

REVIVE US AGAIN

SERMON OUTLINES

BY DR. TONY EVANS

MESSAGE 4:

A CRISIS THAT CRIES FOR REVIVAL

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: 2 Chronicles 20:1-20 (NASB)

¹ Now it came about after this that the sons of Moab and the sons of Ammon, together with some of the Meunites, came to make war against Jehoshaphat. ² Then some came and reported to Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, out of Aram and behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar (that is Engedi)." ³ Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. ⁴ So Judah gathered together to seek help from the Lord; they even came from all the cities of Judah to seek the Lord. ⁵ Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord before the new court, ⁶ and he said, "O Lord, the God of our fathers, are You not God in the heavens? And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand so that no one can stand against You. ⁷ Did You not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever? ⁸ They have lived in it, and have built You a sanctuary there for Your name, saying, ⁹ 'Should evil come upon us, the sword, or judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house and before You (for Your name is in this house) and cry to You in our distress, and You will hear and deliver us.'" ¹⁰ Now behold, the sons of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom You did not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt (they turned aside from them and did not destroy them), ¹¹ see how they are rewarding us by coming to drive us out from Your possession which You have given us as an inheritance. ¹² O our God, will You not judge them? For we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on You." ¹³ All Judah was standing before the Lord, with their infants, their wives and their children. ¹⁴ Then in the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite of the sons of Asaph; ¹⁵ and he said, "Listen, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: thus says the Lord to you, 'Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's.' ¹⁶ Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the valley in front of the wilderness of Jeruel. ¹⁷ You need not fight

in this battle; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the Lord is with you." ¹⁸ Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the Lord, worshipping the Lord. ¹⁹ The Levites, from the sons of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites, stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel, with a very loud voice. ²⁰ They rose early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa; and when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, put your trust in the Lord your God and you will be established. Put your trust in His prophets and succeed."

MESSAGE GOAL: The goal of this message on *A Crisis that Cries for Revival* is to learn that we need to turn to the Lord when a crisis hits; praise Him as He takes care of the problem for us; and be reminded of God's constant faithfulness no matter the circumstances.

INTRODUCTION: A crisis is something every one of us has gone through to some degree, probably at multiple points. The world panics and doesn't know what to do when a crisis hits, when they're faced with overwhelming obstacles. But Christians should be different in our response to a crisis.

It's intimidating to stare down your opposition and see that they are formidable. You're probably not facing down a crisis of military proportions, as King Jehoshaphat was, but perhaps you feel that you're surrounded on all sides by those who seek to do you harm. You have almost certainly been at the point where you feel like your life is breaking down all around you.

It is in situations like this that we desperately need the intervention and revival of the Lord. In this passage, we see King Jehoshaphat in a tough situation that he knows is well beyond him and his abilities. We see him have a conversation with God and cry out to the only One who can save a king or a kingdom. Before anything can be corrected, there needed to be some changes and people needed to turn back to the Lord.

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As soon as Jehoshaphat called the people to turn to the Lord, we start to see change happening. Although the times are different and the situations are different, we need to follow the same formula for divine intervention. God is always faithful and always present in your situation. He doesn't require any secret formula or strategy, just a simple returning to our dependence on Him alone.

Perhaps today you are in the middle of a crisis that is crying for a much-needed revival. Don't face circumstances on your own when your God is fully able and fully present with you. A personal crisis calls for action, for something to be done. That something is to turn our lives back where they belonged in the first place, in the hands of an almighty God. We must remember that we are in need of the Lord in all situations, and we must cry out to Him and be ready to obey and worship. Then and only then will our crisis turn into a soul-satisfying revival.

SERMON POINTS:

1. IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, YOU'RE IN A CRISIS

A crisis often brings fear

- We get afraid when we don't have the ability to fix it
- A sense of powerlessness accompanies a crisis
- A crisis reminds us that we are imperfect people

A crisis is deep and complicated

- Sometimes we don't feel like we can take one more thing
- A crisis causes us to raise our hands in desperation (2 Chronicles 6:34-35)

2. GOD ALLOWS A CRISIS TO SHOW HIS ALMIGHTY POWER

God has a purpose for the crisis

- He wants to move us from knowing of Him to really knowing Him
- He wants to move us from words to action
- He wants us to remember His faithfulness

There is a difference between crisis and non-crisis

- A crisis prayer is a desperate cry for help; non-crisis prayers are just nice words
- A crisis forces us to see something we've ignored before

3. GOD RECOGNIZES OUR IMPERFECTIONS, BUT HE DOESN'T EXCUSE THEM

God has great mercy upon His people

- He will often relent if we simply remove our idols and worship Him (2 Chronicles 18:1-19:3)
- He has every right and ability to bring down wrath, but often does not

We must be adjusted to God for Him to respond

- It's not God who must adjust; we are the ones who must align with Him
- God will not hear or respond if He is overshadowed by idolatry

It is essential that we recognize His sovereignty

- God commands rulers and kingdoms
- God has promised certain things to us
- It is important to recall God's goodness, even in tough circumstances (1 Kings 17:8-24; 1 Corinthians 10:11)

4. WE NEED TO GO TO GOD'S PERSON, GOD'S HISTORY, AND GOD'S WORD

God is a holy and unchanging God

- We need to remember that God never fails or falters
- We need to understand that nothing constitutes a crisis for God
- If God has been good in the past, He will continue to be good in the present crisis

The Word of God is His message to us

- Whatever God wants to reveal to us, He has revealed in the Bible
- We must turn to Scripture during a crisis for our solution (2 Peter 1:19)

5. GOD HAS A WORD FOR YOU IN THE MIDST OF YOUR CRISIS

He has a "rhema" word

- God has a specific word for you found in Scripture
- Sometimes a passage will speak volumes to where you are (Joshua 1:3)
- You must be sensitive to the Spirit to know that God is speaking

**our mission field is not merely across the sea.
it is across the street.**



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God often uses sermons or messages just for you

- That feeling that a sermon was “just for you” may be God speaking to you
- The Bible is a general word to you, but there are specific words as well

6. THE BATTLE BELONGS TO THE LORD

We must have a “hands-off” attitude

- We need to hand things off to the Lord
- We often shoulder things that were meant for Him to bear

God asks us to go, but says He will fight

- When God fights, victory is assured (1 Kings 17:47)
- He doesn’t ask us to conquer things that only He can conquer

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

GETTING BEAT UP BY A CRISIS:

When you’re in a crisis, you can relate to how a boxer feels when he is getting battered. Sometimes a crisis feels like it’s beating you, punching you, and pummeling you from every angle. You can’t even see where the next punch is coming from, but sure enough it comes. You’re overwhelmed and over-matched, but the problem is that it seems like the referee is not stopping the match. You’re trapped in the crisis, but the whistle doesn’t come. That is how it feels like to be overwhelmed by a crisis situation.

THE “RHEMA” WORD:

There is a difference between a general word and a specific word. The Bible gives us both. You can’t go to the Bible and ask it whether you should move to the East Coast or the West Coast, because the Bible, in general, doesn’t contain that answer. The Bible doesn’t give specific answers for things like which purchase to make or which schedule to follow. It is the Holy Spirit’s job to enlighten our minds and hearts and speak a specific word to us through the Bible as we read it. Perhaps there is a passage that you’ve read 200 times, but as the Spirit speaks to you, that passage takes on a new light and speaks to your specific need and situation. That is the difference between the general Word and the specific Word of God.

PLAYING QUARTERBACK:

In a football game, when the quarterback hands the ball off to a running back, something amazing happens—all of the people chasing the quarterback start chasing the running back. When the quarterback had the football in his hands, the problem was his. But when he handed the ball off to the runner, the problem suddenly became the other guy’s problem. The burden of running and holding on to the ball became the burden of the next guy. Our problem is that we often want to hold on to the ball and bear the burdens when God is able and ready to be handed the ball. We’ve got to have a “hands-off” approach to this game we call life. Hand the ball off to God and stop holding on to it and getting tackled by life.

BACKGROUND BIBLICAL HISTORY AND CULTURE:

THE TWO KINGDOMS:

(1 Kings 12) After a long history of a united kingdom of Israel ruled by Saul, David, and Solomon, Israel split into two kingdoms. Israel was the kingdom of the north, spanning 10 tribes, and Judah was the southern kingdom, spanning the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. Jeroboam was the first king of the new Israel and Rehoboam was the first king of Judah. The northern kingdom was entirely run by bad kings for over 200 years, and fell to the Assyrians in 722 BC. The southern kingdom of Judah had Jerusalem and was run by a mixture of good and bad kings for almost 350 years before falling to the Babylonians in 586 BC. Jehoshaphat was one of the good kings of Judah who reigned for 25 years early in the history of the southern kingdom.

THE TEMPLE DEDICATION:

(2 Chronicles 6) King Solomon dedicated the temple to the Lord and prayed over this place of worship for God’s people. King Jehoshaphat recalled this account, which was an important item. Solomon talked about the Lord going out from this place and fighting the battles for His people. God told Solomon He would maintain the cause of His people, and it was part of the very foundation of their worship of God. Jehoshaphat knew this prayer and dedication, and spoke to the Lord about the same thing and on the same terms. When they were being “invaded by the enemy,” it said God would defend them. Once again, it shows us that God will do as He promises.

GO, therefore



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DRIVING OUT THE ENEMIES OF GOD:

(Joshua 2) Rahab was a prostitute who lived in Jericho. She was neither a Jew nor a righteous woman, but her faith in the one true God earned much for her. Knowing that the God of the Israelites was the true God, she hid the spies who were scouting Jericho. Later in the story, as Joshua and the Israelites conquered Jericho (with the marching and horn-blowing), the wall crumbled, but not Rahab and her house. Even though her house was a part of the crumbled wall, her small part stayed intact because of her faithfulness. Rahab is a true story of faith and being on sure footing despite everything around her shaking and crumbling, which is why she is included in God's "Hall of Faith" in Hebrews 11.

DAVID AND GOLIATH:

(1 Samuel 17) Many of us are very familiar with the story of David and Goliath. Israel was once again in a crisis. They were being threatened by a Philistine army that was not only powerful, but had Goliath at the front. Young David went to King Saul and accepted the challenge to fight Goliath. But David told Goliath that the battle belonged to the Lord. All throughout the Old Testament, God's people knew that the battle belonged not to the enemy, but to the Lord. When Jehoshaphat was speaking his words, he was standing in a long line of those who were confident not in Israel or their own military strength, but confident in the Lord's power and promise.

SERMON LINES:

This message will help you encourage those who are either in a crisis, coming out of a crisis, or heading into the next crisis.

This message will also provide a needed reminder that one of the worst things we can do is pray and yet have God not hear us—not because He doesn't want to hear or can't hear, but because we're not adjusting to Him.

QUOTES BY DR. TONY EVANS:

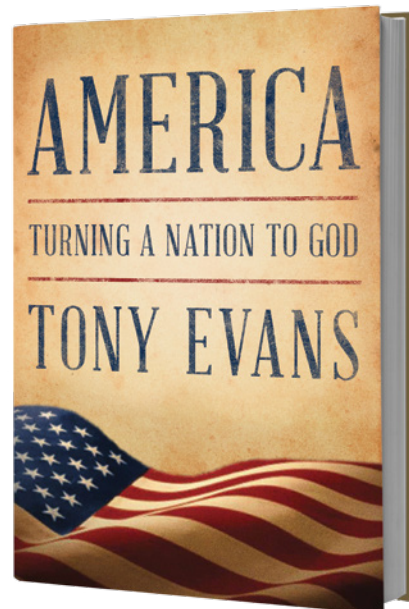
"God allows, creates, causes, and endorses overwhelming scenarios in our world so that we can discover Him."

"Your crisis is not the final word. It looks like the final word because you're being overwhelmed. It feels like the final word because you're afraid. You think it's the final word because you don't know what to do, but it's not the final word. The final word belongs to the Lord."

"Never let feelings sit in judgment over your faith; you must always let your faith sit in judgment over your feelings."

"When the enemy is coming, praise the Lord. When you're being overwhelmed, praise the Lord. When things don't look any better, praise the Lord. When you don't understand what you're going through, praise the Lord."

"Don't get too sophisticated to bless the name of the Lord. Praise Him in the morning, praise Him at noontime, and praise Him when the sun goes down. The problem is not yours, the battle is the Lord's."



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