

### 3. He proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah

#### a. He set aside more time to pray.

- 1) Fasting is setting aside extra time to pray.
- 2) It is setting aside pleasurable things like eating to be able to spend more time in prayer.
- 3) Worry and stress will weaken our resistance to danger, but casting our burdens on the Lord can strengthen us (Psalms 55:22) "*Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.*" (Philippians 4:6) "*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*"
- 4) Why worry when you can pray.

#### b. We must accept God's answer to our prayers.

- 1) Sometimes the Lord will answer our prayer and deliver us as He did for Jehoshaphat.
- 2) Other times, the Lord says "NO" as He did to the apostle Paul who asked God to remove his thorn in the flesh (2Co 12:9). When God does say "NO" he always has our best interest in mind.

**Conclusion:** Only God knows the events ahead as the coronavirus globalizes. Yes, it is fearful, but rather than panic, we can choose to let fear take us to the Lord. We can set ourselves to seek the Lord, looking to Him for protection, comfort and health. We can also spend extra time in prayer.

If you do not yet know the Lord as your personal Saviour from judgment to come, I urge you to believe and receive Him today. If you let me know, I am happy to explain it more clearly to you.

**Song: Cast Your Burden** - Cast your burden on the Lord and He will keep you, He has promised He will never ever leave you, He will always be there ready to uphold you, Cast your burden on the Lord for Jesus cares.

# Facing the Coronavirus

8 March 2020 AM - 2Chronicles 20:3-4 -Trust - Scott Childs

**Introduction:** (See King's chart) King Jehoshaphat received news that a huge army was preparing to attack Jerusalem (2Ch 20:1-2). When he received the news, he did three things to prepare. As we face the coming coronavirus, we would be wise to do just what Jehoshaphat did when facing an enemy far too strong for him (2Ch 20:1-30)

**Transition:** I want us to examine the three things that Jehoshaphat did when facing a foe that we might apply the same to our situation.

## 1. He feared

The dictionary defines fear as "An emotion experienced in anticipation of some specific pain or danger (usually accompanied by a desire to flee or fight)." Fear is a natural response to danger. Any virus that spreads quickly over the globe and claims many lives is a fearful enemy. Fear will often lead us in one of two directions.

### a. Fear can lead to anxiety

- 1) Panic, worry, stress and sleeplessness are some of the anxious results of fear.
- 2) Anxious fear may lead to irrational behaviour like hoarding supplies, sudden decisions, or expecting the worst.
- 3) An anxious reaction to fear will cripple us and do nothing to resolve the problem.
  - a) Panic makes us irrational.
  - b) Worry dominates our thinking with "what if".
  - c) Stress raises blood pressure and harms our health.
  - d) Sleeplessness exhausts us physically.
- 4) God made our bodies so that in response to sudden fear our adrenalin gives us a boost of energy to cope with the danger. Anxiety is a waste of that energy and does nothing to fix the problem or prepare us to face it.

### b. Fear should cause us to run to the Lord.

- 1) We can learn much by watching a mother hen with a brood of chicks. When she senses danger, she clucks her danger signal and her little flock comes running and hide

under her wings. Sometimes you can even see their little heads peeking through her wing feathers. That is the same response God wants us to have when we face fear. We are to run to the Lord and hide under his wings.

- a) (Psalms 17:8) "*Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.*"
  - b) (Psalms 57:1) "*Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.*" Also (Psalms 91:4).
- 2) Fear should wake us out of apathy and show us or need for the Lord. God wants us to dwell close to Him every day, but all too often, we wander off. (Psalms 91:1) "*He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*" We must remember Jesus' invitation in (Matthew 11:28) "*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*"
- 3) Fear should draw those who do not know the Lord as Saviour to Him.
- a) God allows things like the coronavirus to get people to think about eternity. One day we will all die. We need to be ready for that day.
  - b) We read in (Hebrews 9:27) "*And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*" We cannot escape our appointment with death nor our appointment before God our judge.
  - c) Preparation for those appointments is very important. Our sin condemns us before our holy God. (Romans 3:23) "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*" In love Jesus died for us. (Romans 5:8) "*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*" Jesus said, (John 3:3) "... *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" You were born physically, but you also need a spiritual birth. (John 1:12) "*But as many as received him [Jesus], to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even*

*to them that believe on his name:*" You receive Jesus by believing He died for you and asking him to save you from hell. (Romans 10:13) "*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*"

- 4) Jehoshaphat's fear caused him to run to the Lord.

## 2. He set himself to seek the LORD

### a. He drew close to the Lord.

- 1) The phrase "*set himself*" tells us that he gave himself to the task of seeking the LORD.
- 2) Instead of trying to figure out how to repel the foe himself, he went to the Lord for help.
- 3) Overall, Jehoshaphat was a good king, but he had made some poor choices during his reign. He became good friends with King Ahab in Israel. Ahab and his godless wife Jezebel were wicked idol worshipping monarchs.
  - a) God rebuked Jehoshaphat for that friendship. (2 Chronicles 19:2) "*And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.*"
  - b) Jehoshaphat also had arranged a marriage between his son Jehoram and godless Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (2Ch 18:1).
- 4) Seeking God, he got his heart right with God. Remember, (Psalms 66:18) "*If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:*" (Isaiah 59:1) "*Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*"
- 5) He cast his care on the Lord (1Pe 5:7).
- 6) He followed the ways of the Lord.

### b. He sought the Lord for help

- 1) Rather than seeking help from men, he depended on the Lord. Human efforts are limited in protecting us from the coronavirus, but God is able to protect us if that is His will.
- 2) The bottom line is, "**Don't blame God; Seek Him!**"