

In 2022, Run Bravely to the Battle and Sing

At the beginning of every year, I set aside several days to tune out distractions and seek the Lord about the coming year. Usually God gives me a word, a phrase or a specific Scripture that provides hope and guidance.

This year, the Lord dropped 2 Chronicles 20 in my heart, especially verse 22 (NASB1995), which describes how God defeated Israel's enemies when the musicians and singers went into the battle in front of the warriors. It says: "When they began singing and praising, the Lord set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were routed."

I don't normally go looking for verses that match the number of a particular year. After all, scribes added the chapter and verse notations to Scripture, and we certainly don't build our theology on these arbitrary numbers. But in this case, it seemed like a divine coincidence that the year 2022 matched this passage so perfectly.

In this difficult pandemic season—a time that has been marked by intense political and social upheaval—many of us, like King Jehoshaphat, feel overwhelmed. It seems our spiritual enemies outnumber us. The last two years have been characterized by fear of a virus, political polarization and hostility toward biblical faith and values.

But I found a source of great hope, not just in verse 20 but also in the entire chapter. I plan to park in 2 Chronicles 20 for the rest of the year. I find in this passage some keys that will help us navigate this challenging season:

1. Jehoshaphat prayed. Second Chronicles 20:3 admits that King Jehoshaphat was afraid but that didn't stop him from

aggressively seeking God for help. He proclaimed a fast and when the people gathered for prayer, he cried out in his distress and declared that the Lord “will hear and deliver us” (v. 9).

Your tendency may be to hide in quarantine when things get dark or scary but we must resist the temptation to quit. God is looking for faith and spiritual resolve. We can't allow our fear to paralyze us. Turn off negative news, tune out negative voices and stop reading endless social media posts about the problems. Instead, look to heaven and pray with passion and courage. Believe that God will hear!

2. Jehoshaphat listened to the prophetic word. After the people prayed, God anointed the prophet Jahaziel, a musician who was part of the Levitical choir. Jahaziel was not some famous prophet like Jeremiah or Isaiah—he was basically part of the worship team. Yet the Holy Spirit came upon him mightily, and he preached an emotional message to the king and everyone in the assembly.

This ordinary guy stepped out from obscurity and declared: “Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's” (v. 15). The Lord also instructed the people through Jahaziel's prophecy to send the singers into combat instead of soldiers. The king could have laughed at this advice; after all, whoever heard of fighting a war with songs and instruments? But Jehoshaphat discerned that God was speaking through this man. He trusted in God's power when common sense told him to depend on weapons of iron and bronze.

3. Jehoshaphat and the people praised God. The ultimate victory came when Jehoshaphat instructed the musicians to go in front of the army. The choir began to sing: “Give thanks to the Lord, for His lovingkindness is everlasting” (v. 21). They didn't have to sing for long; as soon as the praises started, the invisible ambush hit the enemy. The invaders turned on

each other until they were wiped out.

At the end of the story, the king and the people went on the battlefield to inspect the damage. It took three days to collect all the spoil, so they renamed the place “the valley of Beracah” (v. 26), which means “the valley of blessing.” God had totally turned things around; the day started on a dangerous battlefield but in just a short while, it became a place of blessing.

This is what I’m expecting in 2022. I believe the Lord will turn our battle into a blessing as we pray with faith, act on God’s prophetic instructions and praise Him in the face of our enemies. Let’s do this from coast to coast and watch God’s miracles unfold in 2022. {eoa}

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