

The One Thing That Will Keep You From Your Destiny

There are innumerable gems in seemingly obscure places in the Bible. We all know the stories of Noah, Moses, and Daniel, but fewer are aware of Jehoshaphat, the conflicted king of Israel. In the following, I would like to explore an episode from this man's life.

I've found that the biblical narratives are always transparent and raw. They expose truth about people in ways that are surprising. As we see what God does in the lives of others, it helps us discover who we are and how to navigate our lives.

In Scripture we observe that Jehoshaphat, like so many others, was squandering his calling. He was compromised and living a life that was at arm's length with God. His bad choices should have side-lined him, but somehow God wasn't actively holding his sins against him.

In spite of everything else, Jehoshaphat was still being positioned for greatness. If nothing else, it seems that God blessed him for the sake of the people he was leading. Sometimes God will do amazing things in us, for the sake of those around us. That is what I believe He was doing for Jehoshaphat in this instance.

In this fascinating story, God shows us that He is willing to use someone in spite of their foolishness and sin. Shockingly, the emphasis wasn't on his understanding or even his performance. Nevertheless, that doesn't mean that God wasn't looking for something.

In this narrative, Elisha laid his hands on Jehoshaphat – and as prophetic act – exhorts him to aim high and shoot an arrow through the eastern window. This quick release of the bow represented Jehoshaphat's God-ordained victory over the evil

armies of Aram. Yet, with the arrow's assent, the prophetic decree wasn't over.

Many think they know how things operate, but few have the clearest insight. Sometimes the real test is unseen and unanticipated. After the first arrow was released, the prophet Elisha looked at Jehoash and declared, *"Now pick up the other arrows and strike them against the ground"* (2 Kings 13:18, NLT).

I'm sure Jehoash didn't realize that the test was still underway. So, as the aging prophet instructed him to shoot more arrows into the ground, he didn't put much thought into it. He probably dragged his feet as he made his way to that ancient window. Out of a quiver filled with many arrows, Jehoash casually grasped a few.

The fate of Israel was in play and the king only saw fit to fire off three arrows. In his tepid response he had no idea that he was failing the test.

As soon as Elisha saw Jehoash's response to the word of the Lord, he was aghast. He angrily declared,

"You should have struck the ground five or six times! Then you would have beaten Aram until it was entirely destroyed. Now you will be victorious only three times" (2 Kings 13:19).

This wasn't a test of purity. In many ways Jehoash had already failed at that. This wasn't a test of perspective, God knew Jehoash had limited insight. It was actually a test of passion. God wanted to see what was going on in Jehoash's heart.

What He discovered was a man who was extremely passive and disengaged. Although he was placed into a position of greatness, Jehoash displayed no passion for God's purposes.

In many ways God is conducting the same test today. He wants

to see if you burn for the Kingdom of God or not. The only way that you fail is if you have no heart.

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