

GOD'S DELIVERANCE OF JUDAH

BIBLE TEXT : II Chronicles 19:1-11; 20:1-37

LESSON 306 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts" (II Chronicles 19:7)

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

2 Chronicles 19:1-11

¹ And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem.

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.

³ Nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God.

⁴ And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and he went out again through the people from Beersheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers.

⁵ And he set judges in the land throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city,

⁶ And said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who *is* with you in the judgment.

⁷ Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do *it*: for *there is* no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.

⁸ Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites, and *of* the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel, for the judgment of the LORD, and for controversies, when they returned to Jerusalem.

⁹ And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do in the fear of the LORD, faithfully, and with a perfect heart.

¹⁰ And what cause soever shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and judgments, ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the LORD, and *so* wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not trespass.

¹¹ And, behold, Amariah the chief priest *is* over you in all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Jehoshaphat's Rebuke and Return to God

1. Jehoshaphat is rebuked for his alliance with Ahab, II Chronicles 19:1-3;

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

¹⁴ **Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?**

¹⁵ **And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?**

¹⁶ **And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.**

¹⁷ **Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you,**

¹⁸ **And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.**

Amos 3:3

³ **Can two walk together, except they be agreed?**

Matthew 6:24

²⁴ **No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.**

2. Jehoshaphat appoints judges and instructs them to fear the Lord, II Chronicles 19:4-11.

II Victory over Moab

1. Judah is invaded by Moab, II Chronicles 20:1, 2.

2. Jehoshaphat proclaims a fast, II Chronicles 20:3, 4.

3. Jehoshaphat and Judah pray, II Chronicles 20:5-13.

4. God answers Jehoshaphat, II Chronicles 20:14-19.

5. Jehoshaphat inspires faith and praises, II Chronicles 20:20, 21.

6. God fights for Judah, II Chronicles 20:22-24.

7. Judah returns rejoicing, and God give peace, II Chronicles 20:25-34.

III Another Ungodly Alliance

1. Jehoshaphat joins Ahaziah to make ships, II Chronicles 20:35, 36.

2. God reproves him and destroys the ships, II Chronicles 20:37.

NOTES:

A Separate People

"Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD." God who called Abraham to leave his kindred and his father's house to go to a land that He would show him, has ever wanted His people to be separate from the world of sinners. The Lord through Moses told Israel, "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Exodus 19:5, 6). Ahab was king of Israel and of the seed of Abraham, but he was an idolater, and a murderer. He had imprisoned and killed the prophets of God. On the other hand, Jehoshaphat the King of

matters: also the Levites *shall be* officers before you. Deal courageously, and the LORD shall be with the good.

2 Chronicles 20:1-37

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.

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.

³ And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

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.

⁵ And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court,

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?

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?

⁸ And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying,

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.

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;

¹¹ Behold, *I say*, *how* they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.

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.

¹³ And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and

Judah, had sought the Lord and walked in His commandments. From a natural standpoint they were related, but from a spiritual standpoint they were far apart.

In the World but Not of the World

The love of God must go deeper than that of flesh and blood. The Law commanded: "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, . . . thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: but thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death" (Deuteronomy 13:6-9). A Separation unto God in some cases means a separation from our own family and relatives; as Christians, we are in the world but not of the world. We cannot keep ourselves entirely from associating with sinners, as Paul explains: "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world" (I Corinthians 5:9, 10). Jesus associated with sinners that He might tell them the way of salvation. He accepted invitations to eat with them and was accused of being a winebibber and a gluttonous man, a friend of publicans and sinners (Matthew 11:19).

We, too, must associate with sinners to lead them to Christ, but we must not be partakers of their evil deeds. We may work for sinners, or employ them, but must not be partners with them in business. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing" (II Corinthians 6:14-17).

We, as Christians, are called to separation, and for that reason we do not join lodges or secret orders. Marriage also is a contract, which must not be entered into with an unsaved person; however, when already married, one is not required to separate from an unbelieving husband or wife. (**1 Corinthians 7:12-13** ¹² **But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.** ¹³ **And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.**). It is important that a Christian's close friends and companions be chosen from those who lead godly lives. "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (I Corinthians 15:33). "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Proverbs 13:20). Jehoshaphat made an unwise choice when he chose Ahab as a companion, and he incurred the wrath of God. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God" (James 4:4).

A Revival

When Michaiah the Prophet warned Ahab, he had the Prophet put in prison; but we find a different spirit in Jehoshaphat. The Word of God does not give his immediate reaction to the rebuke of Jehu the Prophet, but the next thing that we find Jehoshaphat doing is travelling throughout Judah bringing the hearts of the people back to God. He set up judges and instructed them thus: "Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking

their children.

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;

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

²⁵ And when Jehoshaphat and his people

of gifts."

An Emergency

The people of Judah were no doubt in good spiritual condition when the word came to Jehoshaphat that a great multitude was coming against him. It is a great source of satisfaction when an emergency arises to know that we are in good standing with God. It is true that Jehoshaphat feared, but only to the extent that he was stirred to lean harder upon God. He "set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah." This was a fast that God honoured; it was not done to be seen of men, but was done in all earnestness and sincerity.

In this national emergency all Judah rallied to the proclamation of Jehoshaphat, "Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD. . . . And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children." How sweet it must have been in the eyes of God to see all his people united to seek His face! Jehoshaphat stood before them that day and began to acknowledge the power of God; and reminding God of His promises, made his petition known. He confessed his own helpless condition, and then, with hope and faith, concluded, "But our eyes are upon thee."

The Answer

No sooner were the words off the lips of Jehoshaphat than the Spirit of God sent the answer, "Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's." Our anxious fears depart when we take our problems to God in prayer. We have no cause for concern when we put our trust in God. "The LORD is my light and salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1). "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." Jehoshaphat did not question the answer that came from God. Oftentimes people are cheated out of great victories by unbelief - by failing to accept the promises of God. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24).

Faith Demonstrated

Not only did Jehoshaphat believe God but he instructed all Judah, "Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper." After thus instructing Judah, Jehoshaphat proposed one of the most remarkable demonstrations of faith on record. Instead of sending his strong warriors into the front of the battle line, "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." "And when they began to sing and to praise," the Lord began to work for them, and their enemies were smitten. As soon as faith takes hold of the promises and praises start to roll from the lips of one of God's children, you can be sure that God will perform that which He has promised. Think of it! Not one sword unsheathed, not one spear raised nor bow lifted — no, not even a stone from a shepherd's sling — but God gave them the victory. All Judah had to do was to go forth singing, collect the spoils, and return praising God. Their armour was the shield of faith; their sword, the Word of God. Their weapons were mighty and their victory great. "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."

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.

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.

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.

²⁸ And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the LORD.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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

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.

QUESTIONS

1. Why was it wrong for Jehoshaphat to help Ahab?
2. What was Jehoshaphat's reaction to the rebuke of Jehu the Prophet?
3. What did Jehoshaphat do in the interest of good government?
4. What did Jehoshaphat do when confronted with a strong enemy?
5. In what way are we to be separate from the world?
6. How did Jehoshaphat demonstrate his faith in God?
7. What means did God use to defeat the enemies of Judah?
8. Study the prayer of Jehoshaphat and tell why it is a good pattern.
9. What part did Judah play in the battle against her enemies?
10. Why did Jehoshaphat's shipping-venture fail?