

# TRUSTING GOD'S PLAN IN THE BATTLE: LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JEHOSEPHAT

*What battle is waging in your life right now? Is it a battle for your health, marriage, children, job, or mental wellbeing? In this plan, we'll learn from the mistakes and victories of Israel's King Jehoshaphat and how you can apply those lessons to any trial you're facing. You'll see how praising God in the thick of the battle leads to ultimate victory!*

## Day 1: Everyday Battles

### 2 Chronicles 20:1 - 2

Battle. That word can conjure up so many images. What do you see right now as you think of that word? Is it a war-torn country filled with devastation? Forces of good and evil fighting in an epic movie? Or do you see more everyday scenes of life, like a loved one in a hospital room, a coworker making your life miserable or fighting panic attacks that hit you out of nowhere? Not all wars are fought on foreign soils. Most battles are close to home.

I know people fighting for their health after a devastating cancer diagnosis. Single parents struggling to raise their children after a divorce. Depressed friends who feel like life isn't worth living. And as a Christian, I fight the daily battle to make Jesus my first love above everything else.

So out of all the Bible plans on the site, you somehow chose this one. Is it because of something you're facing right now? Are you tired of this fight? Please know that you are not alone. Every single one of us is battling something. I wrote this Bible plan to be an encouragement! I want to remind you that God is on your side, and He is fighting your battles!

In this Bible plan, we'll focus on one amazing Hebrew king named Jehoshaphat who led the kingdom of Judah when they were surrounded by, not one, but three enemy armies at the same time. I can't wait to show you what Jehoshaphat did when that happened! Spoiler alert - it involves praise! Ok, I'm getting ahead of myself, but this is a story you won't want to miss. Better yet, you can learn what Jehoshaphat did and apply those battle-tested principles for any trial you are facing!

Tomorrow, we'll do some digging into Israel's past, but before then, please don't forget to click on our "A Little Extra" podcast linked at the top of this page. It's a great chance to hear our HealingStrong team discuss the day's scripture reading and what the Holy Spirit is showing us in that passage. It's like having friends join you in the study!

#### Questions:

1. What are you currently battling that keeps you up at night?
2. Are you feeling overwhelmed or somehow managing your problem?
3. What do you hope to get out of this study?

## Day 2: A Divided Kingdom

1 Kings 11: 1 - 13

1 Kings 22: 41 - 42

I'd like to introduce you to King Jehoshaphat! You're going to love him! He was a descendant of King David and born into the lineage of our ultimate king, Jesus! Jehoshaphat was 35 years old when he became the king of Judah. Wait, Judah and not Israel? That might be confusing for some people, so let's go through a little history lesson!

You see, Israel's first king was Saul, then David (the teenager who killed Goliath) and then his son Solomon (the wisest man on earth). But even though Solomon was extraordinarily wise in his early years, he later made some terribly unwise decisions. He married hundreds and hundreds of women from other countries. Seven hundred wives + 300 concubines = a whole lot of drama! Can you imagine all the craziness?

*"They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, 'You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods.' Nevertheless Solomon held fast to them in love."* 1 Kings 11:2

God did not want Solomon marrying foreign wives, not because they were from other nations. It was because they weren't believers in the one true God and could tempt Solomon and the people of Israel to worship their pagan gods. And that's exactly what happened! Solomon built places of worship and sacrificed for his wives' gods. Because of this sin of idolatry, the people of Israel began to leave their first love, the one and only true God. Can you relate?

Our Heavenly Father became very angry with Solomon for worshiping other gods. God told Solomon He would "tear the kingdom away" because of his sin. So, when Solomon's son Rehoboam became king after his death, the nation of Israel split in two. Ten of the 12 tribes of Israel became the northern kingdom of Israel. The other two tribes became the southern kingdom of Judah.

This is a lesson for all of us. Solomon knew what God had commanded, yet he followed his heart's desires instead. Once he compromised God's principles, it became easier and easier to make it a lifestyle.

If you walk in a straight line and start veering off course by just one degree, you may not notice anything at first. But go hundreds of miles along that new path, and you'll end up far from your destination. A little white lie told to spare a friend's feelings can become a habit of not telling the truth. Watching entertainment with nudity could spark an interest in pornography. Flirting with a co-worker might open the door to an emotional or physical affair. The Lord doesn't want you going off course. His mercy and grace will steer you back on His

perfect plan for you when you seek Him. *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”* Psalm 119:105.

Now that we know how the kingdom was split, tomorrow we’ll learn how Jehoshaphat began his reign and if he learned any lessons from these other kings.

Questions:

1. What do you think about Solomon’s disobedience to God’s commands?
2. Have you ever done something that you knew was wrong but didn’t think it would be a big deal? What happened?
3. How do you think God feels when seeing his children slip away?

Day 3: Seek First God

2 Chronicles 17: 1 - 6

Matthew 6:33

Yesterday, we learned the history of why the nation of Israel split up due to their idolatry. Enter King Jehoshaphat, ready to lead his nation in a godly way! *“The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because in his early years he walked in the ways his father David had followed.”* 2 Chronicles 17:3 This means God was with Jehoshaphat BECAUSE he put God first in everything he did, just like King David did when he first ruled the nation. This reminds me of a great principle that Jesus taught during the Sermon on the Mount when he said, *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”* Matthew 6:33.

Early in his reign, Jehoshaphat, *“...did not consult the Baals but sought the God of his father and followed his commands rather than the practices of Israel.”*

Jehoshaphat could have easily allowed his people to go worship whomever they wanted like their northern kingdom cousins were doing, but he knew that was strictly against what God had instructed them to do. *“I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me.”* Deuteronomy 5: 6 - 7 Sound familiar? This is the first of the Ten Commandments.

As a godly man and leader, Jehoshaphat’s *“...heart was devoted to the ways of the LORD.”* He made sure there were no idols or idol worship in his kingdom. God firmly established the kingdom under his control because Jehoshaphat put God first in everything he did.

You can apply the *SEEK GOD FIRST* principle in your life today. Ask your Heavenly Father first when you:

- Make a decision.
- Buy something of value.
- Interview for a job.
- Connect with people on dating apps.
- Seek help for a problem.

**Bottom line, seek God first in everything and his blessings will follow!**

Questions:

1. Why do you think God said, “You shall have no other gods before me”?
2. What does seeking God first look like in your life?
3. Would you say that your heart is fully devoted to God right now?

Day 4: Getting back to the basics

2 Chronicles 17: 7 - 19

Joshua 1:8

Back to the basics! It’s what we do when we’ve gotten off course or over complicated something. We go back and learn the fundamental aspects of a process or thing. In his third year as king, Jehoshaphat realized that his people were clueless about God’s law and how it impacted them. They needed to learn God’s laws and start living according to them.

Rest assured, God didn’t create His laws to be mean or steal their joy. Just like any parent who truly cares about his children, God created His law as a means of protecting them and providing structure for every aspect of their lives. He cared way too much about them to leave them clueless or worst yet, self-destructive.

God gave us a glimpse of the importance of His law in Joshua 1:8, “*This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.*”

Knowing it was time his people to get reacquainted with God’s law, Jehoshaphat sent out teachers and priests into all the towns of Judah to teach God’s law. But wait! Did you notice what God did right after they started teaching His

law to the people? *“The fear of the LORD fell on all the kingdoms of the lands surrounding Judah, so that they did not make war with Jehoshaphat.”* 2 Chronicles 17:10

God brought blessing on his people and their land because they sought Him. The fear of the Lord poured out on all those other enemy nations causing them to bring tributes to King Jehoshaphat to get on his good side. He also kept an experienced team of fighting men to protect the kingdom. Bottom line, King Jehoshaphat and his kingdom became very rich and prosperous when they put God first.

Let that all sink in! It’s a kingdom principle you can apply today in your school, business, dating life, marriage and home, no matter what stage of life you are in. When we put God first and remain steadfast to keeping his commandments, we will be blessed! Just watch out!

Questions:

1. What does getting back to the basics with God look like to you?
2. What do you want to learn more about from God this year?
3. Name a couple of areas in your life that you’d like to see God change this year. What can you do to involve Him in that?

Day 5: Learning from Others’ Mistakes  
2 Chronicles 18: 1 - 4

Have you ever seen a loved one or friend start hanging out with someone that is a bad influence on them? That’s what today’s passage is all about and I have to tie it up with this great verse from Proverbs 13:20 which says, *“Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.”* Jehoshaphat is living the high life. He’s super wealthy and powerful, but he makes a critical mistake in trying to hold on to all his power and wealth. Let’s see how.

Jehoshaphat aligns his southern kingdom of Judah with the northern kingdom of Israel by allowing his son to marry King Ahab’s daughter. Ahab is this horribly wicked king who was into idol worship and all kinds of evil! Would you want your kid marrying into that family? Um... no! Jehoshaphat allows this marriage to create a political alliance, a means of fortifying his nation and power. Nowhere do we see in the scriptures where Jehoshaphat asks God if he should arrange this alliance. He does all of this without consulting God.

At the opportune time, Ahab asks Jehoshaphat to join him in attacking one of his enemies at Ramoth Gilead. Let me put this into a modern context. Have

you ever had a friend or coworker that had a problem with someone, and they wanted you to not like that person? Furthermore, what if your friend asked you to be mean to that person and join in on their fight? It's not your fight! This would be a great time for Jehoshaphat to mind his own business and to stay out of Ahab's wars!

Sadly, without asking God, Jehoshaphat agrees to join Ahab in this war. You'll find out in the next few days that this decision will bite Jehoshaphat in the back side big time! More importantly, not realizing it, Jehoshaphat is taking on problems that aren't his because he allied himself with someone that he should not have.

Here's what we can learn from Jehoshaphat in this situation:

- **Seek God before you make any decision.** Jehoshaphat didn't ask God what to do which leads to trouble.
- **Pray about who you partner with:**  
*"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?"* 2 Corinthians 6:14 Ahab was an evil king and partnering with him would only bring trouble to Jehoshaphat.
- **Please God, not people!** In this instance, Jehoshaphat was more concerned with getting on Ahab's good side than God's.

Tomorrow, we'll see issues that can arise when you surround yourself with "yes" men. It should be a good one! And if you haven't done it yet, click on the "A Little Extra" video button at the top of your page and listen to our short podcast. We're finding all kinds of hidden treasures in the passage so join us!

Questions:

1. Do you have any partnerships, either relationally or through business that you'd say were "unequally yoked"?
2. Why is it important to go to God before any decision you make?
3. What can you learn from Asa's mistakes?

Day 6: Yes Men  
2 Chronicles 18: 3 - 13

Do you know what a “yes” man” is? He or she tells a superior whatever the boss wants to hear, even if it isn’t the truth. They always agree with their boss, no matter if it’s right or not. In today’s lesson, King Ahab is surrounded by 400 prophets who are his “yes” men.

Yesterday we learned that Jehoshaphat and Ahab had agreed to join forces to attack the king of Aram. But before they start heading out to fight, Jehoshaphat tells Ahab, *“First seek the counsel of the LORD.”* v 4

Could it be that Jehoshaphat’s spirit was pricked for a second when he realized he hadn’t checked in with God on if they should go to war? Maybe he’s thinking it wasn’t such a great idea to ally himself with Ahab without consulting God. We’ll see!

Ahab brings all his “yes” men, but Jehoshaphat realizes none of these guys are true prophets of the Lord. Maybe he sensed the men were telling Ahab only what he wanted to hear. So, Jehoshaphat poses the question, *“Is there not a prophet of the LORD here whom we can inquire of?”* (verse 6)

Ahab whines that there is a prophet of the Lord named Micaiah, *“...but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad.”* (verse 7)

Meanwhile, the false prophets lie to Ahab saying he will be victorious against the Arameans. One prophet named Zedekiah even brings out iron horns and says they’ll gore the Arameans until they are destroyed. Talk about putting on a show for the kings! Remember, these guys aren’t true prophets of God, so they have no clue what will happen in the future. They are lying to Ahab and Jehoshaphat.

A messenger goes to get Micaiah and tells him all the other prophets are predicting success for the king’s upcoming battle, so Micaiah should do the same. But Micaiah says, *“As surely as the LORD lives, I can tell him only what my God says.”* v 13

We will pick up where we left off with the rest of the story tomorrow, but we can learn a thing or two from each of these key players:

- **Jehoshaphat:** Inquired of God this time about the situation.
- **Ahab:** Relied on the counsel of “yes” men instead of the Lord.
- **Micaiah:** Not willing to lie for gain.

## Questions:

1. Have you ever had to tell a boss something they didn't want to hear? How did you handle it?
2. Why do you think Jehoshaphat made this evil king inquire of God?
3. In this situation, what do you think you would have done?

## Day 7: Lying Spirits

2 Chronicles 18: 14 - 27

I love this story because it literally made me do a double take when reading it! It's an unusual story that gives us a glimpse into the throne room of God. Let's cut to the chase!

Remember Micaiah, the prophet who said he would only repeat God's message? Now he's standing before Ahab and Jehoshaphat and has the chance to answer Ahab's question, should Israel go to war or not? "*Attack and be victorious,*" he answered, "*for they will be given into your hand.*" v. 14

Wait, what? I thought Micaiah would only speak what God was showing him.

Here's where it gets very interesting. Knowing Micaiah never had anything good to say for the king, Ahab says, "*How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth **in the name of the LORD?***" v 15

Ahab knew something was up. He invoked the name of the Lord and look what happened!

Micaiah says he saw a vision of the battle and Israel was defeated and Ahab would be killed. But even more interesting is Micaiah's vision of heaven. In the vision, God asked the heavenly hosts to entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead.

One spirit volunteered to be a lying spirit in the mouths of all the prophets. This spirit caused them all to lie, including the Lord's one true prophet, Micaiah. That's the reason why Micaiah lies. It was because he was being whispered to by a lying spirit. But notice when Ahab tells him to speak the truth in the name of the LORD, that's when Micaiah is compelled to speak the truth. The name of the Lord is powerful and caused that lying spirit to leave Micaiah.

Here's what I want us to really see today! There is a powerful spiritual world out there that can literally whisper lies into your ears. Even as Christ followers, we can hear their lies and be influenced to say them. So be wary! Any of us is susceptible to their deceptions, but there is power in the name of the Lord!

Ahab didn't like hearing the truth and told his officials to put Micaiah in prison until he returned safely. I love Micaiah's response, "*If you ever return safely, the LORD has not spoken through me.*" Then he added, "*Mark my words, all you people.*" v 27 All the while Jehoshaphat was sitting front and center to see all of this happen. You'll see tomorrow that trusting Ahab and allying with him will almost cost Jehoshaphat his life. Stay tuned!

Questions:

1. Is it hard for you to believe that Christians can be influenced by evil spirits?
2. Why do you think there is power in God's name?
3. "*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*" Ephesians 6:12 How can you apply this verse to any problems you encounter with people in your life?

Day 8: Crying Out to God  
2 Chronicles 18: 28 - 34

Today's story is not Jehoshaphat's shining moment. We'll come to that victorious battle in a couple of chapters. But it's mistakes and failures in Jehoshaphat's life that help refine him to be a godlier leader in the future. So, brace yourself, it gets a little embarrassing for Jehoshaphat.

Despite being blatantly warned by the one true prophet of God that they would be defeated, Ahab and Jehoshaphat team up and go to battle with the Arameans. Listen to what Ahab says to Jehoshaphat before the battle, "*I will enter the battle in disguise, but you wear your royal robes.*" v 29 Trusting Ahab had his back, Jehoshaphat foolishly wears all his king-like garments into a battle. It's like wearing a huge red and white bullseye on your back or having an enormous neon sign pointing that says, "Aim at me, I'm the king!" Seriously, how could anyone be so ignorant?

Smartly, the King of Aram tells his men to target the king of Israel. The enemy thinks Jehoshaphat is Ahab, so they start attacking him. Realizing he is probably going to die; Jehoshaphat cries out to God.

Pause for a second here and picture this scene in your mind. Instead of fighting harder, relying on his own weapons, or relying on his men, Jehoshaphat screams out to the One who could actually change his circumstance. This was an act of true desperation. He knew he was about to meet his Maker and he wasn't ready yet.

Hearing his cries, God helps Jehoshaphat! *“God drew them away from him, for when the chariot commanders saw that he was not the king of Israel, they stopped pursuing him.”* v. 31 - 32. Did you catch that? After Jehoshaphat cried out to God, His Heavenly Father caused his enemies to stop pursuing him. Just like any concerned parent will run to their child when he or she is crying out for them, God cares for his children.

Meanwhile dressed like a common soldier, Ahab thinks he’s outwitted everyone. He had convinced Jehoshaphat to dress like him in a battle and was hoping Jehoshaphat would be killed. But a stray arrow strikes Ahab between the sections of his armor. Just like Micaiah had predicted, Ahab dies on the battlefield.

At the end of the battle, Jehoshaphat barely escapes with his life and the knowledge to seek God first in any situation. Can you imagine the look on Micaiah’s face when he heard the news? I’d be saying, “I told you so! We’ll find out tomorrow that Jehoshaphat will be getting his “I told you so” moment.

Questions:

1. Why do you think Jehoshaphat trusted Ahab so blindly?
2. Have you ever called out to God in extreme desperation? What happened?
3. What lesson did you learn from Jehoshaphat’s failure today?

Day 9: Loving Those Who Hate the Lord

2 Chronicles: 19: 1 - 3

2 Chronicles: 15: 1 - 2

“I told you so!” How often have you ever heard those words? They have a real sting to them when you know the other person was right. It usually comes after someone has given you a warning and you didn’t listen. When Jehoshaphat returns to Israel after nearly being killed in battle, he gets his “I told you so” from one of his prophets.

*“Jehu the seer, the son of Hanani, 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. There is, however, some good in you, for you have rid the land of the Asherah poles and have **set your heart on seeking God.**”* 2 Chronicles 19: 1 - 2

I don’t know about you, but if I had just nearly been killed and then a wise prophet challenges me, I’d listen! Jehoshaphat probably was really embarrassed and remorseful for getting himself into that mess. This rebuke from Jehu hit home.

Perhaps this wakeup call also reminded Jehoshaphat of changes his father King Asa made years before because another prophet warned him. Look what that prophet said then, *“Listen to me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin. The Lord is with you when you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you.”* 2 Chronicles 15: 2

We can take that principle of seeking God and apply it to our lives today. Here are a few helpful suggestions to stay in constant connection with Him throughout the day:

- Make God the first person you talk to every morning.
- Grab your Bible first instead of your phone.
- Play praise music and start singing, inviting in God’s presence.
- Ask God to give you His perspective today.
- Before sleeping, thank God for what He’s done for you today.

Questions:

1. What was your worst “I told you so” moment? How did you take the news?
2. How can you grow to have a more teachable spirit?
3. How can you incorporate some of these principles of seeking God first?

Day 10: Appointing Judges/Fearing the Lord

2 Chronicles 19: 4 - 11

*“Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem, and he went out again among the people from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim and turned them back to the Lord, the God of their ancestors.”* 2 Chronicles 19:4

It’s revival time in the land of Judah! King Jehoshaphat learned from the error of his ways and was challenged to seek God. He knew that he and his fellow countrymen had allowed sin to creep back into their lives. Now it was time to turn back to the Lord and seek His face!

Did you also notice that Jehoshaphat himself went out from the palace to turn his people back to God? He felt a personal call to make these positive changes in his kingdom. This was a leader that would lead by example, a sort of, “Do as I say and as I do.”

Many times, we see leaders setting up rules to follow, but those rules don’t apply to them. This was not the case for Jehoshaphat. God had miraculously saved him from death on the battlefield and given him a second chance to be a righteous leader and man after God’s own heart.

Jehoshaphat appoints judges in the nation. He wanted to make sure these were righteous judges who would administer God's laws. *"He told them, 'Consider carefully what you do, because you are not judging for man but for the LORD, who is with you whenever you give a verdict. Now let the fear of the LORD be upon you. Judge carefully, for with the LORD our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.'"* v. 6.

In tomorrow's reading, Jehoshaphat and the nation of Judah will be put to the test! We'll see how Jehoshaphat handles the biggest crisis of his life!

Questions:

1. Have you had an "about face" where you were headed down a bad path and God helped you turn back? If so, what happened?
2. Why do you think Jehoshaphat wanted to personally lead this effort to turn his people back to God?
3. What would a revival in your life look like for you?

Day 11: After This...

2 Chronicles 20: 1 - 2

Ephesians 6:12

We've arrived at the best part of Jehoshaphat's story! This is the start of the battle for which he's famous. Today's passage from 2 Chronicles 20 begins with the words, *"After this..."* Whenever I see words like "after this", "before this", "the next day", etc. it's an invitation to check out what happened in the chapter right before then.

So, if we look again at the chapter before, we are reminded that Jehoshaphat had begun getting his nation to turn back to God after they had been worshiping idols and other false gods. Remember how he also appointed judges to administer God's law? Jehoshaphat was helping his people repent of their sin and turn back to their Heavenly Father's laws and commands.

Isn't it ironic that once they set their hearts and minds to turn back to God, then enemies come to make war with them? Could this be a test to see if they will turn to God in this battle or fight in their own strength? Notice this isn't just one enemy nation coming against them. It's three! Imagine three different enemy nations converging to start a war with your country. You would be scared!

Does this scenario sound familiar to you? Have you ever decided to prioritize spending time with God and then all hell breaks loose right after you do

that? You may decide to start going back to church, reading your Bible, or spending intentional time in prayer with God, but then distractions, problems and struggles in life pop up out of nowhere. It's no coincidence. It's spiritual warfare.

Friends, we live in a world where a spiritual war is battling for our souls every day. I'm not talking figuratively. This is literally happening all around you. Some people may not like to talk about spiritual warfare or demons because it scares them, but we're told in Ephesians 6:12 *"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."*

I don't want to leave you frightened because we also know that for believers in Jesus, greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world. Tomorrow, we'll see what Jehoshaphat does when the enemy comes to attack. Good news friends, we can do the same thing when we are spiritually attacked!

Questions:

1. Have you experienced trying to make time with God a priority just to be disrupted? What happened?
2. Why do you think your spiritual enemy would attack you?
3. When having fights and arguments with people, does knowing Ephesians 6:12 change your perspective on that situation?

Day 12 - Inquiring of God  
2 Chronicles 20: 3 - 4

It's happening! Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah are in some serious trouble! Picture not one, but three mighty armies marching to attack them. When Jehoshaphat hears this news, he's alarmed! And who wouldn't blame him? This invasion seemed to come out of nowhere.

What Jehoshaphat does next is something you and I can do any time we are facing a problem, either big or small. *"Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the Lord, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah."* 2 Chronicles 20:3 Did you notice that word **resolved**? It means to make a firm decision to do something.

Jehoshaphat was determined to go to the one authority who could do something about his situation. He inquired of the Lord to see what God had to say about this problem and to receive direction from his Heavenly Father. Maybe Jehoshaphat finally learned his lesson to seek God for everything and obey what He says! Remember that Jehoshaphat almost got killed when he allied with King

Ahab after the prophet Micaiah told him they'd be defeated? Jehoshaphat wasn't going to make the same mistake twice!

We can also see how serious Jehoshaphat is to hear from God because he proclaimed a nation-wide fast! Fasting is the spiritual practice of giving up food and drinks for a period of time to humble oneself and seek God. This sacrifice to oneself is a means of drawing closer to God and seeking His help.

*"The people of Judah came together to seek help from the Lord; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him."* 2 Chronicles 20:4 The people of Judah were in a desperate situation, and they needed God to show them what to do. They needed His help right away! They left their homes and gathered in Jerusalem at the temple to pray and seek God as one united nation.

So, if trouble comes your way, your first call shouldn't be to a friend, parent, coworker, or spouse. Don't get me wrong, it's great to have some godly counsel when you have a problem. But your first call should be to God. Cry out to Him, seek His wisdom and direction. Ask what you should do. Ask for His help! Then sit humbly before Him and listen to what He says!

Questions:

1. What is your typical way of handling problems?
2. Do you go to God first, or do you reserve the right to reach out to him when things get really bad?
3. How do you think Jehoshaphat's past mistakes changed how he handled this situation?

Day 13: Jehoshaphat's Prayer

2: Chronicles 20: 5 – 12

Picture the nation of Judah assembled in big crowds of men, women, and children outside the temple in Jerusalem, earnestly waiting to hear from their king. As a man who humbly knows he can't do anything without God's intervention, as a national leader, Jehoshaphat gives one of the best prayers seeking God for his nation. Let's break down his prayer right now:

- **Reflecting on who God is** - *"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. (verse 6)*

- **Recalling God’s past work on your behalf** - *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.’* (verses 7 – 9).
- **Stating the problem** - *“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.* (v 10)
- **Reminding God of His past promises** - *See how they are repaying us by coming to drive us out of the possession you gave us as an inheritance.* (verse 11)
- **Asking God for help** - *Our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us.* (verse 12)
- **Fixing your eyes on God and waiting for His answer** - *We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”* (verse 12)

This is such a raw and authentic prayer! I challenge you to print out this prayer and hang it somewhere in your home or office. Better yet, memorize it! It will be your go-to when you have any problem come your way! And if you haven’t made time lately, check out our “A Little Extra” at the top of the page. It’s like having some friends discuss what you just read and we’re finding some amazing treasures in God’s word. Listen in with us!

Questions:

1. Why is it important to reflect on who God is?
2. Since God is all-knowing, why do you think Jehoshaphat stated the problem?
3. What part of this prayer really stood out to you?

Day 14: God Answers  
2 Chronicles: 20: 13 - 17

Yesterday we studied Jehoshaphat’s prayer as the enemy was approaching. Today we study God’s answer to that prayer. As the men, women and children of Judah stood at the temple grounds waiting to hear from the Lord, the Holy Spirit

came upon a man named Jahaziel. He spoke the message of the Lord to the people. Let's look closely at what God had to say about this battle.

*“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.’”***

2 Chronicles 20: 15 - 17

We all need to take these words of God and bind them to our hearts! Do you hear what God is saying in this situation to his people? Don't be afraid! The battle is God's! I highlighted key words and put them in a bulleted format so that you can see each step that God is telling them to do.

The people certainly had their part to play in the battle. Did you see what that was? They had to take their positions, which means they had to go out to the battle and not hide from it. They also had to stand firm at the place of the battle. This meant not wavering or waffling or running away but standing firm. Then they had to face their enemies and watch as God battled for them.

Your homework is to print out 2 Chronicles 20: 15 - 17 and place it somewhere in your home. Whenever a big problem arises in your life, read those verses aloud and ask the same God who answered Jehoshaphat and his people to encourage you in your situation!

Questions:

1. What was something that God said in his answer that stood out to you?
2. What part did Jehoshaphat and the people play in this battle?
3. Of all the steps that the prophet laid out in God's answer, what is one that you need more help applying in your life?

Day 15: Worshiping God  
2 Chronicles 20: 18 - 21

Wow, wow, wow is all I can say about this passage! It starts out with the king of Judah bowing with his face to the ground in a truly humbling form of worship. He kneels prostrate before Almighty God who is the only one that can save the people of Judah from the encroaching armies. I just love this scene of a humble leader that knows he's powerless without God and His intervention.

The people follow Jehoshaphat's lead and begin bowing down and worshiping as well. Some priests start standing up and praising God loudly. Talk about a beautiful scene of worship! These people desperately need God!

Early in the morning, they leave for the battle. Imagine the thoughts that must have been plaguing their minds, but even as they were stepping out in courage and faith, Jehoshaphat gave them a good reminder. *"Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld, have faith in his prophets and you will be successful."* 2 Chronicles 2:20 He's basically saying, God's got this!

Next, Jehoshaphat puts men on the frontlines at the head of the army to shout praises to God. They were to say, *"Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures forever."* Now I'm no military strategist but having people singing praises would call attention to your location and make you a big target. The enemy would know exactly where to point all their bows and arrows. But this demonstrates how confident Jehoshaphat is in God and His promise to battle for His people.

Oh, let this be a lesson for all of us when we are surrounded by the enemy. Don't try to fix things on your own. Don't run away and hide. Don't complain to all your friends about how bad it is. Look up to God. Humble yourself before Him! Praise His name. Crank some worship music up in your car, in your house or on your phone! Sing to the top of your lungs and praise God!

Here's some homework for you! Create a playlist of worship songs to play whenever you are feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or attacked. Then when you hear the whispers of defeat in your mind, just click play and start drowning out those whispers with the sound of your praise. Better yet, don't just wait until a battle occurs, start each morning with a praise song inviting God into your day. You'll be amazed at how that shifts your focus from the stress of your to-dos to God who is ordering out your day!

Questions:

1. How do you think Jehoshaphat's demonstration of humble worship impacted his people?

2. What do you think was going on in the minds of the enemy soldiers as they heard these shouts?
3. What can you do to change how you handle your problems after reading this?

Day 16: Enemy Fought Themselves  
2 Chronicles 20: 22 - 25

“As they began to sing and praise....” Let that sit in our minds for a minute. Last we saw the Israelites, they were praising God in front of their enemies like an angelic choir. But that spontaneous worship unleashed something in the heavenlies that they would have never expected. The Lord himself set ambushes amongst their enemies. God laid traps for them!

The men trying to invade the land of Judah suddenly began fighting each other. As the praise songs of the Hebrews kept filling the desert, their enemies began annihilating each other. You can't make this stuff up! I'm picturing one of the praise singers who loved to sing with his eyes closed just belting out his worship to God with no idea what was happening below. Later, when he opens his eyes, he sees a scene of complete devastation before him. The enemy soldiers literally killed each other. There were no survivors.

Jehoshaphat and some men went to carry off all the plunder, all those swords, bows and arrows, clothing, etc. There was so much spoil that it took them three days to get it all. Talk about wiping out your enemy. And just think, the people of Judah didn't have to lift a finger. They simply stood and praised God right in front of their enemies and God won the victory for them!

What can we learn from this? God told them they had to take their positions, stand firm and see His deliverance against their enemies. God did not tell them how He would win the battle and how long it would take. He just told them to face their enemies and watch Him fight for them. Their faith was activated when they took God at his word and obeyed him!

Questions:

1. What does taking your position, standing firm and watching look like for you in your battle?
2. God never asked the people of Judah to praise Him, so why do you think Jehoshaphat did that with the people?
3. What does taking the plunder look like for you in your battle?

Day 17: Fear of God Fell on the Land  
2 Chronicles 20: 26 - 30

As your tour guide today, we're taking a stop in the Valley of Beracah which means either Valley of Praise or Valley of Blessings. Who doesn't want to visit that valley? It is the place where the people of Judah stood and praised God as he fought for them. Isn't it sweet that before heading home after the victory, Jehoshaphat assembled all the people back where the true victory was won? This is the place they took their positions and stood firm to watch God fight for them.

They met there again as triumphant victors and praised their way back to Jerusalem. As they entered the city, they went to the Lord's temple for some more time of worship and praise. They had just seen a miracle and had plenty to celebrate!

Have you ever seen the big celebrations after a sports team wins their championship? Their hometown typically hosts a huge parade, and the city streets are filled with fans celebrating. That's what this was like, but they took their party to the house of the Lord! He was the reason they won the battle and they wanted to continue the praise party!

This victory was bigger than the people of Judah could have imagined because the fear of God fell on all the surrounding kingdoms. Word spread of how God defeated their enemies, and no one wanted to mess with them because of that. *"And the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side."* 2 Chronicles 20:30

This is a great reminder to us that people around you are watching you. You may not realize it, but you have an audience observing how you fight your battles. Your enemies might not want to pick a fight with you if it means fighting God. And who doesn't want to be given a season of rest after a big battle? That's probably the best gift Jehoshaphat could have asked for!

Questions:

1. Do you have a Valley of Blessing in your life, a place where God has won a victory for you in the past?
2. What do you imagine the fear of God looked like to the people of other kingdoms?
3. Why is it important to go back and praise where we had a past victory?

Day 18: What happened to Jehoshaphat?  
2 Chronicles 20: 31 - 37

2 Chronicles 21: 1  
Matthew 6:33

I love watching movies that are inspired by true events. I must know what happened to the people after the events of the movie! The filmmakers usually show pictures of the actual people and include summaries of what happened to them later in life.

This is the “later” part of Jehoshaphat’s story. Overall, Jehoshaphat was a great God-honoring king. Remember how he started off his 25-year reign in 2 Chronicles 17:6, *“His heart was devoted to the ways of the LORD; furthermore, he removed the high places and the Asherah poles from Judah.”* But as we see the “later” part of today’s reading, over time he let things slip and allowed people in his kingdom to put up idols again. *“The high places, however, were not removed. And the people still had not set their hearts on the God of their fathers.”* 2 Chronicles 20:33 Oh boo! It makes you wonder if he got tired of having those high places removed. Or maybe he thought it wasn’t a big problem and didn’t want to address it again. Who knows?

We come to another “later” time in Jehoshaphat’s life which shows he made a poor decision. He struck up an alliance with King Ahaziah, the son of the late wicked King Ahab who almost got Jehoshaphat killed in an earlier battle. Ahaziah was a bad dude, just like his dad, and yet started a ship construction business with him. Never does it say that he consulted with God on if he should make this deal. And guess what happens? All the ships were wrecked. Hmmmm. Wonder if God allowed that to happen to get Jehoshaphat’s attention? This is a great reminder, seek God first in EVERYTHING you do just like Matthew 6:33 tells us!

*“Then Jehoshaphat rested with his fathers and was buried with them in the city of David. And Jehoram his son succeeded him as king.”* 2 Chronicles 21:1 So I don’t want to end his story on a sour note, but it is noteworthy that in the summary of this great and God-fearing king, we see where he failed to seek God on a pivotal decision which ended in a failed business venture. This also happened after he had such a major victory in battle beforehand.

So what can we learn from Jehoshaphat? You will have spiritual victories and mountain top experiences in life, but you will also have low valley experiences as well. The reminder is to ALWAYS fix our eyes on God and seek Him daily in every situation in life. Never get too big for our britches that we don’t think we need to ask God about a decision we are making. Oh, and sin can creep in at any time if you let it. It sometimes comes very gradually and before you know it, you have a “high place” of idol worship in your life that you’ve allowed. When you’ve discovered you’ve allowed a sin back in your life, confess it to Jesus. Repent and turn from that sin.

Tomorrow, we'll discuss how you can put on the armor of God for those daily battles in your life.

Questions:

1. Is it surprising to you that Jehoshaphat still made some wrong choices after having won such a spiritual battle?
2. Do you think the ships being wrecked was God's way of protecting Jehoshaphat from going further with that alliance?
3. Are there any "high places" in your life that you haven't tried to take down? If so, talk to God about them today!

Day 19: Armor of God  
Ephesians 6: 10-18

We are nearing the end of our study, but I couldn't miss the opportunity to give you some helpful tools for how to spiritually dress for your daily battles. The Apostle Paul in his letter to the church of Ephesus gives us a list of uniform items to wear daily. *"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."* Ephesians 6:11 Notice he says to "take your stand". Doesn't that remind you of what God told Jehoshaphat and his people when they went into their big battle?

Ephesians 6:12 says, *"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."* Each day you are involved in a spiritual battle, whether you realize it or not. Spiritual forces of good and evil are impacting your daily life via the people you interact with, entertainment you watch, traps set for you, temptations, and simply battling your own fleshly desires.

But God gave us great spiritual armor to wear:

- **Helmet of Salvation** – The spiritual battle starts first in your mind. Jesus died on the cross for your sins and mine. When you ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins and to be the Lord of your life, He becomes your Savior. His gift of salvation is free to all who ask and receive.
- **Breastplate of Righteousness** – This protects your heart as you walk in a humble manner worthy of God's calling.

- **Belt of Truth** – Wear this tight around your waist so you believe God’s truth instead of the daily lies of the enemy.
- **Shield of Faith** – Use this as you stand on the promises of God. This helps deflect the fiery darts of doubt the enemy hurls your way.
- **Sandals of the Gospel of Peace** – As you go out in the world, you have a chance to share the love of Jesus with others.
- **Sword of the Spirit** – This is your offensive weapon, the Word of God. Read it and memorize it!

Although it isn’t listed as a part of the armor of God, we learned from Jehoshaphat that another offensive weapon you have is your praise! Praise God from the moment you get up until you go to sleep at night. Praise Him in the good, the bad and the uncertainties of your day. Stand firm, wear His armor and watch to see how the Lord will fight for you!

Questions:

1. Why is it important to metaphorically put on the armor of God?
2. What are some lies or doubts the enemy uses on you? What are some Bible verses you can use to combat those lies?
3. What pieces of armor do you forget to wear?

Day 20: Jesus our ultimate victor!

Romans 6:23

John 3:16

Romans 10:10

Today is our last day! Oh, how I’ve loved learning from Jehoshaphat! Just like so many heroes of the Bible, he too made mistakes but also had powerful victories. So, let’s summarize what we’ve learned:

- Remove idols in your life.
- Ask God before you partner with someone.
- Surround yourself with godly counsel.
- Put on the full armor of God daily.
- Be aware of spiritual warfare.
- Seek God first in EVERY situation.
- Stand on the promises of God.
- Praise God in your battle

We don't want to ever end a HealingStrong Bible plan without pointing you to our ultimate victor, Jesus. He fought for each of us by taking on the sin of the world and dying on a cross for you and me. You see, each of us is a sinner and there's nothing we can do to earn salvation on our own. But Jesus Christ, God's perfect Son, took your sin and mine and He died on a cross so that we can have eternal life. If you haven't asked Jesus to be the Lord of your life and to forgive your sins, we want to invite you to ask Him now. Pray this prayer out loud:

“Dear Jesus, I know I am a sinner and need your forgiveness. I believe you died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead. I trust you as my Lord and Savior. Please help me to daily surrender to your will. In Jesus' name, amen.”

If you prayed that prayer, please let us know! We'd love to hear from you! We have an amazing prayer team at HealingStrong that prays for each prayer request sent to us and it would be our honor to lift your prayer need before our Heavenly Father. Please email us at: [prayerrequest@healingstrong.org](mailto:prayerrequest@healingstrong.org)

Questions:

1. What was your biggest takeaway from Jehoshaphat's story?
2. How can you start incorporating prayer more into your everyday battles?
3. Have you made Jesus the Lord of your life?

Trusting God's Plan in the Battle: Lessons from the life of Jehoshaphat was written by Cheryl Collins, a volunteer with HealingStrong. HealingStrong is a non-profit organization of community groups designed to help those battling cancer and other diseases to rebuild the body, restore the soul, and refresh the spirit. We're here to walk with you on any healing journey! Find us online at [Healingstrong.org](http://Healingstrong.org).

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