

What Happens When We Pray

September 4, 2016

I. Introduction

A. Some sermons are TIMELESS. Some sermons are TIMELY.

- This message series is SPIRITUALLY TIMELESS.
- This message series is NATIONALLY TIMELY.

1 Corinthians 10:11-12 These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

B. The prayer of God's people influences the destiny of a nation.

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

2 Chronicles 20:3-4 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.

2 Chronicles 20:12 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.

2 Chronicles 20:22-30 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. 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. 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. The fear of God came on all the surrounding kingdoms when they heard how the Lord had fought against the enemies of Israel. And the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side.

II. Three Things That Happen When We Appeal To Heaven

1. *Our Prayers Are Answered.*

2 Chronicles 20:22 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.

Psalms 65:2 You who answer prayer, to you all people will come.

Psalms 145:18-19 The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. 19 He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them.

A. God responds to our prayers.

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

- The reason we do not pray more is possibly because we do not believe that someone is really listening.

2 Chronicles 20:24 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.

B. God gives us victory.

- Every victory does not look the same.
- We celebrate God's victory even when we have not seen it yet.
- There is no spiritual victory without spiritual work.

2. *Our World Is Changed.*

2 Chronicles 20:23 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.

A. God does the unexpected.

Ephesians 3:20-21 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

- Prayer changes our perspective.

2 Chronicles 20:29 The fear of God came on all the surrounding kingdoms when they heard how the Lord had fought against the enemies of Israel.

- Changed people tell people.

B. God gives us a testimony.

- The more we share our faith the more our faith grows.
- mystory@toledocalvary.org
- When we pray, our eyes are opened to see His hand at work in our lives.

3. *Our Lives Are Blessed.*

2 Chronicles 20:25-26 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. 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.

A. Prayer turns our battles into blessings.

Psalms 23:5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

2 Chronicles 20:27-28 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.

B. Prayer fills our journey with joy.

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

Psalms 40:16 But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who long for your saving help always say, "The Lord is great!"

2 Chronicles 20:30 And the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side.

C. Prayer gives peace to our perspective.

Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.