

FINISHING STRONG SERIES

# DIGGING DITCHES

Partnering with God for Supernatural Outcomes



'And he said, "Thus says the Lord: 'Make this valley full of ditches.' For thus says the Lord: 'You shall not see wind, nor shall you see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, so that you, your cattle, and your animals may drink.' And this is a simple matter in the sight of the Lord; He will also deliver the Moabites into your hand.'" 2 Kings 3:16-18

The kings of Israel, Judah and Edom launched a combined military campaign against Moab but for seven days they and their armies wandered in the wilderness without water and were getting fatigued and despondent. However, the prophet Elisha gave a specific word from the Lord that turned everything around even though it didn't seem to make sense.

This series we are looking at what digging ditches means for us especially as we fast approach the end of the year. It's possible that just like the three kings we may be feeling fatigued and perhaps even despondent as well. But the same God that turned things around then in one day can do the same and more for us.

## Day 1

### What Do We Do: What is the Lord Saying?

'What should we do?' the king of Israel cried out. "The Lord has brought the three of us here to let the king of Moab defeat us." But King Jehoshaphat of Judah asked, "Is there no prophet of the Lord with us? If there is, we can ask the Lord what to do through him." One of King Joram's officers replied, "Elisha son of Shaphat is here. He used to be Elijah's personal assistant." 2 Kings 3:10-11

We see many references in the Bible of David inquiring of the Lord, moving according to God's instructions and never losing a battle. Contrast this with Joram who decided to embark on an expedition, bring in other kings along the way, but not ever asking God what to do or how to go about it. As good as the plan looked, when trouble came on the way Joram was the first to lose hope and declare defeat because none of the options seemed to have any positive outcome and it appeared the entire journey was a lost cause. However, Jehoshaphat asked the only question that could bring real clarity on what the next steps should be which in essence was, "What is the Lord saying?"

'Your own ears will hear him. Right behind you a voice will say, "This is the way you should go," whether to the right or to the left.' Isaiah 30:21

'Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the Lord and turn away from evil.' Proverbs 3:5-7

The error we often make as believers is that we tend to exhaust practically every option available to us before we turn to the Lord as a last resort. It ought not to be so. The way the Lord designed our walk with Him is to involve Him right from the start and every step of the way. As we do so He starts ordering our steps and guiding us on the way to go as we constantly listen for His voice and His direction.

'So David asked the Lord, "Should I go out to fight the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?" The Lord replied to David, "Yes, go ahead. I will certainly hand them over to you." 2 Samuel 5:19

Have we gone through the year making plans, taking decisions that seem to make sense, but without engaging God on what to do or how to go about it? We have an opportunity to course correct and start shaping the coming year by asking God in advance what is on His mind for our future in all areas. God shouldn't be an afterthought, He's the One that knows the end from the beginning so we should prioritize getting His perspective first.

**Prayer:** Lord I apologize for the decisions I've taken without consulting You. Show me what's in Your heart for me concerning the rest of the year and the year to come and align me to Your plans.

## Day 2

### The Right Spiritual Network

“But King Jehoshaphat of Judah asked, “Is there no prophet of the Lord with us? If there is, we can ask the Lord what to do through him.” One of King Joram’s officers replied, “Elisha son of Shaphat is here. He used to be Elijah’s personal assistant.””  
2 Kings 3:11

Human beings are generally relational by nature which is why a lot is said about the power of people and networks. While it’s true that people are very important, the caveat is that we must have the right people and networks. It’s good to have the corporate and social networks, but a more powerful group is our spiritual network. We need to have the right people in our corner: the ones that will ask the right questions at the right time, keep pointing us in the direction of what God is saying per time and are able to access the mind of God.

“Elisha replied, “As surely as the Lord Almighty lives, whom I serve, I wouldn’t even bother with you except for my respect for King Jehoshaphat of Judah.” 2 Kings 3:14

The saving grace for the trio of kings was that Jehoshaphat was among them. He was the only one who thought to enquire of God and that singular decision changed the trajectory of their journey. He was also the only one Elisha was willing to give attention. It was the networking of Jehoshaphat and Elisha that brought the prophetic instruction that changed their story. But for Jehoshaphat, they would very likely have kept wandering in the wilderness which would have made them easy for Moab to defeat. Is it possible that we’re experiencing defeat in some areas because we’re asking the wrong questions or don’t have the right network or both?

“The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.”  
Isaiah 11:2

The most important personality we must consistently engage is the Holy Spirit who among many other things is the spirit of counsel. The fact that His counsel is available to us doesn’t mean we’re taking full advantage of it because we need to intentionally ask Him to guide us. It’s through His guidance that He inspires us to make the right decisions and connects us to the right people.

**Prayer:** Lord help me to seek Your counsel daily so I will consistently be positioned in the right network of people at the right time.

## Day 3

### Obeying Strange Instructions

'He said, "Thus says the Lord, 'Make this valley (the Arabah) full of trenches.' 2 Kings 3:16 AMP

The reason the kings went to Elisha in the first place was because they were in a desperate situation as was no water anywhere. Yes, Elisha gave them a word from the Lord, but it included a strange instruction – make the valley full of trenches. For context let's remember that they had wandered in the desert for 7 days without water. So we can imagine just how weak and despondent the men were. They may have expected rain to fall and they would then capture the water, or maybe God would point them to a well but rather He made them work and dig trenches.

There are times we will seek God for direction and His response will be an instruction which will not make any logical sense. Why make a dry valley full of trenches? Why subject already weak men to the physical rigor of digging across an entire valley? Digging was an act of faith that showed the kings believed God would do what He said He would do. So they dug as an act of obedience.

"What can I do to help you?" Elisha asked. "Tell me, what do you have in the house?" "Nothing at all, except a flask of olive oil," she replied. And Elisha said, "Borrow as many empty jars as you can from your friends and neighbors. Then go into your house with your sons and shut the door behind you. Pour olive oil from your flask into the jars, setting each one aside when it is filled.' 2 Kings 4:2-4

A widow had gone to Elisha for help and the solution offered was to borrow vessels so the Lord could miraculously fill them with the "little" olive oil she had. When feeding the multitude, Jesus multiplied bread and fish from a little supply. God is not limited by our natural circumstances, supernatural supply is a small thing to Him as Elisha noted, but there needs to be participation on our side.

Could it be that we're waiting on God to move, but He's waiting on us to obey the instruction He gave us so He can move? What is God asking you to do that seems illogical? The outcome you're looking for is on the other side of your obedience to His instructions.

**Prayer:** Lord show me where You have given me instructions that I haven't obeyed. Help me as I take a step of faith and walk in obedience regardless of what I see or hear around me because I know You will do Your part.

## Day 4

### Don't Limit God

'You will see neither wind nor rain, says the Lord, but this valley will be filled with water. You will have plenty for yourselves and your cattle and other animals.' 2 Kings 3:17

The Lord needed the men to make the valley full of ditches as an indication of the outpouring that He was going to make available. We are assured that God not only has the character but also the capacity to do incredible things. Is it possible then that we may be limiting God by playing too small in some areas?

'For it was I, the Lord your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it with good things.' Psalms 81:10

'The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him.' Psalms 24:1

Prior experience in some areas may lead us to live fairly conservatively which is fine when it comes to being prudent with resources. However, we shouldn't apply this conservatism when dealing with God because He doesn't fall within any of our human constraints. Sometimes our approach with our expectation of God is similar to someone coming to fetch water from an ocean with a teaspoon. He's much bigger and has infinitely more capacity than we can ever fully realize.

'After Lot had gone, the Lord said to Abram, "Look as far as you can see in every direction—north and south, east and west. I am giving all this land, as far as you can see, to you and your descendants as a permanent possession. And I will give you so many descendants that, like the dust of the earth, they cannot be counted!"' Genesis 13:14-16

'Not a single one of all the good promises the Lord had given to the family of Israel was left unfulfilled; everything he had spoken came true.' Joshua 21:45

Our God is the same One who promised Abraham numerous descendants which holds true to this day. He's the same One who kept all his promises to Israel and because we know He doesn't change, we know both His character and capacity are intact. What are you trusting God for? Believe that He is more than able to do it.

**Prayer:** Lord forgive me for the areas where I have limited You. Grant me a revelation of Your unlimited capacity to transform everything within and around me.

## Day 5

### Spiritual Insight: Distinguishing root causes from symptoms

'But this is only a simple thing for the Lord, for he will make you victorious over the army of Moab!' 2 Kings 3:18

When the kings went to the prophet to find out what to do their focus was getting water because that was the immediate problem. Once they got His counsel, the Lord not only sorted out the water problem, He also dealt with the real issue of the battle with Moab which was why they had embarked on the journey in the first place. The kings were so overwhelmed by the lack of water they almost gave up on the mission.

A simple but powerful tactic of the enemy is to get us so focused on symptoms we forget to deal with the root cause. As we get encumbered by dealing with symptoms, the real victory we should experience will keep eluding us. Elisha had to remind the men that getting them water was just a small thing and not only would God do that, He would also give them a resounding victory over Moab.

'And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.' Romans 8:26

This is why it's important to let the Holy Spirit guide us in prayer. Yes, we may have our prayer points clearly articulated, but the Holy Spirit knows what we really should pray for and address. He knows how to help us differentiate the root cause from the symptoms because when we deal with the root cause the symptoms will automatically disappear.

The kings didn't have a water problem, they had a Godly counsel problem. Once they got God's counsel and took the right action, the water issue was resolved and so was their battle. When we face challenges, we shouldn't rush into assuming we know what's wrong, let's first humble ourselves before God in prayer and ask Him to reveal to us what's really going on.

**Prayer:** Lord I ask for discernment and revelation. Please show me what is really going on in the area(s) I am facing challenges and give me Your counsel on what to do about it.

## Day 6

### God's Economy vs World Economy

'For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.' Isaiah 43:19

As we look around us and see prices sky-rocketing and economies becoming very unstable it's easy for us to start second-guessing God and bringing Him down to the level of what we see. Let's remind ourselves today that God is the Master Creator and owner of all things. Because everything belongs to Him, He doesn't need our permission to create what is needed in order to fulfil His plan. He has the capacity to create something new and bring multiplication where necessary. This means that His economy isn't restricted in any way or dependent on the world's economies.

"For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are Mine...For the world is Mine, and all its fullness" Psalm 50:10,12

'...Open the mouth of the first fish you catch, and you will find a large silver coin. Take it and pay the tax for both of us.' Matthew 17:27

God's economy is never at a loss for what to do to solve problems. When there was a need to pay taxes, Jesus had Peter get the full payment from a coin in a fish. When multitudes needed to be fed, Jesus multiplied the resources provided, all were satisfied and there were leftovers (Matt 14:17-21). When Jesus went from town to town His ministry was funded by a group of women committed to the cause (Lk 8:1-3). Heaven has multiple strategies for multiple situations, but at each point our partnership and obedience is required.

God already knows His plans for the coming year and as we move towards the end of the year our priority should be to start seeking the Lord for His strategy for the coming year. As we seek this, we should also start asking God to show us how we can partner with Him and His help to align us in our hearts and actions to make the most of the year.

**Prayer:** Thank You Lord for reminding me that Your economy and plans can never be restricted. Help me to focus not on what is going on in world economies, but on what You are doing.



## Day 7

### Grit and Grace: The Strength and Stamina to Dig

“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”  
I Corinthians 15:10

“...For by strength no man shall prevail.” I Samuel 2:9

Paul recognized a powerful combination that separated him from others: labour and grace. Meaning he worked hard, but he also realized that there's an extent to the results hard work alone would achieve. He knew clearly that the results he got were not purely by his strength alone but that his efforts were aided by the supernatural help of God.

When the men received the word of God to dig ditches, it meant that for the valley to be full of water in the morning, the men would have to dig all night. Remember these men hadn't had water for a while which also means the ground they had to dig up would have been hard. So weary men were digging up hard ground all night until the valley was full of trenches. Digging is hard work. Digging all night would have required not just strength but also stamina and the determination to continue regardless of how they felt physically. There would have been a grace that came upon the weak and weary men to dig consistently all night long until the water showed up.

Similarly we may encounter times when we've obeyed God and are moving according to His instructions, but we seem to be constantly digging hard ground so we get tired, run out of steam and are ready to give up. At that point we've come to the end of ourselves and tempting as it is to stop, that's when we need ask God to step in and strengthen us.

“Then he lay down and slept under the broom tree. But as he was sleeping, an angel touched him and told him, “Get up and eat!”... Then the angel of the Lord came again and touched him and said, “Get up and eat some more, or the journey ahead will be too much for you.”” 1 Kings 19:5, 7

“Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him.” Luke 22:43 NLT

When Elijah was heading to mount Sinai, he received supernatural help that sustained him for forty days and nights until he got to his destination. Jesus Himself faced a tough situation at Gethsemane and an angel came to give Him strength so He could pray through and prepare spiritually for the sacrifice He was about to make. There's always supernatural assistance available to us to tap into so we can do what needs to be done to fulfil our God given assignment. But we must tap into it.

**Prayer:** Lord I have worked hard and have come to the point where I need Your grace to step in for me. Strengthen me with Your spirit of might, give me the grace to endure and continue what You have called me to do with ease.