

LESSONS LEARNED TOO LATE

1 Kings 13

- ▶ Have you ever been in a situation where things did not go as planned?
- ▶ You look back and learn from the experience. You say, “If only I knew then what I know now, I would have acted differently.”
- ▶ But NOW, it is too late!

- ▶ **1 Kings 13** gives us the account of an unnamed man of God.
- ▶ Jeroboam is king in Israel and has created a false system of worship.
- ▶ The LORD sends an unnamed younger prophet to challenge Jeroboam and curse the idol on display

OUR TEXT – 1 KINGS 13

- ▶ **1 Kings 13**, the man of God obeys God on the way, while there, and even as he begins his journey home.
- ▶ Jeroboam even invited him home to refresh him but he refused.
- ▶ We then read about an older prophet who catches up to the man of God, lies to him and deceives him. He tells the younger man that an angel appeared to him telling him to invite the young prophet home.

- ▶ **1 Kings 13**, assuming the LORD had spoken to the older prophet, the man of God returns home with him, is refreshed and eats.
- ▶ As he is eating the older prophet prophesies and declares that the younger man of God had disobeyed Him and therefore he would not return home.

OUR TEXT – 1 KINGS 13

- ▶ **1 Kings 13**, as the younger prophet leaves, on the way he is met by a lion and killed. But the lion does not touch the donkey nor the corpse.
- ▶ The old prophet hears of this, goes and retrieves the body, mourns and buries it in his own tomb.
- ▶ He then declares that when he died he wanted his bones to be laid beside the man of God. Further he prophesied that all that the man of God said would come to pass.

- ▶ How does this relate to our topic?
- ▶ Consider if that man of God could talk after the fact. Would he say, “If only I could do that again, I would do things differently.”? But it was too late.
- ▶ Let us consider some lessons the man of God learned too late and make application to us.

God Does Not Contradict Himself

- ▶ The directions given by the older prophet were the total opposite of what the man of God was told.
- ▶ He lied, and while it sounded convincing, God does NOT contradict Himself!
- ▶ **Numbers 23:19** – as Balaam speaks
- ▶ **1 Samuel 15:29** to king Saul
- ▶ **James 1:17** – no shadow or variation with Him
- ▶ **2 Timothy 2:12-13** – He cannot deny Himself

God Does Not Contradict Himself

- ▶ Yet how many today reject the Bible because they say it is full of contradictions and God does contradict Himself?
- ▶ Some advocate the Bible is outdated, etc.
- ▶ Many teach doctrines contradictory to what God has said in His word.

God Does Not Contradict Himself

- ▶ Is this different from God changing His mind?
- ▶ Yes! When God changes His mind it for our good and based on repentance of His people. This is not the same as giving specific instructions and then contradicting them.

Cf. 1 Corinthians 14:33

- ▶ This is why we must continually study God's word and consider what He DOES say!

Religious leaders don't always tell the truth

- ▶ The older prophet was thinking about himself. He was willing to lie to gain an audience.
- ▶ Most religions today are based on the teachings of men. And some of them will NOT tell you the truth. Some have agendas and they will say anything to gain a greater following.
- ▶ The Bible warns about such false teachers -
2 Peter 2:1-3, 2 Corinthians 11:12-15, Matthew 7:15.
- ▶ Even Satan uses lies – **John 8:44, cf. James 1:14-16** – he uses bait; **2 Corinthians 11:3 (Genesis 3:4-5)**
- ▶ **Romans 16:17-19, 2 Peter 2:3** – they will exploit you.

Religious leaders don't always tell the truth

- ▶ WHY does this work?
- ▶ Because often we are not prepared!
- ▶ Satan does not attack directly the strong, grounded saint. He goes after the weak and vulnerable.
- ▶ We must be firmly grounded in truth –
Ephesians 4:11-15, Acts 17:11, etc.

Sincerity is not enough

- ▶ Was the man of God sincere? There is no reason to question that. In fact, he was very convicted. BUT that did not change his outcome.
- ▶ Paul is an example –
Acts 26:9, 1 Timothy 1:12-13
- ▶ This sincerity of Uzzah when he tried to steady the ark – **2 Samuel 6**.
- ▶ **Matthew 15:14** – Jesus warned of the blind leading the blind.

Sincerity is not enough

- ▶ This does not mean that sincerity is unimportant.
- ▶ As Christians, sincerity is fundamental.
Our faith is described as unhypocritical, genuine, with integrity, from the heart, etc.
- ▶ **1 Timothy 1:5** – love from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith.
- ▶ **2 Corinthians 1:12** – the testimony of our conscience – we conducted ourselves... with simplicity and godly sincerity.
- ▶ BUT the point is – you can be sincerely wrong!

Sincerity is not enough

- ▶ What should the man of God have done?
- ▶ **1 John 4:1-2** – test the spirits. Consider what is said in light of what God's word says
- ▶ Gideon verified – **Judges 6:36-40**
Joshua should have verified –
Ai – **Joshua 7**, the Gibeonites – **Joshua 9**
Jehoshaphat requested verification
– **1 Kings 22:5-7**
- ▶ God is not expecting a blind faith – **Romans 10:17**

Past Obedience does not atone for present disobedience

- ▶ All the good the man of God had done prior to confronting Jeroboam and even as he did confront him, had no bearing on the consequences of his present actions.
- ▶ Some believe that when we stand before God, He will weigh the good we have done with the bad.
- ▶ That is not how God judges.
- ▶ Our standing before God depends on where we are when we leave this earth.
- ▶ Have we taken care of our sins? Have we been forgiven? **Acts 8:22, 1 John 1:9**

Past Obedience does not atone for present disobedience

- ▶ Our standing before God depends on where we are when we leave this earth.
- ▶ If we walk away from God – **2 Peter 2:20-22, Hebrews 10:35-39; Revelation 14:13**
- ▶ This is NOT a reason to put off obedience or taking corrective action today.
Nor is it a reason to dismiss doing good
(**Ephesians 2:10**)
- ▶ **James 4:14, Hebrews 9:27** – we must ALWAYS be ready!

Partial obedience is NOT obedience

- ▶ The man of God did most of what he was instructed to do. But he did not do all of it.
- ▶ Is there some area in your life that is not right with God? Relationships, behaviors, a command you do not want to obey?
- ▶ Yet many today will declare that since they are doing most of what was commanded, that God will overlook their faults.

Partial obedience is NOT obedience

- ▶ The man of God did most of what he was instructed to do. But he did not do all of it.
- ▶ **1 Samuel 15** – King Saul partially obeyed God (**15:22-23**)
- ▶ **Mark 10:21** – the rich, young ruler lacked “one thing”
- ▶ **James 2:10** – to stumble in one point
- ▶ Often, that “one thing” reveals your heart and loyalties

Partial obedience is NOT obedience

- ▶ Discipleship means complete surrender –
Matthew 16:24, Romans 10:9-10 (Is He Lord?), **Romans 12:1-2, Galatians 2:20**, etc.
- ▶ “I will follow you, but...” is not sufficient!
Matthew 7:21-23, Luke 6:46
- ▶ You do not come to the Lord on your terms!

Concluding thoughts

- ▶ I suppose that if the man of God had a chance to do things again, he would have ignored the old prophet, and we would not read of his tragic ending.
- ▶ But that was a lesson learned too late.
- ▶ However, you and I are still here, and that means that no matter your past, you can make whatever changes are needed.

**MAKE YOURSELF RIGHT
WITH GOD, BEFORE IT IS
TOO LATE!**

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