

Last week Jehoshaphat was confronted by, “the sons of Moab and the sons of Ammon, together with some of the Meunites, came to make war against Jehoshaphat.” **2 Chronicles 20:1**

As would be expected all of Judah was stressed out about this including Jehoshaphat, but unlike Ahab when confronted by his enemies who sought Jehoshaphat to join him in war, Jehoshaphat goes to the one person who can actually make war with his enemies and guarantee success.

**2 Chronicles 20:3-4** <sup>3</sup> Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. <sup>4</sup> So Judah gathered together to seek help from the LORD; they even came from all the cities of Judah to seek the LORD.

After seeking the Lord with all of Judah, Jehoshaphat gets an answer pretty quickly from the Lord.

**2 Chronicles 20:14-15** <sup>14</sup> Then in the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite of the sons of Asaph; <sup>15</sup> and he said, "Listen, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: thus says the LORD to you, 'Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's.

When they heard that God would do battle for them all of Judah responds in worship to God.

**2 Chronicles 20:18** <sup>18</sup> Jehoshaphat bowed his head with *his* face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshiping the LORD.

What follows in our text is most amazing. In times past when the Lord told Israel that He would go before His people in battle Israel was told to engage the enemy and be assured of the outcome. In fact, Moses gives God's rules for engagement to the people early on after Israel comes out of Egypt.

**Deuteronomy 20:1-4** <sup>NAU</sup> "When you go out to battle against your enemies and see horses and chariots *and* people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, is with you. <sup>2</sup> "When you are approaching the battle, the priest shall come near

and speak to the people. <sup>3</sup> "He shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before them, <sup>4</sup> for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'

The very first battle in the Promised Land had Israel going against Jericho as the Lord instructed them.

**Joshua 6:1-5** <sup>NAU</sup> Now Jericho was tightly shut because of the sons of Israel; no one went out and no one came in. <sup>2</sup> The LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king *and* the valiant warriors. <sup>3</sup> "You shall march around the city, all the men of war circling the city once. You shall do so for six days. <sup>4</sup> "Also seven priests shall carry seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark; then on the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. <sup>5</sup> "It shall be that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people will go up every man straight ahead."

And so, we see here, and of course many other instances, where God is with Israel but they are also to personally go into battle in the name of the Lord. But in our text we see something rather interesting.

**2 Chronicles 20:17** <sup>17</sup> 'You *need* not fight in this *battle*; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the LORD is with you."

**What is the Lord's command to the people in this instance?**

Go out and face your enemies. But the caveat here is what comes before at the beginning of verse 17. You need not fight in this battle, station yourselves and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf.

**What in essence is God telling Israel and what would they expect from God in this instance?**

They are simply to watch God work on their behalf. They are to be witnesses of His might and salvation.

What I find interesting about this is how this translates to our walk with the Lord. How many times in life do we find ourselves actually engaging the enemy as God is with us? That can be anything from sharing the gospel in a hostile environment to having to trust the Lord with our financial affairs when life seems to have thrown us a curve.

In those instances we are not exempt from the outcome of such battles but we're still having to trust God in the midst of the battle. And yet at other times God steps in in such a way where He says, 'just watch what I do on your behalf.'

Now honestly I would prefer the latter because all of the work is demonstrated by God and we just watch in amazement. Maybe it's a situation where someone actually comes to us and say's, what must I do to be saved?

Those things actually happen.

**Acts 16:27-31** <sup>27</sup> When the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. <sup>28</sup> But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!" <sup>29</sup> And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, <sup>30</sup> and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" <sup>31</sup> They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

I remember as a young Christian I was going to a Christian ministry on Ft. Lauderdale beach called the Houseboat. And this particular night a young guy happened to be with us and he was asking what we were doing that night, and our response was, we're going to a bible study.

In those days most young people were more interested in running from God than to Him and his response was one of amazement that we would be doing this and he began asking questions and I simply shared the gospel with him. He ended up coming to the bible study and as soon as it ended someone had again shared with him and encouraged him to repent and believe, at which point he did.

I remember heading down to the beach to share the gospel with a few other friends who were at the bible study and as we were on our way the guy who shared the gospel with him shouted to me from the Houseboat and simply said, "hey Drew, thanks."

I turned around and said, thanks for what? He said, thanks for sharing with this guy. He just said yes to the Lord.

I essentially just watched God do His work as He brought this guy into my presence. I didn't get to actually lead him to the Lord but I played a role by simply obeying God and sharing the gospel with him. But it was all God as He essentially said, stand and see the salvation of the Lord.

There were other times in my life where the battle was not so simple. I had a roommate in college. I was living in Gainesville in a trailer with a guy I didn't know. He was an unbeliever and I remember him thinking I was pretty silly reading my bible and spending time with other Christians. He found it amusing and often mocked what I was doing.

I would just give him the truth of who Christ was and why He humbled Himself to come into this world as a human being to redeem a people for Himself. It was in that same trailer where I brought a young girl home to have what we thought was going to be a picnic. The weather was freezing and so we stayed indoors.

That encounter turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to me as I married that girl a few years later. But, I always wondered what happened to my roommate after I left Gainesville.

That was 1973. It wasn't until the mid 1990's that I found out, as Cheryle and I were attending a Calvary Chapel Pastor's conference in Merritt Island.

This guy comes up to me and says, do you remember me? And I looked at him and said yes I do. And he then proceeded to tell me how our many conversations and sometimes arguments, had laid the ground work for him coming to Christ.

But in every situation it is God who says, stand and see the salvation of the Lord. And so, whether we are told to engage the enemy and get our hands dirty if you will, or to simply be there as those who are not personally fighting the battle, but God fighting for us, we are to trust and follow.

But as we look at our text it's clear that Jehoshaphat and all of Judah were not going to have to get their hands dirty in this battle. They are specifically told to be admirers of what God was about to do.

But it's what Jehoshaphat and Judah are doing while God is destroying His enemies that I find interesting.

**2 Chronicles 20:17-22** <sup>17</sup> 'You *need* not fight in this *battle*; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the LORD is with you." <sup>18</sup> Jehoshaphat bowed his head with *his* face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshiping the LORD. <sup>19</sup> The Levites, from the sons of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel, with a very loud voice. <sup>20</sup> They rose early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa; and when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, put your trust in the LORD your God and you will be established. Put your trust in His prophets and succeed." <sup>21</sup> When he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who sang to the LORD and those who praised *Him* in holy attire, as they went out before the army and said, "Give thanks to the LORD, for His lovingkindness is everlasting." <sup>22</sup> When they began singing and praising, the LORD set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were routed.

But look at how the Lord routed the enemies of Judah. He doesn't send an avenging angel to destroy them. He doesn't call down fire from heaven to kill them. He doesn't open the earth to swallow them. He causes them to kill each other.

**2 Chronicles 20:23-24** <sup>23</sup> For the sons of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir destroying *them* completely; and when they had finished with the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another. <sup>24</sup> When Judah came to the lookout of the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude, and behold, they *were* corpses lying on the ground, and no one had escaped.

**For someone to attack an ally and then to turn their attention to their own forces to where no one escapes, what has to happen to the minds of these people to do this?**

They have to actually think that their friends are their enemies, and to be so convinced that you would actually kill anyone you are standing in front of. How God did this we can only speculate. But what we do know is that He caused them to be deceived to such an

extent that they were either hallucinating or were so confused that they could not distinguish friend from foe.

**The bottom line is that what God did for Judah was to show them that in this case they didn't need to lift a finger, but this is all happening while Judah is doing what?**

**2 Chronicles 20:21-22** <sup>21</sup> When he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who sang to the LORD and those who praised *Him* in holy attire, as they went out before the army and said, "Give thanks to the LORD, for His lovingkindness is everlasting."  
<sup>22</sup> When they began singing and praising, the LORD set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were routed.

**In the midst of the battle the people are worshipping the Lord. What's the lesson for us?**

Whether we're in the battle or God is battling for us we need to stand and praise our God who can take out the enemy with a word. And if He chooses not to act that way we still need to stand on His word that He is our God and Savior and that nothing can separate us from His love.

After the battle Jehoshaphat and Judah took the spoils of their enemies and there was so much stuff that it took three days to gather it all together. And by the way, this is a precursor to what Christ Himself tells His people.

**Matthew 5:5** <sup>5</sup> "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

Other translations use the word meek. But the word meek or gentle implies humble. And so, the intent is that those who humble themselves before the Lord, though they may be abused in this world, will one day find that their perseverance will lead to something that God Himself will fight to provide for them.

**And so their inheritance will be what?**

The earth.

**Well, who seems to be in charge of the present earth?**

The enemies of God.

## **Who will vanquish our enemies and turn around and give the spoils to His people?**

The prize for trusting God and His Savior will be an inheritance that will not be limited to, but will include the new earth along with the new heavens. It will all be ours to enjoy as we continually offer up a sacrifice of praise forever to our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Of course, after the battle it didn't take long for word to get out that the enemies of Judah were defeated by God's own hand. And those who might have thought about coming against Judah would not have second thoughts.

**2 Chronicles 20:29-30** <sup>29</sup> And the dread of God was on all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. <sup>30</sup> So the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God gave him rest on all sides.

And of course it must be assumed that after such a battle and after such seeking and worshiping of God as a result of God's might over His enemies Jehoshaphat couldn't help but spend the rest of his days honoring the God who saves.

**2 Chronicles 20:32** <sup>32</sup> He walked in the way of his father Asa and did not depart from it, doing right in the sight of the LORD.

And yet, in the very next verse we find that even a man who did right in the sight of the Lord was not perfect and had lapses of judgment.

**2 Chronicles 20:33-37** <sup>33</sup> The high places, however, were not removed; the people had not yet directed their hearts to the God of their fathers. <sup>34</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first to last, behold, they are written in the annals of Jehu the son of Hanani, which is recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel. <sup>35</sup> After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah king of Israel. He acted wickedly in so doing. <sup>36</sup> So he allied himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish, and they made the ships in Ezion-geber. <sup>37</sup> Then Eliezer the son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat saying, "Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD has destroyed your works." So the ships were broken and could not go to Tarshish. It reminds me of the way we are told about our works for the Lord as believers in Christ. It may be said of us that we did right in the

sight of the Lord as those who have placed our faith in Christ for the remission of our sins.

But as with Jehoshaphat there may be the works of our own hands where God's hands were not involved that will be cut off and not counted as something to last.

**1 Corinthians 3:10-16** <sup>10</sup> According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. <sup>11</sup> For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, <sup>13</sup> each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is *to be* revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. <sup>14</sup> If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that you are a temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?

But we who are in Christ will in fact receive a reward; a reward of an eternal inheritance that we will share with Christ as joint heirs with Him.

**Titus 3:4-7** <sup>4</sup> But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, <sup>5</sup> He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life.

This is the same hope Abraham had and has and it is the same hope you and I ought to rejoice in as we look forward to being an heir with Christ.

**Hebrews 11:8-10** <sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign *land*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; <sup>10</sup> for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.