

DESPERATE FOR GOD

(Fifty Days of Prayer for the Coming of the Holy Spirit; Message Three)

2 Chronicles 20:1-30

After this, the Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to make war on Jehoshaphat...³Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. ⁴The people of Judah came together to seek help from the LORD; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him.

⁵Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the LORD in the front of the new courtyard⁶and said...

⁹If 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...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.** ¹³All the men of Judah, with their wives and children and little ones, stood there before the LORD. ¹⁴Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel son of Zechariah...¹⁵He said... '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.¹⁶Tomorrow 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. ¹⁷**You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you.** ¹⁸Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the LORD...

²¹After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed 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 endures forever." ²²As 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...

³⁰And the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side.

The Predicament

A. Israel had become complacent in their worship of God

1. Jehoshaphat wants God to make his people desperate for him
2. Jehoshaphat prays God will take them, as a nation, to a deeper level
3. This is a dangerous prayer - a prayer God always answers

B. God answers Jehoshaphat by sending him a plague

C. Sometimes God allows things to get "out of hand" so we seek his hand

The Place

A. When things get "out of hand," we need to go to the right place

B. Jehoshaphat calls for time of prayer and fasting

1. They came from everywhere to pray
2. They came with humility, confidence, and expectancy

C. Desperate people live differently than comfortable people

The Prayer

A. Acknowledge God's works: "O, Lord, God of Our Fathers..."

B. Acknowledge God's sovereignty: "You rule over all the kingdoms..."

C. Acknowledge God's presence: "We stand in your presence..."

1. God wants our desperation to make us consciously aware of his presence
2. Don't look at circumstances, look to the One who delivers

The Persistence

A. Desperate people pray differently than comfortable people

1. When comfortable, our prayers are less intense and frequent
2. When desperate, we fall to our knees; we cry out

B. Are we really desperate for God?

1. You can tell by how one worships and prays...
2. Desperate people are not ashamed; they don't give up
3. God loves desperate people

C. We will never know if Christ is all we need until Christ is all we have

The Plan: "The battle is not yours but mine..."

A. God calls us to take a stand, to be still, to pray and to watch God work!

B. People need to get down on their knees and keep their eyes on God

The Praise: "As they began to sing and praise..."

A. The King calls for a choir to be assembled

1. This is not a battle but a concert of praise
2. Praise confuses the enemy

B. Turning our concerns into praise opens the doors of heaven

1. When we're desperate, pray and praise God
2. When we pray and praise God, God will give us his answer
3. That answer is (always) himself

The Peace

A. When we realize God is our answer, we can move beyond desperation

B. ...and into his rest. It is the best place to be!

"And God gave him rest on every side..."