

Our Eyes Are On You

Jehoshaphat, The King Who Prayed and Who Praised

2 Chronicles 20 (Reading: 2 Chronicles: 20:18-30)

Sunday 16th March 2025, Naracoorte Uniting Church

Title of today's sermon comes from J's powerful prayer in verses 5-12 of 2 Chron 20. This prayer culminates with the words, "For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. **We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.**"

This is a consistent theme throughout Scripture, isn't it? From the oldest book in the Bible, **Job 42:5:**

"I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear,
but now my eye sees you"

To the Letter to the Hebrew disciples of Christ: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²**looking to Jesus**, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Let's look then at how J – "YHWH is Judge" – set his own and his people's eyes on the God who alone could fight the battle for them.

1. **He Prayed a Prayer of Remembrance**, reminding God (and perhaps more importantly himself) of who YHWH – the Covenant-Keeping God of Israel – has revealed Himself to be. That prayer, in verses 5-12, is filled with references to Exodus, Deuteronomy and to the words of Solomon as he dedicated the Jerusalem temple (2 Chronicles 6:12-7:22). Notice verse 3 – that prayer involved fasting – that is, the quelling of the voice of our flesh (Speak re the Hazara girl last Sunday). **When you pray, whose words do you use?**
2. **He was helped and encouraged by the work of the Holy Spirit in another**, in this case Jahaziel ("beheld by God"): "And the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly." (verse 14) **Are you enjoying close enough fellowship with seasoned, Spirit-filled Christians to know when you need to be helped and encouraged by their counsel?** (Notice though J didn't 'handball' his responsibilities to Jahaziel: v.17: "Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, and the Lord will be with you.")
3. **He led the whole community in reverent worship:** "Then Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the Lord, worshiping the Lord. ¹⁹And the Levites, of the **Kohathites**¹ and the Korahites, stood up to praise the Lord, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice."

¹ Moses, Aaron and Miriam were Kohathites: The Kohathites, for example, had charge of caring for the objects associated with the sanctuary: "This is the service of the sons of Kohath in the tent of meeting: the most holy things" Numb 4:4-14. The Ark of the Covenant, the Table of Showbread, and other holy items were the responsibility of the Kohathites ([Numbers 10:21](#); [1 Chronicles 9:32](#)). **Stuart's sermon – 16th February.**

4. **Praise Became a Weapon in Jehoshaphat's Hand** (even before the 'outcome' is known): Verses 21 and 22: "And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the Lord and praise him in holy attire, as they went before the army, and say,

"Give thanks to the Lord,
for his steadfast love endures forever."

And when they began to sing and praise, the Lord set an ambush against the men of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir..."

Hebrews 13:15: "Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name."

5. Jehoshaphat and all the people enjoyed the fruit of their labours:

"When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take their spoil, they found among them, in great numbers, goods, clothing, and precious things, which they took for themselves until they could carry no more. They were three days in taking the spoil, it was so much. ²⁶On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Beracah, **[LOBETHAL]** for there they blessed the Lord. Therefore the name of that place has been called the Valley of Beracah to this day. ²⁷Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat at their head, returning to Jerusalem with joy, for the Lord had made them rejoice over their enemies. ²⁸**They came to Jerusalem with harps and lyres and trumpets, to the house of the Lord.** ²²⁹And the fear of God came on all the kingdoms of the countries when they heard that the Lord had fought against the enemies of Israel. ³⁰So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around."

A Biblical faith is a faith worth celebrating. In fact, it's the only faith worth celebrating. Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 61:3:

"to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified."

And therein is the key – when OUR EYES ARE ON HIM, God is glorified.

What does J's name mean again? "YHWH is Judge", or "The Lord has judged." When God's judgement falls upon Christ instead of us, we by His grace are freed:

- **Freed** to PRAY the prayer of remembrance of God's character and nature,
- **Freed** to receive encouragement and help from our Spirit-led brothers and sisters,
- **Freed** to worship Him in communion (common union) in our church communities (to bear one another's...),
- **Freed** to take up the weapon of JOY-filled praise (even when...)
- **Freed** to enjoy the fruit of our labours (which in actual fact is HIS WORK IN US).

Let us pray.

² Where all creation is one day heading, Psalms 146-150