

A Day in the Life of Jehoshaphat

by David Roper

Jehoshaphat's faith and trust in God's sovereignty led to a miraculous victory over his enemies, demonstrating that the battle is not ours, but the Lord's.

Duration: 40:25

Topics: "Jehoshaphat"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal story about facing financial difficulties and the decision to reach out to friends and Christian brothers and sisters for support. As they made appointments with people who showed interest in their ministry, they hoped that these individuals would provide the financial help they needed. However, the speaker emphasizes that true victory comes from relying on God's power and not our own resources. He references the story of King Jehoshaphat in the Bible, where the Israelites faced a massive army but ultimately triumphed through their trust in God. The sermon concludes with the reminder that when we acknowledge our powerlessness and turn to God, He always responds.

Transcript

Turn to the 20th chapter of 2 Chronicles. The nation of Israel is one of the oddities of history. I'm sure you're convinced of that.

There's simply no way to explain the continuance of that nation apart from some kind of divine intervention. For better than 3,000 years, there's been a nation that we've identified as Israel, and though they've waxed and waned and at times been powerful and at times almost disappeared, they're always there. Jesus said that their continuance is linked with the continuance of the sun and the moon.

As long as there's a sun in the sky and as long as the moon appears, there'll be a nation of Israel. If you ever wake up some morning and the sun doesn't come up, then you can worry about Israel. But as long as there's a sun there, the nation of Israel will endure.

One of the earliest extra-biblical references to Israel is found in an Egyptian monument, a 13th century B.C. Egyptian monument that was erected by an Egyptian pharaoh by the name of Merneptah. He had just completed a raid through Syria and Palestine, and he came back and recorded his victories on this monument. And among other things, he said, Israel is desolate.

There is no seed left to her. It's almost like Mark Twain's statement that his death had been highly exaggerated. Because Israel is still there.

They're not left desolate. And I think it's a bit ironic that the Egyptians still have to see that monument in their museum. Because Israel is very much alive and well.

Because God has guaranteed their continuance. And you can only explain the ability of Israel to survive again and again as you trace it back to God's work in their midst. And of course, you can say the same thing about our relationship to the Lord.

Its continuance is based fundamentally on God's faithfulness to us. Because Israel is an illustration in Scripture of our life. Now in chapter 20 of 2 Chronicles, you have an illustration of a battle where Israel was victorious.

And in my estimate, this is the greatest victory that Israel ever accomplished. It's much greater than the conquest of Palestine, the victory over Jericho, or any of the other victories recorded in Scripture. Because it's used in Scripture as a symbol of the final battle, the great day of the Lord.

When the Lord delivers His people. It's tied back into this story. The account occurs during the reign of Jehoshaphat, whose life we looked at briefly two weeks ago.

Jehoshaphat was a king of the southern kingdom, the kingdom of Judah. And in chapter 20, you have a day recorded in the life of Jehoshaphat. The circumstances of that day are given to us in verses 1 and 2. Now it came about after this that the sons of Moab and the sons of Ammon, together with some of the Munites, those are the Edomites, the descendants of Esau, came to make war against Jehoshaphat.

Then some came and reported to Jehoshaphat saying, A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, that is beyond the Dead Sea, out of Edom. And behold, they are in Hazaz and Tamar, that is in En Gedi. These three nations that are mentioned here were ancient enemies of Israel.

They lived just across the Jordan River, were related to Israel. The Ammonites and the Moabites were descendants of the patriarchs. The Ammonites and Moabites were Lot's descendants.

Lot was the nephew of Abraham. And the Edomites were the descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother. And though these were the relatives of Israel, they had always been very hostile to the enemies of Israel and on occasion carried out raids across the borders as they did in this instance.

And the thing that's significant is that they did so at a time when Israel was at rest and it was a time of spiritual victory. It came right after a great period of accomplishment in the life of Jehoshaphat. In chapter 19, there is recorded the great reformation that Jehoshaphat carried out.

Over in verse 4 of chapter 19, Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem and he went out again among the people from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim and brought them back to the Lord, the God of their fathers. God used Jehoshaphat to bring about a great revival in Israel and they were enjoying the fruits of that revival and at rest when suddenly they were assailed by these enemies from across the Jordan. Now, this assault on Israel is symbolic of the same sort of assaults that we experience from time to time on our life.

These tragic circumstances that strike us, the death of a friend or some other loved one or separation perhaps of your parents if you're a young person in a home or you parents receive word that your children

somehow have gone astray or you receive word that you've lost your job or you're assailed by guilt or temptation to go back to some sin that you felt had long since been eradicated from your life. Or maybe it's just a period of dryness in your life when the sky seems to be brass and God is not listening and you feel that He doesn't hear and doesn't care. It could be any number of attacks like this on our life and very frequently they come right at a time when things are going so well.

When we've made some step in our relationship to the Lord, some step of commitment that was very difficult, but we did it knowing that's what God wanted. Perhaps struggled for a while and then we were willing to do what God asked us to do and we feel that somehow things ought to go well, but they don't. Everything happens.

A car breaks down, you lose your job, your children don't respond the right way and everything begins to fall apart. Well, that's what happened to Jehoshaphat. Right at the time when he expected everything to go well, everything began to come apart.

The messenger appears in his house and tells him that this invading army is just a day's march away. Something like 15 miles from Jerusalem, near Ngedi. In verse 3, Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention or set his face to seek the Lord and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

So Judah gathered together to seek help from the Lord. They even came from all the cities of Judah to seek the Lord. Jehoshaphat's immediate reaction was to be afraid and whose wouldn't? We know from the account that we have in chapters 18 and 19 that he had a standing army of over a million men in Jerusalem and yet this horde of people from across the Jordan River were even greater.

He was frightened. He knew he didn't have the resources to meet this attack. Now we need to realize that an initial reaction of fear is not wrong.

That was the only sensible reaction that Jehoshaphat could have had to this situation. It's not the initial reaction of fear that matters. It's what we do with that fear.

What does the fear do to you? Does it drive you to be irritable or bluster or get stoned or get resentful and rage at God and at those around you or withdraw, retreat? What does it make you do? We're not even accountable for the immediate reaction to these assaults on our life. What we are accountable for is what we do after that initial reaction. When Jesus said to the disciples, Fear not.

He uses a present tense verb. Don't keep on fearing. That's the point.

The initial reaction of fear may be the only reasonable reaction. But where do we go from there? Jehoshaphat set his face to seek the Lord and he proclaimed a fast in Israel. A fast, of course, involves denying yourself food over a period of time.

It was the practice of God's people, always has been, from time to time, to give up the necessary requirements of the body in order to attend to the things of God and set their thoughts, their mind, on God. But yet denying yourself food doesn't exhaust the meaning of fasting. It goes much deeper than that.

The idea behind fasting is that of denying yourself any resource other than God himself. Because our tendency in times of stress is to start casting about for some visible, tangible resource that we can trust on. To check our bank account or whatever resource we turn to in a time of pressure.

But Jehoshaphat declared a fast. He simply would not depend on any of the natural resources that man would depend upon. When he set his face to seek the Lord, he knew that that was the place that help was coming from.

Now that's the first thing to do when you're afraid. Deny yourself that tendency to go back and trust the things that you've always counted upon and set your face to seek the Lord. Remind yourself that he and he alone is the source of help.

That's what Ephesians 6 calls girding up the loins of your mind. Pulling your thoughts together. Reminding yourself that there's only one place, ultimately, where help comes from.

And that's the Lord himself. Then in verse 5, Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem in the house of the Lord before the new court. And he said, O Lord, the God of our fathers, art thou not God in the heavens? And art thou not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in thy hands, so that no one can stand against thee.

Didst thou not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham, thy friend forever? And they lived in it and have built thee a sanctuary there for thy name, saying, Should evil come upon us, the sword, or judgment, or pestilence, or famine," You see, these are representative of the attacks on our life. The sword are these terrible, tragic assaults on our life when people around us are cut down, people that we depended upon. Or judgment, that is guilt, a sense of guilt and condemnation assaults us.

Or famine, these dry spells that we all experience from time to time. When these things assail us, we will stand before this house and we will stand before thee for thy name is on this house and cry to thee in our distress, and thou wilt hear and deliver us. And thou behold the sons of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom thou didst not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt.

They turned aside from them and did not destroy them. Behold how they are rewarding us by coming to drive us out from thy possession which thou hast given us as an inheritance. O our God, wilt thou not judge them? For we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us, nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on thee." And all Judah was standing before the Lord with their infants, their wives and their children.

Now the first step that Jehoshaphat takes is to remind himself of the source of his help. And secondly, he begins to remind himself of who God is. You'll notice twice he asks the question, Are you not? Are you not God in the heavens? And are you not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? He begins by calling to his mind who the Lord really is.

Aren't you the God of the heavens? Don't you reign in the realm of spiritual realities? Aren't you sovereign? Is your throne threatened? Is it shaky? Is God pacing the floor and biting his nails and pulling his hair and filled with anguish over the state of things in your life? No, he's not. He's utterly unshaken. Absolutely tranquil.

He's not troubled in the least. He's at peace. We've been studying through the book of Revelation as a staff and it struck us in looking at one description of God seated upon his throne that there's a reference there to a sea of glass that surrounds the throne which we take to be symbolic of the peace that surrounds God.

Have you ever seen a sea like glass? I've seen very few. Usually the sea is troubled. There are waves.

But a sea without chop and without waves is a picture of peace and quiet. We were at Lake Tahoe a couple of weeks ago with the Landreth family and we drove around the lake and my little boy kept asking, where are the waves? Because it was just like glass. It was one of those windless days and you could see reflected in the lake the mountains on the other side.

And I thought of that passage in Revelation. It's a picture of the tranquility of God. He's not anxious.

Things aren't out of control. He's in control. But he not only is in control in the heavens, he also, Jehoshaphat says, rules over all the nations of the world.

All the nations. That means he rules over the Ammonites and the Moabites and the Edomites as he rules over those same people today in the Middle East. He rules over our president and his cabinet and those who are associated with him.

He rules over your family and mine, over your circumstances, your place of employment, whatever your situation is, God rules. He's sovereign. He's not under attack.

He's not threatened. He's at peace. He's quiet.

He's restful. Jehoshaphat reminds himself of that, that though everything is chaotic around him and his kingdom appears to be tottering at any moment, God is not frustrated. God is not inhibited.

His hand is not shortened. He's serene and quiet and in control. And then he reminds himself not only of who God is, but what God can do and has done in the past.

Verse 7, Didst thou not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham, thy friend forever? And they lived in it and have built thee a sanctuary there for thy name. He calls to mind the deliverance of Israel and the land and the promise that the land was theirs for eternity and that no matter who might try to force them out of the land, the land belonged to them. And God would guarantee that that was their place and they could rest there.

God had shown them time and time again in their experience not only who he was, but what he could accomplish. And so Jehoshaphat takes his stand on that principle. We are powerless before this great multitude.

We don't know what to do, but our eyes are on you. And Jehoshaphat and all the people stand before God. Jehoshaphat says, I don't understand the circumstance.

I don't know why you let it occur. It doesn't make sense to me. I don't see any way out.

I'm utterly powerless. I don't know what to do, but my eyes are upon you. When I was in high school, it was a long time ago it seems like, I went to Highland Park High School in Dallas, Texas.

And for some reason the three years that I was there, we had a disastrous athletic program. And the year I was a senior, we lost the first six football games of the season. And it didn't look like the rest of the season was going to be any better.

And I remember attending a pep rally one time and the cheerleaders were jumping up and down and they were leading everyone in a cheer and it went something like this, as best I can remember it. Victory, victory is our cry. V-I-C-T-O-R-Y.

Can we do it? Yes, we can. Highland Park, yes, yes, yes, we can. Or something like that.

Brings out the old beaver coat bit in me. And I remember sitting there and it struck me after six losses and not much possibility of how hollow those words were. Can we do it? Yes, we can.

And so often that's our response to these problems. Can we do it? Yes, we can. But we know we can't.

We know we can't. We know we're powerless. That we really don't have the resources.

And all we can do is say, Lord, I don't have the power. I don't know what to do. I don't know where to go except to you.

And my eyes are on you. And I'm going to stand on that truth. That you're able to accomplish in my behalf all that you've promised to do.

Now, whenever we take that position, God always responds. C.S. Lewis said down through the ages, if men needed wisdom, they might cry out, William Shakespeare, help me. And nothing much happens.

Or if they need courage, they might cry out, Billy Budd, help me. And nothing much happens. But he says, for 1900 years, whenever men have cried out, Lord Jesus, help me.

Something happens. And this was true in the life of Israel. Whenever they cried out to the Lord, something happened.

And so Jehoshaphat cried out to the Lord. And he said, Lord, I don't know what you're going to do. But you know of my distress.

And you're going to hear. And you're going to deliver. And then, in verse 14, in the midst of the assembly, the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jehaziel.

Often help comes from the most unlikely quarter. Right out of the congregation, someone began to speak. The son of Zechariah.

The son of Benaiah. The son of Jeiel. The son of Madaniah.

The Levite of the sons of Asaph. And he said, listen, all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat, thus says the Lord to you. Calls them to consider the Lord's word.

Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude. Because the battle is not yours, but the Lord's. The demand doesn't rest upon you.

It rests upon the Lord. It's His battle. Here's an untroubled, unruffled sovereign of the universe who's going to fight on your behalf.

What's the panic? Why are you afraid? The battle is not yours. It's the Lord's. Tomorrow, go down against them.

Behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz. And you will find them at the end of the valley in front of the wilderness of Jeruel. It's right outside the, virtually outside the gates of Jerusalem.

You need not fight in this battle. Station yourselves. The text says, take a stand.

Just stand on what you know to be true. Stand and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf, oh Judah and Jerusalem. Do not fear or be dismayed.

Tomorrow, go out to face them for the Lord is with you. And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground. And all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the Lord, worshiping the Lord.

And the Levites from the sons of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel. With a very loud voice. And now they're on top of things, you see.

Because they realize that the demand ultimately rests upon the Lord and He's adequate to face this circumstance. They do not need to fight. They only need to stand still and see what God is going to do.

But it's obvious that the stand is not just a physical posture that they're to maintain. They're also to go out and face the enemy. The stand is a mental thing.

It's a position that we take based on our understanding of who God is and what He will do. And we stand fast in our mind on that fact. But we still have to face the opposition, whatever it is.

It's never God's will for us to run from a hard thing. I know from my own experience that whenever I have, God sooner or later brings me back to face it again. Because He wants to teach me that I can face into any obstacle, any problem, as long as my stance is right.

As long as I'm standing mentally, spiritually, on the truth that I know about God. Who He is and what He can do. And that's what enables you to face into problems instead of withdrawing, retreating, giving way to your fear.

Now, this is what they did. But this is the sort of thing that has to be renewed over and over and over again. It's not like flipping a switch and suddenly all your anxiety flees.

My experience is that I'll sob this thing two or three times during the day and I'll go to bed at night with a quiet and peaceful heart. And I'll wake up the next morning and for a few seconds everything's okay while I try to remember who I am. And then by the time I get the alarm off, suddenly I'm assaulted again by all of these doubts and fears and anxieties.

Feelings that I can't cope. How in the world am I going to do this thing today that I dread so much? And I'm overwhelmed by it. And this is what happened to Israel.

Because in verse 20 it says they arose early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa. And when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Listen to me, Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, put your trust in the Lord your God and you will be established. Put your trust in His prophets and you will succeed.

He equates here the word of the prophets with the word of God. Put your trust in the prophets, which is the same as putting your trust in God. And what he's doing is the same thing that you and I have to do every morning and perhaps dozens of times through the day, just to remind ourselves again of where we are in

our relationship to Jesus Christ.

Because these fears and these problems come back again and again and we have to stop, get our eyes off of the circumstances and off of the things that we would normally rely upon and get our eyes on the Lord and realize that it's from Him that we receive our strength and remind ourselves of who He is and what He can do for us and stand on it. And you may have to do that many, many times through the day. But the result is that having done it, you're able to stand.

You're able to face into the thing that you dread. Verse 21, When He had consulted with the people, He appointed those who sang to the Lord and those who praised Him in holy attire, as they went out before the army and said, Give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness is everlasting. And they began to sing and praise God and give thanks for the victory that was already theirs.

They were thanking God in advance for the victory over this coalition of nations. Now, you see, that's the action of faith, to give thanks before you see the victory. But yet, that's precisely what faith does.

Paul says, Don't be anxious for anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God. Lord, I need courage to face this circumstance tomorrow. Thank you that I have it.

Lord, I need love to handle this situation tonight. Thank you that I have it. It's walking in that expectation that God will fulfill His promises.

You see, it is the true expression of faith. Thank you, God, that you're going to do everything that you've promised to do. And will you notice in verse 22, When they began singing and praising the Lord, and it was only then, The Lord sent ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir who had come against Judah, so they were routed.

For the sons of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, destroying them completely. And when they had finished with the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another. They turned on one another and destroyed one another.

And if you read between the lines a bit, you can see what's happening. Israel is marching down this little valley, and occasionally they come to a rise, and as they come to the top of the hill, they look down in the plains, and they can see this enormous army, massed, ready to attack. And they go down to another little valley, and they come up to the top, and they're still there, but they're still singing, and they're still thanking God.

And they go down to another little valley, and they come up, and they're still there. And then they go down to another little valley, and they come up, and they're all dead. Verse 24, When Judah came to the lookout of the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude, and behold, there were corpses lying on the ground, and no one escaped.

Have you ever dreaded something so desperately that you just thought you couldn't face it? And you acted as Jehoshaphat did. You took your stand of what you knew to be true about God, and you faced it. And when you got there, what you dreaded was dead.

Sure. Happens over and over again. And not only was it dead, when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take their spoil, they found much among them, including goods, garments, and valuable things, which they

took for themselves, more than they could carry.

And there were three days taking the spoil, because there was so much. This thing that appeared to be such a tragedy turned into triumph. They came back with more than they left with, which is what Paul means when he says we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Takes the most traumatic, tragic circumstances in their life, and he turns them to triumph. And on the fourth day, they assembled in the valley of Barakah, the Hebrew word means blessing, where there they blessed the Lord. Therefore, they have named that place the valley of Barakah until today, which was the time of the exile at the time this was written.

But interestingly enough, the valley where this battle took place is still called the valley of Barakah, the valley of blessing. Commemorates the time when God blessed his people. And every man of Judah and Jerusalem returned with Jehoshaphat at their head, returning to Jerusalem with joy, for the Lord had made them rejoice over their enemies.

And they came to Jerusalem with harps, lyres, and trumpets to the house of the Lord. And the dread of God was on all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard that the Lord had fought against the enemies of Israel. So, the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God gave him rest.

Now, that will be your experience, and mine, as we act upon the principles laid out in this passage. When you're assaulted and you're tempted to give way to fear, first, remind yourself of the source of your help, and deny that tendency that all of us have to trust other things. Call to mind who the Lord is and what he can do, and take your stand on that, and then move out to face that obstacle, that opposition, whatever it might be.

And the result is that when we get there, the thing that we feared is impotent. Its power is taken from it. And the thing that caused so much stress and sorrow becomes a source of blessing and encouragement.

And the result is peace, because we learn, you see, that every demand, every attack, every stress, every pressure is really upon the Lord. The battle is the Lord's, it's not ours. Now, just this past week, a young man came into my office and shared a story with me.

It's Dick Ewing, who prayed earlier. And as Bill mentioned, Dick is ministering on a campus in Portland, Lewis and Clark College. And both Dick and Pam have been operating on a shoestring financially this past year.

Dick is going to seminary part-time and spending the rest of his time on that campus. And he related a story to me that I want him to share with you. And I'm asking him just to stand where he is and take a couple or three minutes and tell you this story, because it demonstrates in a very vivid way the principle that we're talking about this morning.

Okay, Dick, can you get that thing on there? Yeah, I think it's working, yeah. Well, you kind of have to understand a little bit of what my wife and I were going through to kind of get the impact of what has happened to us. About the end of this summer, we were looking ahead and just seeing our financial resources dwindling and we became convinced that we should begin to write some letters to some friends and other Christian brothers and sisters and make our financial needs known about our ministry so that if they were led to respond, they could do so.

And this is what we were going about. And we made appointments and things with people who were very interested in seeing and hearing about what we were doing. And we thought, well, maybe these people would be the ones that would provide, but nothing happened.

They said, man, it's a real neat ministry, we'd like to pray for you, but none of them were really led to provide, at that time, financial resources. And all we had towards the beginning of this month was a known amount of \$180 coming in. The previous month, we had just barely squeaked through when the Christian couple through whom we are renting our home sensed our need and said, well, why don't you not pay rent this month? And we were wondering where this money was going to come from.

We had made arrangements to come down here to visit my folks. Bounds folks were coming up from Los Angeles, and here we had no tires for the car. The rent hadn't come in yet.

There were bills to pay, and we just didn't see at all how this was going to work out. And I began to worry about this. It was the first Tuesday in November.

All these figures of things came through my mind. Well, if I subtract this and pull this money out of this account or something like this, maybe I can squeeze enough money out of what we've got to hassle something to get down here and pay the bills and this sort of thing. And it really troubled me.

I got up in the middle of the night, and just because all these figures were just blipping in and out, and I wasn't really sure where we were at financially. So I just sat down and figured everything out. Hopefully something would work out, you know.

And sure enough, my feelings and thoughts were vindicated. There was just no way we were going to make it. And so right there I said, Well, Lord, some neat things have been happening in our ministry.

If you want us to stay and continue to operate the way we are, you've got to provide. There's just no way that I can work anything out of this mess that she is. I went back to bed about three o'clock in the morning and slept rather peacefully.

But when I got up the next morning, I was still wondering what the heck was going to happen. Well, I had written to a friend and talked to a fellow that lives in Portland earlier that week. And he had suggested that we get together for lunch.

And so that was one of the things that I had to do that day. And I went down and met him in his office and found out that he couldn't have lunch with me. And I said, Well, that's neat.

How about another time? But he said, Well, I have 15 minutes. I'd like to know a little bit more about what you're doing in your ministry at Lewis & Clark. I said, Well, it would take a little bit more time to explain.

And I would really like to share some of the details more specifically with you. And he said, Well, yeah, that's true. I'm a little pressed for time.

I appreciate your sensitivity. Well, what are your needs? And I said, Well, so far, all we know it's coming in is \$180 this month. And well, you can get the picture.

And he called up the secretary and said, draft a check for \$200. And I about dropped everything right there and got the check in my hand. And I just didn't know really how to react.

And he seemed to express interest to be a part of my ministry. I said, You're not going to provide that much each month, are you? And I just didn't know what to say. I just kind of came out that way.

And so I said, No, but I would like to work something out and like to see you again later. So that's still pending. But I said, Well, man, things are really looking workable.

And my wife and I had been invited to come to a play of one of the students, one of the students at Lewis & Clark was in. He was playing a lead role in this play. And he had gotten tickets for us.

And we found out that our seats were right next to a couple that we knew very well. Early in the play, I guess it was just before it started, he slipped me the check. He said, Well, I heard you need some tires and things like this.

Maybe this will buy tires and a little bit more. I said, Huh? And I was expecting, since he was a student, that he wouldn't really have enough money to provide for something like that. And I had an opportunity to look at the amount of the check, and it was for \$345.

And that blew my mind, because here were the tires, here were the bills paid, and things were really looking up. And I just was really rejoicing. My wife and I talked about, man, everything was all good.

I'd come down here and have a neat time with my family. Things were really workable on the boards. But that wasn't all.

The next morning, we were woken up at 8 o'clock in the morning by a phone call from another friend of ours. He said, Hey, I hear you need tires for your car. And I was really hesitating at this point, because I saw everything was ready to go.

I couldn't understand why the Lord was providing this extra opportunity. And we kind of operate on the basis of somebody says this is for something or another. We make sure we go ahead and do that, and operate that if the Lord fulfills our needs exactly, that we should say no after that.

But the guy had said that giving me the \$345 check, or a little bit more, could be used. That check could be used elsewhere. And so I got to thinking, well, yeah, there are some other needs I hadn't really thought of that we should really take care of.

And so I decided to say yes to this guy that was offering the tires. I went down and got the tires the following Friday. And what happened is that the Lord provided all the money for our rent, all the money for our bills.

And there was a bill that we had kept back on the back shelf, and we were just paying a little bit here and there, a hospital bill that we had accumulated earlier in the year. And that was all paid off. Our heating oil bill was paid off.

There was just everything right across the board was dealt with, plus we had enough money to come down here and have a neat time with my family and Pam's family and friends too. And we still don't know where the balance of our needs for the month is going to come on into the future, but we're growing in our confidence. There's no reason to think that if the Lord wants us to stay there, He's going to provide.

Good. Thank you, Dick. I think I saw some Edomites on the other side of the Sacramento River.

Now, later on in the scriptures, Joel, in prophesying of the coming again of the Lord and the great victory that he works on Jerusalem's behalf, calls the place where that victory occurs the Valley of Jehoshaphat. It's in memory of this victory that God worked out on behalf of this king. Because this victory in 2 Chronicles 20 is really an illustration of all the victories that God wants to produce in our life.

And you know, life is a series of mountaintop experiences and valley experiences. There are mountaintop times as Jehoshaphat experienced in chapter 19 when everything is going well. And there are valley experiences when things appear to be coming apart.

But those valleys you see can be the Valley of Jehoshaphat. That can be the place where God judges, where God provides your needs. And our responsibility is to stand, to trust Him, to wait for Him to work out the victory that He's accomplished in our life.

Let's stand together and we'll close in prayer. Father, we're reminded again this morning that the battle is Yours. And we thank You that we can be free from the strain and stress of having to carry the responsibility for that battle.

We thank You that in Christ we are always led in triumph. We ask that today we translate this truth into experience in our life. We ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

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