

**2Chronicles 20:1** ¶ It came to pass after this also, *that* the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them *other* beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle.

**2Chronicles 20:2** Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they *be* in Hazazontamar, which *is* Engedi.

This chapter opens with news of a coming attack upon Judah. An alliance of Moab, Ammon and others were coming against Jehoshaphat to make war. Messengers came to warn the king that a great multitude came from beyond the sea on this side of Syria in Engedi.

Several translations make reference to Edom instead of Syria, and the Hebrew supports that choice. The people of Moab, Ammon and Edom were settled in the area that is today known as Jordan. The sea being referenced would be the Dead Sea, and Engedi was located on its western shore in the land of Judah.

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

**2Chronicles 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.

News of the imminent attack made the king afraid, especially in light of the words of the prophet Jehu from the previous chapter.

*2 Chronicles 19:2 "And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD."*

He determined to seek the LORD and proclaimed a fast throughout the kingdom. This fast called for them to do without food for a specified time and use that time pray.

All the people gathered together to ask for God's help. It sounds like many came from all over Judah to Jerusalem to join with the king in prayer.

**2Chronicles 20:5** And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court,

**2Chronicles 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?

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

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

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

**and help.**

It seems that all the people gathered together at the temple, and Jehoshaphat stood before them to lead them in prayer. He addressed the LORD as the God of “our fathers” and recognized Him as THE God in heaven. He declared that God was the ruler even over the kingdoms of the heathen and that no power or strength existed that could stand against Him. He recalled how “our” God had given the land to the seed of Abraham as an everlasting inheritance and how he had driven out the inhabitants of the land before them. He noted how they had made it their home and had built a sanctuary in honor of God’s name. He then recalled the words of Solomon when he dedicated the temple. Solomon had asked the LORD to hear the prayers of His people if they came to pray to Him at the temple when in need of deliverance from evil.

**2Chronicles 20:10 And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not;**

**2Chronicles 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.**

**2Chronicles 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.**

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

King Jehoshaphat then identified the evil they faced; the armies of Ammon, Moab and Edom. These were the very kingdoms that the LORD would not let them harm as they made their way to the Promised Land from Egypt. These nations were kin to the people of Judah. Ammon and Moab were descendants of Lot, Abraham’s nephew and the Edomites were descendants of Esau, Jacob’s brother. The LORD did not allow Israel to attack because He had given them their lands just as surely as He had given Israel their land.

*Deuteronomy 2:4–5 “And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore: Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession.”*

*Deuteronomy 2:9 “And the LORD said unto me, Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle: for I will not give thee of their land for a possession; because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a possession.”*

*Deuteronomy 2:19 “And when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, distress them not, nor meddle with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon any possession; because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession.”*

Jehoshaphat then asked the LORD to execute judgment against the attacking

armies. He admitted that they were too weak to fight this great multitude on their own. He declared that their only hope was in His deliverance. The men of Judah, as well as their wives and children, joined the king in this prayer.

“...neither know we what to do: but our eyes *are* upon thee.” – How often I have connected to this statement. God is faithful. When our attitude is one of complete dependence upon Him in faith in accordance to His will as revealed in His word, we can be assured of His provision.

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

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

**2Chronicles 20:16 To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel.**

**2Chronicles 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.**

Suddenly, the Spirit of the LORD came upon one of the Levites of the sons of Asaph named Jahaziel who was part of the congregation gathered at the temple. He called for the people to listen as he declared the word of the LORD. He told them not to be afraid or discouraged at the news of the great army that had come against them. This battle was God's—not theirs. They were to boldly go out to face the enemy the next day by the cliff of Ziz at the end of the brook before the wilderness of Jeruel. He told them that they would not need to fight to win this battle; however, they would have to go out to face the enemy and see the salvation of the LORD. Again he urged them not to be afraid, but to go out the next day confident in the fact that the LORD would be with them.

How wonderful to have such ongoing examples of God's work among you through men who could be confidently recognized as sharing God's word. The professing church is corrupted today with so many charlatans deceiving so many, mainly because of a lack of the knowledge of scripture through personal time spent in His word. Those who truly seek to know the LORD and understand His truth will be rewarded with the guidance of the Holy Spirit—as were the men of Berea whom Paul commended. We are His disciples just as surely those who walked with Him, and the Spirit is as ready to teach us as He was those first disciples.

*Acts 17:10–11& 26 “And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so....But the*

*Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*

*John 14:16–17 "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."*

*1 Corinthians 2:11–13 "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, **not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.**"*

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

**2Chronicles 20:19** And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high.

The king bowed his head and his people fell to the ground in response to the word of the LORD. The Levite families of Kohath and Korah responded by loudly praising the LORD.

**2Chronicles 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.

**2Chronicles 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*.

Early the next morning, the king and his troops went out to face the enemy according to the LORD's word. As they headed out, Jehoshaphat stood before the people to encourage them and remind them that faith in "the LORD your God" would keep them safe and that trust in His prophets would result in success. The king then appointed singers to sing out in praise of the LORD's holiness. The singers walked before the army singing praise to the LORD and giving thanks for His continual mercy.

The psalms are full of such songs of praise. In fact, each verse of Psalm 136 ends with the phrase "for His mercy endureth for ever." Maybe this is the very song they sang.

**2Chronicles 20:22** And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set

**ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.**

**2Chronicles 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.**

When the singers began to praise the LORD, He caused the enemy troops to turn on one another. The troops of Ammon and Moab fought and destroyed the troops of Edom. Then, again inexplicably, they began to destroy each other.

We are not told how the LORD intervened. From my observations, it seems that it doesn't take much to get men to turn on one another. Though we can only speculate, I wouldn't be surprised to know that angels were involved in some way as described in other instances in scripture. Amazing testimony exists today of angels intervening on Israel's behalf in our times. I found this summary at [www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org) of one of the instances I saw depicted in the program "Against All Odds: In Search of a Miracle."

"During the Independence War, Ira Rappaport's Israeli platoon fought the Jordanian military for Mount Zion and found themselves surrounded by hundreds with only twenty-five bullets left. With a sad end seemingly near, the men agreed to go out with a bang and readied themselves to make good use of every last bullet. Then, just when the small platoon were about to face the inevitable, something incredible happened. The Jordanian soldiers dropped their weapons and began suddenly running away, screaming "ABRAHAM!". Several years later, Ira would come across a familiar face with an unlikely answer, as to what had actually occurred on that miraculous day. This was a former Jordanian soldier who had fought against Ira on Mount Zion. According to him, his army all witnessed a vision of Abraham defending the Jews in the sky above the Israeli platoon and had no choice, but to drop their weapons."

Following is another instance summarized at [www.godssecret.wordpress.com](http://www.godssecret.wordpress.com).

"An Israeli military historian recorded that during the 1973 Yom Kippur war, an Israeli soldier in the Sinai took captive an Egyptian column and led them to where the Israeli troops were. The Egyptian commander was asked why he and his men gave themselves up to the lone Israeli soldier. He responded with surprise; 'One soldier? There were thousands of them.' He said that as they neared the Israeli lines, the 'soldiers' began disappearing. The Israeli soldier reported that he was by himself when the Egyptian commander and his men surrendered to him. He was totally unaware of the 'thousands of soldiers' the Egyptian soldiers saw with him, since he himself did not see them."

**2Chronicles 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.**

**2Chronicles 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.**

By the time that the troops of Judah got to the designated place, all they saw were the dead bodies of the enemy forces. Not one of the enemy troops had escaped death. Jehoshaphat and his troops profited from the spoils of the battle, including valuables and precious jewels. There was so much treasure that they couldn't carry it all; it took them three days to gather it.

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

**2Chronicles 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.**

**2Chronicles 20:28 And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the LORD.**

On the fourth day, after all the spoil had been gathered, the troops of Judah gathered together in the valley of Berachah (which means "blessing") to worship and praise (from the Hebrew for "bless") the LORD. King Jeshoshaphat then led his troops home to Jerusalem to celebrate the LORD's deliverance and blessing. They entered the city and headed to the temple accompanied by praise music.

**2Chronicles 20:29 And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of *those* countries, when they had heard that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel.**

**2Chronicles 20:30 So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about.**

When all the kingdoms of the surrounding countries heard how the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel, they were struck with a great fear of God. From that time on, God blessed Jehoshaphat's kingdom with quiet and rest.

**2Chronicles 20:31 ¶ And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah: *he was* thirty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.**

**2Chronicles 20:32 And he walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD.**

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

As the Chronicler begins to end his account of the life of Jehoshaphat, he noted that he was 35 years old when he became king; and he reigned for 25 years in Jerusalem. His mother was Azubah, daughter of Shilhi.

Jehoshaphat walked in the way of his father Asa by doing what was right in the sight of the LORD. Yes, he made some mistakes along the way; but overall he chose to follow the LORD.

It is noted, however, that he did not remove the high places because the people of Israel weren't as committed in obedience to the LORD as their king. These were not the high places dedicated to the worship of false gods, but those where some of the people continued to worship the LORD God of Israel.

**2Chronicles 20:34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the book of Jehu the son of Hanani, who *is* mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.**

The historian also notes that more was written about Jehoshaphat in the book of Jehu, son of Hanani, who was mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.

*1 Kings 16:7 "And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and because he killed him."*

**2Chronicles 20:35 And after this did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who did very wickedly:**

**2Chronicles 20:36 And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Eziongeber.**

**2Chronicles 20:37 Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.**

Sadly, the historian's ending note about Jehoshaphat referenced one of his poor choices as king. He joined with Ahaziah, the wicked king of Israel, to make ships in Eziongeber to go to Tarshish. Eliezer, son of Dodavah of Mareshah, prophesied against him, declaring that the LORD would break the ships because of the king's joint venture with such an evil king. Sure enough, the ships were broken and they could not go to Tarshish.

The account in 1Kings indicates that Jehoshaphat learned from his mistake.

*1 Kings 22:48–49 "Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Eziongeber. Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships. **But Jehoshaphat would not.**"*