

DEFEATING DISCOURAGEMENT  
Lesson Eight (final lesson in this series)  
Discouraged People in the Bible: *Jehoshaphat*

November 3, 2020

Our memory passages:

*2 Corinthians 10:4:* *The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.*

*Psalms 142:1-2:* *I cry aloud to the Lord; I lift up my voice to the Lord for mercy. I pour out before him my complaint; before him I tell my trouble.*

*1 Samuel 2:2:* *There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.*

*Psalms 62:1:* *Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him.*

*Psalms 103:13-14:* *As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.*

*Proverbs 4:23:* *Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.*

*Proverbs 11:25: A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.*

*2 Chronicles 20:12: 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 20:1 ~ 4

*After this, the Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to wage war against Jehoshaphat.<sup>2</sup> 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).<sup>3</sup> Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah.<sup>4</sup> The people of Judah came together to seek help from the LORD; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him.*

- What was Jehoshaphat's mission impossible?
- When Jehoshaphat learned of the vast enemy army headed his way, what was his first reaction?

### **Discussion Questions:**

What advice would his military advisors have likely given him at this point in time?

What advice would his political advisors have likely given him at this point in time?

Whose advice did he seek?

Richard Foster wrote: "To pray is to change. Prayer is the central avenue God uses to transform us. If we are unwilling to change, we will abandon prayer as a noticeable characteristic of our lives."

Jehoshaphat reacted with fear, but he got past that reaction and responded by praying. That's the difference in a reaction and a response. Many times we are reacting when we should be responding.

## 2 Chronicles 20:5 - 12

*Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the LORD in the front of the new courtyard<sup>6</sup> and said:*

*“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.<sup>7</sup> 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?<sup>8</sup> They have lived in it and have built in it a sanctuary for your Name, saying,<sup>9</sup> ‘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.’*

*<sup>10</sup> “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. <sup>11</sup> See how they are repaying us by coming to drive us out of the possession you gave us as an inheritance. <sup>12</sup> 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.”*

The format of Jehoshaphat's prayer is a great one when you're facing something bigger than you are. When you are looking at a truly discouraging situation and you don't know what to do. It is a prayer of praise, a prayer of lament, a strong entreaty, and a prayer of release.

I have discovered seven steps he took—seven R's—as he faced his impossibility. And these seven steps are just as relevant to us today as they were for Jehoshaphat.

### **The First R: *RECITE***

In **verse 6** Jehoshaphat as he begins his prayer, he recites some facts about God. What are they?

### **Discussion Question:**

Why did Jehoshaphat begin his prayer (waste all that time!) telling God what God already knew about himself?

We should begin our prayer time with praise—to remind ourselves who God is.

## The Second R: *REMEMBER*

In **verse 7** Jehoshaphat remembers something. What is it?

- He remembers what God had done for him in the past.
- When you're in panic mode, it's really important to make yourself remember how God has met your need so many times before.

## The Third R: *RECALL*

In **verses 8-9**, Jehoshaphat recalls a promise.

- God you gave us this land, and you promised that if we prayed to you, you would hear us and save us.
- He reminded himself and all the people of what God promised to do for his people.

### Discussion Question:

Can you think of a specific time when God gave you a personal promise from the Bible? What was it?

- For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

**Romans 15:4**

## The Fourth R: *RE-STATE*

In **verses 10-11** Jehoshaphat re-states the problem to God.

### Discussion Question:

What tone do you detect in Jehoshaphat's voice as he says, "*See how they are repaying us by coming to drive us out of the possession you gave us as an inheritance*"?

Jehoshaphat did not re-state the problem until he had...

- Recited out loud who God is
- Remembered what God had done for them in the past
- Recalled God's promises

## The Fifth R: *REQUEST*

In **verse 12**, the first sentence is a simple request that Jehoshaphat makes:

*Our God, will you not judge them?*

All Jehoshaphat asks is that God will judge them. Notice what is missing from this request:

- When to do it
- How to do it

He does not presume to tell God how to judge the enemy. He simply asks God to do it.

## The Sixth R: *RELEASE*

Look at the remainder of **verse 12**, after Jehoshaphat makes his request:

*“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.”*

### Matthew 11:28-30:

*“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

Often when we are discouraged, it is because we insist on carrying our own burdens, and they are too heavy for us. Jesus never intended for one of his own to carry heavy burdens.

*1 Peter 5:7: Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*

**QUESTION:** Why is it so hard for us to let go?

### 2 Chronicles 20:13-30

*All the men of Judah, with their wives and children and little ones, stood there before the LORD.*

*<sup>14</sup> Then the Spirit of the LORD came on Jahaziel son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite and descendant of Asaph, as he stood in the assembly.*

*<sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> 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."

<sup>18</sup> Jehoshaphat bowed down with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the LORD. <sup>19</sup> Then some Levites from the Kohathites and Korahites 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 Tekoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful."<sup>21</sup> After 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."

<sup>22</sup> 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. <sup>23</sup> 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.

<sup>24</sup> 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. <sup>25</sup> So Jehoshaphat and his men went to carry off their plunder, and they found among them a great amount of equipment and clothing<sup>[d]</sup> and also articles of value—more than they could take away. There was so much plunder that it took three days to collect it. <sup>26</sup> On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berakah, where they praised the LORD. This is why it is called the Valley of Berakah to this day.

<sup>27</sup> Then, led by Jehoshaphat, all the men of Judah and Jerusalem returned joyfully to Jerusalem, for the LORD had given them cause to rejoice over their enemies. <sup>28</sup> They entered Jerusalem and went to the temple of the LORD with harps and lyres and trumpets.

<sup>29</sup> The fear of God came on all the surrounding kingdoms when they heard how the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. <sup>30</sup> And the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side.

## The Seventh R: *REJOICE*

After he had released the problem to the Lord, Jehoshaphat then received a word of great encouragement from God's prophet, Jahaziel. What did he tell them to do?

What did Jahaziel say they **WOULD NOT** have to do?

What did Jahaziel say they **WOULD** have to do?

Upon learning from Jahaziel what God wanted him and his people to do, what did Jehoshaphat do?

When the army left for the Desert of Tekoa with the singing men in front. . .  
did they know how God was going to fight their battle?  
did they know their enemies were going to destroy themselves?  
did they know they would find nothing but dead bodies on the ground?

The weapons of our warfare are always different - not like the world's. They have divine power to demolish strongholds, and so our part is simply to obey.

They were rejoicing *before* they saw how and when God was going to deliver them. This is the kind of faith God is looking for in us—that we will praise him before we see the answer. That pleases God tremendously.

When Jehoshaphat's men reached the battlefield, all they found were dead bodies lying on the ground. They didn't have to fight. They had to show up; they had to obey God; they had to face the enemy; they had to claim the victory in advance. But once they got there, the fight was over.

## The Final R - *REST*

There's one final R we find in **verse 30**:

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

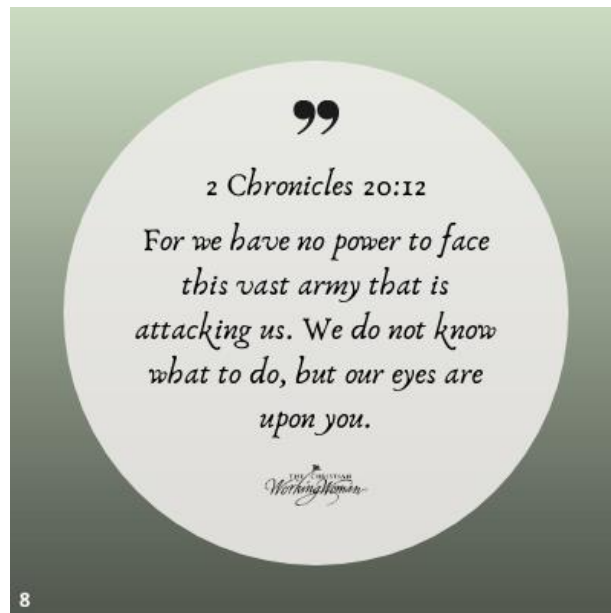
That final wonderful R is **REST**—rest on every side.

Are you ready for some rest? Remember it's the eighth R, and it is a result of practicing the other seven Rs.

### Suggested Assignment:

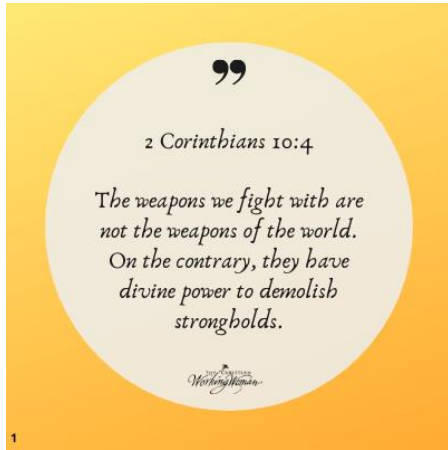
I would also encourage you—as one final assignment—to memorize this last sentence in Jehoshaphat's prayer. You will find yourself using it over and over.

*2 Chronicles 20:12: 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.*





### Lesson One



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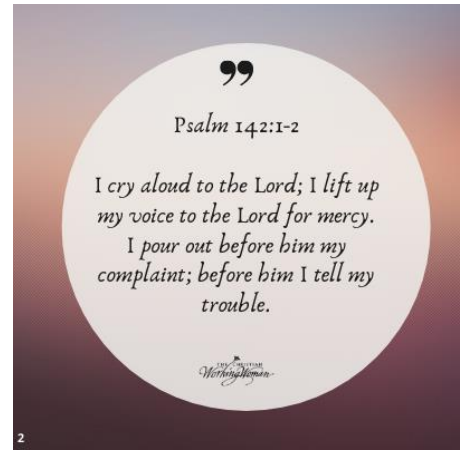
2 Corinthians 10:4

*The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.*

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### Lesson Two



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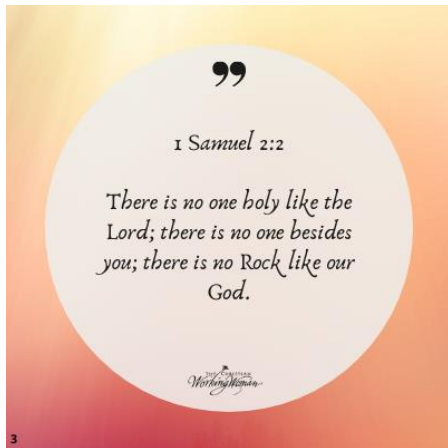
Psalm 142:1-2

*I cry aloud to the Lord; I lift up my voice to the Lord for mercy. I pour out before him my complaint; before him I tell my trouble.*

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### Lesson Three



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1 Samuel 2:2

*There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.*

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### Lesson Four



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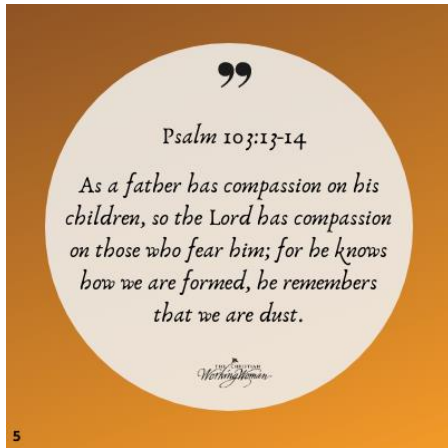
Psalm 62:1

*Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him.*

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### Lesson Five



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Psalm 103:13-14

*As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.*

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### Lesson Six



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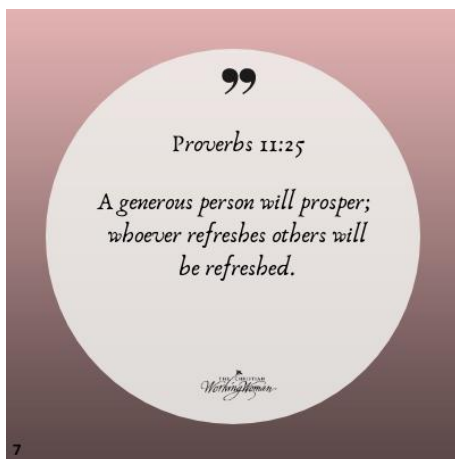
Proverbs 4:23

*Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.*

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### Lesson Seven



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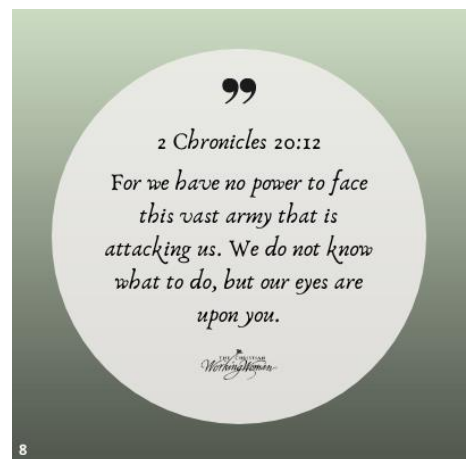
Proverbs 11:25

*A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.*

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### Lesson Eight



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2 Chronicles 20:12

*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.*

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