

## 2 Kings 3 – Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Before we jump in to our study, I would like to point out that there was an archaeological discovery of what's called "The Moabite Stone," (also called the Mesha Stele). It was discovered in 1868 and contains a Moabite inscription that confirms many of the events of 2 Kings 3. <http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-artifacts/artifacts-and-the-bible/the-importance-of-bible-artifacts-found-outside-the-trench-the-moabite-stone/>

1 Now Jehoram the son of Ahab became king over Israel at Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. 2 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, but not like his father and mother; for he put away the sacred pillar of Baal that his father had made. 3 Nevertheless he persisted in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin; he did not depart from them.

- Those who did not go to Israel will need to forgive me for referencing the sites we visited because this is one of those places.
- Namely, Tel Dan, in the north, which was the place that Jeroboam had set up an altar for the worship of the calf and ox images.
- While Jehoram, who was Ahab and Jezebel's son had put away the sacred pillar of Baal, he persisted in the sins of Jeroboam.

4 Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheepbreeder, and he regularly paid the king of Israel one hundred thousand lambs and the wool of one hundred thousand rams. 5 But it happened, when Ahab died, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. 6 So King Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. 7 Then he went and sent to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, saying, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to fight against Moab?" And he said, "I will go up; I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses."

- If this sounds like something we saw Jehoshaphat do once before, that's because Jehoshaphat had done this once before.
- The last time he jumped before seeking the Lord about allying with Israel was with Jehoram's father Ahab when he was king.
- I suppose you could say that Jehoshaphat has not learned the lesson from the last time when he barely escaped with his life.

8 Then he said, "Which way shall we go up?" And he answered, "By way of the Wilderness of Edom." 9 So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom, and they marched on that roundabout route seven days; and there was no water for the army, nor for the animals that followed them. 10 And the king of Israel said, "Alas! For the LORD has called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab."

- I find it rather interesting that Jehoram would immediately conclude this was a sign of the judgment of God on the Israelites.
- The reason being is it suggests that deep down inside he rightly knew that what he was doing was evil in the sight of the Lord.
- This speaks to the conviction of the Holy Spirit, which presupposes we haven't yet had our conscience seared as with an iron.

1 Timothy 4:1–2 1 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. 2 Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

- I would also suggest this speaks to how that some people who want nothing to do with God will be the ones who blame God.
- Neither Jehoram nor for that matter, Jehoshaphat had sought God concerning this strategy of attacking Moab in the first place.
- This is a textbook case of making a decision first, then praying especially when you realize that you may have made a mistake.

11 But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of the LORD by him?" So one of the servants of the king of Israel answered and said, "Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah." 12 And Jehoshaphat said, "The word of the LORD is with him." So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him. (*The humility of kings going to the prophet instead of demanding the prophet comes to them.*)

- Couple of thoughts on what they do in seeking the prophet to inquire of the Lord. First, at least they're now seeking the Lord.
- In other words, it's better late than never, and at least they realize their need for the Lord now that they're in this predicament.
- As we're about to see, the Lord is going to be gracious and merciful to them in spite of the fact that they never sought His will.

- Actually, this ties into the second thought, which has to do with Elisha, who's close by and has the word of the Lord with him.
- I would suggest that God had Elisha close in proximity knowing that they would run out of water and need to inquire of Him.
- The reason I suggest this is that this is how it is for us in the sense that God is always near to us even when we don't seek Him.

- There's something else I would like to point out before we move on to verse thirteen, and it has to do with a striking contrast.
- Notice how that Jehoram blames God for the crisis they're in, whereas Jehoshaphat seeks God because of the crisis they're in.
- The reason I point this out is that often times, we'll either blame God for the trial like Jehoram, or seek God like Jehoshaphat.

13 Then Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother." But the king of Israel said to him, "No, for the LORD has called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab."

- Elisha's response here is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that he does what he had seen Elijah do.
- More specifically, Elisha rebukes very bluntly the king of Israel, just as the prophet Elijah had done prior with his father Ahab.
- When Elisha says, "What have I to do with you?" He's expressing his rejection of and disagreement with Jehoram as a king.

14 And Elisha said, "As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, surely were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not look at you, nor see you."

- It's interesting that Elisha continues rebuking Jehoram by telling him were it not for Jehoshaphat, he wouldn't even look at him.
- What he's saying here is anything he does will be because Jehoshaphat is a righteous king in spite of agreeing to this alliance.
- This should give all of us hope and encouragement, such that, God in His grace and mercy doesn't pay us as our sins deserve.

15 But now bring me a musician." Then it happened, when the musician played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him.

- At first read, this may seem somewhat peculiar that Elisha would ask them to bring him a musician to play some music for him.
- However, when one realizes that God inhabits the praises of His people, then what he does here in fact makes perfect sense.
- Truth be known, this is one of the main reasons as to why we have praise and worship before the teaching of God's Word.

One commentator wrote, "The way to be filled with the Spirit is to edify ourselves by psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs."

Another commentator echoes this with insight into the musician, "This nameless musician was endowed with God-given talents and he used them for the good of others. Surely it never occurred to him that by his music he would help win a military victory and have a dramatic effect on history. But when he shared his God-given ability, the power of God came upon the prophet."

16 And he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'Make this valley full of ditches.' 17 For thus says the LORD: 'You shall not see wind, nor shall you see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, so that you, your cattle, and your animals may drink.' 18 And this is a simple matter in the sight of the LORD; He will also deliver the Moabites into your hand.

- I can't even begin to imagine how difficult it would have been for them to dig these ditches when they're tired and discouraged.
- This would have required tremendous faith not only for that reason, but also because they had to just trust that God would do it.
- Moreover, they had to put their faith to work and believe that even though they wouldn't see wind or rain, God would provide it.

- To their credit, they believed by faith that if they would obey God and prepare for this blessing, that it would be a simple matter.
- It's important to understand that this was a simple matter to God, but it would be hard for them to start the work in anticipation.
- But we're told that this is exactly what they did namely, they got busy and did the hard work to prepare for this amazing miracle.

One commentator of this said, "Digging ditches was something the people of God could do. God didn't ask them to do more than they were able to do. When God wants us to prepare for the blessing He will bring, He gives us things that we can really do."

Kindly allow me to first quote Charles Spurgeon then I would like to share something the Lord had ministered to me personally, "If we expect to obtain the Holy Spirit's blessing, we must prepare for his reception. 'Make this valley full of trenches' is an order which is given me this morning for the members of this church; make ready for the Holy Ghost's power; be prepared to receive that which he is about to give; each man in his place and each woman in her sphere, make the whole of this church full of trenches for the reception of the divine water-floods." ...the way of faith and the road to the blessing is this: God has promised it- we will get ready for it; God is engaged to bless, now let us be prepared to receive the boon. Act not on the mere strength of what you have, but in expectation of that which you have asked."

- What follows are two things the Lord has ministered to me from this passage concerning the renovation of our church building.
- First, because we are able to do something, keep digging and get busy doing the hard work in spite of the setbacks and delays.
- Second, even though we can't see the wind and rain of God's provision financially, just believe by faith that He will fill the wells.

19 Also you shall attack every fortified city and every choice city, and shall cut down every good tree, and stop up every spring of water, and ruin every good piece of land with stones."

- Here we're told that God is not only going to provide for them, and give the victory to them, but He's also going to protect them.
- This because He has them cut down every good tree, stop every spring of water and ruin every good piece of land with stones.
- This would in effect remove the threat from Moab against the Israelites for many years. God gives them more than they asked.

20 Now it happened in the morning, when the grain offering was offered, that suddenly water came by way of Edom, and the land was filled with water. 21 And when all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them, all who were able to bear arms and older were gathered; and they stood at the border. 22 Then they rose up early in the morning, and the sun was shining on the water; and the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood. 23 And they said, "This is blood; the kings have surely struck swords and have killed one another; now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!" 24 So when they came to the camp of Israel, Israel rose up and attacked the Moabites, so that they fled before them; and they entered their land, killing the Moabites. 25 Then they destroyed the cities, and each man threw a stone on every good piece of land and filled it; and they stopped up all the springs of water and cut down all the good trees. But they left the stones of Kir Haraseth intact. However the slingers surrounded and attacked it. 26 And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took with him seven hundred men who drew swords, to break through to the king of Edom, but they could not. 27 Then he took his eldest son who would have reigned in his place, and offered him as a burnt offering upon the wall; and there was great indignation against Israel. So they departed from him and returned to their own land.

- Before we close, I would like to conclude with two observations, the first of which is the blessing was proportionate to their faith.
- In other words, the more ditches they dug by faith, the more water they had, which in turn was what God used to defeat Moab.
- This is actually the second observation, such that, often times the way God chooses to provide comes from an unseen source.