"The Battle Belongs to the LORD"

("FACING THE IMPOSSIBLE")

II Chronicles 20:1-30

7/21/02

Today we are in a Battle. Not physical, but spiritual. Our warfare is not people, but the twofold enemy of their souls - sin and Satan. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood..." Many times the struggle is hard, the outlook seems dark.

II Chron.20:1-2 When difficulties come, they tend to come in bunches - "a great multitude".

Background:
Jehoshaphat made a disastrous alliance with Ahab and almost lost his life for it. He went to war (contrary to the advice of the prophet Micaiah). Read: 19:1-3
In 19:4-11 he made reforms, fortified cities, & demanded that the Judges judge righteously. At this time the king was enjoying peace and prosperity until a coalition of people from the east formed an attack against him.

* **YOU CAN FACE THE IMPOSSIBLE!**

You can face impossible circumstances by following 2 steps described in King Jehosaphat's life.

I. **<u>SEEK THE PRESENCE OF GOD</u>** (TAKE BIBLICAL ACTION) v.3-13

Often the only time we <u>really</u> seek God's face is in difficulty (and we should!) Often this is the only way God can <u>get our attention</u>.

v.3) In times of fear, turn your attention to the Lord (<u>focus</u> on God & not on the problem)

v.5) Jehoshaphat went to the place where an O.T. saint met God - the Temple.

In the king's prayer he acknowledges:

A. THE <u>SOVEREIGNTY</u> OF GOD (v.6a)
He rules Heaven, and He rules Earth's kingdoms (even pagan ones) Is He Lord of your life?

B. THE <u>POWER</u> OF GOD (v.6b-7)
God's might and power has no equal (none can match it).

C. THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD (v.8-11)

(He acknowledges the working of God in the past)

1. He is faithful to His promises (v.8-9)
   *God promised to answer prayers that came from the Temple.

2. He is faithful to His provision (v.10-11)
   v.10) Israel was told not to meddle with the nations of Moab, Ammon, & Edom b\c they are relatives.

*God gave the land.

D. TOTAL DEPENDANCE UPON GOD (v.12-13)

1. Admits inability - "no might" to do.

2. Admits ignorance - to know what to do.

*"our eyes are on thee" They look to the One with the ability, and the One with the knowledge.

Just like the needy, helpless eyes of an infant gaze with a feeling of security into the eyes of his mother, so we are to look to our Heavenly Father.

v.13 The whole family was gathered (what scene this must have been!)

II. **TRUST THE PROMISES OF GOD** (BIBLICAL ATTITUDE) v.14-30

A. HE IS WORTHY OF YOUR TRUST (v.14-21)

To not trust God is to call Him a liar. If there is one sin that is despicable it is the sin of unbelief.

1. God promises to provide victory (v.14-16)

When problems come: don't run & don't quit. This is a Divinely appointed opportunity for God to glorify Himself.

*God wants to show His power in your life.

*He wants to use you to do the impossible.

> He does not need talent, or strength. Samuel said to Saul "when you were little in thine own sight" you were anointed king over Israel. God is in the business today of using the foolish things of the world to confound the wise...the weak..the base things...the despised...the nothings" I Cor.1
>
> God is not desperately "looking for millionaires or famous athletes or entertainers or statesmen" as if He needed their money, fame, fortune, or talent to get His work done!
>
> The Lord specializes in converting simple folk, common people, the under-privileged, the down-and-outers, the project kids, and other looked-down-upon groups.
>
> Some might say: "That's because they are the only ones dumb enough to believe the Bible."
>
> No, actually, they are the only ones humble enough to believe!
>
> Jesus said, *"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes."* (Mt. 11:25).
>
> God delights in taking a Sarah who could not bear children and making her the mother of one of the largest races on earth (Gen. 18:14, 32:12)
>
> God delights in taking a humble slave like Joseph and elevating him second to Pharaoh over Egypt (Gen. 41:38-44).
>
> God delights in enlisting 300 soldiers of Gideon to fight and conquer 120,000 Mideanites (Jud. 7:2, 7, 12; 8:10) (NOTE: 400 to 1 odds).
>
> God delights in utilizing a Samson to destroy 1,000 wicked Philistines with a

jawbone of a donkey (Jud. 15:16).

God delights in using a red-headed, freckle-faced, baby-faced (I Sam. 17:42) shepherd boy named David to wipe out a 9'9" fully armored Philistine named Goliath (I Sam. 17).

God delights in providing adequate food for a poor widow of Zarephath who only had a few drops of oil and a handful of grain (I Ki. 17:9ff).

God delights in using three Hebrew youths to show up King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (Dan. 3).

God delights in using as His mouthpiece a John the Baptist, "who had no formal education, no training in a trade or profession, no money, no military rank, no political position, no social pedigree, no impressive appearance (or diet!)" (MacArthur, p. 51). Yet Jesus said, *"Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist"* (Mt. 11:11).

God delights in taking a boy's lunch consisting of two sardines and five bite-size biscuits to feed 5,000 men besides women and children (Mt. 14:17-19).

> "Little is much when God is in it." -- Conversely, much is little, if God is not in it!

God delights in taking unlearned, ignorant, dumb fishermen from Galilee and turning them into the most bold and influential mortals ever to spread the Gospel message (Acts 4:13).

"God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (II Tim.1:7).

Our natural tendency is to try to defeat the enemy ourselves if the problem had been smaller (the army smaller) the people might have trusted in their own strength.

"the battle is not yours, but God's"

Whatever battle you are now facing one truth must be understood! If you belong to God (if you are His child) then He is responsible for you. (ex. child - parent relationship) He is deeply concerned about your concerns!

Who are you trusting in for:

*Your children's future? give them to God like Hannah did.

*Your unsaved mate? Submit & live in Godly fear like I Pet. 3 commands.

*Your victory over sin? "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory ...I Cor.15:57. In temptation - He makes "a way of escape that ye amy be able to bear it."

Our battles are God's battles.

Problems in our Church are God's problems.

We don't handle them alone. God is faithful to <u>his</u> work! What a comfort! I am so glad that this is <u>not</u> "my" Church. It is God's and He is deeply concerned about it (I Pet.5). So all of you "worry warts" had better stop!

When we see the works of men of God in the Bible we tend to praise the man of God and forget the God of the man.

Where did David get his courage?
" " Solomon " wisdom?
" " Samson " strength?
" " Daniel " Faithfulness?
" " Paul " Boldness? ....
All from God!

2. God promises <u>His presence</u> (v.17-21)

This battle would be won not by man's efforts. Not by works; All is accomplished by God. Like salvation. All the glory goes to Him as a result.

"Stand still and see the Salvation..."
read: **Exod.14:13-ff** (same phrase)

Yet man is still expected to <u>respond</u> (they were commanded to go out to face the enemy.

God's presence is all the comfort we should need.
"If God be for us who can be against us"
Great Commission Mt.28:18-20 "Lo I am with you always..."

B. HE WILL <u>REWARD</u> YOUR TRUST (v.22-30)

They <u>believed</u> God's Word (promise) as evident by their 1) Worship, 2) Praise

*They <u>claimed the victory</u>!

This is not the "power of positive thinking," this is the power of God centered thinking!

When you are in difficulty (whatever it is) the best way to build up your confidence in God is to just keep repeating back to God those <u>attributes</u> (characteristics) that are His, and those <u>actions</u> He has accomplished in the past.

"Mercy" = chesed - lovingkindness; God's covenant faithfulness. The name for the stork is "chesida" b\c it is known for it's faithfulness to its young in contrast to the ostrich which neglects her young.

v.23) "sing & praise" - note: the faith! "faith honors God & God honors faith!"

Ill. Paul & Silas in the Philippian jail praying and singing at midnight just before a great earthquake that freed them! They were not fretting nor praying with trembling knees!

Ill. Gideon & the Midianites

Concl. What course of action are you taking in your difficult circumstances or in your impossible crisis? You need to 1) <u>seek</u> the presence of God, and 2) <u>trust</u> the promises of God.

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*They claimed the victory!

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1) _____, 2) _____

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