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The annals of military science and history are filled with irony and, quite often, with a resort to music that may not make any sense to the observer, but a great deal of sense to the Army in the field. While climbing Heartbreak Ridge (Bear Mountain) at West Point, the ascending path was almost unbearable for endurance to put one foot before the other, especially with a 64 pound pack on one's back. Quite often, someone in the marching column would sound off with a little barracks ballad such as "Yellow Ribbon" or some Jodie Call. This would take one's mind off the tiresome climb and lift spirits. It has been said that Napoleon owed some of his success to the martial music played during his troop musters, among which "La Marseillaise."

The British Army, at the time of the American Revolution, often placed their pipers, fifes and drums behind their advancing columns to play a rousing tune that encouraged those at the front who were facing the possibility of death or mortal injury. At Gettysburg, the Confederate band played, strangely, a waltz during Pickett's Charge. That certainly turned out to be no waltz across the cornfield. But what of an army that placed its choir BEFORE its armed, advancing columns? Believe it or not, this is precisely what Jehoshaphat did when his armies went out against the formidable allied armies of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir.

Naturally, this would seem insane to any competent field commander, but not to King Jehoshaphat when he had been informed of the Lord that the battle was not Judah's, but LORD's. Jehoshaphat was a Godly King very much in the vein of our own Founding Fathers. When the warning came of impending invasion, what did King Jehoshaphat do first? Did he summons his field commanders and muster his troops? Did he seek to gather defenses against the enemy at the gates? No, the King did none of these at first. At first, he fled to the Lord in prayer.

³ And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. ⁴ And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD. ⁵ And Jehoshaphat stood in the

congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, ⁶And said, O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee? ⁷Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever? ⁸And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying, ⁹If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name is in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help. ¹⁰And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not; ¹¹Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit. ¹²O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee. ¹³And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. (2 Chron 20:3-13) Would it not be a blessing if we had a President and a Congress that were so righteous!

God had told the King that none of his soldiers would even be required to lift a finger against the enemy, yet they would be destroyed in place. Such an assurance does not evoke feelings of fear and panic, but of confidence in men of faith. So what action did Jehoshaphat take in the face of the mighty invaders?

²⁰And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. ²¹And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever. ²²And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten. ²³For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another. ²⁴And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped. (2 Chron 20:20-24)

The LORD is good at turning the avenging sword of the enemy back upon the very breast of that enemy.

I have known commanders who were very much like Alexander the Great - they almost weep when the enemy does not show up to do battle. Well, this enemy did, indeed, show up to do battle, but the battle was not with the Children of Judah, but with themselves. It is true today, too, that our greatest enemy is not the one arrayed before us on the battlefield; it is the ancient, coiled serpent that resides in our own hearts - that is the greatest enemy, and he is within us.

Today, America faces the most dreadful enemy of all of our past battles. It is an enemy who has been arming himself for several decades. The war plans of that enemy have been rehearsed, over and over again, in the hearts of our children in institutions of learning, and through decadent media sources. It has indoctrinated and conditioned our youth to place all past values in the dust bin and to throw moral caution to the winds. Our youth have come to know little of the history of our country, except that which is tainted by lies and propaganda. Many are biblically illiterate and devoid of understanding of common sense and reason in government. Whoever promises the most freebies gets their vote. Little do they know that the freebies they receive are the poisons that will strike a dart into their very hearts.

Who is responsible for this revolting development? I am sad to say that it is you and I, and every mature citizen of the land that has placed more emphasis on immediate gratification of desire to the detriment of the proper training and teaching of our youth. We have, instead, allowed them to be taught by teachers and professors who demean the godly past of our country, and who have emphasized immediate gratification of every filthy desire to the detriment of hard work and striving for perfection in a profession. We have allowed the BRAMBLES among us to ascend the throne of national and local power and we have shunned the men and women of conscience who have sounded the alarm of God's displeasure against a nation that He once favored more highly than any other nation among the nations of the world. We stagger as drunk men, and every solution to every problem is forever the WRONG solution that exacerbates our dilemma.

We have reached a point in our history in which a godly king such as Jehoshaphat alone will not suffice, for it is the canker of the hearts of the people that must be amended and cleansed by the power of the Holy Ghost. We need not only a praying king; we need a praying citizenry. We need to pray according to the counsel given in 2 Chronicles 7:14 - *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.* (2 Chron 7:14) The counsel is not for ALL of the nation to pray, but only those who are *called by my name* (the Christian Church). We must fall on our knees as did Jehoshaphat - not be lifted up with the pride of past blessings and victories - but to come humbly to the Throne of God's Grace, fervently praying and seeking the face of the Lord. We must, too, turn from our reprehensibly wicked ways - then He will hear our prayers and heal our lands unless our iniquity has grown too full to countenance.

Seeking the face of the Lord is an important principle because the Lord will not look upon sin. Turning from our personal and national sins will afford us the privilege to go to the Lord face to face. Time is of the essence. The gloom and roar of the storm is at our very shore. We must act now with immediate dispatch, or lose our blessed land of liberty forever.

Remember the counsel of Malachi: *7 Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? 8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. 9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. 10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. 11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. 12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the LORD of hosts.* (Mal 3:7-12)

Let us stop paying our substance and obeisance to Mammon, and pay our tribute to the God of our Fathers.