

## “WHEN GOD SPEAKS – JEHOSHAPHAT”

2 Chron. 20:1-12

CWBC – 3/24/19

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**INTRO** – Good morning, everyone! Aren’t you thankful to God for the privilege to worship Him in this place today?

**Jab 1** – What do all of these have in common?

- N. Korea
- Russia
- Afghanistan
- Iran
- China
- Iraq
- Syria

All have, at some point over the last several years, been considered the #1 enemy of the USA according to the Gallup polling organization.

**Jab 2** – What do all of these have in common?

1. Corrupt government officials
2. Pollution of oceans, rivers and lakes
3. Pollution of drinking water
4. Not having enough money for the future
5. People I love becoming seriously ill
6. People I love dying
7. Air pollution
8. Extinction of plant and animal species
9. Global warming and climate change
10. High medical bills

They’re the top 10 fears of Americans in 2018.

(<https://blogs.chapman.edu/wilkinson/2018/10/16/americas-top-fears-2018/>)

**Jab 3** – What do all of these have in common?

- Pipe organ
- Guitar (acoustic & electric)
- Piano
- Drums
- Dancing/singing
- Chanting
- Shouting
- Silence
- Helping others

They are all appropriate ways to express worship.

**Right Hook** – Open your Bibles or your Bible app to 2 Chron. 20:1-12 (page 372 in pew Bible). Today, we are looking at a guy named Jehoshaphat in our series, “When God Speaks.”

**EXPLANATION** – Jehoshaphat – one of those Bible names that causes us to get tongue-tangled when we say it. What do we know about this guy? Snapshot of his life:

- 4<sup>th</sup> king of Judah
- Started off strong spiritually
  - o 2 Chron. 17:3-6 – “The Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father’s early years and did not worship the images of Baal. <sup>4</sup>He sought his father’s God and obeyed his commands instead of following the

evil practices of the kingdom of Israel. <sup>5</sup> So the Lord established Jehoshaphat's control over the kingdom of Judah. All the people of Judah brought gifts to Jehoshaphat, so he became very wealthy and highly esteemed. <sup>6</sup> He was deeply committed to the ways of the Lord. He removed the pagan shrines and Asherah poles from Judah."

- He led the people to begin learning the laws of God again. Sent men all across Judah to go into the towns & teach the people the truths of God's law.
- Was a strong military leader, too, & usually used good judgment in making alliances w/ other kings, although he got in trouble & almost lost his life by agreeing to team up w/ the wicked king Ahab & go into battle against the Syrians. God told him not to do it through a prophet, but he did it anyway.

Come to chapter 20 now – Let's just walk through this chapter & see what happens.

- Large armies were coming against Jehoshaphat & the people of Judah. He was afraid & sought God's guidance on his own, & also by declaring a time of fasting for all of the people. Everyone came together to seek the Lord. He cried out to the Lord, asking for His intervention & help.

- When he finished praying, God spoke through a man named Jahaziel & told the people not to be afraid b/c God was going to fight the battle for them. I love what Jahaziel said in v. 17: "You will not even need to fight. Take your positions; then stand still & watch the Lord's victory. He is w/ you, O people of Judah & Jerusalem. Do not be afraid or discouraged. Go out there tomorrow, for the Lord is w/ you!" (NLT)
- That led to a time of worship as Jehoshaphat & the people praised God for His answer to their fasting & prayer.
- Just as God had told them to do through Ahaziel, Jehoshaphat & the people went out the next morning to see God work. They worshiped the Lord together, singing His praises & giving thanks to Him. And when they did, God set an ambush among the enemy armies & they actually turned on each other & began to fight each other. When it was all over & the dust had settled, there were dead bodies everywhere as the enemy armies destroyed each other completely. No one survived.
- Jehoshaphat & the people went out & gathered all of the enemies' belongings that were scattered everywhere. There was so

much equipment, clothing, & valuables that it took them 3 days just to gather it all up. They named that place the Valley of Beracah, which means the Valley of Blessing.

- Jehoshaphat & the people returned to Jerusalem, full of joy over the victory of the Lord. They broke out into a great time of worship at the Temple.
- When all of the surrounding kingdoms heard about what had happened, the fear of the Lord came over them & they dare not attack Judah. So Jehoshaphat's kingdom was filled w/ peace b/c God had so richly blessed them.

**APPLICATION** – Listen for God's voice when your enemies & your fears are strong. 3 ways we can apply what we see in this chapter to our lives:

**Face Your Enemies** – We've all got them. May not be military armies of soldiers lined up against you, but there are any number of enemies that you & I face on a nearly daily basis.

- Depression
- Discouragement
- Doubt
- Despair
- Decay – of relationships

- Depravity
- Distance
- Debilitation
- Deficits
- Debt
- Disasters

Listen friends, when these & other enemies attack you, face your enemies & turn them around w/ the power & the truth of God's Word. No, it's not easy! Remember, this is warfare we are involved in! Quit thinking that your life is supposed to be easy. Jesus promised us, "In this world you will have trouble" (John 16:33). But He followed that up by saying, "But take heart! I have overcome the world!"

Use the powerful truth of God's Word against your enemies! That's what Jesus did when our enemy, Satan, was attacking Him & tempting Him. Jesus just kept firing of Scripture after Scripture until finally Satan left Him alone.

Get you an arsenal of Scriptures ready. Memorize them! And when these enemies begin to ambush you & besiege you, just keep sending salvo after salvo of TRUTH against them.

- Charles Swindoll: “I know of no other single practice in the Christian life more rewarding, practically speaking, than memorizing Scripture... No other single exercise pays greater spiritual dividends! Your prayer life will be strengthened. Your witnessing will be sharper and much more effective. Your attitudes and outlook will begin to change. Your mind will become alert and observant. Your confidence and assurance will be enhanced. Your faith will be solidified.”

**Face Your Fears** – What are you afraid of? Not talking about spiders, or snakes, or scary movies. I’m talking the kind of fear that keeps you up at night; that gnaws away at the pit of your stomach; that dominates your thoughts & affects your attitudes & actions; the kinds of things that cause you to think that your way of life is about to seriously altered. Williams Gurnall: “Fear is Satan’s weapon held in reserve. When alluring temptations fail, he opens his quiver & shoots these arrows to set the soul on fire, if not w/ sin then w/ terror.”

Some of your fears are probably directly related back to the list of enemies we just talked about. No doubt that Jehoshaphat’s fears were directly related to his drawing up against him. How many of us have made this honest confession in v. 12 – “We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you”? Maybe that’s where you are right now.

But notice where the focus is! It’s not on the enemies. It’s not on the fears. It’s on the LORD! Listen friends! You don’t have to know everything that you’re supposed to do – You just have to know the Lord!

And the proper response in facing our fears is prayer & fasting. Even if that prayer is only, “God, help me!”, then pray it! If all you can do is squeak out the name, “Jesus,” then say it! Pray, pray, pray, & pray some more!

And what about fasting? Why fast? B/c fasting is a spiritual discipline of denying ourselves so that we can focus more clearly on the only One who can get us through whatever trouble we are facing. It intensifies our prayers & awakens us spiritually in a fresh, new way, making us more receptive to the Lord’s voice & work. Andrew Bonar: “Fasting is abstaining from anything that hinders prayer.”

- Phone
- Internet
- Social media
- TV

**Face Your God** – All of what we have talked about is rooted in the most powerful activity that

anyone on the face of the earth can do –

## **WORSHIP!**

The power of worship cannot be underestimated.

We are all worshipers of something or someone.

Love what Louie Giglio wrote about worship:

“You, my friend, are a worshiper! There, I said it. Everyday, all day long, in every place, you worship. It’s what you do. It’s who you are...We are all worshipers, created to bring pleasure & honor to the God who made us. You may not consider yourself a ‘worshiping’ kind of person, but you cannot help but worship...something. It’s what you were made to do. Should you for some reason choose not to give God what He desires, you’ll worship anyway – simply exchanging the Creator for something He created” (*The Air I Breathe*, p. 9).

You see that Jehoshaphat & the people’s response to the clear voice of God was the fall down & worship Him. You see that their preparation for battle was to worship. And you see that their victory celebration after the battle was won was to worship. It’s what we do b/c it’s who we are!

**CONCLUSION** – So, here we are.

- We all have enemies we have to face.

- We all have fears we have to face.

What will we do? What should we do? We face our God & worship Him – which means that we must obey Him out of love & devotion & commitment to Him. My favorite definition of worship is that worship is extravagant love & extreme obedience. Will you obey His voice today?