

## HELP IS FROM THE LORD

By Rev. G. Grant Verdoold  
Sunday, 2 February, 2020

The TEXT: 2 Chronicles 20: 1- 30

"<sup>1</sup> It happened after this *that* the people of Moab with the people of Ammon, and *others* with them besides the Ammonites, came to battle against Jehoshaphat. <sup>2</sup> Then some came and told Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from Syria; and they are in Hazazon Tamar" (which *is* En Gedi). <sup>3</sup> And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. <sup>4</sup> So Judah gathered together to ask *help* from the Lord; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord. <sup>5</sup> Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court, <sup>6</sup> and said: "O Lord God of our fathers, *are* You not God in heaven, and do You *not* rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand *is there not* power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You? <sup>7</sup> *Are* You not our God, *who* drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever? <sup>8</sup> And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying, <sup>9</sup> 'If disaster comes upon us—sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine—we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your name *is* in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save.' <sup>10</sup> And now, here are the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir—whom You would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and did not destroy them— <sup>11</sup> here they are, rewarding us by coming to throw us out of Your possession which You have given us to inherit. <sup>12</sup> O our God, will You not judge them? For 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." <sup>13</sup> Now all Judah, with their little ones, their wives, and their children, stood before the Lord. <sup>14</sup> Then the Spirit of the Lord came 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, in the midst of the assembly. <sup>15</sup> And he said, "Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the Lord to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle *is* not yours, but God's. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> You will not *need* to fight in this *battle*. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord *is* with you." <sup>18</sup> And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with *his* face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the Lord, worshiping the Lord. <sup>19</sup> Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with voices loud and high. <sup>20</sup> So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "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." <sup>21</sup> And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the Lord, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: "Praise the Lord, For His mercy *endures* forever." <sup>22</sup> 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. <sup>23</sup> For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy *them*. And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another. <sup>24</sup> So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there *were* their dead bodies, fallen on the earth. No one had escaped. <sup>25</sup> When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found among them an abundance of valuables on the dead bodies, and precious jewelry, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away; and they were three days gathering the spoil because there was so much.

26 And on the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berachah, for there they blessed the Lord; therefore the name of that place was called The Valley of Berachah until this day. 27 Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat in front of them, to go back to Jerusalem with joy, for the Lord had made them rejoice over their enemies. 28 So they came to Jerusalem, with stringed instruments and harps and trumpets, to the house of the Lord. 29 And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of *those* countries when they heard that the Lord had fought against the enemies of Israel. 30 Then the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around."

Verse 26: Berachah means blessing

### Introduction:

Now after hearing that exciting text from the Bible, you can see why I felt the need to read the whole scripture to you! I could not choose just one verse.

It reminds us again that Jesus plus nothing equals everything!

### The HOOK:

Jerusalem was startled by sudden news.

There has for a great while been quiet preparations made in distant countries beyond Jordan. Upon it's mountains Edom had been getting ready. The workshops of Petra had been ringing with the flurry of hammers as the enemies of Israel had been beating their pruning hooks into spears and swords, and now they were coming down in hordes to attack Israel!

There were 3 great nations who were assisted by the odds and ends of all the nations around about, so that a great company eager for plunder was amassing itself for battle!

They had heard about the riches of the temple at Jerusalem. They knew that the people of Judea, for many years had been flourishing, and they were coming now to kill, and to destroy, and to sack, and to plunder!

Isn't it amazing? The tactics of Satan have always been "to steal, and to kill, and to destroy." (John 10:10a)!

They were like grasshoppers or locusts in size of multitude that was swarming and teeming together and coming down for a brutal assault on GOD's people!

What were the people of GOD to do? How were these poor Judeans to defend themselves?

Well, it tells us in verses 3 and 4 of our text that their immediate response was to go to the LORD. "3 And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. 4 So Judah gathered together to ask *help* from the Lord; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord."

Yes! The LORD GOD Almighty, was their defense. "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?" Jeremiah 32: 27.

Armour and swords were inadequate to provide protection. The fact is their situation was so altogether hopeless that there was no use in looking to anything but GOD!

When we need help, where are we looking? To inadequate human sources, to ourselves? We should always be looking to GOD! GOD alone should be our hope and our help just as He was to Jehoshaphat and his people. They were compelled to trust in GOD, and GOD alone, just as it says in Psalms 121: 1 & 2, "1 I will lift up my eyes to the

hills—From whence comes my help? <sup>2</sup> My help *comes* from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

Jehoshaphat aided them to seek help from the LORD by proclaiming a fast. armies of Moab, Ammon and Edom was PRAYER! Yes, fasting and prayer were their preparation for this great battle!

Prayer was their strongest defense and mightiest weapon!

E. M. Bounds said, "GOD shapes the world by prayer." This is how important prayer is!

Oswald Chambers said, "Worship and intercession must go together, the one is impossible without the other."

No doubt if the Ammonites had heard of this, they would have laughed and mocked Jehoshaphat, Edom would have scoffed at them, and Moab would have cursed those that sought to make supplications before The Living GOD! Can you hear the mockers?

I can almost hear them, "What? Do they suppose their prayers will defeat us?" This would be the jest and sneer of these adversaries!

Yet Israel knew that prayer was their finest artillery. Don't be fooled! Remember, "The fool has said in his heart, "*There is no God.*" They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good." Psalm 141: 1. GOD is real!

Israel knew that GOD was their defense, and their offence, all at once! In coming to prayer before The Living GOD, they would see three great nations crushed in one mighty swoop!

"For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy *them*. And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another." verse 23.

GOD's people resorted to the invisible arm, the omnipotent arm of GOD Almighty! This is where we must go as a church, and as individuals! The divine art of prayer and praise is so needed today! Today, I pray that we all learn a great lesson in the school of faith! We must all come to realize that to be a scholar in the school of faith one needs to pray!! "**Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.**" James 5: 16.

Prayer is a powerful weapon, Then and Now! "**Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.**" Jeremiah 33: 3. "<sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup> in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18

**The BOOK 1:** How they asked for help.

They asked GOD for help expressing a sincere confidence in the ability and availability of The Living GOD! They asked in faith. "**Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**" Hebrews 11: 1. "**But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.**" Hebrews 11: 6.

So, the people came and asked for help from the LORD Almighty. They came fasting and praying, seeking the will of GOD, and believing in HIS power to save them. "**and said: "O Lord God of our fathers, *are* You not God in heaven, and do You *not* rule over all the kingdoms of**

**the nations, and in Your hand *is there not* power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You?"** verse 6.

Friends, if we begin our prayers by doubting the power of GOD, our faith will be limp indeed! We need to pray as though everything depends on GOD! That is the only way to pray! Faith is an oasis in the heart which will never be reached by a caravan of thinking! We must trust in GOD alone, as the Israelites did. **"5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths."** Proverbs 3: 5-6 GOD hears the heart!

The Israelites prayed to GOD, pleading HIS past acts. They remembered all the great promises GOD made to Abraham and all the great miracles HE performed in that time. **"Are You not our God, *who* drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?"** verse 7. GOD is here! In your dilemma, in your trial, in your failing, in your fear, you must remember our Great GOD is here, and able, and desiring to meet your need.

HE is here today! **"Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever."** Hebrews 13: 8

Recall the former days of old. Remember GOD's blessings and benefits! HIS mercy endures forever! HIS love knows no bounds! HE is great in HIS faithfulness, tenderness and loving kindness. It is foolish to think that the LORD who has blessed you for the past 70 years will not keep you for the next 10!

And, Cedardale, the LORD who has blessed us for the past 60 years, will HE not provide for us in the years ahead! Despite the era, despite the changing times, GOD has been faithful!

The Spirit of GOD has been magnificently working in hearts these past 60 years! HIS provision, HIS benefits, HIS blessings, HIS guidance can be felt and seen. People have been set free! People have been healed and set free from disease. People have been called into ministry! Nine Pastors have been called to shepherd this wonderful work because GOD is the Father of this church! Oh, how great are GOD's gracious dealings with us!

Verse 7 asks, **"Are You not our God, *who* drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?"** Will HE leave us now? The answer is a resounding, **"NO!"**

They remembered and plead the promises of GOD. **"If disaster comes upon us—sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine—we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your name *is* in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save."** they said in verse 9. They knew they were not immune to misfortune, but they also knew that GOD would hear them in their trial and save them!

Prevailing prayer trusts in the promises of our Great GOD! (See POST NOTES: Habakkuk's Prayer).

Plunge into the promises of GOD Almighty! Grasp them! Hold on to them tightly! Plead them before the throne of grace! If you know nothing else, know that GOD hears you! Hold on to this with a grip of determination, believing in the faithfulness of GOD! Believe this: **"Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all."** Psalms 34: 19

Oh LORD, you have come to us, **"saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."**" Hebrews 6: 14, and again YOU said, **"blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which**

***is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.***” Genesis 22: 17

They expressed their confidence in GOD! In verse 12 they said, **“O our God, will You not judge them? For 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.”**”. Highlight this important verse! What did they mean by this?

They meant that if help were to come, the only place from which it could come is from GOD, GOD alone! They were looking for that help! They knew that even in a hopeless situation, there was hope. They knew that there was only one source of help. They did not know when it would come, but they knew it would come! They looked for it with a holy expectation!

So too, we do not know when. We do not know how, but we do know from where our help will come! It will come only from The Sovereign LORD! **“My soul, wait silently for God alone, For my expectation is from Him.”** Psalm 62: 5. Friends, do you know this is the way you are saved?

We are looking to YOU, LORD! We are seeking YOU now! By **“looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”** Hebrews 12: 2 we are saved! Fix your eyes upon HIM!!!! This is the only way to be saved, by looking, waiting, and reverently watching! My eyes are upon YOU, and YOU only, no-one and nothing else!

**“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”**” Acts 4: 12. There is no other name where we can find help in a day of trouble. HE is the only way! We have been called to a glorious mission! Let us do what these people did in their time of trouble! Let’s just do it!!

**The BOOK 2:** How they received help.

Their help comes to them first, by a message from GOD. They received a fresh assurance of GOD’s goodness. Verse 15 tells us, **“And he said, “Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the Lord to you: ‘Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God’s.”**”.

So, in this emergency facing the Israelites, GOD’s first response is to quiet them with this reassurance.

Every pastor, evangelist, ministry worker needs to trust in this promise. Don’t listen to the nay-sayers and fear mongers. GOD is in control. The battle is HIS! HE has overcome the world!

Be not afraid or dismayed sounds quite a lot like Jesus saying, **““Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.”** John 14: 1, and sounds like HIM saying, **“I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.”** John 14: 18 and **“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”**” John 16: 33

Then the LORD gave them distinct direction as to what they were to do. Do you know what they were told to do? Verse 17 tells us. **“You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!’ Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you.”** GOD told them to just go and stand in faith! That was the direction that GOD gave!

How often has GOD given HIS people deliverance by quieting them and asking them to just be still as their only course of action? **“He says, “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.””** Psalm 46: 10.

Verse 20 tells us, **“So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, “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.””**

Not only did they march out, but verse 21 tells us that they went out praising The LORD! **“And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the Lord, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: “Praise the Lord, For His mercy endures forever.””**

The Israelites, by marching out to meet the foe with songs and Hosannas, as we shall see, were doing the best possible thing to rout their enemies. Their enemies were totally unable to comprehend such a defense as this. They must have surmised that it was some kind of sneaky treachery intended to ambush them, and so in their confusion GOD caused them to slay one another! Israel on the other hand had only to keep praising The LORD and singing HIS praises!

Verse 23 tells us **“So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there were their dead bodies, fallen on the earth. No one had escaped.”**. The battle was already over and all the Israelites had done was pray and sing praises to GOD!!! None of their enemies, none of these men of might, could raise their hands against the people whom GOD favoured! Their victory was so great it took them 3 days to gather the spoils of war!

Friends, HE can deliver you today! In answer to your prayer, HE will be your almighty defense! Psalm 23: 5 says, “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.”. And Psalm 23 verse 1 tells us HE will also be our shepherd who cares for and provides for us. **“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.”**.

My friends, did you know you were this highly favoured by your Loving GOD? Psalm 5: 11 says, **“But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You.”**. Psalm 89: 18 reminds us, **“For our shield belongs to the Lord, And our king to the Holy One of Israel.”**.

This is all because, **“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”** Romans 8: 1

So, let us trust HIS Holy Name and praise The Name of The LORD GOD Almighty!!

**The TOOK:** What happened after they received help?

Well, verse 28 tells us that as soon as they won the victory, they worshipped GOD!

Have you ever considered my friend, that your trial is intended to strengthen your faith? Could your difficulty be intended to draw you closer to GOD? That’s what happened here! That is one of the intentions of trials, to revive us in the spirit of devotion and commitment to GOD!

Verse 29 tells us there was such a jubilee of joyful noise and praise to GOD. The celebration that the air was full of electrifying praise of a people in holy communion with their GOD! Their devotion rose from trustful and grateful hearts to their Living GOD! **“Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.”** Psalm 107: 1.

**“And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries when they heard that the Lord had fought against the enemies of Israel.”** GOD made it known that HE alone is the Almighty!

May we here at Cedardale get into the worshipping frame of mind and be kept in it. This should always be our proper response to GOD.

Notice in verses 18 and 19 that they worshiped and praised The LORD in anticipation of a great victory, **“18 And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the Lord, worshiping the Lord. 19 Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with voices loud and high.”**

Our faith must be such that we praise GOD before the deliverance comes! You may not have your answer yet. You may not be delivered yet but praise HIM for what is coming! Adore HIM for what HE is going to do! Bless HIS Holy Name for what is sure to come!

They went out marching and singing praises. Then they prepared to gather up the riches of the enemy which took 3 days! Verse 25 tells us, **“When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found among them an abundance of valuables on the [f]dead bodies, and precious jewelry, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away; and they were three days gathering the spoil because there was so much.”**

What a different employment from what they had expected. First, they felt afraid and did not know what to do because of their weakness in the face of overwhelming odds. Now the difficulty was in being able to carry off the greatness of the riches won in the battle!

So, trust GOD and go straight ahead! You will see wonders. Ephesians 3: 20 tells us that GOD is able to not only meet but exceed our expectations. **“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,”**

Let us be as they were, going out singing and praising the LORD! **“27 Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat in front of them, to go back to Jerusalem with joy, for the Lord had made them rejoice over their enemies. 28 So they came to Jerusalem, with stringed instruments and harps and trumpets, to the house of the Lord.”** (Verses 27 & 28)

Praise HIS Name in HIS house!!!

I will leave you with 2 quotes. “So often fear is the glue that keeps us stuck,” said Shannon L. Alder.

Corrie Ten Boom said, “Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known GOD!”  
May we trust GOD more! May our faith be strengthened!

This is my way forward as your Pastor, and I pray that it will be your way forward too.

## POST NOTES:

### Habakkuk's Prayer - Habakkuk Chapter 3

**1** A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet. On *shigionoth*. **2** Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy. **3** God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens and his praise filled the earth. **4** His splendor was like the sunrise; rays flashed from his hand, where his power was hidden. **5** Plague went before him; pestilence followed his steps. **6** He stood, and shook the earth; he looked, and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled, and the age-old hills collapsed—but he marches on forever. **7** I saw the tents of Cushan in distress, the dwellings of Midian in anguish. **8** Were you angry with the rivers, Lord? Was your wrath against the streams? Did you rage against the sea when you rode your horses and your chariots to victory? **9** You uncovered your bow, you called for many arrows. You split the earth with rivers; **10** the mountains saw you and writhed. Torrents of water swept by; the deep roared and lifted its waves on high. **11** Sun and moon stood still in the heavens at the glint of your flying arrows, at the lightning of your flashing spear. **12** In wrath you strode through the earth and in anger you threshed the nations. **13** You came out to deliver your people, to save your anointed one. You crushed the leader of the land of wickedness, you stripped him from head to foot. **14** With his own spear you pierced his head when his warriors stormed out to scatter us, gloating as though about to devour the wretched who were in hiding. **15** You trampled the sea with your horses, churning the great waters. **16** I heard, and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound; decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled. Yet I will wait patiently for the day of calamity to come on the nation invading us. **17** Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, **18** yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior. **19** The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer; he enables me to tread on the heights. (For the director of music. On my stringed instruments.)