

General Church Education



# Joram of Israel and the Moabites

2 Kings 3

## Lesson 17

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 6: The Lord Is the Prophet and  
Preserver

For ages 11-12 years

## Joram of Israel and the Moabites

2 Kings 3

### Teacher Background

When Ahab conquered Moab he made its king pay tribute to Israel. After Ahab died, Moab refused to pay. So, when Ahab's son Joram came to the throne, he asked Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, to help him fight Moab and he agreed. Joram attacked from Edom, which Moab would not expect, but he ran out of water. The kings went to Elisha to learn what would happen. The Lord said they were to dig ditches. Then, when they quenched their thirst, the armies would attack Moab and destroy its food and water sources. However, the water that filled the ditches looked like blood to the Moabites and they thought their enemies were dead. So they entered the camp and were defeated. Then Israel ruined Moab. As a last resort, the king of Moab sacrificed his son.

Moab has many meanings in the Writings. Most have to do with polluting the Word. When Joram attacked Moab the people cared for their own pleasure and worshiped false gods. Their rebellion is understandable since no one likes to be enslaved. However, the Lord allowed Moab to be destroyed so it could not influence other nations or rebel against Israel.

### Focus Points

- Moab rebelled against Israel; Joram attacked Moab from Edom and ran out of water.
- Israel consulted Elijah, who told them to dig ditches which filled with water.
- The water looked like blood, so Moab thought Israel had died and attacked, leading to its downfall.

### Readings from the Writings

“And the servants of Isaac dug in the valley, and found there a well of living waters. That this signifies the Word as to the literal sense in which is the internal sense, is evident from the signification of ‘digging in the valley,’ as being to make search lower down in respect to where truths are; for to ‘dig’ is to search, and a ‘valley’ denotes what is below.” *Arcana Coelestia* 3424

“The mighty ones of Moab [signify] those who are in the life of falsity from [the love of self], is evident from the signification of ‘mighty ones,’ as being things that reign and prevail; and from the representation of Moab, as being those who are in natural good and suffer themselves to be easily led astray ... for they who are in natural good, and not in good from the truth of faith, thus not in spiritual good, suffer themselves to be led away to believe any falsities whatever, thus to live according to them. They are led away from truths to falsities especially by those things which favor their loves.” *Arcana Coelestia* 8315

## Teacher Activity Overview

The lesson offers students the following choices:

### Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“Thus says the Lord: ‘Make this valley full of ditches’. For thus says the Lord: ‘You shall not see the wind, nor shall you see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, so that you, your cattle, and your animals may drink’” (2 Kings 3:16, 17)

### Projects and Activities (for answers, see back of lesson)

Fill in the Blanks

Read the story of Joram and Moab. Try to fill in the blank spaces without looking at the verses in 2 Kings 3. Then check your answers and complete any blanks you missed.

In the Wilderness

The Writings give many spiritual meanings for the word “wilderness”. Read some meanings and write why you think wildernesses might have that meaning in the Word.

### Additional Project and Activity Choices for Parents and Teachers

Choosing Music

Elisha called for a musician so he could feel the Lord’s presence. Reflect on the relationship between music and emotions. Available at: <https://newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-choosing-music-1-samuel-16-2-kings-3.pdf>

The Sun on the Water

Color two pictures of the sun on the water in the ditches. Make the water in one picture blue to show that they were filled with water. Make the water in the other picture red to illustrate what the Moabites saw. Available at: <https://newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-the-sun-on-the-water-2-kings-3.pdf>

A Chart of the Kings of Israel and Judah

As you learn about the kings of Israel and Judah, complete a chart. As you fill in the spaces, think about whether the king is good or evil. Available at: <https://newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-a-chart-of-the-kings-of-israel-and-judah-1-kings-2-kings.pdf>

# Joram of Israel and the Moabites

## 2 Kings 3

### Vocabulary

**arrogant**—having an exaggerated sense of one’s importance

**quenched**—satisfied (their thirst)

**perverted**—did things that were not acceptable

### Moab Continues to Rebel

Almost as soon as Ahaziah became king, Moab rebelled against Israel. Ahab, Ahaziah’s father, had conquered Moab and made its king pay tribute. Since Mesha, the king of Moab, was a sheep-breeder, the annual tribute was two hundred thousand sheep with all their wool. When Ahab died, the king of Moab refused to pay the tribute. After Ahaziah died and Joram (or Jehoram), another son of Ahab, became king of Israel, this rebellion led to a war among four nations.

Joram gathered the men of Israel to go against Moab. Then he went to Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, and asked him to join in the war to put down the rebellion. Jehoshaphat agreed, using the same words he had used to Ahab when Ahab needed help from Judah to fight against Syria.

“I will go up; I am as you are, my people as your people, and my horses as your horses.” (2 Kings 3:7)



### Joram’s Plan of Attack

Joram took a long route to attack Moab. He went by way of the wilderness of Edom. Since the Judah had conquered Edom the king of Edom was forced to help king Joram fight. Since Israel is just north and east of Moab, traveling directly from Israel would have been shorter route and had good water supplies. But Mesha would have expected that. By coming from the south through Judah and then Edom, Joram could gather more warriors and launch a surprise attack. He may not have been aware of how terrible the wilderness would be. He believed that the water his soldiers carried would be enough. Spiritually, Joram’s plan of attack makes sense as well. Although

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Jehoshaphat was a good king who tried to follow the Lord, Joram was not. He was arrogant and did not look to the Lord or to a prophet of the Lord for guidance. A wilderness, a place without water, stands for being without any truth from the Word— exactly the state in which Joram was.

### The Water Runs Out

After marching for seven days the army ran out of water and was unable to find any more. It not only needed water for the soldiers, but for the cows, sheep, camels, horses, and donkeys that traveled with them. These animals were vital. The cows and sheep provided food for the army. So, if they died the soldiers would starve to death. The other animals transported the men and their supplies. If they died, the journey would be impossible.

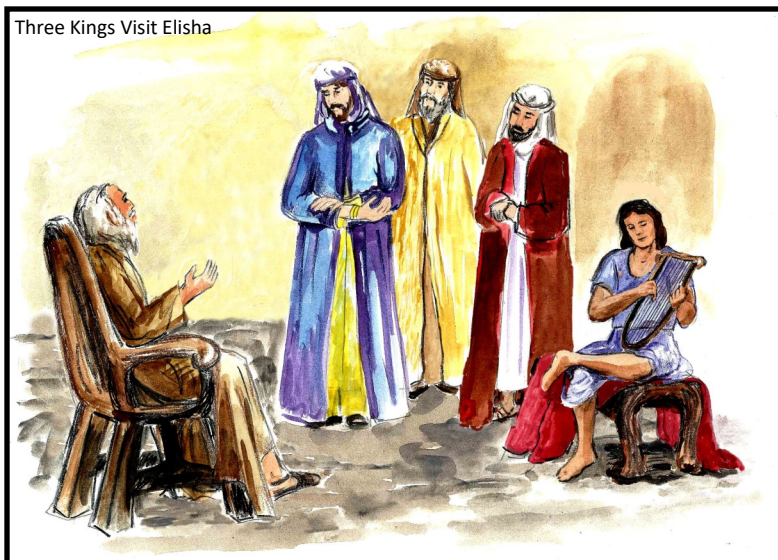
Joram, the king of Israel, became discouraged and blamed the Lord for the problem. Since he did not love the Lord, he did not think of asking a prophet to inquire of the Lord what they should do. But Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, said,

“Is there no prophet of the Lord here, that we may inquire of the Lord by him?” (2 Kings 3:11)

### Elisha Inquires of the Lord

When Joram learned that Elisha was there, the three kings went to him. Notice that they did not send for Elisha, but “went down to him.” At first, Elisha refused to ask help of the Lord and told Joram he should go to the prophets of Baal, whose god he worshiped. Then, because of Jehoshaphat, Elisha agreed to speak to the Lord. First, Elisha called for a musician. He felt the presence of the Lord while the music played.

The Word does not tell us what type of musicians were brought or the kind of music they played. However, Elisha could hear the Lord, who told him what should be done to have water. First they were to dig ditches throughout the valley. Then Elisha told them that after the water had filled the valley and the people and animals had quenched their thirst, the armies of



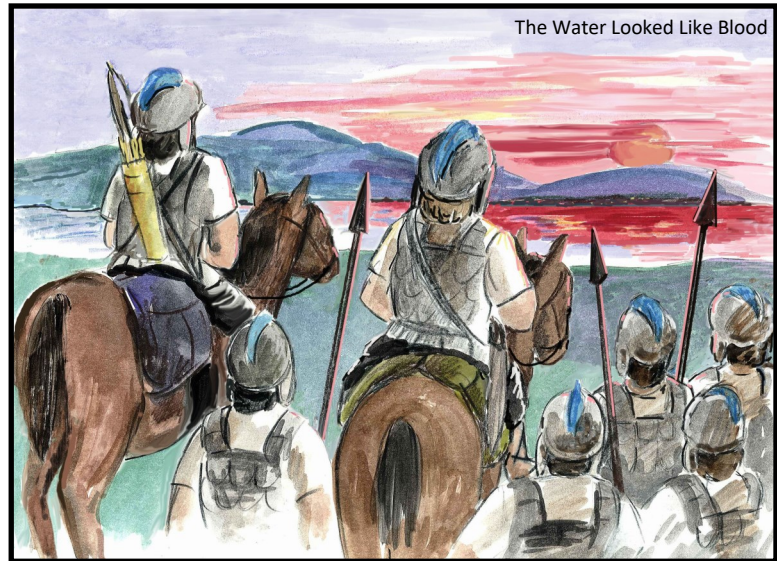
Three Kings Visit Elisha

Israel, Judah and Edom would attack the strong and important cities of Moab. They would destroy the land so it would not have water to drink or good land to grow crops.

### The Water Fills the Valley

The Lord performed a great miracle by means of Elisha. He not only gave the armies of the three kings water, but made the sun shine on the water in the ditches. This made the water look so much like blood that when the

Moabites saw it, they thought their enemies had killed each other. This makes sense if we remember that Judah and Israel had been enemies since Israel was divided. Also, Edom, like Moab, was the possession of Judah. It paid tribute and had little freedom. And it was common in those times for nations to squabble with each other—there was rarely peace throughout the lands.



### The Moabites Are Defeated

Moab foolishly rushed into the enemy’s camp, thinking they might find spoil. But, Israel and its allies rose up and defeated them. Then, as Elisha prophesied, the armies of Israel, Judah and Edom did terrible things. They threw stones on Moab’s fields, making it impossible to plow them and sow seed. They filled the wells with dirt, so there was no water. They cut down fruit trees, so there was no fruit. The kings wanted to ruin Moab. The Lord let them do this because the Moabites were even more wicked.

When the king of Moab saw defeat was inevitable, he took seven hundred soldiers and tried to break through the enemy lines. When this failed, he sacrificed his eldest son as a last resort. This made the armies of Israel, Judah and Edom retreat.

### Water in the Wilderness

Water is essential for life on earth, just as the truth is essential for spiritual life. It is important to note that the water that appeared in the wilderness of Edom did not fill the valley until the preparation was complete. This is like trying to succeed in our good and useful goals.

- First, we must want to succeed = desire to win the battle against Moab
- Then we must believe the Lord has power to help = Joram asks for a prophet of the Lord
- We must go to the Word = the prophet Elisha
- We find out what the Word has to say = inquire of the Lord
- We study to understand what is required of us = dig the ditches
- We understand the truths needed to succeed = water flows into the valleys
- Finally, we do what is needed = enter the battle

This may sound simple but like Joram, the king of Israel, we often want to just get going without the first steps. However, if we remember we need water to live, we can be reminded that we need to work to learn, understand and apply the truths of the Lord’s Word to truly live well.

## Activity Overview

### Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“Thus says the Lord: ‘Make this valley full of ditches’. For thus says the Lord: ‘You shall not see the wind, nor shall you see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, so that you, your cattle, and your animals may drink’ (2 Kings 3:16, 17)

### Projects and Activities (answers at back of lesson)

Choose one or two.

#### Fill in the Blanks

Read the story of Joram and Moab. Try to fill in the blank spaces without looking at the verses in 2 Kings 3. Then check your answers and complete any blanks you missed.

#### In the Wilderness

The Writings give many spiritual meanings for the word “wilderness”. Read some meanings and write why you think wildernesses might have that meaning in the Word.

## Fill in the Blanks

### 2 Kings 3

Fill in the blank spaces with the correct word without looking at the verses in 2 Kings 3 first. Then, refer to the verses after the questions to see how you did and fill in any missing answers.

1. Now Joram the son of \_\_\_\_\_ became king over Israel. v. 1
2. And he did evil in the sight of the \_\_\_\_\_ . v. 2
3. Now \_\_\_\_\_ king of Moab was a \_\_\_\_\_ . v. 4
4. And [Jehoshaphat] said, “I will go up. I am as you are, my people as your \_\_\_\_\_ and my \_\_\_\_\_ as your horses.” v. 7
5. Is there no \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord here, that we may inquire of the \_\_\_\_\_ by him? v. 11
6. And one of the servants of the king of Israel answered and said, “ \_\_\_\_\_ the son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of \_\_\_\_\_ .” v. 11
7. And he [Elisha] said, “Thus says the \_\_\_\_\_ : ‘Make this valley full of \_\_\_\_\_ .’” v. 16
8. [S]uddenly water came by way of \_\_\_\_\_ , and the land was \_\_\_\_\_ with water.” v. 20
9. The Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as \_\_\_\_\_ . v. 22
10. And they said, “This is \_\_\_\_\_ ; the kings have \_\_\_\_\_ one another; now, therefore, Moab to the \_\_\_\_\_ !” v. 23
11. So when they came to the camp of \_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_ rose up and \_\_\_\_\_ the Moabites, so that they \_\_\_\_\_ before them. v. 24
12. And they destroyed the \_\_\_\_\_ and each man threw a \_\_\_\_\_ on every good piece of \_\_\_\_\_ .” v. 25



## In the Wilderness

2 Kings 3

The Heavenly Doctrine gives us many spiritual meanings for the word “wilderness”. Each meaning has to do with the story in which “wilderness’ is mentioned. Each meaning tells us about the spiritual condition of the church.

There are many kinds of wildernesses, but they all have some things in common. It is hard for vegetation to grow there. Few animals can live there. There is little water or food. Few, if any people live there. Travel is very difficult.

The wildernesses in the Word were probably very rocky or sandy, with little water or vegetation, and only a few towns where people could obtain supplies.

Do you remember other stories from the Word in which a wilderness played a key part? List some of these below.

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In the chart below, read some meanings of wildernesses then write a reason why you think wildernesses might have that meaning in the Word. Think of what you know about the spiritu-

Meaning in the Doctrine	Reason for that meaning?
The truths of the Word have been twisted and used for evil purposes— made false.	
There are no truths because the Word is not present with the people.	
Temptations—the strong desire to do something wrong because of a lack of the truth.	
No goodness—therefore no truth.	
Obscurity—inability to see the truth very well.	

al meanings for water, food, trees, life, etc.

What is the one word that all the meanings have within them? Why do you think that is?

# Answers

## Lesson 17

Fill in the Blanks

1. Ahab. 2. Lord. 3. Mesha, sheepbreeder, 4. people, horses. 5. prophet, Lord. 6. Elisha, Elijah.  
7. Lord, ditches. 8. Edom, filled. 9. blood. 10. blood, killed, spoil. 11. Israel, Israel, attacked,  
fled. 12. cities, stone, land.