

2 Chronicles Chapter 20

Verses 1-2

The offspring of Lot, i.e., Moab and Ammon, located east of the Jordan, and those from Edom to the south (the offspring of Esau), had intentions of dethroning Jehoshaphat.

They had come around the south end of the Dead sea as far north as Engedi, at the middle of the western shore.

This was a common route for enemies since they were invisible to the people on the other side of the mountains to the west.

2 Chronicles 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."

This Trans-Jordanian invasion in Jehoshaphat's day is not recorded by the author of Kings.

It forms a backdrop for Jehoshaphat's later involvement in Jehoram's Moabite expedition (2 Kings 3:7).

After the revival among the people of Judah that Jehoshaphat had nurtured, the country discovered that not one but three armies "came against Jehoshaphat to battle".

As in other times, the revival of the people was threatened by a vastly superior foreign army (see 14:2-15).

In the last lesson, we read of a peace that prevailed in Judah.

The Ammonites and the Moabites had come against Jehoshaphat at the opening of this lesson.

2 Chronicles 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 Hazazon-tamar, which [is] En-gedi."

Deserters or spies, or some of the inhabitants of those parts where they had entered, who rode post haste to acquaint him with it.

"Saying, there cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria".

That is, beyond the Dead or Salt sea, the sea of Sodom.

The Targum is, "beyond the west of Syria," that sea being the western boundary of it.

"And, behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is Engedi" (see note on Gen. 14:7).

Hazazon-tamar means the dividing of the palms.

This was actually a group of people attacking Judah from the area of the Dead sea. This was not Syria however.

It appears that Jehoshaphat was facing a war where he would probably be out-numbered.

Verses 3-6

"Jehoshaphat" again demonstrates that he was a righteous king and a man of prayer (compare 18:6; see the note on 2 Kings 3:11).

Verses 3-4

Jehoshaphat made the appropriate spiritual response, i.e., the king and the nation appealed to God in prayer and fasting.

The fast was national, including even the children (verse 13; compare Joel 2:12-17; Jonah 3:7).

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

Jehoshaphat "feared", meaning he realized he did not have the resources within himself to fight this battle.

That fear prompted him "to seek the LORD" and proclaim "a fast" throughout the country (Matt. 6:16-18), a wise approach in any frightening situation (Acts 14:23).

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."

To implore his assistance against their enemies, and his protection of them.

And they met not in their several cities, but at Jerusalem, as appears by what follows.

"Even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD":

At the temple, where was the ark, the symbol of his presence.

Jehoshaphat had taught them well.

They knew their strength was not in the flesh of man, but in the power of Almighty God.

God honors a faith of this nature.

Verses 5-12

Jehoshaphat stood in the redecorated center court praying for the nation, appealing to the promises, and the glory and the reputation of God which were at stake since He was identified with Judah.

In his prayer, he acknowledged God's sovereignty (verse 6), God's covenant (verse 7), God's presence (verses 8-9), God's goodness (verse 10), God's possession (verse 11), and their utter dependence on Him (verse 12).

Verses 5-7

When Jehoshaphat faced difficulty, he chose to worship God and remember Him, especially that "None is able to withstand thee".

This is an essential reminder during difficult times (13:12; Neh. 4:20).

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

In the temple, in the court of the people, where the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem were assembled.

In the midst of which he stood very probably on the brazen scaffold erected by Solomon (2 Chron. 6:13).

"Before the new court":

Which must be the court of the priests.

For he stood in the great court, or court of the people.

And before this, which might be so called, because renewed or repaired when the altar was by Asa (2 Chronicles 15:8).

Dr. Lightfoot thinks it was the court of the women.

But it is a question whether there was any such court in the first temple.

Or that the great court was then divided into two, one for the men, the other for the women.

It is very interesting to me, that this prayer was sent heavenward by Jehoshaphat.

He was king, not high priest.

He was sincere in the prayer that follows.

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?"

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose covenant God he was.

"Art not thou God in heaven?"

That dwells and rules there, and does whatever thou pleases in the armies of it.

"And rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the Heathens?":

Being King of kings, and Lord of lords, all the world over.

"And in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?"

His power being infinite, unlimited, and uncontrollable, and so not resistible by finite creatures, at least not so as to be stopped and overcome.

The answer to this is yes.

God is over all the earth, the heavens, under the earth, and above the earth.

No army could destroy them, except the LORD allowed it.

God rules over everything.

2 Chronicles 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?"

Israel's possession of its God-given inheritance is a pivotal promise in the unconditional covenant with "Abraham" (compare Gen. 17:8; Ezek. 37:21-28).

See the note on Joshua 21:43-45.

Again, the answer is yes.

He is that God.

He gave this land to His family to inhabit forever, as long as they obeyed His commandments.

Verses 8-9

In the face of imminent danger, Jehoshaphat remembered and believed both the words of Solomon at the dedication of the temple (verses 6-7), and the power of standing “before this house” in God’s presence.

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

From ages past, hitherto, since it was first given them, and they were put into the possession of it.

"And have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name":

A temple for his worship, honor, and glory, and for him to dwell in.

And is a reason why it might be hoped he would protect them, especially when they prayed to him.

"Saying":

And he promised to hear and help them, as follows.

2 Chronicles 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."

Any calamity.

"As the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine":

God's four sore judgments, if by "judgment" is meant wild beasts.

"We stand before this house":

In the court before the Holy Place, and Holy of Holies.

"And in thy presence, for thy name is in this house":

Called upon in it, and it was called by his name, and in which he dwelt.

"And cry unto thee in our affliction":

As Solomon prayed at the dedication of it.

"Then thou wilt hear and help":

As the LORD promised (see 1 Kings 8:33).

Solomon indeed had built the temple in Jerusalem for the LORD that his father David had wanted to build.

When Solomon prayed at the dedication of the temple, he asked for a promise from God, and God granted the request to all generations.

God loves to be reminded of His Word.

He had promised if they prayed toward this temple, He would hear and answer their prayer.

Verses 10-11

Despite God's kindness in giving these nations the lands where they dwelled (Deut. 2:4, 9, 19), they attacked God's people in an attempt to gain more land.

Although humans will not always repay Christian kindness with kindness, the LORD can be counted on to bless those who bless others.

2 Chronicles 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;"

Charging them not to meddle with them, nor take any of their lands from them (Deut. 2:5).

"Mount Seir":

A prominent landmark in Edom.

"But they turned from them, and destroyed them not":

In obedience to the divine command, when it was in their power to have done it.

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."

Evil for good.

"To come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit":

The land of Canaan was their inheritance.

An inheritance given them by God, their covenant God and Father, who had a right to dispose of it.

And yet so given, that it was still his possession.

He was the LORD and Proprietor, they but tenants under him.

All which, as there were so many aggravations of the guilt of their enemies, so there were so many arguments with the LORD to protect them.

God had stopped the children of Israel from destroying the very people that were trying to destroy Judah and Jerusalem now.

Jehoshaphat wanted to know if God stopped them then, so that these people could cast them out of their possession now.

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."

This prayer seems counterintuitive in today's self-sufficient culture.

Still, Jehoshaphat admitted weakness: "we have no might", and he had no plan.

He simply held on to what he did know: God.

Jehoshaphat knew that he would not be able to win this war with so vast an army against him, unless the LORD Himself won the war for them.

He says that he had placed himself and all of the people of Judah into the hands of God.

Whatever happened would be as a result of God's action on their behalf.

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

Looking towards the most Holy Place, where the ark of his presence was, in a humble and submissive posture.

Waiting what would be the issue of things, what answer they should have from the LORD.

"With their little ones, their wives, and their children":

They and their wives, with their children, both small and grown up, which they brought with them.

That as the sight of them, now in the utmost danger, might affect them, and make them the more fervent in their supplications to God.

So they might hope the LORD would have pity and compassion on them, and save them.

This was such a serious matter that even the wives and children were in attendance.

The entire families were praying before the LORD.

Verses 14-17

The LORD responded immediately, sending a message of confidence through the prophet Jahaziel.

2 Chronicles 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;"

For the coming of the “Spirit of the LORD” upon Old Testament believers (see the note on Judges 3:10).

This is an explanation that Jahaziel was of the Levitical lineage.

He was in the temple, and the Spirit of the LORD descended upon him.

The message was from God.

The prayer was directly seeking an answer from God.

The beautiful thing was that God used one of His own creation to bring the message through.

2 Chronicles 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."

The prophet Jahaziel spoke words of comfort to “all Judah: for the battle [is] not yours, but God's”.

Although Christians fight spiritual battles (Eph. 6:12), the battle is still God’s (1 Cor. 15:24-25).

This had to be a tremendous relief to Jehoshaphat and to the people in attendance.

This battle was God's. This was not a “fear not”; God will be with you. It was a statement that the battle was God's.

They must not fear, only trust God.

2 Chronicles 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."

“The cliff of Ziz ... wilderness of Jeruel”:

These areas lie between Engedi on the Dead sea and Tekoa, which is 10 miles south of Jerusalem and 17 miles northwest of Engedi.

This is the pass that leads from the valley of the Dead sea toward Jerusalem.

This was just explaining that they would not fight down in the valley, but would in fact, fight on an elevated area near the Dead sea.

This was a totally desolate area with no trees to hide behind.

The army of Judah would be at a higher place, and they would look down upon their enemy.

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; tomorrow go out against them: for the LORD [will be] with you."

Since the LORD would fight for them.

"Set yourselves, stand ye still":

Present themselves they might, as if ready to engage; and keep their ground.

Not giving way in the least, but would have no need to strike a stroke.

"And see the salvation of the LORD with you": Which he would work for them (see Exodus 14:13).

"O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed":

Which is repeated for the confirmation of them.

"Tomorrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you":

To protect them, fight for them, and give them victory; the Targum is, "the Word of the LORD shall be your help."

The following is a very similar statement that Moses said at the Red sea.

Exodus 14:13 "And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever."

Both of these are beautiful statements that the LORD would fight for them.

They had nothing to fear.

Verses 18-21

Here was the praise of faith.

They were confident enough in God's promise of victory to begin the praise before the battle was won.

So great was their trust that the choir marched in front of the army, singing psalms.

Verses 18-19

Notice the two postures of worship: bowing "his head" in humility and then standing confidently to praise God "with a loud voice on high".

These two postures are common to every season of revival.

2 Chronicles 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."

Not only in reverence of God, and his prophet, but as a token of his belief of what was said, and his thankfulness for it.

For the king's prostration "before the LORD" in public prayer (see 6:13-39).

"And all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, fell before the LORD, worshipping him": Adoring his goodness to them, in imitation of their king.

They believed that God Himself, would save them and fell before Him in perfect adoration.

This was an act of thanksgiving to God.

2 Chronicles 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."

Who were of the posterity of Kohath, in the line of Korah.

"Stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high":

In high notes; they being the course in turn at this time for this service.

In verse 18, we saw the king and his people adoring the LORD.

Now we see those who ministered gave high praise to the LORD for His answer to these people.

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."

Being confident of success, animated by what the prophet said to them.

"And went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa":

Which, according to Jerom, was six miles from Beth-lehem, and nine from Jerusalem.

Some say twelve, beyond which was nothing but a desert.

It was part of the wilderness of Judah.

"And went forth":

Out of Jerusalem, through one of the gates of it.

"Jehoshaphat stood and said, believe in the LORD your God": In the promises he had made, particularly with respect to the victory over their present enemies.

The Targum is, "in the Word of the LORD your God:"

"So shall ye be established":

Have courage and firmness of mind, as well as be safe and secure.

"Believe his prophets":

Sent by him, and that speak in his name, particularly Jahaziel, who had predicted victory to them.

"So shall ye prosper":

Things will succeed to your wishes, and beyond your expectations.

We could add to this, that they went out rejoicing knowing that the victory was theirs.

They were instructed once again, by Jehoshaphat to not fear but believe in the LORD God.

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."

When the day of war arrived, Jehoshaphat implemented his unusual strategy: "He appointed singers unto the LORD" to lead the army.

This is anything but a typical battle plan, it is a worship plan, the best kind of battle plan.

"The beauty of holiness":

This refers to the manner in which the Levite singers were clothed in symbolic sacred clothing (compare 1 Chron. 16:29), in honor of the LORD's holiness.

The singers wore their garments they wore when they sang worship in the temple.

This army was led by praise and worship.

The singers were the front lines.

These were songs of high praise.

They were praising their God for His Holiness.

Verses 22-24

Similar to God's intervention in Gideon's day (Judges 7:15-23), God caused confusion among the enemy, who mistakenly turned upon themselves and slaughtered each other.

Some think this may have been done by angels who appeared and set off this uncontrolled and deadly panic.

The destruction was complete before Jehoshaphat and his army ever met the enemy (verse 24).

The confusion that resulted in the enemies' mutual quarrel and destruction is reminiscent of the case (in Judges 7:22), and the false assumption of the Moabites in the later Israelite/Judean expedition against them (2 Kings 3:23).

The LORD used this tactic, confusing the wicked to destroy themselves, on other occasions (Joshua 10:10; Judges 7:22; 1 Sam. 14:20; Isa. 19:2; Zech. 14:13).

2 Chronicles 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."

They sung more or less all the way they went, from the time they set out, but when they came nearer the enemy, they sung louder and louder.

"The LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, which were come against Judah":

Some take them to be their own ambushments, which they set for the destruction of Judah.

But the LORD turned them against their own confederates, mistaking them for Jews.

"And they were smitten":

By them, many of them were destroyed.

I believe these who ambushed were actually angels God had sent to fight for Judah.

I believe this army of God attacked these enemies of Judah and killed them.

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."

Supposing that they had acted a treacherous part by them, and took on the side of their enemies.

"Utterly to slay and destroy them":

As they did.

"And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir": So that there were none left of them.

"Every one helped to destroy another":

In their confusion mistook one another, either for Edomites or Jews, like the Midianites in the times of Gideon.

There was such confusion in these battles, that they turned against each other.

The Moabites and the Ammonites fought each other, until no one was left.

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."

Which might stand upon the hill or cliff of Ziz, for the sake of the direction of travelers.

And the preservation of them from thieves and robbers.

"They looked unto the multitude":

Which they could take a view of from the top of the hill.

"And behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped":

All to a man slain, there was not one to be seen standing on his feet.

The army of Judah had not even gotten to the battlefield.

These dead bodies were fallen, because of the angels of the LORD.

The ones the angels killed, plus the ones that turned on each other and killed each other, were these dead bodies.

Verses 25-28

They went back just as they had gone out, with music (compare verses 21-22).

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."

Which was all they had to do; they had no need to fight, as they were told, the LORD had fought for them.

"They found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies":

Rich garments on them, and gold and silver on them.

"And precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves":

With which their clothes, or some part of their bodies, were ornamented.

"More than they could carry away":

There was so much, that it made a great burden for them.

“And they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much”:

It took up so much time to strip the bodies, to search for their money and jewels, rings, chains, and such like things of value, worn by them.

Notice the battle was already won, when Jehoshaphat and his men got to the battlefield.

All they had to do was gather up the riches this defeated army had left.

There was so much of it, that it took three days to gather it up.

2 Chronicles 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."

As it was afterwards called from what they did there, as follows, which was the reason of its name.

"For there they blessed the LORD":

Returned thanks to him for this wonderful appearance on their behalf, and gave him the glory of it.

No doubt but they had given him praise before in some sort and manner.

But now in a set, solemn, and public manner, with one heart and voice they united in ascribing honor, blessing, and glory to him.

"Therefore the name of the same place was called, the valley of Berachah, unto this day":

The valley of Blessing.

This name it bore in the times of Ezra, the writer of this book, even after the Jews returned from the Babylonish captivity.

It is thought to be the same that is called by Jerom Cephar-baruchah, which he speaks of as not far from Engedi (see 2 Chron. 20:2).

Others will have it to be the same with the valley of Jehoshaphat, but not so likely, that seems to be nearer Jerusalem.

"Berachah":

Means valley of blessing.

The army of Judah gathered in this valley and praised God for His greatness.

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."

There to praise the LORD in the temple, as they had done in the valley.

"For the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies":

By giving them a complete victory, and making them masters of so much wealth and riches.

This war, they had feared so much, had turned into a beautiful blessing from God.

Their joy was in the LORD.

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

The three principal instruments of music used in singing the praises of God.

These they played upon as they came to the city, and entered it, and passed through it.

"Unto the house of the LORD":

The temple, there to offer praise and thanksgiving again.

It appears the singers and musicians led them in high praise all the way back to Jerusalem.

The trumpets were blowing in victory, so all the land would know they had won.

2 Chronicles 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."

This is the second time in Jehoshaphat's reign that fear came on the nations (compare 2 Chron. 17:10), which was similar to that when Israel came out of Egypt (Exodus 23:27; Num. 22:3; Joshua 2:9-11; 9:10-11).

Apparently, word traveled quickly about this battle, and it was obvious to all who heard the story that "the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel".

The same was true when God led Joshua to take the Promised Land (Joshua 2:9-12).

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

Both within and without; they were at peace among themselves.

And none from abroad dared to molest them.

"For his God gave him rest round about":

From all his enemies.

The Targum has it, the Word of his God.

And so, in the preceding verse, the Word of the LORD fought.

And in 2 (Chron. 20:28), the Word of the LORD made them rejoice.

All of the countries in the near vicinity had heard what the LORD had done to the Ammonites and the Moabites.

They now knew that the LORD fought for Judah.

They were not afraid of Jehoshaphat, but they were afraid of his God.

They would not dare attack him, for fear his God would defeat them as he had the Ammonites and the Moabites.

There was peace in the land, because the people depended upon God.

Verses 20:31 – 21:3

See notes on 1 Kings 22:41-49.

2 Chronicles 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."

Compare (1 Kings 22:41-50).

A brief section, which constitutes the whole account of the reign of Jehoshaphat in the older narrative.

"And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah":

Kings adds: "In the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel."

With this omission, our verse coincides with (1 Kings 22:41-42).

We find that Jehoshaphat reigned from his 35th year, until he was 60.

2 Chronicles 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."

And he walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it.

Who was a good prince.

"And departed not from it, doing that which was right in the sight of the LORD":

In his moral conversation, religious worship, and civil government.

2 Chronicles 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."

The high places, where idols were worshipped, were taken away (2 Chron. 17:6).

But not those where sacrifices were offered to the true God.

"For as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers":

To seek and serve him wholly, according to His Will.

To offer sacrifices to him only at Jerusalem, as the law required (Deut. 12:5).

They could not as yet be prevailed upon to relinquish the high places, built and made use of before the temple was.

Partly because they were nearer to some of them than that.

And partly out of veneration for them, as being of a long time used.

Jehoshaphat had been even more devoted to God than Asa had been.

They were both righteous kings in the sight of the LORD.

Jehoshaphat's only errors were the fact that he was friends with Ahab, and not tearing down the high places.

He sought the LORD with all his heart, and the LORD blessed him mightily.

Verses 34-37

Jehoshaphat, like other kings, made poor decisions along the way.

Even though he was a good king, he still paid the consequences.

His times of past success did not make him immune to sin or its consequences.

2 Chronicles 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."

Those that were done at the beginning, and those that were done at the latter end of his reign.

"Behold, they are written in the book of Jehu, the son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.

See 1 Kings 16:1, the same that reproved Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 19:2).

He wrote a book of his own times, and which was so much esteemed, according to Kimchi, that it was written with, or put along with, the book of the kings of Israel.

For so he interprets the phrase.

But the Targum understands it of Jehu being the king's historiographer, who had the care and oversight of the diary, journal, or annals of the kings of Israel.

This book of Jehu is not in the Bible.

We may safely assume it was a book of records that someone kept from a more civil standpoint. Hanani was a seer of Judah during the time of Asa.

Jehu was a prophet, who first appeared to denounce Baasha.

He also appeared to Jehoshaphat to tell him of God's displeasure about his alliance with Ahab.

Verses 35-37

See the note on 1 Kings 22:48-49.

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

Meaning, not after the invasion of the Moabites, etc., and the slaughter of them.

But after Jehoshaphat returned from Ramoth-gilead, when he was reproved by a prophet for helping the ungodly (2 Chron. 19:1).

So that it was a great aggravation of his folly and weakness, then after that, and quickly after that, he should join himself to a wicked prince.

Though not in war, but in trade.

For so it must be, since Ahaziah reigned but two years, and those not complete (see 1 Kings 22:51).

But is here related, that Jehoshaphat's weaknesses and blemishes might be laid together.

"Who did very wickedly":

That is, Ahaziah, who walked in the ways of Ahab his father, and of Jezebel his mother, and of Jeroboam the son of Nebat (1 Kings 22:52).

2 Chronicles 20:36 "And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Ezion-geber."

Of which (see 1 Kings 22:48), and though it is there said (1 Kings 22:49), that Jehoshaphat refused letting the servants of Ahaziah go with his.

That was after he had been reproved for joining with him, and after the ships were broken.

"And they made the ships in Ezion-geber":

Of which see 1 Kings 9:26.

Jehoshaphat went into a commercial venture with Ahaziah.

God showed his disapproval by sinking the ships they had made.

2 Chronicles 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."

A city in the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:44).

"Prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah":

An idolatrous prince, with whom he ought to have had no fellowship, even in civil things.

It being both a countenancing him, and exposing himself and people to danger.

"The LORD hath broken thy works":

The ships built at the joint expense of the two kings, that is, the LORD had determined to break them.

And now foretold that he would; the Targum is, "the Word of the LORD hath destroyed thy works."

"And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish" (see notes on 1 Kings 22:48).

God settled this alliance, before it got off the ground.

The prophet that brought the reason for the destruction of the ships is not mentioned elsewhere.

Jehoshaphat dissolved partnership immediately.

2 Chronicles Chapter 20 Questions

1. Who sent their armies against Jehoshaphat?
2. In verse 2, where had they come to?
3. When Jehoshaphat heard of the oncoming army, what did he do?
4. Jehoshaphat and his people believed their strength came from whom?
5. Who prayed to God for them?
6. How did his prayer begin?
7. What were some of the things that Jehoshaphat reminded God of that were things done to honor Him?
8. What had God promised Solomon about the prayers of the people?
9. Why had Judah not already destroyed Ammon and Moab?
10. What plea did Jehoshaphat make to God in verse 12?
11. Who came to the temple to pray, besides the men?
12. Who did the Spirit come upon and he spoke?
13. What message did God have for His people?

14. Who did this battle belong to?
15. Where would Jehoshaphat find them?
16. Verse 17 is similar to what verse in Exodus?
17. What effect did this beautiful promise from God have on Jehoshaphat?
18. Who stood up to praise in verse 19?
19. In verse 20, Jehoshaphat encouraged his people to do what?
20. The singers would sing of whom?
21. What happened, when they began to sing?
22. What happened to the enemies of Judah?
23. Who does the author believe actually were the ambushers?
24. What did the Ammonites and Moabites do, in the confusion?
25. What did the troops of Judah find, when they came to the watch tower?
26. What was left for Jehoshaphat and his men to do?
27. Where did they assemble on the fourth day?
28. What does "Berachah" mean?
29. How did they return to Jerusalem?
30. Why was there no more war for Jehoshaphat?
31. How old was Jehoshaphat, when he stopped reigning?
32. How was Jehoshaphat like Asa?
33. What were the only errors mentioned of Jehoshaphat?