

## SINGING IN THE VALLEY OF BERACHAH

*2Chronicles 20:26 And 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.*

I wish to call this place the valley of Berachah (blessing) today! Amen! Perhaps we should begin with praise like Judah did in Jehovah's sight before the sermon (sing "As David did in Jehovah's sight ...). Let us first understand what happened in the original valley of Berachah and do the same here today. Jehoshaphat was a godly king in Judah. He served God sincerely and demonstrated his love in many ways. However, he had one weakness – he was a close friend of Ahab, the wicked king of Israel. In our text today, Jehoshaphat received the frightening news that his enemies had secretly assembled outside of Jerusalem and were ready to capture the city and Judah. "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" (2Chronicles 20:1). Could it be that the king perhaps feared that this pending disaster was on account of his close friendship with Ahab? Whether this was the case or not, Jehoshaphat decided there was only one course of action: he and all of Judah would repent and fast and pray.

*2Ch 20:3 And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.*

*2Ch 20:4 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.*

When troubles come, we must not seek the help of so-called powerful friends or allies. Jehoshaphat looked up to heaven, not to Ahab or any other king. He was not afraid to declare his helplessness and confusion before God in the hearing of all the people. "O 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" (2Chron 20:12). Once we confess our helplessness and stand and wait on the Lord Jesus Christ alone, he always answers. Once we bow our heads and our tears of despair hit the ground, the God who drowned Pharaoh and his army will speak.

*2Ch 20:15 And 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.*

Jehoshaphat was a man who was grounded in the word of God. The Bible records that he sent Levites to teach the word of God in all Judah. “And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people” (2Chron 17:9). Surely, Jehoshaphat must have been inspired by the great miracle at the walls of Jericho in the days of Joshua because he called a military counsel and made a similar decision. “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” (2Chron 20:21). Isn’t it amazing that the king consulted with the people, and not military generals or even priests and Levites? Hallelujah! How happy this made God when the king and the people together decided to appoint “singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness!” We often think that singing unto the Lord is the safest job in the world. What harm can come to someone who sings unto the Lord? Wrong! Singing unto the Lord is one of the most dangerous and potent weapons in the armory of the Christian. As the singers approached the enemy lines and began to sing, their singing became live ammunition that rained down chaos. Remember how the demons in Saul squirmed and fled when David worshipped God playing on his harp!

**1Sam 16:23** *And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.*

Note that God did not command Jehoshaphat and the people to appoint singers to face the enemy; this was the desire of the king and the people in collaboration. God never forced his people to sing and worship him at any time. When the leaders and the people of God agree in one spirit to glorify the name of Jesus, no enemy can stand against the church. So, the war started with singing. Imagine the look on the faces of the Ammonites and their allies when messengers reported that Judah was approaching them with singing! Asaph says it well, “[To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm or Song of Asaph.] In Judah is God known: his name is great in Israel” (Psalm 76:1). Judah means “praise” and, yes, the enemy came to know that day that God is known in Judah. When we praise the name of Jesus, the Lord will reveal his name, power and salvation to those who oppose him.

**Act 16:25** *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.*

**Act 16:26** *And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.*

The enemy had come to the land of Judah – they were in God’s territory. 2Chronicles 20:2 states that they had penetrated Judah and were in Engedi. Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah were making it clear to these invaders that they had the right to sing praises unto the God of Judah whose land they had invaded. This Engedi was the same place where David hid in strongholds when Saul sought to kill him. Judah knew that David, himself from Judah, had sanctified Engedi by singing songs unto the God of Israel when his life was in danger. “[A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.]] O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is” (Psalm 63:1). How wonderful God is! Because Judah was a tribe that loved to praise God, God blessed them in return and said through Jacob:

***Gen 49:8*** *Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee.*

When you become a singer and worshipper of Jesus, God will bestow a good reputation upon you. The scripture above is also fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Now, the children of Judah went to meet the enemy with singing and praise. What can we learn from them? Firstly, do not wait for the Lord to remove your problems and then praise him. Rather, agree with others to face your problems with singing and praise, like Judah did. The moment the singers and Judah went out with singing to meet the enemy, God moved into action. “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” (2Chron 20:22). Let us face all challenges like Judah did – meet them with singing and worship! Next, they did not stop with the destruction of the enemy, they continued to sing and worship for four days. Engedi, which was supposed to fill their hearts with fear, became the valley of Berachah. Jesus will transform every Engedi in your lives into the valley of Berachah. Hallelujah!

***2Ch 20:26*** *And 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.*

***2Ch 20:27*** *Then 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.*

**2Ch 20:28** *And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the LORD.*

If we go singing unto the Lord, we will doubtless return with singing. In them was fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, “Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away” (Isaiah 51:11). Let us determine to never stop singing and worshipping unto the Lord Jesus Christ! May the Lord Jesus transform your Engedis into the valleys of Berachah!