

Fact Sheet for “Jehoshaphat, Part II” 2 Chronicles 20:1-30

Pastor Bob Singer
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Last week we looked at Jehoshaphat’s alliance with Ahab in 2 Chronicles 18 and it’s disastrous results at Ramoth-Gilead. When Jehoshaphat returned to Jerusalem from that battle a prophet of the Lord met him.

^{NET} **2 Chronicles 19:2-3** the prophet Jehu son of Hanani confronted him; he said to King Jehoshaphat, "Is it right to help the wicked and be an ally of those who oppose the LORD? Because you have done this the LORD is angry with you! ³ Nevertheless you have done some good things; you removed the Asherah poles from the land and you were determined to follow the LORD."

In chapter 19 Jehoshaphat traveled from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim encouraging the people to return to the Lord (19:4). He appointed judges throughout the nation, reminding them that they were not to please people but to please the Lord in their verdicts (19:5-7). He appointed others in Jerusalem to serve as sort of a supreme court charging them to always act in the fear of the Lord, faithfully and with an undivided heart (19:8-11). Then in chapter 20 he makes a great choice.

^{ESV} ¹ ¶ **After this the Moabites and Ammonites, and with them some of the Meunites (*Me-u-nites*), came against Jehoshaphat for battle.**

The Meunites were a nomadic tribe living east and south of the Dead Sea.

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" (khats-ats-one' taw-mawr') (that is, Engedi).**

The “sea” here is the Dead Sea. And Jehoshaphat knew they would soon head for Jerusalem.

Pause to read 2 Chronicles 20:3-7. God is sovereign in power. God has graciously given this land to His people.

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.'**

Jehoshaphat’s prayer was in keeping with Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the temple in Jerusalem (6:20, 28-30).

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 destroy¹⁻¹¹ behold, they reward us by coming to drive us out of your possession, which you have given us to inherit.**

Jehoshaphat was not informing God, but stating the reason for his prayer. Then he made his request.

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."**

¹ Numbers 20:17-21; Deuteronomy 2:2-7.

Think about it. Jehoshaphat's father was Asa. Jehoshaphat would have known the story of his father's early reliance upon God for the victory over the invading Ethiopians (14:9-15:19). He also would have known of his father's later reliance on himself for the victory over Baasha king of Israel (16:1-10). The first victory pleased God, the second did not. Perhaps it was Jehoshaphat's awareness of these two of his father's battles that in his mind. Perhaps it was Jehoshaphat's own dedication to God. But in any case Jehoshaphat chose the right path in relying upon God for this battle.

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 Jahaziel (yakh-az-ee-ale') the son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel (yeh-ee-ale'), son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly.

What Jahaziel said was in keeping with the Mosaic Law (Deuteronomy 20:1-4).

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.

These words are much like David's words to Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:45-47.

¹⁶ Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz (tseets). You will find them at the end of the valley, east of the wilderness of Jeruel (yer-oo-ale).

Ziz was a narrow mountain pass somewhere in the wilderness southeast of Jerusalem.

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."

NKJ stand still and see the salvation of the LORD

NIV stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you

Pause to read 2 Chronicles 20:18-20.

Tekoa, the hometown of Amos (Amos 1:1) was 12 miles south of Jerusalem. These words would strengthen Judah to fully trust God for this battle, but these words would also strengthen them for future challenges.

Pause to read 2 Chronicles 20:21-29. The singers went before the army. When they began to sing the Lord set an ambush for the enemy. The Valley of Beracah means the Valley of Blessing. Then the Lord gave Jehoshaphat a quiet realm.

Now Jehoshaphat wasn't perfect. After this he joined himself with Ahaziah, the wicked son of Ahab, in a shipping venture. A prophet came and told him that because he had done this the ships would be broken. As a result they were broken and unable to go to sea. (1 Kings 22:47-49; 2 Chronicles 20:35-37) Jehoshaphat was determined to serve the Lord, but he still had a weakness for allying himself with the kings of Israel who did not serve the Lord.

When I think about this story I think about verse 17... stand still and see the deliverance of the LORD! What battles are you facing? What challenges are ahead? Stand firm in the Lord! Seek to please Him. Go to Him in prayer seeking His answer. Then see His answer, His solution, His deliverance. Pray fervently. Trust Him and give Him praise for His solution now! Does God still answer prayer? You bet He does!