

Friday, August 3, 2018

**Relent**

1 Kings 20-21

*"Have you noticed how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself, I will not bring this disaster in his day, but I will bring it on his house in the days of his son."*  
1 Kings 21:29

Ahab is a vile and evil man. As a matter of fact, *There was never a man like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, urged on by Jezebel his wife.* (21:25). Yet, when he hears this proclamation against him he is led to humble himself before the LORD. This is not at all expected in the reading of his account. It is totally out of character. There are still consequences that must come because of his actions, which have earned the wrath of God, and yet we see that even in the most vile of men, if they turn toward God, He will relent. God's relenting is not Him changing His mind. God does not change. Rather, God relenting is His consistent response, according to His changeless nature, to a change in conduct. Ahab's surprising change in conduct allowed for God's relenting. How grateful I am for the heart of God. It is a heart that longs to forgive. God is holy and holiness before Him is required, but He is gracious and He will extend grace to those who repent and call on His name. In this age, that means to turn to Jesus alone for our salvation.

*Lord, thank You for relenting according to Your changeless nature. Thank You for being a God that does not change and for allowing Your kindness to lead us to repentance. Amen.*

Saturday, August 4, 2018

**About me**

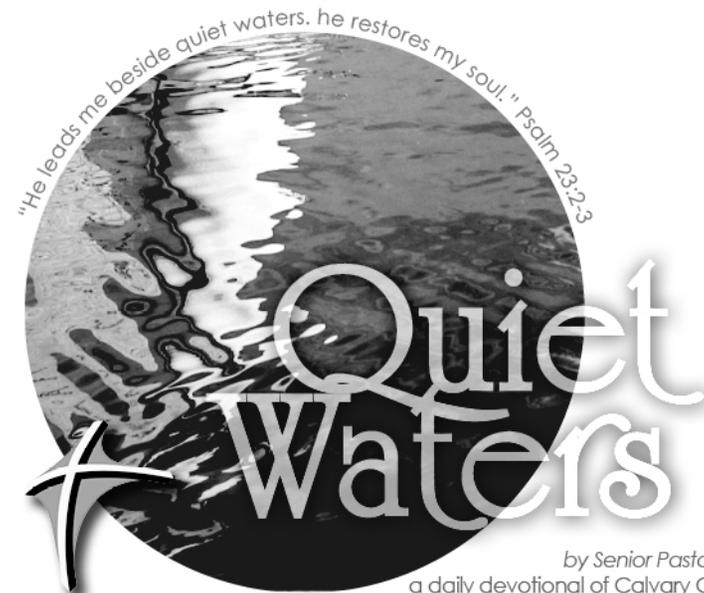
1 Kings 22–2 Kings 1

*But Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there not a prophet of the LORD here whom we can inquire of?" The king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, "There is still one man through whom we can inquire of the LORD, but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah." "The king should not say that," Jehoshaphat replied.*  
1 Kings 22:7-8

Ahab is concerned about one thing—himself. When the time comes to consider whether or not to go into battle, he is concerned with finding prophets who will say what he wants to hear. Micaiah will not do that. His life is identified by being a person who speaks for the LORD. This identification caused for him to live as a hated man (at least by the king). Why did Ahab hate him? Because Micaiah never said anything good about Ahab. "About me," Ahab said. For Ahab, it was all about him. That meant he found people to surround him who would say good things about him—like the approximately four hundred men who had been giving a lying spirit. Micaiah told Ahab exactly what had happened, and yet Ahab thought he could thwart the word of God with a disguise. It did not work. Ahab paid with his life. It is easy to be tempted to hate people who do not say good things about me. But when those people are speaking to me through the word and power of Jesus, I had better listen carefully to what they have to say, even if it isn't anything good about me.

*Dear God, I love to make things all about me and forget that my heart knows that it is all about You. Help me to not fall into the trap of Ahab and miss Your word. Amen.*

July 30 - August 4, 2018



by Senior Pastor Chuck Cervenka  
a daily devotional of Calvary Community Church

Monday, July 30, 2018

## Downfall

1 Kings 12-13

*This was the sin of the house of Jeroboam that led to its downfall and to its destruction from the face of the earth.*

1 Kings 13:34

Jeroboam was faced with a choice. God had come to him and made him an amazing offer. God told him that if he served God, God would establish a dynasty for him that would be as enduring as the one God had built for David (11:34-39). Apparently, Jeroboam did not see this as a good option. Instead, he chose to rely on himself (12:26) to establish the kingdom. It turned out that this was not the best choice. It caused him to establish a new place for the Israelites to worship, and then he made two calves and told the people these were the gods that led them out of Egypt. This is all wrong on multiple levels. What is amazing is that the people believed it. They had not remembered the one true God who had rescued them so that they could worship Him. They had turned their hearts from God, embracing false gods instead. We will never know the potential kingdom Jeroboam turned his back on. Sin led to the downfall and destruction of what might have been great. One man made the decision to trust himself instead of God. I have the same tendency in my life and in my heart. All too often, I find myself trusting in my thoughts as opposed to God's promises. I can learn from Jeroboam not to place trust in anything other than God.

*Dear God, You know my heart and You know all the potential that I have to accomplish great things for You as I align my will and my heart with Yours. Please give me an undivided heart of worship for You. Help me trust in You alone. Amen.*

Tuesday, July 31, 2018

## Committed

1 Kings 14-15

*Although he did not remove the high places, Asa's heart was fully committed to the LORD all his life. He brought into the temple of the LORD the silver and gold and the articles that he and his father had dedicated.*

1 Kings 15:14-15

Asa comes as a breath of fresh air into the account of the kings of the divided kingdom. The account of Asa in Kings is brief but this statement that Asa was committed to the LORD all his life is significant. It appears that Asa did not do all he could have. He did not remove the high places of worship that caused people to be distracted from the temple worship, but he was committed to the LORD. He did bring back to the temple the items that were dedicated for use there. For me, this is a significant message. God really does look at the heart of a person. As such, God notes for us that *Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as his father David had done.* (15:11). What Asa did that was right was not determined by his actions, but by his heart. God saw his heart as committed. This causes me to consider 1 Corinthians 4:5, *Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.* I long to have a heart and motives that are committed to God. My actions may not always be perfect and I may not always do all that I can, but I long to be totally given over to the LORD, for His glory and His service.

*Dear God, help me to have an undivided heart before You. Take my life and let it be totally Yours so that I can be completely committed to You all my life. Amen.*

Wednesday, August 1, 2018

## First

1 Kings 16-17

*Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small cake of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the LORD gives rain on the land.'"*

1 Kings 17:13-14

God has sent a prophet to speak against Ahab—the king who has done more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any king before him. Elijah bursts onto the scene and rain stops. This would be a statement by God that even though Ahab has begun worshiping Baal (the Canaan god who was supposedly in charge of rain), it was God who was in control of everything, including the rain. He then follows the command of God and goes to be with the widow that God has prepared. The times are hard and food and water are scarce. Each person is trying to survive and this dear woman has less than enough for herself and her son. Yet Elijah makes a request that will require extreme faith. *"Take all your food and feed me first,"* he says. She went away and did as Elijah had said and God was faithful to His promise. Acts of faith are not always easy. Many times they are counterintuitive. Yet each time I follow the LORD in faith, I find that believing is seeing. We walk by faith, not by sight.

*Dear God, thank You for the example of faith this dear widow displayed. May it be an example to me. Help me live according to the power of the Spirit in me to walk faith steps each and every day. Amen.*

Thursday, August 2, 2018

## Set out

1 Kings 18-19

*So Elisha left him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his attendant.*

1 Kings 19:21

Elisha sets out to follow Elijah. In Elisha is seen a man who is ready to give all to follow the LORD. As he turns back, it is to make it clear that he is ready to give it all to follow the call on his life. He takes nothing with him. Rather than sell the oxen and the plowing equipment, he slaughters the oxen and uses the plowing equipment to cook them so that he can give the meat away. This is a thank offering that is being offered by Elisha (whose name means *God saves*) because he has been called by God to follow Elijah (*the LORD is God*). Something new is happening and Elisha will be a key part of God's plan. He is ready to give it all up to follow God's leading. He sets out to follow completely. What things do I hold on to? It is those same things that hold me back from radical service to the LORD. They can be good things, but if they are things that I cannot let go of, if asked, then they are things that will keep me from setting out to follow God's call completely. I need to be ready to give whatever is necessary to follow my God.

*Dear Lord, please help me to set out to follow You fully. Help me be ready to abandon whatever it is that keeps me from this. I long to run toward Your call on my life the way that Elisha did, so that I can be used by You for Your glory. Amen.*