

**THE  
BELIEVER'S  
BATTLE PLAN**

*An Exegesis of  
2 Chronicles Chapter 20*

*By*

*Trey Dickerson*

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *New King James Version* of the Bible.

**Editorial Note:** All references to the names and attributes of God are capitalized. We have chosen not to capitalize the name “satan” and related names, even at the cost of violating grammatical rules.

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# ***CONTENTS***

<b>FOREWORD</b> .....	vii
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	ix
<b>1 WRESTLING THE “ITES”</b> .....	1
<b>2 MAGNIFY THE LORD</b> .....	15
<b>3 HELP FOR THE HUMBLE</b> .....	29
<b>4 HAVING DONE ALL TO STAND</b> .....	45
<b>5 THE BATTLE IS THE LORD’S</b> .....	53
<b>6 INQUIRING OF THE LORD</b> .....	65
<b>7 OUR REASONABLE SERVICE</b> .....	77
<b>8 PRAISE GOES FIRST</b> .....	87
<b>9 MORE THAN CONQUERORS</b> .....	97
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	111



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# ***FOREWORD***

From the very moment that my wife and I began to read Trey Dickerson's original manuscript our hearts were drawn to the simple but yet profound truths that he portrays.

Instead of another "how to" book, Trey has brought us back to the basics of seeking our God. With humility and everyday experiences the author expresses the IN CHRIST truths of the New Covenant yet draws them from the Old Testament example of 2 Chronicles chapter twenty.

If you are facing a battle or circumstance that is trying to overcome you, then the BELIEVER'S BATTLE PLAN is a must for you to read and experience.

As Trey so adequately expresses- "The battle belongs to God, but the victory belongs to us."

Don Krow  
Director of Discipleship /  
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Ministry





# ***INTRODUCTION***

Everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ will experience battles throughout their life. Jesus promised this when He said, “In the world, you *will* have tribulation...” There is no way around it; if we are going to follow the Lord, we will be persecuted by the enemy.

But the good news is that Jesus also went on to say in John 16:33- “...but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Jesus assured us that we will experience battles, but He also promised us victory in every one of them.

Our Lord Jesus has given us the keys to the kingdom, and this book that you hold in your hand contains the keys to living this victorious and overcoming life of faith.

This is not true because I, its author, have any great virtue in and of myself. It is true solely because it is based on God’s Word. God’s Word holds all the keys to walking triumphantly through life’s challenges and difficulties that will come upon each one of us.

So while you will doubtless see the author’s thoughts and views mixed in throughout this book, I can assure you that what you will predominantly find is the unadulterated Word of God.

The portion of the Word of God that this book is based on is what I consider to be one of the

greatest goldmines of truth in the Old Testament - 2 Chronicles chapter twenty.

This great chapter contains a highlight of the reign of one of Judah's greatest kings- Jehoshaphat. In it, we are given specific details of his ensuing problem and the steps he took to experiencing God's deliverance from that problem. Through his example, we are taught how we are to respond when we find ourselves in a trial or temptation.

The New Testament reveals to us how these real-life stories from the Old Testament were recorded as examples for us that we may learn from them (1 Corinthians 10:11 & Romans 15:4). Therefore, the historical account of the lives of these Old Covenant believers, are types and shadows of our New Covenant. They are recorded to reveal to us God's principles and guidelines that we are to live by today.

Therefore, this chapter unveils to us in a very practical way how we can see victory every single time we find ourselves in a battle of the Christian life.

I have entitled this book THE BELIEVER'S BATTLE PLAN because I see it as containing God's strategy for overcoming the challenges the enemy will throw at us. This story reveals God's battle plan that we are to follow and contains His blueprint for successfully overcoming the devil's strategies.

Now my intent through this book is not to provide you with some "formula" for success. There

are no victories found in formulas. There are no such things as “3 Keys to Success” or “10 steps to Victory.” You have to be led by God’s Spirit in every battle you encounter because every trial of your faith is unique and requires specific direction from the Holy Spirit.

So with that said, as you read through the many different principles and truths contained in this book, I exhort you to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit for the specific truths He has for *you* in this hour of your life. Focus on applying the truths that you sense Him bearing witness with. For it is in being obedient to your Divine Teacher, the Holy Spirit, that you will experience God’s peace and victory.

So while I do not intend on providing you with a formula, I do intend on sharing some practical instruction from God’s Word in order to help set you on the right path to God’s destiny for your life, which is complete and total victory.

Now let’s begin to look at this amazing chapter in detail and glean from it the practical instruction that is contained in it.

Our prayer is that the Lord will minister comfort and peace to your heart and that He will reveal to you your path to victory.

Be blessed as you journey together with me through God’s holy and inspired Word.

*Trey Dickerson*



# **THE BELIEVER'S BATTLE PLAN**



# *CHAPTER ONE*

## *WRESTLING THE “ITES”*

### **FOR THE WORD’S SAKE**

Before we delve into 2 Chronicles chapter twenty, it is important for us to first understand what took place prior to this chapter’s events.

Chapter nineteen records the rebuke Jehoshaphat received from the seer, Jehu, for allying himself with the evil King of Judah, Ahab (verse 2). Then, in the rest of chapter nineteen, we see the fruits of repentance in the life of Jehoshaphat by his decisions to set his kingdom on a course to seek God first.

This is very important to understand because of what verse one starts off by saying in chapter twenty.

Verse one starts off by saying, “***It happened after this...***”

Now the “it” that happened is a reference to the ensuing problem that we will soon get into, but

when verse one says, **“It happened after *this*...”**  
what does the word “this” refer to?

It happened after what?

It happened after the reforms of Jehoshaphat recorded in chapter nineteen.

These great armies that came to fight against Jehoshaphat’s kingdom came to battle against him after he had seen the light and began to establish his kingdom on God’s statutes and principles.

Did you know that this is inevitable?

Invariably, after we receive the light of God’s Word and embrace its truth, a battle will arise in our lives.

For example, when we receive the truth of God’s will to heal us, it seems like the symptoms of our illness get worse. When we see the light concerning God’s will to bless us, it seems like more bills pile up.

Jesus forewarned us of this.

He said in the Parable of the Sower that Satan comes immediately to steal the Word that was sown in our hearts (Mark 4:15). He also said in the same parable that tribulation and persecution arise for the Word’s sake (Mark 4:17).

Therefore, it should not surprise us when we receive God’s truth in our heart, that satan comes immediately to steal that revelation from us.



But the question is: Why does he fight our reception of God's Word so persistently?

The answer is because he is afraid.

Yes, he is afraid of the believer who receives the truth and begins to walk in its light because these believers are the biggest threat to his kingdom.

Therefore, satan's goal is to steal the Word out of our heart before it can produce its fruit.

But not only did Jesus prophesy this, the writer of Hebrews also made a similar statement.

He said in Hebrews 10:32- "But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings."

Notice that it was after they were "illuminated" that they experienced hardship. The great battle that these Hebrew converts encountered occurred immediately after they were enlightened to the truth.

I am making this point to help us understand that some battles we find ourselves in are not necessarily because we have done anything wrong; many times we are experiencing so much resistance because we are doing something right.

Oftentimes, our biggest fights with the enemy come when we are seeking God and walking in the light of His Word.

As a matter of fact, when our desire is to live godly, we can expect persecution to arise in our lives (2 Timothy 3:12). It will happen to us just as it happened here to Jehoshaphat.

Now let's take a look at who Jehoshaphat found himself in a war with.

## **OUR REAL ENEMY**

Verse one goes on to say- **“...the Moabites, the Amorites, and some of the Meunites came against Jehoshaphat to battle.”** (Amplified Bible)

We need to understand that this was not an uncommon occurrence for the nation of Israel.

Throughout the history of the children of Israel, we see different nations wrestling against them. These included the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Canaanites, the Jebusites, the termites and the parasites (pardon the humor). These different “ites” continuously harassed the children of Israel.

And although we, who are God's Israel today, do not war against these former kingdoms, the principle still lies true with us.

You see, the “ites” that they were constantly striving against in the Old Testament were types and shadows of the real enemy we wrestle with today.

The “ites” that we war against today are the spiritual “ites” that come to steal, kill, and destroy from us- satan’s kingdom (John 10:10).

Under the new covenant, it has been revealed to us that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood- that is, against physical enemies like the children of Israel did. We wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12). In other words, our battle is not against physical human beings; our battle is against the demonic forces of the kingdom of darkness.

These spiritual attacks are manifested in many different ways:

They can manifest as natural problems such as persecution, sickness, poverty, etc. Oftentimes, the root of these natural problems is a result of some spiritual influence.

This is extremely important to understand, especially regarding the hatred we encounter from the world.

You see, if we do not truly understand who our real enemy is, then the devil will continuously be successful at getting us to yield to unforgiveness, strife, judgment, bitterness, etc. He will ultimately be successful at keeping us out of walking in love, and therefore, will keep us out of God’s perfect will for our lives.

But if we can see that the harassment we are experiencing is just a product of the inspiration of our unseen enemy, we will be able to respond differently to our enemies.

We will be more capable of responding in love towards the person being used and focus our anger on our real enemy who is inspiring them.

Understanding this truth will help us to love our enemies because we will see them more as ignorant and helpless pawns in the hands of our real enemy- satan.

Therefore, this successful battle plan that Jehoshaphat incorporated into his life is what will work for us as well against the demonic harassment that we face. It shows us how to successfully wage warfare against our unseen enemies in the kingdom of darkness.

## **THE BAD REPORT**

We then go on to read in verse two that there were some who came to give Jehoshaphat a bad report.

Notice what they told him- **“A *large* army from Edom east of the Dead Sea has invaded our country. They have *already* reached En Gedi.”**  
(Contemporary English Version)

You know, the enemy always seems to make sure that we receive the “bad news,” doesn’t he?

Just as was the case with Jehoshaphat, he will send well-meaning people to communicate to us how big and insurmountable the problem we are facing is.

These messengers told Jehoshaphat that a “vast army” (New Living Translation), “a huge force” (The Message Bible), and “a great multitude” (NKJV) were invading his country.

Worse than that, not only were they on the way, but “they had already reached En-Gedi.”

In other words, these men were telling Jehoshaphat- “King, you have a *big* problem. And when we say big, we mean *big*! There is a massive army that is invading your country! And are you ready for some more bad news? They have already reached En Gedi!”

This would be like your doctor, after just a routine check up, telling you- “I’m sorry to have to tell you this Mr. or Ms. Christian but you have an extremely large tumor and the cancer has already spread throughout much of your body.”

It would also be like someone giving you the bad news that your perfect little angel was just arrested for selling drugs when you had no idea they had ever touched any drugs in their life.

Both of these examples are just a couple of the many “bad reports” that we can receive in our life. Some of these bad reports will be more severe and some less severe.

But just because we receive “bad reports” does not mean we have to accept them.

The last report is not the final report.

We have the gospel (i.e. the good news) that if God is for us, who can be against us (Romans 8:31)? We have the gospel that God always causes us to triumph in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 2:14).

We have the good report that trumps all bad reports if we will just believe it.

So how did Jehoshaphat respond when he received the bad report?

He responded the same way that most of us would- he feared! (vs.3)

## **THE TEMPTATION TO FEAR**

We need to understand that walking in fear is the exact opposite of walking in faith. Therefore, walking in fear is absolute disobedience to the Word of God.

There is no other way to say it.

Allowing ourselves to live in fear is like saying to God- “God, I don’t believe you can or that you will take care of me.” This is how disrespectful to God fear, worry, and anxiety really is.

God told us 365 times in His Word to “Fear not!” I believe the reason for this is because there will be opportunities everyday in our 365 day calendar year to yield to fear.

But there is something that we must understand about fear: Just because we are tempted to fear does not mean that we have necessarily yielded to it.

You see, temptation is not sin!

Just because we get a bad report and our head and emotions immediately go into a frenzy, does not yet mean that we have entered into fear and worry.

You see, these initial “feelings” that come up when we receive bad news are just natural emotional responses. They are not where the problem lies. The problem lies when we embrace these emotions and yield to these temptations to fear.

Jesus taught along these same lines in John chapter fourteen.

In John chapters 14-16 we have recorded what Jesus’ last words were to His disciples before His crucifixion.

They were about to experience a lot of negative emotions when they watched their Lord hang on that cross.

So Jesus was preparing them through these three chapters by giving them some of their most crucial information. And the very first thing He told them was to not let their hearts be troubled (14:1).

Why would He have told them to not let their hearts be troubled if they were not going to be tempted to have their hearts troubled?

Their hearts most definitely were going to be tempted to get upset, to panic, etc. Therefore, Jesus said to them- “Now don’t let your emotions and feelings run the show, guys. Grab a hold of them and choose to believe in me and in God.”

You see, this is the first battle we must overcome when bad circumstances occur in our lives and we get a bad report: We will be tempted to panic and enter into fear and anxiety through our emotional response.

If we fail in this initial reaction by allowing our hearts to be troubled and embracing the fears and worries, then it is going to be very difficult to reverse the direction we are going- which is the direction of defeat.

We must grab a hold of those initial emotions to panic and put our attention on God and His promises.

And this is exactly what Jehoshaphat did after he was tempted to fear.



## SETTING YOURSELF TO SEEK THE LORD

Verse three goes on to say that after he was tempted to fear he **“set himself to seek the Lord.”**

What a huge point.

Instead of setting himself up for failure by embracing the fear that he initially felt, he set himself to seek the Lord. In other words, he got control of his emotions, turned his attention away from the problem, and put his focus on seeking God for the solution. Hallelujah!

You see, learning to seek God is a pivotal part of the Christian’s life.

We have a tendency to look to everything else but God for our answers when problems arise. We turn to our family, friends, banks, credit cards, etc. when we have huge needs brought before us.

For example, when a financial need arises in our life that we cannot afford in the natural, we immediately think that we must need to borrow the money for it.

Oftentimes, this kind of mechanical response will get us into trouble because God might have a better idea and a different plan.

No, these natural things are not where we are to look for our answers; we are to seek God- the One who has all the answers and all the ability.

But the problem is that it is easy to think we are seeking God when we are really not.

When the Bible speaks of “seeking God,” it is not referring to a passive, lethargic, and lukewarm pursuit of Him. It is referring to a zealous and fervent desire for Him. It is referring to a diligent pursuit of Him.

When 2 Chronicles 20:3 says that Jehoshaphat set himself to seek the Lord, it denotes that he got extremely serious about turning to the Lord for their help.

This is very obvious when we consider Jehoshaphat’s first proclamation after he decided to seek the Lord for their help.

## **FAITH’S EVIDENCE**

Verse three concludes by saying- **“and (he) proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.”**

Now fasting is not necessarily something you have to be doing if you are truly seeking God, but it is a good indication that you are indeed serious about seeking God.

We can see throughout the Bible and church history that when God’s people got serious like this, they always saw God provide them with the desires of their heart.

When we get serious about seeking the Lord in our times of trials and tribulations, our God has promised that He will hear us and He will heal our land (2 Chronicles 7:14).

He said in Jeremiah 29:13 that when we seek Him with all of our heart, we will find Him.

There is absolutely no substitute for diligently seeking the Lord with all of our hearts. It was and still is the best result-getter.

So why does it produce such great results?

It brings such great results because truly seeking the Lord is a clear expression of faith, and faith is the only way that we receive from God.

Someone might ask, “How does diligently seeking God express and demonstrate faith?”

I would respond to this question with a question of my own:

Why else would you cut out some meals and spend extra time in prayer unless you truly believed that God was your answer?

Things like prayer and fasting never have and never will “move God.” What invites God into our situation is *faith*.

And although things like fasting and prayer can be done as “works of the law” (that is, good deeds done out of legalism and wrong motives), they can also be done as “works of faith” (that is,

things you do because you believe God can and will work on your behalf). And when they are done as “works of faith” they produce awesome results.

But one of the main points I want you to get out of this chapter is that when we receive bad reports and are tempted to panic, it is important that we grab a hold of those emotions and set ourselves to seek God for our deliverance. When we look to the Lord for our salvation like this we will never be put to shame (1 Peter 2:6).

## ***CHAPTER TWO***

# ***MAGNIFY THE LORD***

So after we have taken control of those unruly emotions and made up our minds to seek God, what do we do next?

The answer is *prayer*, of course. We begin to seek God by spending time in prayer.

Not only is prayer a practical way of seeking God, but it is a way to keep the flesh and mind under control at the same time.

This is exactly what we see Jehoshaphat beginning to do in verses 5-12.

After Jehoshaphat and all of Judah decided to set themselves to seek the Lord through fasting, Jehoshaphat lifted his eyes toward heaven and prayed a powerful prayer that is recorded for our instruction and admonition.

In this prayer, we have a wealth of spiritual principles on how to pray in these critical situations as well as the correct mindset and attitude we are to have.

Let's begin in this chapter to dig into his prayer and glean the wisdom contained in it.

## ENTERING BOLDLY

In verses 5-7 Jehoshaphat began his prayer by using a method of approaching God that most believers today would be apprehensive about using: He began to ask God some bold questions. He asked God these questions, not attempting to get an answer, but just to recall who God is and what He had done.

He said, **“O Lord God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You? Are You not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?”**

These sound like some very bold statements, don't they?

To some this would seem to be disrespectful and arrogant, but what we need to understand is that God likes it when people approach Him boldly and confidently. He likes it when we approach Him bringing Him in remembrance of His Word, and boldly declaring who He is and what He has said (Hebrews 4:16).

God would rather us come to Him boldly asking- “Is this not what you have done? Is this not what you have said?”- rather than with the misplaced piousness that would say- “I know that I am just a little worm in your sight, a lowdown, dirty

sinner, and I know that you probably have more important things to tend to...”

No, God is pleased when we actually dig into His Word to find out what His will is and to discover who we are in Him. It pleases Him when we study His Word to find out what He has done before and what He has already spoken. These things bless Him because we are seeking to know and understand His will.

And then after we have discovered these truths, He loves it when we stand upon His promises and boldly expect them to come to pass—just simply because He said it.

This is what God desires and what is fully pleasing to Him.

When we approach Him with confidence like this, He sits on His throne and smiles saying, “That’s My boy!” or “That’s My girl!” “It brings Me much joy when I see My children putting faith in what I have said. When you trust in Me, you unlock an eternal law that releases Me into your situation and gives you victory every time.” Glory to God!

And this is exactly what Jehoshaphat did.

What he did in this list of questions is an extremely important part of our battle plan too.

As we determine that we are going to seek the Lord when troubles arise, the way we need to

initially approach God with our need is not by magnifying the need, but by magnifying God.

Most believers, even when they make the decision to seek the Lord, do it incorrectly.

They will approach God saying things like: “Oh God, I need your help! Where are You? Oh God, I thought You said that You were my Provider! Please, help me Jesus!”

This is not how you want to start out seeking the Lord during these difficult times.

In the rest of this chapter, we will look specifically at the manner in which we do need to seek the Lord during these trying times.

## **MAGNIFYING WHO HE IS**

In verses 5-7, Jehoshaphat basically started out his prayer by focusing on three major truths about God:

1. He declared that God was the One True and Living God and that He was high and lifted up in the highest, most influential place (i.e. **“O Lord God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven”**).
2. He declared that God reigns over all the earth and all nations are subject to his Kingship (i.e. **“and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations”**).



3. He declared that God is stronger than any natural or spiritual force, and it is nothing for Him to defend, protect, and give victory (i.e. **“and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You?”**).

What was Jehoshaphat doing in these three verses?

In a nutshell, he was telling God how great He is. He was magnifying who God is by just simply glorifying His power, His ability, His rule and His reign.

You see, when Jehoshaphat started his prayer, he did *not* do something that so many Christians tend to do: He did not go straight into telling God about His problem.

No, instead of going straight into what the problem was, he first praised God for how great He is.

There are several reasons why this is extremely important to do first when we find ourselves in a crisis.

When these alarming situations arise, they tend to consume our hearts- that is, the emotions of fear and the thoughts of doubt begin dominating our minds.

So when we approach God with these problems, we generally have been putting too much

focus on the crisis which causes us to come to God in fear. This results in us wanting to go straight into the problem with God saying something like “Lord... I need your help! The doctor said...” or “Oh God, these bills have come in...”

Therefore, the most important and initial step in approaching God is to gain control of our chaotic soul and begin to praise God for how great He is.

We should begin to deliberately put our focus on how wonderful our God is. We can do this by magnifying how He is the One True and Living God, by glorifying how great and awesome He is, and by proclaiming how He is above and mightier than anything that is on this earth.

You see, our emotions will follow our focus.

When we deliberately choose to focus on how great and mighty God is in these crisis situations, we can tame those wild and unruly emotions and actually replace them with joy and peace in the midst of the storm.

To put our focus on the Lord and how great and majestic He is makes Him bigger to us, which in turn increases our faith and renders our problem powerless in our sight.

Therefore, starting out by magnifying who God is will be the first step to experiencing victory over the problem.

And make no mistake about it- you will not *feel* like doing this.

It is a lot easier to preach this than it is to apply it to our lives, especially when we are in the middle of a valley. But just because it is not easy doesn't nullify the fact that it is the truth and that it is our responsibility.

I will give you an unconditional guarantee that if you will do this by faith when these crises arise, the feelings will follow your faith. In other words, even though you might not initially feel like magnifying God, before it is over, you will.

## **MAGNIFYING WHAT HE'S DONE**

Then in verse seven, Jehoshaphat begins to magnify God in a different way: by recalling what He had done for them in the past.

You see, in verse six he simply declared who God is- the One True and Living God, the Almighty Creator of the heavens and the earth. He was magnifying how great God is not necessarily because of what He had done, but because of Who He is.

But in verse seven he begins to magnify something else about God- namely, what He had already done for them in the past.

Again, notice what He says- **“Are You not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this**

**land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?”**

Notice how Jehoshaphat specifically recalled how God had already driven out the inhabitants of the land that He promised them one time before. He intentionally began to stir up his memory of how, in the past, God had already given them this land by driving out its inhabitants.

And what was the problem they were currently facing?

It was that several nations were attempting to invade that same land God had already given them. In other words, these same nations were on a mission to repossess Jehoshaphat's kingdom, when God had already driven them out once before.

This would be like us being supernaturally healed in the past and then the enemy trying to put the same sickness on us again.

This would also be like God supernaturally supplying our needs in the past and then the enemy trying to tell us that our current need will not be met.

Do you see the benefit of recalling what God has already done for us?

If we would just stir up our minds to think about all the victories God has already given us, of how he has brought us through time and time again, then that would shrink the severity of the problem that is currently before us. It would cause our

current situation that might currently look like a mountain, to look like a molehill.

Therefore, when we are faced with a battle, it would behoove us to stir up our memory of all the victories God has given us throughout our life. By doing this, we will begin to see our current obstacle as it is in truth, no problem to God.

## MAGNIFYING HIS COVENANT

I love what else Jehoshaphat did in verse seven.

Again, he said, **“Are You not *our God*, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before *Your people* Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?”**

Notice how Jehoshaphat made reference to God being *their God* and them being *His people*.

By using these references Jehoshaphat was making it clear that he understood that they had a special relationship with God.

He goes on to describe this “special relationship” by making reference to them being descendants of Abraham- God’s friend forever.

This is another important thing to do as we are seeking God concerning our problems: to remind ourselves of the covenant we have with Him.

You see, the Word of God teaches us that although we were Gentiles- that is, those outside of covenant with God- we have also been made fellow citizens of God's kingdom (Ephesians 2:19).

Therefore, those who have made Jesus their Savior and Lord have become Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29). In other words, Christ's followers have entered into an unfulfilling covenant with Jehovah God.

So by magnifying the fact that we have this unfulfilling covenant with Almighty God through Jesus Christ's finished work on the Cross, we reinforce our confidence in God's promises.

The reason for this is because when we see His promises as sealed and secured by the blood of Jesus we will have the full assurance of faith that what He has promised, He is bound to perform.

Therefore, it is in our best interest when we are under attack to remind ourselves that we are in covenant with Almighty God and we are assured of victory since He is our covenant partner.

Did you know that this is exactly what David did before he approached Goliath?

When he heard the blasphemies of Goliath he said, "For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" (1 Samuel 17:26). Basically what David was saying was- "Hey, this guy does not have a covenant with God, and we do! So who is he to defy God's army?"

You see, David knew about his covenant with God, and it was through this understanding of that covenant that produced the boldness to conquer his “giant.”

Likewise, it is extremely important for us to know how solid and sure our covenant with God is; and it is especially important to recall this covenant in our times of trouble.

This is yet another way we can shrink the problem we are currently facing.

### **MAGNIFYING WHAT HE’S SAID**

Then notice what Jehoshaphat went on to say in the following two verses:

**“And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying, ‘If disaster comes upon us—sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine—we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your name is in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save’”** (verses 8 & 9).

Notice that in these two verses, Jehoshaphat is basically declaring a truth from the Word of God.

You might be thinking- “How is this statement a promise from the Word?”

Well, it is not a “Scripture” in the sense that we think of- that it was written and promised by God when Jehoshaphat recalled it, but the principle still holds true.

Jehoshaphat was quoting from the prayer Solomon prayed as he dedicated the Temple of God in 2 Chronicles chapter six, just a few chapters before this one. We know now in hindsight that this prayer of Solomon was recorded in the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, it was evidently God’s will to honor his petition.

This prayer is a spiritual principle that remains for all of God’s people or else it would not been written in God’s infallible and unchanging Word.

So for the sake of modern day terminology, we could say that Jehoshaphat was “confessing the Word of God” and reminding God of His promises when he recalled what King Solomon had prayed under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

This is yet another powerful key to effective prayer and to overcoming the attacks of the enemy: Confessing the Word of God and reminding Him of His promises.

Not only does quoting what God has said build our faith, for faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17), but it also pleases God to hear us standing on His Word.



So let's quickly recap what we have seen thus far in Jehoshaphat's prayer.

Up to this point in Jehoshaphat's prayer, there is one thing that is glaringly obvious: He has not yet presented his problem to God.

In verses 5-9 he avoided the temptation to go straight into talking about the imminent crisis they were facing and instead turned his attention to four basic aspects of God:

1. He praised and glorified God, not for anything He had necessarily done, but simply because He is the all powerful God Who rules over all. (verse 6)
2. He recalled the great things that God had done for them before- stirring up his mind to remember how God had given them victory in the past. (verse 7)
3. He reminded himself of the relationship that they had with Jehovah through His covenant that He cut with Abraham. (verse 7)
4. He recalled a promise that God had given them and reminded Him of His Word. (verse 8-9)

By beginning his prayer magnifying God like this, Jehoshaphat set himself on a course to the awesome victory he experienced.

Likewise, if we incorporate these principles into our battle plan, we will be on our way to experiencing the same.

# ***CHAPTER THREE***

## ***HELP FOR THE HUMBLE***

### **PLEADING OUR CASE**

After Jehoshaphat spent a considerable amount of time praising and glorifying God, he said in verses 10-12: **“And now, here are the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir- whom You would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and did not destroy them- here they are, rewarding us by coming to throw us out of Your possession which You have given us to inherit. O our God, will You not judge them?”**

Notice here that Jehoshaphat used the issue of justice to plead his case with God.

He was saying that these specific “ites” that were trying to steal their land were the very ones whom God would not let Israel destroy in the past. And now they were repaying God’s mercy towards them by trying to take the land God gave Israel.

So basically what Jehoshaphat was saying was- “God, this is not right. We are being wronged here.”

God’s avenging of injustices is an example we can find all throughout the Word of God. In these instances, we can see where someone pleaded their case with God and He avenged them.

The reason we see so much of this in God’s Word is because the issue of justice is a big issue in the heart of God.

We are told that His throne is established upon righteousness and justice (Psalm 89:14). He constantly warned against rulers and judges being unjust towards the poor, the widows, the orphans, slaves, etc.

He absolutely does not tolerate injustice. It is one of His “pet-peeves.”

So what does this have to do with how we pray when we are in the middle of a battle?

It has everything to do with it.

You see, when we are being persecuted or afflicted unjustly, we have a God who is most interested in avenging us and is quick to do it.

Therefore, when we call out to Him in our afflictions and plead our case with Him, He is righteous and just to execute justice on our behalf. This adds even more confidence on our part that He will grant us our requests.

On the other hand, it also means that we need to make sure that the persecution and affliction that we are facing is not self induced.

I know that we all have a tendency to see ourselves through rose-colored glasses and are oftentimes blinded by our pride, but the fact is that sometimes difficulties that we are experiencing are brought on by ourselves.

This is something we have to honestly consider when certain problems occur in our lives: Is what we are suffering justified or not?

Let me give you an example from my own life:

There was a time at the very beginning of my Christian walk where I dealt with a difficult situation in a job. Although I believed that I was being treated unfairly during this hard time, God corrected me. Let me explain.

Soon after I got saved, God gave me a job at a Christian bookstore. My supervisor at this particular location knew what I stood for and what I believed in. Therefore, she did not particularly agree with some of my “theology.”

So after sometime there, I was reprimanded for what was considered poor job performance.

Of course, my initial response was- “This is persecution! I am being unjustly persecuted because my boss does not agree with what I believe!”

God, on the other hand, saw something that I didn't see.

As I was pleading my case to Him the day after I was reprimanded, He took me to First Peter and, to make a long story short, showed me how I was not giving my best effort at this job. Therefore, my punishment was just.

This was very sobering to me, but it was correction that was much needed.

So here is my point: We need to judge ourselves to see whether the difficulties we are experiencing are warranted or if we are truly being attacked unjustly.

If it is justified, we should repent and believe God to deliver us from the penalty of those wrong decisions. But if it is indeed unjust, it is important to plead our case before God and trust His willingness and ability to bring forth justice on our behalf.

This is the attitude of humility we should adopt in the middle of life's challenges.

We should be willing to walk in the truth, whether that be, making changes if we are wrong or pleading our case if we are being wronged.

Now at this point, I want us to delve more into this humble attitude by taking a look at what Jehoshaphat said in verse twelve.

It is another extremely important key to us seeing the victory he saw.

## IN CHRIST VERSUS IN OURSELVES

Jehoshaphat told God in the rest of verse twelve- **“For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.”**

Wow! What a powerful set of truths we have in this verse.

This declaration by Jehoshaphat shows us that a very important attitude to have when we are facing difficult trials and tribulations is an attitude of humility.

Why is this so important?

It is important because so many times when difficult circumstances come up in our lives, we try and take things into our own hands. We do everything in our power to deliver ourselves, and we do everything we know to do to gain victory.

But what is so important for us to do in these battles is to fully trust, depend, and rely upon the Lord and not on our own capabilities.

Two of the greatest truths that we can learn in the Christian life are: understanding who we are in Christ and understanding who we are in ourselves.

Now I definitely believe that we should major on the positive truths of who God is in us and who we are in Him. But at the same time there is also a place for remembering who we would be without God and who we are in ourselves.

Knowing who we are in Christ produces boldness, while knowing who we are in ourselves produces humility. Both are extremely important to understand.

The “in Him” truths of the New Testament which tell us that we are righteous, holy, strong, wise, etc. are truths that are made a reality “in Christ”- which is the opposite of “in ourselves.”

There is a truth in Romans 11:18 that exhorts us to remember that it is the root (i.e. vine) that supports us. This means we are not to forget where we came from and are to be mindful that we are who we are by the grace of the True Vine- the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are the branches that are upheld and sustained by the True Vine that we are abiding in. If we were removed from the Vine and attempted to produce fruit independent from Him, we would fail. As Jesus said in His teaching about the Vine and the branches- “Apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

This leads me to the first statement Jehoshaphat made in this portion of verse twelve.



## IN OURSELVES, WE CAN DO NOTHING

Jehoshaphat's first point was- **“For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us.”**

By making this statement, Jehoshaphat shows that he understood that, in and of themselves, they could do nothing against this great multitude of “ites” that were coming against them. He was declaring to God that he knew they did not have the power, might, strength, or ability to win on their own.

We would do good to renew our minds to this truth as well.

You see, in and of ourselves, we cannot defeat the spiritual “ites” that we face either. We are absolutely no match for them in ourselves. We desperately need the Lord's help if we are going to win our battles against the kingdom of darkness.

For example, when we are facing the multitude of weaknesses that we have in our flesh, the temptation most believers have is to lean on their own strength and ability to live free from those sins.

The attitude that these Christians have is- “I am going to do everything I can to live pleasing to God and quit walking in the flesh.” And while their heart is right on many of these occasions, their method for obtaining these good desires is wrong.

We cannot “will” ourselves to overcome the flesh. Living a life free from the carnal dictates of the flesh is only obtainable by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Flesh cannot clean up flesh.

It is only by the grace of God through the power of the Holy Spirit that we can stop fulfilling the lusts of the flesh.

So what should we do when faced with this great multitude of “flesh?”

The same thing Jehoshaphat did here, which is believe to believe and confess that we do not have the power in ourselves to overcome the “multitude of carnality” that is in us.

This is the first key to overcoming our flesh.

When we stop leaning on the arm of the flesh to deliver us, we are positioning ourselves to receive the Lord’s mighty arm of salvation. Hallelujah!

## **IN OURSELVES, WE KNOW NOTHING**

Notice the next truth Jehoshaphat confessed to God. He said, “**nor do we know what to do...**”

Here, Jehoshaphat makes it very clear that they did not know what to do about this great multitude coming up against them.

Sure, they might have had an idea or two of what they might be able to do to defeat them, but by this statement they showed that they certainly did not claim to have all the answers.

Instead, Jehoshaphat humbled himself again by basically saying, “God, not only do we not have the ability to defeat these guys, but we would not even know what to do if we could!”

When we are in a battle, it is also important that we understand this simple yet profound truth: We do not know everything nor do we have all the answers.

Sure, we might have learned a few things about how to walk in victory or how to use our faith, but each battle we find ourselves in is unique. Every trial of our faith is going to be at least a little different and will probably require a different approach.

Therefore, we need God’s wisdom and direction for each and every battle because He knows exactly what the way of escape is for every one of these trials.

The problem lies when we think we know something about the enemy we are up against or when we think we know exactly what will bring us out of our trials.

There is a truth in 1 Corinthians 8:2 that says if we think we know anything, we know nothing yet as we ought to know. This means that

the moment we think we have the answers, that is when we are revealing how truly ignorant we are.

Nobody has all the answers. Only God does. He alone is wise (Jude 25)!

So in every battle, we would do good to humble ourselves like Jehoshaphat did, and realize that we do not know exactly what to do and quit trying to figure it all out.

Let me tell a story that perfectly illustrates my point here.

I heard a testimony before of a couple who had a young child with a skin disorder.

This couple did everything they knew to do to get their child healed and to relieve him of his suffering: They bound the devil, they confessed the truth, they laid their hands on him, and they stood on the Word of God. They also tried all the natural remedies that the doctors advised them to take. They did all they knew to do but got no results.

Then one day after much frustration, the father was praying and God spoke to him to pray for his child's heart.

After he spoke to his heart, the child's skin began to clear up, and within a short period of time, the child was completely healed. Praise God!

But what I want you to see is that they, nor the doctors, knew that his skin condition was a result of a problem with his heart. No one made the

connection. Everyone was just doing what they knew to do, trying this and practicing that.

But what if, instead of just doing everything we could think of, we would first of all seek the Lord for what we should do?

I guarantee you that if we sought God's counsel first when difficult situations come up, we would save ourselves much frustration and unnecessary heartache.

I have actually heard of several Christians who believe God still heals today say that the Lord specifically told them to have medical procedures done.

Someone who also believes this way might say, "Well, I just don't believe God would ever tell someone to have surgery!"

My question is: Why not?

I believe God's perfect will is for us to receive our healing directly from Him, but as evidenced by the scores of people who tried to believe God for their healing and did not receive, not all are in a position to receive it by faith.

There are many possible reasons for people failing to receive God's perfect will for them, but my point is: Don't you think God knows beforehand if someone will or will not receive their healing?

Of course He does.

So why wouldn't He lead someone to get their healing some other way if He knew they were not going to receive directly from Him?

The bottom line is that God loves us and wants us whole- just as any father wants their children well.

He is not sitting on His throne saying, "Well, if they are not going to receive their healing supernaturally from Me, they will just have to die!"

No, God is a good God. He wants us well, period.

So the lesson we should learn from Jehoshaphat's statement here is that we do not know exactly what to do in every battle. So why don't we just ask God for the wisdom and direction we need instead of just doing everything in our own wisdom and understanding?

We would keep ourselves from many unnecessary heartaches and defeats if we would just humble ourselves and ask Him what we should do first.

Now let's look at the final statement Jehoshaphat made in this powerful verse.

## **THE HUMBLE GET THE GRACE**

The third and final thing Jehoshaphat declared, since they did not have the power nor the

knowledge to deliver themselves, was- **“but our eyes are upon You.”**

In other words, since they knew their victory did not lie in themselves, they chose to look to the Lord to give them their victory.

Like Jehoshaphat, when we face the mountains that periodically arise in our lives, we should look to the Lord. This happens after we first quit looking to ourselves.

Once we realize that we do not have the power or the knowledge to face our battles in ourselves, we are now able to look to the Lord to fight for us. This is when we position ourselves to watch Him grant us victory by His marvelous grace.

When we lean on our own abilities, we are limited because we do not have nearly enough power to deliver ourselves.

God is omnipotent- that is, He is all powerful. We should put our focus on Him for power and strength, not ourselves.

These two truths should be ever present in us- Apart from Him we can do nothing, but through Him we can do all things.

We should keep the truth ever before us that we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. But at the same time, we should never forget that without Him we can do absolutely nothing.

Understanding both of these truths will keep our eyes on Him and will guard our hearts from thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought to think.

When we lean to our own understanding, we are limited because we don't know or understand everything about our situation.

God is omniscient- that is, He knows everything. We should put our focus on Him for direction and wisdom- not ourselves.

He knows exactly what the natural and/or spiritual root is to every problem we encounter, and He is more than willing to share His wisdom with us. All we need to do is turn our eyes on Him.

James 1:5 tells us that if we lack wisdom all we have to do is ask and God will liberally give it to us. He went on to say that we have not because we ask not.

Why would believers not ask for wisdom?

I would venture to say that it is usually because we have more faith in our own ability to know what to do than in God's ability to know what to do. This is why we need to set our eyes on Him!

When we truly humble ourselves by leaning on the Lord for our strength and by looking to Him for our answers, we get more grace. But when we act proudly by taking things into our own hands, we can actually face resistance (James 4:6).



We do not need resistance; we need grace, and more of it.

We need God's grace to overcome the devil and see the mountains in our lives removed; but this grace is given to the humble.

Therefore, we need to humble ourselves in the midst of our battles:

We need to humble ourselves by repenting if we have brought these problems on ourselves. We need to humble ourselves by acknowledging the fact that we do not have the ability or the knowledge to deliver ourselves. And we need to humble ourselves by turning our eyes over on the Lord for His help.

Those who humble themselves under the mighty of God like this will be exalted in due time (1 Peter 5:6).



# ***CHAPTER FOUR***

## ***HAVING DONE ALL TO STAND***

### **STAND, THEREFORE**

So what do we do after we have magnified God and presented our situation to Him?

What do we do after we have truly embraced the truth that God alone is our answer?

We do exactly what Jehoshaphat and all of Judah did next.

Verse 13 says, **“Now all Judah, with their little ones, their wives, and their children, stood before the Lord.”**

Notice that this verse says that all of Judah *stood* before the Lord after taking their situation to Him in prayer.

This is a huge point.

You see, it is one thing to declare something in prayer, but it is another thing to actually stand

like they did after they made their confessions of faith.

The reason for this is because it is not extremely difficult to say the things that Jehoshaphat said in his prayer. It is, however, another thing altogether, to actually put these truths into practice after we pray.

What is of extreme importance is what you do during that period of time between your prayer and the victory being manifested.

And Jehoshaphat's kingdom made the right choice yet again: They stood.

Likewise, our primary responsibility after we have presented our case before God is to just simply "stand."

## **STRIPPED AND DISARMED**

In Ephesians chapter six- our most concentrated instructions on spiritual warfare in the Bible- we are told several times that, having done all, we are to simply stand.

You see, there is a reason why the Apostle Paul mentioned "standing" three times in this chapter on spiritual warfare.

The reason is because under this new and better Covenant, the battle has already been won.

Jesus Christ spoiled principalities and powers through His death, burial, and resurrection 2000 years ago (Colossians 2:15).

This word “spoiled” describes someone being stripped of all their possessions, and one of those things was their weapons. It is for this reason that the New International Version says in this verse that Jesus “disarmed” the enemy.

In Isaiah 54:17, the prophet said that no weapon formed against us will prosper, but the truth is that now the enemy does not even have any weapons to form against us. He has been stripped of all the weapons that he ever had to form against mankind.

All he has now is his knack for deceiving us into believing he has any power over our lives whatsoever. He will lie to us, telling us that he is going to steal, kill, or destroy what we have. But he lacks any power to actually accomplish any of those threats.

You could say it this way: Under our new covenant, the only effective weapon the enemy has against us is the illusion that he even has an effective weapon. This, my friends, is a powerfully true statement.

Therefore, we already have the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (see 1 Corinthians 15:57). Thanks be unto God!

## STEADFAST AND IMMOVABLE

So if the battle has already been won and we already have the victory, what is the only thing left to do?

You guessed it- The only thing left to do is just simply stand.

This is exactly what the Apostle Paul went on to say after he made this glorious statement of victory in 1 Corinthians 15:57- “Thanks be unto God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!”

In verse 58, he went on to say, “Therefore (i.e. in light of the victory Jesus has already purchased for us), my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable...”

What this verse is saying is that since God has already given us victory over every one of life’s challenges, our only responsibility is to just be established and unmovable; grounded and steadfast. In other words, our only job is to not be moved off what God has said and to hold fast to our confession of faith.

This is exactly what the Apostle Paul meant in Ephesians chapter six when he told us “to stand.”

To “stand” implies holding our ground. It implies not moving from where God has placed us or from what God has done for us.

So, after we take our situation before the Lord in prayer and cast all of our cares over on Him, our next responsibility is to “stand”- to not be moved from what the Word of God tells us and to not waver from what He has promised us.

## **STANDING UNDER PRESSURE**

Now make no mistake about it, “standing” is easier said than done. The enemy will do everything he can to try and get you to cast away your confidence and let your confession slip away.

One of his favorite devices he likes to use is what the Bible calls *tribulations*.

This word “tribulation” comes from the Greek word *thilipsis*. This word was used to describe being under extreme pressure.

The word picture that would best illustrate this word *thilipsis* is that of a huge boulder being placed on top of someone. Therefore, *thilipsis* describes circumstances and situations that put a “ton of pressure” on our mind, will, and emotions.

I believe all of us can relate to this word picture I just described.

We all have had circumstances in our lives where we felt extreme pressure mentally, emotionally, and even physically. These circumstances that put this pressure on us are what the Bible calls “tribulations.”

## STAYING UNDER POWER

But the Bible also tells us of a virtue that is to be our response to these tribulations. It is called *patience* (Romans 5:3-4 & James 1:2-4).

This word “patience” comes from the Greek word *hupomeno* which literally means to stay, dwell, or abide under something. It describes enduring or standing underneath something.

So what is the thing that this patient person is standing underneath?

It is the tribulation- the circumstances that weigh on us and put extreme pressure on us.

The enemy is ultimately using these tribulations for one purpose- to get us to move. His goal is to get us to cave in under the pressure. His aim is to get us to move from where God wants us.

But not only does he try to get us to quit trusting the Lord in the current trial we are in; his ultimate aim is to steal all our faith in God.

So, as the Word of God teaches us, our response to this pressure is to endure, to be patient, and to not let the circumstances move us from God’s perfect will for us.

As we have just discussed, biblical “standing” means to stand up strong under the pressure and not be moved. Allowing this “staying



under power” (i.e. patience) to work in us during times of great pressure is what it means to stand.

So don't be moved! Don't quit! Let patience have her perfect work in you, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing (James 1:4).

Be strong and stand against the temptation to throw away your hope in the promises of God. Do not cast away your confidence which has great recompense for reward (Hebrews 10:35).



## *CHAPTER FIVE*

# *THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S*

After Jehoshaphat and all of Judah stood before the Lord, the Holy Spirit began to speak through a man who was in the midst of the assembly.

The man God used was a Levite by the name of Jahaziel. God used this ordinary man to share some encouraging words about the trial they were in.

So I want us to spend this chapter and the next taking an in-depth look at some of the things that God said to Jehoshaphat through this prophecy.

### **IT IS NOT OUR FIGHT**

God began to speak to them: **“Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the Lord to you: Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God’s.”** (vs.15)

What an awesome statement this is that the Holy Spirit made at the end of verse fifteen- **“The battle is not yours, but God’s!”**

We would do good to continuously reflect on this truth in order to remind us that the battle is not ours, but the battle is God’s.

You see, this powerful phrase has a whole range of applications to our lives:

As I already made a point of this in chapter one, these “ites” that Jehoshaphat had coming up against him were types and shadows of the kingdom of darkness that we wrestle against under our New Covenant. And these demonic forces manifest themselves in many different ways.

Their effects range from the more obvious demonic devices such as depression, oppression, sickness, and poverty to the more subtle areas of darkness such as bitterness, envy, strife, and selfishness.

So when it is written that the battle is not ours but the Lord’s, this applies to any of these different “ites” that come against us today.

For example, when we see the enemy working to destroy our marriages- trying to generate strife and bring division between us and our spouses- we should remember that the battle is not ours, but God’s.

Sure, in the middle of these difficult situations, the enemy will feed us the lie that our

marriage is hopeless and that our spouse will never change.

Sure, he will try and deceive us into thinking that we better defend ourselves lest we be taken advantage of.

But the truth is that the battle for our marriage is not ours, it is God's.

God is able to create hope where there seems to be hopelessness. God is able to bring change when change seems impossible. God is able to heal, restore, and even prosper our relationship with our spouse no matter how discouraging our situation seems.

It is His battle, and He is resolved to fight it for us. Hallelujah!

Do you know what happens when we see the challenges we encounter as *our* battles?

Our pride will cause us to attempt to take things into our own hands.

For example, when we have lost loved ones, we feel such an urgency to see them come into the light that we allow that fear of their present course to drive us. When this happens, we will take every opportunity that we get to hammer them with the truth and witness to them.

While our motives are good, we need to also understand that the battle for our loved-one's salvation is not ours; it is also the Lord's battle.

We need to understand that we cannot make anybody see the light; only God can because no one comes to Jesus unless the Holy Spirit draws them (John 6:44 & 16:8).

Now please understand me: I am definitely not promoting some kind of radical predestination teaching where we do not need to ever witness to them. All I am saying is that we need to understand that the fight for their salvation has not been laid squarely on our shoulders; it is the Lord's battle to fight.

Therefore, we should just rest in Him-trusting that He is fighting that battle and drawing them to Himself- while at the same time being open to share the truth with them as the Lord opens up the opportunities.

You see, understanding that each and every battle we encounter in our life is the Lord's battle and not our own is such an important part of the Christian life.

It is a principle that we see all throughout God's Word and He desires us to understand: We are victorious only by the grace of God and not by any works that we have done. We are saved by the grace of God. We are healed by the grace of God. We are prosperous by the grace of God.

God's grace is Him fighting all our battles for us, and it has been His plan for mankind since Adam.

Therefore, every battle we find ourselves in- whether it be over our ministries, over our physical health, over our finances, over our families, or over our own souls- God has said that all of these are His battles and, therefore, should not concern us in the least. Thank you Jesus!

## THE ROOT OF FEARING DEFEAT

Let's now draw our attention to the phrase that the Holy Spirit included before He said that the battle is not ours, but God's.

Again, He said- ***“Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's.”***

By including that word **“for”** before this phrase we have just covered, God is telling us *why* we are not to be afraid or dismayed when these “ites” come against us.

So what was the reason that He gave them not to fear?

It was because it was not even their battle; it was God's. He told them not to be afraid or dismayed *because* the battle was not even theirs to fight.

You see, if the battle was ours then we would have every reason to be afraid because we know that we have limitations. We know that there

are many problems that we will encounter that are beyond our control.

So if these battles were indeed ours, we most definitely would have every reason to be afraid.

But let me ask you a question: Are you ever afraid of God losing any of His battles?

Of course you are not.

So can you guess the only reason why we ever get afraid when alarming situations enter into our life?

It is because we see them as our battles.

The only reason we become dismayed is because we incorrectly see these huge and insurmountable problems as *our* battles, and not God's.

Therefore, the very root of the fear of defeat is not being fully persuaded that the battles we encounter are the Lord's battles and not ours.

Sure, if we were asked if we believed that the problems we have were *our* battles we would deny it, but the evidence of our faith is in our actions.

If we are in fear, it is because we do not truly believe God will fight that battle for us.



If we are afraid and worried it is for one of two reasons: Either we do not believe God can handle it or we do not believe He will handle it.

And usually our deficiency is not in believing that God has the power or ability to do what He wants to. What we are generally deficient in is not in believing that God wants to. In other words, most believers are not convinced that God is willing and resolved to fight all of their battles for them.

But the truth is God has said that every battle we find ourselves in that was instigated by the enemy is not our battle; they are His battles.

Therefore, if we saw our problems in this light, we would be full of peace in the midst of the storm because we know that God is more than able to take care of these situations.

## **BE STILL AND KNOW**

Now I want to skip ahead to something that the Lord spoke to Jehoshaphat through Jahaziel because it pertains to the theme of this chapter.

He went on to tell them in verse seventeen: **“stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.”**

This extremely powerful statement is one that is very near and dear to my heart.

I found myself in a particular trial very early in my Christian walk and God spoke this very statement to me. The details of this battle are not important, but the outcome is.

I received a bad report one day that one of the many poor decisions I made before I came to know the Lord had come back to haunt me. When this news got back to me, I was absolutely terrified to say the least.

Unfortunately, I did not respond the way Jehoshaphat did upon hearing his bad news when fear tried to grip him.

To be honest with you, I just panicked. I called everybody I could think of for counsel, legal advice, etc. I got into what I would call: a “flesh frenzy.”

But thank God, He was gracious to me.

Later on that afternoon after I had done everything I knew to do, He revealed to me a portion of Exodus 14:13 which say’s exactly the same thing as here in 2 Chronicles 20:17- “Do not be afraid. Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.”

When I got this word from God my faith was ignited. I knew I had heard from the Lord.

I am sure this was how Jehoshaphat and all Judah felt too because it was a fresh Word for them as well.

When I got this Word, I knew that the Lord was going to deliver me from the consequences of this past mistake. And, glory to God, He did!

He supernaturally delivered me from this situation like He delivered the children of Israel in their predicament. Thank you, Jesus!

You see, when the children of Israel were delivered from their bondage to Pharaoh, God began to lead them to the land of promise.

However, after their exodus, they came to this apparent barrier- the Red Sea. And on top of that, Pharaoh and his army were pursuing them from behind.

Their slavery to Pharaoh in Egypt was a type of our bondage to the devil in the world. Therefore, this pursuit by Pharaoh is symbolic of how our past will attempt to recapture us after we have begun to follow Jesus.

This is a biblical illustration of what the devil was trying to do to me.

But, glory to God, He communicated to me the same message He gave the children of Israel through Moses- Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.

So what does this statement mean, to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord?

What was God saying to the children of Israel, to Jehoshaphat, and to me and you?

He was basically telling them and us today: “Just stand still. I don’t want any help. I don’t want any self effort on your part. I just want you to be still and watch Me deliver you.”

Another good paraphrase would be: “Guys, don’t do anything. Just sit back and watch Me be your God by my supernaturally delivery.”

This is very similar to what we talked about in chapter sixteen when we discussed how they simply stood before the Lord after Jehoshaphat’s prayer ended.

You see, God does not need, nor does He want our help in these battles.

If they are His battles (and they are), then we should not make them our battles by trying to help Him out.

I understand this requires a lot of faith, especially for us out there who like to be in control and are very task-oriented people.

Nevertheless, if we want to avoid giving birth to any “Ishmaels”- that is, producing the fruit of doing things in our strength and according to our own understanding- then we better allow God to give us the victory in His way and in His timing.

This is a word from God to every generation of His people: Don’t try and help Me out. Just be still and watch Me be God.

## LET GO AND LET GOD

Many of us have heard the verse quoted that says- “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10).

We usually hear this verse used to teach us to get quiet in His presence, but actually it denotes the same thing we have seen here in this phrase we have been covering.

You see, God desires for us to know Him as our God. He desires for us to let Him be our God and He wills for us to experience all that He has to offer in our lives.

In other words, He wants us to allow Him to do the miraculous in our lives. He wants us to allow Him to do exceedingly abundantly above all we could ever ask or even think. He wants us to fully experience Him as our God, but we have to let Him do this.

So how do we let Him be God to us?

We let him be our God by learning to “stand still”- that is, not taking things into our own hands and promptly doing whatever He tells us to do. These are two of the greatest keys to experientially knowing Him as our God.

You see, we need to avoid the temptations of the flesh and mind that scream to “help God out” as we wait on Him to bring about our salvation.

It is tough on our flesh to “stand still” as we see our enemy approaching. It is difficult to not get involved and do something as trying circumstances are surrounding you. But being “still” is a must if we are going to receive God’s best kind of victory.

And we can only be still like this because He has assured us that the battle we are facing is not our battle; it is His battle.

So let the Lord fight your battle. Let Him be your God. Allow Him to manifest Himself in your life and bring you your desired deliverance.

The battle belongs to the Lord, but the victory belongs to us.

# *CHAPTER SIX*

## *INQUIRING OF THE LORD*

### **WHAT IS GOD'S PLAN?**

In this chapter, I want us to finish looking at what the Lord spoke to Jehoshaphat through the prophet, Jahaziel. But before we delve into this, allow me to make the following point:

While God has said that the battle is not ours to fight, this does not mean that we should do nothing and expect God to do everything. In some cases, that might be exactly what He wants us to do, but we are not to assume that.

We need to hear from God. We need to receive specific direction from Him on what part we have to play in Him giving us victory in all of these battles.

You see, each battle is unique and probably will require a completely different approach.

The mistake many believers have made is that they believe there is a formula for receiving from God. They think if they just do one, two, or

three steps that it will unlock victory every single time, but that is not necessarily true.

Sure, there are some things that are very helpful in bringing about victory, but the most important thing we need to do is hear from God. We need to be led by Him specifically in what we need to do.

Why do I make this point?

It is because what we saw work for somebody else with the same problem may not necessarily work for us. In fact, what we did the last time the same problem came up might not necessarily work this time.

Our individual walks with God are walks of faith that require a personal relationship with the object of our faith. There are not any blanket methods to walking in victory. We need to get alone with Him and receive a personal and fresh Word every time we are faced with a challenging situation.

And Jehoshaphat received one of these Words from God. In verse sixteen, the Lord told him specifically what he needed to do and where he needed to go.

In verse sixteen, Jahaziel continued with: **“Tomorrow go down against them. They will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the brook before the wilderness of Jeruel.”**



The next thing the Lord spoke to them is also very significant.

## WHEN DO WE FIGHT?

At the beginning of verse seventeen the Lord said, **“You will not need to fight in this battle...”**

This is an extremely important statement because sometimes God commissioned Israel to fight their battles, and others like this one, He fought it for them.

For instance, when Joshua led the children of Israel into the Promised Land, God commissioned them to possess the land by physically fighting for it. But there were also times that He did not require them to fight at all.

Now this does not mean that sometimes He helped them and then other times he did not. It was God’s grace that gave them victory whether it came through their own hand or whether it came through His hand. It just simply means that there were times He knew they needed to fight it themselves and there were other times He could fight it for them.

This is why it is so important to hear from God.

We need to know whether we are to do things in the natural to cooperate with God in Him granting us victory or we need to know whether we

are to do nothing and just let God totally fight the battle for us.

We need to be led by the Holy Spirit on whether we are to go and talk to an individual we are having problems with or whether we need to be silent and allow God to deal with them Himself.

We need to hear from God on whether we need to make some adjustments with how we have been a steward our money or if we need to not change anything and trust God to supernaturally give us our desired financial breakthrough.

Therefore, it is important that we inquire of the Lord as to whether we need to fight a particular battle or not.

## **HEARING FROM GOD**

David understood this truth of seeking God for direction very well.

We are told throughout his life story that he constantly inquired of the Lord (1 Samuel 23:2-4, 30:8 & 2 Samuel 2:1).

He constantly asked the Lord whether or not he needed to go to battle against his enemies. He did not just assume he knew what God wanted him to do.

One of my favorite examples of this is found in 1 Samuel chapter thirty.

In this chapter, we are told how David and his army returned from doing the Lord's work. Upon returning from this battle, they discovered that the Amalekites had raided their home in Ziklag and taken captive their wives and possessions.

When this news reached David and his men, they wept so much that they did not even have the power to weep anymore (vs.4). And on top of what David was already experiencing emotionally, he then found out that his men were now talking of stoning him.

So what do you think would have been the response of most Christians if this would have happened to them?

They would have responded in one of two ways:

1. They would have either hung their heads in defeat- despairing over everything the enemy had stolen from them.
2. They would have charged ahead in anger and done everything they could think of to fight back and recover what the enemy had stolen from them.

But David did not respond in either of these two ways.

In the midst of what was a emotionally devastating situation, David did not let the situation

dictate His attitude. He refused to stay in that pit of self-pity.

We are told in the famous verse of 1 Samuel chapter thirty that David responded to this news by “encouraging himself in the Lord” (vs.6). This means that he began to focus on the encouraging truths that He had in the Lord.

For example, he might have recalled the faithfulness of God towards him while he was still a shepherd- how the Lord delivered him from a number of dangerous circumstances.

He might have recalled what God spoke to him while he was in those hills as a boy and then rejoiced over God’s promises to him.

There are many ways that we can encourage ourselves in the Lord like David did in this situation.

But David did not stop there.

Not only did he rejoice in the Lord when everything seemed to be going wrong; David also did not act hastily when it came to how they were going to recover their wives and possessions.

David set his face to seek the Lord and to discover what God wanted Him to do. He sought God to find out whether he should pursue the Amalekites or not (vs.7-8).

This is such a great lesson for us to learn from when it comes to the battles we encounter.

When a crisis arises like this, we should not act hastily- making a rash decision of what to do- based on what our emotional response is. We should get alone with God and inquire of Him what He wants us to do.

You see, as we have already spent some time talking about, we need a fresh word from God in every single battle because He knows the exact ins and outs of every one of these crises.

He knows exactly where we are in our personal walks each time too. He knows what we are ready for and what we are in a position to receive from Him. He knows all the implications of every step we make.

So since God possesses all knowledge and understanding, it would behoove us to get His wisdom by inquiring of Him in every trial we are in.

Then in verse seventeen, God goes on to give them further direction.

In the rest of verse seventeen He says, **“Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem! Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you.”**

## POSITIONING OURSELVES

Notice that the first thing He said here was “position yourselves.”

These two words hold another very important lesson regarding our inquiring of the Lord for what we are supposed to do.

Why would God tell them to position themselves for battle if He just said that they would not need to fight in this battle?

That does not make a lot of sense, does it? On the surface, it might seem like these two statements contradict each other, but there is a good lesson in this.

Sometimes when we inquire of the Lord for His specific instructions, He will instruct us to do something that does not make sense. Sometimes when we inquire of the Lord for direction, He will direct us to do something that, to the natural mind, seems like complete foolishness.

The Bible is full of examples where God has done this. Therefore, these examples show us that this is consistent with His nature.

Let me give you one example:

Do you remember the account of Naaman in 2 Kings chapter five? This story describes how God told Naaman through the messenger of the prophet

Elijah to go dip in the Jordan River seven times in order to be healed of his leprosy.

That was a very unconventional way to get somebody healed, wasn't it?

What did dipping in the Jordan River seven times have to do with being cleansed of leprosy?

It had nothing to do with the Jordan River or dipping seven times; but it had everything to do with Naaman's faith in God's Word.

There is also another good point in this story that we need to understand: Naaman almost missed his miracle.

When he arrived at the prophet's home, Elijah sent out his servant to tell him the Word of the Lord. When Naaman saw this, he was furious. The Bible said it was because he thought that Elijah should come out himself and heal him in some spectacular fashion (vs.11).

Naaman evidently thought he was too special to have a servant sent to him instead of the prophet himself. He probably also thought it was too ridiculous to be told to dip in the "dirty and disgusting" Jordan River.

You see, Naaman had two wrong concepts about hearing from God:

1. He thought he deserved to hear from God in a different way.

2. He thought he deserved to hear from God something a little less strange.

And both of these wrong concepts will greatly hinder us from receiving from God too.

When we do inquire from the Lord what we are to do in a battle, we do not need to expect God to speak to us in just one particular way. He might not want to give us the wisdom we desire by speaking directly to our hearts. There is a good chance He might indirectly send someone across our path to give us the wisdom we desire.

In those cases, we need to guard against the pride that will tell us that we can hear from God just as good as them; so why would God send them to tell us something?

This is an attitude that will keep us from consistently hearing from God because He will oftentimes speak to us through other people.

I believe that the reason God tells us to do these things that do not make any sense in the natural is because, when we do them, we are demonstrating that we truly trust Him. I believe he is trying to get us to use our faith because it is only by putting our faith in Him that we position ourselves to receive from Him.

So we should expect God to occasionally give us some ridiculous instructions because He wants us to use our faith and receive His very best.



Do you see how imperative it is that we hear from God in every battle?

By inquiring of the Lord first, not only will we keep from making those rash and emotional decisions that are usually wrong, we can be assured that God will lead us in the way of victory.



## *CHAPTER SEVEN*

# *OUR REASONABLE SERVICE*

Can you imagine the feeling of elation that Jehoshaphat and his kingdom must have been experiencing at this point?

They had just heard from God. They had just heard some of the best news they could have ever received. It was the good news; it was the Gospel!

So what was their response to the gospel they just heard?

Verses eighteen and nineteen go on to tell us their response to the Word of God: **“And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the Lord, worshiping the Lord. Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with voices loud and high.”**

In these verses, we are told that Jehoshaphat and all his people fell down on their faces and began to worship the Lord. Then the Levites and

singers stood up on their feet and began to praise God with voices loud and high.

So if you have been wondering what our responsibility is in light of these exceedingly great and precious promises, here you go:

Our reasonable service is to worship the Lord for fighting these battles for us. Our reasonable service is to praise Him because all we have to do is stand and watch Him deliver us.

This is a pretty good deal, isn't it?

The Lord fights our battles and we praise and worship Him for it. What a good God we serve!

But I want us to take a moment and note *how* they praised and worshiped the Lord.

## **THE HEART OF PRAISE & WORSHIP**

The Holy Spirit chose to make special mention of how they physically bowed down in worship and how they naturally lifted up their voices in praise. I believe this is very significant.

Now let me first of all say that I do not believe that physically lying prostrate or naturally raising our voices holds any benefit in and of themselves.

We can lie on the floor until we are mistaken for a rug. We can lift our voices until we

are blue in the face. We can do these natural expressions of praise and worship and not get any results other than the occasional rug burn and sore throat.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal (2 Corinthians 10:4) - that is, they have little or nothing to do with any of these natural ways of praising and worshiping the Lord.

So does this mean that it does not matter whether or not we praise and worship God in these demonstrative ways?

No, it is extremely important that we praise and worship God in these natural ways. The very fact that they are recorded so many times in Scripture teaches us that it is important to praise and worship God like this.

There have been and still are those who say that it does not matter whether or not we lie prostrate in worship or lift our voices in praise. There are even those who frown upon these expressions of praise and worship, citing them as acts of “emotionalism” and not as being truly “spiritual.”

But instead of embracing our opinions and traditions, the questions we need to ask are: How does God desire us to express ourselves in praise and worship? What does the Word of God reveal to us about how we should praise and worship?

As I just made mention of in these two verses, evidently His will is that we express ourselves in these demonstrative ways.

However, this all goes back to the universal truth that God looks at the heart and not at the outward appearance (1 Samuel 16:7). He is more concerned with the motive of our heart- why we do what we do and why we do not do what we do not do.

You see, there have been many people who have bowed down or lifted up their voices but have done these things with impure motives. For instance, there have been many Christians who have performed many of these outward acts just to be seen by men.

Does that mean that we should eliminate all natural expressions of praise and worship?

Of course it doesn't.

It just means that we need to judge ourselves from time to time to make sure our motives are pure.

Now here is a good point: Did you know that being very demonstrative to be seen of man is not any worse than not being demonstrative at all because of the fear of man?

I have found that the primary reason that so many believers do not express themselves in praise and worship is not because they are seeking to honor God; it is because they are concerned about

their reputation and because they care what people think about them. Both of these motives are equally wrong because they are pride and loving the praise of men more than the praise of God.

Whether it be bowing down with our faces to the ground in worship or lifting up our voices in praise, the real issue is the condition of our heart.

When our hearts get filled up with a love and appreciation for all that God has done for us—namely, giving us victory over every battle we face, we are going to express that love and appreciation. And when we allow this genuine praise and worship to overflow from our hearts like this, we put a huge smile on the Lord's face.

There is no greater way to please the Lord than to give God our hearts in praise and worship like this, especially when we are in the midst of our trials and tribulations. And when you please the Lord, you will know it. Everything in your life will come alive as you begin to lift Him up in praise and worship.

Therefore, shouting unto God with a voice of triumph and loving on the Lord by bowing down are not only our reasonable service, they greatly benefit us as well. We will see this in greater detail in the following verses.

## INSTANT OBEDIENCE

Then, after they praised and worshiped God for His promise of victory, we are told in verse twenty: **So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa.**

This statement shows how strong their faith was because in order to rise up early the next morning to face their problem indicates that they were confident in God's Word.

If they were gripped with fear they would have put off doing what God had told them to do. They would have stayed in their homes and thought of every reason why they should put off obeying God.

But the very fact that one would rise early in the morning to go do something is an indication that they are anxiously expecting something good to happen.

This part of 2 Chronicles chapter twenty reminds me of when God told Abraham to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice. The Bible says that one evening, God told Abraham to do this and then "early the next morning" he headed out to do what God told him to do.

This was an indicator of how great Abraham's faith was because to even be willing to do what God told him to do is miraculous enough; but to rise up early the next morning to do it shows this man's absolute faith in God.



I know personally, if I have plans to get up early to do something that I enjoy, it is relatively easy to get out of bed when my alarm goes off. But if I have to get up to do something less enjoyable, that is a different story. I will hit the snooze button half-a-dozen times because it is so hard to get out of the bed. It is amazing how much different I can feel in the morning based on what my plans are for that day.

This is the power of hope. To have a confident expectation that something good and exciting is going to happen today will cause you to hop out of bed in the morning.

This is one of the reasons why people who are depressed sleep so much. It is because they are void of hope.

People who suffer from depression have lost their expectation that something good might be in store for them.

Having hope is the key that unlocks an excitement to face the day and its challenges.

Therefore, faith- which is the substance of things hoped for (Hebrews 11:1) - gets excited in the midst of the battle because it anticipates the victory which is right around the corner. Faith is quick to face the challenge because it sees the glory to follow. Hallelujah!

## KEEP BELIEVING

Now notice in verse twenty that the following morning after they rose up early to go into the Wilderness of Tekoa that Jehoshaphat stood and exhorted the people to keep believing.

Even if we have had an encounter with the Lord or have a strong “thus saith the Lord” like Judah did here, we all need to continuously be exhorted to believe God.

It is easy when we get a Word from the Lord to dance and shout, but as time elapses our hearts have a tendency to become hardened to what God has revealed to us.

This is why we need to surround ourselves with faith-filled believers who will offer us encouragement and exhort us to believe God (Hebrews 3:12-13). This will help keep our hearts sensitive to the things of God.

So what was it that Jehoshaphat exhorted the people to believe?

In verse twenty he said, **“Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper.”**

In this verse, he exhorted the people to believe two specific things: He told them to believe in the Lord their God and to believe in His prophets.

In other words, what Jehoshaphat was saying was that we should have faith in two things when we are stepping out to do what God has told us to do.

The first exhortation he gave them was to believe in the Lord their God. This means that we are to put faith in who He is (i.e. His nature and character).

As Jehoshaphat said, believing in God's person is what will cause us to be established, which means to be steadfast, grounded, and unmovable.

Knowing God is what puts our roots down deep. Having this intimate relationship with Him is the foundation that keeps us established and unmovable in the midst of difficult situations.

The second thing Jehoshaphat exhorted the people to believe was what God had said.

Since the prophets of their day were the mouthpieces used by God to speak to His people, believing His prophets was symbolic of believing God's Word.

It is through actively putting faith in what God has said that causes us to prosper. In other words, increase, growth and expansion in our lives are directly tied to believing what God has spoken to us, whether through the Spirit or the Word.

So think of these two truths voiced through Jehoshaphat as a building: If we believe in who God is and are persuaded that He loves us and is for us

(which comes through our fellowship with Him), we will have a strong foundation that enables us to be unmovable. But it is only when we believe what He has said- specifically putting faith in His Words to us- that we will begin to see an increase upon that foundation and become a strong pillar in the kingdom of God. Glory to God!

These are the keys to experiencing stability and prosperity after we have heard from God:

1. Expressing our genuine heart-felt gratitude through praising and worshipping God.
2. Instantly obeying His instructions in faith.
3. Continuing to trust in His character and continuing to believe what He has promised us.

They are also our reasonable service.

## ***CHAPTER EIGHT***

### ***PRAISE GOES FIRST***

I just love the next verse in 2 Chronicles chapter twenty. It is a pivotal point in the lesson we should be learning from this great chapter.

After Jehoshaphat had exhorted the people, verse twenty one goes on to say- **“And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the Lord, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: ‘Praise the Lord, For His mercy endures forever.’”**

What an unusual battle plan: Sending the praise and worshipers on the front lines *before* the army!?!

This demonstrates the great faith that Jehoshaphat’s kingdom was walking in at this particular time.

And make no mistake about it; it was not Jehoshaphat’s royal decree that put these guys on the front lines. No, Jehoshaphat did not compel these men to do this.

This verse said that he first consulted with the people about doing this. He wanted to see what

they thought and was giving them the opportunity to do it willingly. And from the result, they evidently wanted to do it.

It is very clear that they were fully persuaded that, what God had promised, He was going to perform. The reason is because, in the natural, this was sure suicide.

You have to understand, they did not have any weapons. They had no way of defending themselves. All they were carrying into this head to head encounter with the enemy were their garments of praise (Isaiah 61:3). This was a huge step of faith.

The even more amazing thing about their willingness to do this was that we have no reason to believe that God specifically told them to do it in the first place. They evidently just had it in their hearts, based on God's promise, that they would not even have to fight in this battle.

Wow! Great was their faith.

So how does their sending the singers to the front lines apply to the various battles that we find ourselves in?

It teaches us that once we have inquired of the Lord and have received His direction that praise should precede everything else we do. In other words, once we have heard from the Lord, the only thing left to do as we are awaiting the manifestation of our victory is to rejoice and praise the Lord.

It might seem like we need to do something in the natural when our enemies are approaching, but the single greatest thing we can do is praise God.

You see, God inhabits the praises of His people (Psalm 22:3). You could say that the best way to get God to manifest Himself in our midst is by praising Him. And when God shows up like this, nothing but blessing can remain. All darkness must flee in the brightness of His glory. Hallelujah!

The carnal mind thinks that the only way we are going to get out of the mess we are in is through our own strength. However, the truth is that the strength we need to defeat our enemies is not found in the arm of the flesh; it is found in praise.

Psalm 8:2 says that praise is the strength that will still the enemy; and this strength is released in our lives as we rejoice in the Lord (Nehemiah 8:10).

This is the victory that overcomes the world and every battle we have in our lives- even our faith (John 16:33 & 1 John 5:4). And this overcoming faith is voiced through praise because praise is the language of faith.

## **THE SACRIFICE OF PRAISE**

We are also told in our text that they instructed these singers in not only what they were to wear, but also in what they were to say.

The New King James version says that they were appointed to say, **“Praise the Lord, for His mercy endures forever,”** but the Amplified Bible puts their simple statement of praise this way: **“Give thanks to the Lord, for His mercy and loving-kindness endure forever!”**

I want you to visualize what was going on here: Singers were appointed to march before the actual army chanting- **“Give thanks to the Lord, for His mercy and loving-kindness endure forever!”**

A New Testament verse that beautifully describes this passage of Scripture is 2 Corinthians 2:14.

It says, “Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.”

This verse sounds a lot like Jehoshaphat and his people, doesn't it?

God was leading Judah into a victory that He had already won for them. He was leading them into triumph.

So what is the fragrance of His knowledge that we diffuse as we are being led into all of these victories?

It is the fragrance diffused by the sacrifice of praise. Praise God!



If you were to ask if we were still supposed to offer sacrifices under the New Covenant, most Christians would say no. But that is not exactly true. It is true that we do not offer up the same kind of burnt offerings that they did under the law, but there are different- more spiritual- sacrifices that we are to offer today under our New Covenant.

One of these spiritual sacrifices is found in Hebrews 13:15 which says, “Therefore by Him let us continually *offer the sacrifice of praise* to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”

A lot of times when this verse is quoted, the “sacrifice of praise” is taught as giving God your praise even though you do not feel like it. But this is not what the author meant when he used the word “sacrifice” to describe our praise.

This word has more to do with giving God our *offering* of praise. In other words, our praise is our gift to Him, just as the goats, lambs, bulls, etc. were the Jews gifts to Him.

This is what is meant by giving God the “sacrifice of praise.”

Therefore, just as their Old Testament sacrifices gave off a natural aroma, our New Testament sacrifice of praise gives off a spiritual aroma. There is a sweet savor that is dispensed through us wherever we go praising the Lord.

The even better news about this is that this spiritual aroma actually affects the atmosphere around us.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 2:14-15, our praise makes God known. We will become more aware of His presence in our lives because the atmosphere around us will be saturated with the glory and blessing of the Almighty.

And not only will we become more aware of God, those we come in contact with will sense His presence as well.

This spiritual fragrance upon us will draw out different reactions from the people we come in contact with: Those who know the Lord will be attracted to it, but those who are walking in darkness will either not want to have anything to do with us or they will persecute us.

Has there ever been a time in your life when you have come in contact with someone who walked with God and you were drawn to them? Has there ever been a time in your walk with God where an unbeliever just seemed to have it in for you?

I know I personally can say a definite “yes” to both of these questions.

I have had times when I have met people and the things of God never got brought up, yet I knew they were a Christian. You can just know because you can sense it.

There have also been times in my life when I have been around certain people who just seemed to know where I stood with the Lord, and they were not even Christians. In many of these situations, I did not feel like I was vocal at all about what I believed, but these unbelievers acted as though I was preaching to them all the time.

This used to amaze me until I realized this one truth- that there is evidently something (or better yet, “Someone”) we carry with us everywhere we go, and His name is the Holy Spirit. He emits a spiritual aroma around us to where people- saved or unsaved- can sense His presence.

So now is a good time to ask ourselves this question: Do we reek of the presence of God?

If your answer is “no” or if you would just like to diffuse more of the fragrance of His knowledge every place you go, the key is in what we have been talking about: It is through the sacrifice of praise. Living a lifestyle of praise is what causes God to inhabit the atmosphere around you (Psalm 22:3).

## THANKS BE TO GOD

There is another Scripture in 1 Corinthians that say's basically the same thing as this one does in 2 Corinthians 2:14.

1 Corinthians 15:57 says, "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Now if you compare these two passages of Scripture, what is the key phrase that you see?

They both begin with- "Thanks be unto God!" Yes, in both of these verses that mention how God gives us victory and always leads us in triumph, the Apostle Paul begins with a resounding "Thanks be to God."

So here is a powerful truth to get a hold of: Just as Paul prefaced God's promises of Him giving us victory and causing us to triumph with "thanks be unto God," likewise our victories and triumphs will be preceded by thanksgiving. In other words, giving God thanks is what will lead us into victory after victory. Thank you Jesus!

And as we have already seen, this is exactly what Jehoshaphat's singers were commissioned to declare as they were marching towards their victory: "Give thanks to the Lord" (vs. 21 Amplified Bible). Thanksgiving preceded their victory too.

Our response to God's promise that He will go before us, defeat our enemies, and give us the victory is to be *thanksgiving*. Living this lifestyle of gratitude and thankfulness is a major key to always being led into triumph.

When we gripe, complain and become discontent with what we are currently experiencing and what we currently possess, we can actually keep ourselves in the wilderness even longer. This is exactly what happened to the children of Israel.

In the face of adverse circumstances and undesirable situations, they constantly murmured. This displeased God as well as kept them going around the same mountains for forty years. 1 Corinthians 10:10-11 says that these things were written for our admonition so that we do not murmur and complain like they did and, therefore, open ourselves up to the same problems.

God wants thankful children. He desires children who will, in the face of these undesirable circumstances, rise up in faith and thank Him for all that He has given them and for all that He will give them. When we adopt this lifestyle of thanksgiving and gratitude, we are on our way to being led into victory after victory.

I hope that you now see how important praise and thanksgiving are to our battle plan. Based on the passages of Scriptures we have covered in this chapter, praise and thanksgiving precede the manifestation of our desired victories.

Therefore, since they are such an integral part to us always being led into triumph, perhaps we should take a moment and lift up our voices, thanking God for what He has promised us and praising Him for all that He has done. I can give you an unconditional guarantee, you will be glad that you did.

Thanks be unto God who always leads us in triumph and who always gives us the victory!

# CHAPTER NINE

## ***MORE THAN CONQUERORS***

Now let's conclude this teaching by taking a look at the end result of Jehoshaphat walking in all of these spiritual principles that we have covered.

2 Chronicles 20:22 goes on to say: **“Now when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.”**

### **PULLING THE TRIGGER**

Notice that it says, **“Now *when* they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushes...”**

It was *when* they began to sing and to praise that the promise of the battle being the Lord's and their not needing to fight in this battle was fulfilled.

This is a spiritual law that we see throughout the Word of God.

Throughout the Bible, we see time and time again that when God's people lifted up their voices

or instruments in praise to God, in the midst of challenging circumstances, that it wrought spectacular results.

A couple of Old Testament examples of this are the stories of Joshua and the Battle of Jericho (Joshua 6:20) and Gideon versus the Midianites (Judges 7:22). In both of these accounts we see that it was when they shouted and blew their trumpets, God delivered their enemies into their hands.

But this spiritual law is not just unique to the Old Testament.

In Acts chapter sixteen, when Paul and Silas began to sing and praise while they were imprisoned, God sent an earthquake and delivered them.

You see, lifting up a sound of praise unto God has, and always will be, a catalyst to seeing supernatural victories and experiencing spectacular provision.

Why does praise yield these kinds of results? Is it because God is just waiting for His people to give Him the glory and then He decides to move on their behalf?

Absolutely not!

God is not some ego-driven glory hunter. He always desires to help His people and give us the victories we desire. Actually, He desires for His children to experience victory and peace more than we do.



No, the reason why praise brings these supernatural victories is found in Psalm 22:3 which says that God is “enthroned in the praises of Israel.” This verse is saying that when God’s people praise Him, He is invited to reign in their midst. Hallelujah!

You see, when God is allowed to reign in our lives, His kingdom will come and His will shall be done. Heaven will be loosed in our lives, providing us with all manner of prosperity and blessing. Praise God!

That makes me want to begin praising God right now, how about you?

Therefore, when we open our mouths and begin to thank, praise, and worship God for the victory that He has promised, it triggers us entering into the manifestation of those victories. In other words, praise is what pulls the trigger, releasing God to do what He does best- redeem, deliver, and save His people. Glory to God!

Now notice the fruit of their singing in the following three verses (vs. 23-25).

## **CONFUSION IN THE ENEMY’S CAMP**

Verse twenty three says, **“For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy them. And when they had made an end**

**of the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another.”**

This verse describes how God caused their enemies to turn on and destroy one another.

First, the Ammonites and the Moabites teamed up together against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, and after they destroyed all of them, they turned on and destroyed each other completely.

What an awesome way to experience victory: To have your enemies turn on one another instead of fighting against you.

This is the power of praise: It can loose God to cause those who assemble against us to turn on each other instead.

For instance, when we thank and praise God, it can cause your co-workers, who have conspired together to do you harm, to turn on and harm each other. It can also cause other companies, who have tried to steal the business from our company, to turn on and fight against each other.

The list is endless.

My point is that by letting praise become a true priority of ours during difficult times, we can see spectacular results like this.

Just as it happened with Jehoshaphat, our enemies will, likewise, turn on and kill each other (verse 23).

## TO GOD BE THE GLORY

But I want you to realize that while all of this slaughter amongst their enemies was taking place, Judah was obviously completely unaware.

Verse twenty four goes on to say, **“So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there were their dead bodies, fallen on the earth. No one had escaped.”**

Can you imagine their reaction as they came to the place overlooking the wilderness and saw that every man from these three armies now lay dead (vs. 24)?

I am sure their reaction was similar to Jesus’ disciples when they saw Jesus do something that superseded all logic by walking on the water.

The Bible says in Mark’s account that they were “greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure and marveled” (Mark 6:51).

Just think about it- to come to this place overlooking the wilderness and instead of seeing three massive armies arrayed against you, you see every last one of these “ites” laying dead.

Questions would have to arise like: “What happened?”

But this is how God works!

He oftentimes will give us miraculous victories that we cannot explain and that make no sense to the natural mind.

God likes to do this for two reasons:

1. Because He loves us immensely.
2. So that no man can take the glory for it.

He desires to give us testimonies like this so the world will know Him, and He will be glorified through our testimony.

He wants us to experience His supernatural protection and provision so people will be forced to confess: “That had to be God.”

This is why God calls those who do not have much going for them in the natural: It is because people will have to recognize that the amazing things they do for Him are not because they are so amazing in themselves.

These people are oftentimes disesteemed by the world because they are not the smartest, the strongest, or the wealthiest. So when God uses them in a great way, the world will have to recognize it is God working through them.

Notice another result of their rejoicing and praise.

What is described in verse twenty five is what I believe put the “cherry on top” of this already amazing victory.

## MORE THAN ENOUGH

When Jehoshaphat and his people came down to take their dead enemy's spoil, what they found was an abundance of valuables and precious jewelry on their bodies. So much, in fact, that it took them three days to gather it all. Glory to God!

If you study the Scriptures or serve God long enough, you will find this is just God's nature.

Not only does God like to give you *just enough* victory (which would have been the case if this story had ended with verse twenty four); He desires to give us a "more than enough" kind of victory.

I am sure it would have been *enough* to Jehoshaphat if God would have helped them defeat their enemies in an actual war. If that option would have been given to Jehoshaphat in the beginning of the chapter, I am sure he would have been more than satisfied with that.

However, that is not all God did.

God fought the battle for them to where they did not even need to lift a finger against their enemies. And then, to make the victory even sweeter, God had it worked out that their dead enemies would be covered with the spoils of war.

Notice verse twenty five: **"When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found among them an**

**abundance of valuables on the dead bodies, and precious jewelry, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away; and they were three days gathering the spoil because there was so much.”**

Hallelujah! Now that is a “more than enough” kind of victory!

This reminds me of the time when God delivered the children of Israel from the Egyptians.

We are told that when God finally got through to that hard-hearted Pharaoh to let His people go, that He also caused the Egyptians to give the children of Israel much of their silver, gold, and clothing (Exodus 12:35). Then Exodus 12:36 goes on to tell us- “Thus they plundered the Egyptians.”

You see, God did not want to just barely redeem the children of Israel; He wanted their Exodus to be a glorious testimony of how His mighty hand can deliver His people.

It would have been enough had God just simply redeemed the children of Israel from their oppressors. But God is not just enough; He is more than enough. He is El Shaddai- the God who is more than enough. Hallelujah!

In both of these accounts, God caused His people to plunder their oppressors. In like manner, God desires to plunder our enemies as well. He longs to not only give us victory in every battle; His will is to give us victories that go beyond our wildest dreams and imaginations.

Not only does He fight the battle for us, He gives us the spoil of the battle. This is one of the things that makes us more than conquerors (Romans 8:37).

## **MORE THAN CONQUERORS**

What does this mean to be *more than a conqueror*? How can you be “more than” a conqueror?

The answer is vividly illustrated in this chapter.

Judah had three nations team up against them; an insurmountable object, to say the least. Their only hope for victory in this battle was God because there was no way they could defeat this great multitude on their own.

So they looked to God to help them, and not only did He help them, He took the battle into His own hands and fought it for them. Then to make it even more special for Judah, God supplied them with such an awesome spoil, it took them three days to carry it off.

That, my friends, is being more than a conqueror. You partake of the victory without ever having to fight the battle; and you get a glorious bounty to boot. Praise God!

Let me give you a great example of what it means to be *more than a conqueror*.

There are many athletes who, week in and week out, train and practice to become the best at their respective sports. They work extremely hard to defeat each of their fellow competitors.

But when these hardworking athletes are victorious, they are not true examples of someone who is “more than a conqueror.”

The person who is *more than a conqueror* in their lives is their spouse.

Yes, their spouses are the ones that are more than conquerors because they never had to go through the countless hours of training and they never had to compete; yet they partake of the prize money from their spouse’s victories. In other words, they get to spend the money their spouses worked so hard to earn.

The successful athletes are conquerors, but their spouses are more than conquerors.

Here is how this applies to us:

We, the bride of Christ, never had to step into the arena with the devil and earn our salvation. Our Divine Husband fought the battle for us, so that now, we can partake in the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness and reign in life (Romans 5:17).



Jesus died and rose again to purchase everything that we could never afford. He came to give us life and life more abundantly when we did not deserve it.

Therefore, as the bride of Christ, we get to partake in the spoils left behind by our Glorified Husband's victory over death, hell, and the grave. We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. Glory to Jesus!

## THE VALLEY OF BLESSING

After this glorious triumph for Jehoshaphat and his people, we see in verses 26-29 their reaction to this awesome victory. (Take some time to visualize what took place in these verses):

**“And on the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berachah (translated “the Valley of Blessing”) for there they blessed the Lord; therefore the name of that place was called The Valley of Berachah until this day. Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat in front of them, to go back to Jerusalem with joy, for the Lord had made them rejoice over their enemies. So they came to Jerusalem, with stringed instruments and harps and trumpets, to the house of the Lord. And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries when they heard that the Lord had fought against the enemies of Israel.”**

Wow! What an awesome illustration of what God's battle plan will produce in our lives.

The conclusion to this account from the life of Jehoshaphat reminds me of the 126<sup>th</sup> Psalm.

Psalm 126:1-3 says, "When the Lord brought back the captivity of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing. Then they said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.' The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad."

The great and awesome victories that God desires to work in our life- our redemption from every evil work of the kingdom of darkness- will produce the results we see in this psalm.

First of all, it will be like we are dreaming. Sometimes we might feel like we need to pinch ourselves to see if this is really happening or not.

God's supernatural provision will oftentimes be so surreal that when people hear of it their reaction will be something like- "I can't believe it! Did that really happen?"

This is the degree to which God desires to manifest Himself in and through our lives.

Then our mouths will be filled with laughter and our tongues with singing. We will not be able to help ourselves. Once we see these miraculous deliverances from the hand of the Lord, rejoicing

will just overflow from our hearts in the form of laughter and singing.

Then, after the unbeliever's around us see or hear of our deliverance, their reaction will be: "The Lord has done great things for them!"

They will be forced to acknowledge the fact that a "higher power" has done this because of how supernatural our victory truly was.

Therefore, our deliverance will be a great testimony to the reality and goodness of the One True and Living God.

And, last but not least, we will have to agree with them: The Lord has done great things for us and we are glad!



# *CONCLUSION*

I hope this book has been a blessing to your life.

I sincerely believe that it will be an extremely beneficial and important tool for all of us as these battles periodically arise in our lives.

While it is virtually impossible to give a thorough synopsis of all the things we have talked about, let me attempt a brief summary.

We have discovered that there is indeed a battle plan for the Christian when these “ites” rear their ugly heads and present various trials and tribulations in our lives.

The first thing we are to do is not allow those negative emotions, that come up initially when we get a bad report, to dictate our response. We should set ourselves to seek the Lord for His wisdom and salvation by immediately going to Him with our problem.

We learned that our prayer does not need to be one that is focused on the problem; these prayers need to be totally focused on God- magnifying who God is, our covenant with Him, what He has done, and what He has promised. When we start off our prayers like this, the problem will shrink and God will be magnified.

We also learned, when we finally get to the petition in our prayer, it is good to present it from a

standpoint of justice. Since God is a God of righteousness and justice, He is quick to avenge those who are being wronged.

We also found there is a certain mentality we need to adopt: We saw how it is also good to understand and even proclaim to God how totally dependent we are on Him.

We should be very conscious of the fact that He (not ourselves) is the One who has the wisdom and strength to get us out of the mess we are in. We need to understand that apart from Him we cannot do anything and apart from Him we do not know anything. Therefore, we look to Him for our answers and for our victories.

After we end our prayer, it is important to understand there could be some time in between the prayer and the answer. Therefore, we must resolve that no matter how long it takes, we will stand until we see the manifestation we desire.

We also learned that what goes along with this waiting process is the temptation to help God out. Therefore, we are to stand still- letting Him be God over our predicament and not taking things into our own hands.

We then saw how after they stood, God spoke to them many exceedingly great and precious promises.

Included in these promises was the promise that the battle was not theirs, but His. We saw how this simple yet profound truth applies to many

different areas of our lives including everything from our spiritual well-being to our natural well-being. God provides victory in all these areas by his grace and not by our own efforts.

Another exhortation God gave them was to stand still and see His salvation. We saw how this meant to continue to not try and help God out, but rather to be still and know that He is God. By letting Him be God like this, we allow Him to deliver us in only the way He can.

After God gave them these different promises and exhortations, He gave them specific directions on what they were to do about this specific battle. We learned from this how it is of the utmost importance to hear from God in every battle we find ourselves in. Since every battle is unique, each one requires specific direction. Therefore, we need to get alone with God and hear from Him every time we find ourselves in a battle.

But while we are told to stand, this does not mean that we are to just sit around twiddling our thumbs waiting for God to win the battle for us. In the meantime, we are to get in the two battle positions of lifting up our voices and bowing down on our face- thanking, praising, and worshipping Him. This is our reasonable service while we are standing.

We also saw that they even incorporated praise into their battle-plan by sending the singers out before the army. This act of faith is what ultimately triggered the manifestation of their victory. The Bible says they saw the manifestation

of God's promise when they began to sing; and what a glorious victory it was.

God did what He does best: He gave Jehoshaphat a "more than enough" kind of victory—that is, a victory that far exceeded his expectations. We saw that when God fights our battles, these victories will always be ones that are exceedingly abundantly above all that we could ever ask or think. Hallelujah!

So what will you do when you get bad news? What will your battle-plan be?

Will you yield to those fears and feelings or will you respond according to these biblical principles?

I guarantee that by responding like Jehoshaphat did, you are setting yourself up for the same kind of victory that He experienced.

This power-packed chapter is the perfect battle-plan for a believer. It is a guaranteed, biblical formula for success.

My friends, these last days we are living in are perilous times (2 Timothy 2:1), and things are going to get worse on the earth before they get better. We will see more natural disasters occurring, more ungodliness abounding, etc. I am not being pessimistic; the Word of God tells us these things will come to pass—warning us so that we will be prepared.



Therefore, I believe this particular teaching has been a way to prepare us for these tribulations, as well as the individual battles, we experience every day.

So take to heart these truths. Hide them in your heart, so that in the day of testing, you will come out of the fire without even the smell of smoke.

The battle belongs to God but the victory belongs to us!

Selah.



# ***ABOUT THE AUTHOR***

Trey received Jesus as His Lord and Savior in January of 2000.

After living for all that is in the world for the first 23 years of his life, which included struggles with drugs and alcohol, Trey was supernaturally saved and filled with the Holy Spirit during a revival service at New Covenant Worship Center in Athens, GA. God's work in Trey had only begun that evening.

After that salvation experience, the Lord began to guide Trey into all truth- a process that is still on-going. The Holy Spirit gave Trey a hunger for God's Word which propelled him to spend most of his spare time reading, studying, and meditating the Holy Scriptures.

The Lord has given Trey a desire to preach His Word, and has called him to teach the Body of Christ as well as serve in the ministry office a pastor.

Trey has served under several different churches and ministries- service which includes, but is not limited to, leading cell groups, serving as a youth pastor, and teaching various Bible studies. These Bible studies include systematic teachings through different books of the Bible and also various topical studies.

Trey has also ministered many times from different pulpits in the Middle Georgia area during the past ten years.

In the past few years Trey has begun a monthly teaching newsletter that has blessed many people.

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