

Fact Sheet for **“God Answers Prayer”**
2 Chronicles 20:1-30

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2 Chronicles 20 is one of the great stories on God's answer to prayer in the OT.

The Threat

ESV ¹ ¶ **After this the Moabites and Ammonites, and with them some of the Meunites, came against Jehoshaphat for battle. 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 Ha-za-zon-tamar" (that is, Engedi).**

This sea is the Dead Sea.

They were assembled at Engedi on the west side of the Dead Sea.

³ **Then Jehoshaphat was afraid and set his face to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. ⁴ And Judah assembled to seek help from the LORD; from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.**

Faced with their dire need they prayed.

Jehoshaphat's Prayer

⁵ ¶ **And Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, 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.**

Was Jehoshaphat reminding God of his power?

⁷ **Did you not, our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel, and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend?**

Was Jehoshaphat reminding God of his promise?

⁸ **And they have lived in it and have built for you in it a sanctuary for your name, saying, ⁹ "If disaster comes upon us, the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house and before you-- for your name is in this house-- and cry out to you in our affliction, and you will hear and save."**

This was part of Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple (2 Chronicles 6:28-30).

God answered Solomon's prayer (2 Chronicles 7:12-22).

God's answer was based on his promise of curses and blessings (Deuteronomy 28-30).

Was Jehoshaphat rehearsing Solomon's prayer and God's answer to it?

¹⁰ **And now behold, the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom you would not let Israel invade when they came from the land of Egypt, and whom they avoided and did not destroy-- ¹¹ behold, they reward us by coming to drive us out of your possession, which you have given us to inherit.**

Was Jehoshaphat informing God?

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."**

Was Jehoshaphat sort of spurring God to action?

Jehoshaphat did not have an answer to this threat within his own abilities. He, and all Judah with him, could only rely on the Lord. Jehoshaphat's prayer, although not phrased with absolute trust in God, was still a solid prayer for God's help.

God's Answer

God would graciously answer with absolute authority.

¹³ ¶ **Meanwhile all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. ¹⁴ And the Spirit of the LORD came upon Ja-ha-zi-el the son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jei-el, son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. ¹⁵ And he said, "Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat:**

Thus says the LORD to you, 'Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God's.

God reminded Jehoshaphat through the prophet that the battle was the Lord's.

It's one thing for a prophet to say this. It was another thing to put the following detail to this prophecy.

¹⁶ Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the valley, east of the wilderness of Je-ru-el.

Still, this could have been a guess from a prophet who was just speaking from himself. But look at the next verse!

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."

That prophet knew he was speaking from God! God would fight for Judah and Judah would not have to fight at all.

Their Immediate Response

¹⁸ ¶ Then 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. ¹⁹ And the Levites, of the Kohathites and the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice.

Their Actions and God's Actions

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."

Trust in God!

Tekoa was 12 miles south of Jerusalem.

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."

The army was still there, but those who were to sing praises to God were at the head of the line.

²² And when they began to sing and praise, the LORD set an ambush against the men of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, so that they were routed.

God waited until they began to sing and praise before he moved.

²³ For the men of Ammon and Moab rose against the inhabitants of Mount Seir (Edom), devoting them to destruction, and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they all helped to destroy one another.

Their Discovery and Praise to God

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.

The watchtower of the wilderness was on the hills above Engedi. When Judah arrived the battle had already been won.

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. ²⁶ On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Be-ra-cah', for there they blessed the LORD. Therefore the name of that place has been called the Valley of Beracah to this day. 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. ²⁸ They came to Jerusalem with harps and lyres and trumpets, to the house of the LORD. ²⁹ And the fear of God came on all the kingdoms of the countries when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel.

That God was with Judah was obvious to the surrounding nations.

³⁰ So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around.

Right now go to prayer for your own needs as well as those of our church.