

The Paradox of Brokenness & Wholeness

In 2 Chronicles 20, King Jehoshaphat was facing a life-threatening situation. Three armies combined to attack his nation of Judah. Jehoshaphat was so frightened that he cried to God for help, saying, "O our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you." (2 Chronicles 20:12) But kings usually don't admit their powerlessness and pray like this. King Jehoshaphat was actually praying from his inner brokenness. This is not just rare in Biblical days but also in today's church. Many spiritual people of today would find this kind of vulnerability so uncomfortable that they would pray to God on the outside but actually speak to men: "Well, God. Situation is not good but I thank God for giving me spiritual wisdom and experience. I know what I'm going to do and I will overcome the situation."

In our upbringing, we learn to protect ourselves and naturally have developed our own sophisticated strategies to hide our brokenness, flaws and weaknesses. As I search my own heart, I don't want other people to see parts of our real self: a weak, incompetent, angry and jealous sinner. But man like Jehoshaphat showed me how I can only find peace and strength from God through brokenness. Without admitting the real me, there won't be complete healing and help from God. Moreover, when we admit our weaknesses without denying in front of people, God can bring healing to other people through us. Brokenness becomes the starting point of experiencing the transforming power of God and building up an authentic Christian community (small group). It's such a paradoxical statement that through brokenness, God can bring wholeness to us as individual and community. But it's the truth from God that we should come to God with our brokenness.

破碎和完全的矛盾

於歷代志下二十章當中，約沙法王正面臨著一個性命攸關的處境，當時分別有三支軍隊同來攻擊他的國土猶大。約沙法王於驚恐中向神呼求說：「我們的神阿、你不懲罰他們麼？因為我們無力抵擋這來攻擊我們的大軍，我們也不知道怎樣行，我們的眼目、單仰望你。」(歷代志下 20:12) 鮮有君王會如他般禱告甚至承認自己的無能為力。約沙法王的禱告實乃源自於他內在的破碎。類似的情形不僅罕見於聖經時代，在現今教會中也絕不常見。很多屬靈人並不自在於這樣公開自己的軟弱，致使他們面向人群時會作流於表面的禱告：「神啊，雖然我的景況並不理想，但感謝祢在當中賜予我屬靈智慧和經驗。我知道該怎樣向前行，也深信我定能成功走過這個艱難。」

在成長的過程中，我們學會了保護自己，對於如何隱藏自身的破碎、缺陷和軟弱，會很自然地練就出一套世故的策略。當我探視自己的內心，我並不希望旁人看清部份的真我：那個脆弱、不堪一擊、易怒和嫉妒的罪人。但約沙法王卻展示了我，那藉著向神破碎自己方能覓得的平安和力量。要得著神完全的醫治和幫助，我必先承認那真正的自己。再者，當我們能於人前毫不偽裝地承認自己軟弱之同時，神更會透過我們去醫治其他人；破碎自己也就成為了我們經歷神改變大能，及建立一個真實的基督教族群(小組)的起始點了。這看似是何等自相矛盾的說法—神透過破碎給我們帶來了作為一個個體和群體的完全，但這確是從神而來的真理，我們都該帶著破碎來到祂的跟前。