

God Mode Activated

July 16th message – Praise and the Presence of God (Tim Perry)

Roo's Summary

2 Chron. 20:22. Judah was threatened with annihilation. They were encouraged by the prophet Jahaziel (a descendant of Asaph) not to be afraid, "For the battle is not yours, but God's" (20:15). Jehoshaphat led the people into worship (perhaps silently) and the Levites and singers began to shout and sing praises: the praise [*tehillah*] in which God is enthroned (Ps. 22:3). The results are profound. Did God send angels? Did the enemies turn directly on themselves? Either way, the connection between praising God and seeing God's salvation is clear. The situation turned "as they began to sing and praise." Are we taking advantage of opportunities to begin to praise God in the midst of our struggles?

2 Chronicles 20:1-9

After this, the Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to wage war against Jehoshaphat.² Some people came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the Dead Sea. It is already in Hazezon Tamar" (that is, En Gedi).³ Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah.⁴ The people of Judah came together to seek help from the LORD; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him.

⁵ Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the LORD in the front of the new courtyard⁶ and said: "LORD, the God of our ancestors, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you.⁷ Our God, did you not drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend?⁸ They have lived in it and have built in it a sanctuary for your Name, saying,⁹ 'If calamity comes upon us, whether the sword of judgment, or plague or famine, we will stand in your presence before this temple that bears your Name and will cry out to you in our distress, and you will hear us and save us.' (2Ch 20:1-9 NIV)

Kid's Message: Let God Decide

What do you do when something really big and difficult happens to you or your family?

Introduce Jehoshaphat – king of Judah

The crisis that's about to hit the people of Judah

Jehoshaphat lives up to his good name in the way he responds

Meaning of Jehoshaphat (Heb. *yēhōšāpāt*, 'Yahweh has judged')

God has judged or God has decided

Jehoshaphat was such a good leader because he always found a way to let God decide what to do

One time another king wanted to talk Jehoshaphat into starting a war with another nation

What do you think Jehoshaphat did? He asked the other king if this was his idea or God's idea.

Turns out it wasn't God's idea, Jehoshaphat didn't join him and that other king died in battle.

Jehoshaphat always found a way to let God decide what to do.

How about you guys? What would you do if something really big happened to you or someone you care about?

Let God Decide...

By taking time to pray first before taking action

By talking about the problem and thinking about how God might see it

By sharing the struggle with someone else who can help you

Prayer

Message continued...

Introduction (gotta work this out- some combination of introduction to the message, but maybe a little more about me and my family and why I'm teaching this morning)

Israel's situation (2 Chron 20:1-9)

- 1) Jehoshaphat's knee-jerk reaction (vv3-4)
 - a. Fear
 - b. Sought God (himself and his people)
 - c. Proclaimed a fast
- 2) Jehoshaphat's second response (vv 6,7 & 12)
 - a. We are powerless in the face of this threat
 - b. "Jehoshaphat" Yahweh will judge.
- 3) How about us here today?
 - a. What is threatening your life and vitality as a Christ follower?
 - b. How are you dealing with it? What is your typical knee-jerk reaction?
 - c. Decisions you need to make right now in order to be a Jehoshaphat.

God-Mode Activates (vv 13-17)

- 1) Jahaziel's gifts and ministry are empowered in a surprising turn of events
 - a. Who he is (his connection to Asaph, not from a pedigree of military leaders)
 - b. The meaning of his name: "Yahweh sees"
 - c. How the Spirit speaks and works through him
- 2) Yahweh decides what to do
 - a. No military action will be needed – Yahweh will bring salvation
 - b. "Don't just do something. Stand there!"
 - i. They did have to go face their threat (v 16)
 - ii. They did not have to obey their fears (v 17)
 - iii. They did have to believe in Yahweh (v 20)
 - iv. They did still have to follow the leadership of Jehoshaphat and Jahaziel (v 20)
- 3) Crisis can cut us off from God-Mode creativity (7 deadly lies we believe when we're in crisis)
 - a. I have to face this crisis alone (I got myself into this, I have to get myself out)
 - b. The solution to my problem can only come best through an expert who deals with it all the time.
 - c. There isn't time to wait around for God to act. It's an emergency!
 - d. If I delay immediate action, the problem is only going to get worse.
 - e. If I let others know, it will only add to the depression and embarrassment I already feel.
 - f. Paying for a high quality fix is really the only way problems get solved – everybody knows that.
 - g. Its not that important to actually worship God – I find singing awkward, surely he doesn't expect me to do that. It's hard to sing when you're stressed out anyway.

Results (vv 18-24)

- 1) What worshipping Yahweh did in this crisis
 - a. Preparation on the eve of the battle (v 18)
 - b. Engaging the battle itself (vv 20-21)
 - c. Yahweh takes action when he hears the praises of his people
 - i. Connection with Psalm 22:3 – God actually inhabits the praise of his people
 - ii. The actual song they start singing is a throw-back from (1 Chron 16:8ff)

The occasion was the return of the Ark to the temple (where it was supposed to be)

- iii. God acted against the enemy bringing total defeat and cause for celebration
- 2) Crisis, Intercession, Worship (a pattern God's people can still follow today)
 - a. Jehoshaphat's first steps in crisis show us what intercession can do
 - i. Intercession clarifies what's at stake in the situation

- ii. Gives God space to begin bringing his creativity and power to bear
- iii. Often broadens the circle of those involved to include other gifted and caring players
- b. Jahaziel's role helps us see what worship means to God and his people
 - i. Worship clarifies what's at stake for God and his glory
 - ii. It is a powerful signifier that the faith of God's people is in the right place: God himself
 - iii. God's character and actions in salvation history are celebrated together when we praise

Conclusion (maybe a moment of response around challenges people are facing, use the response cards?)

The reprise in the narrative is in vv 27-28 (the post-mop-up celebration)

"the returned, every man (very unusual battle scene statistic even for a VICTORY) returning home with JOY "for the LORD had made them rejoice over their enemies"

We're all on a continuum of some sort in our experience with crisis or loss. We've either been in one, we're still in one, or one is on its way to us soon. There will come a day when we'll be headed safely back home, everyone accounted for, no more danger or threat, no casualties, and great JOY in our hearts because the LORD of salvation has provided for us. For some of us we will get to have this kind of moment in our earthly experiences. For some challenges, though, we won't get our Jehoshaphat moment in this earthly lifetime. We'll get to share it later when God reconciles all things to himself.

Some of us will be made by God to rejoice! Dragged into rejoicing...because finally we'll be shown beyond a shadow of a doubt that God sees what happens (Jahaziel) and God decides what needs to happen next (Jehoshaphat). If victory like that is inevitable, let's do our part now in the way we respond to difficulty. Let's pray and give God some elbow room to start working. Let's let God decide what to do – give him the rightful place of king in our lives. And let's be ready to celebrate his goodness and salvation! Amen!

Col 1:19-20

Rev 6:14

Rev 21/22



Tim Perry Bio...

Tim is a recently appointed Area Director for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship's Graduate and Faculty Ministries. Tim moved to Omaha in 2006 to work as the Evangelism Director at Christ Community Church. He and his wife Cheryl have three children, Aaron, Phoebe and Silas. Tim and Cheryl are graduates of the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana and first joined InterVarsity staff in 1987. While working as an Area Director Tim completed his Masters of Divinity at Trinity International University in Deerfield, Illinois. He greatly enjoys talking about things like popular culture, technology, biblical interpretation, and apologetics. He's also a bit of fiend for coffee, books and guitars. You can catch his blog at PerryBoilerRoom.com.

