

PASSION CITY CHURCH

Alarmed, Determined

Full Transcript

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Introduction: A Desperate Man Named Jehoshaphat

- 0:00 I want to take us to a desperate man that could have been anybody, but some man today, and his name is Jehoshaphat, and we've preached about him a lot at Passion City Church, and if you've been around church, you've heard his story before. But there's a lot of desperation in this moment, and I want us to capture some principles from it so that if you're in a place where you feel desperate, you'll know what to do.
- 0:26 If you're in a circumstance or a situation where you feel what Jehoshaphat felt, and what the people of Judah felt that you'll know what to do, because you've seen God come through for someone, and God didn't put Jehoshaphat's story in Scripture just for our entertainment or information or education. He put it there so that we could learn from this story so that when we're in desperate times, we'll know what to do. And so I do have some points today, but the talk isn't so much me saying, OK, here's what you do. Do A and then do B and do C. It really just falls out of what we're going to read today. So take some notes.
- 1:04 Take your phone out. John, some things down is God is highlighting them for you, because it's really beautiful to see what happens. Jahashifat was in a place that a lot of us get in. He was in a place where things were coming against him that were bigger than his ability to solve them. This is all happening, by the way, in about 850 BC. And where we're going to pick up in 2 Chronicles 20, if you have Scripture, is in the city of Jerusalem. So can we just frame all this historically? This isn't just a Bible story. This is a historical story. This is the king of Judah, Jehoshaphat, and Jerusalem in 850 BC. And as we open up
- 1:50 In chapter one, it says this. I mean, in verse one, it says this. After this, the Moabites and Ammonites, we got a lot of ites and people and names in here today don't. lose the plot because of them. And some of the men unites came to wage war against Jehoshaphat. Some people came and told Jehoshaphat a vast army is coming against you from Eden, from the other side of the Dead Sea. It is already in Hazen, tomorrow, and that is in Getty. Alarm, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the Lord and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. That's a posture in a position. That's what we talked about last week. Prayer is a posture more than it is formulating some sentences that we say to God, it's really a posture of the heart and of our lives.

Who Is Jehoshaphat? A Man After God With a Fatal Flaw

- 2:45 Now, who is this guy? Jehoshaphat. Let me just take us back for a second so that we can know who he is before we jump into the story. So let's go back a few chapters. Chapter 17, Jehoshaphat, his son, talking about Asa, succeeded him as King and strengthened himself against Israel. He stationed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah and put garrisons in Judah and in the towns of Ephraim, that his father, Asa, had captured. The Lord was with Jehoshaphad, because he followed the ways of his father, David, before him.
- 3:27 His great, great, great, great grandfather, I think I got the greats, right? was David and then Solomon, and then great, great grandfather, then great grandfather, then Asa his father eventually. So he's in a lineage of people who have sought the heart of God. He did not consult the Bales, the false gods, the idols, but sought the God of his father and followed his commands, his commands, the God of his father, rather

than the practices of Israel. The Lord established the kingdom under his control and all Judah brought gifts to Jehoshaphat so that he had great wealth and honor. His heart was devoted to the ways of the Lord. Furthermore, he removed the high places in the ashera poles from Judah.

4:22

2 Chronicles 20:1-3

After this, the Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to wage war against Jehoshaphat. Some people came and told Jehoshaphat, 'A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the Dead Sea. It is already in Hazezon Tamar' (that is, En Gedi). Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the Lord, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah.

5:11 Why? He just wanted to strengthen himself. And so we see now, if you read chapter 18, a battle ensues, Ahab sucks Juhashifat into it because of this alliance. They go out to war against the word of God, which came through one prophet, where hundreds of prophets said, you should go. They were the false prophets, but one true prophet said, I wouldn't do that. And Ahab said, go put him in jail and only give him food and bread and water till I get home safely. And the prophet looks at Ahab and said, yeah, you're not coming home safely. But they went into battle, and Ahab was killed. Jehoshaphat's life, they came after him in battle, but he was spared by God.

5:55 But then the next chapter, when Jehoshaphat King of Judah returned safely to his palace in Jerusalem, Jahu the seer, the son of Hen and I went out to meet him and said to the king, should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord? Because of this, the wrath of the Lord is on you. You are favored, and we're gonna even see further down that God is with you, but

6:19

2 Chronicles 17:1-6

Jehoshaphat his son succeeded him as king and strengthened himself against Israel. He stationed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah and put garrisons in Judah and in the towns of Ephraim that his father Asa had captured. The Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the ways of his father David before him. He did not consult the Baals but sought the God of his father and followed his commands rather than the practices of Israel. The Lord established the kingdom under his control, and all Judah brought gifts to Jehoshaphat, so that he had great wealth and honor. His heart was devoted to the ways of the Lord; furthermore, he removed the high places and the Asherah poles from Judah.

6:49 Pattern of these kings, even the ones who love God, was to kind of shore up their ranks by making alliances with people who were not for God. And I just, as I was preparing, I just kept wondering, is there someone in the gathering today that there's a little side message for you over here today? Don't make that alliance. Is there someone that's about to propose to somebody that's not of God? Don't. Is there somebody about to go down an aisle with somebody who's not of the ways of God? Don't go down the aisle. Don't make that alliance.

The Prayer of Desperation: Calling on Heaven

- 7:34 Is there somebody that you're like, I don't know. I know these people aren't the right people to get into this deal with, but we need them. Don't. This is what we're gonna see today. This is the underlying message of Jahashifat in Second Chronicles 20. The underlying message is, God will come through for you. Don't make an alliance with a wicked king.
- 8:02 And so here's the story of vast armies coming. And they're coming down. They're already at the Dead Sea in Ingeti. And so look at verse three, alarmed Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the Lord and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. Let's just read the whole chapter. The people of Judah came together to seek help from the Lord. Indeed they came from every town in Judah to seek him. Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the Lord in front of the new courtyard and said, here comes his prayer.
- 8:43 Lord, the God of our ancestors, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power in might are in your hand and no one can withstand you. I'm just telling you, that is an opening line that pleases the heart of God. When you put that as the preamble and the prelude to whatever the rest of your prayer is, not only are you positioning your mind with right thinking and really good theology, you're getting the attention of heaven.
- 9:19 Our God, did you not drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel? and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham, your friend. He's just harking back to the moment when Joshua brought the people across the Jordan River and God led them in to possess this promised land. They've lived in it and have built in it a sanctuary for your name, saying if calamity comes upon us, whether the sword of judgment or plague or famine, we will stand in your presence before this temple that bears your name and will cry out to you in our distress. When we are desperate, we will cry out to you. And you will hear us and save us.
- 10:04 But now let's recap, I know you already know, but let me just recap for you really quickly. Here are men from Ammon and Moab and Mount Seer, whose territory you would not allow Israel to invade when they came from Egypt. In other words, God said, these people just leave them alone.
- 10:22 So they turned away from them and did not destroy them. But as a result, see how they are repaying us by coming to drive us out of the possession you gave us as an inheritance. Our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. Have you ever felt like that was your prayer? God, I don't know if I've got what it takes to withstand this news that is coming at me.
- 10:57 We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you. Can we just read that out loud together? We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you. Let's read it again. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you. Old men of Judah, with their wives and children and little ones, stood there before the Lord. Then the spirit of the Lord came on Jehaziel, who let's just skip down with a descendant of Asap. and he stood in the assembly, and he said, listen, King Jehoshifath, and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem, this is what the Lord says to you, do not be afraid. Or discourage because of this vast army.
- 11:43 For the battle is not yours, but God's. Amen. Tomorrow, march down against them, they'll be climbing up by the pass of Ziz, and you'll find them at the edge of the gorge in the desert of Jeriel. You will not have to fight this battle. Take up Your positions, stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you.

Judah and Jerusalem do not be afraid and do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow and the Lord will be with you.

Heaven Answers: The Battle Is Not Yours But God's

- 12:22 Jehoshaphat bowed down with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the Lord.
- 12:38 They were desperate. Then some Levites from the Cahoa Thites and the Cora Heights stood up and praised the Lord the God of Israel with a very loud voice. Early in the morning, they left for the desert of Tukoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, listen to me, Judah. He's just repeating what he's already heard from the prophet. Listen to me, Judah, and people of Jerusalem have faith in the Lord your God. When the armies are coming, have faith. When you are alarmed, have faith. When you're concerned, have faith. When you're afraid, have faith. Have faith in the Lord your God, and you will be upheld, have faith in His prophets, and you will be successful.
- 13:27 After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat, anointed 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 and doers forever. Now we've talked about this a lot here, but what a picture do you see this? We got three armies banding together, they're crossing into our land seeking to destroy us. We have a word from God. We're going to see this salvation of God. We don't have to fight. God is going to fight for us. And we're going to believe that by putting the worship team in front of our army.

14:06

2 Chronicles 20:6-12

Lord, the God of our ancestors, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you. Our God, did you not drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend? They have lived in it and have built in it a sanctuary for your name, saying, 'If calamity comes upon us, whether the sword of judgment, or plague or famine, we will stand in your presence before this temple that bears your name and will cry out to you in our distress, and you will hear us and save us.' But now here are men from Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, whose territory you would not allow Israel to invade when they came from Egypt; so they turned away from them and did not destroy them. See how they are repaying us by coming to drive us out of the possession you gave us as an inheritance. 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 on you.

- 14:37 Give thanks to the Lord his love and doers forever. And as they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the men of Eman, Moab, and Mount Seer who were invading Judah and they were defeated.

God Fights: The Enemies Destroy Themselves

- 15:04 The emanites and the Moabites, they rose up against the men of Mount Seer to destroy and annihilate them. In other words, they got all confused these people. And after they finished slaughtering the men from Seer, they helped to destroy one another. And when the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and looked toward the vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground. No one had escaped.
- 15:29 So Jahashifat and his men went to carry off their plunder And they found among them a great amount of equipment and clothing and also articles of value more than they could take away. There was so much plunder that it took three days to collect it. On the fourth day, they assembled in the Valley of Baraka, which means blessing or thank you God, gratitude, where they praised the Lord. That's why it's called the Valley of Baraka to this day. Don't you love some things that just make sense?
- 15:57 Then led by Jahashifat, all the men, all the men, all the men of Judah and Jerusalem, returned joyfully to Jerusalem. For the Lord had given them cause to rejoice over their enemies. They entered Jerusalem. They went to the temple of the Lord with harps, with liars, with trumpets. This was a
- 16:24 Celebration. And then look what happened. The fear of God came on all the surrounding kingdoms when they heard how the Lord had fought against the enemies of Israel.
- 16:38 And the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace. For God had given them rest on every side. They didn't need an alliance with some wicked king to
- 16:55 Have rest. on every side. And God got all the glory. I'm observing a few things. Number one, Jehoshaphat was rightfully alarmed. If we go back to verse three, I think it is.

Alarmed but Determined: Resolve to Inquire of God

- 17:20 When he heard the news, he was alarmed. So when you hear the news, don't go, that's not affecting me. I'm not bothered by that. When you hear the news, you should be concerned. You should be alarmed. You should go, what? Huh? Can you say that again? He was alarmed. And it's okay as a human being following God and trusting in God and believing in God to be alarmed.
- 17:49 But his desperate concern was different than a lot of times in our lives, where when the armies are coming, it's not just desperate concern. We quickly capitulate into fear and dread. Oh my gosh, oh my word, I don't know what's going to happen. I don't know how this is going to work out. Oh my, where's God? What's happening? I don't know. And we just quickly fall in. And what God is saying, did they be alarmed? But look how His alarmed is really quickly followed by. If I can see it here, this incredible punctuation.
- 18:22 Thank you, Lord, for this very determined comma, alarmed comma, Chahashafat resolved to inquire of the Lord. As soon as he was desperately concerned, his instant reaction was, I got to find God. I've got to seek God. I've got to hear from God. And how do you hear from God? You proclaim a fast for all of Judah.

18:55 This is backwards thinking by the way. This is what we talked about last week. This is why we know that we don't fight with the weapons the world fights with because no worldly army hearing that there are three armies coming would declare a fast. I know, let's don't eat for a minute and get weak.

19:17 But Jahash Effat wasn't thinking like humans think. He was thinking like a follower of God thinks. A human follower of God. And he said, I'm going to proclaim a fast. And all the people came together to seek help from the Lord. When we're alarmed, resolve to inquire of God

19:43 And create a window of time in your life where you can hear from God.

19:51 And then he called on heaven. I would encourage you if you memorize scripture to memorize this prayer. And just get it into the fabric of your life and into your mind, into your thinking, and into your spirit. So when the alarm bell comes, you'll kind of have already woven into your spiritual DNA, a footprint for a way forward.

20:16 He called on God. And he says in verse 12, this is one of the most interesting

20:25 Paradox, if you will, to me in scripture. He says, for we have no power to face this vast army. That's desperation. Desperation comes out of the word hopeless. In other words, it's saying, I don't know. But for us, it's a little bit different. And the connotation for a believer and an Almighty sovereign God is a little different than the connotation for a human being saying, we're desperate meaning we've lost all hope. No, we're desperate meaning we don't see in our own strength any hope here.

20:59

2 Chronicles 20:15-17

He said: 'Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the Lord says to you: Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow march down against them. They will be climbing up by the Pass of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the gorge in the Desert of Jeruel. You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions, stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you.'

21:42 You knew what to do. And you know what to do. So what to do is, Lord, we've got this incredible circumstance happening around us, and we don't know what to do. That's not where we end. We say, God, we don't have what it takes. We don't have the answer. We don't have the resource. We don't know God.

22:04 But we're going to lock our gaze on you. We're going to fix our eyes on you. What a prayer. A few chapters before, when his father, Asa, was in another one of these situations, had made another alliance with another wicked king. He has a prophet come to him, Han and I, the seer. Remember it was his son who came to Jehoshaphat in Jerusalem. And the seer came to Asa, king of Judah, and said to him, because you relied on the king of Aram, and not on the Lord your God, the army of the king of Aram has escaped from your hand. And then he goes on to explain a little bit of all this context, and he says, yet when you relied on the Lord, he delivered them into your hand.

- 22:57 For the eyes, do you know this verse? For the eyes of the Lord. Anybody know this verse? For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth. When I was growing up, the translation we were reading said, for the eyes of the Lord roam throughout the earth. And what is he looking for?
- 23:16 The eyes of the Lord ranged throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.
- 23:28 Interesting that that verse was a prophecy given to Jehoshaphat's dad. And now we see Jehoshaphat living out The benefit of what it means to say to God, are you not the God of heaven? Do you not rule over all the nations? Can anyone withstand your purposes and your plans? Our eyes are fixed on you. And I know that in that moment, the eyes of the Lord roaming throughout the whole earth, they locked on to Jehoshaphat. And God said, I am happy. to show myself strong on behalf of this man and these people and all of Judah and all of Jerusalem gathered in this moment because their eyes are fixed on me. He knew what to do.
- 24:13 He was alarmed, but he inquired. He was alarmed, but he stopped. He was alarmed, but he called on heaven. And when he called on heaven, he didn't offer solutions. He just said, you're sovereign God. Sometimes when we're alarmed or like, God, do you see what's happening here? You're gonna need to do A, B, C, and D. Instead of just going, God, I know you see what's happening here. And I don't know, I don't have solutions. I just know that you're a sovereign God.

The Antidote to Fear Is Faith, Not Courage

- 24:38 And I put all my hope and all my trust in you and heaven answered. Heaven answered and said, God's gonna fight for you. And I just wanna say that to you today, God is gonna fight for you. If you're putting your trust in him, he's going to fight for you. In fact, he is fighting for you. And you're going to sleep tonight and he's going to fight for you tonight. You're going to run out of your energy and he's going to keep fighting for you. You're going to have a moment where you go, I don't have any more solutions than God's going to say, I'm still fighting. And you're like, I can't see you fighting.
- 25:06 And he's like, I know. But trust me, I'm fighting. And I'm working. And I'm on the case. And I am on the side of right. And I am on the side of truth. And I'm on the side of justice. And I love you. And I'm for you. I gave my life for you. I am with you. Your purpose and your plan, your destiny. I'm still on board with that. I'm fighting for you. And to be able to lay down and say, God, I can't fight anymore. But thank you that you're fighting for me. God, I don't see how it's working out, but thank you that you are fighting for me. And for somebody to say, how you doing?
- 25:39 I don't know. But I got this weird piece over my life because I believe God Almighty is fighting on my behalf. Well, how do you see that happening? I don't know. But I believe it. And I've got a great role model in this king from Judah back in 850 BC. And I'm trying to track along because God showed me how to walk in faith

- 26:05 And not sight. The armies were still coming. They were on the way. They were still moving, organized. Apparently had a lot of heavy equipment with them.
- 26:19 And the prophet said, you're not going to have to fight. And when he said it to Hashafat, put his face on the ground. How in the world can you put your face on the ground when there are armies coming? And you're not looking around? That's trust. That's trust. That's having blinders on.
- 26:54 To that and that and going, I just wanna totally focus on sovereign God who told me that he's gonna fight for us. And we're gonna go, but he's gonna fight. We're showing up in the morning, but he's gonna fight. We're coming to the battle, but he's gonna fight.
- 27:26 Few more things there and we're done. They replace fear with faith. I think sometimes, and we've said this a lot, but please, let's try to grab onto this. I think sometimes we try to replace fear with either masking it by whatever it is that we go to for comfort,
- 27:49 Or by trying to muster up some kind of internal courage that's bigger than what we're facing. And the antidote to fear certainly isn't masking it by going to our addictions or whatever other thing of comfort we go to when we're afraid. But the antidote to fear is also not trying to muster up courage.

28:14

2 Chronicles 20:22-26

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. The Ammonites and Moabites rose up against the men from Mount Seir to destroy and annihilate them. After they finished slaughtering the men from Seir, they helped to destroy one another. When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and looked toward the vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground; no one had escaped. So Jehoshaphat and his men went to carry off their plunder, and they found among them a great amount of equipment and clothing and also articles of value—more than they could take away. There was so much plunder that it took three days to collect it. On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berakah, where they praised the Lord. That is why it is called the Valley of Berakah to this day.

Name Your Barakas: Remember Where God Came Through

- 28:50 When I'm afraid, I put my trust in you. Is anything making you afraid today?
- 29:02 Put your trust in God. Their faith became sight. And they named the place, the place of blessing, the valley of blessing. Is anybody ever been through the Valley of blessing before. Has anybody ever gone out to fight and the Lord fought for you? Just check in. Anybody been to the battle and the Lord did it?
- 29:26 No, I'm seriously asking. I'm not looking necessarily for a moment. Is anybody ever been to the moment where you're like, I don't know. And then God came through. But wherever that is, if you can go there in your mind right now, if it was a doctor's office, or you were sitting in a meeting, or an arbitration, or you were at your house, or you were alone, and you got a phone call. If you can see that moment where God came through, then name that moment. That is the garage of blessing and thanksgiving.

- 29:53 Because that's where we got the call that God came through. We have a three car garage at our house. This one is the left garage. This one is the right garage. The one in the middle is called the garage of blessing. the garage of Baraka. That's what we call it, not really. I'm just giving you an example.
- 30:12 But you could, we don't have three car garage, but we did at one time. And the one on the left was called the
- 30:21 Bay, I guess is the right word I'm looking for, of Baraka, the one on the left.
- 30:28 Because that's the one where we got the call that God came through. That's the one I backed out of at 4.45 in the morning on the morning my mom died, the head to the hospital, backed out of the Bay of Baraka.
- 30:48 See, we don't name the places and we should. A cubicle up there, I don't work there anymore, but when I drive by that building, I always think up on the ninth floor up there, if you kind of go out of the elevator and turn to the left, there's a little cubicle that ended the thing by the copy machine, and I used to work there, and that's the cubicle of Baraka.
- 31:09 That's where I got the news. That's where I got the email that God had come through. And I'll always call that the cubicle of Baraka. See, we don't name our places, and then we forget what God has done. And then when we're alarmed, we don't inquire of the Lord, we panic, because we didn't name our places. But if we named our places everywhere we went, almost every week of our lives, we'd go somewhere around Baraka.
- 31:38 That's the Burger King of Baraka right there. That's the one, that's it, right there. Please don't tear it down. No, no, they're taking down the Burger King of Baraka. I'll have to now know that that condo is the condo of Baraka because it's built on top of the Burger King of Baraka because we were in the drive through and we got the word that God came through. And we named that place that drive through of Baraka.
- 32:07 *How many Barakas you have in your life? 100,000? Name them. Because you're going to need them.*
- 32:23 Because somebody's coming before you know it to tell you three armies. And that's usually the way it works in life. It's not one thing. What's that phrase? If it's not one thing, it's another. And that's the way life comes, normally. It's not just that, but then it's that. You're going to be kidding me, that and that and that,
- 32:47 All of that. And in that moment, please be human and please be alarmed, but go to Baraka as quick as you can.
- 32:58 My God comes through. So you know what I'm going to do right now? You know what I'm going to do right this minute? I am going to call on heaven.
- 33:06 Thank you, Jamie McDonald, for giving us an incredible, powerful way to do that in song.
- 33:17 And I'm gonna put praise out at the front. And on my way to meet with them, on my way to the hospital, on my way to the

33:32 Settlement, I'm gonna put praise out front. And I'm gonna arrive saying, give thanks to the Lord, His love endures forever.

33:51 I don't know what I'm going to find in the valley of Tacoma, but I'm coming with a song appraise to the God who is faithful in Jesus' name.

34:04 That's what you do in your desperate. Anybody desperate?