

NT Reading: James 1:2-8

Theme: The presence of God's people in the world brings blessing to those associated with them. Our association with the Lord Jesus Christ by faith brings far greater and lasting blessing to us and is the fragrance of Christ in the world.

Background: Elisha has taken the "mantle" of Elijah. God's blessing on the godly and his curses upon the ungodly are seen again in Chapter 3.

Introduction: Taking on a task you don't really relish?

I. An Unlikely Alliance **1-7**

A. Three Kings

1. Jehoram (son of Ahab, next in line because Ahaziah had not kids)

ASIDE: Compare **3:1** with **1:17**. **2:Kings 18:16** solves the dilemma. Co-regency.

- a. Wants Moab back in line – rebelled after death of Ahab
- b. A "double-minded" man
 - Not as bad as he could be (put away the pillar)
 - "Not as Bad" is still "not good"

2. Jehoshaphat

- a. Did "what was right in the sight of the Lord" (**1 Kings 22:43**)
- But not perfectly

NOTE: It's a matter of the *heart*. One was committed to doing what was right. The other was double-minded.

- b. He supports Israel and Jehoram **7b**

3. King of Edom

- vassal state of Judah, little choice in the matter

B. A Daring Ploy **8-10**

1. Surprise the enemy
 - Approach them from the less-protected southern end
2. Headed for disaster **9**
 - No water after 7 days
3. It's God's fault – according to Jehoram **10**

III. Grace By Association **11-14**

A. The Lord's Prophet **11**

1. Jehoshaphat's request
 - a. Where is there a prophet of the Lord?
 - b. Elisha is with them
 - "the word of the Lord is with him"
2. Jehoram's rebuke **13**
 - a. Rebuked by Elisha -
 - Call your own prophets (But he is double-minded)
 - b. Rebuking God??
 - 1) The Lord is the problem
 - 2) Calling good evil!

B. For the Sake of Jehoshaphat **14**

1. Provision and Deliverance **16-20**

-Blessing by association – for all three kings/armies

NOTE: That was and is God's plan – that his people be a blessing to the nations
-Genesis 18:18; 26:4; Zechariah 8:13

- C. The Abundance of Grace in Christ
 - 1. In Christ, By Faith
 - His work and blessings become ours – by association
 - 2. Blessing those around us
 - 2 Corinthians 2:14-16

- IV. A Shocking Victory **21-25**
 - A. Judgment Against Moab
 - 1. Expecting easy victory
 - 2. No mercy is showed
 - B. A Foretaste of Judgment
 - 1. Experiencing the curse in Moab
 - 2. Anticipating God's final judgment

- V. The Desperate Acts of Unbelief **26,27**
 - A. Mesha Seeks Deliverance
 - 1. The 700
 - 2. A Deal With the Devil
 - Appease Chemosh by sacrificing his son on the wall

- B. The Kings Relent

ASIDE: Understanding "great wrath against Israel" -Three views

- a. God's great wrath?
 - Means Elisha's instructions were in error.
 - No "scorched earth" policy permitted
 - But Elisha is never rebuked or corrected
 - b. Moab's great wrath
 - The Moabites are incited to self-sacrificing assault on Israel
 - Israel quits the field
 - c. Great "indignation" *upon* (legitimate translation) Israel
 - They have had enough; Leave in disgust

- C. The Unbelieving World – Today
 - 1. But we're "enlightened"
 - Such gruesome things can't happen among us?
 - 2. The fruit of unbelief
 - False religions and bowing before false "gods" (recognized or not) have dreadful consequences

ILLUSTRATION: The orphan and the infant.

NOTE: How much of the world is in slavery, bondage, poverty – not because of capitalism or socialism, but because of unbelief – because of satanic beliefs and religions? Much, I fear.

- VI. From Desperation to Eternal Salvation and Liberation
 - We spread the blessings of grace by *association* with those around us, and by *proclamation* of the grace of God at work in us in Christ.