

“PRAYING IN BATTLE”

Text: II Chronicles 17:1-6, 20:1-22

Subject: How Fasting and Prayer Overcomes Satan’s Plan

Introduction

(Our Case In Point Today Is A Revelation)

1. How your battles are won or lost in the secret place.
2. How spiritual means overcome carnal means.
3. How God intervenes when people fast and pray.
4. How divine peace will guard and keep your heart.
5. How a praying heart and a praising voice allow God to work mightily.

I. The Enemy Of Jehoshaphat (Vs. 1, 2)

- Defeated already in a great battle (II Kings 3), the Moabites seek to retaliate.
- Jehoshaphat (King of Judah) receives word that a very large army is invading his kingdom.
- The enemies of God come in from the East and defy the King.
- And Jehoshaphat faces opposition because in II Chronicles 17:6, he sought the Lord and took away the high places and groves of idol worship in Judah.

(In other words)

1. When you are in pursuit of revival and a heart that is holy, expect opposition.
2. When you are making progress in your spiritual life, expect unannounced obstacles.
3. When you are about to see God grant you spiritual victories, expect intimidation.
4. When you are about to see God answer prayer, expect something big to have to pray through.

II. The Energy Of Jehoshaphat

Question: How did Jehoshaphat respond to the unexpected?

Answer: He turned his heart toward the Lord.

1. In v. 3, he proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.
2. God’s people were called to unite in public and corporate fasting and prayer.
3. In v. 13, the fast included men, women and the young people. (No one was exempt.)
4. The people responded in a marvelous way (v. 4).

“And Judah gathered themselves together to ask help of the Lord; even out of all of _____ they came to seek the Lord.”
(your city)

(In other words)

- A common danger and a common cause brought all of God’s people together.
- These people of God were from different cities, and had different tastes, desires, jealousies and rivalries.
- Yet, because of the matter at hand, and the threat to spiritual progress,
- Every personal pet-peeve and individual desire was set aside. (How come?)
- Because the church was called upon to protect their common inheritance (rather than promote their individual differences). Repeat!

(What a discovery here)

1. That what God wants is more important than what I want.
2. That God's agenda always takes precedent over my agenda.
3. That what God wants to do is more important than what I want to do.
4. That God's plan includes you, and when you win everybody wins, and when everybody wins, you win.

(What was the key?)

- A corporate call to fast and pray!
- A corporate call to unite as one!

III. The Encouragement Of Jehoshaphat

Question: What happens when people fast and pray?

Answer: An encouraging word comes to your heart.

(What's the word?)

1. "**Remember who God is**" (v. 6)
"Art not thou God in heaven?"
"Don't you rule over all the kingdoms?"
"Isn't there power and might in your hands?"
2. "**Remember what God has done in the past**" (v. 7)
"Didn't you drive out all the inhabitants of this land so your people could march forward?"
3. "**Remember what God will do In the future**" (v.9)
"Didn't you say if we stand in your house in your presence and cry unto thee in prayer, that you will hear and help?"
4. "**Remember who to stay focused on**" (v. 12)
"Neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee."

Question: What happens when people fast and pray and unite as one for God's glory?

Answer: (v. 14) "*Then came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation.*"

Question: What's the word from God to your heart?

Answer: (v. 15) "*Hear the word of the Lord, be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of what troubles you.*"

(Why Not?)

- "*For the battle is not yours, but God's*" (v. 15)
- "*You'll not need to fight, just stand still and see the Lord deliver, for the Lord will be with you.*" (v. 17)

(What was the response?)

- (V. 18) "*All of Judah bowed their faces to the ground and worshiped.*" (Why?)
- Because in prayer you always see God bigger than your mountains!

IV. The Ending Of Jehoshaphat (vs. 22-30)

- No need for any military weapons!
- No need to use carnal, fleshly means!
- No need to fight flesh with flesh!

(What did Jehoshaphat do?)

- He organized the people to fast, pray, sing and praise the Lord. (v. 21)
- And in (v. 22), the Lord responded to a heart of faith and praise, and destroyed every fleshly opposition.

(How come?)

- Because it's not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit saith the Lord!!!

(Three Lessons From The Victory)

1. There are anti-Christian forces to impede the work of God.
 - There are strongholds in the unseen world standing in opposition to the church.
 - So #1 – Like Judah, it's time to unite in fasting and prayer.
2. It was the Holy Spirit that came upon JAHAZIEL in the midst of the congregation to give encouragement and direction in the presence of God.
 - So #2 – Let's believe God and expect the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts to operate in the building of His church.
3. Jehoshaphat's spiritual weapons overcome the enemies' carnal weapons (and nothing of God has changed).
 - So #3 – Spiritual weapons always overcome the carnal weapons of man against you.

Conclusion

(What are the spiritual weapons that work today?) Like those that worked for Jehoshaphat?

1. Corporate fasting (self-denial)
2. United prayer (in agreement)
3. Wholehearted praise (believing for intervention)
4. Genuine unselfishness (no personal agendas)
5. Spiritual gifts (The anointing of God came in the congregation and God's presence is what makes the difference.)

Question: Isn't it foolish to praise the Lord even before the answer comes? (Absolutely not!)

Answer: It's a sign of faith that God will come through and God rewards a heart full of faith!!!

Amen!
Bill Kirk