

JEHOSHAPHAT AND THE CHOIR THAT LED AN ARMY

God corrected Israel and Judah for turning to other nations instead of Him in time of need. But a faithful king shows the results of trusting in God.

by Becky Bennett

God told His people, the children of Israel, that if they obeyed Him they would enjoy amazing blessings (Deuteronomy 28:2-4, 11-12). And He would provide protection: “The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways” (verse 7).

Unfortunately, throughout most of their history, they missed out on these blessings. They did not obey God, and they did not trust that God would protect them and deliver them from their enemies.

But on just a few occasions, there were righteous kings who truly tried to obey God and lead the people in the right direction. And when they did, blessings and miracles happened.

The story of Jehoshaphat and the choir that led an army is one shining example.

JEHOSHAPHAT, A KING WHO SOUGHT GOD

Jehoshaphat was a good king we read about in 2 Chronicles 17-20. He was the son of Asa, another good king of Judah, and he “sought the God of his father, and walked in His commandments” (2 Chronicles 17:4). “His heart took delight in the ways of the LORD” (verse 6).

Jehoshaphat sent out leaders to teach the people about God and His way of life (verses 7-9). He set up judges and cautioned them they were judging on behalf of God and should “take care and do it, for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, no partiality, nor taking of bribes” (2 Chronicles 19:6-7).

And God blessed Jehoshaphat and his kingdom.

AND THEN COMES TROUBLE

But then Jehoshaphat faced a trial. He heard that the armies of Moab, Ammon and Mount Seir—“a great multitude”—were coming to fight against him and Judah (2 Chronicles 20:1-2).

Jehoshaphat did the right thing. His example is a lesson to God’s people today about how to handle a looming threat or trial: “Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. So Judah gathered

QUIZ TIME

What did Jehoshaphat instruct the people of Judah to do when the armies threatened to attack?

together to ask help from the LORD; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD” (verses 3-4).

They fasted and they prayed! The people of Judah gathered together at God’s temple, and Jehoshaphat prayed. His prayer is inspiring and faith-filled (verses 5-12). Jehoshaphat remembered what God had done for His people in the past, and he knew how much they needed God’s help now. He said: “We have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.”

THE ANSWER CAME

After such a powerful prayer, the men of Judah, their wives and their children stood in the temple expectantly. How would God answer?

Then, the Bible records, “The Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel,” a Levite of the sons of Asaph, perhaps a musician who served in the temple.

“Thus says the LORD to you,” Jahaziel said. “Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God’s. 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. You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you” (verses 14-17).

Jehoshaphat and all the people with him bowed to the ground in worship of God who had given them the answer they had looked for. And then two groups of Levites stood up to praise God with “voices loud and high” (verse 19).

The next day they rose early in the morning and went out to the place God had said.

As the army was getting ready to go out, Jehoshaphat encouraged them: “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” (verse 20).

The king appointed a choir singing praise to God to lead the army. After all, the battle was God’s and the end result was certain!

And so, the army marched out with singing: “Praise the LORD, for His mercy endures forever” (verse 21).

DELIVERANCE AND BLESSINGS COME FROM GOD

The Bible doesn’t tell us exactly how it happened. What we’re told is: “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” (verse 22). For some reason the armies of Ammon and Moab fought against the inhabitants of Mount Seir who were with them. And when they had killed them, they turned on each other!

When the people of Judah came to the place where they could look out on the wilderness, they only saw dead bodies! They did not have to use any weapon—the battle was already finished.

QUIZ TIME

What did Jehoshaphat’s army do as they marched to battle?

Their only task was to gather spoils from the fallen armies, though that was no small task. There was so much precious jewelry and valuables that they were busy gathering it for three days!

They named the place “Valley of Berachah,” or “Valley of Blessing” (verse 26). And truly God had blessed them. They had faced danger by turning to God for help and deliverance. They trusted God and praised Him in advance, and God intervened mightily for them. He completely removed the threat and turned it into a blessing.

LESSONS FOR US TODAY

God cares about His people today, just as He cared about the people of Israel and Judah in the Bible. When we seek to obey Him and follow His way, He will give us blessings. But that doesn’t mean we’ll never have trials or challenges. When those hard, scary times come upon us, we must turn to God—praying, fasting and studying His Bible.

We must see that we can’t handle the challenge on our own. We need God’s help. We must recognize that God has taken care of His people in the past, and He can be trusted to take care of us now. An answer from God might not come as fast or as clearly as it did to Jehoshaphat. Still, when we seek God and do our part to turn to Him, we can go forward, trusting God to take care of us.

We might not know how long the problem will last or how much we will be challenged, but we can know that in the end God will save us and turn it all to blessings.

See more about trusting God in the section about “[Faith: Believing and Pleasing God.](#)”

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