

The Valley of Blessing (Berachah)

by Keith Malcomson

This sermon is about the importance of surrendering to God in the midst of overwhelming opposition and challenges. It emphasizes the need to prove that God is the God of our valleys, not just the mountaintops, by seeking Him in times of darkness and uncertainty. The message highlights the significance of believing in the Lord, trusting His prophets, seeking His guidance, and worshiping Him in humility and submission, leading to a God-given victory and a valley of blessing.

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 20:15, Luke 17:15, James 4:10, Psalm 95:6, 1 Peter 5:6

Topics: "Surrender", "Trusting God in Adversity"

Description

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Transcript

I want you to go in your Bibles to 2 Chronicles chapter 20 here this morning. 2 Chronicles chapter 20 and we are part nine of this series of the God of the Valleys. We have looked now at several significant valleys in the Bible and we see that God is indeed the God of the valleys, not just of the mountains.

We know that God is the God of the mountaintops. We know that. Extraordinary, miraculous, supernatural interventions of God.

We know that God is there, but what about the valleys where you cannot see, where it can be dark, where enemies gather? Have you proved that God is your God in the valley? Because anyone can prove that God is the God of the mountaintop when everything's going good and God is answering all the prayers and everything is happening. But can you prove, have you proved that your God is the God of your valleys? At your worst point, your lowest point, your most dire point, when you're all alone, isolated, is your God still alive at that point? And that's what we have dealt with in these. I hope you've seen something about these valleys that you'll never look at a valley quite the same again after these weeks.

2 Chronicles chapter 20. I want to simply read one verse here this morning and then I want to do something that I normally do not do. I usually pray, but I want to read a prayer and I never do that.

You know that I never read a prayer, but I want to read a biblical prayer. I want to read the prayer in this chapter. We're going to bow our heads and I'm going to read this prayer as my prayer for this meeting this morning.

But first of all, let's read this one verse. 2 Chronicles chapter 20, verse 26. And this is my message this morning.

Two weeks ago, we dealt with the valley of weeping. Last week, the valley of trouble. This week, my message is different.

The valley of blessing. 2 Chronicles chapter 20, verse 26. And when Jehoshaphat and the people, sorry, that's the wrong scripture.

Verse 26. And on the fourth day, they assembled themselves together in the valley of Berekeh. For there they blessed the Lord.

Therefore, the name of the same place was called the valley of Berekeh on to this day. Let's pray. O Lord God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? And rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? And in thine hand is there not power and might so that none is able to withstand thee? Art not thou our God who does drive out the inhabitants of the land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend forever? And they dwell therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying, If when evil cometh upon us as a sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, for thy name is in this house, and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou will hear and help.

And now behold the children of Ammon, and Moab, and Mount Seir, who now wouldst not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and destroyed them not. Behold, I say, how they reward us to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou has given us to inherit. O our God, wilt thou not judge them? For we have no might against this great company that cometh against us.

Neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee. Amen. I'm going to preach here this morning, in part nine of this series, the valley of blessing.

The valley of blessing. Here in verse 26, we read about this valley called the valley of Berekeh, Berekeh, or the valley of blessing. It was actually after a set of events that God's people changed the name of this valley, or named this valley the valley of blessing, because it was right there that they blessed God.

This was not a valley in which they're asking to be blessed. This is not a valley in which they were merely blessed by God, although they were. That is not what is notable about this valley.

This valley gained a name, and remember what a valley is. It is a low place. It is a dangerous place.

It is a place of real enemies. And yet, this place was named the valley of blessing. Why? Because it was right there that they blessed God.

They gathered together. I mean, everyone in the people of God gathered together, and it was right there that they so blessed God that they renamed the entire name of the valley. Now, what does this word, to bless, mean? This word is used some 330 times in the Old Testament, to bless.

And 302 of those times, it is translated by the word bless. It's the Hebrew word barak, and it's usually interpreted blessed. But this is what it means, to kneel down, to bless God as an act of adoration.

You are blessing God. You open up your mouth. You begin to praise him and bless him and worship him and adore him.

You are vocal in your adoration. But built into it two or three times, I think it is, this word barak is actually used for kneeling down. So part of this is that you kneel down.

You bow the knee. Isn't it a tragedy that so many bowed the knee two years ago? What an agenda. But I'm telling you, we are caught up in something here.

I want to bow the knee and to bless our God. This is truly bowing the knee. This is truly taking the knee, that we would bow and bless the Lord Jesus Christ.

You see, this was an entire valley filled with the people of God, and they are bowing the knee to the Lord Jesus or to the Lord God Almighty. They are blessing him. You actually can't bless God unless you bow the knee.

And you know what it means to actually bless God or to bow the knee? It means to be in submission, to be in obedience, or to acknowledge God in all of his fullness, his rights over your life, his authority over your life, his power and sovereignty in the world. And so to truly bless God, you're in a place of submission. Do you know you cannot bless God if you're not submitted to God? He's not interested in mere words or nice songs or good singing or good worship.

He's not interested in that. He's looking for an individual who really blesses him. Where your heart is utterly submitted, then you can bless God.

Not everyone blesses God. You ever have anyone around you, they don't necessarily bless you. They really don't bless you.

They're a burden to you. They're a curse to you. They're an annoyance to you.

But when someone blesses you, they delight you. They encourage you. They adore you.

Can you imagine God's people? We are meant to be a people who adore God. We worship God. We magnify God.

You know here this morning in this service, I don't care how well you sing. I don't care how pristine our worship is. We try our best.

We don't always manage the note. I don't always. But I want to tell you, what does matter is the heart.

That is the essential thing. That is the essential thing. We are experts in worship in this generation, but we are not experts in blessing God.

Because to bless God, you've got to bow the knee. You've got to be in utter submission. And so we have here in 2 Chronicles 20, we have a valley, a low valley, a large valley, a valley that has a wilderness either end of it.

And you know what? All of God's people gather deliberately in that valley. They choose to gather in this valley to bless God. It's not about them.

This valley has everything to do with blessing God. We live in a generation of bless me, give to me. If I don't get a good feel factor out of church, I'm not coming.

I come here to get, to receive, to be ministered onto. And yet, you know what? The gospel turns up radically around. The real gospel makes you someone who says, it's not about me.

It's about blessing God. It's not about me getting blessings. It's about me wanting to give.

What can I do in serving you, God? I want to be submitted. I want to yield to you. I want to give to you.

They deliberately go to this valley to bless God. I've got about six points here. I might add a few as I go along.

But I've certainly got six. Listen, let me take you into this. And I'm going to take you to the pathway to this valley.

How God's people get there. What is it about this? What made this people to go to a valley where they were selfless? They weren't considerate of themselves and everything was about God. And they went to a low place, an isolated place, a wilderness place, a dangerous place.

And when they went there, all that was their focus was we go there deliberately as an act to bless God. What would motivate a people to do that? To go to a low, isolated, dark, hard place and say, we're going there deliberately. It's planned.

And we're going there to bless God, to magnify him, to exalt him. Listen here to these six points. Number one, overwhelming opposition.

I want to take you on the steps that take you to the valley of blessing. And number one on this, if you want to go to the valley of blessing, do you want to get to a place where in the valley, all you do, you're consumed with blessing God, living for God, worshipping God, submitting to God. You're consumed with this.

I mean an entire people, not an individual, the entire church, the entire gathering of God's people. They are united in this. How do you get there? Well, this is number one, overwhelming opposition.

Without overwhelming opposition, you'll probably never get to the valley of blessing. Look at verse one here with me. It says, it came to pass after this also that the children of Moab and the children of Ammon, and with them other besides the Ammonites came against Jehoshaphat to battle.

This is King Jehoshaphat. There are 10 tribes in the north. That's called Israel.

There are two tribes in the south. That's called Judah with their capital in Jerusalem. And the king in this small southern region is called King Jehoshaphat, a remarkable man of God.

But a man who made mistakes along the way, a man who took wrong directions at times, but he's in the right place at this time, I want to tell you. And so here is King Jehoshaphat. And it came to pass that all of these enemies began to gather.

Moab, Ammon, and the children of Mount Seir all gathered together to do battle against Jehoshaphat. They're coming to Jerusalem. You see, there's my point here.

Overwhelming opposition. You want to get to the valley of blessing. You want to be in that place where you're consumed with magnifying and worshiping the Lord.

I want to tell you the first way to get there is overwhelming opposition. You want to be a selfless Christian who adores God, who really lives for God. Then it's going to mean overwhelming opposition.

Are you still on board in this journey to this valley of blessing here this morning? You see, Jehoshaphat is going to be known as a king who leads the entire children of Israel, all of Judah into this valley of blessing. But you know what? He didn't get there easily. He is driven there.

He doesn't know he's going there at this point. There's overwhelming opposition, but these enemies are going to force him into a valley to bless God. You see, you can see your enemies as enemies.

What good can come out of enemies? I want to tell you, they can start you on a journey where you're going to be driven to a place of blessing the Lord in a valley. And so we see here, who are these enemies? The people of Moab and the people of Ammon come up as entire peoples to attack Judah. Do you know who Moab and Ammon were? They were the children of Lot by his own daughters.

Do you remember who Lot is? That's the nephew of Abraham, the friend of God. Lot is the one with his wife and two daughters who gets dragged out of Sodom and Gomorrah before judgment falls by two angels. Two angels are sent to drag them.

Righteous Lot, he's so righteous he can't die in Sodom and Gomorrah. Two angels drag him out when he lingers because they don't want to leave. They don't want to leave Sodom, a wicked city filled with iniquity.

But he is a righteous man. He's not a drinker. He's not a moral.

He's not a homosexual. He actually rebukes the sin. But you know what? He's saved as by fire.

He is barely saved. That's who Lot is. Angels have to drag him out.

You know what Lot was? He lived far too close to this world. And you know what Christians do? There's far too many live far too close to this world. I want to tell you, it'll cost your children.

It'll cost the life of your wife. That's what living close to the world does. You say it doesn't matter.

Oh, I love Jesus. I'm righteous. I'm born again.

Doesn't matter the decisions or where I live or what I do. It could cost you your entire family. It is such a serious thing.

We know that Lot fled. His wife is turned to a pillar of salt because she looks back at Sodom. You know why she had her house there? It's not the homosexuality she's interested in.

She had her home, her possessions, her friends, all those natural carnal things. It was her life. All that money.

That's where she lived. And she looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt. You better be careful about being rooted in this world.

And so they fled. And Lot with his two daughters escaped to a mountain. I want you to notice that here this morning.

These enemies of Moab and Ammon, you know where they had their beginning? In a mountaintop experience. So Lot flees for safety to the mountain. It's safe to go to the mountain.

I don't want to stay in the valley. That's dangerous. Sodom's in a valley.

I don't want to go there. So let's go to the mountain. And they found a cave.

You know what his two daughters done? They made him drunk, slept with him, and he had two children. One called Moab, one called Ammon, who in later generations grew to be two entire people on the outside of the land of inheritance. This is the two armies that are marching against Jehoshaphat.

This is where they had the beginning. What does Moab and Ammon represent? Do you know they're related to Abraham, the friend of God? Do you realize they're related blood relatives to God's people? That's who they are. But Moab and Ammon, although they have Abrahamic blood flowing in their veins, look at them.

They're those who live close to this world. Do you know what else? Lot slept with his two daughters. Do you know what it represents? Those churches, preachers, leaders, Christians who don't evangelize.

They're incestuous. They never evangelize out into this world. So Moab and Ammon are a religious people, very close to the land of promise, very spiritual in their heritage and background.

They are descended from this family of Abraham through Lot. But do you know what? They have their origin in the mountaintop experiences. You know what I believe they represent? Movements in today's church, actual entire worldwide movements.

And you know what? They're on the march against God's people, the Moabites, the Ammonites, relatives of the real church of God. But they're incestuous, worldly, carnal, and they're on the march against the real church of God. You know who else is here? You see in verse 22, it's the children of Mount Seir.

Again, you've got mountains. Who are these children of Mount Seir? They're actually the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob. Again, blood relatives.

A brother of Esau gave birth to these children who now inhabit an entire mountainous region called Mount Seir, just outside the land of promise. It's an entire barrier against the land of promise. They are also marching.

Remember Esau, he sold his birthright for a bowl of porridge. He was carnal. Oh, Jacob had his problems, I want to tell you, as a conniver.

But he was spiritually minded. You know, Esau would sell what is spiritual. But again, he's in this Abrahamic line.

It's remarkable that now you have Moab, Ammon, Mount Seir, all these with their mountaintop experiences. You see, I believe there's a church movement in our world. There's a wide movement in today's church, and they come from mountaintop experiences.

They love dwelling in the mountain. They don't believe in the valleys. They don't want to stay in the valleys.

You see, I'm not talking about giants here. I'm not talking about Philistines here, am I? I'm now talking about movements that are very close to the real, and yet they're utterly different than us. They are dominated by mountaintop experiences, but they're worldly.

They're carnal. They're fleshly. They're of this world.

And you know what? They're on the march. They're organized. They're strategic.

They're making a movement. These enemies are related and all connected to mountains. They see no blessing in the valleys, and they cannot bless God in the valleys.

They don't want to. The valley is a means to an end for them. And you know what? In this chapter, they come marching up this valley.

This valley that's later called blessing, that has no name in this chapter, they use that valley. But you know what? They don't get anything out of it. They use it as a means to an end, as a means to advance themselves, as a means to get to where they want to go.

They are actually approaching Jerusalem through this valley. They use this valley to disguise themselves, hide themselves, and to approach unto Jehoshaphat and to his people. It says in verse 2, Then there came out some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee.

There's a great multitude of this carnality Christianity today. You know what? They are marching against the real church in great numbers, vast multitudes from all sides, all different kinds of movements, and they're all on the march. Against you, from beyond the sea, on this side of Syria, and behold, they be in Hazan-Tumar, which is in Gedi.

Now I want you to notice that. As soon as Jehoshaphat first hears about them, the news he hears is they're in Gedi. That's about 50 miles from Jerusalem.

That means they're very close, one or two days max away from Jerusalem. They're in Gedi. Do you know what in Gedi was? It was on the left side of the Dead Sea, inside the land, and Gedi is right on the Dead Sea.

It's an oasis, and it's the largest one along the Dead Sea. It's filled with palm trees, and vineyards, and beautiful waterfalls. Look it up for yourself.

It's a beautiful place. It is a remarkable place. It's like a holiday resort, and here are these enemies.

Here they are in Gedi. Do you know what the name in Gedi means? There's a direct translation, founting of a kid or a baby goat. These are goats, and they're in a holiday paradise.

They're mountaintop believers, and they're on the march. They are carnal. They are worldly.

They are numerous beyond imagination, and you know what it says in verse 3, and Jehoshaphat feared. Wouldn't you? You see, this man was wise. He is a godly man.

Do you know two chapters before, he failed God in a similar situation. He compromised, joined himself with people he never should have, but he made it right, and in the chapter before, he puts God's order back in the nation, puts spiritual order back in, brings the people back to God again, begins to teach the word of God, and it's right at this point the enemy begins to march. Overwhelming opposition.

You may be in fear this morning going, how are we going to stand? We're only a small remnant. How do we stand against these mass movements of carnality in worship, in preaching, in megachurches, in television, on the internet? How do you stand against it? And it says, Jehoshaphat, he feared. What are you going to do with your fear this morning? See, that's the secret.

It's good to fear. It's natural to fear. It's normal to fear, but then what are you going to do? Number two, a call to prayer.

What would you do under that situation? What are you doing? Because I want to tell you, they're marching for your children. They're marching for your neighbours, your family, those around you, our young people, our older people. There is a movement.

What are you going to do? You know what Jehoshaphat done? He called them to prayer. Look at verse three, and Jehoshaphat feared, and he set himself to seek the Lord. It began with him in his own heart.

This was Jehoshaphat's answer. What are you going to do? Train your army? Call the soldiers out? Begin to send your fighting men out? Lead your best generals out onto the battlefield? Get your sword out? Absolutely not. The first thing Jehoshaphat done was to set himself to seek the Lord.

That's a very real thing. Can I tell you this morning, it's time for you as a church to set your heart, to set yourself to seek the Lord. You see, if you don't set your heart, you don't seek God.

Prayer becomes a casual thing. You let go of prayer. You have no set time.

You have no set order. You lose all of your time. You walk in circles.

You go through a day and you haven't prayed. You go through two days. A week, you have no regular order.

If you don't set yourself to seek the Lord, I mean, if you don't get away from everyone, into a room, into a cupboard, under the stairs, or like Susanna Wesley done, oh, but you don't understand, Brother Keith, all my children. What did she do? She threw her big, large dress over her head and said, don't you dare disturb me when this dress is over my head. Woe betide the child that disturbed Susanna Wesley in her prayer time.

See, we've got all excuses. You don't understand. Oh yes, I understand very well.

You've got to set your heart. You've got to choose a time. You've got to turn off the phone.

You've got to stop looking at Facebook. You've got to shut the door. You've got to say for the next 30 minutes, I'm seeking the Lord.

For the next hour, I'm seeking the Lord. After two minutes, you look at your watch, throw your watch out the door as well. We always say in school of Christ, I challenged them in Germany.

First morning, I said, some of you are addicted to your watch or the time in your mobile phone or whatever. I said, it's going to kill you. It'll be worse than a drug addict or alcoholic.

Just put time. I challenge you, don't once in the first hour of prayer tomorrow morning, I said, don't look at your watch once. You don't need to.

You're here all day. You're here. Do you realize that that's like an addiction? Not to look at the watch.

You don't need a new time. Just throw it away for a time. You know here, he set himself to seek the Lord and he proclaimed to fast throughout all of Judah.

This was the first time in our Bible, a general call to fasting is actually given in our Bible. And it was this man Jehoshaphat. He had set himself to seek the Lord.

I'm going to seek the Lord. And he calls the nation to fast. The New Testament calls us to pray and to fast.

Jesus said, there's some things aren't going to happen. Some demons aren't going to be broken unless you add fasting to prayer. You know, all the new versions of the Bible remove the word fasting or in the margin, they put a question.

This isn't in the original, the oldest manuscripts. You actually can't teach the doctrine of fasting from any one of the new versions of the Bible. That's quite a challenge.

That's why in England, some of the movements, they actually say fasting's Old Testament. It's not for the New Testament church. Entire movements.

One of the biggest church planting movements in England, the leaders actually teach that because of the translation that they actually use. I'm telling you something is going on in our generation. And it says, and Judah gathered themselves together.

Thank God God's people responded to ask help of the Lord. They're praying, they're fasting. The leadership has set their heart.

Prayer is a violent thing. Unless you mean business, you'll never pray. I want to tell you, you've got to get violent.

The violent take the kingdom by storm. You've got to get violent, not violent with God, not violent with people around you. You're getting violent against things that hinder you from praying and seeking the face of God.

Why would they pray and fasting to seek help of the Lord? Do you know there's a place of utter weakness? The armies are against us. Compromise Christianity is everywhere in this hour. How are you going to get the victory? You've got to go to prayer and fasting.

Compromise is in this church. Compromise is in your home. I don't need to be a prophet.

You know, that is natural to all of us. You need to get back to fasting and praying. When's the last time you called a fast for yourself? When's the last time you set yourself to seek the Lord? When's the last time you

determinedly said, I'm going to pray through and touch the Lord? Well, they've done it as an entire people.

You know what? They got so desperate. They said, we need the help of the Lord to seek the Lord. Fasting is a means to seek the Lord.

Setting your heart helps you to seek the Lord. Again, it says, previous this about Jehoshaphat in the previous chapter, chapter 19, verse three, concerning this man, this king. It says, one of the good things found in him that God found in him, that he had prepared his heart to seek God.

That's the sort of man he was. Jehoshaphat was a man who sought the Lord. I'm telling you how to get to the valley of blessing.

Overwhelming opposition. Second of all, a call to prayer, to fast, to seek the Lord. This prayer that we read out this morning is a remarkable prayer, a dynamic prayer.

We cry unto you in our affliction. You are our God. We seek for your help.

Listen to this part of the prayer in verse 11. Behold, I say, how they reward us to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou has given to us. Verse 12, for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us.

Neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon you. This is real prayer. I've got no strength.

I need the help of God. I don't know what to do, but my eyes are on you. I'm seeking you in prayer and fasting.

Do you realize that's the sort of person God helps? You want to draw the attention of God to you, then call a prayer. Third of all, a prophetic voice and guidance. It says there in verse 14, then upon Jehazaiel, the son of Zechariah.

Now we'll go through all of his family. All of the family are mentioned there. His genealogy.

Do you know genealogy is important? Why does it give all his family members? I want to know what preacher you've been listening to. I want to know where you are birthed. I want to know what teaching you sat under.

Oh, that doesn't matter. Yes, it does. Who gave birth to you? Who molded your views on the atonement on the cross and holiness? Is it heretics? Is it user friendly preachers in a mega church? You know, one of those top mega church pastors in America always seem to come from America, don't they? There's one of them just two weeks ago, I turned him on, caught a bit of it.

One of the top in America right now today. Famous, revered, respected. Do you know what he said? He said, no, I grew up, I used to teach that it ought to be in this order.

First God, then family, then ministry. He says, you know what? I got it wrong. You put your wife first.

That's what that great mega preacher Bible teacher said. I went, man, you're heading for disaster. To actually teach a mega preacher, influential, born again, influencing Christians all around the world.

And yet he says, actually, no, I've got new revelation. You put your wife first. You're a blasphemer.

You're a liar. You don't even know your Bible. What a dangerous thing.

Do you know here? Anyway, genealogy. You've got the genealogy of this man, Jehazazel. You know what it says here in verse 14? Right in the midst of all this seeking of God, God's people are seeking him in this overwhelming opposition.

And it says, then came the spirit of the Lord upon him in the midst of the congregation. This man isn't mentioned anywhere else. We don't know who he is.

We know who influenced him or gave birth to him. We know his own family, but he's a nobody in the house of God. You know what happened? The spirit of God came on him and he began to prophesy.

We don't know if this man was a prophet before, but he is a prophet here. Listen to what his name means in the Hebrew. Beheld of God, or God gazes and keeps his eye upon him.

What a man. We don't know anything else about him apart from what we read in this chapter, but God's eye was upon him. He drew God's attention.

And you know what? God's spirit came upon him. I'm tired of all the false prophecy in the church. We need real Holy Ghost prophecy again.

We need a thus saith the Lord again. We need prophets in the church again. But you know what? We need the spirit of God to come back on men who are going to speak by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This man prophesies. And you know what? He gives exact detail. The prophecy was not according to the will of man or the mind of man.

It was the spirit of God speaking. He gives strong encouragement, clear direction, accurate timing. That's prophecy.

I believe in prophecy. I believe in the gifted ministry of a prophet. I believe it's for today.

The gifts were never removed from the church, but we need the real Holy Spirit. The church is filled with prophecy and prophets and it's false. It's a laughing stock.

It's a mockery. It's ridiculous, but real prophecy isn't. But if we get back to prayer and fasting and seeking God again, you're going to find the spirit of God come in individuals that you never expected.

People who never prophesied before, people who never had a supernatural encounter, people who never had a revelation from God are going to have it in the house of God. And they'll stand up and begin to prophesy accurately. Who was he? He's a nobody.

Do you think Jehoshaziel can actually know how to defeat the enemy? Do you think he knows what the enemy is going to do and where the enemy is going to be? Utterly impossible. The spirit of God revealed that. Do you realize you can't know the future? The Holy Spirit does.

And the gifts of the Holy Spirit can come in this church. It seems to God we ought to pray for it and believe for it. I still believe in dreams and visions and prophecy.

And it's going to continue like Peter preached until the great blackout, the cosmic blackout at the end of age. It hasn't happened yet. The gifts are still here.

Even with all the foolish, I still believe in the real. Never give up on the real. And so we see from verse 15 to 17, two verses, three verses, he begins to prophesy.

Listen to what he says. Thus saith the Lord unto you. Speaking to the king, this nobody, this nobody in the house of God.

God's spirit gave him authority. Thus saith the Lord. And he begins to prophesy to the king and to the people.

Be not afraid nor dismayed. Encouragement by reason of this great multitude. There's real truth and there's a multitude of enemies you've got against you.

For the battle is not yours, but God's. The battle is not yours. This overwhelming battle.

You know what? You're not going to have to fight against it. God is prophesying here saying the battle is not going to be yours. God is doing something here and he himself is going to fight in this battle.

Then he goes further. Tomorrow. Now he's giving clear instruction.

Tomorrow, go you down against them. Oh, they're coming to attack you. You're scared.

I'm telling you tomorrow morning, get up early and you go against the enemy. I'm in charge. This boy better have the real Holy Spirit.

This better be a real prophecy or they're in serious trouble. I want to see again the real gifts of the Holy Spirit and the church that gives clear information. I'm tired of the shout.

Oh, the Lord's going to bless you. The Lord's going to use you. Man, it could be for everyone and anyone.

There's no accuracy anymore. And listen, he actually goes on to prophesy where the enemy is coming their entire route. Behold, they come up by the cliff.

That's straight up from in Getty and you shall find them. Notice this carefully at the end of the brook. Remember the word brook is the word for Valley.

Do you know where you're going to find them at the end of the valley? The Holy Spirit is telling you where you're going to find the entire enemy. I want you to go down and I'm telling you the route they're taking, where are you going to find them at the end of the valley? They're going to come in through that valley. It says before the wilderness of Jewel.

He shall not need to fight in this battle. Set yourselves, just set yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord with you. Judah and Jerusalem fear not nor be dismayed tomorrow.

Go up against them for the Lord will be with you. Number four, spirit led strategy. You're marching down towards this valley, the valley of no name with a remarkable enemy.

And right at the end of that valley, you're marching down to that valley. Go down to the valley tomorrow. You're not going to have to fight.

Can you imagine your small army marching them against this great large army and you're relying on an unknown prophet, untested prophet who said, God's going to fight for you. You won't even have to lift your

sword. Just march down to the valley.

Are you sure? Will you check that man's genealogy? Will you check his history? Will you check his character? Why do we listen to pastors, preachers, and prophets who have no character? They can't even be faithful to their wives. Their homes not in order, their children aren't in order, but we're going to stake the future of the church on them. Disaster.

Worship leaders who, they divorce their wife and they marry, they're floozy, and two years later, they're back leading the worship all over the church. Revivalists who can, in the midst of revival, go be drinking and marry their secretary, sleep with their secretary. You call that revival? You've been fooled.

That's a false revival. That's false worship. You think God accepts that worship? Not a chance.

Fourth, spirit-led strategy. Let me say a word. I'm allergic to the word strategy.

I hate it in the church. I grew up in decades of this. What's your strategy for evangelism? What's your strategy in the church? And all the strategy's the same.

One man gets a strategy in America, it goes to Hong Kong, it goes to Britain, goes to Ireland. Everybody strategizes. They all copy it.

Let me give you another word. Networking. Let's network.

Where do you get that in the Bible? I hate the word network. I hate the word strategy, but it's one of my points. I've never used the word strategy, I think, in all these years, but I'm using it in this fourth point.

And listen how I use it. Spirit-led strategy. See, I believe in strategy, but you know what? It's spontaneous.

It's not copied off Jimmy June's or prophet nobody. Look at verse 18 here, what it says. And Jehoshaphat bowed his head.

I'm talking about strategy. What did Jehoshaphat do? He bowed his head with his face to the ground. I like this strategy.

And all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshiping the Lord. What's worship? Is it music? No. The Bible never teaches the word worship means music.

It doesn't mean music. We think worship is a feeling, a sound, a feel, lighting, a sensation, feeling the anointing. The Bible doesn't say that.

Look at them. They're in a valley with enemies and they're falling on their face and they're worshiping God. Remember Job when he lost his 10 children.

What did he do? Fell on his face and worshiped. No music, no lights, nothing. That's worship.

What does the word worship mean in the Bible? It means to prostrate yourself on your face. That is the biblical definition. Everyone in the Bible who worship and where the word worship is used, they were in a crisis.

Their emotions, their mind were in a mess, but they worship the Lord. They're submitted to him. See, I believe in this spirit led strategy.

What's your strategy? Well, fall on my face and worship the Lord. Call a prayer meeting and let's fast and cry out, help me God. I love that sort of strategy.

That is real strategy. In verse 19, straight after this then, it says, and the Levites, the children of the Koahites and the children of the Korah stood up and began to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice and high. I believe in lying on your face and worshiping God, but I also believe in standing up and praising God and singing aloud and shouting aloud.

Noise doesn't scare me. I want to tell you, look what's happened here. This was the strategy.

They're right in the face of the enemy. You know what? They're going to be taken step by step to the valley of blessing. It's going to get very scary.

You didn't want to come here. You didn't think you're coming here. You're being driven to a valley and you are going to make that valley, a valley of blessing where you are going to bless God himself.

Then we read Jehoshaphat gets up and gives them an exhortation, 27 word exhortation, three lines. In the midst of this worship and praise, this lying on their face and this standing and shouting, he stands up and speaks to the entire people and he gives them three strategies. It was inspired of God.

It came out of worship, out of prayer, out of fasting, out of submission. That's where you get your strategy. Not off the internet, not from the mega church, not from the latest bestseller Christian book.

If you buy the latest bestseller Christian book, you're wasting your money. You're so foolish. They're rubbish.

That's right. The Blood Moons, remember that a few years ago? Oh, Rabbi so-and-so wrote it on the revelation of the Blood Moons. Number one bestseller for years and all the programs sold his messages.

He's still going today, by the way. It's just these 10 more down the road. And now he's got a new book and everyone goes and follows it.

That is not spirit led strategy. We all follow those things and then throw it in the bin a bit down the road. Listen to what Jehoshaphat done.

Number one, believe in the Lord your God and you shall be established. We're right here in this valley. If you're going to make it a valley of blessing, believe in the Lord.

That means to be faithful to him, to trust him and he will establish you. He's going to build you up. He'll support you.

He'll make you permanent in the face of your enemies. Overwhelming enemies. I'm trying to compromise Christianity.

I'll establish you. But believe in the Lord. Second of all, believe his prophets.

So shall ye prosper. Believe his prophets. Trust.

You can't trust most prophets today. Look at their character. Look at their track record.

Listen to them for five minutes and if you have any sense or discernment, you're going to switch them off. They might be looking to make a profit, but they're not prophets. They call themselves prophets.

But if you can find a real prophet, a real, so saith the Lord. I have heard from God. God has spoken to me.

God has told me look at the information. You're not going to have to fight in this battle. You will prosper.

That means to push forward, to break out, to become profitable. If you really hear the word of a true prophet, if you can hear God's word, I'm going to tell you, see true biblical preaching is prophetic preaching. It has to be.

The spirit of God comes, reveals the hearts, gives clear information, deals accurately. I want to tell you, the mantle of a prophet isn't what most people think it is. It really isn't.

And then he says, when he had consulted with the people, that means to deliberate or take advice. Right in the midst of this, what do you think? What about this? You know what else he'd done? He appointed singers. Yeah, I'd definitely deliberate over that.

Brother Suf, do you think she should sing? Do you think he should get a mic? Uh-uh. You deliberate, you consult. He appointed singers unto the Lord.

Oh, I didn't mean the quality of their singing. Is that what you thought I meant? Oh, do they have a beautiful voice? I never said that. Where are they on a Saturday night? Are they in the prayer meeting? They walk right.

That's what I mean. They'll qualify you as a singer. Not the quality of your voice.

Do you see how we've got things so back to front in the house of God? And so it says, he appointed singers unto the Lord and that they should praise the beauty of his holiness. That's real praise. As they went out before the army, it wasn't the soldiers.

It was these singers going out before the army to say, praise the Lord for his mercy endureth forever. This is how they advanced through this valley. They're gonna meet in the valley.

Number five, God-given victory. And when they began to sing and appraise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon and Moab on Mount Seir, which would come out against Judah and they were smitten. I believe God sent his angels and confused them all.

You know what happened? Ammon and Moab rose up against Mount Seir and slew them all. Then after Mount Seir is all slew, then Ammon turns against Moab and they all turn against each other. You know what God had done? God had sent his angels to confuse them.

Jehoshaphat didn't need to draw a sword. Not one of them were fighting in the battle. Do you see this entire war was won in this valley? They are walking according to a spirit-led strategy that brings them to a God-given victory.

You can't break God's ways and think you're gonna get great victories in the church. It is utterly, utterly impossible. You know when Jehoshaphat and Judah got down there, it says they went down, everyone was dead.

The entire army had killed each other. They're all slain. There is no army.

They turned on each other and they spent the next three days gathering all the jewels, all the treasures, all the riches, all the gold. They said they couldn't even carry all of the spoils of the war. Three days they spent doing that.

It was remarkable. This is a God-given victory. Do you remember many years ago when I was 21 in the army in Germany? An American missionary said to me, he said, Brother Keith, I believe God wants you to be in our team to go to Romania to go and evangelize.

Communism had fallen. The Berlin Wall had come down. Things were open.

Romania was only opening up to the gospel. I was 21 years old and I believe God wanted me there. I said it's impossible.

My regiment is in South America. I can't leave the camp. You're not allowed to.

You're not given any holiday. You're not allowed to leave the camp. The missionary said, I believe you're going to be there.

He said, promise me you're going to pray and fast. I said I will, but I knew it's impossible. So I'm praying and fasting and I become convinced I'm going to be there.

I'm going to go to Romania on this trip, but it's impossible. But I prayed, I fast. I went into my staff sergeant.

I said, staff, I booked my ticket to Romania. I need to go with my church. And I stood there and waited for his response.

It was blank. Then he said, okay. I was the only soldier to leave that camp while the rest were in South America for six months.

I went there, but do you know the time leading into it? I'm trying to fast. I'm trying to pray. This is going to be one of the biggest events of my life.

To go there, we're going in the streets, churches. The people have been under communism. I'm trying to pray and I couldn't get through.

I'm a man of fasting and prayer by 21. I believe in fasting and praying. I go alone and seek the Lord, but I couldn't pray or fast.

I got trouble. You know what God done? He brought me to this chapter. 2 Chronicles 20.

He brought me right here. Do you know the scriptures he gave me? He spoke to me clearly. He said, be not afraid nor dismayed for the battle is not yours, but God's.

You shall not need to fight in this battle. This was a word that came as a word from the Lord. And he said, stand still, set yourself and see the salvation of the Lord.

And some of you know the story. I went there. The first time we stood in the streets of Romania, everyone was shopping.

The German preacher, he stood up. We're all behind him, the teams together. And he begins to preach, stands up and says, if anyone wants to know the Lord, just step forward and we'll pray with you.

300 plus people all stand forward. He turned around and says, they didn't understand because this doesn't happen in the West, does it? 300 people with their shopping on the high street in the morning wanting to get born again. It doesn't happen.

He said, they don't understand they're religious. They don't understand. So he turned around, preached repentance and against sin and against religion and a real change of life.

And then said, who wants to know this Christ and turn from their sinful ways and from your dead religion? They all stepped forward again. He turned around. He said, well, let's begin praying with them.

But I'm going with my Northern Irish mind. I know it's not like this. This is, they don't understand.

By the third person, I'm repentant. They are weeping over their sin. They're broken.

I've seen nothing like this. You know, for the next two weeks, we start praying for the sick every night, every morning on the streets. I saw miracle after miracle for two weeks.

I saw miracles I've never seen before, never seen since. I watched blind eyes open, deaf ears open, a crippled leg of a little girl who had AIDS, her legs straightened right in front of me. I'd never seen that in my life.

I still can't even believe what my eyes saw. A little boy who was deaf, seven years old, his ears immediately opened and he jumped up, started shouting, rejoicing. Miracle after miracle after miracle.

It was remarkable. Saints, I'm telling you, that was these scriptures from this chapter where I couldn't even get through and fight in the battle. He said, you're going to watch and you're going to see what I'm going to do.

It was extraordinary. All those AIDS kids healed. I've got a letter at home in a box from the doctor saying there's a healing amongst all the AIDS kids in that Romanian orphanage.

It was extraordinary. Let me finish here. Sixth and lastly, the valley of blessing, a victory that leads to a valley, a victory that makes you go into the valley.

Do you know what it says in verse 26? And on the fourth day, after spending three days gathering all of the treasures, all the spoils, three days, then on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berica. They gathered themselves after three days. You know the problem with us, we're so forgetful.

We get caught up in the victory. Pride can come in. Forgetfulness, caught up in all of this, you forget God.

Be very careful. And it says they assembled themselves on that fourth day in the valley of Berica for there they blessed the Lord. Therefore the name of the same place was called the valley of Berica on to this day.

They named it the valley of blessing. Do you know what they done? They all gathered there unitedly. Oh yeah, there was a victory, but they come to that valley unitedly.

They stopped everything. They gathered together and they begin to bless the Lord. They begin to adore him.

They begin to bow the knee. You know what this valley became? It became a place of utter submission, bowing the knee, submission to the will of God. We worship you.

We adore you. We bless you. We magnify you.

Oh, how easily we forget the Lord. Do you remember Luke chapter 17 where 10 lepers came to Jesus and he healed them all. Leprosy was a deadly illness.

Jesus healed all of them. Then listen to what happened. And one of 10 healed.

One of them, Luke 17, when he saw that he was healed, turned back and with a loud voice glorified God and fell down on his face at his feet, at Christ's feet, giving him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, were there not 10 cleansed, but where are the nine? There are not found that return to give glory to God, save the stranger, the Samaritan.

Where's the nine? You say you couldn't get healed of leprosy and not come back to this valley. Really? Nine didn't come back to Jesus. Healed of leprosy.

Since I'm saying there's a valley that you've got to gather in, you've got to choose to go there. It'll be after a victory. It'll be after the triumph over your enemies.

Be very careful that on that hour, you've got to deliberately go into that valley, that low place, that place of submission. This valley is a place of humility. You know, there's danger.

If God uses you to heal someone or to see someone saved or to do something, you can get very arrogant. You can think you have the power. You can think more of yourself than you ought to.

You can think you're important to God. Be very careful. Do you know where you need to go? You need to go to the valley of humility.

You need to go to a You need to find a valley. You know what? Pride will destroy you. It was pride that had Lucifer cast out of hell and that dug hell itself.

Pride, the sin of pride dug hell. Remember what hell was created for? Lucifer and his fallen angels. The sin of pride.

Do you know how dangerous pride is? It can destroy you. My worship, my singing, my evangelism, my knowledge, my ability, my beauty, my friends, my money, my house, my car. You've really got a bad perspective, you know.

After the greatest spiritual victory, you've got to choose to go to the valley of blessing because there it keeps you right. When you really bless God, when you really praise him, when you really adore him, it's a place of submission, a place of humility, a place of thanksgiving, a place of remembrance. And in that place, as you humble yourself in that low place, in that valley place, you keep a right perspective in seeing who God is and who you are.

You're nothing. Should God win the greatest victory through you, you're nothing. You're a sinner that was saved by the grace of God, redeemed by the precious blood of the lamb.

And the only value on your life is not who you are, but who the Lord Jesus Christ is. Please stand with me here this morning. Thank you, Lord God.

Oh, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. Lord God, we ask you right now as a church, as a people, we know our own pruneness, oh God, to arrogance, to forgetfulness, oh God, to pride. Lord God, we realize what we are apart from your grace.

Lord God, we ask of you, Lord God, even in a lawn, overwhelming enemies to come in around us, overwhelming circumstance of life, impossibilities. Lord God, that we would be driven, carried step-by-step until we choose to walk into that valley of humiliation, that valley of submission, that valley of blessing, where we lift our hands and we get a clear perspective of the God of heaven. My God, I pray for a moving of the Holy Spirit in every heart in this room.

We pray for a move of God, a new call to fasting and prayer. Lord God, a truth seeking after you, real genuine worship, real strategic moving of the Holy Spirit. My God, we pray for that genuine moving of your Holy Spirit in Jesus' mighty name.

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