

WITH ONE HEART & VOICE

a people who pray together

“May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” [Romans 15.5-6]

We hope this series of studies will help us get to grips with the principles behind corporate prayer, and then discern together how best they may be worked out among us here in practice. You’ll find the background to the series [here](#).

Priorities!

Unlike the last couple of weeks, there’s potentially quite a bit of reading involved in the passage for study this week. The same pattern remains, with 7 (sets of) questions, as some of you find it helpful to work your way through the passage on a day-by-day basis. The time you have in a Community Group, of course, is limited and almost certainly, therefore, you will need to be selective in which questions you look at.

You’ll know your own group, so as ever use what you’ll find most helpful. **The really key issues here for us all as a fellowship are best covered in questions 3, 4 & 5, though, perhaps more than ever this week, there’ll be benefit in looking, however briefly, at all of the questions:** and as ever please feed back any insights which would seem to be of benefit to us all!

Prayer!

Do try also to make a point in your Community Group of leaving time for praying together!

7. “.. (they) came together to seek help from the Lord..” [2 Chronicles 20.1-20]

[week beginning Sunday 4th December]

The passage for this week’s study affords us the chance to look in on a prayer meeting from a bygone era, and to get a flavor of what went on. It helps us to see *why* they met to pray, *how* they prayed, *who* was involved in the praying, and *what* such praying led to, both in the time they shared together and then also in the aftermath.

Jehoshaphat was one of the good and godly kings of Judah, who, from early in his reign, ensured the people were well taught in the Word of God. You might want to read the background to that in 2 Chron.17.3-9 and 19.4-10.

*

1. **Read 2 Chron.20.1-30.** It’s well worth reading right on through to the end of the story, as well as the part which relates to the prayer of the people.

What stands out from the passage for you at this time?

Have you ever experienced an answer to prayer like this?

2. **Read 2 Chron.20.1-2.** These verses provide the background to what follows, and help explain the ‘alarm’ which the king felt.

What was the problem Jehoshaphat faced? And how might this be paralleled in your own life? Or in ours as a church?

Read **2 Chron.17.10-19**: in the light of what you read in those verses from chapter 17, why do you think the king was so alarmed?

Do you think the events recorded in **2 Chron.18.1-19.3** may have left the king more fearful than he once had been?

3. Read **2 Chron.20.3-4**. This was more than just a call to prayer, exhorting folk, wherever they were, to pray: this was the calling of a 'prayer meeting'.

There was a clear reason for their meeting to pray: what was it? Does it help you when there is a *specific* matter to be praying about in such a meeting for prayer? And if so why?

Why do you think Jehoshaphat proclaimed a fast for all Judah?

What was the point of the people of Judah all *coming together* in this way? Why is that significantly different from their simply all having agreed to pray about the same matter in their own homes or localities?

4. **Read 2 Chron.20.5-9.** Jehoshaphat led the people in their corporate prayer: the pattern of his praying is instructive.

What are the truths about God on which, in his praying, the king was deliberately relying?

Read **2 Chron.6.34-35 & 7.11-16.** Solomon's prayer dedicating the temple, along with the assurance he'd received from the Lord, were clearly in the king's mind here: what promises of God can we fall back on in times of trouble?

5. **Read 2 Chron.20.10-12.** In these 3 verses the king provides an object lesson in 'supplicatory prayer'.

What two things does the king ask the Lord to do?

There are challenges ahead for us as a fellowship, not least in regard to our building here – as there may be challenges you face too – where our resources may well seem similarly inadequate: how do these verses help inform our perspective?

6. **Read 2 Chron.20.13.** In the midst of the drama unfolding through this chapter, it's easy to skip over the striking detail which this verse sketches in.

Why do you think that mention is made of the 'children and little ones' being present, as well as the men and their wives?

7. Read 2 Chron.20.14-20. The prayers of the people (voiced through their king) will shortly be answered in a quite remarkable manner (vv.21-25): here there's a more immediate answer in the form of the Lord's assurance to them.

What specific instructions are given by the Lord to the people, and how might each of them have application to us in the face of our own situations?

Their meeting to pray was a two-way thing – not only did they voice their cries to the Lord, but He spoke to them as well: how might this find expression in our own setting?