

**Vertical Church Series, Part 8
“Digging Ditches” 2 Kings 3:9-24**

Today is our final study in our Vertical Church series - {added}

A)The Lord laid this portion of Scripture on my heart **to set up our week of prayer and fasting!**

B)2 Kings 3 Today we are going to look at another event that took place in the life of King Jehoshaphat.

C)Godly king – but he does a dumb thing here!

Scene: Divided Kingdom - After Solomon!

A)Kingdom of Israel 10 tribes in the North – led mostly by ungodly kings – Ahab & Jezebel

B)Judah 2 tribes in the south- Several kings that followed the Lord – like King Jehoshaphat

B)The King of Israel is Jehoram – son of queen Jezebel and King Ahab – Horrible.

C)Jehoram is a little better but not much
2 Kings 3:2-3 **The wrap on him**

v.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.

V.4 -5 We are told that the Moabites paid King Ahab a tribute tax every year.

A)Ahab dies – The Moabite king decides – I am done with that – my agreement was with Ahab not his son

B)Jehoram wants to go down and show him who is boss –

1)But He Solicited the help of The King of Edom and the King Jehoshaphat of Judah.

C)Here is the dumb thing that King Jehoshaphat does – he doesn’t pray. { He just goes

D)Maybe he was trying to **be a bridge builder** – trying to help out the new young King

1)Without even thinking – consulting the Lord– he agrees – let’s do this thing!

E)Judah really had no business being involved in this thing. - Foolish -

“Like one who grabs a stray dog by the ears, is someone who rushes into a quarrel not their own.”

PROVERBS 26:17

Descriptive Proverbs

Prov 26:11 “As a dog returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his folly.”

Prov 21:9 Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife.

King Jehoshaphat – getting into this Battle

“Like one who grabs a stray dog by the ears, is someone who rushes into a quarrel not their own.”

PROVERBS 26:17

**That is where we are going to pick up the story v. 9
2 Kings 3:9-10**

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; 25 miles a day – so approx – 175 miles they have been marching

{ roundabout route Nice way of saying they got lost –this is quickly turning into a disaster}

So they are lost 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."

Bad place – no water – stranded – lost – Jehoram says – God is going to kill us!

A)We are being idiots but IT IS ALL GOD’S FAULT!

B)Why do we do that?

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.

Jehoshaphat has his priorities backward

A)He likes to act on his own intuition and then when things are not going right – Seek God

B)Unfortunately many believers are this way.

1) Do what they think is right and when it doesn’t work – then they seek the Lord

Here is what God promised: - Proverbs 3:5-6

**5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding;
6 In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct your paths.**

Psalm 37:4-5

“Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.”

C) Well King Jehoshaphat doesn't do either of those things –

1) instead he launches out – trouble – then he turns to the Lord

D) Better late than never I guess – right?

The Lord needs to be our first resort not our last!

A) A while back I lost my cell phone – couldn't find it for 2 days – battery died – I was sure it was at home.

B) For 2 days scoured the house

1) Retraced my steps - Car

C) Next day: Wife – Please look for me –

1) She hangs up the phone – Prays – cushion -Calls back

D) For two days I didn't pray once – She prayed right away!

1) Denise more spiritual – Yes

So Jehoshaphat finally takes the spiritual lead here – Let's seek the Lord.

A) So they call ON Elisha – These three kings go to him – what should we do!

B) Elisha was the servant of Elijah – asked for a double portion - **BAD DUDE** –

C) He has a different temperament than Elijah – Blunt - fiery { Lacks etiquette} **No PC in bones**

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."

Why are you calling me ? Go to the false prophets of your mom and Dad – Prophets of their false gods

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."

Trying to be all spiritual

This always amazes me – people who are so far from God – rebellion – get in a jam and suddenly want to get all spiritual – **No no – God's hand is in this** –

Expecting Elisha to say {How do you know that God's hand is in this – even know God – even pray about this!

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."

WOW! Just so you know – I will seek the Lord for you for one reason only - King Jehoshaphat's presence

This Dude is Gnarly – Blunt -

15 But now bring me a musician."

NIV Bring me a Harpist –

Why a musician? Mood music ? Hippy burning essence – going into a trance.

A) Listen – the music did not increase the Lord's presence – but **it increased the prophet's sensitivity** to the Lord's presence.

B) God works thru music – **Music can increase our sensitivity to the Lord's presence.**

C) Worship can prepare our hearts to hear from God.

The Bible says that when two or more are gathered in His name He is there in the midst of them.

A) Gathered in His name? Not here playing church – here drawing near to Jesus – because of Jesus

B) Here because you believe that Jesus is our portion

C) HE IS HERE!

Psalm 22:3 **God inhabits the praises of His People.**

Inhabit = Enthroned

Worship is happening – God is more than just here –

A) He is being enthroned in our midst – Setting up His throne in this place and in our hearts

B) He comes and takes his rightful place in our midst in our gathering –

1) He is being Enthroned in our hearts

Why we make such a big deal – about your presence in worship.

A) Worship is not the warm up to the Bible study.

B) Worship is not the entertainment before the Talk

1) In fact if our Worship leaders are doing their jobs correctly – Your focus should not be on them – Jesus

C) **Worship - Prepares you to receive from the word –**

1) but more importantly, we together are declaring – you are our King

D) We are submitted to you! – BE ENTHRONED!

E) Witness – High School ministry – Something missing

So Elisha calls for a musician – Sensitivity

v. 15 *Then it happened, when the musician played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.* 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.*

Heart of THE message today

A) v.17 'You shall not see wind, nor shall you see rain;
NO STORM yet that valley shall be filled with water

B) This is a “SIMPLE THING” – God was going to provide water would be in that desert with no storm

C) Simple thing – Listen – the area of your life that needs healing, refreshing, revived –

1) SIMPLE THING FOR GOD!

God was promising to send water into that Valley from a Heavenly source!

A) But before the water would come they had to dig the ditches to catch what God would provide.

B) They had to dig the ditches before the water was apparent, so they could benefit from it when it came.

This is a PATTERN that we often see in Scripture where God calls His pp to do something to prepare themselves for the Blessing that is coming!

A) CROSSING THE JORDAN

Joshua 3:5 “Joshua told the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you.”

B) Feeding of the 5,000 – Jesus told the disciples to have the multitude sit down in groups of 50 on the grassy plain.

C) He didn’t perform the miracle until the pp were in a position to receive the miracle.

1) SAY THAT AGAIN

In this case The water was available only because they were obedient to dig the ditches.

A) If Israel and Judah had disobeyed God's word and failed to dig the ditches, then God's blessing would have passed them by.

B) Think about this – God could have created His own ditches right? – He didn’t need them to dig

C) But He asked them to dig ditches because He wanted them to participate in what He was going to do

God told them to get ready and prepare to receive and catch His blessing.

A) God often moves us to do things that may or may not make much sense for the moment, but they are things that will prepare us for what He will do in the future.

B) They are Steps in the pathway of God’s blessing!

C) See, the measure of water available to these thirsty men was directly connected to how faithful they were to dig the ditches.

The more ditches and the bigger the ditches, the more water would be provided.

A) Though it was hard and unpleasant work, the more they did the more blessing they received.

B) The ditches were not the blessing, and they were not the victory,

1) But they were essential parts of both the blessing and the victory – that was going to come

C) Listen, there is an element of faith that involves believing God to do what only GOD CAN DO!

D) But there is also an element of preparation that involves you doing what you can do!

1) You being obedient to do what God is asking you to do!

Listen, the difference between our faith and the way the world prepares is this.

A) The world prepares for something that they hope they can achieve.

B) I am getting ready to do this thing – My prep/ my time/ my energy – end result = we win the game.

1) We give the presentation.

C) But faith is about Preparing for something that we know that we cannot accomplish – but we can only receive from the hand of God.

D) But we can and need to prepare ourselves for the outpouring

Similar situation in Ch. 4 – One of my favorite stories!

A) Widow – out of money – bills are due – on the verge of losing her sons to slavery.

B) Calls on Elisha –

2 So Elisha said to her, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" And she said, "Your maidservant has nothing in the house but a jar of oil."

3 Then he said, "Go, borrow vessels from everywhere, from all your neighbors — empty vessels; do not gather just a few. 4 And when you have come in, you shall shut the door behind you and your sons; then pour it into all those vessels, and set aside the full ones."

5 So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured it out. 6 Now it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel."

And he said to her, "There is not another vessel." So the oil ceased. 7 Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you and your sons live on the rest."

C) She is told to borrow those empty vessels believing that God was going to fill them.

1) Elisha instructed **Borrow many not just a few!**

C) Her faith was going to be registered in how many pots she borrowed.

1) The degree to which her need was met was going to be measured in the same way.

“She was herself to measure out what she should have; and I believe that you and I, in the matter of spiritual blessings from God, have more to do with the measurement of our mercies than we think. We make our blessings little, because our prayers are little.”

CH Spurgeon

Listen Church – this week for us is about Digging ditches – through Prayer.

A)Hard work – Praying, pleading

B)Admitting – We have a need that we cannot meet.

1)Revival - - Out pouring

2)Healing –

3)Refreshed –

C)We need God’s mercy on our country!

1)Outpouring on our Church – families – CCS

2)Public Schools

D)NC – **400k pp who are not in Church** – LOST

1)Nineveh – ONE DAY

E)Dig this week in prayer – believing that God is going to work in some way! –

Dig Believing - He is going to meet the need – He is going to do a work in us!

A)Digging ditches was something the people of God could do.

B) God didn't ask them to do more than they were able to do. **Hard – not fun – But doable**

C) **Fasting & Prayer can be hard** –fasting is never Fun

1)Question is to what degree will we be obedient to what God is asking

So the kings returned from their visit to Elisha & told their commanders to have the men dig ditches.

A)I AM SURE THEY WERE NOT JUMPING UP AND DOWN – AWESOME – GIVE ME A SHOVEL

B)Thirsty, near-dead men in the middle of the desert don't look forward to the hard work of digging ditches in dry rocky ground.

1) Yet this work was essential.

C)It was a part of the preparation – They did it!

2 Kings 3 v. 20 Now it happened **in the morning**, {THE NEXT DAY they prepared themselves and God answered BIG TIME} when the grain offering was

offered, that suddenly water came by way of Edom, and the land was filled with water.

Note: Do you think this was hard –for these men – tired dehydrated men to dig ditches?

A)Desert hot – the ground is dry – rocky – pain

B)Here is what is interesting to me- There is not one verse in this story describing how hard it was to dig ditches in the desert.

C)Not one – You would think we would have read and the men were complaining –

1)**The men worked hard all day – nothing – why?**

I believe it is because the glory of what God did when they were obedient was so much greater than the sacrifice and the pain they experienced in obeying his voice.

God calls us to do the work of preparation.

A)That is what this week is about –

B)Praying and fasting is going to be our time of digging ditches – our time of borrowing jars

C)Preparing ourselves as a church and as individuals for God to speak and God to move

C)God to work in the miraculous in our lives!

The rest of the Chapter – Chronicles the Victory