

**Saturday, July 27**

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**2 Chronicles 19:1 - 20:37**

**19** **1** When King Jehoshaphat of Judah arrived safely home in Jerusalem, **2** Jehu son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him. “Why should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD ?” he asked the king. “Because of what you have done, the LORD is very angry with you. **3** Even so, there is some good in you, for you have removed the Asherah poles throughout the land, and you have committed yourself to seeking God.” **4** Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem, but he went out among the people, traveling from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim, encouraging the people to return to the LORD, the God of their ancestors. **5** He appointed judges throughout the nation in all the fortified towns, **6** and he said to them, “Always think carefully before pronouncing judgment. Remember that you do not judge to please people but to please the LORD . He will be with you when you render the verdict in each case. **7** Fear the LORD and judge with integrity, for the LORD our God does not tolerate perverted justice, partiality, or the taking of bribes.” **8** In Jerusalem, Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites and priests and clan leaders in Israel to serve as judges for cases involving the LORD ’s regulations and for civil disputes. **9** These were his instructions to them: “You must always act in the fear of the LORD, with faithfulness and an undivided heart. **10** Whenever a case comes to you from fellow citizens in an outlying town, whether a murder case or some other violation of God’s laws, commands, decrees, or regulations, you must warn them not to sin against the LORD, so that he will not be angry with you and them. Do this and you will not be guilty. **11** “Amariah the high priest will have final say in all cases involving the LORD . Zebadiah son of Ishmael, a leader from the tribe of Judah, will have final say in all civil cases. The Levites will assist you in making sure that justice is served. Take courage as you fulfill your duties, and may the LORD be with those who do what is right.”

**20** **1** After this, the armies of the Moabites, Ammonites, and some of the Meunites declared war on Jehoshaphat. **2** Messengers came and told Jehoshaphat, “A vast army from Edom is marching against you from beyond the Dead Sea. They are already at Hazazon-tamar.” (This was another name for En-gedi.) **3** Jehoshaphat was terrified by this news and begged the LORD for guidance. He also ordered everyone in Judah to begin fasting. **4** So people from all the towns of Judah came to Jerusalem to seek the LORD ’s help. **5** Jehoshaphat stood before the community of Judah and Jerusalem in front of the new courtyard at the Temple of the

LORD . **6** He prayed, “O LORD, God of our ancestors, you alone are the God who is in heaven. You are ruler of all the kingdoms of the earth. You are powerful and mighty; no one can stand against you! **7** O our God, did you not drive out those who lived in this land when your people Israel arrived? And did you not give this land forever to the descendants of your friend Abraham? **8** Your people settled here and built this Temple to honor your name. **9** They said, ‘Whenever we are faced with any calamity such as war, plague, or famine, we can come to stand in your presence before this Temple where your name is honored. We can cry out to you to save us, and you will hear us and rescue us.’ **10** “And now see what the armies of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir are doing. You would not let our ancestors invade those nations when Israel left Egypt, so they went around them and did not destroy them. **11** Now see how they reward us! For they have come to throw us out of your land, which you gave us as an inheritance. **12** O our God, won’t you stop them? We are powerless against this mighty army that is about to attack us. We do not know what to do, but we are looking to you for help.” **13** As all the men of Judah stood before the LORD with their little ones, wives, and children, **14** the Spirit of the LORD came upon one of the men standing there. His name was Jahaziel son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite who was a descendant of Asaph. **15** He said, “Listen, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Listen, King Jehoshaphat! This is what the LORD says: Do not be afraid! Don’t be discouraged by this mighty army, for the battle is not yours, but God’s. **16** Tomorrow, march out against them. You will find them coming up through the ascent of Ziz at the end of the valley that opens into the wilderness of Jeruel. **17** But you will not even need to fight. Take your positions; then stand still and watch the LORD’s victory. He is with you, O people of Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid or discouraged. Go out against them tomorrow, for the LORD is with you!” **18** Then King Jehoshaphat bowed low with his face to the ground. And all the people of Judah and Jerusalem did the same, worshiping the LORD . **19** Then the Levites from the clans of Kohath and Korah stood to praise the LORD, the God of Israel, with a very loud shout. **20** Early the next morning the army of Judah went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. On the way Jehoshaphat stopped and said, “Listen to me, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be able to stand firm. Believe in his prophets, and you will succeed.” **21** After consulting the people, the king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army, singing to the LORD and praising him for his holy splendor. This is what they sang: “Give thanks to the LORD ; his faithful love endures forever!” **22** At the very moment they began to sing and give praise, the LORD caused the armies of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir to start fighting among themselves. **23** The armies of Moab and Ammon turned against their allies from Mount Seir and killed every one of them. After they had destroyed the army of Seir, they began attacking each other. **24** So when the army of Judah arrived at the lookout point in the wilderness, all they saw were dead bodies

lying on the ground as far as they could see. Not a single one of the enemy had escaped. **25** King Jehoshaphat and his men went out to gather the plunder. They found vast amounts of equipment, clothing, and other valuables—more than they could carry. There was so much plunder that it took them three days just to collect it all! **26** On the fourth day they gathered in the Valley of Blessing, which got its name that day because the people praised and thanked the LORD there. It is still called the Valley of Blessing today. **27** Then all the men returned to Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat leading them, overjoyed that the LORD had given them victory over their enemies. **28** They marched into Jerusalem to the music of harps, lyres, and trumpets, and they proceeded to the Temple of the LORD. **29** When all the surrounding kingdoms heard that the LORD himself had fought against the enemies of Israel, the fear of God came over them. **30** So Jehoshaphat's kingdom was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side. **31** So Jehoshaphat ruled over the land of Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years. His mother was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi. **32** Jehoshaphat was a good king, following the ways of his father, Asa. He did what was pleasing in the LORD's sight. **33** During his reign, however, he failed to remove all the pagan shrines, and the people never fully committed themselves to follow the God of their ancestors. **34** The rest of the events of Jehoshaphat's reign, from beginning to end, are recorded in which is included in **35** Some time later King Jehoshaphat of Judah made an alliance with King Ahaziah of Israel, who was very wicked. **36** Together they built a fleet of trading ships at the port of Ezion-geber. **37** Then Eliezer son of Dodavahu from Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat. He said, "Because you have allied yourself with King Ahaziah, the LORD will destroy your work." So the ships met with disaster and never put out to sea.

## **Romans 10:14 - 11:12**

**10 14** But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? **15** And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!" **16** But not everyone welcomes the Good News, for Isaiah the prophet said, "LORD, who has believed our message?" **17** So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ. **18** But I ask, have the people of Israel actually heard the message? Yes, they have: "The message has gone throughout the earth, and the words to all the world." **19** But I ask, did the people of Israel really understand? Yes, they did, for even in the time of Moses, God said, "I will rouse your jealousy through people who are not even a nation. I will provoke your anger through the foolish

Gentiles.” **20** And later Isaiah spoke boldly for God, saying, “I was found by people who were not looking for me. I showed myself to those who were not asking for me.” **21** But regarding Israel, God said, “All day long I opened my arms to them, but they were disobedient and rebellious.”

**11 1** I ask, then, has God rejected his own people, the nation of Israel? Of course not! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham and a member of the tribe of Benjamin. **2** No, God has not rejected his own people, whom he chose from the very beginning. Do you realize what the Scriptures say about this? Elijah the prophet complained to God about the people of Israel and said, **3** “LORD, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too.” **4** And do you remember God’s reply? He said, “No, I have 7,000 others who have never bowed down to Baal!” **5** It is the same today, for a few of the people of Israel have remained faithful because of God’s grace—his undeserved kindness in choosing them. **6** And since it is through God’s kindness, then it is not by their good works. For in that case, God’s grace would not be what it really is—free and undeserved. **7** So this is the situation: Most of the people of Israel have not found the favor of God they are looking for so earnestly. A few have—the ones God has chosen—but the hearts of the rest were hardened. **8** As the Scriptures say, “God has put them into a deep sleep. To this day he has shut their eyes so they do not see, and closed their ears so they do not hear.” **9** Likewise, David said, “Let their bountiful table become a snare, a trap that makes them think all is well. Let their blessings cause them to stumble, and let them get what they deserve. **10** Let their eyes go blind so they cannot see, and let their backs be bent forever.” **11** Did God’s people stumble and fall beyond recovery? Of course not! They were disobedient, so God made salvation available to the Gentiles. But he wanted his own people to become jealous and claim it for themselves. **12** Now if the Gentiles were enriched because the people of Israel turned down God’s offer of salvation, think how much greater a blessing the world will share when they finally accept it.

### **Psalm 21:1 - 13**

**21 1** How the king rejoices in your strength, O LORD ! He shouts with joy because you give him victory. **2** For you have given him his heart’s desire; you have withheld nothing he requested. Interlude **3** You welcomed him back with success and prosperity. You placed a crown of finest gold on his head. **4** He asked you to preserve his life, and you granted his request. The days of his life stretch on forever. **5** Your victory brings him great honor, and you have clothed

him with splendor and majesty. **6** You have endowed him with eternal blessings and given him the joy of your presence. **7** For the king trusts in the LORD . The unfailing love of the Most High will keep him from stumbling. **8** You will capture all your enemies. Your strong right hand will seize all who hate you. **9** You will throw them in a flaming furnace when you appear. The LORD will consume them in his anger; fire will devour them. **10** You will wipe their children from the face of the earth; they will never have descendants. **11** Although they plot against you, their evil schemes will never succeed. **12** For they will turn and run when they see your arrows aimed at them. **13** Rise up, O LORD, in all your power. With music and singing we celebrate your mighty acts.

#### **Proverbs 20:4 - 6**

**20 4** Those too lazy to plow in the right season will have no food at the harvest. **5** Though good advice lies deep within the heart, a person with understanding will draw it out. **6** Many will say they are loyal friends, but who can find one who is truly reliable?