

The Hireling and the Servant

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[0 : 00] 1 Kings chapter 18. 1 Kings chapter 18. Yep. We've been in chapter 17 for a while now, so tonight, chapter 18.

And look with me at beginning at verse 1. 1 Kings 18 beginning at verse 1. And it came to pass after many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go show thyself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth.

And Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab, and there was a sore famine in Samaria. And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house.

Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly. For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, that Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them by fifty in a cave and fed them with bread and water.

And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks. Peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.

[1 : 18] So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it. Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself. And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him, and he knew him, and fell on his face and said, Art thou that my lord Elijah?

And he answered him, I am. Go, tell thy lord, behold, Elijah is here. And he said, What have I sinned that thou wouldst deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab to slay me?

As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom with whom my lord hath not sent to seek thee. And when they say, He is not there, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation that they found thee not.

And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, behold, Elijah is here. And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the spirit of the Lord shall carry thee whither I know not.

And so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me. But I, thy servant, fear the Lord from my youth.

[2 : 29] Was it not told, my lord, that I did what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the Lord? How I hid a hundred men of the Lord's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.

And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, behold, Elijah is here, and he shall slay me. And Elijah said, As the Lord of hosts liveth before whom I stand, I will surely show myself unto him today.

So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah. Let's stop there. Let's have a word of prayer. Father, I pray that you would help us tonight, Lord, as we look at this situation between Elijah and Obadiah.

Most of it tonight we'll talk about Elijah. And Lord, I pray that you would help us to understand that there's a difference between these two men. They both say they love you, but there is a difference between them.

And so, Lord, I pray that you would just help us tonight to begin to understand that difference, and see how you have moved in the life of Elijah, and how we should be living our lives as he did.

[3 : 42] We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. For the last three years, Elijah's been hiding out. He's been away from the public.

He was at the Brook Cherith. He was at Zarephath. He was in these different areas hiding from Ahab.

Now the Lord says, I want you to go, and I want you to present yourself to him again. It's been three years. You know, he went to Ahab, and he announced that the drought was going to happen.

And that drought has now been going on for three years. And Elijah has gone through the Brook Cherith, and the thing's drying up there.

He's gone through being at the widow's house and seeing the barrel of meal come down to almost nothing, but yet be replenished day after day. He's seen a boy die and be raised back to life.

[4 : 46] So he started out as a man of faith. He had faith in God and what God was going to do, but now he's going to be referred to as a man of God. It's going to be a big difference in his life.

He was a man who was totally dedicated to what God had him to do. And as he comes back into public life, the first person he runs into is Obadiah, who is also a believer.

And both of them believe God. Both of them say they love God, but they have different approaches to how they do things for God. And so we're going to kind of be looking at what happens there.

You know, a lot of people in today's church are a lot like Obadiah. They say they love God. They do things for God and stuff, but are they really committed to him?

Are they really surrendered to him? Are they really willing to follow him in everything that they do? You know, Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3, verse 5, and said, you know, they have a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.

[5 : 55] And that's kind of where Obadiah is. He did some good things, but he didn't trust God as he should have like Elijah did. So here we have the two of them. And the first thing we want to look at is Elijah's surrendered service.

Elijah's surrendered service. Notice what it said back in verses 1 and 2. It said, let me get back there. I've got to flip a page. It said, and it came to pass after many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, go, show thyself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth.

And Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria. Notice what happened. God spoke to Elijah and said, here's what I want you to do.

And what was Elijah's response? Let's go. Let's do it. Whatever you called me to do, I'm ready to go, and I'm going to face whatever you have me to face, and I'm going to be ready for it.

You know, we've learned as we've watched Elijah go through the different trials that he's gone through and the different things that he's faced. Verse I use with Mike there at the jail all the time.

[7 : 20] All things work together for good to them that love God. It doesn't say everything is good. It says everything works together for good. Mike has gotten saved since being in the jail there.

Mike is growing in the word of God while being in the jail there. Mike faced the fact that he was supposed to get out at the end of May.

Everything had been worked out. The judge and the lawyers had worked everything out so that he was going to go to court. He was going to plead no contest. They were going to take the time served, put him on probation, let him go home to Jacksonville, Florida, and serve his probation down there.

Everything was all set. Came the court date. New judge. Different judge. Different judge wanted more information on what all they had worked out and stuff.

So now he has a new court date. August 2nd. Two more whole months he's going to be there. But we talked about it even yesterday. He's totally on board.

[8 : 28] He's like, yep, there's a reason. God's doing it for a reason. He's got something for me. It amazes me when I talk to this kid.

Well, he's not a kid. He turned 39 yesterday. But to me, he's a kid. But anyway, it's just amazing to watch. He understands all things work together for good.

Ephesians 4.13 says, Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

And Mike's learning that. He's like, you know what? The things that I'm going through, all things work together for good. So it's going to help me grow in my faith because the more time he has here and we have the time to talk, he's going to grow in the faith.

He's going to grow in the knowledge of who Jesus Christ is. And he's going to become more and more Christ-like as we continue on. It's just amazing to watch and to listen to him.

[9 : 32] So the trials of life come. They're going to do one of two things to us. They're going to draw us closer to God or they're going to push us away.

What's it going to be? I watch a lot of people these days, things come into their life and it's not a matter of drawing closer to God. They question God all the time.

Why, why, why, why? God has reasons. God has a plan. Do we trust him? How many times have I said that in the last few months?

Do we trust him? You know, some people, they get it in their mind, well, I'm going to serve God and as I serve God, everything's just going to go fine.

No, it doesn't always work that way. And it's like you look at them and you go, have you read your Bible? It's like people, the health and wealth people.

[10 : 32] Everything's going to be great. Everything's going to turn out your way. Everything's going to. Have you talked to the disciples? The apostles didn't work out so good for them in a lot of situations.

But they were completely committed and surrendered to God and what he had for them to do. How did they do that? Second thing here about Elijah is not only the commander that he had, but the commands that he had.

The command of God in his life. When God said something, did you notice what those two verses said? God said, go. And it said, Elijah, went.

He understood the commands. He understood what was going on there. He understood that God was in control. Here they had been three years without water.

If I'm Elijah, I want to stay hidden because no water for three years. People are dying. Starvation, poverty, all kinds of things.

[11 : 34] If I'm Elijah, he said, I'll stay back here, Lord. I think I'll just stay. Until you send the rain, I'll just stay back here a while. No. God said, go hide yourself.

And now God's saying, now it's time to come out. Now it's time to go see Ahab and what he has for you and what I have for him, better way to put it.

You know, we've talked when we first started talking about Elijah. Isaiah 55, he talks about the fact that we don't know.

God's ways are not our ways. His thoughts are not our thoughts. God's ways are not our ways. But we have to trust him and what he is doing and what he is deciding is best to accomplish his will.

We take comfort. Comfort. Elijah didn't know all the details of what God was going to do. All he knew was God said, time to go.

[12 : 39] And he went. That's all he knew up to that point. Well, God, I'll do what you want me to do. But could you give me a few more details about it? Could you tell me what's going to happen?

Could you tell me who I'm going to talk to? Could you tell me who I'm going to see? Could you tell me what kind of help I'm going to get? Could you tell me? Elijah go. Elijah went. That was it.

Basically, he was trusting God. He was trusting everything's going to work out the way I want it to. You just do what I say that I want you to do.

You know, think about it for a minute. How God has worked that way in other people's lives. Abraham had no kids.

Yet in Genesis 12, God said, Abraham, you're going to have a great nation. It's going to be like the stars of the heaven and the sands of the sea.

[13 : 45] He didn't even have a kid yet. But he trusted God. How about Moses? Moses, I want you to go to Egypt. I want you to represent me in Egypt in front of Pharaoh.

I want you to talk to Pharaoh and tell him whatever I say. But Lord, that's not me. I don't have, I will be, I love the way the words are in there.

I will be with thy mouth. He says, but Lord, you know, okay, bring Aaron with you. I'll be with his mouth too. What were they going to do?

They were going to talk to Pharaoh. Okay, so I'm going to talk to Pharaoh. God said, I'll be with your mouth. What you need, I will give you. I will take care of it.

Think about the disciples. After Jesus rose and he's given them commission to go out. What did he tell them? I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world.

[14 : 45] God is always going to be there. He's always going to supply the need. He's always going to take care of whatever he calls us to do. He is going to provide for us, that we'll be able to do it.

And then the compliance, the compliance. He responds with a heart for God. God said, go. He went. God gave a command.

He was ready to obey. Are we ready to do what God has called us to do? When God spoke, he moved. He doesn't put up any objections.

He doesn't point out difficulties. He doesn't say anything about, you know, what about this, that, and the other thing. He just goes and does it. You know, think about God and his commands.

John 14, 15. If you love me, keep my commandments. John 14, 21. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.

[15 : 51] And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him. You obey me and watch what I do.

You obey me and I'm giving you a promise. I will be there with you. I will manifest myself to you. You will see me at work in your life.

Just obey me. You know, where's our heart at today? What are we facing today? And are we willing to obey what God has for us?

Are we willing to follow him? When we're ready to obey, that's the kind of life that God can and will bless when we're ready to follow him.

And we'll continue on next week from there.