

\*6/2/19

**Jehoshaphat Prayed For God's Help**  
**2Chron. 20:1-30**

Jehoshaphat had joined himself to evil Ahab by an unequally yoked marriage of his son Jehoram to Athaliah the daughter of Jezebel and agreed with Ahab to go the war against Syria, but he knew better, yet God delivered him from being killed in battle.

So the prophet Jehu, the son of Hanani met Jehoshaphat as he was returning to Jerusalem and rebuked him, "Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD? Therefore the wrath of the LORD is upon you. "Nevertheless good things are found in you, in that you have removed the wooden images from the land, and have prepared your heart to seek God." 2Chron. 19:2c-3

\* God is the God of second, third chances!

Jehoshaphat continued with the reforms of the revival going out among the people, brought them back to the God of their fathers and set up judges for the law.

\* This section is unique of Second Chronicles and not found in First kings, 1Kings 22:1-30

Now Jehoshaphat was facing a great adversity of three invading nations causing him to pray to God, which is characterized by three things. 2Chron. 20:1-30

- I. The seeking of God due to the adversity. vs. 1-4

- II. The expressing of total confidence in God for the adversity. vs. 5-19
- III. The witnessing of deliverance from the adversity. vs. 20-30

- I. **The seeking of God due to the adversity. vs. 1-4**

- A. The formidable invasion coming against Jehoshaphat. vs. 1
  1. The specific time is stated, "It happened after this"
    - a. The phrase after this "achar" refers to the previous chapter.
      - 1) The events.
      - 2) The time period.
    - b. The phrase is looking back to the period of revival and reforms of Jehoshaphat.
      - 1) As Jehoshaphat turned the people back to God.
      - 2) As Jehoshaphat set up judges to teach the law.
    - c. The phrase also indicates the rebuke of Jehoshaphat by the prophet Jehu, the son of Hanani.
      - 1) For helping the wicked, Ahab.
      - 2) For loving those who hate the Lord.
      - 3) For declaring God's wrath was upon him.
  2. The specific nations are stated, "It happened after this that the people of Moab with the

people of Ammon, and others with them besides the Ammonites.” vs. 1a-b

- a. The Moabites were the descendents of Lot’s by his oldest daughter. Gen. 19:37
    - 1) Moab “Mow; ab”, means of his father.
    - 2) The Moabites lived on the east side of the Jordan River about the middle of the Dead Sea.
  - b. The Ammonites were the descendents of Lot’s younger daughter. Gen. 19:38
    - 1) Ammon “Ammown”, means son of my people.
    - 2) The Ammonites lived on the east side of the Jordan River also north of Moab, a bit above the Dead Sea.
  - c. The third was the Edomites, descendents of Esau from “Mount Seir”. vs. 22
    - 1) Edom “Edom” means red in reference to Esau being a hairy red. Gen. 25:25
    - 2) Esau had a fraternal twin brother, Jacob, God told Rebekah there were two nations in her womb. Gen. 25:23
    - 3) They also lived on the east side of the Jordan River, south of the end of the Dead Sea.
    - 4) Going from north to south it would be Ammon, Moab, then Edom.
3. The specific purpose is also stated, “came to battle against Jehoshaphat.” vs. 1c

- a. These three nation were not part of the nation of Israel or Judah and had no part of the promise to inherit the land.
  - b. The three nations for the first time since David the rebelled seeing a great opportunity to defeat Jehoshaphat, since the nation being divided and weak.
  - c. But this also was God’s wrath on chastening Jehoshaphat. 2Chron. 19:2d
- B.** The frightful news reached Jehoshaphat. vs. 2
1. The person is not named, “Then some came and told Jehoshaphat.” vs. 2a
    - a. It could have been one person?
    - b. It could have been a few officers?
  2. The words were spoken to king Jehoshaphat, “saying, “A great multitude is coming against you.” vs. 2b
    - a. The number stated was a great multitude “rab hamown”, a exceedingly vast horde.
      - \* The face of Jehoshaphat without doubt became very serious.
    - b. The target, “is coming against you”.
      - \* The mind of Jehoshaphat surely became overwhelmed.
  3. The direction of their origin was stated, “from beyond the sea, from Syria.” vs. 2a-b
    - a. Beyond the sea is the Dead Sea indicates the east side of the Jordan River.

- 1) It is called the Dead Sea or the Sea of Salt due to the high content of salt, there are no fish, nothing can live.
  - 2) You cannot not sink in the Dead Sea, you do not swim or dive in, your eyes would burn, people just float.
- b.** Syria “Aram”, means the Aramean people.  
\* This would be north of Ammon.
- 4.** Their present location was given, “and they are in Hazazon Tamar” (which is En Gedi.)” vs. 2c-d
- 1) The name Hazazon Tamar means dividing the date-palm.
  - 2) The town was situated in the desert of Judah and is identified for us as En Gedi, where David hid at times.
- C.** The comprehensible response of Jehoshaphat. vs. 3-4
1. The natural response of Jehoshaphat, “And Jehoshaphat feared.” vs. 3a
    - a.** The word feared “yare”, simply means to become afraid.
      - 1) Being gripped with dreadful terror.
      - 2) Resulting in despair and hopelessness.
    - b.** Fear is natural to every human being.
      - 1) It is a God given defense mechanism.
      - 2) It can paralyze a person to do nothing or propel a person to do anything to defend themselves.

2. The super-natural response of Jehoshaphat, “and set himself to seek the LORD.” vs. 3b
  - a.** Jehoshaphat rather than giving in to his fear, he chose to look beyond himself.
    - 1) He knew that because he trusted in himself when he went to battle with Ahab, he was under God’s wrath, evident by the invasion.
    - 2) He knew the only way to go to God.
  - b.** Jehoshaphat decided to “set himself to seek the LORD.”
    - 1) He was the king, the leader of the people of God.
    - 2) He set “Nathan” is to give himself to seek “darash” to consult or inquire of the LORD, Yahweh, their covenant God.
    - 3) This was all in accord to the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the temple for the various situations to call on God for help. 2Chron. 6
3. The public response of Jehoshaphat, “and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.” vs. 3c
  - a.** This was a national emergency.
  - b.** The entire nation was to demonstrate to God their critical situation and their sincerity towards hearing from God.
4. The nation’s cry to God, “So Judah gathered together to ask help from the LORD; and

from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.” vs. 4

- a. They gathered at Jerusalem to ask God to help them.

\*Again this was in view of the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the temple.

- b. All came from the cities of Judah, not to seek king Jehoshaphat, but the LORD, Yahweh.

\* The total unified dependence on God.

### Illustration

A Congressional Proclamation signed by **John Hancock**, President of the Continental Congress, set aside May 17th, 1776 as a day of public Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer throughout the Colonies, “that we may with united hearts confess and bewail our manifold sins and transgressions, and by a sincere repentance and amendment of life, appease His righteous displeasure and through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, obtain His pardon and forgiveness; humbly imploring His assistance to frustrate the cruel purposes of our unnatural enemies;...” adding, “GOD save the PEOPLE,” in lieu of “GOD save the KING.”

### Application

1. We will have different adversities in life.
  - a. Decisions on the people we spend time with.

- b. Decisions of our education and future profession to earn a living in life.
- c. Decisions of who we will date and marry.
- d. Decisions for times of danger.

\* “The **fear** of **man** brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.” Prov. 29:25

2. Some of us will encounter heart wrenching situation that we dare not trust ourselves for the wisdom or decision, so will go to God.

- a. When husband or wife become unfaithful.
- b. When a son or daughter becomes wayward and rebellious to God.
- c. When a child or family member is diagnosed with cancer or some terminal disease.

1) David said, “As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal **heart** and with a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you **seek** Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.” 1Chron. 28:9

2) Solomon wrote, “Trust in the LORD with **all** your **heart**, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil.” Prov. 3:5-7

***The seeking of God due to the adversity was wisdom!***

**II. The expressing of total confidence in God for the adversity. vs. 5-19**

**A. The prayer of Jehoshaphat. vs. 5-13**

1. The sight of the prayer, “Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court.” vs. 5
  - a. The king was one of the people standing with all the people at Jerusalem. vs. 5a
  - b. The “house of the LORD” refers to the temple of Solomon. vs. 5b
  - c. The new court could be the outer court rebuilt since the days of Solomon. vs. 5c
2. The prayer recognized God is Omnipotent, nothing is impossible for him to do. vs. 6
  - a. God was the Father of the nation, “and said: “O LORD God of our fathers.” vs. 6a-b
  - b. God is sovereignly in control of all nations, but not forcably, “are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations.” vs. 6c-d
  - c. God is undefeatable, “and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You?” vs. 6e-f
3. The prayer acknowledged God was their benevolent God. vs. 7

- a. He was a personal God, “Are You not our God.” vs. 7a
- b. He was the One who judged the inhabitants of Cannan, “who drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel.” vs. 7b
- c. He was the One who bequithed the land to them, “and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?” vs. 7c
  - 1)) Abraham was called out by God to a land he had never seen. Gen. 12:1-3
  - 2)) Abraham is called a “friend of God”. Is. 41:8; Ja. 2:23
4. The prayer was based on the prayer petitions when Solomon dedicated the temple. vs. 8-9
  - a. They were presently in the land and the temple, “And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying.” vs. 8a-c
  - b. They were asking after God’s promises, ““If disaster comes upon us--sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine.” vs. 9a-e
  - c. They were trusting God to deliver them, “we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your name is in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save.”” vs. 9f-i  
\* 1Kings 8:33-45; 2Chron. 6:24-35
5. The prayer declared they obeyed God’s command for these nations. vs. 10-11

- a. They confessed their innocence in the past, “And now, here are the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir--whom You would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and did not destroy them.” vs. 10  
\* The reference. Duet. 2:5
- b. They accused the nations of their guilt by their invasion, “here they are, rewarding us by coming to throw us out of Your possession which You have given us to inherit.” vs. 11
  - 1) The three nation were now attacking Judah.
  - 2) The three nations were trying to take the land God gave them.
- 6. The prayer confessed the inability to defend themselves against the three nations. vs. 12
  - a. They pleaded for family justice, “O our God, will You not judge them?” vs. 12a
  - b. They stated their vulnerability, “For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us.” vs. 12b
  - c. They declared their lack of understanding, but total dependence on Him, “nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.” vs. 12c-d
- 7. The people of the nation waited to hear from God, “Now all Judah, with their little ones,

- their wives, and their children, stood before the LORD.” vs. 13
  - a. The entire nation.
  - b. Entire families.
  - c. The king.
- B. The prayer of Jehoshaphat answered. vs. 14-19
  - 1. The prophet of God spoke, “Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly.” vs. 14
    - a. His name was Jahaziel that means “Yahweh remembers” 1Chron. 16:5
    - b. His father Zachariah trace his geneology back to Asaph in the day of David.
  - 2. The answer of God through Jahaziel to the king and Judah. vs. 15-17
    - a. First to not be afraid for the battle was God’s, “And he said, “Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: ‘Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God’s.’” vs. 15
    - b. Second to go out to meet the invading nations, ““Tomorrow go down against them. They will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at

the end of the brook before the Wilderness of Jeruel.” vs. 16

- 1) They would pass “the Ascent of Ziz” six or so miles north from Engedi towards Jerusalem.
- 2) The wilderness of southern Judea.
- c. Third to just position themselves, not fight, “‘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.” vs. 17
  - 1) “stand still and see the salvation of the LORD” are the words of Moses at the Red Sea. Ex. 14:13
  - 2) This was all in faith, acting on what God had just revealed by His words.
  - 3) The assurance, “for the LORD is with you.”
3. The response of the king and nation, “And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the LORD, worshiping the LORD.” vs. 18
  - a. The king and people prostrated themselves to the ground in reverence.
  - b. The act of worshipping their God.
4. The Levites joined in the worship, “Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and

of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with voices loud and high.” vs. 19

### **Illustration**

The first prayer at the Continental Congress 1774 by Reverent Jacob Duché prayed, “O Lord our Heavenly Father, high and mighty King of kings, and Lord of lords, who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers on earth and reigns with power supreme and uncontrolled over all the Kingdoms, Empires and Governments; look down in mercy, we beseech Thee, on these our American States, who have fled to Thee from the rod of the oppressor and thrown themselves on Thy gracious protection, desiring to be henceforth dependent only on Thee. To Thee have they appealed for the righteousness of their cause; to Thee do they now look up for that countenance and support, which Thou alone canst give. Take them, therefore, Heavenly Father, under Thy nurturing care; give them wisdom in Council and valor in the field; defeat the malicious designs of our cruel adversaries; convince them of the unrighteousness of their Cause and if they persist in their sanguinary purposes, of own unerring justice, sounding in their hearts, constrain them to drop the weapons of war from their unnerved hands in the day of battle!

### **Application**

1. The Scriptures teach prayer is talking to God, not man, as Jesus taught his disciples to pray. Lk. 11:2-4

- a. We are His sons and daughters and He is our Father in heaven.
  - b. Our heavenly Father is interested in our needs and hearing from us.
2. The Scriptures teach prayer is not a tool to get my will, desires or wants accomplished, but God's.
- a. We are to pray according to the will of God found in the Word of God, to know He will answer our prayers. 1Jn. 5:14-15
  - b. We are to understand prayer is to tap into the things of God not simply to get things from God as Daniel sought the Lord for the plan for Israel. Dan. 9:1-3
  - c. We sin when we do not pray, Samuel said, "moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you." 1Sam. 12:23
3. The Scriptures teach prayer is a matter of heart posture, not physical posture necessarily.
- a. Jesus told of a Pharisee and a tax collector who went to pray, one prayed with himself the other prayed to God. Lk. 18:11-14
  - b. The position of the body can be on our feet, knees, backs, face to the ground, hands lifted up to heaven, but if the heart is not humble and only desiring to be seen of men, God does not hear. Matt. 6:5-8
    - 1) Not to be seen of men as the hypocrite. vs. 5
    - 2) Not for men's ears but God's in secret. vs. 6
    - 3) Not through many words or patterns. vs. 7

- 4) Not in ignorance that God already knows our need. vs. 8
4. The Scriptures teach prayer keeps us from losing heart and protects us from anxiety.
- a. Jesus spoke a parable and said, "Men ought always to pray and not loose heart". Lk. 18b
  - b. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:6-7
  - c. Seeking the Kingdom of God first, then all these things will be added. Matt. 6:25-34
5. Prayer is in order to see God work.
- a. Jeremiah said, "Call on Me and I will answer you, and I will show you great and mighty things which you know not". Jer. 33:3
  - b. Jesus said, "Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers to His harvest". Matt. 9:38
6. The Scriptures teach emphatically prayer is a declaration of total dependency on God. Ps. 73:25-26
- a. God is to be our primary love: "Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You."
  - b. God is to be our primary strength; "My flesh and my heart fail: But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."
- \* Prayer brought him back to reality!



*The expressing of total confidence in God for the adversity was walking by faith!*

**III. The witnessing of deliverance from the adversity. vs. 20-30**

**A. The battle described victoriously. vs. 20-26**

1. The entire nation went out in obedience, “So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa.” vs. 20a
  - a. The wilderness was immediately to the east of Tekoa, a town 10-11 miles south of Jerusalem in the hill country of Judah near Hebron.
  - b. It was built by Rehoboam and the birthplace of Amos the prophet. 2Chron. 11:5-6; Amos 1:1
2. The king addressed the nation, “and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, “Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper.” vs. 20b-h
  - a. This was a call to believe Yahweh and His prophets, faith and trust in action.
  - b. The promise was they would be established and proper victorious.
3. The king appointed the order of worship for the battle, “And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise

the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: “Praise the LORD, For His mercy endures forever.” vs. 21

- a. Those to sing to their covenant God.
  - b. Those to praise the holiness of their God.
  - c. They took the front position to lead the army of Judah praising Yahweh for His eternal mercy.
4. The instant they began to worship God, Yahweh began to destroy the enemy, “Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.” vs. 22
    - a. The vast armies did not matter to God.
    - b. The outcome notice is stated up front as having taken place already, “and they were defeated”.
  5. The three nations turned on each other by the hand of God. “For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy them. And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another.” vs. 23
    - a. First Ammon and Moab turned and destroyed the Edomites.

- b. Second Ammon and Moab turned and destroyed each other, as with the Midianites and Gideon. Judges 7:22
  - c. This is not a lie or an exaggeration, but past history reviewed by God.
- 6. The astounding gruesome view of the battle field, “So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there were their dead bodies, fallen on the earth. No one had escaped.” vs. 24
  - a. Arriving at a watchtower they saw all the dead bodies, not one was alive.
  - b. They did not witness the battle!
- 7. The incredible abundant spoils of war were collected, “When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found among them an abundance of valuables on the dead bodies, and precious jewelry, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away; and they were three days gathering the spoil because there was so much.” vs. 25
  - a. Personal valuables of the soldiers.
  - b. Precious jewelry.
  - c. The spoil was more than they could carry away after three days.
- 8. The expression of gratitude and appreciation to God for the victory, “And on the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berachah, for there they blessed the LORD;

therefore the name of that place was called The Valley of Berachah until this day.” vs. 26

- a. This took place on the fourth day.
  - b. They blessed “barak” means to salute or commend Yahweh for His deliverance, north-west of Tekoa, south of Bethlehem towards Hebron.
- B. The celebration of God’s deliverance. vs. 27-30
  - 1. The triumphant return, “Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat in front of them, to go back to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had made them rejoice over their enemies.” vs. 27
    - a. Don’t miss “every man of Judah”, not one had to fight, so not one die in battle.
    - b. Their joy was due to Yahweh’s deliverance.
  - 2. The instruments of worship were returned to the temple, “So they came to Jerusalem, with stringed instruments and harps and trumpets, to the house of the LORD.” vs. 28
    - a. The musical instruments were made to worship Yahweh.
    - b. David had them made and organized the entire temple worship. 1Chron. 24-27
  - 3. The news of God’s deliverance traveled quickly, “And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries when they

heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel.” vs. 29

- a. Not the fear of Judah, but of God.
  - b. Not some, but all the kingdoms of those countries that heard Yahweh fought against the enemies of Israel.
4. The outcome is stated, “Then the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around.” vs. 30
- a. Jehoshaphat enjoyed peace.
  - b. God was responsible for the peace.

### Illustration

Corrie ten Boom in her devotional for March 7 shares the following on prayer. “May we pray about little problems of my life, or only about the big ones? One day when I had a bad cold in the concentration camp, Betsie, my sister, prayed for a handkerchief for me. We laughed at the silliness of that prayer, but only a few minutes later a woman came by with a handkerchief for me! We do not know what God considers important. We do know that He answers prayers—even tiny ones.”

### Application

1. When we see the healing of those we have been praying for, it reminds us of our God of miracles.
  - \* “Is anyone among you **sick**? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the **sick**,

and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.” Ja. 5:14-15

2. When we see individuals come to Christ after years of prayer for them, it reminds us of the goodness of God. (Joey Hernandez, 40 years)
  - \* “Those who sow in tears Shall **reap** in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him.” Ps. 126:5-6
3. When we see marriages that have been destroyed and they reconcile again as we have been praying for them it reminds us of the power of prayer.
  - \* “Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a **threefold cord** is not quickly broken.” Eccl. 4:12

***The witnessing of deliverance from the adversity was verified hope!***

### Conclusion

Jehoshaphat was faced with a great adversity of three invading nations causing him to pray to God which is characterized by:

- I. The seeking of God due to the adversity was wisdom!
- II. The expressing of total confidence in God for the adversity was walking by faith!
- III. The witnessing of deliverance from the adversity was verified hope!