

NOON BIBLE STUDY: 1 KINGS 13

1 KINGS 13:1-5 - PROPHECY OF JUDGMENT (THOUGH JOSIAH)

PROPHECY: UPON ALTAR JEROBOAM WAS USING, BONES WOULD BE BURNED. THE BONES OF THE VERY PRIESTS THAT WERE SERVING THE IDOLS AT THAT ALTAR. THIS WILL HAPPEN DURING THE REIGN OF A DAVIDIC KING (JUDAH) NAMED "JOSIAH"

V. 3 & 5 - "THE ALTAR WAS SPLIT APART AND THE ASHES WERE POURED OUT..." JUST AS THE MAN OF GOD SAID THEY WOULD BE IN V. 3 AS A SIGN OF HIS WORD BEING TRUE.

V. 4 - AS JEROBOAM REACHES OUT TO POINT AT THE MAN OF GOD, HIS HAND "DRIED UP". NLT: "BECAME PARALYZED IN THAT POSITION"

1 KINGS 13:6-10 - UNNAMED MAN OF GOD HEALS JEROBOAM AND LEAVES HIS PRESENCE

V. 8-9 - WE LEARN HERE THAT WHEN THE UNNAMED MAN OF GOD WAS COMMISSIONED BY THE LORD, HE WAS TOLD TO NOT EAT BREAD, DRINK WATER, OR RETURN THE SAME WAY HE CAME." SUCH PRECISE INSTRUCTION SPEAKS TO THE URGENCY OF THIS MESSAGE.

1 KINGS 13:11-19 - PROPHET OF BETHEL DECEIVES MAN OF GOD

1 KINGS 13:20-25 - THE MAN OF GOD IS DISOBEDIENT AND IS KILLED BY LION

THE MAN OF GOD WAS DECEIVED, BUT HE WAS STILL DISOBEDIENT. AS WE LOOK OVER THIS TEXT WITH PROBABLE CONFUSION ABOUT HOW THINGS TURNED OUT FOR THE MAN OF GOD, WE CAN NOTE A FEW THINGS

- GOD HAD SPECIFICALLY AND DEFINITELY SPOKEN DIRECTLY TO THE MAN OF GOD (V. 1, 9, 7)
- JEROBOAM HAD TEMPTED HIM TO GO AGAINST THE COMMAND GOD HAD GIVEN (V. 7).
- THE OLD PROPHET TEMPTED HIM WITH THE EXACT PHRASING THE LORD HAD COMMANDED THE MAN OF GOD NOT TO DO "COME HOME WITH ME AND EAT BREAD" (V. 15).
- GOD HAD GIVEN HIM SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS AND NOW 2 PEOPLE HAVE TRIED TO GET THE MAN TO GO AGAINST WHAT GOD HAD SAID...SOMETHING SHOULD HAVE SMELT "FISHY".
- THE PROPHET, BEFORE WE LEARN THAT HE IS FLAT OUT LYING (END OF V. 18) DID NOT SAID THAT THE "THE LORD" OR THE SIMPLY "WORD OF THE LORD" GAVE HIM THE INSTRUCTION BUT "AN ANGEL..." (V. 18). NOW WHILE THAT MIGHT SEEM LIKE A COMPELLING SOURCE, IT IS SECONDARY TO "THE LORD" OR "THE WORD OF THE LORD."
- THE MAN OF GOD COULD/SHOULD HAVE ASKED THE LORD IF THIS NEW, CONTRARY, INFORMATION WAS INDEED FROM HIM. THIS IS A MAN WHO ONLY VERSES BEFORE ENTREATS THE LORD FOR A MIRACLE (V. 6), CERTAINLY HE HAD THE LORD'S EAR AND ATTENTION AND COULD HAVE ASKED FOR CLARITY.

FURTHER THOUGHTS: THE WORD OF GOD

THE MAN OF GOD RECEIVED A WORD FROM SOMEONE ELSE CLAIMING TO BE A PROPHET, CLAIMING TO HAVE RECEIVED A "WORD FROM THE LORD" THAT IS CONTRARY TO THE CONFIRMED "WORD FROM THE LORD" THAT THE MAN OF GOD HAD RECEIVED. DALE RALPH DAVIS OBSERVES THE FOLLOWING:

"ONE CAN ALMOST HEAR (THE APOSTLE) JOHN SCREAMING "TEST THE SPIRITS! (1 JOHN 4:1). COULD THERE BE A MORE CONTEMPORARY WORD THAN VERSE 18 OF OUR TEXT? ARE WE NOT IN ALLEGEDLY CHRISTIAN CIRCLES AWASH IN FOLKS BLABBERING "THE LORD SAID TO ME" AND WITH TEACHER-TYPES CLAIMING TO HAVE HELD INTERVIEWS WITH JESUS AND QUOTING HIS 'WORDS'? ARE WE TO SWALLOW THESE CLAIMS OR CLING ONLY TO THE SURE AND WRITTEN WORD OF THE PROPHETS AND APOSTLES?...SURELY 1 KINGS 13 TEACHES THAT THE GIVEN WORD OF GOD IS ADEQUATE FOR HIS SERVANTS AND THAT IT IS NOT SAFE TO RECEIVE ANYTHING BEYOND OR BESIDE THAT WORD." (DALE RALPH DAVIS, "FOCUS ON THE BIBLE: 1 KINGS" PAGE 153)

FURTHER THOUGHTS: THE MAN OF GOD

DOES THE MAN OF GOD DIE SO THAT HE WILL BE PROVED RIGHT LATER DURING JOSIAH'S TIME - BECAUSE OF LOCATION OF THE TOMBSTONE AND IT BEING FOUND BY JOSIAH AND HIS MAN (2 KINGS 17:16-18)? LESSON IS SOMETIMES GOD HAS GREATER PURPOSES FOR US, TO HIS GLORY - THAT SURPASS OUR LIVES IN THIS AGE.

A LESSON FROM THIS RECORD IS THAT WE DON'T ALWAYS GET CLEAN AND CLEAR CUT ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WE HAVE OR SITUATIONS WE ARE IN. THE OLD PROPHET FROM BETHEL DOESN'T SEE THE BIGGER PICTURE. THE UNNAMED MAN OF GOD'S FAMILY (IF HE HAD ONE) DOESN'T UNDERSTAND WHY THIS HAPPENED. AND THE BIBLICAL TEXT GIVES NO INDICATION THAT THEY ARE COMFORTED OR ENLIGHTENED.

MANY OF US CAN RELATE TO THIS PREDICAMENT. BAD OR TRAGIC THINGS HAPPEN IN OUR LIVES OR IN THE LIVES OF LOVED ONES AND WE DON'T HAVE ANY UNDERSTANDING AS TO "WHY". WE DON'T LIKE THAT. IN SITUATIONS LIKE THIS OUR FAITH IS OFTEN TESTED. DO WE ALLOW OUR UNANSWERED QUESTIONS TO LEAD US TO RUN FROM GOD. DO WE HAVE AN EXPECTATION IN THESE SITUATIONS THAT GOD MUST FILL US IN ON HIS DIVINE AND ETERNAL PLAN AND WHEN HE DOESN'T WE ARE JUSTIFIED IN OUR LACK OF FAITH OR ALLEGIANCE TO HIM? OR DO WE WRESTLE WITH UNCERTAINTY AND DOUBT YET MAINTAIN OUR FAITH IN THE CREATOR GOD WHO IS SOVEREIGN OVER THE UNIVERSE? DO WE RUN TO HIM WHEN THESE MOMENTS ARISE AND CLING TO HIM TIGHTER?

READING THE UNANSWERED STORY OF THE MAN OF GOD IN 1 KINGS 13 CAN CHALLENGE US TO PREPARE OUR HEARTS AND MINDS BEFORE WE ARE IN THESE SITUATIONS OURSELVES. SOMETIMES WE DON'T KNOW THE ANSWERS. SOMETIMES LIFE SEEMS UNFAIR. BUT THE LYRICS OF THE GREAT SONG "I KNOW WHO HOLDS TOMORROW" SPEAK TO US POWERFULLY:

*MANY THINGS ABOUT TOMORROW
I DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND
BUT I KNOW WHO HOLDS TOMORROW
AND I KNOW WHO HOLDS MY HAND*

AND FINALLY, CONSIDER JOB WHO LOST SO MUCH, AND KNEW NOTHING OF THE SPIRITUAL DRAMA BEING PLAYED OUT IN THE HEAVENS BETWEEN THE LORD AND SATAN. THROUGH HIM WE SEE AN EXAMPLE OF A MAN OF FAITH, ENDURING TRIALS, NOT HAVING ANSWERS AND NEVER RUNNING FROM GOD.

JOB 1:21-22 - HE SAID, "NAKED I CAME FROM MY MOTHER'S WOMB, AND NAKED I SHALL RETURN THERE. THE LORD GAVE AND THE LORD HAS TAKEN AWAY. BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD." 22 THROUGH ALL THIS JOB DID NOT SIN NOR DID HE BLAME GOD.

JAMES 5:7-11 - THEREFORE BE PATIENT, BRETHREN, UNTIL THE COMING OF THE LORD. THE FARMER WAITS FOR THE PRECIOUS PRODUCE OF THE SOIL, BEING PATIENT ABOUT IT, UNTIL IT GETS THE EARLY AND LATE RAINS. 8 YOU TOO BE PATIENT; STRENGTHEN YOUR HEARTS, FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD IS NEAR. 9 DO NOT COMPLAIN, BRETHREN, AGAINST ONE ANOTHER, SO THAT YOU YOURSELVES MAY NOT BE JUDGED; BEHOLD, THE JUDGE IS STANDING RIGHT AT THE DOOR. 10 AS AN EXAMPLE, BRETHREN, OF SUFFERING AND PATIENCE, TAKE THE PROPHETS WHO SPOKE IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. 11 WE COUNT THOSE BLESSED WHO ENDURED. YOU HAVE HEARD OF THE ENDURANCE OF JOB AND HAVE SEEN THE OUTCOME OF THE LORD'S DEALINGS, THAT THE LORD IS FULL OF COMPASSION AND IS MERCIFUL.

1 KINGS 13:26-32 - THE PROPHET OF THE LORD IN BETHEL BURIES AND HONORS THE UNNAMED MAN OF GOD

V. 28 - "HAD THE LION MAULED AND FEASTED ON THE CORPSE AND AT LEAST THE TRAUMATIZED DONKEY, FOLKS, ON SEEING THE EVIDENCE, COULD SAY IT WAS 'ONE OF THOSE THINGS'. THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN LIONS GET INVOLVED. BUT HERE WAS A LION THAT, AFTER THE LETHAL ASSAULT, SEEMED TO BE ON YAHWEH'S LEASH. THE ECCENTRIC LION WAS A TESTIMONY TO THE PRESENCE OF GOD. THIS WAS NO NORMAL LION ATTACK. GOD WAS AT WORK HERE IN JUDGMENT. HIS DISOBEDIENT SERVANT LAY SLAIN, THAT AND NOTHING MORE. THE EVENT HAD 'SUPERNATURAL' WRITTEN ALL OVER IT" (DAVIS, PG 155)

"THE LION AND DONKEY STANDING WATCH OVER THE DEAD MAN WERE NEEDED LEST ANY SHOULD SAY WITH A SHRUG OF HIS SHOULDERS 'HOW DANGEROUS THE ROADS HAVE BECOME SINCE SOLOMON'S DEATH', AND DISMISS THE WHOLE MATTER AS AN ACCIDENT (H.L. ELLISON, "THE PROPHETS OF ISRAEL", PAGE 25)

V. 32 - THE MAN OF GOD'S WORDS WERE STILL GOING TO COME TO PASS. AND THEY WILL IN 2 KINGS 22-23.

1 KINGS 13:33-34 - JEROBOAM REMAINS UNREPENTANT IN HIS IDOLATRY