

## Tax Collection Gone Seriously Wrong

2 Kings 3

### I. Jehoram Was only Half Bad

**A. Jehoram failed to live up to the standard of evil set by his family; being better than a monster is no great virtue.** Now *Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign* over Israel in Samaria the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. And *he wrought evil in the sight of the LORD; but not like his father*, and like his mother: for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made. *Nevertheless he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat*, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom. (2 KINGS 3:1-3)

**B. Baal, the Phoenician sun-god [Molech] was worshiped with abominable practices ranging from prostitution to abortion.** They have built also *the high places of Baal, to burn their sons* with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, *which I commanded not, nor spake it*, neither came it into my mind: (JEREMIAH 19:5)

**C. Baal was the abomination of the sophisticated; trendy thinking has limited value.** For it is written, *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise*, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. *Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* (1 CORINTHIANS 1:19-20)

### II. Moab Resisted the Tax Collector

**A. Times change.** And *Mesha king of Moab* was a sheepmaster, and *rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool*. But it came to pass, *when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled* against the king of Israel. (2 KINGS 3:4-5)

**B. One more time, Judah and Israel formed a coalition for war.** And king *Jehoram* went out of Samaria the same time, and *numbered all Israel*. And he went *and sent to Jehoshaphat* the king of Judah, saying, *The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle?* And he said, *I will go up: I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses*. And he said, Which way shall we go up? And he answered, The way through the wilderness of Edom. (2 KINGS 3:6-8)

**C. God has a record of infatuating those whom He has chosen to destroy; Jehoram began to have second thoughts.** So the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, and the king of Edom: and *they fetched a compass of seven days' journey*: and *there was no water for the host*, and for the cattle that followed them. And the king of *Israel said*, Alas! that *the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab!* (2 KINGS 3:9-10)

**D. Jehoshaphat knew where to turn for guidance.** But *Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD*, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, *Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat*, which poured water on the hands of Elijah. 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. (2 KINGS 3:11-12)

**E. Elisha was willing to do for Judah what he could not bring himself to do for Israel.** And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? *get thee to the prophets of thy father*, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, *Nay: for the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab*. And Elisha said,

As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, **were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee**, nor see thee. (2 KINGS 3:13-14)

**F. God agreed to help.** But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that **the hand of the LORD came** upon him. And he said, Thus saith the LORD, **Make this valley full of ditches**. For thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts. And **this is but a light thing in the sight of the LORD: he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand**. And ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and **mar every good piece of land** with stones. (2 KINGS 3:15-19)

**G. The Moabites totally misunderstood what they saw.** And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat offering was offered, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and **the country was filled with water**. And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered all that were able to put on armour, and upward, and stood in the border. And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and **the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood: And they said, This is blood: the kings are surely slain, and they have smitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil**. (2 KINGS 3:20-23)

**H. What God had said, came to pass.** And when they came to the camp of Israel, the **Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites**, so that they fled before them: but they went forward smiting the Moabites, even in *their* country. And **they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone**, and filled it; and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees: only in Kirharaseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about *it*, and smote it. (2 KINGS 3:24-25)

### III. Some Things Aren't Worth the Price

**A. The coalition had only sought to collect taxes; the depravity which followed removed the will to continue.** And when the king of **Moab saw that the battle was too sore** for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through *even* unto the king of Edom: but they could not. Then **he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering upon the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel: and they departed from him, and returned to their own land**. (2 KINGS 3:26-27) God was indignant that Israel had provoked such sin.

**B. Scripture had warned about such practices.** Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for **every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods**. (DEUTERONOMY 12:31) The Carthaginians once sacrificed 200 sons of their nobility to appease their demons. Moab worshiped the idol Chemosh.

**C. Moab polluted the land.** Yea, **they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood**. (PSALM 106:37-38) **along with** And **thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech**, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I *am* the LORD. (LEVITICUS 18:21)