

Pray Through

Text

2 Chronicles 20:1-26

Introduction

King Jehoshaphat is the great great great grandson of King David. Although earlier in his life he was disobedient to God's Prophet and God, he turned back to God and would bring the nation back to God.

"After this, the armies of the Moabites, Ammonites, and some of the Meunites declared war on Jehoshaphat. Messengers came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast army from Edom is marching against you from beyond the Dead Sea. They are already at Hazazon-tamar." (This was another name for En-gedi.)"
(2 Chronicles 20:1-2)

Jehoshaphat found himself surrounded by three powerful armies. These were armies that were bent on totally destroying the nation.

"Jehoshaphat was terrified by this news and begged the Lord for guidance. He also ordered everyone in Judah to begin fasting. So people from all the towns of Judah came to Jerusalem to seek the Lord's help". **(2 Chronicles 20:3-4)**

Jehoshaphat was terrified, don't judge him, you would be too. He called the people to fast, they were desperate they sought the Lord's help.

"Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the Lord means safety".
(Proverbs 29:25)

5 "Jehoshaphat stood before the community of Judah and Jerusalem in front of the new courtyard at the Temple of the Lord. 6 He prayed, "O Lord, God of our ancestors, you alone are the God who is in heaven. You are ruler of all the kingdoms of the earth. You are powerful and mighty; no one can stand against you! 7 O our God, did you not drive out those who lived in this land when your people Israel arrived? And did you not give this land forever to the descendants of your friend Abraham? 8 Your people settled here and built this Temple to honor your name. 9 They said, 'Whenever we are faced with any calamity such as war,[d] plague, or famine, we can come to stand in your presence before this Temple where your name is honored. We can cry out to you to save us, and you will hear us and rescue us.'

10 "And now see what the armies of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir are doing. You would not let our ancestors invade those nations when Israel left Egypt, so they went around them and did not destroy them. 11 Now see how they reward us! For they have come to throw us out of your land, which you gave us as an

they went around them and did not destroy them. 11 Now see how they reward us! For they have come to throw us out of your land, which you gave us as an inheritance. 12 O our God, won't you stop them? We are powerless against this mighty army that is about to attack us. We do not know what to do, but we are looking to you for help." (2 Chronicles 20:5-12)

"Jehoshaphat's prayer was a *promise centered prayer* instead of problem centered prayer".

"If your foundation is built on the Promises of God, you won't buckle in fear".

"The greatest way you can face your future is when you reflect on God's past".

"When You Don't Know What To Do, Pray Through"

Pray, but then stop and listen

3 "As all the men of Judah stood before the Lord with their little ones, wives, and children, 14 the Spirit of the Lord came upon one of the men standing there. His name was Jahaziel son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite who was a descendant of Asaph. 15 He said, "Listen, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Listen, King Jehoshaphat! This is what the Lord says: Do not be afraid! Don't be discouraged by this mighty army, for the battle is not yours, but God's. 16 Tomorrow, march out against them. You will find them coming up through the ascent of Ziz at the end of the valley that opens into the wilderness of Jeruel. 17 But you will not even need to fight. Take your positions; then stand still and watch the Lord's victory. He is with you, O people of Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid or discouraged. Go out against them tomorrow, for the Lord is with you!" (2 Chronicles 20:13-17)

"When we stop to listen, God starts to speak"

18" Then King Jehoshaphat bowed low with his face to the ground. And all the people of Judah and Jerusalem did the same, worshiping the Lord. 19 Then the Levites from the clans of Kohath and Korah stood to praise the Lord, the God of Israel, with a very loud shout". (2 Chronicles 20:18-19)

"When you do not know what to do, praise through"

When you begin to worry, begin to praise

The battle had not even started but they praised!

20 "Early the next morning the army of Judah went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. On the way Jehoshaphat stopped and said, "Listen to me, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Believe in the Lord your God, and you will be able to stand firm. Believe in his prophets, and you will succeed."

21 After consulting the people, the king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army, singing to the Lord and praising him for his holy splendor. This is what they sang:

"Give thanks to the Lord;

his faithful love endures forever!"

22 At the very moment they began to sing and give praise, the Lord caused the armies of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir to start fighting among themselves.

23 The armies of Moab and Ammon turned against their allies from Mount Seir

22 At the very moment they began to sing and give praise, the Lord caused the armies of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir to start fighting among themselves. 23 The armies of Moab and Ammon turned against their allies from Mount Seir and killed every one of them. After they had destroyed the army of Seir, they began attacking each other. 24 So when the army of Judah arrived at the lookout point in the wilderness, all they saw were dead bodies lying on the ground as far as they could see. Not a single one of the enemy had escaped. 25 King Jehoshaphat and his men went out to gather the plunder. They found vast amounts of equipment, clothing, and other valuables—more than they could carry. There was so much plunder that it took them three days just to collect it all! 26 On the fourth day they gathered in the Valley of Blessing, which got its name that day because the people praised and thanked the Lord there. It is still called the Valley of Blessing today". (2 Chronicles 20:20-26)

They came to wipe out God's people, the people were on their knees praying and then praised, God moved and intervened.

Where is your "Valley of Blessing"? That place when you think about it reminds you of God's work, faithfulness and intervention.

Discussion Questions

- 1) To say that Jehoshaphat was in a pickle would be an understatement. He had three powerful armies nearby ready to annihilate the Israeli nation. The scripture said that he was "terrified", can you imagine what he was feeling and have you ever found yourselves in a situation where you didn't see anyway out of it?
- 2) Starting in verse 5, Jehoshaphat stood before the people and prayed. Why do you think he stood in front of the people as opposed to going off by himself? What things do you notice about this prayer? What did it mean to you when Ezra said that this "was a promise centered prayer instead of problem centered prayer"?
- 3) What do these two statements mean to you:
 - "If your foundation is built on the Promises of God, you won't buckle in fear"
 - "The greatest way you can face your future is when you reflect on God's past"
- 4) After this study, what does it mean to you to "pray through"? Also why is it important to "stop and listen"?
- 5) Do you find it strange that in verse 21 that they sent the singers out ahead of the army and they worshiped and praised God?
- 6) Lastly, where is your "valley of blessing"? That place when you think about it reminds you of God's work, faithfulness and intervention?