

Title: His God Gave Him Rest
Text: 2 Chronicles 20: 1-30
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2 Chronicles 20: 30: So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about.

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For the sinner who comes to God through Christ Jesus confessing our total inability, depending entirely upon God by faith, the battle *is* not yours, but God's and God shall give us rest.

2 Chronicles 20: 1: 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. 2 Then 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.

Jehoshaphat was a child of God's grace, a believer. He was a godly king over Judah. The enemies represent the enemies of the believer. God has left the believer in this earth with many enemies, which God left to teach us our need of Christ, to prove those that are his and to teach us to trust him alone.

John 17:15: I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

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

These enemies came because of something Jehosaphat had done which displeased the LORD. Prior to this, Jehosaphat had erred by giving help to his enemy—Ahab, king of Jerusalem—who hated God. Ahab flattered Jehosaphat with a great feast then asked Jehosaphat to go to war with him. All the prophets came forth declaring success to Ahab. Ahab reluctantly called in God's prophet, Micaiah, but he told Jehoshaphat, "I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil." (2 Chr 18: 7) Micaiah declared that Ahab would die in the battle because the LORD had spoken. (2 Chr 18: 22) (So Ahab was killed by that bowman who "drew back his bow at a venture.") But the last words Micaiah declared from the LORD in Jehosaphat's presence, was, "Hearken all ye people." (2 Chr 18: 27) But Jehosaphat did not hearken. Instead, he joined Ahab in the battle. And the LORD was displeased by this.

2 Chronicles 19: 2 And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.

Proposition: The LORD is teaching Jehosaphat, and us, the only way for a believer to be established is to believe in the LORD and the only way to prosper is to hearken to the LORD's prophets.

Before, when Jehosaphat looked to himself, to carnal weapons, and ignored the LORD's prophet and the LORD did not give him rest. These enemies are the result. But this time, God ordered everything to sanctify this trial to Jehosaphat's heart,...

2 Chronicles 20: 3: And Jehoshaphat FEARED, and SET HIMSELF TO SEEK THE LORD, and PROCLAIMED A FAST THROUGHOUT ALL JUDAH.

Jehosaphat himself sought and he proclaimed it was time for all Judah to turn from their food, from their labor and to seek the Lord. A true fast is simply turning from the body, from earthly things, and giving ourselves to seek the LORD.

I. SO THE FIRST THING WE SEE IS, THE LORD USES OUR ENEMIES (OUR SIN) TO DRAW HIS CHILD TO HIMSELF—2 Chronicles 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.

Until God gives us a need, showing us our sin, we will not seek salvation of the Lord. When God reveals to one of his elect our sin OR when God brings upon a believer a great trial to show us our sin or our need of him, we see in this text three reasons why:

1) To gather his children together—“**And Judah gathered themselves together.**” Believer’s enter a perpetual spiritual fast from the time God calls us out of this world and sanctifies us into Christ in the new birth. The reason we are here tonight, turned from this world and all our worldly things, is because God has shown us our need to seek the LORD. For believers, the sufferings we endure individually, we each suffer, because we are one body in the Lord, born of one Spirit. Therefore, God gathers his sheep together, in the beginning showing us our sin and he keeps us gathered, often using trials to do so.

1 Corinthians 12: 25: God hath tempered the body together,...that the members should have the same care one for another. 26: And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. 27: Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

2) God reveals our need to make each of his children individually “**ask help of the LORD.**” Sinner, you will not ask help of the LORD until you see that you cannot save yourself by anything you do. Believer, haven’t you found that the time when we really do seek the LORD is when God graciously reveals our sin to us or when he sends some great trial? So let us not complain about our sufferings or our trials, if they bring us to God’s feet, they are good.

3) God reveals our need and God effectually turns us from this world to him--“**even OUT OF all the cities of Judah they came TO SEEK the LORD.**” They dropped what they were doing, no matter how important it was, left the city they were in and came to seek the LORD. When a worldly man is faced with his sin or with trials, he only makes himself busier so as to ignore God, ignore his sin, ignore the fact that he shall meet God. But when God reveals to his child our sin or our need of him, God turns his child. Nothing in this world is as important as heeding the voice of our LORD.

Application: Brethren, God makes our sin obvious to us, when we begin to see our disobedience and our worldliness or when we face trials, hear God’s voice in it! Drop everything and set ourselves to seek the Lord and ask help from him!

II. SECONDLY, WE SEE THAT WE MUST COME TO GOD OUR FATHER IN CHRIST JESUS HIS SON--2 Chronicles 20: 5 And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD, BEFORE THE NEW COURT, [drop to verse 8. He said that when God delivered them into this land] v8: And they dwelt therein, and have built thee A SANCTUARY therein for thy name, saying, 9: If, 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.

This house, with the holy of holies, in which was the mercy seat over the ark of the covenant, blood over the broken law, is where God promised to meet. It was a type of Christ Jesus the Son of God.

Christ is the True Temple. Speaking of himself, Christ said, “Destroy this temple and I will raise up again in three days.”

Hebrews 8: 1: Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; 2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

Christ is the Believer's Mercy Seat. Christ is the believer's Mercy Seat where God meets with us, justifies us, forgives us and gives us help in time of need. Notice what the text says,

2 Chronicles 20: 9 If, 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.

Application: Sinner, when God brings you into judgment: **the sword** of justice makes you see you owe eternal death, **the judgment** of God making you see the fierceness of God's wrath against sin, **the pestilence** of your sins eating up all your so-called goodness and righteousness, when God makes you to behold you are in a **famine** of true Bread—without Christ, without hope, without God—then you will come to Christ.

God's name is in Christ. God's presence—where he will meet with his people—is in Christ alone.

Acts 4: 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

God has freely chosen his people in Christ. God has freely justified his elect in Christ by grace, apart from any works or any merit in his people. God is righteous: he satisfied his justice by the death of his Son and now God is righteous to show his people mercy. God has set Christ forth to be a propitiation—the mercy seat—through faith in his blood

Therefore, I assure you, if he has given you a willingness to come to Christ begging mercy, confessing your sin, through Christ Jesus, God will hear and God will help. The same is true of you and I, believer, in our trials or when we sin.

1 John 2: 1: My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2: And he is the PROPITITATION for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

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.

III. THIRDLY, WE SEE WHAT TRUE BROKEN HEARTEDNESS IS—THIS IS THE NEEDY SINNERS CRY—THE CRY OF THE HEART GOD HAS MADE CONTRITE.

First, we acknowledge God's holiness—**2 Chronicles 20: 6 And said, O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven?**

Luke 11:2: And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

God is holy! We are sinners. The publican would not even lift up his eyes to heaven.

Secondly, the cry of the contrite is a cry which praises God's sovereign will to do as he pleases—**2 Chronicles 20: 6:...and rulest thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?**

God rules over all the kingdoms of the earth—even the heathen kingdoms. In his hand is power and might. None can withstand his hand. We come asking for God to do as he will, not as we will.

Psalm 135:6; Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

Thirdly, the broken and contrite come pleading everlasting covenant grace—**2 Chronicles 20: 7** *Art not thou OUR GOD, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before THY PEOPLE ISRAEL.* Our God accomplished our redemption and drove out our enemies, simply because God made us his people—**THY PEOPLE ISRAEL**—not based on any good or evil in us, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. God said, “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”

- **V7: and gavest it**—we acknowledge salvation is the free gift of God—thou gavest.
- **V7: to the seed of Abraham thy friend**—we plead his covenant promise which he revealed to Abraham and in our hearts. He promised the inheritance to Christ the Seed—Gal 3: 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. Then Christ divides the spoil with the strong—his people who have absolutely no strength—Gal 3:29 And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise—Isa 53:12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.
- **V7: For ever?**—the covenant of grace is everlasting, as eternal as God who made it in eternity. We shall never perish because his grace is forever—Jer 31:3 The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

Fourthly, the cry of the contrite is a cry, not for our glory, but for God’s glory. If our enemies drive us from the eternal inheritance God promised us, they first cast us out of God’s possession, so God’s glory is at stake.—**2 Chronicles 20: 10: And 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; 11 Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of THY POSSESSION, which THOU HAST GIVEN US TO INHERIT.**

Fifthly, the cry of the broken and contrite heart is a confession of our total inability and that all our hope is in God’s faithfulness—**2 Chronicles 20: 12 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.**

Application: If our hearts are truly broken and contrite we will come to God in Christ acknowledging his holiness, asking his will to be done, pleading his everlasting covenant of grace, pleading for God to defend his glory, acknowledging we have no strength and no wisdom, but that we depend solely upon God to save us. The sinner in whom the Spirit of God has created such a heart, to come to God in Christ with this spirit, shall be saved.

Sinner, don’t be like those enemies. God did not destroy these nations though he could have justly, because the inhabitants were all guilty sinners. Yet, though God spared them, instead of repenting and coming to God in Christ, they raged against God by raging against his people. Sinner, God would be just to put any of us in hell for we all sinned in Adam and came forth rebelling against God—Isa 64:6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. Every second a sinner spends: imagining God will receive you because of some goodness in you, imagining you have worked righteousness by some religious work, calling yourself a child of God simply because you decided to call yourself a Christian (taking his name in vain), looking to a false god that depends upon you like these enemies did then you prove that in your mind God is your enemy. You are waging war against God and his people. Christ Jesus told religious men in his day, speaking of Satan and of them:

Matthew 12: 30: He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

Sinner, “despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? 5: But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6: Who will render to every man according to his deeds:” Flee to Christ.

But these enemies are one more proof of thousands in the word of God that except God draw a man to Christ, he cannot and will not come—John 6: 44: No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

IV. WE SEE THAT GOD PROMISES TO SAVE THOSE WHO COME TO GOD THROUGH CHRIST JESUS, CONFESSING THEIR SIN AND INABILITY—2 Chronicles 20: 13 And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. 14: Then 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;

God always saves by sending the good news through his prophet in the midst of the congregation. Jahaziel means “beheld of God.” That is the good news God’s preacher is sent to declare—by pure grace, through the blood of Christ, through the work of the Spirit, God’s people have been “beheld of God.”

Jahaziel had nothing to boast of, “the Spirit of the LORD came upon him”—nor do any of God’s preachers. It is God the Holy Spirit that gives the message from God through Christ to his messenger. And it is the Spirit of God that makes the word effectual in the hearts of his people

2 Co 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

THE PROPHET IS A PICTURE OF CHRIST JESUS WHO TEACHES US THROUGH THE GOSPEL. It pleased God to save through the preaching of the gospel (1 Cor 1: 21) because it is a constant reminder and humbling means for us who think ourselves mighty men to have to sit and be taught by a nothing, a nobody. But this is how it pleased God to bring us “somethings” to nothing.

1 Cor 1: 26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

The man who will not submit to God’s preachers will not submit to Christ. Mark it down. But God’s people will, even when they are a civil king as was Jehosaphat. They will do so because God has worked all this work of grace to make them see their utter need of Christ.

Here is the good news Christ’s preachers declare—2 Chronicles 20: 15: **And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, AND THOU KING JEHOSAPHAT, 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.**

- **Hearken ye**—hear God’s prophet and believe in God.
- **All Judah and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem and thou king Jehosaphat**—wherever God’s chosen child is, whatever city, whatever condition, whatever the situation, however high their station in life.
- **Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude:** Be not afraid, don’t fall into confusion—by reason of the great multitude. You have a multitude of enemies that you cannot conquer (these are not enemies when God makes us to see he has done this for his elect): you need perfect fulfillment of the law, you need justification from all our sins, you need perfect righteousness, you need sanctification into Christ, you need redemption from every enemy, you need temporal provision and strength to stay on Christ. Thus saith the Lord, “Fear not and do not be confounded over the great multitude of the enemy”

- **For the battle is not yours, but God's.**--Romans 8: 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us—With our enemies is “an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us” 2 Ch 32:8—Zech 4: 6: Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

This may surprise you, but God gives us something that we must do which proves we believe him—**2 Chronicles 20: 16 To 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.**

Application: The works of faith which prove we believe God—works which justify us before men as truly believing God—are not works we do whereby we try to win the battle ourselves by our works, they are works which prove that we believe God is able: that he has, is and shall save us as God says he shall. Read these works in the text:

- Go down
- Do not fight—no need
- Set yourselves
- Stand ye still
- And see the salvation of the LORD with you

The one thing God requires we do, which no man can do unless God work grace in his heart, is NOTHING! Now, fear not and be not dismayed—do as God has said—for the LORD will be with you.

V. WE SEE THAT GOD MAKES HIS WORD EFFECTUAL IN THE HEARTS OF HIS PEOPLE.

First, God's effectual grace makes us submit to God—**2 Chronicles 20: 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.** True worship is submission to the LORD. They bowed their head because their heart was bowed; they put their face to the ground because their heart was in the dust; they all fell before the Lord because their hearts had been brought down. True worship is from a submissive heart—the heart created anew in true righteousness and true holiness.

Secondly, God's effectual grace makes us praise God—**2 Chronicles 20: 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.** The whole reason God saves by grace is this: “That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. (1 Cor 1: 29-31)

Psalm 81:1 Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.

Psalm 95:1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Thirdly, God's effectual grace makes us obedient to the LORD. The next morning they all went as God commanded—**2 Chronicles 20: 20: And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa.** Beforehand, when Jehosophat joined with Ahab, we see what any of us will do, if left to ourselves. He did not believe in the LORD and he proved it because he did not hearken to God's prophet, Micaiah. Now, in what Jehosophat does we see what any of us will do if God works grace in our heart—**2 Chronicles 20: 20: 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.** Jehospat got the lesson: **Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.** We believe his prophets by believing the gospel which Christ sends them to declare—that is the point.

VI. WE SEE THAT GOD DESTROYS OUR ENEMIES AS HE PROMISED—HE EVEN USES OUR ENEMIES TO DESTROY THEMSELVES—2 Chronicles 20: 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. 23 For 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. 24 And 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.

Did you notice when the Lord's people began to sing and say, "Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever." It was then that the enemies destroyed one another. The victory is through the gospel through faith. Just keep **praising the beauty of holiness**—Christ Jesus—and he shall defeat our enemies by our enemies. God put it into the hearts of Ammon and Moab to ambush Mount Seir, thinking they were attacking the Lord's people. So before it was all over, the enemies all destroyed themselves.

VII. CHRIST SHALL DIVIDE THE SPOIL OF HIS VICTORIES WITH HIS PEOPLE AND GIVE US SWEET REST IN HIS KINGDOM--v25: And 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. 26 And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah; [blessing] for there they blessed the LORD: therefore the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah, unto this day. 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. 28 And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the LORD.

Every believer is coming to heavens Jerusalem and the one we are coming unto is Christ, whom the house of the LORD typified.

2 Chronicles 20: 29: And 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.

Our enemies will not fear if they hear that we won the victory by our strength but when they hear that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel they will fear. That is why we must trust the Lord, walk by faith.

Remember, before, by trusting in his own strength and his own wisdom, Jehoshaphat only incurred more trouble from his enemies. But when he believed in the LORD through the word delivered by the LORD's prophet, this was the outcome:

2 Chronicles 20: 30 So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for HIS GOD GAVE HIM REST round about.

The only way for a sinner to be established is to believe in the LORD and the only way for a believer to prosper—to grow in grace and knowledge of Christ, to be kept unto the end—is to hearken to the LORD's prophets, that is to continue faithfully sitting under the sound of the gospel of Christ and him crucified.

2 Chronicles 20: 30 So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for HIS GOD GAVE HIM REST round about.

Amen!