

What was the purpose of the armies of Judah, Edom, and Israel digging ditches in the valley?

What would the depth, width and number of their ditches show about their confidence in God's promise?

Based on the promises and calling of God in our lives, what would our ditches look like? Are they deep, wide, and numerous? Are they shallow, narrow, and few?

In what ways has God shown His faithfulness to you in the past?

What are some of the things you do regularly to strengthen your faith?

How has God answered a prayer in a way that was different from what you prayed for?

Read **James 2:14-26**.

Are faith and works opposed to one another?

How do faith and works work together in the Christian's life?

How have you seen people go to one extreme or another?

Read **Colossians 3:23-24**.

What do these verses teach us about our responsibility in living the Christian life?

Read **Philippians 2:12-13**.

How can you work out your salvation while God works in you?

GRACE NOTES

Message: **ELISHA - Digging Ditches**

Scripture: 2 Kings 3

Date: Sunday, September 13, 2015

Joram son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned twelve years. He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, but not as his father and mother had done. He got rid of the sacred stone of Baal that his father had made. Nevertheless he clung to the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit; he did not turn away from them. (2 Kings 3:1-3)

"What!" exclaimed the king of Israel. "Has the LORD called us three kings together only to deliver us into the hands of Moab?"

But Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there no prophet of the LORD here, through whom we may inquire of the LORD?" An officer of the king of Israel answered, "Elisha son of Shaphat is here. He used to pour water on the hands of Elijah." (2 Kings 3:10-11)

FAR TOO OFTEN, IT IS OUR DESPERATION THAT SENDS US BACK TO THE LORD.

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. Elisha said to the king of Israel, "Why do you want to involve me? Go to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother."

"No," the king of Israel answered, "because it was the LORD who called us three kings together to deliver us into the hands of Moab."

Elisha said, "As surely as the LORD Almighty lives, whom I serve, if I did not have respect for the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not pay any attention to you." (2 Kings 3:12-14)

(continued on back)

“...now bring me a harpist.” While the harpist was playing, the hand of the LORD came on Elisha and he said, “This is what the LORD says: I will fill this valley with pools of water. For this is what the LORD says: You will see neither wind nor rain, yet this valley will be filled with water, and you, your cattle and your other animals will drink. This is an easy thing in the eyes of the LORD; he will also deliver Moab into your hands.” (2 Kings 3:15-18)

**ONLY GOD CAN SEND THE WATER,
BUT HE MAY BE CALLING YOU TO DIG THE DITCH.**

“The next morning, about the time for offering the sacrifice, there it was—water flowing from the direction of Edom! And the land was filled with water.” (2 Kings 3:20)

**SOMETIMES GOD ANSWERS YOUR PRAYERS BUT
NOT ALWAYS IN THE WAY YOU EXPECTED.**

Now all the Moabites had heard that the kings had come to fight against them; so every man, young and old, who could bear arms was called up and stationed on the border. When they got up early in the morning, the sun was shining on the water. To the Moabites across the way, the water looked red—like blood. “That’s blood!” they said. “Those kings must have fought and slaughtered each other. Now to the plunder, Moab!” But when the Moabites came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and fought them until they fled. And the Israelites invaded the land and slaughtered the Moabites. (2 Kings 3:21-24)

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)

SERMON STUDY NOTES -

Fill in the blank in this sentence: If I had _____, then I would be happy/satisfied/content.

Why did you fill in the blank the way you did?

Why do you think it is so difficult to find our satisfaction only in our relationship with the Lord?

Thinking back to the message this past Sunday, what most caught your attention, challenged you, encouraged you, caused you to think or act differently, or left you confused?

Describe a time when a great need drove you to rely only on God.

What big dream do you have for your life that you will need God’s help to accomplish?

If the Lord is calling you to “dig a ditch,” what is that ditch for you?

What was it that drove the three kings in our story to the Lord?

What is it that most frequently drives you back to the Lord?

What does only approaching the Lord in times of desperation show about our relationship with Him? What does it show to the unchurched who are observing us?

What could you do differently that would keep you from only approaching God in emergency situations?