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Saved from attack By Elise L. Moore

What can you do if you find yourself in a situation that is very frightening-not like being scared of the dark or worried about school, but a situation where you are being threatened by another person, and you feel helpless? This happened to me when I was in fourth grade. I was saved from a dangerous predicament through listening to and obeying God. But to understand how I was kept safe, I need to tell you about one of my favorite Bible characters.

My dad used to tell me bedtime stories that he made up about two little dogs. One of the dogs was very fat and always getting into trouble. The other was very skinny and always saving his friend. My dad called the dogs Gee-hosh-a-fat and Gee-hosh-a-skinny. Later I realized that Gee-hosh-a-fat, or Jehoshaphat (as the Bible records it), was actually the name of a wonderful king in the Old Testament. King Jehoshaphat wasn't at all like the selfish puppy in my dad's stories. He was consistently faithful to God. The king turned to God, listened carefully for guidance, and then obeyed His direction.

The Bible tells us that at one time several armies joined together to attack King Jehoshaphat and his people, also known as the kingdom of Judah (see II Chron. 20:1-30). The people of Judah were greatly outnumbered and very afraid. Jehoshaphat called them together to pray-men, women, and children. They turned to God and listened as the king asked God for His protection.

Suddenly, a man in the group named Jahaziel was conscious of an angel message from God. He told the assembly what God said to him: "Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.... Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to-morrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you."

What a remarkable message! I loved everything about it. God's command to not be afraid. The assurance that the battle was God's. The promise of certain victory. And the demand that the people be obedient, putting their trust in God into action.

There is only one God, one supreme power. God is divine Mind, and fills all space. Divine Mind is only good and communicates only good thoughts, or angel messages, like the one that came to Jahaziel.

Evil is the suggestion that good is not all-powerful-that there is an aggressive, wicked power. Evil is a false belief that God could be absent. But Christ Jesus showed us that God is always present and caring for us. He proved that God is the only power and that His power is supremely good. Mrs. Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, says in *Science and Health*, "Evil is nothing, no thing, mind, nor power" (p. 330). And elsewhere in this book she says, "God is infinite, therefore ever present, and there is no other power nor presence" (p. 471).

When Jehoshaphat and the people heard the message from God, they knew it was the answer to their prayer and were immediately grateful and joyous. The next morning they got up early, expectant of good and unafraid. The king was so confident of God's presence and supremacy that he placed singers at the front of the army to praise God. By the time Jehoshaphat and his people arrived at the battlefield, there was no enemy to fight! They were victorious as God had promised, without having to battle anyone.

This illustration of the power of prayer-turning to God, listening to and promptly obeying Him-is what helped me when I needed it. My mom had allowed my little brother and me to go to the morning movies one Saturday. There was enough money and time to see the movie twice.

At intermission, a man sat down next to me and began talking in a low voice so that no one else could hear. He wanted me to leave the theater with him. He was bothering me, so I asked my brother if we could move over a few seats. But the man got angry and followed us. Then he grabbed my leg and told me not to move again.

I was really scared. I thought about calling out for help, but no sound came out of my mouth. At that moment I didn't think specifically about Jehoshaphat. But I suddenly realized that I was not helpless. I could pray. I knew I *must* pray.

I began to think about God. I began to know that God was present, always present. That He is All. That God is good. And that good is all-powerful. The man was still talking to me, but I wasn't listening to him anymore. I was thinking about God being the only power. I kept praying like this until I got a thought, an angel message from God, as Jahaziel did. The thought was that I should not be afraid because God was with me. There was also specific direction for action. The direction that came to me was that I should get up right then and leave. And the thought continued that God would protect me, that the man would not be able to touch me.

I was sure that these thoughts were from God and that I must obey immediately. Before, I had felt frozen in my seat and had not been able to speak. Now I was not afraid. I knew that I could, and must, do exactly what God was telling me to do. I turned to my little brother, told him that we were leaving, and stood up. My brother didn't hesitate a moment or ask any questions. He just got up and headed toward the aisle.

Although the man had been holding me, I was able to get up and walk away from him. He lunged across the seats to grab me, but he missed, even though he was in the seat next to mine. He couldn't even touch me! I was so conscious of God, the power of good, surrounding me. It was the presence of God that had prevented that man from holding on to me any longer.

My brother and I walked into the lobby, where I found an usher. I told her what had happened, and she asked me to go back into the theater with her to point out the man. When we started down the aisle, he saw us and, leaping over several seats, ran out a side exit. An usher called our mom, and someone came to get us.

I was grateful to be safe. But I was even more grateful to see the tremendous power of God and the result of obedience to Him. Waiting in the lobby, I knew that nothing could make me afraid like that again. I had felt the strength and power of God's presence and heard divine Mind speaking to me. No matter what the challenge might be, we can all turn to God, listen carefully, and obey Him. This is a prayer that keeps us safe from attack.