**Lessons from Jehoshaphat: What to Do When *Enemies* Gather and You’re *Afraid,* 2Chron.20:1-30**

During the *prophetic ministries* of Elijah and Elisha, Jehoshaphat reigned over the southern kingdom of Judah (~874 – 849 B.C; he was the fourth king of Judah following the division of Israel). 2Chron.20 records that during his reign the rival kingdoms of Moab and Ammon (descendants of Lot by his daughters after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, cf. Gen.19:30-38) rose up to *“make war”* with Judah, vv.1-2. Understandably, Jehoshaphat, and Judah with him no doubt, *“was afraid,”* v.3.

But the importance of this story, at least in my view, is not so much the king and nations’ *fear,* but what he did in response to it, and what he *led* God’s people to likewise do…

We live in a time when many of God’s people are *afraid;* fearful of *enemies*- both *seen* and *unseen.* What are our *spiritual leaders* and *we* to do?

**Please note how Jehoshaphat responded to his *fears:***

1. **He *turned* *his attention to seek the Lord,* v.3a.** *Attention* equals *focus;* Jehoshaphat’s *whole focus* was on *the Lord.* While this is a good thing to do always, it is especially needful when we are *fearful-* when our faith is more likely to fail, cf. Rev.2:10 (Smyrna, *“do not fear… be faithful unto death...”*)
2. **He *proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah,* v.3b.** *Fasts* set aside the *physical* provisions for the body (and the preparations necessary for them) for a time of special *spiritual* devotion; they were associated with *mourning, repentance,* and *seeking guidance/counsel,* cf. Matt.4:2; 6:16-18.
3. **He and Judah *assembled,* vv.4a,5,13.** *Fellowship* and *being together* is important at all times, but especially in times of *fear* and/or *temptation,* Heb.10:23-25.
4. **Thus together, they *sought the Lord* (and *His help*)*,* v.4.** They didn’t turn to “experts” in government, academia, society, or war; they *sought the Lord* and His *counsel.*
5. **And they *prayed,* vv.6-13:** (cf. Jas.5:13a; not *publicizing* or *complaining*, *praying*)
   1. Recognizing God’s ***sovereignty*** and ***power,* v.6**
   2. Remembering His ***past provisions,* vv.7-8**
   3. And His ***promised protection(s),* v.9**
   4. ***Petitioning***Him for ***current deliverance***from their enemies, vv.10-12a
   5. Recognizing their **own *inability***and ***ignorance****,* but ***trusting* in Him**, v.12b

**Because of *how* they reacted, God *heard* and *answered* their pleas:**

1. **The *spirit of the Lord* spoke to them through *Jahaziel,* vv.14-15**; in times of trouble and fear, seek *wise counsel* from those who will *speak God’s word* to you, cf. Heb.13:7.
2. ***Do not fear* or *be dismayed,* for the *battle is not yours* but *the Lord’s,* v.15!** Wow- what an amazingly encouraging statement! To hear God say, “I’ve got this!” had to be, and is, tremendously encouraging and relieving to faith and trust.
3. ***Go down against them,* but *don’t fight-* just *watch* and *see the salvation of the Lord,* vv.16-17a.** cf. Ex.14:13-14, *“Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish… The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent.”* (see also2Cor.10:3-7)
4. **Jehoshaphat and all Judah *worshipped* and *obeyed,* being assured that *the Lord is with you,* vv.17b-19,21,22a.** It was important to *assemble, fellowship, worship,* and *seek God’s counsel* **before** the “battle,” and it is just as important to *assemble, fellowship, worship,* and *praise Him* for deliverance afterwards, 1Thess.5:16-18. See also Luke 17:11-18 where *ten* lepers where *cleansed,* but only *one “gave glory to God”* for his cleansing.
5. **They also *trusted the Lord* and *His prophets* for *success,* vv.20-22a.** As important as it is to allow God to define “success” on/with His terms, it is also vital to *trust* Him and His *way* for that “success.”

**The Result?**

1. **Their *enemies destroyed each other completely,* vv.22b-24.**
2. **The *spoils,* which were more than they could carry, were *left to Judah,* v.25.**
3. **They *blessed the Lord* and *enjoyed peace,* vv.26-30.**

**Now, why do *you think* this story is recorded for all posterity, Rom.15:4? Always, but especially in times of *fear* and *adversity:***

* ***Turn your attention to* and *seek the Lord;***
* ***Devote yourself* wholly to the *spiritual* pursuits- *mourning* and *repentance* as necessary, and *seeking God’s counsel* and *guidance* always;**
* ***Assemble* and *pray* for *guidance* and the Lord’s *will* to be done;**
* ***Remember* that *the battle is not yours,* but *the Lord’s;*** and then,
* ***Don’t fight,* just *watch* and *see the salvation of the Lord!***