

Worship Is Warfare

Last Things

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Our Scripture lesson is taken again from Revelation chapter 14, and you will find this on page 1,928 in your Bibles.

1 Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. 3 And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. 4 These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb. 5 No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless.

The word of the Lord. ["Praise be to God."]

Lord, please help me to make these things vivid, memorable, heart-sticking and memory-sticking and extremely practical and bless us as we gather, that as we go out of this place we would go out of here refreshed and encouraged because of the word of God as we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Now you may recall two weeks ago when I preached on this passage, we didn't get through. I never get through with sermons here because I used to preach 50 and 55-minute sermons, but I've learned not to do that anymore. And so I want us to pick up where we left off, just a very quick synopsis.

Who are the 144,000?

They're not the people that you're told they are when people knock on your door selling *Watchtower* magazines. In fact, according to Jehovah's Witnesses, the 144,000 have all died out, and that's why they never have the Lord's Supper. They display it, but nobody can partake because the 144,000 are dead. Who are the 144,000?

The symbolism in this book is what destroys most people. The symbolism is we had 12 tribes of Jacob, 12 sons of Jacob, and we had 12 apostles. 12 times 12 is a gross, 144. And then think of the Holy of Holies, the Holy of Holies was a cube 10 cubits long, 10 cubits wide, and 10 cubits high. 10 times 10 times 10 is 1,000.

So the 144,000 are God's people dwelling with him and that's really what we have here, and trying to get hung up on trying to read this literally, as some commentators have said, these were actually, literally Jewish men who never touched a woman, and there are 144,000 Jewish male virgins. It's just missing the whole point of the book. The whole point of the book is to take these themes out of the Old Testament as a great musical and weave them together into the final symphony of victory that God has.

So those are the 144,000, and they sing a new song. What is that new song?

Well, if we turn back to where we were in Revelation chapter 5, where we sort of ended, but we had the Lord's Supper two weeks ago, and so we look there, on page 1,919, and we find that people in verse 9, Revelation 5:9, "and they sang a new song."

And they sang a new song: 'You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.' (Revelation 5:9)

Now I want you to notice something about this song and it debunks the idea that we should only sing the book of Psalms. Only to sing the book of Psalms is to betray what happened in the death, burial, resurrection, ascension of Christ and sending the Spirit. We sing a new song, and we sing the Psalms with a new interpretation.

Isaac Watts understood this, and so he paraphrased Psalms, like Psalm 72 he paraphrased into, “Jesus shall reign where e’er the sun.” And so when we sing the Psalms, indeed when we pray the Psalms, when we read the Psalms, we need to read them as Christians.

Here’s how to interpret the Psalms, a little tidbit.

First of all, the Psalms were written by the author, for the author—by and large, in the case of David. And so David went through all of these terrible things. If you want to know what it feels like to have people hate you and want to kill you and try to trip you up, and if you want to know what it’s like to feel super, super guilty because you’ve done something incredibly wicked and compounded it with murder, read the Psalms.

They are, by and large, written by David, but not all of them. Moses wrote the 90th Psalm, and that helps us understand God did not promise you 70 years of life, or if by reason of strength, 80 years. I’m less than four years from 80. Is that all I’ve got to expect? Moses wrote it. What happened to Moses in the wilderness?

People were dropping like flies at the ripe old age of 70 and 80. Moses lived to be 120. Can you live to be 120? You can, if God wills it and that is an extremely healthy life can be that long in our time.

But people were dropping like flies in the wilderness wanderings because God said, “Because you turned your back on me and didn’t believe my promise to give you the land, therefore all you folks are going to wander in the wilderness till the last one of you drops dead and then your children whom you said were going to die in the wilderness, they’re going to inherit the land.” (Numbers 14:28-35)

So Psalm 90 isn’t a promise, “Well, the Lord’s promised me 70 years.” I’m glad he’s promised me a healthy life as I seek him, and I attempt to seek him (Psalm 91:16). And those promises are for you. So again, we have to interpret the Psalms in their context. Most of them are written by David.

And then how do we read those Psalms? Well, “As many as may be the promises of God in Jesus Christ, they’re yea and amen” (2 Corinthians 1:20). And what that means is the Psalms ultimately point to David’s greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ and those Psalms are fulfilled in him.

Psalm 22, which is an amazing prophecy of the cross as you go through it and analyze it with its acrostics that are in there (It is not an acrostic poem; I meant to say “chiastic structures.”), and chiastic structures, sometimes I might answer that question. But what you find is that it prophesies, this Psalm of David, that Jesus would actually have his hands and his feet pierced (Psalm 22:16), and that they would gamble for his garment (Psalm 22:18) and all these things, these prophecies, ultimately point to the Lord Jesus Christ.

But because you and I are in him, they’re ours too. So when I read the Psalms, I not only look at David, and I not only look at his greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, but I look at myself and I say, “Lord, as many as may be the promises of God, in Jesus Christ they are yea and amen” (2 Corinthians 1:20).

But we need to be more explicitly Christian when we sing the Psalms, when we read the Psalms, when we meditate on the Psalms, and when we pray the Psalms, and we see that here with this new song in Revelation 5:9:

“You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain.”

Who is he talking about? He’s talking about the Lamb of God. Who is the Lamb of God? You remember John the Baptist saw the Lord Jesus and he said, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” (John 1:29).

So this is the Lamb.

“You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.” (Revelation 5:9-10)

So who are “they”? We are “they,” and that’s important. This is a promise about you and me and we read further, and we go to verse 11,

11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they sang: ‘Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!’ 13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: ‘To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!’ 14 The four living creatures said, ‘Amen,’ and the elders fell down and worshiped. (Revelation 5:11-14)

So our theme is that the book of Revelation is a book of worship.

Now here is where we’re going with it today. When we worship, we’re engaged in war. Worship is warfare. If you look at Revelation right across the page and you get to chapter 6 and you discover the opening of the seals and you discover after that the trumpets, and the trumpets begin to blow and as the trumpets blow, and we can look there at Revelation chapter 8 and verse 6:

“Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.” (Revelation 8:6)

And so this is what I want us to understand and I want us to look at a biblical character in the Old Testament who illustrates this in his very inconsistent life. Worship is war. Worship is warfare. When we praise the Lord, we are engaging in warfare against our enemies and the enemies of God. What do I mean and how do I mean it? So here we go. The trumpets that are designed for worship also were designed to call the assembly together in the Old Testament.

The LORD said to Moses: “Make two trumpets of hammered silver, and use them for calling the community together and for having the camps set out. When both are sounded, the whole community is to assemble before you at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. If only one is sounded, the leaders—the heads of the clans of Israel—are to assemble before you. When a trumpet blast is sounded, the tribes camping on the east are to

set out. At the sounding of a second blast, the camps on the south are to set out. The blast will be the signal for setting out. To gather the assembly, blow the trumpets, but not with the same signal.

“The sons of Aaron, the priests, are to blow the trumpets. This is to be a lasting ordinance for you and the generations to come. When you go into battle in your own land against an enemy who is oppressing you, sound a blast on the trumpets. Then you will be remembered by the LORD your God and rescued from your enemies. Also at your times of rejoicing—your appointed feasts and New Moon festivals—you are to sound the trumpets over your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, and they will be a memorial for you before your God. I am the LORD your God.” (Numbers 10:1-10)

And they also were used in war, and we see that, of course, with Joshua “fitting the Battle of Jericho.” He had the priests blow the shofar (shôphâr, שׁוֹפָר: “trumpets made from rams’ horns” (Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner (1958) *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E. J. Brill), p. 1448)), which is a ram’s horn, and they go around the city, and on the seventh day, as they surround it seven times, and they blow the ram’s horns, and the people shout, and the walls of Jericho fall down. They fell down because of faith and that’s what’s important (Joshua 6:16-20; Hebrews 11:30).

So we believe the promises of God, and because we believe the promises of God, we praise the Lord, and when we praise the Lord, interesting things happen.

Let’s go back into the Old Testament to 2 Chronicles chapter 18, and I want us to see—we’re going to be looking at the life of Jehoshaphat for a moment, Jehoshaphat (y^ehōšāpāt, יְהוֹשָׁפָט). And what that means is Yahweh (יהוה) is a shaphat (shāphat, שָׁפֵט). Yahweh is a judge. Yahweh is a judge. Jehoshaphat. And so notice one of the mistakes that Jehoshaphat made. He tried to have peace.

His father was Asa, who really followed the Lord in the early days of his life, but at the very end, he took the idols that he had collected from other people. I confused King Amaziah with King Asa.

Now it happened that after Amaziah came from striking down the Edomites, he brought the gods of the sons of Seir, set them up as his gods, worshiped them, and burned incense to them. Then the anger of Yahweh burned against Amaziah, and He sent him a prophet who said to him, “Why have you sought the gods of the people who have not delivered their own people from your hand?” Now it happened that as he was talking with him, the king said to him, “Have we given you to be a royal counselor? Stop! Why should you be struck down?” Then the prophet stopped and said, “I know that God has counseled to destroy you, because you have done this and have not listened to my counsel.” (2 Chronicles 25:14-16)

King Asa got diseased in his feet, and for three years he suffered, and the Bible says that he did not seek the Lord but the medical doctors (2 Chronicles 16:7-12).

Is there anything wrong with seeking a medical doctor? No, but it can be if you don't seek the Lord first. You need to understand: You're never sick, you never have anything happen to you that is merely chance. God ordains whatever comes to pass for your good and my good that he might make us more like the Lord Jesus (Romans 8:28-29).

So the first thing to happen when you get sick or you have an accident, say, “Lord, are you trying to speak to me through providence, through this event?” And you seek the Lord, and then it's totally legitimate to seek physicians. But not if you don't seek the Lord because medicine is like the Lord's Supper, it's a means blessed by God, and without God's blessing, it isn't going to do you any good. It'll just fill your bloodstream with little white streaks as you get certain things injected in you.

So we look not to medicine, but to the Lord who uses medicine. Now here's Jehoshaphat and so we find here on page 699 of 2 Chronicles chapter 18, we discover here in verse 28: “So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, went up to Ramoth Gilead.”

Now, Jehoshaphat has aligned himself with the house of Omri, and Omri's son is King Ahab, who stands out as the quintessential evil king of Israel, married to Jezebel. And so Jehoshaphat, in his quest to have peace and

blessing and prosperity for his kingdom, goes up to Samaria to see Ahab, and remember you go up, excuse me, he went down to Samaria because Jerusalem is always up. So he goes down to see King Ahab.

Now look at verse 29. “The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat ...”

Man, you don’t ever want to get aligned with a crook, I’ll tell you why. He said, “I will enter the battle in disguise, but you wear your royal robes” (2 Chronicles 18:29).

What kind of idiot was Jehoshaphat? He was a godly man, just like you and me, and we can both become idiots at times. And so he’s an idiot. Who in the world is going to go into battle wearing his royal robes when the guy that everybody wants to kill, Ahab, is disguised. So we notice this.

So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle. Now the king of Aram (and that’s Syria, this would be its capital, Damascus) had ordered his chariot commanders, ‘Do not fight with anyone, small or great, except the king of Israel.’ When the chariot commanders saw Jehoshaphat, they thought, ‘This is the king of Israel.’ So they turned to attack him, but (now notice in that next clause) but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him. (2 Chronicles 18:30-31)

Jehoshaphat was a Christian, speaking anachronistically. Jehoshaphat knew what to do when he was in trouble. This was his “Help me Jesus” prayer. He cried out to the Lord, just like I cried out to the Lord when I foolishly tipped my canoe in winter in our lake.

(So he) cried out, and the LORD helped him. God drew them away from him, for when the chariot commanders saw that he was not the king of Israel, they stopped pursuing him. (2 Chronicles 18:31-32)

Now look at verse 33. Can you ever protect yourself when God’s determined to bring you down? The answer is no. Look at verse 33:

But someone drew his bow at random (Random ducked, that’s a terrible joke) and hit the king of Israel between the sections of his armor. (2 Chronicles 18:33)

So here's a guy, and he's got to make sure that he's shot all his arrows and so he puts an arrow in his bow, he pulls it back, and he just fires it into the air. He's not aiming at anything or anybody and what happens? It says that it hit the king of Israel. It hit King Ahab between the sections of his armor that were underneath his robes because he's disguised.

The king told the chariot driver, 'Wheel around and get me out of the fighting. I've been wounded.' All day long the battle raged, and the king of Israel propped himself up in his chariot facing the Arameans until evening. Then at sunset he died. (2 Chronicles 18:33-34)

And Jehoshaphat returns home.

Now you'd think that Jehoshaphat would have learned a lesson, "Don't get mixed up with ungodly people. Don't ever get in partnership with somebody who's dishonest, because if they will cheat somebody else, they will cheat you." But God had determined to bring down Ahab.

Now let's look at something else. We go over to page 700, and we're going to see here another battle.

After this, the Moabites and the Ammonites, with some of the Meunites, came to make war with Jehoshaphat. (2 Chronicles 20:1)

Now, that is not chronologically the next event. The next event, if you turn back to the left, to 2 Kings chapter 3, you will see there is a battle between this battle with Ahab and the king of Syria and the battle we're reading back here. So turn back with me, if you will, to 2 Kings chapter 3. 2 Kings chapter 3 and again, we're using Jehoshaphat to illustrate that praise is warfare. So we look here, page 572, 2 Kings 3. So this battle that's recorded in 2 Kings 3 takes place before the thing we're going to turn back to.

Joram son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah. (2 Kings 3:1)

Now you can go on and read through all these things. Verse 4, "Now Mesha king of Moab raised sheep."

Have you ever heard of Mesha? Has anyone ever heard of the Moabite stone? Well Mesha had a big stone put up to commemorate his victory over Israel. It's not quite the victory that he wrote about.

Never forget this: politicians love to promote their own stories. And I'm still, because I go to sleep reading it every night, reading Mary Beard's story about the Roman emperors and how they always wanted to have great advertisements everywhere how great they were. And so Mesha commemorates this very battle here.

And he raised sheep, but he decides to rebel and so then, verse 6,

So at that time King Joram set out from Samaria and mobilized all Israel. He also sent this message to Jehoshaphat king of Judah: 'The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to fight against Moab?' (2 Kings 3:6)

Okay. Notice poor Jehoshaphat, a godly Christian man who, like you and like me, can be an idiot at times.

'I will go with you,' he replied. 'I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.' (And then they go through a route and) 'What route shall we take?' 'Through the desert of Edom,' he answered. So the king of Israel set out with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. (2 Kings 3:7-8)

So you've got three kings united. Who is Edom? That Edom is Esau. Remember that Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau. So here are Esau's descendants, Edom, along with Judah and Israel.

Now notice the next sentence there. It's important.

After a roundabout march of seven days, the army had no more water for themselves or for the animals with them. 'What!' exclaimed the king of Israel. 'Has the LORD called us three kings together only to hand us over to Moab?' (2 Kings 3:9-10)

Now look at verse 11. Remember, Jehoshaphat is a believer, but he is a believer who's inconsistent.

And Jehoshaphat asked, ‘Is there no prophet of the LORD,’ (that is, of course, that means Yahweh. It’s the proper name of the God of the Bible.) “Is there no prophet of the LORD here that we may inquire of the LORD through him?’ (2 Kings 3:11)

Notice what’s said next.

An officer of the king of Israel answered, ‘Elisha son of Shaphat is here. He used to pour water on the hands of Elijah.’ Jehoshaphat said, ‘The word of the LORD is with him.’ So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him. (2 Kings 3:11)

Notice that a man of God can have kings come to him. They didn’t say, “Come up here.” They went down there. They had hat in hand. They were in big trouble. The animals didn’t have water. They didn’t have water. They’re going to starve to death. They’re going to die of thirst.

They went down to him and look at what Elisha says. He was like so many modern preachers when they get with a politician, they just are full of flattery (sarcasim).

Elisha said to the king of Israel, ‘What do we have to do with each other? Go to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother.’ (I mean, these guys, they’d read Dale Carnegie’s *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. He was blunt. He told them the truth.) ‘No,’ the king of Israel answered, ‘because it was Yahweh who called us three kings together to hand us over to Moab.’ (2 Kings 3:13)

Now, this is something very intriguing if we read here further. Verse 14.

Elisha said, ‘As surely as the Yahweh Almighty lives, whom I serve, if I did not have respect for the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not look at you or even notice you’ (2 Kings 3:14)

Look at verse 15. What did he need? He said, “Bring me a harpist.”

Why did he ask for that? Because we need music to get our hearts right with God. Imagine what it’s like. They’re in a warfare state, in a very carnal warfare state, mixed with pagan worshipers of false gods, and all of the ugliness of war, and never mistake it. Remember what General Lee said, not my renter. He said, “It is well that war is so terrible, else we should grow too fond of it.”

War’s terrible. And so here they are in a place of confusion and what does Elisha ask for? He said, “Bring me a musician. I need somebody to play on the harp or the guitar for me, play a little praise music for me. I’ve got to get in the mood.”

And you know, there are people that say, “Well, that’s just silly.” Do you realize that authentic Islam has no place for music? Authentic Islam has no place for music. They chant the Quran in Arabic. No place for music.

But I want you to know that music’s important. When you’re down in the dumps, put on some good music. We live in an era like no other era when you can have wonderful music surround you because the music helps to change your mood, and your mood has to be changed if you’re really to hear from God.

While the harpist was playing, the hand of the LORD came upon Elisha and he said, ‘This is what the LORD says,’ and he told him what to do. (2 Kings 3:15-16)

And so they followed his instructions and verse 20.

The next morning, about the time for offering the sacrifice, there it was—water flowing from the direction of Edom! And the land was filled with water. (2 Kings 3:20)

And so they go out and we read:

Now all the Moabites had heard that the kings had come to fight against them; so every man, young and old, who could bear arms was called up and stationed on the border. When they got up early in the morning, the sun was shining on the water.

To the Moabites across the way, the water looked red—like blood. ‘That’s blood!’ they said. ‘Those kings must have fought and slaughtered each other. Now to the plunder, Moab!’ (2 Kings 3:21-23)

I love Bible stories. You know, they’re the best stories you can ever read because they’re true. And so here are God’s enemies, Moab, and they look out and in their presumption, they assume that they’re seeing blood. It must have been a huge amount of blood, they thought. They’ve all turned on each other, fought each other, and killed each other. Verse 24, page 574:

But when the Moabites came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and fought them until they fled. And the Israelites invaded the land and slaughtered the Moabites. They destroyed the towns, and each man threw a stone (and so on). (2 Kings 3:25)

Now look at verse 26. This is a very powerful verse and Mesha, the king of Moab, writes on his Moabite stone this story.

When the king of Moab saw that the battle had gone against him, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through to the king of Edom, but they failed. (So he thought, “I’ll go here, I’ll get the king of Edom.” But they failed. So what happens?) (2 Kings 3:26)

Look at verse 27.

Then he took his firstborn son, who was to succeed him as king, and offered him as a sacrifice on the city wall. (2 Kings 3:27)

Now the next sentence is grossly misinterpreted by most commentators, because remember that modern commentators think in atheistic terms.

What do I mean by atheistic terms? That is, there’s no supernatural element. And modernism is gripped with a kind of practical atheism. And so commentators will tell you that when Israel and Judah and Edom saw him kill his own son, they were so bothered by this, they withdrew in horror.

But that isn’t what it says at all. Look at what it says.

The fury against Israel was great; they withdrew and returned to their own land. (2 Kings 3:27)

You need to understand something: human sacrifice was very common among God's people's neighbors. They sacrificed their own children. And what did this man do? This man was, he viewed himself as the son of Chemosh. The son of Chemosh, because the king is viewed as the son of the god, and so as a son of Chemosh, he takes his own biological son, who's next in line to the throne, takes him up on the city wall and slaughters him as a blood offering to Chemosh.

Chemosh (k^cmôsh, כְּמוֹשׁ) was a pagan god, a demon spirit masquerading as a god (1 Corinthians 10:20), who delighted in blood sacrifice. And what happens is that the battle turned against Israel and Judah and Edom when the king of Moab slaughtered his heir and gained demonic supernatural power against Israel, Judah, and Edom. And that's really what's there in the text. And on the Moabite stone, "I, Mesha, son of Chemosh," and he talks about his victory.

I (am) Mesha, son of Chemosh-[...], king of Moab, the Dibonite—my father (had) reigned over Moab thirty years, and I reigned after my father,—(who) made this high place for Chemosh in Qarhoh [...] because he saved me from all the kings and caused me to triumph over all my adversaries. As for Omri, (5) king of Israel, he humbled Moab many years (lit., days), **for Chemosh was angry at his land**. And his son followed him and he also said, "I will humble Moab." In my time he spoke (thus), **but I have triumphed over him and over his house, while Israel hath perished for ever!** (Now) Omri had occupied the land of Medeba, and (Israel) had dwelt there in his time and half the time of his son (Ahab), forty years; **but Chemosh dwelt there in my time**. (Pritchard, J. B., ed. (1969). *The Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), p. 320, emphases mine)

Did he have a victory? Of sorts, he did. So here is the second great event, and I'm moving quickly. The second great event is Jehoshaphat stupidly

aligned himself with Ahab's son and the king of Edom against Moab. And he's defeated. He's defeated. And that's what Mesha writes about.

Now let's turn back in closing to the passage in 2 Chronicles where we looked. 2 Chronicles chapter 20, and here's what we see here. 2 Chronicles chapter 20, page 700. Now here is a case where Jehoshaphat was being loyal to the Lord alone. He did not align himself with any foreign nation, just with the Lord. Notice now verse 1 of chapter 20, page 700.

After this, the Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to make war on Jehoshaphat. (2 Chronicles 20:1)

Notice he doesn't have any allies at this point. It's just Jehoshaphat himself, and so he learns this, and they begin to seek the Lord and in verse 5, 2 Chronicles 20:5:

Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the LORD in the front of the new courtyard and said: 'O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you. O our God, did you not drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend? They have lived in it and have built in it a sanctuary for your Name, saying, 'If calamity comes upon us, whether the sword of judgment, or plague or famine, we will stand in your presence before this temple that bears your Name and will cry out to you in our distress, and you will hear us and save us.' (2 Chronicles 20:5-9)

And then he goes through, and he cites what's happened.

Verse 10:

'But now here are men from Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, whose territory you would not allow Israel to invade when they came from Egypt.' (2 Chronicles 20:10)

And so now, verse 11, "See how they're repaying us."

Now look at verse 12. Boy, if this is not a prayer for you and me today in your private life and in our public life.

Verse 12, 2 Chronicles 20 verse 12:

‘O our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us.’ (2 Chronicles 20:12)

Look at the last sentence. I have my closest pastor friend, he has a doctorate in psychology, and he’s bi-vocational, he works for the Rapids Parish School Board as a counselor to troubled youth, but he’s also a Black Baptist minister. He’s my closest friend. He preached seven sermons on this verse.

‘We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you.’
(That’s the beginning of real prayer. ‘We don’t know what to do but our eyes are on you.’ (2 Chronicles 20:12)

Now notice, this happens as they begin to pray. Look at verse 14:

Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite and descendant of Asaph (Asaph was an appointed song leader) as he stood in the assembly and this is what he says, ‘Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the LORD says to you: ‘Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God’s.’ (2 Chronicles 20:14-15)

And you see in the past Jehoshaphat aligned himself with Ahab: That didn’t turn out real well. Jehoshaphat aligns himself with Ahab’s descendants: That didn’t turn out real well.

But he is alone now, he has no resources, he has no allies, and he’s cried out to God, and God gives him this answer, “For the battle is not yours, but God’s.”

And then he promises what’s going to happen. Verse 17:

‘You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you’ (and so on and so forth). (2 Chronicles 20:17)

Now look at verse 18:

Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the LORD. Then some Levites from the Kohathites and Korahites stood up and praised the LORD, the God of Israel, with very loud voice. (2 Chronicles 20:18-19)

Now look at verse 20:

Early in the morning they left for the Desert of Tekoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, ‘Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the Yahweh your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful.’ (2 Chronicles 20:20)

Now notice again, verse 21:

After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: ‘Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures forever.’ (2 Chronicles 20:21)

Verse 22:

As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated. (2 Chronicles 20:22)

And then you can read the rest of this.

But listen, do you see what I’m saying? Praise is warfare.

When we worship God and allow the joy of the Lord to get into our hearts as we sing (Nehemiah 8:10), because you've got to get yourself in the mood—"Bring me a musician"—when you sing and you worship the Lord, he begins to change your heart.

As you begin to praise God, your eyes are no longer on yourself and your need. Your eyes are no longer on your enemy who aims at nothing less than genocide against you. Your eyes are on the Lord.

And as you praise God, as you worship God, as you recite his promises before him, as you turn to him and get your mind off your narcissistic self and your wicked enemies, and get them on the Lord, something happens. Praising the Lord results in amazing results. It's when they praise God that God sets the ambushes and defeats their enemies.

So I say to you again, as we finish this sermon from two weeks ago in Revelation 14, the book of Revelation is a book of worship. But you can't miss the other theme is that as the church in heaven and the church on earth worships, God defeats all our enemies.

And he does, and he will. You have enemies? You better believe you have enemies. You have enemies that hate you and despise you. Who is that?

Is somebody in the church here today? No.

Is it Joe Biden? Is it Donald Trump? No!

Who's your enemy? The enemy is the evil one and all his minions, Satan and his demons (Ephesians 6:10-18). They put little thoughts in your mind. They make you feel paranoid.

They make you think, "People looking at me. They know what I did last week. People look at me... Oh my goodness! What's going on? Everybody is... Oh they know, oh my! I don't need to come in this church because everybody's looking at me and..."

No, they're not. That's just nonsense. Remember that Satan and his demons are the authors of paranoid thoughts.

Get your eyes off of the world and its people and its enemies and get your eyes on Jesus, and you're going to be alright. You're going to be okay. You're going to be better than okay. You're going to triumph. You're going to be victorious.

And that is a wonderful truth and I close with an appeal to those who are watching.

If you don't know Jesus, the things that are coming on our nation and the world, are going to rock you to your core. Now is the time to seek the Lord as you have never sought him before, because things are not going to get better.

But for God's people, for God's people who will praise the Lord no matter what's going on, they're going to be okay. They're going to come through. They're going to be prospered.

And may God Almighty, the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit bless this word in Jesus' name.