**ELISHA TEACHES KINGS TO RELY ON GOD**

2 Kings 3:1-27

Key Verse 18

 “This is an easy thing in the eyes of the Lord; he will also deliver Moab into your hands.”

**Introduction**

 In today’s passage we see how Elisha served as a shepherd for three kings and people in Northern Israel. The spiritual and moral condition was very dark. They needed a shepherd who could lead them to God. God raised Elisha as a shepherd. Our times are also dark. We need shepherds above all. God wants to raise us as shepherds for his people. Let’s learn from Elisha how to be shepherds for his people and live as spiritual leaders, Bible teachers, and shepherds.

1. Read verses 1-12. What did the author say about Joram son of Ahab? (1-3) Describe how three kings(Israel, Judah, Edom) came to Elisha. (4-12)

1-1, Read verses 1-12.

 Joram son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned twelve years. 2 He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, but not as his father and mother had done. He got rid of the sacred stone of Baal that his father had made. 3 Nevertheless he clung to the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit; he did not turn away from them. 4 Now Mesha king of Moab raised sheep, and he had to pay the king of Israel a tribute of a hundred thousand lambs and the wool of a hundred thousand rams. 5 But after Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. 6 So at that time King Joram set out from Samaria and mobilized all of Israel. 7 He also sent this message to Jehoshaphat king of Judah: “The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to fight against Moab?” “I will go with you,” he replied. “I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.” 8 “By what route shall we attack?” he asked. “Through the Desert of Edom,” he answered. 9 So the king of Israel set out with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. After a roundabout march of seven days, the army had no more water for themselves or for the animals with them. 10 “What!” exclaimed the king of Israel. “Has the Lord called us three kings together only to deliver us into the hands of Moab?” 11 But Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there no prophet of the Lord here, through whom we may inquire of the Lord?” An officer of the king of Israel answered, “Elisha son of Shaphat is here. He used to pour water on the hands of Elijah.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+kings+3&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9588b)]” 12 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.

1-2, What did the author say about Joram son of Ahab? (1-3)

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* Joram was an evil king, who succeeded Ahaziah in Northern Israel. Ahaziah had no son and Joram, who was his brother, became a king.
* Seeing the terrible result of Baal worship, Joram got rid of the sacred stone. “Not as his father and mother had done” shows some hope in his life.
* Yet he clung to the sins of Jeroboam to maintain his power. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam.
* 

1-3, Describe how three kings(Israel, Judah, Edom) came to Elisha. (4-12)

 ***Now Mesha king of Moab raised sheep, and he had to pay the king of Israel a tribute of a hundred thousand lambs and the wool of a hundred thousand rams. 5 But after Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. 6 So at that time King Joram set out from Samaria and mobilized all of Israel. 7 He also sent this message to Jehoshaphat king of Judah: “The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to fight against Moab?” “I will go with you,” he replied. “I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.” 8 “By what route shall we attack?” he asked. “Through the Desert of Edom,” he answered. 9 So the king of Israel set out with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. After a roundabout march of seven days, the army had no more water for themselves or for the animals with them. 10 “What!” exclaimed the king of Israel. “Has the Lord called us three kings together only to deliver us into the hands of Moab?” 11 But Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there no prophet of the Lord here, through whom we may inquire of the Lord?”An officer of the king of Israel answered, “Elisha son of Shaphat is here. He used to pour water on the hands of Elijah.” 12 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.***

* After Ahab’s death, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. This brought great economic loss. So Joram decided to subdue the Moabites.
* He mobilized all Israel and invited Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, along with the king of Edom, to join his military campaign.
* They wanted to surprise the Moabites by approaching from the south, through the Desert of Edom. Their strategy seemed good.
* But they could not find water. They were doomed to destruction before fighting. In this desperate situation, there were two responses.
* **The king of Israel** complained about the Lord and became angry and fatalistic and doubted God’s love. Many people respond to hardship in this way.
* **Jehoshaphat**, a godly king, was different. He said, “Is there no prophet of the Lord here, that we may inquire of the Lord through him?”
* He believed the solution would come from the Lord. When Jehoshaphat was told about Elisha, he said, “The word of the Lord is with him.”
* So they went to Elisha. Usually kings summon people to come to them. However, Jehoshaphat and the other kings went down to Elisha.
1. Read verses 13-20. Why did Elisha consent to help them? (13-14) What did he ask them to do first? (15) What words of the Lord did he give them? (16-19) What happened the next morning? (20)

2-1, Read verses 13-20.

Elisha said to the king of Israel, “Why do you want to involve me? Go to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother.”

“No,” the king of Israel answered, “because it was the Lord who called us three kings together to deliver us into the hands of Moab.”

14 Elisha said, “As surely as the Lord Almighty lives, whom I serve, if I did not have respect for the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not pay any attention to you. 15 But now bring me a harpist.”

While the harpist was playing, the hand of the Lord came on Elisha 16 and he said, “This is what the Lord says: I will fill this valley with pools of water. 17 For this is what the Lord says: You will see neither wind nor rain, yet this valley will be filled with water, and you, your cattle and your other animals will drink. 18 This is an easy thing in the eyes of the Lord; he will also deliver Moab into your hands. 19 You will overthrow every fortified city and every major town. You will cut down every good tree, stop up all the springs, and ruin every good field with stones.”

20 The next morning, about the time for offering the sacrifice, there it was—water flowing from the direction of Edom! And the land was filled with water.

2-2, Why did Elisha consent to help them? (13-14)

***Elisha said to the king of Israel, “Why do you want to involve me? Go to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother.” “No,” the king of Israel answered, “because it was the Lord who called us three kings together to deliver us into the hands of Moab.” 14 Elisha said, “As surely as the Lord Almighty lives, whom I serve, if I did not have respect for the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not pay any attention to you.***

* Elisha said to the king of Israel, “What do we have to do with each other? Go to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother”.
* The king of Israel should have acknowledged his sins in this time of need and humbled himself. Instead, he retorted, “No, because it was the Lord who called us three kings together to hand us over to Moab.”
* This aroused Elisha’s holy anger, saying, “As surely as the Lord Almighty lives, whom I serve, if I did not have respect for the presence of Jehoshaphat”

2-3, What did he ask them to do first? (15)

 ***But now bring me a harpist.” While the harpist was playing, the hand of the Lord came on Elisha***

* Elisha was willing to help for the sake of Jehoshaphat. But he had to overcome his holy anger to hear the word of the Lord well.
* He needed music therapy. Sometimes, in order to listen to the voice of God, we need to overcome anger, bitterness, a busy mind, or stress.

2-4, What words of the Lord did he give them? (16-19)

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* “What the Lord says” was beyond imaginations. They needed to accept the Lord’s word with faith. Faith is to believe that what God says will happen.
* Then Elisha said, “This is an easy thing in the eyes of the Lord.” He also prophesied that the three kings would defeat Moab completely.
* God wants to do great things through us. But we need to have practical faith in God. In another version(KJV), they were asked to make this valley full of ditches.
* They must have been tired with thirst in the desert. So it was never easy to obey this command to make ditches. But they obeyed by faith. Thank God!

2-5, What happened the next morning? (20)

 ***The next morning, about the time for offering the sacrifice, there it was—water flowing from the direction of Edom! And the land was filled with water.***

1. Read verses 21-27. Describe how the Moabites were defeated. (21-25) What did the king of Moab do to try to win the battle? (26) Upon losing the war, instead of repenting and calling on the Lord of Israel, what did the king of Moab do?

3-1, Read verses 21-27.

Now all the Moabites had heard that the kings had come to fight against them; so every man, young and old, who could bear arms was called up and stationed on the border.22 When they got up early in the morning, the sun was shining on the water. To the Moabites across the way, the water looked red—like blood. 23 “That’s blood!” they said. “Those kings must have fought and slaughtered each other. Now to the plunder, Moab!”

24 But when the Moabites came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and fought them until they fled. And the Israelites invaded the land and slaughtered the Moabites.25 They destroyed the towns, and each man threw a stone on every good field until it was covered. They stopped up all the springs and cut down every good tree. Only Kir Hareseth Was left with its stones in place, but men armed with slings surrounded it and attacked it.

26 When the king of Moab saw that the battle had gone against him, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through to the king of Edom, but they failed. 27 Then he took his firstborn son, who was to succeed him as king, and offered him as a sacrifice on the city wall. The fury against Israel was great; they withdrew and returned to their own land.

3-2, Describe how the Moabites were defeated. (21-25)

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* Amazingly enough, God used the ditches in a completely unexpected way to supply the need as well as to defeat the enemy according to verse 24.
* “The Israelites rose up” indicates that they were able to use the ditches they made by obeying the word of God.
* “Digging ditches” can be compared to leadership of hard work by faith beyond expectation. It must have been boring work at the battle.
* But it became a direct cause to win the battle against the enemies. Such manual works were unimpressive or unspectacular and even led them to complain.
* At the end, however, it ended up becoming God’s marvelous wisdom and counsel to win victory and render glory to the Lord. Amen.

3-3, What did the king of Moab do to try to win the battle? (26)

 ***When the king of Moab saw that the battle had gone against him, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through to the king of Edom, but they failed.***

3-4, Upon losing the war, instead of repenting and calling on the Lord of Israel, what did the king of Moab do?

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* It shows how desperate the king of Moab was after his defeat in the battle. He did this to honor his pagan gods. How senseless the ritual act was!

**Conclusion**

 It was a great victory as Elisha had prophesied. During a time of national crisis, Elisha saved the nation by listening to the Lord and giving the right advice to the kings. In this way he became a shepherd of the kings. As God’s servants, we are called to be shepherds of our nation like Elisha. We must first listen to the word of God and pray for our nation as a kingdom of priests!

**One word: Rely on God!**