

Believe in the Lord Your God

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[0 : 00] Now some of you may recollect that at the very turn of the year we read this chapter, chapter 20 of 2 Chronicles and focused at that time at verse 17.

You shall not need to fight in this battle. Set yourselves, stand ye still and see the salvation of the Lord with you. This evening I'd like us to focus a couple of verses further down at verse 20.

They rose early in the morning and went forth into the wilderness of Togohah and as they went forth Jehoshaphat's students 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. Believe in the Lord your God. If we were to look at the history or the genealogy of Jehoshaphat's life, we would see that he is the fifth generation after King David.

After King David of course there's then Solomon and then Rehoboam, his son, and then Abijah and then Asa, Jehoshaphat's father. And then the fifth generation is Jehoshaphat himself.

[1 : 09] He came to the throne about 100 years after the death of King David, but David had himself reigned for 40 years. And so we could say that David's prime would be about 125 years previously before this incident or before Jehoshaphat's reign, wherever it may have been.

That's 125 years. That's like 1892 to us. Seems like ancient history, you know, absolutely eons ago. And yet of course so many things are unchanged and some things are exactly the same.

The generations of men rise and pass away. Whether it is the fifth generation from King David or whether it is, you know, ten generations from Adam to Noah, which of course if you look at the genealogies again is.

A generation can be a fairly elastic term. If they add him to the death of Noah, for example, that ten generations covers over 2,000 years. Partly because people lived inordinately long times, or some of them did in those days.

Noah lived 950 years. Third longest life in the entire Bible. Whereas by contrast Noah to the death of Abraham, that's another ten generations, but this time it's only 117 years.

[2 : 31] So, you know, between the death of Noah and the death of Abraham, there's such a short period of time compared to the previous ten generations. How many generations do you think between the time of Christ and ourselves?

In that intervening 2,000 years, how many generations, how many of our fathers and forefathers and great-grandfathers and so on have risen and passed away?

And if we were going to go back that, you know, that 125 years to 1892, we might think, oh, well, they're really, really old-fashioned then, you know, Victorians.

What do they know compared to us? What was the world like then? Well, in those days, they had the ecclesiastical disputes, just like we did. 1892, the free church was on the point of breaking apart over the Declaratory Act.

Another dispute there in the church of the day. Churches have this tendency, we all do, to disagree one with another. And sometimes it's over very important things.

[3 : 34] The Declaratory Act was a case in point. But every generation, 1892, 1992, whatever it is, they each think they are the cutting edge.

Each generation believes and knows themselves to be the most modern, the most up-to-date that anyone has ever been. Every generation thinks like that.

200 years ago, a broad-sheet newspaper began to bring regular news to its readers. Now, most people hadn't had that before. They tended to be sort of monthly or quarterly, whatever.

This was a broad-sheet newspaper bringing news up-to-date of the changing face of the world, as to how, you know, the times that were changing. And then, in those days, too, things were

happening in the world that seemed to be upsetting the old ways of doing things. And as they brought this new bang-to-date, broad-sheet news to their readers, they gave it that edgy title that they thought would encapsulate the changing days and the generations in which they lived.

[4 : 39] And they called it, they called it, the times. The times in which they lived. Now we think of that, oh, a really old-fashioned broad-sheet. 50 years on, another new kid on the block, broad-sheet newspaper, far more up-to-date, far more sort of worth it and edgy, making use of the instantaneous, miraculous modern communications of the day.

And they called their broad-sheet, in line with that new instantaneous communication, the daily telegraph. Telegraph was revolutionary.

Like, you press a few clicks at one end and it shoots down a wire so the same message can be received hundreds of miles away by people. This was revolutionary in the 1850s.

And it was just thought, ooh, fantastic. It's like a sort of instantaneous click of it. The information superhighway that we've got nowadays of the World Wide Web and things can be read all over the world instantaneously.

They thought they were really bang-up-to-date. They thought they were really edgy to us. These are like the aged grandfathers of, you know, the print media that's already on the way out and it's had its day.

[5 : 55] To their day, they were racy and modern. They were new men, new money, and new generations, the up-and-coming generations. But it's the same human nature then, thinking that at the forefront of everything, and yet within a generation or two, it's just passing.

They'll say, we'll do the same. There'll be a time when people think, oh, the World Wide Web, they thought they were so often. Oh, how old-fashioned it is now. Look at what we've got nowadays. They'll say, goodness knows what they'll have. And I'll leave while. But they'll think that we'll be really old-fashioned. Just like we think the 1990s is really old-fashioned. And the 1890s is just ancient history.

Generations rise and pass away. It may take thousands of years. It may only take hundreds of years. But the point is, they pass, they rise, they go. But God remains the same.

The up-and-coming generations each have the same human condition. They have the same desperate need of the gospel. They have the same one and only solution to their problems and to the needs of their world.

[7 : 04] And it is this. Believe in the Lord your God. That is the solution to Jehoshaphat's problem. It is the solution to your problems and mine.

You think, oh, what has that possibly got to do with my daily life and problems and bills and difficulties and all the difficulties in my family or relationships or whatever it may be?

Try and see. Just remember how Nathaniel was told by Philip when he came to see him. We found the Messiah. I said, oh, can any good think of it in Asa? Come and see.

Try and see the input of the Lord into your ordinary daily life. Your ordinary run-of-the-mill problems and see the difference that the Lord's input, the Lord's spirit, the Lord's grace will make.

It is the same solution that Israel needed then and that Scotland needs now and that Scalpy needs this very night and that you and I need all the time.

[8 : 04] Believe in the Lord your God. Five generations then between King David and Jehoshaphat. And yet a not dissimilar challenge.

The problem of the Moabites and the Ammonites and all these other people coming to attack Judah, this was not of Jehoshaphat's making. He hadn't gone out to provoke them.

He hadn't stirred up trouble. They were just coming to get them for no reason whatsoever. It's in many ways the same old story. A problem not of his making.

Now, we can relate to that surely, can't we? Because if you think about some of your problems in life, some of the challenges or difficulties you face, they will be because maybe of mistakes we have made and things that we have done that we shouldn't have done or a wrong turn that we took somewhere along the line.

Some of them, some of our problems will be because of that. But the vast majority of the things with which you have to deal, the vast majority of your problems and difficulties and the obstacles in life and the hassles that you face, nine times out of ten will not be of your making.

[9 : 20] They will not be, in that sense, your fault. There will be things that happen despite everything you do. There will be problems that seem to have sought you out like a heat-seeking missile and following you everywhere you try to go and dodge the bullet, but it comes and finds you.

There will be things that you are trying to avoid and still it comes and gets you. It's like the end of Job chapter 3, remember, where he says, you know, I was not in peace, not in safety.

Now I was out of quiet, yet trouble came. It still comes. And it did for Jehoshaphat, and it did for David five generations before, and it does for you and me.

Problems come and get you. They come and find you. Most of them are not of your making. What do you do? Now just as there is these problems for David, think back to David, you know, in 1 Samuel 17, where, you know, you've got the incident with David and Goliath.

Goliath is not of David's making. David hasn't stirred up this trouble, and yet here he is, he's just turning up at the army camp, bringing bread and cheese to his brothers and his brothers' officers and so on.

[10 : 32] And there's Goliath, right there, thumbing his nose at the armies of Israel, defying the God of Israel. And David could have walked away, perhaps. But instead he comes to face the challenge.

He didn't create this problem, but he's still going to deal with it in the only way that it can be dealt with. If we remember what we read in verse 15 of 2 Chronicles 20.

He said, Harken ye, O Judah, inhabitants of Jerusalem, king of 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.

The battle is not yours, but God's. You didn't make this battle. You didn't seek out this problem. It came to find you. And if you are trusting in the Lord as you face it, it's not your battle.

You didn't make it. You didn't bring it about. It is God's battle. Let him fight it. But be prepared to be used of him in it. Now, where it says the battle is not yours, but God's.

[11 : 36] You've got echoes there, haven't you, of what David cries out to Goliath when he defies the armies of the living God. 1 Samuel 17, verse 45. Then said David to the first time, And thou comest to me with a sword and a spear, and with a shield.

But I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand, and I will smite thee and take thy head from thee, and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

And this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands. The battle is not yours, but God's.

He saveth not with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's. That's what echoes, of course, in the New Testament. Remember what Paul writes to the Corinthians. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

Strongholds. This assembly shall know the Lord's, save or not with sword and spear. The battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands. The battle is the Lord's then five generations before.

[12 : 53] The battle is God's five generations later. Five hundred generations on. The battle is still the Lord's, if we are prepared to put ourselves into his hands, and let him fight it for us, but be willing to step up to the plate and be used of him in that way.

It is, in many ways, the same old story. The generations of men rise and pass away, but the problems, the challenges, the attacks still come.

Whatever generation you're in, whatever form they take, you don't seek them out, they come and get you. But if you are trusting in him, the battle is the Lord's, not yours.

Let his strength fight it. Believe in the Lord your God. David has to do that himself, of course, a few years down the line, when after he has risen to the top of public opinion, Saul is still hunting him down.

Saul is about to die, or has already died by this point in 1 Samuel chapter 30. David and his men return to Ziklag. They find it burned with fire and all their wives and children taken away.

[14 : 06] And because the men resent the fact that David had taken them away to fight for the first times, as they thought they were going to do, David was greatly distressed. 1 Samuel chapter 30, verse 6.

David was greatly distressed, for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters. But David encouraged himself, and the Lord is God.

The Lord is God. We'll come to that again a little further on. The Lord is God. Remember, believe in the Lord your God.

There's that sense of possession, of being possessed by him, in the same way as you might talk about your mother, your father, your home. It's not that you have ownership of these people, it's that rather it has ownership of you.

You belong to it. The Lord your God. David encouraged himself, and the Lord is God. We have the same old problems, the same old story.

[15:08] A problem not of Jehoshaphat's making in this chapter, but a solution, not of Jehoshaphat's own strength, any more than it was of David's before him, as he faced Goliath.

It is not of his own strength, but it is not without his power, the Lord's power. Jehoshaphat faces this battle, not with his power, but with the Lord's power.

It is not his power, but it is still very much within his reach. Let us understand this. As we face a battle that is not ours, or not of our making, the battle is not yours, but God's.

You face it, not in your power, but with a power that is within your reach. Just as the power is not Jehoshaphat's, but it is within his reach.

David encouraged himself in the Lord. It was one of the lowest points of his life, as his old men were about to stone him. But what do we read? We read that as he encouraged himself in the Lord, he then turned to the Lord, and then he says to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech said, I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod.

[16:23] And Abiathar brought hither the ephod to David. And David inquired at the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? Shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue, for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all.

Now this may not have been what David wanted to hear. He might have wanted to hear, just sit tight, you know, have a rest, because you know, you're exhausted, and I'll send my armies of angels, and I'll bring back all your wives and children, and so on.

Just you sit there, and get your strength back. No. When he is exhausted, when he feels he has no more power, God says to him, I will deliver them into your hand.

You're going to get up. You're going to go on. And you're going to face this challenge. And you're going to face this fight, which is my fight, not yours, David. But you have to go and do it.

He answered him, Pursue, for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all. David encouraged himself in the Lord. And if we are going to believe in the Lord our God, as we are told here in this chapter, and as Jehoshaphat tells the people, if we are going to act on that faith that we claim to have, it will mean us going out into the unknown.

[17:40] It will mean us going forward when we don't feel strong enough to do that. But because we trust and believe what the Lord says, we will do it. We will go forward, even when we may feel exhausted.

The battle is not yours, but God's. The strength is not yours, but God's. The power is not yours, but it is power very much within your reach.

Because it is accessible when you go to the source of the power, when you go to the Lord. Now we mentioned earlier that theoretically David, if we go back these five generations, David could have walked away.

You know, he wasn't the king at that point. He wasn't part of the army. He could have gone back to his shepherd's tents, and he could have gone back to looking after the flock, and fighting off lions, and bears, and so on, and just being the youngest son of Jesse, and comparatively peaceful existence.

But supposing he had. And then Goliath and the Philistines wiped the floor with Saul and his army. And the Philistines saying, we win, you become our servants. So the Philistines rule over all of Israel.

[18:47] And David's quiet existence, since then, becomes not a peaceful shepherd boy working for his father. Then his father is replaced by a Philistine overlord. The Philistines take over the whole country.

He's now keeping the same flock, but he's keeping it for the Philistines. He's got no chance of fighting back. He's no chance now to be independent, or to be free, because he walked away. He walked away from the challenge when he could have first stopped to it. He was just a boy, just a teenager at the time. But if he had chosen to walk away, then the opportune moment, the key hinge in his history, a lot of the Lord's people, would have passed.

The moment would have passed. This was the moment the Lord had prepared, and David stepped up to it and changed the face of history because of it.

Jehoshaphat could not walk away in the way that David could. He was the king. He was the one on the throne of Jerusalem, and they were coming for him. They'd come up from the Dead Sea, up by the way of the sort of brute, the craggy kind of defile, up through the rocks, and they were coming up through the wilderness of Tekoa, that's to the south of Jerusalem, and as far as anybody knew, they were just going to advance steadily towards Jerusalem, picking up spoil as they went, and nobody had the strength to stop them.

[20 : 12] There was no army strong enough to stop them. Certainly there was no army between them and Jehoshaphat. He had to raise whatever troops he had. He had to go in such strength as he had, and it wasn't much.

His only strength was the Lord. He could not walk away. But the attack, the challenge, the problem was coming regardless. If he had sat tight in Jerusalem and said, right, just close the gates, put up the barricades, we'll fight them off here, they might have laid siege to Jerusalem, and they might have gone away after a while, but they would have devastated his kingdom round about, and everybody would have seen how weak and frightened he was, and they would have said, where is now your God?

Many a time you may feel you might want to just walk away because the problem of the attack, which is not of your making, seems too great, and out of nowhere, it's just come.

But if David had walked away, what then? The Philistines rule over the land, he starts keeping sheep for them. Instead, the opportunity to fight back in the tree, that's fast, because the Israelite army's been wiped out, Saul is dead, there's nobody left to fight.

He's got nobody to lead, because they have won, because he walked away. If Jehoshaphat had walked away, or simply thrown up the barricades, and unlocked the gates, and sat tight, trembling in Jerusalem, what then?

[21 : 46] They'd have devastated the land. They'd have seen his own weakness, and the apparent absence of his God. Look, however, never mind all these terrifying scenarios.

Let's just say, none of these bad things have happened. Look at what they would have missed out on. Even if nothing bad had happened to Israel, after David walked away, from the Goliath confrontation.

Even if nothing bad had happened to Judah, and Jehoshaphat had walked away, from this problem. Look at what they would have missed out on. David would never have been the champion, with the feet of Goliath.

He would never have risen up, to the top of the army, in Israel. He would never have become Saul's successor. He would never have been faithed, and adored by all the multitudes of Israel.

He would never have become the Lord's chosen vessel, to rule over and lead his people Israel. All of this, all of this glory, all of this opportunity, would have been passed up.

[22 : 53] All that the Lord had in store, for David's life, the golden age of Israel, would have simply been frittered away.

And look at what Jehoshaphat, would have missed there. As it is, because he goes on in the faith of the Lord, they don't even have to lift a sword, against their enemies. When they go forward, praising the Lord, what happens?

When they began, verse 22, when they began to sing, and to praise, the Lord said, ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, which were come against Judah, they were smitten.

For the children of Ammon and Moab, stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, utterly to stay and destroy them. And when they had made an end, of the inhabitants of Seir, everyone helped to destroy another. They all turned to each other.

They all slaughtered each other. They turned against one another, and they all killed each other. So that when Jehoshaphat arrives, at the battlefield, there's nothing for him to do, except gather up the spoil.

[23 : 51] He can't even say, look how strong I am. I won this battle. Look what fierce warriors we Israelites are. What a mighty king I am. If he was prepared to forego that glory of calling the battle, his battle, and his victory, and his glory, the Lord simply pours the riches and the spoil into his life.

That is all he has to do. The spoil is so great. They are three days gathering it. There's so much more than they can carry. But see how right he gets it.

See how right he calls it. Verse 46. On the fourth day, they assembled themselves in the Valley of Bereka. For there they blessed the Lord. Therefore, the name of the place was called the Valley of Bereka, which means blessing or benediction.

Unto this day. Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, Jehoshaphat in the forefront of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy. For the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies.

And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the Lord. They gave the credit when it was due. And because they gave the credit when it was due, and because they had put the faith when it was due, they had this victory, this glory, this enrichment, this enrichment, all of which would have been passed up if they had just walked away.

[25 : 24] Look at what they would each have missed. Look at what David would have missed out on. Look at what Jehoshaphat would have missed out on. These trials, these problems, these challenges that seem to be seeking you out, that seem to just want to come and get you, are not sent because the Lord doesn't love you, or because he has somehow forgotten about you.

It's not because he doesn't love you, but because he does love you, and would have you to face, and conquer, and triumph over them, these problems, these challenges, these battles that are not yours, but God's.

He would have you triumph. He would have you conquer. He would have you win. But if you are going to win, you have got to face the battle that is ahead, the battle you did not seek, the battle which you did not make.

It came to get you proof that the battle is not yours, but the Lord's. He doesn't bring this on you because he doesn't love you. He brings it on you because he does, and because he wants you to win.

He wants you to conquer. He wants you to triumph. He would have you to face, and conquer, and triumph over these challenges, these problems, these battles, in such a way as to glorify him.

[26 : 46] Not you, but to glorify him, and his name, and to enrich, and strengthen, and bless you. Look at the victories that lay ahead of David, and Jehoshaphat.

Look at the glory, the blessing, the enrichment, the advancement that came to them because they faced these battles in the faith, and in the strength of the Lord.

And the Lord glorified himself by bringing about a military result in each case, which seemed logically, and militarily impossible.

Remember what the angel said to Mary in the New Testament. With God, nothing shall be impossible. With God, all things are possible.

Without God, you're on your own. Who wants to be on their own when the battles come and find you? Who wants to be on their own when the troubles come and seek you out?

[27 : 48] You face them in the strength of the Lord. Believe in the Lord your God, and anything is possible. And the victory, and the glory, and the advancement, and the way ahead that the Lord desires to open up before you, he will do, but you must face the battle square on.

He will cause you to conquer, to have victory, to triumph over them in such a way as to glorify himself. But you and I, we get the blessings, we get the side benefits.

You know, all the spoil, all the riches that Jehoshaphat and his army picked up, these things are no use to God. God's in heaven. What does he want with trinkets and gold and silver and so on? But he uses them to bless his people.

He gives it to his people who love him and serve him. And here we have then this verse that we actually focus upon. Verse 20. They rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa.

And as they went forth, Jehoshaphat's students said, Hear me, O Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in the Lord your God. So shall ye be established.

[29 : 02] Believe his prophets. So shall ye prosper. Here's the first thing. They rose early in the morning. If you can't escape the problem that is coming, then get up and get on with it.

Get up and face it early. Get out the bed, throw off the covers and the slab of the spawn, and face it straight on. They rose early in the morning and went forth.

That's where they went. And they faced it head on. If you can't escape it, get up and go to it. And don't be afraid. Go to it in the Lord's strength.

Get up and face it. And face it right away. That's what you've got to do if you're going to go in the Lord's strength. They rose early in the morning and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa.

That is to the south of Jerusalem. It's where the defile that leads up from the mountain, the cliff of Ziz, that would bring the armies up from En-Gedi, which is about halfway down the western shore of the Dead Sea.

[30 : 07] People gathered there because there was water there, a spring there that people would refresh their armies with. Then they go up the narrow defile of the cliff, ways up into the plain, the wilderness of Tekoa, south of Jerusalem.

And that's where they would face them. A barren, desert-y sort of area. And this is where the Israelites had to go. They went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa. This is where they went.

And the journey ahead may look barren for them and perhaps for you. And it may look frightening. They went forth into the wilderness where the enemy was prophesied to be.

Verse 16. Tomorrow go ye down against them. Behold, they came up by the cliff of Ziz and ye shall find them at the end of the brook before the wilderness of Jehuam.

That's where the enemy is going to be. That's where the enemy is prophesied to be. It's barren. It's a wilderness and it's frightening. But that's where you've got to go and you've got to go early because that's where the enemy is prophesied to be.

[31 : 07] If you're going to beat them, you have to go where they are. You have to be where that problem, that challenge, that difficulty is going to be. They went into the wilderness. They rose up early in the morning and went forth into the wilderness of Decoah.

Don't be put off by how frightening or barren the journey ahead may look. The battle is not yours, the battle is God's. And then what Jehoshaphat said, Hear me, O Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Believe in the Lord your God. So shall ye be established. Now, Jehoshaphat, if anything, has more to lose than the rest of them. They might be scattered, every man to their homes if the enemy is successful.

He will be captured and probably executed and that's the end of his kingdom. He will be finished if he loses this battle. Most kings did not survive more than one military defeat.

So if they kept on staying on the throne, it meant that they kept on winning their battles. If he loses, he loses everything. They might live, he will almost certainly die.

[32 : 14] But he, with no times than them, puts his money where his mouth is and he has this faith going forward. Believe in the Lord your God.

They get up early, they go into the wilderness and he says, believe in the Lord your God. Now remember how we said about David. He strengthened himself in the Lord his God.

First of all, you've got this faith. Faith going forward. Belief. Faith is the substance of things going forward. The evidence of things not seeing. We walk by faith, not by sight.

If we are believing, if we are putting our faith in somebody or something, then we are by its very nature stepping up and stepping forward into that which we do not yet see to be the case.

That which we do not yet see to be the case. Now sometimes, of course, people will hold off from commitment to the Lord and they'll say, oh well, I'm not good enough or I would really like to be sure before I make this step of commitment.

[33 : 18] In other words, I want the proof before I put the faith into practice. Now if you do that, then of course you're wanting the proof, you're wanting the evidence. Where's the faith?

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not safe. How is it faith if you wait until you've got all the evidence and you know it's safe and then you tentatively put a toe in the water? No. You're going to act and walk by faith.

You go into what you can't see. You go into a situation you don't know if it's safe but you trust and you believe in the Lord your God. Faith is put into practice.

You don't wait until you get a bolt of lightning from heaven. You don't wait for Damascus road or until angels appear and see it's okay. You can't actually step out now. It's all right. God has made it totally safe for you.

Now he wants you to come and he calls you by name. He does call you by name. Who do you think gave you a name in the first place? Who do you think put it in the mind and the heart of your parents to give you the name that you have and every name means something.

[34 : 21] The invitation of the gospel goes out to every creature under heaven. You cannot say you are not called. You cannot say you are not invited. You cannot say the Lord does not seek you out.

He calls. He invites. He entreats. The Lord calls to needy sinners such as we are. Generations rise and pass away but the solution to the problem is the same in every generation.

It is for me and it is for you. You must respond with faith. Believe in the Lord your God. Second thing we notice is that it's believe in the Lord.

Now as we've said in the past the name the Lord in capitals is covering over the divine name.

Where that is the case in the text it would actually have the divine name Yehah or Jehovah as we tend to anglicize it.

This is the divine name regarded as so sacred that they put this sort of title over the top of it the Lord. Nevertheless it is a personal name that is concealed beneath it.

[35 : 26] The personal name of the living God. I am that I am. That's what it translates roughly into meaning. The Lord is his name. It is personal.

It is the Lord Jehovah. It is a person or we could say three persons in whom you are put in your trust. Not a concept not a philosophy not an ideology not a political party.

It is a person. An eternal person who remains the same even when the generations of men rise and pass away. Five generations on from King David this is still the God of David.

This is still the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob the living God of living souls. Believe in the Lord this personal named deity personal named saviour.

The Lord is his name God is his function God is his office sort of thing. You might say you know Nicholas Sturgeon the first minister Theresa May the prime minister the one is their name the other is their office.

[36 : 28] It is what they fulfill it is their function. God is the highest power in heaven or in earth and whether we do capital G and recognize the one living and true God or whether we were to say that our God is something else by definition God must be the highest power of all or else whatever is higher than him must be the real God.

You know if God is able to do x much but something else is able to do double x then that's twice as much power so that must be the real God so wherever the buck stops that is the ultimate source of power God is his office his fulfilment his potency the Lord is his name God is his function his office so we have so we have this named personal deity who has the greatest power in heaven and in earth and we are told to trust in him it's a bit of a no brainer isn't it we can either put our hope and our faith in ourselves we who rise and pass away in the blink of an eye or we can do it in the personal God who is unchanging Jesus Christ the same yesterday today and forever they leave in the Lord your God now don't forget this extra little bit this year your God David strengthened himself in the Lord his God same God here they leave in the Lord your God why is it personal to you it's not because you have ownership of God but rather it's it is your possession in the sense that your house or your family name or an inheritance is given to you given to you for your own

I don't know use enjoyment possession for a time you know most of us some of us will have built the house that we live in but most of us buy or move into or inherit a house that somebody else built and when we move on our relatives will sell it or they'll pass it on to somebody else and it becomes there inheritance they are not the house they are temporary they're passing through but the house will continue so likewise our possession our inheritance the Lord our God we don't own him he owns us and because he is our father because he is our saviour because he is the one who has redeemed and saved us we say that he is ours as the song of Solomon puts it my beloved is mine and I am his so even though it's he that owns us yet we can say we have a possession and inheritance in him he is your God you see there are many gods that people worship throughout the world the Hindus supposedly have a million gods the Muslims worship another god they call Allah various other people have different gods that they give different names to but your God the God of Abraham

Isaac and Jacob the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ you and I we are commanded to believe in the Lord personally you are ownership of you God his function his power his potency we are to have faith in him and to put this faith into action it's about going forward in faith going forward to the battle that we don't know what is going to happen in the end of course Jehoshaphat didn't

even have to lift the sword didn't have to lift the finger God had done it all but the faith is put into action and the praise begins verse 22 even before they know what the result is going to be even before they know how the armies are going to clash and what's going to be the outcome they praise God although as though it is a done deal as though it is already finished as though it is a faith accomplished they praise the Lord for what he has already done praise expressing faith in anticipation and we read that it's when they praised the Lord that God began to defeat their enemies not simply when they pleaded to him or they prayed to him but when they praised as though it were a done deal believe in the Lord your God in this final bit it says he also believe his prophets so shall ye prosper now we think oh that's a bit of a compliment believing the prophets believe in God that's one thing but believe the prophets that's sort of secondary isn't it the prophets are only ever pointing in one direction

John 1 verse 45 Philip findeth Nathanael and saith unto him we have found him of whom Moses and the law and the prophets did right Jesus of Nazareth the son of Joseph turn back a page Jesus himself speaks in Luke 24 verse 25 then said he said unto them oh fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory and beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them the things concerning in all the scriptures the things concerning himself the Acts of the Apostles chapter 3 verse 16 we read his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong this is the man healed in the beautiful gate whom ye see and know yea the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all and now brethren I want that through ignorance he did it that is the crucifying of the Lord as did also your rulers but those things which God before hath showed by the mouth of all his prophets that Christ should suffer he hath so fulfilled repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord believe the prophets what they have spoken and ye shall prosper where are the prophets pointing the prophets are pointing to Christ whatever the soundness that is restored to this man who is healed at the beautiful gate it is a soundness that can be given unto us not only in body but in spirit and soul believe in the Lord your God believe in what the prophets have spoken and where they are pointing they are pointing to Christ how many generations have risen and passed away between Jehoshaphat and Jesus between Jesus and us it doesn't matter because at the end of the day you will face the same kinds of problems the same kinds of challenges the same nature of them because you didn't seek them out but the solution will likewise be the same not of your making not of your power but within your reach believe in what the prophets have said believe in the Christ to whom they are appointed believe in the Lord your God let us pray