The Battle Belongs to the Lord

Study 4 – Walking with God - Jehoshaphat

2 Chronicles 20:1-30

Message Mate

- How do you respond to fearful situations? This passage shows us how we can move from fear of a threat to the fear of God through prayer, prophecy and praise. When Jehoshaphat heard an invading army was close by, he was afraid and did not know what to do, yet he still responded with faith. He called the nation to a time of prayer and fasting.

- Jehoshaphat's prayer started by acknowledging that God had power and authority over every situation and circumstance. He then reminded God of three promises to the people of Judah. First, that God had made a promise to Abraham that this land was for his descendants. Second that they had built a temple for God and third that Solomon's prayer when the temple was dedicated said when calamity came, they could cry out to God in their distress and He would hear them and save them. This part of the prayer focused on the faithfulness of God. The second part of the prayer focused on God's justice, calling on Him to exercise justice against the invaders. When you feel fear and don't know what to do, turn to God in faith, draw upon His promises to you and trust that He will act justly on your behalf.

- In response to their prayers, the Holy Spirit came upon a Levite causing him to prophesy. The prophecy included encouragement to not to be afraid or discouraged, and it brought strategy telling them what to do and that the battle was the Lord's. This was similar to the word brought when the Israelites were being chased by the Egyptians at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:13,14). The people of Judah knew God had saved them then and that He could do that again.

- Their prayers led to prophecy and this led to praise. The people were gathered at the temple and they praised God then and there. Then in faith they put the worship team at the front of the army knowing that God would be faithful and fight for them. As they praised God, He moved to defeat the enemy, such that when they arrived, all the enemy soldiers were already dead. In response they gathered the plunder and praised God, before returning to the temple to continue to praise God.

- When you are fearful, stand firm in the presence of God. Cry out to Him. Call upon His faithfulness and justice. Cry out knowing that He will hear you and save you. Praise God for what He will do, what He is doing and what He will do. As the news of God's victory spread, the fear of God came upon all surrounding kingdoms bringing peace and rest to the kingdom of Judah.

- When you face fear, turn and face God in faith with prayer, prophecy and praise. Pray for the fear of God in our lives, church, city and community so that we may move from fear of a threat to the fear of God.

Some Questions to Consider

1. When you face a fearful or threatening situation, what is your usual response, to fight, take flight, freeze or fawn (seek to placate or appease the threat)? How does Jehoshaphat's example challenge or encourage you to move to faith in God?

2. What do you learn about God from the way Jehoshaphat began his prayer? Why is it important to remember God's power, authority, and faithfulness when we are afraid?

3. Jehoshaphat reminded God of His promises to His people. What promises of God can you hold onto when you are facing fear, uncertainty, or distress?

4. The prophecy told Judah, "Do not be afraid or discouraged…the battle is not yours, but God's." What does it mean in practical terms to trust God with a battle you cannot control?

5. Judah responded to God's word with praise before they saw the victory. What does this teach us about praising God in the middle of difficult circumstances?

6. How can we move from being controlled by the fear of a threat to living in the fear of God? What difference does the fear of God make in the way we respond to challenges?

7. What situation are you currently facing where you need to turn toward God in prayer, trust His promises, and praise Him for His faithfulness? How can you put this into practice this week?

Pray –

Pray with thanks that God is powerful and mighty and no-one can withstand Him (2 Chronicles 20:6)

If you are willing, pray for the fear of the Lord in your life, our church, city and community.