THE BATTLE IS NOT YOURS, BUT GOD’S

2 Chronicles 20:15 He said: 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.’ “

Setting

2 Chronicles 20:2-4 Some people came and told Jehoshaphat, “A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the Dead Sea. It is already in Hazezon Tamar” (that is, En Gedi). Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the LORD and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. The people of Judah came together to seek help from the LORD; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him.

Jehoshaphat’s Prayer

2 Chronicles 20:5-7 Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the LORD in front of the new courtyard and said: “Lord, the God of our ancestors, 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. 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?”

2 Chronicles 20:8&9 “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 20:10-12 “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; so they turned away from them and did not destroy them. See how they are repaying us by coming to drive us out of the possession you gave us as an inheritance. Our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”

Jahaziel Speaks for God

2 Chronicles 20:14&15 Then the Spirit of the LORD came on Jahaziel…He said: “Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in 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 20:16&17 Tomorrow march down against them. They will be climbing up by the Pass of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the Desert of Jeruel. You will not have to fight this battle. Take your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you.’ “

Jehoshaphat’s Words of Encouragement

2 Chronicles 20:20&21 Early in the morning they left for the Desert of Tekoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, “Listen to me, Judah and the people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful.” 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.”

God Fights the Battle

2 Chronicles 20:22&23 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. The ammonites and Moabites rose up against the men from Mount Seir to destroy and annihilate them. After they finished slaughtering the men from Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

2 Chronicles 20:24&25 When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and looked toward the vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground; no one had escaped. So Jehoshaphat and his men went to carry off their plunder, and they found among them a great amount of equipment and clothing and also articles of value – more than they could take away. There was so much plunder that it took three days to collect it.

Judah and Jerusalem Celebrate

2 Chronicles 20:26-28 On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berakah, where they praised the LORD. This is why it is called the Valley of Berakah to this day. Then, led by Jehoshaphat, all the men of Judah and Jerusalem returned joyfully to Jerusalem, for the LORD had given them cause to rejoice over their enemies. They entered Jerusalem and went to the temple of the LORD with harps and lyres and trumpets.

Do Things Like That Happen Today

Countries at war with or extremely hostile to Israel:

Lebanon: 150,000 die in civil war from 1975-1990; then Syria invades “to restore peace” and is not driven out until 2005. Ongoing government crises. Beirut port explosion.

Iran-Iraq War 1980-1988 500,00 to 1,000,000 die, 500,000 permanently disabled. Isis Iraq conflict.

Syrian Civil War; war with Isis; conflict with Turkey and Kurds.

Yemen Civil War; probably the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.

The Application to Christians

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 6:18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.

Application

The idea of taking on the prevailing cultural worldviews on abortion, LGBTQ, evolution and other unbiblical ideas seems as overwhelming to us as the Moabites, Ammonites and Edomites did to Jehoshaphat and to Judah.

The present crises have caused people to wonder if God is trying to get our attention.

We have taken a first step by fasting and praying, humbling ourselves before God and asking His forgiveness. And we will continue to fast and pray until the end of Yom Kippur.

James 5:16d The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

2 Chronicles 7:14 “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

We need to continue to fast and pray in a more limited way.

We need to trust the Lord to do what we cannot, demolish arguments and all thinking that is contrary to Christ.

But we need to be ready for Him to use us to help do it.

I Peter 3:15b Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

Be so filled with the fruit of the Spirit that people ask. Galatians 5:22&23a But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Remember that God worked for the Jewish people when they began to sing and praise.