

TakeFive

Biblical insights for the week of February 25-March 1, 2019
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We Dig the Ditches, God Brings the Rain

Monday — 2 Kings 3:1- 6

The book of Ecclesiastes states that there is nothing new under the sun. Adam fell into temptation and that brief moment of rebellion interjected itself into humanity and sin disrupted the perfect flow of harmony from generation to generation.

King Ahab and his wife made the sacred pillar of Baal (verse 2) and sinned against the God of Israel. Their son Jehoram became king over Israel, and while he did not worship Baal in public, he 'persisted in the sins of Jeroboam who made Israel sin' (verse 3).

All of us are afflicted with some of the damage caused by the cycle of sin that tragically weaves throughout history. Sometimes we are left to carry the baggage from decisions made long before us. The wonderful news is Jesus took all of the past, present and future sins upon Himself on the cross. The chains linking us to the past have been broken, and there is hope for our future in Christ.

For Today: Lord, when I wrestle with the choices of the past that have hurt me, please remind me that I have the victory because You were victorious.

Tuesday — 2 Kings 3:5-14

Jehoram's father most likely infuriated Mesha, the king of Moab, who was a sheep breeder who paid taxes in the form of lambs and wool from rams (verse 5). A rebellion ensued, and Jehoram enlisted the help of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah and the king of Edom to fight the Moabites. The three kings had a common enemy, which was the land of Moab. The king of Judah advised them to take the path of the "Wilderness of Edom" (verse 8). The three kings were on a quest with their sense of security in the notion of a pact against an enemy. They were without a true north or a reliance on God to guide them. In contrast, the three wise kings in the New Testament were clearly led by the star of Bethlehem to Jesus.

Sometimes we see opportunities that look fantastic on paper, but we miss the opportunity to gain God's perspective. Again, we can have the best intentions, but are they God's best for us?

For Today: Lord, please be my guide through the circumstances and situations in life and give me discernment so that I may act according to Your will.

Wednesday — 2 Kings 3:9-14

The repercussions of moving in our own strength are ultimately depletion both physically and emotionally. The three kings made 'a circuit of seven days journey' (verse 9) after believing they had a foolproof blueprint. However, there 'was no water for the host nor for the beasts that followed them' (verse 10). When we arrive at the end of ourselves, we can view the great chasm between God and the frailty of our humanity. Jehoshaphat recognized this first and said 'is there not a prophet here of Jehovah, that we may inquire of Jehovah by him?' (verse 11).

There is great clarity when our circumstances and plans fail us. We can call upon the Lord in the uncertainty of life. We can turn to Him instead of turning the wrong way.

For Today: Lord, please teach me how to turn to You in all circumstances.

Thursday — 2 Kings 3:13-18

This portion of the passage is close to my heart; I truly believe the Holy Spirit anoints music that glorifies God. Music can ultimately soften the heart that is hardened and align it to the heart of Jesus. Many times after a time of worship, my heart has felt truly prepared to hear from the Lord through Pastor Shawn's messages.

In this passage, we see that when the prophet Elisha is approached, he lets the three kings know he is displeased and the text reads like a flurry of anger. Elisha is attuned to the heart of God and discerns that he needs music to soften his spirit. A minstrel was summoned, and 'Jehovah (God) came upon him (Elisha)' and he told the three kings to dig ditches (verse 16) and 'the valley shall be filled with water.' God would orchestrate the light to appear as blood and trick the Moabites into believing the three kings and their army had perished.

For Today: Lord, please give me a new song to soften my heart so I can hear Your voice.

Friday — 2 Kings 3:19-27

The conclusion of this passage spells out that God is victorious when we humble ourselves and turn to Him. The Moabites had a false sense of security, believing the army of the three kings had all perished. That was once the position of the three kings when they were certain they would succeed by their own methods. This time, God was on their side through the prophetic words of Elisha and He was victorious. God utilized the properties of His creation such as water and light to play a role in the victory. Perhaps we should be looking for the properties of the Holy Spirit to play a role in our lives. It may be a word inspired by the Holy Spirit or a circumstance that is aligned with God's will. God can use us in all the complexities from the past and cloudiness of our own plans.

For Today: Lord, help us turn to You for You have won the victory!