



Message Four: A STORY OF WORSHIP
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Where the Spirit of God is, there is also singing. The early church was characterized by its singing; so also in every generation where there is renewal by the Spirit a new hymnody breaks forth. If most such songs do not have staying power, some of them do, and these become the treasure-trove of our ongoing teaching and admonishing of one another, as well as of our constantly turning to God the Father and God the Son and offering praise by inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

-- Gordon Fee

Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God

Today, we will turn our attention to an ancient story of a people who move from breathing the air of fear and anxiety to the air of hope and victory. It's a story of the power of worship. It demonstrates how worship and warfare are intricately related. The story is found in 2 Chronicles 20.

KING JEHOSHAPHAT FACES A CRISIS

Jehosophat was the 4th King of Judah and was one of only seven righteous kings out of the twenty who ruled Judah.

He receives disturbing news of an impending attack for which they are out-manned and under-prepared.

2 Chronicles 20:1-2, The Moabites, Ammonites, and some Meunites came to start a war with Jehoshaphat.

Messengers came and told Jehoshaphat, "A large army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the Dead Sea." (NCV)

The atmosphere is charged with **fear** and Jehoshaphat calls the people to a fast and to prayer.

2 Chronicles 20:3-4, Jehoshaphat was afraid, so he decided to ask the LORD what to do. He announced that everyone in Judah should fast during this special time of prayer to God. The people of Judah came together to ask the LORD for help. (NCV)

A PRAYER OF PERSPECTIVE

First, there is a **reminder** of who God is.

2 Chronicles 20:6, LORD, God of our ancestors, you are the God in heaven. You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. You have power and strength, so no one can stand against you. (NCV)

Next, he **recounted** God's past performance.

2 Chronicles 20:7, God, you forced out the people who lived in this land as your people Israel moved in. And you gave this land forever to the descendants of your friend Abraham. (NCV)

Finally, the people **rely** on God.

2 Chronicles 20:9, 'If trouble comes upon us, or war, punishment, sickness, or hunger, we will stand before you and before this Temple where you have chosen to be worshiped. We will cry out to you when we are in trouble. Then you will hear and save us.' (NCV)

THE ATMOSPHERE CHANGES

1. State your **problem**.

2 Chronicles 20: 10-11, *But now here are men from Ammon, Moab, and Edom...They have come to force us out of your land.* (NCV)

2. Admit your **inability**.

2 Chronicles 20:12, *We have no power against this large army that is attacking us.* (NCV)

3. Focus on God and wait for his **voice**.

2 Chronicles 20:12-13, *We don't know what to do, so we look to you for help."* All the men of Judah stood before the LORD with their babies, wives, and children. (NCV)

4. Receive the **Lord's instruction**.

2 Chronicles 20:14-17, *The Spirit of the LORD came upon one of the men standing there...He said, "This is what the LORD says: Do not be afraid! Don't be discouraged by this mighty army, for the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow, march out against them. But you will not even need to fight...Stand still and watch the LORD's victory...Do not be afraid or discouraged...for the LORD is with you!"* (NCV)

5. Go out with **worship** leading the way.

2 Chronicles 20:21, *The king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army, singing to the LORD and praising him for his holy splendor..."Give thanks to the LORD; his faithful love endures forever!"* (NCV)

The atmosphere changed!

2 Chronicles 20:22-23. At the very moment they began to sing and give praise, the LORD caused the armies of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir to start fighting...and attacking each other. (NCV)