

**LESSONS THIS QUARTER**

- 6) 09 Jan..... 1Kings 16b-22..... A Hill on Which to Stand
- 7) 16 Jan..... 2Kings 21-23..... Building a Culture for Life

**INTRODUCTION**

- The northern kingdom of Israel spins out of control, getting worse and worse under King Ahab and his wife, Jezebel
- The Jews compromised their beliefs with the world by succumbing to idol worship
- Elijah comes on the scene to challenge Israel to live for God
  - ♦ How do we compromise our beliefs these days?
  - ♦ How can we take a stronger stand for righteousness?

Passage	Comments
1Kings 16:1-34	<p><b>God has Control even over Wicked Nations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv1-14. God foretells the downfall of Baasha – his family members to be eaten by scavengers                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Why such cruelty from God?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• vv15-34. God allows one wicked king worse than the one before (Zimri → Omri → Ahab) to rule Israel – WHY? – Possibly to justify His actions to destroy &amp; disperse Israel and eventually set up Israel’s return, restoration and coming of Christ</li> </ul>
17:1-24	<p><b>Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath (Sidon)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v1. Elijah’s 1<sup>st</sup> prophetic announcement to Ahab is for a 3 year drought</li> <li>• vv2-6. Elijah obeys God explicitly by hiding from Ahab and being fed by unclean birds</li> <li>• vv9-16. God gives Elijah 1 more command – go to Jezebel’s home town &amp; be fed by a widow</li> <li>• It is ironic God showed no mercy to Israel’s widows &amp; orphans during this drought, but only to this heathen widow. WHY?..... Is 9:17                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Does someone’s behavior justify us or God showing mercy to them? ..... Yes &amp; No</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The widow and her family lived comfortably during the 3 year drought (supply of food and oil)</li> <li>• v24. BUT the widow did not believe Elijah to be a ‘man of God’ and that God’s word was truthful UNTIL Elijah brought her son back to life</li> <li>• Why was it critical for this widow to believe in Elijah and in God’s word?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Not only did God show mercy by relieving her physical and financial misery, but He also extended salvation to her through believing faith – “Now I know... God’s word is truth”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
18:1-46	<p><b>Elijah vs the Prophets of Baal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elijah did not act presumptuously – He knew God was going to act..... v36</li> <li>• vv3-4. Obadiah (“servant of Jehovah”) was a governor of Ahab’s house – a very righteous man who had a very unrighteous boss                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ There are 13 Obadiah’s in Scripture</li> <li>♦ The Book of Obadiah was written by another</li> <li>♦ This Obadiah secretly hid 100 prophets, similar to Germans hiding Jews during WW-II</li> </ul> </li> <li>• vv19-40. Elijah against 850 false prophets                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ The challenge is made, and God prevails</li> <li>♦ v39. The people are convinced God is God</li> <li>♦ v40. Elijah has the people kill Baal’s prophets</li> <li>♦ v46. Elijah miraculously beats Ahab’s chariot</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Passage	Comments
19:1-21	<p><b>Fearful Elijah Runs Away, But He is not Alone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v3. It is easy to lose our focus after a mountaintop victory – always be on guard</li> <li>• vv9,13-18. ‘Why are you here, Elijah? You should be elsewhere – Oh, by the way, there are 7000 who have not bowed their knees to Baal’                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ God wasn’t harsh with Elijah, but He did get the point across that Elijah should be more concerned about doing God’s will then being worried about his life</li> </ul> </li> <li>• vv19-21. Elisha is called, but is there hesitance or compassion to say goodbye to parents ..... Lu 9:61,62</li> </ul>
20:1-43	<p><b>God blesses King Ahab with War Victory</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God can still bless a wicked person or nation when they demonstrate humbleness &amp; repentance                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ v42. BUT Ahab showed mercy when he should not have. God wanted Ahab to slay Ben-hadad - Therefore, Ahab would die earlier for not knowing God’s will in this situation.....v42</li> <li>♦ vv35-36. Another man receives the death penalty (ate by a lion) for not obeying the word of the Lord to beat up a man of God ..... WHY?                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ God is a “hard” God (Mat 25:14-30)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
21:1-29	<p><b>Jezebel has Naboth Killed for His Property</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv17-24. Why did God do nothing about the murder but to report the incident to Elijah?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ The answer seems to be for God to pronounce a horrible demise on Ahab and Jezebel</li> <li>♦ vv25-26. Notice Jezebel is given credit for inciting Ahab to commit atrocities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• vv27-29. But Ahab repented and got his sentenced commuted till a later time                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- God gives people time to repent ..... Rev 2:20-21</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
22:1-53	<p><b>Kings Ahab, Jehoshaphat and Prophet Micaiah</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• King Ahab of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah team up to fight King Aram of Syria</li> <li>• v22. A behind the scenes look – God allows a spirit to speak lies to deceive false prophets – it was time for Ahab to die</li> <li>• v34. A random soldier fired an arrow and it just happened to hit Ahab between his armor plates                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- God is fully aware of every arrow and bullet shot in war. Nobody dies by accident!</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS:**

- God is not locked into only showing mercy to Jews and Christians. He can show mercy to heathen widows & orphans, and to unrighteous peoples and nations when they show humbleness, repentance, willingness to know God
- ...and God often times initiates the mercy to entice people to repent and come to Him ..... Rom 2:4

**NEXT WEEK:** 2Kings 21-23. King Manasseh causes Judah to do more evil than the nations whom the Lord destroyed

