

Praise your way to Victory

We all encounter difficulty and challenges in life. One thing that some folks do is to complain or murmur, but that ought not to be so.

When we complain, gripe or murmur, we are not operating in faith. Faith does not complain or give excuses. Complaining hinders what God can do in our lives. Rather we should try to spin this around and begin to look for the positive things God has done in our lives and begin to give Him praise or we can start to praise Him for who He is.

This is not necessarily to get victory, but it yields victory anyway. Every time we focus on the Lord through thanksgiving and praise, we will get direction from the Lord that will bring us the victory that we need.

2 Chronicles 20 It came to pass after this also, that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle. ²Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, **There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria;** and, behold, they be in Hazazontamar, which is Engedi. ³**And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.** ⁴**And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the Lord: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord.** ⁵And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court, ⁶And said, O Lord God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee? ⁷Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever? ⁸And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying, ⁹If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name is in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help. ¹⁰And now, behold, the

children of Ammon and Moab and mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not; ¹¹Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit. ¹²O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee. ¹³And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. ¹⁴Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation; ¹⁵And he said, Harken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's. ¹⁶To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. ¹⁷Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you. ¹⁸And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord. ¹⁹And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high. ²⁰And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. ²¹And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever. ²²And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten. ²³For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another. ²⁴And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped. ²⁵And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much. ²⁶And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah; for there they blessed the Lord: therefore the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah, unto this day. ²⁷Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the forefront of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies. ²⁸And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and

trumpets unto the house of the Lord. ²⁹And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they had heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel.

In this passage, King Jehoshaphat was faced with a difficult situation. It looked like he had no chance to win this battle, but he knew where to go and whose help to ask for. He went to the Lord and the He gave him one of the best war strategies known to man. This ploy to defeat the enemy was glorious.

Lessons to learn:

A. ²Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, **There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria;** and, behold, they be in Hazazontamar, which is Engedi.

a) The king was told about the enemies that were coming against him and that they had drawn closer. They were a great multitude.

i) There are times when we get a bad report that our enemies are coming and closing in against us. These enemies may not be people. They can be failure, lack, destruction, loss, sickness or disease and so forth.

ii) These bad reports can come from anyone. From the most loved and trusted to the least trusted such as family members, doctors, lawyers, friends and so forth etc.

B. ³And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

b) The king set himself to pray, fast, and seek the Lord. He asked others to join him in seeking the Lord.

i) We can do the same thing. We can ask a few people in our close circle, family, mentors or people of influence in our lives to stand with us in prayer. It is not a multitude that moves the Lord, but there is power in corporate prayer. If one is in unbelief, one is in faith and this makes a huge difference. We need each other in good and bad times.

ii) Jehoshaphat feared which is why he sought the Lord. Although it is commendable that he sought the Lord, he perhaps would not have done that if he had not feared.

- We should seek the Lord not only when our back is against the wall. This should be our lifestyle. When tragedy comes and your being threatened, seek the Lord.

iii) Jehoshaphat feared but you should not. The Lord is with you, for you, around you, before you, behind you, and in you. There is no cause to fear.

C. ⁴And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the Lord: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord. ⁵And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

a) The people and the king realized that they needed help from the Lord, and everyone came out to participate in seeking the Lord.

i) We need help from the Lord. This is important for all of us to understand, yet not help just in the time of need but help always. We can tap into the help of the Helper (Holy Spirit) to the degree we want to.

ii) Hebrews 4:16 *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

- If we go to the Lord, we will find mercy and grace to help us in a time of need.

iii) I have to mention that we need to be intentional to go to the Lord every time we encounter a situation, old or new. God might have fresh direction for us, and we do not want to be stuck to only what worked in the past and have no new leading from the Lord.

b) Notice it says they gathered themselves together

i) This is speaking of unity. Unity is key to seeing victory. The more united we are the more victory we will see and experience.

D. ⁵And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court, ⁶And said, O Lord God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee? ⁷Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever? ⁸And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying, ⁹If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name is in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help. ¹⁰And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not; ¹¹Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit. ¹²O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but **our eyes are upon thee.**

a) The king prayed a prayer of thanksgiving and praise to the Lord. He did not complain. He reminded the Lord of how faithful He was in the past, His promise to Abraham and the possession He had given them.

i) Do not complain. Pray and rehearse the good things He has done in your life and how He has delivered you in the past. Ask God for help.

b) King Jehoshaphat understood that he could not win this through his own might.

i) We should also recognize that very quickly. We need to be God dependent. We have no might to have victory in our own strength. We need God's help.

ii) We also need to look to the Lord. Our eyes cannot be on people and all the things we have to help us. We need to be believing and trusting the Lord for direction. Our eyes **MUST** be on Him not only in the times of trouble but in all our daily walk. If we look to the Lord, we will avoid many of the pitfalls. When we take our eyes off of the Lord down to the pitfalls, we fall in them. We navigate all the traps and the pitfalls by looking up—looking to the Lord, not down to our own circumstances, strengths, and abilities.

E. ¹⁴Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation; ¹⁵And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the Lord unto you, **Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.** ¹⁶To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. ¹⁷**Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you.**

a) As they all gathered before the Lord in unity, the Spirit of the Lord spoke through Jahaziel.

i) As they sought the Lord, He spoke. When we seek the Lord, He will speak to us and give us direction and guidance. God speaks and He is not deaf.

b) Be not afraid.

i) The first thing God spoke was "Be not afraid." Fear is a hindrance to the manifestation of the power of God. We need to fear not. If we fear, we will be discouraged.

ii) The reason they were dismayed was because they were looking at the multitudes and comparing it with their numbers. Did that really matter? The Lord was with them. They were a majority with the Lord, not a minority.

c) God revealed that the battle was His.

i) This is true for all our battles as well. They belong to the Lord. If the battle is His, then He does the fighting.

ii) They were to set themselves, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.

d) Notice although the battle was the Lord's, He told them to go out against them.

i) They were not going out alone. The Lord was with them.

- ii) We have a part to play. He did not tell them to stay at home. They played a part in this victory. They had to go against them, although they were not to fight.
 - iii) Notice that the Lord said they were not to fight in **this battle**. There are times they fought before, but this was not going to be one of them.
 - iv) We have to be sensitive to the Lord. The approach might change in this encounter unlike our experience in the previous encounters.
- F. ¹⁸ And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord. ¹⁹ And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high.
- a) After Jehoshaphat and all the people received direction from the Lord, they worshipped the Lord.
 - i) Worshipping the Lord should not be an afterthought but a regular practice. Nonetheless, he worshipped the Lord which is the perfect response in tragedy.
 - b) They stood up to praise the Lord with a loud voice on high.
 - i) This ought to be a way of life not just a response to tragedy. We know this was key to their victory.
- G. ²⁰ And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.
- a) We are established and rooted through believing the Lord. If we do not believe the Lord by believing His messengers, we will not be established nor prosper.
- H. ²¹ And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever. ²² And when they began to sing and to

praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.

- a) Notice what happened. As they praised the Lord, victory happened.
 - i) They were not to fight, but this did not say they were to do entirely nothing. They praised God and deliverance started happening. God set ambushments against the enemies of Israel and they were smitten.
1. ²³For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another. ²⁴And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped. ²⁵And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much. ²⁶And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah; for there they blessed the Lord: therefore the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah, unto this day. ²⁷Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the forefront of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies. ²⁸And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the Lord. ²⁹And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they had heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel.
 - a) By praising and worshiping God, all the enemies of Judah were defeated for the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount sier which were coming against Judah, and they were defeated.
 - i) The enemies destroyed each other before the face of Judah.
 - b) Praising God did not only bring them victory, but it also brought them riches in abundance. They collected spoils such as precious jewels. Judah took three days gathering the spoils for it was too much (verse 25).
 - i) Thanksgiving and praise cause the earth to yield increase (Psalm 67:5-6).

- ii) Praising and thanking God also causes us to always triumph in Christ. If we are not triumphing, we need to check our thank-o-meter!
- iii) Praising God causes manifestation to happen (2 Corinthians 2:14).
- c) Through the leadership of King Jehoshaphat and the people worshipped God before and **after** their victory. They blessed Him (by giving Him thanks—Psalms 100:4-5) after becoming abundantly rich in spoils, and for the victory over their enemies.
- d) Praise and thanksgiving will cause us to experience victory. Giving thanks to God and praising Him is one of the most powerful weapons always at the disposal of a believer.

Praise still the enemy and the avenger. Thanksgiving and praise = Strength

*"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou **ordained strength** because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger."*

—Psalm 8:2

*"And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast **perfected praise**?"*

—Matthew 21:16

Thanksgiving is a form of praise. When we give thanks to the Lord, we are praising Him. If we are unthankful people, we can't claim to be ones that praise the Lord. You can't be thankful if you have no memory.

Praise and thanksgiving are very powerful things we should employ in our lives daily. Notice the commentary of the Holy Spirit through Jesus. Jesus through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit quoted and **interchangeably** used "**ordained strength**" with "**perfected praise**."

Therefore, praise is strength. As we praise the Lord, we release strength into our lives. Two, The Joy of the Lord is our strength (Nehemiah 8:10). Like praise, joy is also strength. Joy will still (silence and quiet) the enemy and the avenger. As we praise the Lord, we enter into joy and this stills (quiets) the enemy. Thanksgiving and praise affect you, God, and the devil.

If we are lacking in strength, we are lacking in joy, praise, and in thanksgiving because these give us strength.

Rich Kanyal