

Grateful Hearts & Steady Faith

By: Sharita Hanley

2 Chronicles 20:12

...For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us.

We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”

Constant strikes between Israel and Islamic militant groups have devastated a predominantly Christian village in Beirut, Lebanon. “We’re surrounded by four Shia villages,” locals shared. Although they live in terrifying conditions, they rely on each other. “We take care of each other. We’re a community. We all support each other.” Their [resiliency, faith, and willingness to praise God in the midst of turmoil](#) is similar to the faith Jehoshaphat displayed when enemy nations planned to invade and attack Judah.



In 2 Chronicles 20, three enemy nations come together to attack God’s people in the land of Judah. When King Jehoshaphat heard about the planned conquest, he was afraid. However, instead of letting worry and anxiety consume him, he sought the Lord, gathered together with his community, and led a nation-wide fast.

Jehoshaphat’s actions provide us a practical roadmap we can use today to maintain steady faith and grateful hearts when we face terrifying and uncertain circumstances.

First, we need to go to God. As soon as

Jehoshaphat learned about the planned attack, he “set his face to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.” (2 Chronicles 20:3) Although he was afraid, he didn’t let his emotions overtake him. He didn’t deny his feelings, but he did take them to God. He didn’t lean on his own military and political experience either. He acknowledged God’s sovereignty, omniscience, and omnipotence. That’s what we need to do, too. Turning to God when everything in our flesh wants to lash out or run and hide, forces us to trust Him, which deepens our faith.

After going to God, we can lean on our community. Although Jehoshaphat went to God on his own, he did not bear the burden of his circumstance alone. He leaned on his community and he involved them in his pursuit of God’s guidance, protection, and mercy. 2 Chronicles 20:4 says “and Judah assembled to seek help from the Lord; from *all*

the cities of Judah they came to see the Lord.” Jehosaphat wasn’t afraid to let others know about his troubles. He wasn’t afraid to ask for help. He wanted the entire nation involved. We need others, too. All throughout the Bible, we are instructed to encourage and support each other (1 Thessalonians 5:14, Galatians 6:2, Proverbs 27:17, Hebrews 10:24-25, and Philippians 2:3-4). Why? Trying to handle challenges on our own, causes us to miss out on the emotional support, practical help, advice, and sense of belonging community provides. And Satan loves to deceive us when we’re isolated.

Lastly, we need to praise God with a grateful heart despite circumstances. Before Jehosaphat knew God had answered his prayer, he appointed people to sing, “give thanks be to the Lord, for his steadfast love endures forever.” (2 Chronicles 20: 21). Reminding ourselves of God’s character during life’s storms allows us to develop and maintain a grateful heart. Despite the challenges we face, God is kind, compassionate, merciful, just, holy, perfect, faithful, sovereign, and omnipresent. He’s with us and He’s taking care of us. And that alone, is more than enough reason to be grateful.

Whatever we face in life, we must remember that our God has always been and always will be in control. So let’s have steady faith and grateful hearts. We’re intimately connected to El Eyon, the Lord of Heaven and Earth. That’s why when hordes of chaos come against us and we don’t know what to do, we can always turn our eyes toward Him in praise with a grateful heart and steady faith.

Reflect:

1. How do you respond when you’re faced with uneasy, uncertain, and terrifying circumstances? Do you run and hide? Breakdown under the weight of your emotions? Grunt and complain? Throw a pity party? Whatever your answer, challenge yourself to go to God instead.
2. Is your heart full of gratitude? Is your faith steady? If not, what changes in your mind, heart, and soul, do you need to make?

Dig A Little Deeper:

- Joshua 5:13-6:27 tells the story of the fall of Jericho which reminds us to seek God and follow Him even if the journey seems impossible or unexpected.
- In Philippians 4:11, Paul says, “...for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.” Ask God to help you be content in any and every circumstance.
- Are there any seeds of discontentment in your life? Ask God to reveal them to you and repent. Then ask God to show you all the blessings in your life and give Him thanks.
- Memorize 1 Corinthians 15:58 which says, “therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord, your labor is not in vain.”

- Lord, I know You are with me. Help me stay steadfast and unwavering in my faith when unexpected challenges arise. Remind me that even in difficult times, I can be grateful for Your presence and character. You are sovereign, gracious, mighty, kind, compassionate, just, and faithful. Let the truth of who You are guide me to deeper gratitude and trust. In Jesus' name, Amen.

References:

English Standard Version Bible (2008).