

1  **The Best Defense**

2 Kings 3

2  **Review**

- After Ahab's death, his son Ahaziah becomes king.
- During Ahaziah's reign, Moab (which has been paying tribute to Israel for three generations) rebels.
- Instead of going out to war, Ahaziah stays home to avoid God's judgment, but ultimately is killed when he falls through a lattice in his palace.

3  **Review**

- During Ahaziah's reign, Elijah the Tishbite is taken up into heaven and Elisha succeeds him as prophet over Israel.
- Elisha performs the miracle of parting the Jordan River to demonstrate that the power of Elijah has now been passed on to him.
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4  **Moab**

- In previous weeks we've discussed the history of the nation of Moab, as well as what it symbolizes in Scripture.
- Moab symbolizes the flesh that wants us to doubt & deny God.
- Our flesh is constantly looking to rebel, when it should be subject to the law of grace (just as Moab is rebelling against Israel).

5  **The fight against the flesh**

- It's easy to get defensive in the fight against idolatry, the world, and the flesh.
- Christ's intention for the church was never that it should be defensive.
- His intent for us as believers is that we – through the power and aid of the Holy Spirit – should be attacking the areas in our life in which our flesh is strong and wants to rebel.

6  **Redemption doesn't stop**

- God's purpose for redemption is that it does not stop at the moment we are justified – made right with God.
- Christ's purpose isn't just to save us from hell – it's to make us whole, to give us more in Christ than we lost in Adam.
- Ultimately, Christ wants to redeem and influence every area of our lives.

7  **TAKING THE OFFENSIVE**

2 Kings 3

8  **Jehoram**

- Jehoram, the second son of Ahab, becomes king at his brother's death. Jehoram is wicked, but not as wicked as his predecessors:
- *He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, though not like his father and mother, for he put away the pillar of Baal that his father had made. Nevertheless, he clung to the sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin; he did not depart from it.* (2Ki 3:2-3)
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9  **The Omride Dynasty**

10  **Moab rebels**

- Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheep breeder, and he had to deliver to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. But when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. (2Ki 3:4-5)
- Moab actually rebelled against Israel during the reign of Ahaziah, but Ahaziah was too fearful to take any action.
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11  **Moab and the Omride Dynasty**

- We know from extra-Biblical sources (such as the *Mesha Stele*) that the Moabites were subjected by Omri and made to pay a tribute of sheep.
- This same tribute is the one referred to in 2 Kings 3.

12  **An alliance proposed**

- So King Jehoram marched out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. And he went and sent word to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to battle against Moab?" And he said, "I will go. I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses." Then he said, "By which way shall we march?" Jehoram answered, "By the way of the wilderness of Edom." (2Ki 3:6-8)
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13  **An alliance proposed**

- Jehoram proposes an alliance with Judah against their mutual enemy, the Moabites.
- Note that the Moabites were recently part of a threefold alliance against Judah, along with the Ammonites and the Edomites.
- Jehoshaphat agrees, and the two kings prepare to march to war.

14  **A good man goes to war**

- At this point, the kingdoms of Judah and Israel are already allied by marriage.
- Jehoshaphat had already once gone to war along side Israel (Ahab) and had been judged for it.
- Since then, Jehoshaphat has repented of his compromise.
- Unlike in two previous cases, God will not condemn Jehoshaphat for this alliance.

15  **1) Don't go alone**

- It is impossible to face the fight against the flesh alone.
- We need the support and encouragement of brothers and sisters in Christ who will both help us when we are weak, as well as be honest to point out our flaws.

16  **A plan proffered**

- Then he [Jehoshaphat] said, "By which way shall we march?" Jehoram answered, "By the way of the wilderness of Edom."
- Jehoram's plan of attack is both creative and unconventional.

17  **The short road**

- We know from the *Mesha Stele* that King Mesha had the bulk of his military forces concentrated in the north of Moab, to defend against an invasion by Israel.

18  **The long road**

- <sup>2</sup> • Jehoram's proposed solution is to take the long road into Moab – through Judah, around the southern tip of the Dead Sea, and into the Desert of Edom, which bordered Moab and Edom.

19  **The long road**

20  **2) Go with wisdom**

- We need to be intentional, not haphazard, about Christian living.
- We need to have a balanced, objective view of our strengths and weaknesses.
- We need to understand the heart issues that are the cause of behavioral issues.

21  **The going gets tough**

- *So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. And when they had made a circuitous march of seven days, there was no water for the army or for the animals that followed them. Then the king of Israel said, "Alas! The LORD has called these three kings to give them into the hand of Moab." (2Ki 3:9-10)*
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22  **The going gets tough**

- At this time Edom was a vassal of Judah, and so as they are marching through Edom, the king of Edom joins the alliance with his army.
- As they are marching through the desert of Edom, they run out of water.
- Jehoram promptly blames their lack of water on God.

23  **Is there a prophet in the house?**

- *And Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no prophet of the LORD here, through whom we may inquire of the LORD?" Then one of the king of Israel's servants answered, "Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah." 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. (2Ki 3:11-12)*
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24  **Is there a prophet in the house?**

- Jehoshaphat, as he did with Ahab, asks if there is a prophet of the Lord of which they can inquire to find out what they should do about their predicament.
- One of Jehoram's servants informs them that Elisha is "coincidentally" nearby.

25  **Words are said**

- *And Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and to the prophets of your mother." But the king of Israel said to him, "No; it is the LORD who has called these three kings to give them into the hand of Moab." And Elisha said, "As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, were it not that I have regard for Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would neither look at you nor see you. (2Ki 3:13-14)*
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26  **Words are said**

- Elisha asks Jehoram why he is coming to a prophet of Jehovah instead of Baal, as his parents and brother had done.
- Jehoram continues to blame Jehovah for their problems, subtly admitting that the false gods his family have worshipped are powerless to intervene.

27  **Lessons learned**

- Like his father Ahab, Jehoram is facing a dire need for water.
- Jehoram has already seen, during his father's reign, how Baal was powerless to send rain when it was needed, but when Elijah prayed, Jehovah sent rain.
- Now, Jehoram must humble himself before Elijah's successor to plead with Jehovah for water.

28  **Words are said**

- Elisha states that because of Jehoram's wickedness (although he had forsaken Baal, Jehoram continued to lead Israel in the pagan calf worship that Jeroboam had started), he would "not look" upon Jehoram.
- Nevertheless, for Jehoshaphat's sake, he would inquire of God on their behalf.

29  **Music!**

- *...But now bring me a musician. And when the musician played, the hand of the LORD came upon him.* (2Ki 3:15)
- This is one of the many instances in which music is used in Scripture in conjunction with prophecy (see 1 Chr. 25:1).
- Music throughout Scripture has a deeply spiritual, moral quality.

30  **3) Go with worship**

- Every human being is a worshipper. There is no question whether or not we will worship: the question is, what will we worship?
- Ultimately, fleshliness is the result of worshipping the wrong things.

31  **3) Go with worship**

- At the very heart of every pornography addiction is someone making an idol of their own bodies.
- At the heart of every workaholic is someone making an idol of the fear and the praise of men.

32  **God answers**

- *And he said, "Thus says the LORD, 'I will make this dry streambed full of pools.' For thus says the LORD, 'You shall not see wind or rain, but that streambed shall be filled with water, so that you shall drink, you, your livestock, and your animals.' This is a light thing in the sight of the LORD. He will also give the Moabites into your hand, and you shall attack every fortified city and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree and stop up all springs of water and ruin every good piece of land with stones."* (2Ki 3:16-19)
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33  **God answers**

- God, through Elisha, makes the following promises:
  - That there would be more than enough water to drink, although they would see no storm.
  - That they would be militarily victorious (armies)
  - That they would be territorially victorious (cities)
  - That they would be economically victorious (trees and fields)

34  **The water**

- *The next morning, about the time of offering the sacrifice, behold, water came from the direction of Edom, till the country was filled with water.* (2Ki 3:20)
- The three kings were positioned in a river valley which was fed by the waters from the

flash floods of the mountains of Edom (the Aravah).

- "Aravah" is Hebrew for "desolate and dry area."
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### 36 **The water**

- When it rained, water would run off of the mountains of Edom, through the Aravah, and into the Dead Sea (which is the lowest point on earth).
- God supernaturally caused a flash flood that either had no storm, or a storm that was too far away for either the Moabites or the three kings to see.

### 37 **The military success**

- *When all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them, all who were able to put on armor, from the youngest to the oldest, were called out and were drawn up at the border. And when they rose early in the morning and the sun shone on the water, the Moabites saw the water opposite them as red as blood.* (2Ki 3:21-22)
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### 38 **The military success**

- *And they said, "This is blood; the kings have surely fought together and struck one another down. Now then, Moab, to the spoil!" But when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose and struck the Moabites, till they fled before them. And they went forward, striking the Moabites as they went.* (2Ki 3:23-24)
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### 39 **The military success**

- Taken by surprise, Moab musters every available man to their southern border.
- When the sun rises, the combination of the coloration of the rising sun and the red rock made the water look like blood to the Moabites.
- The Moabites assumed (not unreasonably) that the three kings had had a falling out and that the armies had killed each other (as happened recently to the Ammonites, the Moabites, and the Edomites when attacking Judah).

### 40 **The military success**

- Rather than going out prepared for battle, the Moabites rush to gather up the spoils of war.
- At that moment, the Israelites and their allies ambush the Moabites and slaughter them.

### 41 **The territorial success**

- *And they overthrew the cities, and on every good piece of land every man threw a stone until it was covered. They stopped every spring of water and felled all the good trees, till only its stones were left in Kir-hareseth, and the slingers surrounded and attacked it.* (2Ki 3:25)
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### 42 **The economic success**

- *And they overthrew the cities, and on every good piece of land every man threw a stone until it was covered. They stopped every spring of water and felled all the good trees, till only its stones were left in Kir-hareseth, and the slingers surrounded and attacked it.* (2Ki

3:25)

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43  **Mesha's getaway**

- *When the king of Moab saw that the battle was going against him, he took with him 700 swordsmen to break through, opposite the king of Edom, but they could not.* (2Ki 3:26)
- Mesha gathers his remaining forces and attempts to break through Edom's ranks, but is unable to do so.
- While he is there, however, he captures the king of Edom's son.

44  **Pronoun trouble**

- *Then he took his oldest son who was to reign in his place and offered him for a burnt offering on the wall. And there came great wrath against Israel. And they withdrew from him and returned to their own land.* (2Ki 3:27)
- Many people (and commentators) wrongly assume that it is Mesha's son who is sacrificed in this passage.
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45  **Pronoun trouble**

- In fact, it is the son of the King of Edom who is sacrificed. This is clarified by the prophet Amos:
- *Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because he burned to lime the bones of the king of Edom.* (Amo 2:1)
- This culture would have considered the son of the king of Edom to be the "bones of the king of Edom."

46  **Pronoun trouble**

- *Then he [Mesha] took his [the king of Edom's] oldest son who was to reign in his [the king of Edom's] place and offered him [the son of the king of Edom] for a burnt offering on the wall. And there came great wrath against Israel. And they [the Edomites] withdrew from him [Jehoram] and returned to their own land.* (2Ki 3:27)

47  **The alliance disintegrates**

- The Edomites are so angered and horrified at their loss that they withdraw from the alliance.
- Without the support of the Edomites, the campaign is doomed to failure.

48  **4) Go with sacrifice**

- We need to have a "whatever it takes" attitude towards dealing with our flesh and becoming more Christ-like.
- This may, at some point, mean sacrificing something that we would rather not lose.
- If we balk and are not willing to give that thing up to God, our progress will be halted and the good that has been done will be undone.