

JEHOSHAPHAT, A MAN OF PRAYER  
2 Chron. 20:5-13

Intro: Jehoshaphat was the fourth king in Judah after the kingdom was divided. He reigned about 850 years before Christ.

When he became King, it is said that "the Lord <sup>was</sup> with" him (2 Chron. 17:3-6).

His one mistake was his alliance with Ahab, king of Israel, but when this was pointed out to him, he took immediate to correct it. Ch. 19 tells of his great concern to get his people to walk with the Lord.

Right at the time that he was instituting these reforms word came to him of an invasion by Moab, Ammon, and Edom-- an army which was too great for him and for his people.

And so he prays.

He set himself to seek the Lord (2 Chr. 20:3), and sought to get his people to do the same.

How he prayed, what he said, is our special interest tonight as we look for instruction regarding prayer for ourselves. Surely we can say that as he came to this critical moment in his life he brought with him those truths which had been established in his life before.

Therefore, it is interesting to note the following:

I. HE DREW UPON THE KNOWLEDGE WHICH HE HAD OF THE LORD (vv. 6, 7).

In doing this, he draws heavily from the past. He manifests that he knows the Law (Deut. 4:39), that he was acquainted with the life and heart-desire of David regarding the Temple (1 Chron. 29:10-12), that he knew the prayer of Solomon at the ded. of the Temple (2 Chron. ~~6:22-39~~ 6:22-39), and even the prayer of Asa his father (2 Chron. 14:11).

Thus, he knew the Word of God, and he had learned from men of God who had preceded him. The person who fails to learn from the past is one who is neglecting one of the greatest sources of help available--especially that which we find in the Word of God.

II. HE DREW UPON HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE WILL OF GOD (vv. 7, 8).

Note how in v. 7 he refers to Joshua, and then to Gene-

sis--and he does not look at second causes. What God did in Joshua's day was in fulfillment of promises which he made to Abraham! Abraham, the friend of God!

V. 8 gives us the whole history of the people up to Jehoshaphat's day. The people would never have had the land, and they never would have been able to remain in the land, apart from the faithfulness and power of God!

III. HE DREW UPON HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE WAYS OF THE LORD (vv. 10, 11).

Again, sacred history comes to his aid. How tragic it would have been for Jehoshaphat if he had not known about God's dealings with His people in the past.

Israel had not wronged these nations. In fact, God had providentially spared them when they came into the land. Jehoshaphat knew that it was contrary to the ways of the Lord for these people to be able to do what they were attempting to do in view of the past.

IV. HE DREW UPON HIS KNOWLEDGE OF HIMSELF AND OF HIS PEOPLE (v. 12).

There are three things here: 1/ their powerlessness; 2/ their ignorance; 3/ their faith.

On 1/ cf. Abraham, Jacob (at Peniel), Moses (when called, and later at the Red Sea), Joshua (after the defeat at Ai), and David (pursued by Saul). NOTHING MOVES THE HEART OF GOD ANY MORE THAN FOR US TO CONFESS TO HIM OUR WEAKNESS AND HELPLESSNESS. Cf. 2 Cor. 12:7-10.

On 2/ cf. Elisha in 2 Kings 6:15-17.<sup>(After Jehosh.)</sup> Usually powerlessness and ignorance go together. Again, think of Abraham and Sarah, also Moses.

On 3/ cf. David against Goliath in 1 Sam. 17:45, 46.

Possibly many other examples could be cited for the above, but Jehoshaphat brought the background of all of these truths to support him in his time of need and to serve as a pattern for his prayer.

Concl: What was the result? Read vv. 14-30. Note how worship and praise were offered to God by the people, how complete the victory was, and the statement of the conclusion in v. 30.

Our need: To know the Lord from the Word, to know His purposes and His promises, to understand His ways, and to cast ourselves completely upon Him.