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Praise God in Advance

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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." 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. - 2 Chronicles 20:21–22 (NIV)

Praise God in advance because the battle has already been won. This weekend is Alumni Homecoming and the 50th anniversary of Die Meistersinger, a men's chorus at Southern that began in 1974. I am not much of a singer; it has been reported that dogs howl when I try to sing. However, I appreciate the legacy on our campus where, for fifty years, this male chorus has blessed so many with the gift of music, reminded us of the power of harmony in our communities, and used their voices to bring glory and honor to God. This weekend's celebration on campus has also reminded me of another group of choristers who sang not in a church but on a military battlefield.

In 2 Chronicles 20, King Jehoshaphat led the army of Judah to face an extensive military enemy. The problem? God's people were outnumbered badly, three armies to one. It was a real David and Goliath story, but of epic proportions. What is even more dramatic is what God asked King Jehoshaphat to do next; He instructed the King to place the singers at the head of the army instead of the soldiers who marched out. You do not need to be a military strategist to realize that God's instructions made no sense militarily. Why would God do that? Because it made sense spiritually. The singers were placed on the frontlines because there is power in praising God. In fact, one of the greatest weapons God's people have is not a sword, a chariot, or an Apache helicopter; the greatest weapon God's people have is praise. In other words, worship is a weapon both on the battlefield and in life.

Although outnumbered, God's people defeated the enemy, and God taught them an important lesson about life with Him. We do not need to wait for God to fight the battle, we can praise God in advance because the battle has already been won. "But how," you may ask. Because Jesus won the ultimate victory over sin and death at the cross. Just as King Jehoshaphat sang about the power of God before the battle, we can praise God for the victory of Christ before we experience visible evidence of a win. The only way to avoid worry is to take every trouble to Christ and praise Him in advance because the battle has already been won!

REFLECTION

1. When you think about battles in your life, how easy or difficult is it for you to praise God before seeing the outcome? What might be holding you back from praising Him in advance?

2. Why do you think worship can serve as a "weapon" in our spiritual lives? How does this perspective influence the way you approach challenges?
3. If worry or fear sometimes outweighs your faith, how might praising God in advance shift your mindset or bring peace?

PRAYER REQUESTS AND RESOURCES

- Come worship with us tonight at Illes Gym for Student Missions Vespers. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and the Vespers service starts at 7:00 p.m. **There will only be one service this evening, and there will be plenty of room for everyone who attends.**
- Find a meaningful sense of belonging by joining a student or faculty/staff LifeGroup today: [click here](#).
- Follow @ministryandmissions on Instagram for updates on events and programs. It is also a place where you will find encouraging messages. Also, [check out our website](#) for many new resources.
- Talk with Chaplain [Anna Bennett](#) or [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or have a desire to grow spiritually.