

Seeking a Promise

2 Kings 3

¹Now Jehoram the son of Ahab became king over Israel at Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. ²And 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. ³Nevertheless he persisted in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin; he did not depart from them.

⁴Now 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. ⁵But it happened, when Ahab died, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

⁶So King Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. ⁷Then 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." ⁸Then he said, "Which way shall we go up?" And he answered, "By way of the Wilderness of Edom."

⁹So 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. ¹⁰And the king of Israel said, "Alas! For the LORD has called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab." ¹¹But 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."

¹²And 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.

¹³Then 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."

¹⁴And 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. ¹⁵But now bring me a musician."

Then it happened, when the musician played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him. ¹⁶And he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'Make this valley full of ditches.' ¹⁷For 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.' ¹⁸And this is a simple matter in the sight of the LORD; He will also deliver the Moabites into your hand. ¹⁹Also 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."

²⁰Now 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.

²¹And 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. ²²Then 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. ²³And they said, "This is blood; the kings have surely struck swords and have killed one another; now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!"

²⁴So 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. ²⁵Then 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.

²⁶And 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. ²⁷Then 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.

—2 Kings 3

Read 2 Kings 3

Has God given you a promise from His Word? Our foremost need in any crisis is to receive a promise from God. According to 2 Peter 1:3–4, God has given us *exceedingly great and precious promises*. These promises are meant to prepare, equip, and guide us through every condition that arises in our lives. It is by way of these promises that God instructs, inspires, and sustains us in crisis and invites us to become participants in what He is doing, even in the worst of situations!

Our text this week centers on three kings and their armies who were in crisis. While one of the kings resigned himself to death and defeat, Jehoshaphat (the king of Judah) sought for a word from God. Not only did God have a word for these kings, He also faithfully fulfilled the word that He gave them through the prophet Elisha.

Rather than giving in to resignation and defeat in crisis, seek a promise from the Lord. Stand on that promise. Rehearse that promise. Pray, mentioning that promise. Cooperate with God's instruction. Look expectantly for God to fulfill His promise!

**FOOD
FOR THOUGHT**

Is his name Joram or Jehoram? Joram is the shortened form of Jehoram. The NKJV version refers to him as Jehoram (we do too). Some translations use Joram to cut down on the confusion between him (the son of Ahab) and King Jehoram (the son of Jehoshaphat).

**FOOD
FOR THOUGHT**

Jehoram believed that God was to be *avoided* because of the crisis, while Jehoshaphat believed that God should be *sought* because of the crisis.⁵

—David Guzik

As you study the text this week, present your own crisis before the Lord. Ask Him for a promise that you can lean on to receive His comfort, direction, and fulfillment.

1. Answer the following questions from 2 Kings 3:4–11 in order to capture the context of this event:
 - a. What was the reason for the hostility between Moab and King Jehoram? 2 Kings 3:4–5
 - b. Who did King Jehoram convince to ally with him? 2 Kings 3:7
 - c. What was the desperate dilemma that these three kings and their armies encountered? 2 Kings 3:8–10
 - d. What did King Jehoshaphat suggest? 2 Kings 3:11

**FOOD
FOR THOUGHT**

This is the second mention of Jehoshaphat directing a king to seek counsel from the Lord God of Israel. In 1 Kings 22:5, he said to King Ahab, “Please inquire for the word of the LORD today.”

2. What do you glean about Elisha's reputation from 2 Kings 3:11–12?

3. From 2 Kings 3:13–14, make a note of anything that piques your interest concerning Elisha's exchange with these kings.

4. Use 2 Kings 3:15–18 to note and comment on Elisha's method, instruction, prophecy, and promise:
 - a. Verse 15

 - b. Verse 16

 - c. Verse 17

**FOOD
FOR THOUGHT**

"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."⁷

—David Guzik

**FOOD
FOR THOUGHT**

When Elisha wanted to become more sensitive to the leading and speaking of the Holy Spirit, he asked for the service of a musician. This demonstrates the great spiritual power in music.⁶

—David Guzik

**FOOD
FOR THOUGHT**

But be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

—Ephesians 5:18b–19

**FOOD
FOR THOUGHT**

God promised victory to Israel, Judah, and Edom for the sake of Jehoshaphat's righteousness. However, the excessive violence done to Moab by Israel was not sanctioned by God.

- d. Verse 18
- 5. Observe and summarize the fulfillment of God's Word from:
 - a. Verse 20
 - b. Verses 21–24
- 6. What is your greatest takeaway from 2 Kings 3?