

What You Need to Know About ELISHA:

**“Heir of the Spirit:
‘What wish shall I grant you
before I am taken away’ (2 Kings 2:9)”**

Study Number Two – 2 Kings 3:1-27

We’ve chosen to take for this series of studies the life of Elisha. This is our second session so we’ll have six remaining sessions in this particular series.

As we introduced Elisha, remember that he was an understudy of Elijah for at least ten years. And those ten years were fantastic years of preparation.

Usually these two guys get their names mixed up and we never do get a chance to study Elisha. But everybody talks about Elijah because he’s the guy who called fire out of heaven and did all those great things.

Then Elisha comes on and we almost get lost in the history of it all and forget to study his life. That’s the reason we picked him out because he’s one that we don’t look at too much.

In our last study with Elisha, after he took over after Elijah’s departure, he crossed the Jordan River and was confronted by the water quality board of Jericho. He solved the little

problem there and then went up to Bethel. He made a reverse trip home.

With Elijah they had been at Gilgal, Bethel and Jericho, and then across the Jordan and Elijah took off. Elisha then, now taking over, is making the trip in reverse.

When he got to Bethel he was met by some guys who were really of the school of the false prophets. They were probably somewhere around 20 to 25 years of age and they really cast a stern rebuke on Elisha. They'd already heard about Elijah's departure and they said, "Get out of here. You know, go up you baldhead; go up you baldhead."

They made fun of him and mocked him and as Elisha turned around to these guys, he pronounced a curse on them and forty-two of them were mauled by some female bears that came out of the woods.

And as we look at that passage of scripture, a lot of people say that's the reason the God of the Old Testament can't be the God of the New. There's a problem with that. Because when we read Revelation 1 and we see that magnificent picture of Christ, it's nothing but a God of judgment and a God of justice.

And in the Old Testament we have a picture of a God who is a God of justice, who's a God of judgment. In the New Testament we have a God of grace, and that's the other side of the same God.

And we cannot assume that because we've got a God of grace we're always going to have a God of grace. Because remember, as the water was made bitter in the city of Jericho, that curse was released and blessing came upon the city of Jericho.

But as there had been blessing for hundreds of years on the city of Bethel, now the curse has been pronounced. We cannot assume that God's grace will automatically cling to a place or a race. And that's the lesson we get out of that.

And it makes it kind of scary when we realize the way our country's going as we destroy biblical absolutes, as we begin to do our own thing and live by that which is right in our own eyes instead of that which is right in God's eyes. It gets kind of scary because we cannot constantly assume that in this generation God's grace is going to continue to claim. And yet there is a time soon coming when His judgment will be very real.

We'll see some more of that in this particular passage that comes under consideration. Elisha, since we left him, went on up to Carmel and had a little time of fellowship with the Lord, getting his act together—getting ready for his public ministry.

Then he moves into the chaplain's offices in Samaria, which is the head location. It's like being in Washington D.C. There he is, a religious consultant for the whole northern kingdom. And now he's set up business. And as the scene of the story opens, the northern kingdom is ready for war.

v. 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.

“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.”

Now Jehoram is the second son of Ahab that's taken over in the kingdom. Ahab married Jezebel and the two of them went after the god Baal. And it was a time of great apostasy in the land.

Ahab and Jezebel had two boys. They had Ahaziah and then they had Jehoram.

After Ahab was killed in battle, Ahaziah, their other son came to the throne. He was kind of a creepy type that was super scared of going into battle because his daddy had been killed in battle. He decided to stay home and send the troops out.

Moab in the south recognized that with the change of leadership in the kingdom they had a chance to rebel and get out from under bondage to the Israelites. They're a kingdom in the south. And so they did rebel.

Ahaziah sent his troops down there, he stayed home. But one morning he got up early, stretched, looked out the window and he lost his balance and got himself splattered all over the

patio down below.

And he never recovered from that. Actually his rule was just two years in length and then he died. Now Jehoram has come to the throne. And this is the guy who's going to reign for quite a few years and he's going to reign for most of the time that Elisha is the prophet of God in the northern kingdom.

Now it says Jehoshaphat is king in the land of Judah. Down in the south we have the southern kingdom and Jerusalem is the headquarters. Jehoshaphat's the head guy down there. So we have Jehoram in the north and Jehoshaphat down in the south.

The reason they mention that is because they're both going to come into the picture in this passage. Now that we have the geography straight, Jehoshaphat has been leading down there in the south for about twelve years as Jehoram comes to the throne.

Verse 2—this is what it says now about Jehoram:

v. 2 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, though not like his father and his mother; for he put away the sacred pillar of Baal which his father had made.

“And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, though not like his father and his mother; for he put away the sacred pillar of Baal which his father had made.”

Now it's interesting to note that little phrase occurs a lot of times in the Bible and it describes the life or the biography of different individuals.

“he did evil in the sight of the Lord,”

Jehoshaphat's going to be different. He's a fairly good guy. He's going to do some things that are right in the eyes of the Lord. Nobody in the north ever did. They always “did evil in the sight of the Lord.”

A lot of times we think we're getting away with things. The Bible makes it clear that “what a man sows that he also reaps.”

The Bible also says that “all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” (ref. Hebrews 4:13)

God knows all about us. He is scrutinizing our life. He knows our thoughts, He knows our attitudes. He's aware of our actions. The scripture teaches us that those things are recorded.

At the end of our life He can make a judgment. He'll make a judgment in several areas:

1. Did we ever find time to get ourselves right with Him through receiving His provision of grace, His Son Jesus Christ?

2. After we got our act together with Him, what kind of life did we live as a Christian? Did we develop an ever deepening relationship with Jesus Christ so that fruit was born through our life?

And when the time comes, all of that from the time we become a Christian until we check it in and go on home is going to be exposed to Him. And there's going to be a verdict, a judgment made on the basis of what we did.

It's just something that's so amazing that we can get so careless about and forget that God is aware of all of it. But here he just kind of sums up old Jehoram's life in just one little phrase:

“he did evil in the sight of the Lord,”

But it wasn't quite as bad as his dad and mom. Remember his dad and mom were the worst of all. Ahab and Jezebel, they sustained 450 prophets of Baal right in the white house. They had them right there eating in the cafeteria every day and they turned the hearts of the people of Israel away from Jehovah God to this substitute god Baal—the god of the now generation—sex, silver and Satan. He was the god of fertility, the god of the crops. And the people went after that and God was deeply hurt and deeply reproached by what they had done.

Now here's a few verses along this line of God being able to scrutinize all that goes on:

2 Chronicles 16:9

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong on the behalf of those whose hearts are perfect (or right) toward Him.

Proverbs 15:3

The eyes of the Lord are in every place watching the evil and the good.

Hebrews 4:13

All things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him, with whom we have to do.

The Lord not only sees it all, but He registers it because He says, “he didn’t do as much as his mother and father did.”

Revelation 20:12 indicates the fact that in a future day we’re going to face that record:

Revelation 20:12

... “I saw the dead, the great and the small standing before the throne, the books were open and another book was opened which is the Book of Life, and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.”

So God not only is aware of it, but it is being recorded so that it can be flashed on the computer screen with a complete recall. Instantaneously we'll be able to see our whole life played out.

Now of course this is a context of judgment for somebody who's never received Christ. Somebody who thought they could do it by their own works and by their own actions. And that'll just be replayed before them, their whole life, and they'll be judged on the basis of their performance.

Of course we who know Jesus Christ will not come into condemnation. We'll face that day of the Bema—the examination day. Salvation is not the issue. The crowns are. And we'll stand there before Him, the One who was crucified, the One who was willing to give His life on our behalf, and be examined.

v. 3 Nevertheless, he clung to the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel sin; he did not depart from it.

“Nevertheless, he clung to the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel sin; he did not depart from it.”

Jehoram continued to do some of the things that Jeroboam the son of Nebat did.

Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, was really a bad guy too. He put

golden idols in a couple of the key cities of Dan and also in the city of Bethel—golden calves. And although Jehoram took down some of the things, he left those landmarks there from Jeroboam the son of Nebat. So he clung to some of the things that had been done earlier.

v. 4 Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheep breeder, and used to pay the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams.

“Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheep breeder, and used to pay the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams.”

Critics have looked at that verse for years and they’ve said, “Mesha the king of Moab—never heard of the guy!” And they go over there and they criticize the Bible and they just pick it all apart.

What happened when they started digging? They found Mesha the king of Moab. They actually found his name in the archeological remains.

They have found close to six thousand different remains that have only verified and vindicated the historicity of the biblical reference. A lot of these guys that go over there as critics and liberals and want to tear the Bible apart and make fun of it, trying to go over there and prove the fact that it’s not right, many of them have come back even to a conservative faith, recognizing that they’re dealing with a record that is accurate.

With a record that mentions names and places and people who are not mythical nor mystical—they need to be spiritualized—but the names of real flesh and blood people.

Now Mesha was the king of Moab. During the time that they were in bondage under Ahab's reign, every year they had to pay taxes. And their tax was:

“100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams.”

Now that's a lot. And they were going to rebel against that and get out from under that taxation by being freed from the Israelites. So that's why the battle's getting ready to take place.

v. 5 But it came about, when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

“But it came about, when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.”

Proverbs 16:7

When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

But when his ways are not pleasing to the Lord, He can also stir up the circumstances that are around us to get our attention.

And here He's providing another opportunity. The enemies begin to move around the nation for them to respond to Him. And now Jehoram doesn't have any time for God. Look at him—verse 6.

He's always got the wrong idea about God. Every time he comes into the picture, he's always got some crazy philosophizing statement to make.

v. 6 And King Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel.

“And King Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel.”

Now when a king got ready to go to war, he usually talked to the Lord about it, got His instructions and guidance and then went to war. Now Mr. Jehoram doesn't need anybody to tell him anything. He just goes out and musters the army, gets as much together as he can.

Now he didn't get too many because verse 7 says he still needs some more.

v. 7 Then he went and sent word to Jehoshaphat the 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.”

“Then he went and sent word to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah,”

Sent somebody down south:

“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.’”

What’s wrong with that?

Well there are two things:

1. Jehoshaphat is a godly king and he shouldn’t be messing around with an ungodly king, and especially going to war.
2. Jehoshaphat should have said, “Let me check in with the Lord for a second just before I tell you yes or no.”

Now Jehoshaphat has done that kind of thing on a regular basis and he’s been rebuked for it.

In 2 Chronicles 18 he comes into focus and he goes down and sees Ahab and he allied himself with Ahab in a marriage relationship through some of their family. And he’s been rebuked for that.

But now Jehoram says, “Hey Jehoshaphat, you go with me to

fight?” He says, “Sure!”

He learns his lesson because when old Jehoshaphat has to fight in 2 Chronicles 19 and 20, he has the forces around him.

What does he do? He says, “Lord, you know we really don’t know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.”

And the Lord just says, “Set yourself, stand ye still and see the salvation of the Lord. You’re not going to have to fight in this battle.”

He learned his lesson anyway. We make mistakes, but learn our lesson and become a better person. And the next time around Jehoshaphat does the right thing. But not here.

v. 8 And he said, “Which way shall we go up?” And he answered, “The way of the wilderness of Edom.”

“And he said, ‘Which way shall we go up?’”

And old Jehoram answered and said:

“And he answered, ‘The way of the wilderness of Edom.’”

He’s already got an idea. He’s going to get Edom to help him too. “We’re going to get Moab for sure. We’re going to get three guys.”

And without consulting the Lord for instruction, Jehoshaphat

gets all his troops, Jehoram gets all his troops, and they go down by way of Edom. They're going to get the old king of Edom to go with them.

v. 9 So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom; and they made a circuit of seven days' journey, and there was no water for the army or for the cattle that followed them.

“So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom; and they made a circuit of seven days' journey, and there was no water for the army or for the cattle that followed them.”

Alright, now that just tells us something. We'll always find when we go out of the will of God we usually end up in a desert and we have a real need. God can quickly get our attention when we get out of His will.

It took David a year for the Lord to get his attention, but he said, “My moisture's been turned into the drought of summer. My body physically is beginning to waste away and your hand's heavy upon me.” (ref. Psalm 32)

That's the Lord getting his attention. And then that has a way of getting our attention, they went around for seven days and they end up out here in some backside of the desert and they don't have enough water and they're in a real crisis.

No water for the cattle and no water for themselves. They're

between a rock and a hard place. Now if we have a need in our life, a real legitimate need, and we're really upset about it, it is a good indication that the Lord's trying to get our attention because we're not in the center of His will.

Whenever we have a real need in our life, it's an indication that either the Lord's getting ready to change the direction of our life or He wants to do something very significant in our life so we better get close to find out what it is. Because He's promised to meet all of our needs according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus.

But that's when we're in the center of His will. When we're out of it, we can plan on Him putting the heat on. And we can plan on it getting worse and worse until we respond.

And these guys are sitting out here and the troops are griping and complaining, and the three kings don't know what to do and Jehoram's responsible for it. Now look at him. Talk about Mr. Negative—verse 10. Isn't this something?

v. 10 Then the king of Israel said, “Alas! For the Lord has called these three kings to give them into the hand of Moab.”

“Then the king of Israel said, ‘Alas! For the Lord has called these three kings to give them into the hand of Moab.’”

When we get into trouble it's usually, “Well, the Lord's trying to get even with me. The Lord brought me out here so He

could dump me in the hands of Moab so they'd kill me.”

It's really about the only time Jehoram ever mentioned the Lord—when he's in trouble. And then he always picks on the Lord. The Lord's an old joy robber. He's always taking away everything that's fun.

Proverbs 19:3

The foolishness of man subverts his way and his heart rages against the Lord.

Jehoram has a running battle with the Lord and he's going to have problems.

Jehoshaphat is great. At least he's big enough to admit he's made a mistake.

v. 11 But Jehoshaphat said, “Is there not a prophet of the Lord here, that we may inquire of the Lord by him?” And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, “Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who used to pour water on the hands of Elijah.”

“But Jehoshaphat said, ‘Is there not a prophet of the Lord here, that we may inquire of the Lord by him?’ And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, ‘Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who used to pour water on the hands of Elijah.’”

Now Jehoshaphat turned to these other two guys and said, “You know we made a mistake.” He sees the totally different reading in these circumstances. He’s hearing the Lord say, “Hey Jehoshaphat, you should have checked in with Me for signals and now I’m just giving you another opportunity to do it.” Jehoshaphat gets the message.

He says, “Is there a prophet of God around here so we can find out what the Lord really wants us to do? Because we made a mistake or we wouldn’t be out here in the middle of nowhere.”

Jehoram doesn’t even know. He doesn’t say, “Well, yes, Elisha. He’s in charge of the chaplains’ office in the kingdom.” One of the servants says, “Yes, Elisha’s around.”

This guy is probably old Obadiah. Talk about a neat guy. He served in Ahab’s court and he saved a hundred prophets from being slain from Jezebel. Talk about walking a tight line. He’s in a kingdom that’s totally opposed and he’s a godly man.

He just kind of steps up and says, “Well yes, Elisha’s around! He used to wash the hands of old Elijah the prophet. He used to be his servant in fact.”

Jehoshaphat immediately knows. Look what he says in verse 12.

v. 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.

“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.”

Now here’s his opportunity. Talk about getting it. The three kings come into the office and want to seek consultation and advice. Anyone would get a big head over that, wouldn’t they?

There’s a cute story of some little kids who were forming a little club and they had three rules. One was, don’t think too big. And two, don’t think too little. And three, let’s all think medium.

Let’s just all think medium. We don’t want to think too big of us and we don’t want to think too little. Let’s just all think medium.

And Elisha’s not a bit impressed. He’s just going to think medium here. And when he does, he sure nails old Jehoram to the wall—verse 13.

v. 13 Now Elisha said to the king of Israel, “What do I have to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and to the prophets of your mother.” And the king of Israel said to him, “No, for the Lord has called these three kings together to give them into the hand of Moab.”

“Now Elisha said to the king of Israel,”

He looks right at Jehoram:

“What do I have to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and to the prophets of your mother.”

Now who are those? Those 450 prophets of Baal that met Elijah on Mount Carmel and all of them lost their lives.

“If you want to find out the answers, why don’t you go to the prophets of Baal and get your answer?”

“And the king of Israel said to him, ‘No, for the Lord has called these three kings together to give them into the hand of Moab.’”

A lot of times people express their opinions before they’ve got all the facts. And we have no right to an opinion until we have all the facts.

“Now Jehoram, just sit down and shut up, will you? You’re just fouling up the air with all that stinking thinking. You’re just negative from the word go! Just let God tell us what He really wants to do and it might be a tad bit different than your preconceived notions.”

Now Elisha really tells him:

v. 14 And Elisha said, “As the Lord of hosts lives, before

whom I stand, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look at you nor see you.

“And Elisha said, ‘As the Lord of hosts lives, before whom I stand, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat’—see he’s the good guy—“the king of Judah, I would not look at you nor see you.”

“Now I want to tell you Jehoram, you’re privileged to be here. Because this is the first time you’ve ever been right. You must really be having trouble to come and talk to me. It must be really bad when all else fails that you call the prophet of God. It’s really something that you’re here. And I wouldn’t even look at you and I wouldn’t even say anything to you if it weren’t for this godly king from the south that’s in here.”

And talk about putting him in his place. It’s about time that somebody did. In verse 15 Elisha says:

v. 15 “But now bring me a minstrel.” And it came about, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.

“But now bring me a minstrel.”—that is, get a guitar player—
“And it came about, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.”

Elisha said, “Now I’m sure there must be a message from the Lord since you three guys have come. And I just want a guitar

player. And as he plays, I'm going to ask the Lord to speak to us and give us the message that He wants to reveal at this time."

And here comes the message—verse 16.

v. 16 And he said, "Thus says the Lord, 'Make this valley full of trenches.'

"And he said, "Thus says the Lord, "Make this valley full of trenches."

v. 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 shall drink, both you and your cattle and your beasts.

"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 shall drink, both you and your cattle and your beasts."

Just like when the multitude was hungry in the time of Christ, the Lord Jesus took five loaves and a couple of fish from a little guy that wanted to give it and fed the multitude.

So here God says, "I know you're thirsty. I was just waiting for you to ask, that's all. Now y'all get out there and dig some trenches and I can tell you by tomorrow morning you're going to have all the water you could ever want. Now just do it."

Isn't that a lot different than what old Jehoram thought? The Lord's just waiting to be consulted sometimes before He meets their needs.

John 16:24

Up till now you've asked nothing. Ask and you shall receive that your joy may be full.

So many individuals might be poverty-stricken spiritually just because they haven't taken time to check in and tell Him that they have a need.

God waits to bestow lessons when our hearts are open and we're ready to ask Him to meet those needs and to be faithful. And He will if we have a legitimate need in the center of His will and we ask Him, we can have the confidence that if it's according to His will He's going to fulfill that need.

And finally when these guys do come, they consult with the prophet of God and the message is totally different. Now it doesn't end there with the water either. Look at verse 18. He says:

v. 18 'And this is but a slight thing in the sight of the Lord; he shall also give the Moabites into your hand.'

““And this is but a slight thing in the sight of the Lord; he shall also give the Moabites into your hand.”

“Guys, I want to tell you, you’re going to be victorious in the battle too. You see you’re going to get the water and then you’re going to have a war and you’re going to win the war.”

Now isn’t that something? That’s the way the Lord is. How gracious and good He is. He is not a joy robber! He’s not delighted to send us out into the wilderness to give us into the hands of the enemy.

He has the neatest and most exciting and most abundant life for us if we just get our act together and just trust Him and believe Him. He wants to bless. He wants to meet our needs.

We’re just too proud sometimes to come and let Him do it. And here the Lord in such a special way says, “You’re going to win and you’re going to have water.”

v. 19 Then you shall strike every fortified city and every choice city, and fell every good tree and stop all springs of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones.”

“Then you shall strike every fortified city and every choice city, and fell every good tree and stop all springs of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones.””

v. 20 And it happened in the morning about the time of offering the sacrifice, that behold, water came by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with

water.

“And it happened in the morning about the time of offering the sacrifice, that behold, water came by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.”

Nine o'clock in the morning those trenches they'd been digging all afternoon were filled clear to the top. And nearly every one of those soldiers were killed in the rush getting down there to get water. Afterwards they were totally satisfied.

v. 21 Now all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them. And all who were able to put on armor and older were summoned, and stood on the border.

“Now all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them. And all who were able to put on armor and older were summoned, and stood on the border.”

Now after they had this water and they'd gotten all satisfied, it says:

v. 22 And they rose early in the morning, and the sun shone on the water, and the Moabites saw the water opposite them as red as blood.

“And they rose early in the morning,”—these are the Moabites now—“and the sun shone on the water,”—this is the next morning—“and the Moabites saw the water opposite them as

red as blood.”

Ever done that? Ever got up real early in the morning near a lake or something and as the early rays of the sun begin to come up, the water changes color a hundred different times? And sometimes it can almost look just like it’s totally red.

But as they saw the reflection of this down in the valley and they saw all this red, they made a wrong conclusion—verse 23.

v. 23 Then they said, “This is blood; the kings have surely fought together, and they have slain one another. Now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!”

“Then they said, ‘This is blood; the kings have surely fought together, and they have slain one another. Now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!’”

“This is going to be easy guys. Those three kings got in a fight down there and they fought with each other and they killed everybody. Now let’s just go down and take the spoils off all of them and we win!”

v. 24 But when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites arose and struck the Moabites, so that they fled before them; and they went forward into the land, slaughtering the Moabites.

“But when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites

arose and struck the Moabites, so that they fled before them; and they went forward into the land, slaughtering the Moabites.”

v. 25 Thus they destroyed the cities; and each one threw a stone on every piece of good land and filled it. So they stopped all the springs of water and felled all the good trees, until in Kir-hareseth only they left its stones; however, the slingers went about it and struck it.

“Thus they destroyed the cities; and each one threw a stone on every piece of good land and filled it. So they stopped all the springs of water and felled all the good trees, until in Kir-hareseth only they left its stones; however, the slingers went about it and struck it.”

Now we’re in the war. Notice the king of Moab—verse 26.

v. 26 When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took with him 700 men who drew sword, to break through to the king of Edom; but they could not.

“When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took with him 700 men who drew sword,”—as they’re his green berets—“to break through to the king of Edom; but they could not.”

Now want to see the kind of religion represented among the

Moabites? They worshipped the god Moloch and involved in the satanic worship was child sacrifice. And that's why we have this last tragic picture in verse 27.

v. 27 Then he took his oldest son who was to reign in his place, and offered him as a burnt offering on the wall. And there came great wrath against Israel, and they departed from him and returned to their own land.

“Then he took his oldest son who was to reign in his place, and offered him as a burnt offering on the wall.”

This is a last-ditch effort to get Moloch, their god, to be appeased and to help them in the battle.

“And there came great wrath against Israel, and they departed from him and returned to their own land.”

Naturally they got upset. Naturally they had expected to win and now they've lost. Now the war is over.

We look at that and say, “But what about the Moabites?” The Moabites are just like a lot of other people. They've been given the gift of life by God but they surrendered that right by their continued persistence to live in sin and not to respond to Him.

God gave the Moabites an opportunity. If we want to temper this a little bit with love and grace, there's a way to do it. There's a beautiful love story in the Old Testament known as

the book of Ruth.

And when we read that we realize that Naomi and Elimelech and their two boys, during a time of famine went down to the land of Moab to be sustained during this time of great need. And while they were there the two boys found two really cute little girls—Ruth and Orpah, both Moabitish girls. They married but there was the Russian flu that came through and all three of the men died.

Elimelech and the two boys died. This left Naomi, Ruth and Orpah. Naomi said, “It’s time for me to go back to my people, to the city of Bethlehem in the land of Judea.”

Ruth and Orpah said, “We’ll go.” Naomi said, “Oh no, don’t go with me. Don’t leave your people and go.” And Orpah takes that as an indication that she needs to stay, but Ruth continues to go.

And it’s the beautiful story of Ruth being accepted in the land of Israel and being accepted by God Himself. And through Boaz’s redemption, Ruth is also placed in the Messianic line and becomes the grandmother of Jesse, who was also the father of David, and ultimately led to Jesus Christ.

So we can’t say that God is not fair with the Moabites. God is fair. Just as sure as God is fair with us, He’s thrown the life-ring of His Son into the sea of sin, and what we do with that is our responsibility. If we choose to drown, we’ve made our own choice. But if we choose to respond to His Son, there is love,

there is grace, there is light, there is truth, there is life, there is peace, there is joy. It waits for us to make a decision in that regard.

Now Elisha has international significance. And as we see him in our next exciting chapter, there'll be some more things to learn.

Here are some of the key lessons that we get out of this particular study.

Lesson #1: Everything we do is witnessed by the Lord and it is also recorded or registered by Him.

It's a very sobering thought. It's a call to be clean. It's a call to be honest. It's a call to be upright.

Lesson #2: Jehoram and Jehoshaphat make the mistake of formulating plans and commitments before they consult the Lord.

Ever do that?

We get so excited about what God wants us to do we go blowing it out of here and we do something big! And in a last-ditch effort we say, "And God will you bless my plans?"

And thankfully we say "my plans" because we're the author of them. If they fail, they were our plans. If they were His, they would truly be successful.

One of the hardest problems every Christian has is learning to live with divine authority and letting God be God. How quickly we make commitments, how quickly we make plans without consulting the Lord.

Lesson #3: Jehoshaphat put himself in a very serious situation by joining together with this godless king in making a commitment to him without first discussing it with the Lord.

Now listen to this verse:

2 Corinthians 6:14, 15

Do not be bound together with unbelievers, for what partnership has righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness. Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?

That's a principle. And if we're believers and we violate that principle, we're going to suffer the consequences. If we're going to go into business with somebody who's not a Christian we're entering into a partnership that's going to be very difficult.

If we end up marrying somebody who's not a Christian and we enter into marriage in the hopes that they will come to Jesus Christ, we have a rough road to hoe. Because as soon as the physical wears off, the old self comes to the surface and

usually the Christian is the one who surrenders to the crumbly environment that's created.

We very seldom see the Christian transforming the other mate. Instead they kind of rock along in lukewarmness.

Now that's a serious matter. Emotions are powerful. And as we think about marriage we're hoping that we're not going to be passed by. And when this prince charming comes into a woman's life, be sure that if you're a believer that he is too. You have plenty of time to scrutinize his faith.

Girls, ask yourselves these questions: What are his long-term goals? What does he want to do with his life? How's he going to invest my talents and abilities? Those are things that they need to really think about before they get involved in it.

Jehoshaphat put himself in a very stringent set of circumstances simply because he failed to consult the Lord in this. He violated the Lord and the principles that were involved by joining himself with Jehoram in the first place.

Lesson #4: When a need arises in our lives, it is an indication that we are either out of the will of the Lord or that He is preparing to give us new instructions.

And what's the answer to both of those? Check in for signals, and get there quickly.

When a need arises in our life, it is either an indication of a

change in the direction of the will of God for our life or it could possibly be that He's preparing to give us new instructions. Get into His presence to discover.

Lesson #5: When a man does not know God, he formulates wrong opinions about what is happening in his life. Jehoram does this when he says, "Alas, for the Lord has called these three kings, to give them into the hand of Moab."

Jehoram looks on Him as a joy robber. He has the totally wrong opinion of God.

Lesson #6: How gracious the Lord is to give directions and insights into our problems and needs if we will only consult Him.

When these guys recognize the mistake and Jehoshaphat leads them to Elisha, there's the answer. And just maybe that's the answer to our problems right now.

Somebody said if you and God feel at a distance, guess who moved. God's still waiting. He's wanting to give us direction and guidance in our life.

How gracious the Lord is to give directions and insight when we consult Him.

Lesson #7: Victory will always result when we follow the Lord's way of doing things.

So as we are willing to trust the Lord and do it His way, there will be victory.

Here's one of the neatest verses in the New Testament:

2 Corinthians 2:14

Now thanks be unto God, who is always leading us in a constant pageant of triumph.

When He's leading there's gonna be victory.

Father You've been very special to take the passage of scripture that historically we could look at it and say it's pretty dead and pretty dull and yet out of it comes some fantastic principles for our daily lives. We pray that You'll guard each one of us from being involved in situations that we shouldn't be involved in. That You'll protect those who know You and walk with You in a very special way. Keep them open and sensitive to Your leadership in their lives and that ultimately they'll find themselves in the center of Your will, where You can bless and prosper their lives. Then Lord for those that don't know You, we pray that the attractiveness of these times and the thought of knowing a God who is a God of love and grace, providing the basis for relationship through His Son, they'll come to know Him as Savior. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

What You Need to Know About ELISHA:

**“Heir of the Spirit:
‘What wish shall I grant you
before I am taken away’ (2 Kings 2:9)”**

Study Number Two – 2 Kings 3:1-27

Notes

v. 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.

v. 2 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, though not like his father and his mother; for he put away the sacred pillar of Baal which his father had made.

v. 3 Nevertheless, he clung to the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel sin; he did not depart from it.

v. 4 Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheep breeder, and used to pay the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams.

v. 5 But it came about, when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

v. 6 And King Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel.

v. 7 Then he went and sent word to Jehoshaphat the 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.”

v. 8 And he said, “Which way shall we go up?” And he answered, “The way of the wilderness of Edom.”

v. 9 So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom; and they made a circuit of seven days’ journey, and there was no water for the army or for the cattle that followed them.

v. 10 Then the king of Israel said, “Alas! For the Lord has called these three kings to give them into the hand of Moab.”

Notes

v. 11 But Jehoshaphat said, “Is there not a prophet of the Lord here, that we may inquire of the Lord by him?” And one of the king of Israel’s servants answered and said, “Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who used to pour water on the hands of Elijah.”

v. 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.

v. 13 Now Elisha said to the king of Israel, “What do I have to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and to the prophets of your mother.” And the king of Israel said to him, “No, for the Lord has called these three kings together to give them into the hand of Moab.”

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

v. 15 “But now bring me a minstrel.” And it came about, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.

v. 16 And he said, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Make this valley full of trenches.’

v. 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 shall drink, both you and your cattle and your beasts.

v. 18 ‘And this is but a slight thing in the sight of the Lord; he shall also give the Moabites into your hand.

v. 19 Then you shall strike every fortified city and every choice city, and fell every good tree and stop all springs of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones.”

v. 20 And it happened in the morning about the time of offering the sacrifice, that behold, water came by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.

v. 21 Now all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them. And all who were able to put on armor and older were summoned, and stood on the border.

v. 22 And they rose early in the morning, and the sun shone on the water, and the Moabites saw the water opposite them as red as blood.

v. 23 Then they said, “This is blood; the kings have surely fought together, and they have slain one another. Now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!”

v. 24 But when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites arose and struck the Moabites, so that they fled before them; and they went forward into the land, slaughtering the Moabites.

Notes

v. 25 Thus they destroyed the cities; and each one threw a stone on every piece of good land and filled it. So they stopped all the springs of water and felled all the good trees, until in Kir-hareseth only they left its stones; however, the slingers went about it and struck it.

v. 26 When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took with him 700 men who drew sword, to break through to the king of Edom; but they could not.

v. 27 Then he took his oldest son who was to reign in his place, and offered him as a burnt offering on the wall. And there came great wrath against Israel, and they departed from him and returned to their own land.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read 2 Kings 3:1-27 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. What is Jehoshaphat's question in verse 11?

3. How does Jehoshaphat describe Elisha in verse 12?

4. What is Elisha's response to the kings in verses 14-19?

5. What natural phenomenon confuses the Moabites, according to verse 22?

6. What happens as a result of this deception, according to verse 24?

7. Describe the action of the king of Moab in verse 26.

8. What happens in verse 27?

9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Everything we do is witnessed by the Lord and it is also recorded or registered by Him.

LESSON #2: Jehoram and Jehoshaphat make the mistake of formulating plans and commitments before they consult the Lord.

LESSON #3: Jehoshaphat put himself in a very serious situation by joining together with this godless king in making a commitment to him without first discussing it with the Lord.

LESSON #4: When a need arises in our lives, it is an indication that we are either out of the will of the Lord or that He is preparing to give us new instructions.

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LESSON #7: Victory will always result when we follow the Lord’s way of doing things.