

The Hireling and the Servant Part 2

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 05 June 2024

Preacher: Pastor Steve Hersey

[0 : 00] We've been talking about Elijah.

Oh, hang on a minute. Okay. All right.

First Kings chapter 18. Last week we talked about verses 1 through 16. We started, we read through them all. I'm not going to do that again tonight.

We will read verses as we come to them tonight. We were talking about the fact that Elijah had been at the brook Cherith, and he'd been at Zarephath, and he'd helped heal the widow's son.

He'd done all these things, and he went from being a man of faith to being a man of God, and he had done so many things, and seeing God work in so many ways, and God answered so many prayers that we talked about, first of all, Elijah's surrendered service.

[1 : 14] He was ready to surrender his life to do whatever God had called him to do, because, first of all, he understood who the commander was. God is the commander.

God is in charge, and God had given him all kinds of things to help him see God at work in his life, and he understood following God was all that he needed to do.

We mentioned Romans 8, 28, all things work together for good to them that love God, even to those who are called according to his purpose. All things work together for good. It doesn't say everything is good, but everything works together for good, and Elijah got to see that, and most people, when they see God working in those ways, they have one of two choices they make.

They either are going to follow God more faithfully, or they're going to remove themselves away from God. Elijah got in as close to God as he possibly could.

Second thing, he saw the command. The command from God. Notice in chapter 18, look at verse 1, the last half of verse 1. He said, go, show thyself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth.

[2 : 25] And Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab. He understood the command. Go and do it. And he went. No questions asked. No questions about what's going to happen.

How am I going to handle this? How am I going to do that? What am I going to do with the other thing? Just go and do it. Just the same way he had been told three years before. Go to Ahab. Tell him it's not going to rain.

He went. He did what God commanded him to do. And God later commanded him there in chapter 17. He says, okay, after you've done that, go hide yourself. And he did that.

He followed God. Sometimes we don't understand what God is giving to us. In Isaiah 55, remember we talked about the fact our thoughts are not his thoughts. His ways are not our ways.

God has a purpose and a plan. Are we ready to follow? And then letter C was comfort. He got comfort by following God because he knew everything was going to work out the way that God wanted it to happen.

- [3 : 23] So we talked about some others who had seen that. Abraham, go from Ur and go where I'm going to send you. Didn't tell him where he's going to send him.
- Just go where I'm going to send you. And when you do that, I'm going to form from you a nation. Sands of the sea, stars of the sky, all that. Moses, go to Pharaoh and talk to him.
- Tell him what I want. Well, I can't really talk. I'll be with your mouth. I love that. It's not I'm going to be with you. I'm going to be with your mouth. Very specific about what he was going to do.
- And then the disciples, he tells them to go out, take the gospel everywhere, and he said, I will be with you always. God is always going to be there. Letter D was the compliance. Elijah did what God told him to do.
- We use verses like John 14, 15. If you love me, keep my commandments. When you love God, you're going to just do what he says. Which brings us to number two.
- [4 : 26] Obadiah's secret service. Obadiah. This is not the same Obadiah that's one of the minor prophets. But look with me at verse three. Chapter 18 of 1 Kings, verse three.
- 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 may lose not all the beasts.
- So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it. But Ahab went one way by himself and Obadiah went another way by himself. Obadiah is the governor over Ahab's house.
- What does that mean? He's like Joseph with Potiphar. Remember Joseph with Potiphar? He is in control of everything that takes place. That's Obadiah with Ahab's house.
- [5 : 38] He's in control of everything that takes place there. He has a lot of power. He has a lot of authority and a lot of opportunity to do things.
- One of the things about Obadiah though, notice what it said there in verse 3. He feared the Lord greatly. Obadiah is a contradiction.
- What do I mean by that? He fears the Lord greatly, but he also fears Ahab greatly. He fears the Lord and wants to serve God, but he also knows Ahab can have him killed at any time.
- And has had other prophets killed. So, what is he going to do? Well, first of all, his sovereign. Who is his sovereign? He feared the Lord greatly.
- He's governor over all of Ahab's stuff. And he runs everything that's taking place there at Ahab's household. But notice how Elijah refers to him.
- [6 : 44] Look down at verse 8. Verse 8, and he said unto him, I am. He asked if that was Elijah. And he says, I am. And then he says, go tell thy Lord, behold, Elijah is here.
- Elijah is saying, the guy that's really in charge of your life, Ahab, go tell him that I'm around. Go tell him that I'm available.
- He's a believer, but he has a real contradiction in his life. How do I handle things like Ahab and Jezebel? We have a lot of Christians who do things like that.
- They say that they love God. They want to serve God. They do things, but they hold back. Instead of serving God the way that they should, they hold back.
- You know, whose will is more important to you? Is it what you want or what God has for you? Who's the most important in your life?

[7 : 50] You know, can you honestly say that God has the first place? He has place in your life that tops everything else. Where are your priorities?

I always get really concerned when I see how many people put other things ahead of God's priority. And one of the places that's easiest to see it and show it in this day and age, how often parents will make decisions about sports things over church things.

How they'll use sports and different things like that instead of putting God as the priority. Who gets the first of your money? We're supposed to give of the first fruits.

Who gets the first of the money? Who gets the time, your time and your talents? Who is the Lord in your life? What are you going to, what are you going to, who are you going to serve?

So Obadiah has this contradiction taking place. And he has a secret. Look at verse 4, back there in 18. Verse 4, it says, 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.

[9 : 10] Again, a very good thing. He saved a hundred prophets from being killed. He divides them up so that they're not all in one place. So that if she finds out about one group, there's another group still there.

And he does a good thing. And he apparently out of his own pocket, he took care of paying for them to be fed. He makes sure that they're taken care of and they get fed.

It's a great thing that he is doing here. He's a believer, but he's a closet believer. He believes in God. He fears God.

But he's not about to tell anybody else about it. And it happens a lot today too. We believe in God, but the people around us know that we believe in God.

He knows if he tells what he's doing, he could probably be killed on the spot. Good concern. That's a concern he should have. But again, let's go back to Joseph.

[10 : 10] Let's go back to Daniel. They knew. Daniel had been praying three times a day. They made the new law. What did Daniel do?

He prayed three times a day. Where did Daniel wind up? In the lion's den. He knew that it could cost him his life. But he says, you know what? I follow God. I'm going to do what God wants me to do. Notice his deeds.

His deeds. He made those hundred prophets a place to hide. He took care of them. He met their needs. So there's some positive things about Obadiah's life.

But he's allowing his deeds to be his testimony over his actual living out for the Lord in front of those around him.

You know, a lot of times we do that. We'll try to do things for the Lord, but we don't want the crowd around us. They'll think differently of us. They'll mock us. They'll ridicule us. They'll do all these different things.

[11 : 13] He says, no, no, no. Live for me. People conceal their faith in order to save face with mankind.

We want people to think well of us. We want people to think that we're normal, whatever that is. We're normal, but we need to be living for the Lord.

Romans 10, 11. For the Scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. If you believe on the Lord, he says you're not going to be ashamed.

Mark 8, 38. Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

He says, stand up for me. Live for me. When you think of Obadiah, the word, like I said, contradiction, compromise, those things come to mind.

[12 : 20] Even though he did great things for God and for his people, he had some compromise issues that would take place there. You know, again, mankind today, Christians today, we do a lot of good things.

But when it comes to standing up for the Lord in different areas, we just kind of back off. Many times we do things and they're not necessarily abstaining from the appearance of evil.

You know, that verse in 1 Thessalonians 5, 22, says abstain from the appearance of evil. We need to make sure that we're doing that.

A lot of times we allow ourselves to get into situations where things look like we're okay, we're not doing, but we're not standing up for the Lord in those areas either.

You know, sin can take us places we don't want to go and cause us to do things we don't want to do when we're not allowing the Lord to shine through us.

[13 : 38] When we become a Christian, 1 Corinthians 5, 17 says, look, therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is the new creature. Old things are passed away. All things are become new.

We are to be different. We're to be different than the people around us, different than the world in general and what that shows. Why? Titus 2, 14.

He says we're supposed to be different.

We're supposed to be doing good works. We're supposed to be showing people that our Christ is alive. He rose. He changed us. And we're showing what he has done.

1 Peter 2, 9. You're a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. That ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

[14 : 38] God has called us out of the things that we used to be a part of. He's called us into something different. He says, look, be a peculiar people. And you don't have to be strange in order to be peculiar.

Just don't do everything that everybody else is doing. They'll think you're peculiar. We're not supposed to fit into this world. We're supposed to be pilgrims on our way through this world.

1 Peter 2, 11. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul. Don't ever be guilty of concealing your faith.

Don't ever be guilty of putting it on the back burner to make it look good for other people. Not everyone's going to appreciate your stand for God. We know that. We can see that. Everything's going to be kind of, hmm.

But he says, look, you're going to spend eternity with God. He did something very special for us. You can't serve God and mammon.

[15 : 43] The Bible tells us in Matthew 6, 24. So, what did the Apostle John think about this? You know these verses well. He said, love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. He says, look, do the will of God.

He's going to abide forever. And as a Christian, you're going to abide forever with him. Do what he has called us to do. Follow him always. Never back off saying, well, I'm just going to kind of, that's what Obadiah was doing.

He says, no, don't do that. But we'll look some more at that next week. So, all right. Prayer request tonight.