

Helpless | when you don't know what to do (2 Chronicles 20)

Can you remember a time when you felt your back against a wall? Cornered by circumstances out of your control? Helpless in the face of what stood before you? What do you do when you don't know what to do?

1. Jehoshaphat PRAYS (2 Chronicles 20:3-13)

Jehoshaphat and his army just narrowly escaped a war (a couple chapters before) *and now THIS?!*

Weakened and unprepared. What would you do?

Jehoshaphat “*stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of The LORD*” and does something seemingly unspectacular: He prays.

VV6-12 “*We have no power*” = “*We’re helpless!*” “*We don’t know what to do BUT our eyes are upon you.*”

When we pray we ARE NOT surrendering to a cold impersonal fatalism.

We speak into the ear of the ever-present God of love and justice.

2. God SPEAKS (2 Chronicles 20:14-17)

God knew their fear; discouragement, he was aware of the details (he lays out his own details) and

emphasizes something very important: “*The battle is mine. Go stand firm (take your place) but you won’t be doing the fighting – watch / see what I will give you.*”

3. Jehoshaphat BELIEVES (2 Chronicles 20:18-21)

From fear to faith something changed. What happened?

The Word of God moved from ear to heart to mouth to feet.

Jehoshaphat heard, believed, spoke *and it moved him to action.*

V20 “*Listen / Hear! Pay careful attention...*” We’re so busy trying to figure a way out or figure a way through our circumstance, that we can fail to listen.

4. God DELIVERS (2 Chronicles 20:22-26)

They began to sing; *The LORD* began to battle.

A story that inspires hope. Also filled with anticipation = a king will come in the line of David just like Jehoshaphat and as king LEAD his people, as a priest INTERCEDE for them.

NOW we stand and look at the victory won for us through his life, death and resurrection. What we were powerless to do, God did for us. NOW in the face of grief, conflict and troubles of *any* kind we can make our appeals to promises made and kept in Jesus.

QUESTIONS

1. Read 2 Chronicles 20. From COVID-19 to systemic racism, the circumstances of our times have been overwhelming. We all want to do something. But what do we do when we don't know what to do? What does this story teach us about the importance of prayer?
2. “*We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you*” – is this a prayer of faith? How so?
3. What facts does Jehoshaphat lean (VV6-12)? What promises does he find hope in?
4. When we face something completely overwhelming, what facts and promises about God can we remember and make an appeal to? The good news about Jesus is filled with promises we're meant to look to / hold onto. Can you think of examples of promises within the gospel that would be helpful to remember in difficult times?
5. Jehoshaphat was not a perfect king (at all) but he took the time to listen to the Word of the LORD. We can be so busy trying to figure a way out or a way through our circumstances, that we fail to listen to the Spirit of God / the Word of God. What will it require of us to listen?
6. How does this story inspire faith and worship? How does it anticipate Jesus?

PRAY: Take time to pray about difficult / overwhelming circumstances you're facing right now. Use the prayer found in 2 Chronicles 20:6-12.