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21 After consulting the people, the king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army, singing to the LORD and praising him for his holy splendor. This is what they sang: "Give thanks to the LORD; his faithful love endures forever!"

22 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 among themselves. 23 The armies of Moab and Ammon turned against their allies from Mount Seir and killed every one of them. After they had destroyed the army of Seir, they began attacking each other.

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The Rhythm of Praise

I'd like to begin our time together in a rather unconventional way.

- A. We're going to kick off our discussion with some active engagement from all of you.
- B. Please know that you will not be judged for your decision to sit this one out if the request feels too daunting.
- C. However, your participation will play a vital role in laying the groundwork for the message we will explore together this evening.

With that being said! There are two prerequisites for our corporate endeavor.

- A. The first prerequisite is simply that you are alive. If you are currently breathing, please raise your hand.

B. If you notice someone next to you who is not raising their hand, please call 911 immediately.

The second prerequisite is your willingness to fully participate.

A. Specifically, you need to be willing to use your voice to shout praises to God along with everyone in your row and section for 60 seconds.

B. As mentioned earlier, if this is too daunting a task to ask, you may be seated without judgment.

What we are doing, without the support of instrumentation, is following the instruction of Psalm 150:6, which states, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord."

A. Those of us who are breathing and willing to participate will do just that.

B. On the count of three, we will honor the name and nature of the Lord with expressions of reverence,

gratitude, and appreciation for who He is and what He has done.

C. Are you ready? I said, "Are you ready?" 1, 2, 3!

What we have just created is a corporate rhythm and sound of praise—a rhythm and sound that directly impacts our engagement with God.

A. Tonight, I want to share how this spiritual practice is essential to the activation of God's power in our lives.

B. Using Biblical support, we will see how a willingness to praise God is sometimes all that is needed to overcome many of the obstacles and oppositions we face in our life.

In fact, I believe the victory many of you have been seeking lies in the rhythm of your praise.

A. There is a sound that attracts the presence and power of God while breaking the power of the enemy, and that sound emerges through the rhythm of your praise.

B. And tonight, we are activating that rhythm!

C. Just tell your neighbor! "I'm activating my rhythm tonight!"

When we observe 2 Chronicles 20, we recount a battle against Judah during the reign of King Jehoshaphat.

A. King Jehoshaphat was the fourth King of Judah, the southern Kingdom of Israel.

B. 2 Chronicles 17:3 tells us, ³ The Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father's early years and did not worship the images of Baal. ⁴ He sought his father's God and obeyed his commands instead of following the evil practices of the kingdom of Israel. ⁵ 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. ⁶ He was deeply committed to the ways of the Lord. He removed the pagan shrines and Asherah poles from Judah.

C. Essentially, King Jehosophat was a man of godly character.

And I'm sharing King Jehosophat's character with you to further express how we can be following the commands of God and still face unwarranted confrontation and conflict.

A. We cannot assume the battles we face are because of something bad we've done.

B. We can be doing everything right and still have to war against the giants of life. It's just a part of our human experience!

C. Whether we are living in compliance with God's will or contrary to it, we will encounter life challenges often.

So, the chapter begins by mentioning how a vast army from Moab and Ammon, along with other allied nations, were coming to wage war against Judah.

A. Upon hearing the news, King Jehoshaphat was afraid and sought the Lord's guidance.

B. Verse 3 says, “Jehoshaphat was terrified by this news and begged the Lord for guidance. He also ordered everyone in Judah to begin fasting. ⁴ So people from all the towns of Judah came to Jerusalem to seek the Lord’s help.” **(SLIDE)**

This is important because many of us attempt to wage war, be it spiritual, mental, emotional, relational or physical, in our own wisdom.

A. We use what we know to combat what we are facing, and although, at times, what we know is enough, there are some battles we cannot effectively defend without divine guidance.

B. The absence of divine guidance can lead us to employ tactics that cause more trouble than triumph.

C. The guidance of God, however, gives us strategies, empowering us to successfully soar over the things that come up against us.

D. When we're in a battle, it is imperative that we seek and trust the instructions of God over our personal intellect; He knows best how to approach an attack.

So, King Jehosophat proclaims a fast throughout all Judah and gathers the people to seek God's help. He acknowledges God's power and asks for His intervention in the face of the threat.

A. In response to his prayer, the Spirit of the Lord comes upon Jahaziel, a Levite, who delivers a message from God to the king and the people.

B. **In verse 15, Jahaziel says,** "Listen, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Listen, King Jehoshaphat! This is what the Lord says: Do not be afraid!

And note, one of the first things God is going to address when we're under attack is our feelings.

A. We cannot go into combat with the wrong countenance. We cannot face what's against us in fear.

B. Many of us are being defeated on the battlefield of our mind and haven't even stepped on the battlefield of our situation yet.

C. If we've lost the battle within us, the chance of conquering the battle before us is less likely to happen. You've got to conquer what's in you if you expect to conquer what's before.

D. Tell your neighbor, "Get your inner world together!"

Jahaziel speaks to the emotional state of the King and the people first, telling them not to be afraid or discouraged by the mighty army coming against them.

A. And here's the reason why! He says, "The battle is not yours, but God's."

B. What if I told you, what you're facing right now is not an attack against your family, it's not an attack against your finances, it's not an attack against your future, but it's an attack against your God.

Often, when we are facing life's battles, we forget WHO we belong to, and when we forget WHO we belong to, we end up turning Kingdom attacks into personal wars.

A. As sons and daughters of God, every attack on us is an attack on our father, and every attack on our father is an attack on His Kingdom.

B. David had this revelation, when fighting against Goliath and the Philistines, in 1 Samuel 17:45, when He tells Goliath, "You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of Heaven's Armies—the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶ Today the Lord will conquer you, and I will kill you and cut off your head. And then I will give the dead bodies of your men to the birds and wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel! ⁴⁷ And everyone assembled here will know that the Lord rescues his people, but not with sword and spear. This is the Lord's battle, and he will give you to us!"

Listen! When you are under attack, the Kingdom of God is under attack. This means whoever, and whatever, is

standing up against you, is ultimately standing up against your God, and God will not allow you to experience defeat as a representative of His Kingdom.

A. For you to experience defeat is for His Kingdom to experience defeat and for His kingdom to experience defeat is to suggest that He is not all powerful and all sovereign as God. Essentially, you've got to win for His Name sake.

B. That's why the battle is not yours, it's the Lords!

C. Just tell your neighbor, "It's above me now!" This is a nod to the fact that the situation is now out of my hands and at the discretion of God."

So Jahaziel tells them, ¹⁶ Tomorrow, march out against them. You will find them coming up through the ascent of Ziz at the end of the valley that opens into the wilderness of Jeruel.

A. ¹⁷ But you will not even need to fight. Take your positions; then stand still and watch the Lord's victory. He is with you, O people of Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid or discouraged. Go out against them tomorrow, for the Lord is with you!"

B. Watch this! King Jehosaphat and the Israelites would have to **face** the enemy, but they wouldn't have to **fight** the enemy.

Why would God instruct them to go out to the battlefield if he was the one who was going to be doing the battling?

A. **Read the text!** ¹⁶ Tomorrow, march out against them. You will find them coming up through the ascent of Ziz at the end of the valley that opens into the wilderness of Jeruel. ¹⁷ But you will not even need to fight. Take your positions; then stand still and watch the Lord's victory.

B. May I suggest that they had to face the fight to show that they had faith in God.

And notice I said “show” they had faith and not “say” they had faith because it’s easier to make a statement of faith than it is to take a step of faith.

A. Statements of faith are valuable! However, God likes to see faith through our **movements** just as much as He likes to hear faith come from our **mouths**.

B. It’s not just what we **declare** that suggests we have faith in God but it’s also what we **demonstrate**, especially in times of **difficulty**, that shows how much we really trust Him.

So, 20 Early the next morning the army of Judah went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. On the way Jehoshaphat stopped and said, “Listen to me, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be able to stand firm. Believe in his prophets, and you will succeed.”

A. As I shared before, this fight is less about the battle and more about what Judah believes.

B. God it's testing their **faith** with a **fight**, and they need only to **trust** the Word of God in order to **triumph** over the opposition.

C. And they did! They trusted the Word of the Lord and had faith in what He would do, and their faith was revealed through a rhythm of praise.

Verse 21 says, After consulting the people, the king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army, singing to the LORD and praising him for his holy splendor. This is what they sang: "Give thanks to the LORD (RHYTHM OF PRAISE); his faithful love endures forever! (Revelation who He is)"

A. Praise is not merely religious rhetoric used to display piety.

B. It is a reverent response to the revelation of who God is and our faith in Him.

C. And it is often in praising Him for who He is that we experience what He can do.

The text says, 22 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 among themselves.

A. Their praise revealed His power, and His power solved the problem.

B. 23 The armies of Moab and Ammon turned against their allies from Mount Seir and killed every one of them. After they had destroyed the army of Seir, they began attacking each other.

C. 24 So when the army of Judah arrived at the lookout point in the wilderness, all they saw were dead bodies lying on the ground as far as they could see. Not a single one of the enemy had escaped.

May I suggest tonight that God can handle the problem before you but He's waiting to hear praise come from within you first.

A. As I shared at the top of my message, which is also my one point for tonight, “The willingness to praise God is sometimes all that is needed to overcome many of the obstacles and oppositions we face in our life.”

B. Tonight, our rhythm of praise is rescuing us from many of the problems we’re in.

C. Everyone stand on your feet, as we prepare to engage in part two of our corporate exercise.

Here’s the bonus revelation of the text!

A. Not only did Judah’s faith in God win the war, but the battle ended up becoming a blessing.

B. The Bible tells us, after the battle, ²⁵ King Jehoshaphat and his men went out to gather the plunder. They found vast amounts of equipment, clothing, and other valuables—more than they could carry. There was so much plunder that it took them three days just to

collect it all! ²⁶ On the fourth day they gathered in the Valley of Blessing, which got its name that day because the people praised and thanked the Lord there. It is still called the Valley of Blessing today.

Listen, God will use a battle to bless you! The battle was His, but the blessing belonged to Judah.

A. We serve a God who will take care of the fight and let us handle the favor.

B. If you're in a battle right now, I would praise God, because it's possible that God is using this fight to favor you. You will not leave the battlefield empty handed.