drive us to prayer (2Ch 20:1-4).

That's obvious to any believer, of course. But just because it's obvious doesn't make it automatic.

A. A RECOGNITION OF OUR GREAT NEED DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY DRIVE US TO PRAYER.

It's easy to read this story and miss what a great thing it was for Jehoshaphat to call the nation to prayer over this crisis. Put yourself in his place. It would have been very human to panic. When he heard the news of this army within his borders, we could understand if he yelled, "Call all my top generals! Get the army mobilized immediately! We don't have a second to waste!" As soon as the troops were mustered, if there was time, he could have stopped for a quick word of prayer. But turning his attention to seek the Lord and calling the nation to prayer and fasting was not automatic.

Not only could Jehoshaphat react with panic, he also could have had a twinge of anger at God. He had just instituted a number of reforms to bring the nation back to the Lord. The text states, "Now it came about after this" (2Ch 20:1). After what? After his reforms (2Ch 19:4-11)! It would have been easy for Jehoshaphat to have said, "What kind of deal is this, God? I tried to bring the nation

back to You! I taught them to put away their idols and follow You because You're worthy to be trusted. And now we're facing annihilation at the hands of this pagan coalition! See if I follow You again!"

A lot of people feel that way when they've tried to follow God and then get hit with difficult trials. They get angry and complain, "This isn't fair, God! I was trying to follow You and do Your will. I get hit with trouble while my pagan neighbor enjoys the good life!" So they pout and feel sorry for themselves. Instead of humbly submitting to God in prayer, they lash out at Him in anger. But Jehoshaphat didn't do that. He did what was not automatic in a crisis: He prayed.

Another natural reaction would have been for Jehoshaphat to trust in his army. Chapter 17:12-19 tells about the organization and might of his forces. He was equipped for war. It would have been easy to think, "This is the sort of thing we're prepared for. Call out the army! Let's go get them!" But Jehoshaphat, rather than trusting in his army, publicly admits his lack of strength and calls on God as his only help in this crisis.

He put prayer first. He realized that he could do some things after he had prayed, but he could not do anything worthwhile before he prayed. Prayer was his strongest weapon. So, he resisted the temptation to panic, get angry at God, or trust his army. He recognized his great need, so he prayed.

You say, "That's what I want to do the next time a problem hits." Do you? Be careful before you glibly say that! To understand this story, we have to see that Jehoshaphat's call to prayer was a humiliating thing for him to do.

B. A RECOGNITION OF OUR GREAT NEED REQUIRES HUMBLING OURSELVES BEFORE GOD AND OTHERS.

Jehoshaphat was the king of Judah. In the ancient Near East, kings were a proud lot. They had an image to maintain. Leaders have to be tough and inspire confidence in their leadership. What kind of leader admits in front of his people, "I'm scared, folks, because we're helpless against our enemy!" That's not good politics!

But that's what Jehoshaphat did. He admitted his fear, called a national prayer meeting, and then prayed in front of everyone about how helpless he was (2Ch 20:12). Surely, it would have been better politically to pray in private, but then to get up in front of the people and say, "We've got a little problem, folks! But our side is strong. Our troops are going to wipe them out! Pray for us while we go out and defend our nation against these intruders."

But Jehoshaphat wasn't worried about politics or his public image. He just knew that he was in deep trouble if God didn't answer, and so he openly admitted his weakness and called upon the Lord.

A major detriment to godly prayer is the wave of worldly teaching flooding the church that says that you need to build your self-esteem. I myself got sucked into that teaching for a while. One of the things the Lord used to correct me was reading John Calvin's classic, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. In a great section on prayer, Calvin gives several rules for prayer. He writes,

To this let us join a third rule: that anyone who stands before God to pray, in his humility giving glory completely to God, abandon all thought of his own glory, cast off all notion of his own worth, in fine, put away all self-assurance--lest if we claim for ourselves anything, even the least bit, we should become vainly puffed up, and perish at his presence. We have repeated examples of this submission, which levels all haughtiness, in God's servants; each one of whom, the holier he is, the more he is cast down when he presents himself before the Lord (J. T. McNeill, ed. [Eerdmans], III:XX:8).

He goes on to cite examples from Scripture, such as Daniel, David, and Isaiah. The point is, we're too proud to admit that we're needy. Our pride, self-sufficiency, and self-esteem robs God of His glory. When we recognize our great need, we should humble ourselves and pray, not just by ourselves, but with other Christians who can bear our burdens with us.

But, once our need drives us to God in prayer, we need to understand how to pray. Jehoshaphat's prayer gives us some important instruction in how to seek God in prayer.

2. A recognition of our great God should direct our prayers (2Ch 20:5-13).

There are two things to see here:

A. IN OUR PRAYERS WE SHOULD NOT ONLY SEEK ANSWERS TO OUR PROBLEMS, BUT WE SHOULD SEEK GOD HIMSELF.

Note verse 3: "Jehoshaphat ... turned his attention [lit., "set his face," i.e., "determined"] to seek the Lord." Verse 4 states that the people not only sought help from the Lord, but also that they sought the Lord. This was nothing new for Jehoshaphat. Earlier (2Ch 17:4), he is described as a king who "sought the God of his father." As we've seen, the Hebrew word "seek" means, literally, "to trample under foot," to beat a path to God because you frequent that way so often.

It's significant that in Jehoshaphat's prayer, the first four verses (2Ch 20:6-9) focus on God Himself; finally, in the last three verses (2Ch 20:10-12) he mentions the problem. But even in mentioning the problem, God is prominent. I wonder, if we were facing imminent annihilation, would we be so God-centered?

In a crisis, if we pray at all, what do we usually pray? "God, get me out of here!" We want relief and we want it now! But in so praying we miss something crucial: In a crisis, we aren't supposed to run and get God off the shelf, like Aladdin's genie, rub Him the right way, get what we want, and put Him back until the next crisis. Trials should cause us to seek God Himself, because He Himself is what we need. God is our sufficiency, our very life. If we have God and cling to Him, then even if we aren't delivered from our crisis, we can go through it--even through the loss of children and possessions, as Job went through--because, as is said here of Abraham (2Ch 20:7), the living God is our friend.

This is at the heart of the current controversy over the role of psychology in the church. Is God Himself, His indwelling Spirit, and His Word (and the many provisions given in it, including Christ's body, the church) sufficient for a believer in the crises of life, or must we turn to the therapies and counsel of the world to enable us to cope? Incredibly, Christian psychologists are saying that God and His Word are not sufficient; we need psychotherapy!

As Calvin pointed out (in the quote above), God alone deserves all glory. If we turn to the world for help, the world gets some of the glory. If we turn to God as our only refuge and strength, He gets the glory. Our trials should force us to lay hold of God in new ways that we would not have done if we had not been driven to pray. We should come away, not just having presented our requests to God, but also knowing God better, who Himself is our refuge and strength in times of trouble (Ps. 46:1).

B. IN OUR PRAYERS WE SHOULD SEEK GOD AS REVEALED IN HIS WORD.

Jehoshaphat's prayer is steeped in Scripture. He starts by (2Ch 20:6) reciting God's attributes: "You are the God of our fathers" (implying, "You took care of them.") "You are God in the heavens, the ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations" (including those threatening to wipe us out!). "You are so powerful and mighty that no one can stand against You." Why is he telling God all this? Certainly not for God's information! It was to rehearse in his own mind and in the people's minds the greatness of God, so they could trust in Him.

Next he recites God's actions (20:7): "You drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and You gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever." (Abraham is called God's friend here, in Isa. 41:8, and James 2:23.) He reminds God of His agreement to hear the prayers of His people when they cry to Him in their distress (almost a direct quote from the dedication of Solomon's temple, 2 Chron. 6:28-30).

Then Jehoshaphat mentions the problem which, he reminds God, stems from the fact that Israel obeyed Him by not wiping out these very people who are now invading the land (2Ch 20:10-11)! They are about to drive Israel out, not of their possession, but of God's possession. Finally, he calls attention to God's ability to deal with the problem, in contrast to Israel's inability (2Ch 20:12).

That's a great prayer because it's saturated with Scripture. It focuses on God as He has revealed Himself in His Word! If we fill our prayers with the greatness of our problems, we'll shrink our faith. But if we fill our prayers with the greatness of our God and how He has worked down through history, we'll stimulate our faith. God delights to answer believing prayers where we put our finger on the promises and truth in His Word and ask Him to make it so in our case.

Thus, a recognition of our great need should drive us to prayer; a recognition of our great God should direct our prayers. Finally,

3. Reliance on our great God should follow our prayers (2Ch 20:14-30).

As the nation was gathered at the Temple in prayer, the Spirit of God came upon a prophet in the assembly (22Ch 0:14) who encouraged them not to fear and assured them that God would undertake for them in this battle without their fighting at all (2Ch 20:15-17; not God's usual means!). When they heard this word through the prophet, everyone fell down and worshiped and then they stood up and sang loud praises (2Ch 20:18-19).

By the way, we further see Jehoshaphat's humility here. If he had been proud, he would have said, "Wait a minute! I'm the king! I called this prayer meeting! Who does this prophet think he is to get a message from God? God has to give the message through me!" But he was humbly willing to submit to God's word through this other man.

Then, based on the prophet's word from God, the people got up the next morning and marched out to the battlefield, led by a choir singing praises, of all things (2Ch 20:21)! God caused the enemy armies to turn against each other, so that all Israel had to do was collect the spoil and celebrate the victory! Two thoughts:

A. RELIANCE ON GOD MEANS BEING OBEDIENT TO HIS WORD.

The promise given through the prophet (2Ch 20:15-17) was one thing; believing and acting on it was another. These singers were staking their very lives on the truthfulness of that word from God. They were doing a crazy thing--marching unarmed in front of the army, singing praises to God, against a powerful enemy that was armed to the teeth! As they went out on this seemingly crazy mission, Jehoshaphat encouraged the people by saying (2Ch 20:20), "Put your trust in the Lord your God, and you will be established. Put your trust in His prophets [i.e., His Word] and succeed." Their trust was put into shoe leather in that they kept marching!

This deliverance is a picture of our salvation. In salvation, we cannot do anything; God does it all: "Stand and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf" (2Ch 20:17). Even faith is the gift of God, so that we cannot boast (Eph. 2:8-9). Yet at the same time, our faith in God's promise which lays hold of His salvation is not just intellectual assent, where we say, "I believe" but don't act on it. Saving faith is always obedient faith. Just as these singers' faith was demonstrated by their marching out to battle, armed only with songs of praise, so genuine faith in Christ as Savior will be demonstrated in a life of joyful obedience to His Word. "Faith" that says, "I believe, but I'm not going to act on it" is not saving faith.

B. RELIANCE ON GOD IS ALWAYS REWARDED BY GOD.

He never fails those who trust Him and obey His Word. That is not to say that He delivers everyone who trusts Him from suffering or even death. There are many who have trusted God and lost their heads (Heb. 11:36-40)! But this earthly life isn't the final chapter. All who suffer loss for Jesus will be richly rewarded in heaven or else God is a liar! Just as Israel was enriched literally by the spoil of victory, so we will always be enriched spiritually through our trials if we recognize our great need, pray to our great God, and rely on Him alone, not on any human schemes or support.

Conclusion

A popular T-shirt reads, "Bottom of the ninth, down by three runs, bases loaded, two outs, full count--No Fear!" That shirt is promoting an American folk virtue--self-confidence in a crisis. Christians should join Jehoshaphat in rejecting all self-confidence and acknowledging, "O God, we're powerless and we don't know what to do, but our eyes are on You!" God is our confidence in the crisis!

Corrie Ten Boom, author of *The Hiding Place* and survivor of the German concentration camps, used to have people come up to her and say, "Corrie, my, what a great faith you have!" She would smile and reply, "No, it's what a great God I have!" We can be confident in a time of crisis if we let our great need drive us to prayer and faith in our great God.

Discussion Questions

- How can we keep from growing bitter toward God when trials hit?
- Agree/disagree: Pride is the main thing that keeps us from prayer.
- If we only pray to get what we want rather than to seek God Himself, what does it reveal about us?
- How can we trust God when we feel He has let us down about something in the past?

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