



This week at Magdalen Road Church we had a one-off sermon from 2 Chronicles chapter 20. The context of the passage is that the God's people, the people of Judah, are surrounded by their neighbouring nations of Ammon, Moab and Edom, and the king Jehoshaphat, does not know what to do.

And so he prays. He strikingly ends his prayer with the phrase "we do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you ". He acknowledges his weakness and turns to the Lord.

We noted that in many ways that is a prayer for our times because of so much uncertainty and stress that people are feeling in our current context, even in the hardships though, we can still be certain that God is in charge and so fix our eyes upon him.

Rather than coming up with a great big plan of action (whether tactical, military or political) Jehoshaphat turns to God in prayer.

We noted that there are three aspects to Jehoshaphat prayer as he remembers

1. Who God is

It's as if Jehoshaphat is reminding himself (and his people) of what God is like. He appeals to God on the basis of who he has revealed himself to be. His God is not just a territorial deity, but rather the God of the whole world and indeed the God of his ancestors. Neither time nor geography is able to limit the true God. If they're surrounded by Ammon, Edom and Moab? That doesn't matter as those areas are part of God's territory.

2. What God has done

Jehoshaphat looks back and remembers God's track-record. He's a God who keeps his promises in that the promise he made to Abraham he kept – they are now people in their land and, against all the odds, God provided what he said he would. More than that, they are now settled in the land and have constructed the temple from where this prayer comes from...

3. What God has said he would do

Because of who God is, and what he has done, and because God keeps his promises we can look ahead with confidence. In v9 Jehoshaphat is actually quoting his great-great-grandfather, King Solomon's prayer, as he dedicated the temple to the Lord.

God has promised to hear and to rescue his people, and provide what they need, and so Jehoshaphat is able to look ahead with a humble hope and assurance.

We noted that of course the context is very different for us and yet our fundamental hope is the same and the even in the midst of stress confusion and uncertainty we can trust that our God keeps his promises to us.

Here are some questions to start discussion and application

- Describe the situation outlined in the chapter. What might you be tempted to do if you were in Jehoshaphat's shoes?
- What does he pray in the light of?
- How can we apply this prayer to our context?