

Your Worst, His Best

2 Chronicles 20:14-17

Background Information

- **20:8–10 Mount Seir** is another, more original, name for Edom (Gen. 32:3). Listing Mount Seir with **Ammon** and **Moab** supports the view that Syria in v. 2 is actually Edom. These were all “brother nations” to Israel, and for that reason Moses and the Israelites were forbidden to invade them in the days of Israel’s journey to Canaan from Egypt (Num. 20:17–21). Edom was another name for Esau, Jacob’s brother (Gen. 25:30); Ammon and Moab were sons of Lot by his two daughters (Gen. 19:36–38).^[1]
- **The Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to make war (20:1–30). Sensing weakness following the defeat of Jehoshaphat and Ahab at Ramoth Gilead, an eastern coalition joins forces against Jehoshaphat.** This account (not found in 2 Kings) has two areas of uncertainty as to the make-up of this coalition. **The first is that the Hebrew text has “Ammonites” where the NIV has posited “Meunites” (20:1).** This reading is attested in the LXX and alleviates what would seem to be an unlikely expression (viz, “Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Ammonites”). **Moreover, since the “people of Seir” function later in the passage (cf. 20:22) as synonyms for the third part of the coalition (Meunites), the proposal has merit.** The Meunites were an Arabian tribe living in the southern region of the Transjordan and parts of the Sinai who were able to control some of the trade routes stemming from the southern portion of the King’s Highway.²⁷⁸ The Meunites paid tribute to Judah during the reign of Uzziah (26:7–8) and are mentioned in Assyrian annals as paying tribute to Tilgath-Pileser III (eighth century B.C.).^[2]

Sermon Outline

A. The Worst (vs. 14-15):

1. Then in the midst – When Jahaziel was in the inner-most part of the gathering of all the people. It seems like he was in the heart of a worship service.
 - a) 20:11–14 As a member of the Asaph division of the Levites (1 Chr. 6:39; 15:17, 19; 16:7), Jahaziel was probably a musician. Music was an important part of Israel’s religious life (13:12). The people would go into battle praising God with instruments and voices (vv. 19, 21, 22, 28).^[3]

2. The Spirit of the Lord – The Spirit of the Lord represents spiritual empowerment for Jahaziel to provide a message of God to His people in a difficult time.
3. The Spirit of the Lord – The Holy Spirit came on God’s people not the enemy. This demonstrates who God is identifying with.
4. The Spirit of the Lord – The divine power of God is empowering them to overcome their enemy.
5. Came; To be – The Spirit of the Lord’s coming is in the perfect tense meaning it is something that has already been done and therefore it is evident in the present circumstance and will remain unchanged in the future.
6. Came; To be – The Spirit’s presence was on His own initiative and for His purpose.
7. And he said – Jahaziel submitted to the Spirit of the Lord’s influence and endlessly keep speaking to everyone the thoughts that the Lord gave him.
8. Listen; attention – While in the middle of everyone Jahaziel commanded everyone to give him their full attention to hear what God is saying.
9. Thus says the Lord – The message God provided to Jahaziel was provided before he spoke and he is going to represent the Lord with the exact message to His people.
10. Thus says the Lord – The person who is speaking is not Jahaziel it is the One who has all power and authority and desires to continue a sincere covenant relationship with Israel.
11. Thus says the Lord – I love the fact that the Lord’s speaking is on His initiative, for His people, before they encounter a powerful enemy. It is nice to hear from God before the storm so we can function with peaceful hearts in the storm.
12. Do not fear – The Lord tells them continuously not to be terrified emotionally or intellectually because they are intimated by the other military or anticipate harm.
 - a) When God tells you not to fear we have every human reason to fear so not fearing is about obedience because of trust (Joshua 1:9).
13. Or be dismayed - They must continuously not allow themselves to become demoralized or shattered because they are overwhelmed by what is before them.
14. The battle is God’s – The writer shifts from the Lord, who is the One fighting for them, to God who is sovereign and is supreme over all. He is the One who provides them salvation.

B. God’s Best (vs. 16):

1. ‘*Tomorrow go down....*’ – God’s direction is specific and clear.
2. Go down – The Lord commands them to put together a military maneuver

- and move towards the enemy.
3. Behold – While they are moving towards the enemy, they need to remain focused by paying attention to what they are doing.
 4. They will come up; Offering – The Lord knew exactly where the enemy would be, what their military maneuvers will be and what direction they would travel in. No matter what decisions people can make the Lord is still in control. Chaos does not mean that God is absent. He is always a very present help.
 5. You will find; Happened to us, befallen us – Jehoshaphat's military will not be surprised by anything their enemy does. God knew this before they decided to function this way and He knows that the enemy will do exactly what they planned.
 6. You need not fight – Israel has completely no need to engage in battle. To fight here is to consciously move forward raising their arms to engage their enemy. They need to move towards the enemy by making war maneuvers but taking out their arms is totally unnecessary.
 7. Station yourselves – They need to take their positions for battle even though there is no need to fight.
 8. Stand – He commands them to show readiness to engage in war when they maneuver into their positions for battle. It is as if God wants to make the enemy think there is going to be a fight while He instructs Judah that they are setting up to spectate His defeat of their enemy.
 9. See – The Lord wants them to inspect and gain a complete understanding of all He was going to do to their enemy.
 - a) The prophet's words echo those of Moses at the Red Sea (Ex. 14:13). Usually God provides victory after plunging us into the struggle. Every now and then, however, He reminds us that He alone is the source of every triumph.^[4]
 10. Salvation – It is the One who has all authority and power and is committed to His relationship with Israel that would provide deliverance from their enemies.
 11. Salvation – The Lord's deliverance provides them safety and victory over their enemies.
 12. Do not fear – The Lord tells them continuously not to be terrified emotionally or intellectually because they are intimidated by the other military or anticipate harm.
 13. Or be dismayed - They must continuously not allow themselves to become demoralized or shattered because they are overwhelmed by what is before them.
 14. Go out to face them – They are commanded to leave where the Lord told them to be and constantly towards a specific location for a specific purpose.
 15. Lord – The Lord who is mighty and powerful and is committed to His relationship with Israel would not leave them nor forsake them.
 16. Love this verse:

- a) Need not fight.
- b) Station yourselves.
- c) Stand and see the salvation of the Lord.
- d) Do not fear or be dismayed.
- e) Go out to face them.
- f) The Lord is with you.

^[1] Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. (1999). [*Nelson's new illustrated Bible commentary*](#) (p. 550). Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers.

^[2] Walton, J. H. (2009). [*Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary \(Old Testament\): 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*](#) (Vol. 3, p. 339). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

^[3] Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. (1999). [*Nelson's new illustrated Bible commentary*](#) (p. 550). Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers.

^[4] Richards, L. O. (1991). [*The Bible reader's companion*](#) (electronic ed., p. 293). Wheaton: Victor Books.