

## **JEHOSHAPHAT: POWER OF PRAISE**

Thursday, September 28

Reading: 2 Chronicles 19-20

**2 Chronicles 20:21** *After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise Him for the splendor of His holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: "Give thanks to the LORD, for His love endures forever."* **22** *As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.*

Upon returning home, a prophet rebukes Jehoshaphat for his alliance with the wicked house of Ahab. Unlike his father Asa, Jehoshaphat takes this rebuke to heart and renews his efforts to bring his people back to God. He appoints judges and instructs them to remember they are judging for the Lord.

When news comes that an alliance of nations from the east are approaching with a vast army, Jehoshaphat and the people immediately go to prayer. These nations had been untouched by the Conquest because God had commanded it (they were related to Abraham through Lot and Esau). The king's prayer acknowledges God's power and their weakness. "We have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon You."

As they worship and pray, God gives a message to one of the Levites. The Lord promises victory without a fight. The army is to "stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you." The message ends with the wonderful words, "The Lord will be with you." The prayer meeting now turns into a praise gathering as the king and people worship and praise God for His promised deliverance.

The next morning, Jehoshaphat encourages the people to trust God and the army takes its place with the singers leading the way. As they praise God, the Lord turns their enemies against each other and the invading armies destroy each other! The people are so thankful for the victory and plunder God has given them that they name the place "the Valley of Praise" (Beracah). They rejoice in the valley and continue to rejoice as they return to Jerusalem and celebrate at the Temple with music and song.

### **POINTS TO PONDER:**

1. Jehoshaphat's instructions to the judges show us what a real leader looks like.
  - (1) They know that the Lord is watching what they do (19:6).
  - (2) They remember that true justice comes from God (19:7).
  - (3) They fear the Lord and serve Him faithfully and wholeheartedly (19:7, 9).
  - (4) They encourage people to follow God and not sin (19:10).
2. Notice the various ways Jehoshaphat and the people worship God. They fast! They pray! They listen to God's Word! They rejoice with music and song! They obey! What does your worship-life look like?
3. "The battle is not yours, but God's." We would do well to remember that we are not alone in the struggles of life. God is our strength to fight the battles when we keep our eyes on Him. Do you rely on God's strength or your own in the struggles of life? Why should you enter a "valley of praise" after God has given you victory?