

Friday, August 10, 2018

Turn away

2 Kings 10-11

So Jehu destroyed Baal worship in Israel. However, he did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit—the worship of the golden calves at Bethel and Dan.

2 Kings 10:28-29

Jeroboam's sin is a plight on the people of Israel. The golden calves continue to draw people away from the true worship of God, just as Jeroboam had intended. Jehu was an agent of justice for the LORD and received a blessing from God because he had done well (10:30). Jehu destroyed all the prophets of Baal and brought justice on the house of Ahab for his wickedness. Jehu destroyed the temple of Baal along with the sacred stone used in worship of that false god. However, the calves were not destroyed. The sin of Jeroboam continues to cause Israel to commit sin—the worship of false gods. Jehu had an opportunity to turn away from this worship but he did not. Apparently the worship that was given to these calves was so ingrained in the life of the people of Israel that they were unable or unwilling to change. Perhaps it had become such a part of life that they did not even think it needed to change. This can happen to me. If I am not continually seeking the LORD to reveal to me the things in my life that need to change and then seeking His power to help, I will give myself to the worship of long-held sin.

Lord, reveal the golden calves in my life. I know that I must have some things that I am oblivious to because of the depth of my pride. Help me turn away. Amen.

August 6 - 11, 2018

Saturday, August 11, 2018

Gracious

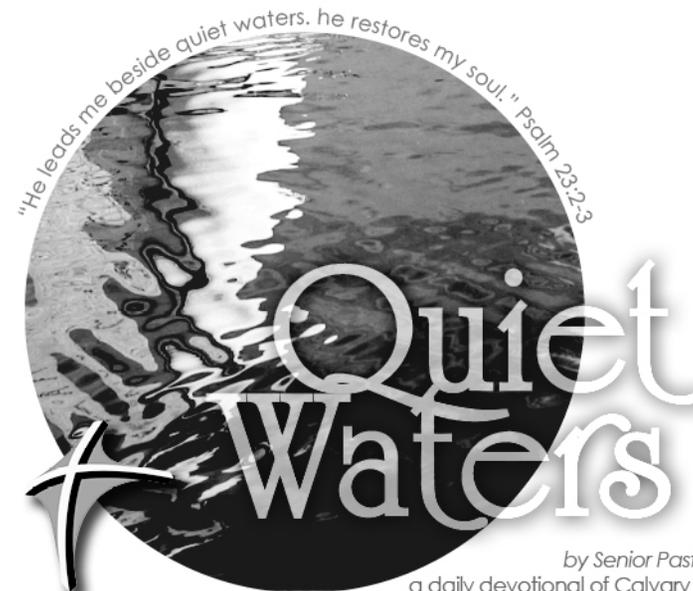
2 Kings 12-13

But the LORD was gracious to them and had compassion and showed concern for them because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. To this day he has been unwilling to destroy them or banish them from his presence.

2 Kings 13:23

God is indeed faithful to His promises and His covenants. Just as grace is extended to Judah because of David (8:19), grace is extended to Israel because of Abraham (13:23). God has compassion toward the nation he has chosen as His own. It is clear that He loves them. But what is even more clear is that He will maintain His promise. He is unwilling to destroy them or banish them. He has a plan for all of Israel and even though they are at this time divided, in God's eyes they are not. God's grace toward Israel is illustrated in the account of the dead man hurriedly thrown into the tomb of Elisha (13:21). Just as the man was thrown into the tomb, so Israel will be unwillingly thrown into exile by God in His righteous judgment. And yet, just as the man who touched the bones of the prophet was brought to life, so Israel will be brought back as they maintain contact with the prophets and move into obedience. Death can be followed by resurrection because God's love is strong enough to overcome death, whether it be the death of a person or the death of a people thrown into exile. God's grace is amazing as He remembers His covenants. I am under the New Covenant and I see that in Jesus I am brought to life from my death in sin (Ephesian 2:1, KJV).

Dear God, I am dead apart from Your gracious love toward me and toward Your people whom You have chosen. Thank You for Your grace and Your covenants. Amen.



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

Monday, August 6, 2018

Picked up

2 Kings 2-3

When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?" "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied. "You have asked a difficult thing," Elijah said, "yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise not." He picked up the cloak that had fallen from Elijah and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan.
2 Kings 2:9-10, 13

Elijah is taken into the presence of God to await his future renewed earthly appearance (Matthew 17:4). He is going to leave a heavy load for Elisha. Elijah has been a formidable prophet and voice for God. Elisha will need the power of God in order to fulfill the mission God has for him. He realizes that, so when Elijah asked what he could do for him, Elisha asked for a double portion of the spirit that had given him the ability to prophesy in power. Elijah indicated that was not something within his power to give, but that God could give it. Elijah was whisked away and left his cloak behind. It was left for Elisha to pick up and in so doing, pick up the load of service that was left for him, and with it the presence of the spirit he had desired. His request was honored by God and he was given the supernatural ability to do that to which he was called. What is the "cloak" that has been left for me to pick up? God has a mission for me and I am unable to do it apart from His power flowing through me. Have I taken hold of that power in my life? Am I walking in the power of the Spirit of God?

Dear God, I realize that there are amazing things that You want to do through me for Your glory. Please cause me to rely on Your power and presence in my life. Amen.

Tuesday, August 7, 2018

I know

2 Kings 4-5

Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the LORD had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy... Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel."
2 Kings 5:1, 15a

Naaman was a great and mighty commander in the army of Aram. God had given victory though Naaman for Aram. It is interesting to me that this happened even though it seems fairly apparent that neither the king nor Naaman had any intimate knowledge of the LORD. They think that it is all their own doing that has accomplished this. God knows better. God is sovereign even over those who do not know Him or believe in Him. But God has a better plan for Naaman. It involves him being afflicted with leprosy. The leprosy has come so that through Elisha God may remove Naaman's pride. His humble servants will help him understand the gifts that can be embraced in humility alone. As Naaman humbles himself and washes away his pride, he is left knowing God in a way that changes him completely. He is now completely devoted to the only God that heals.

It is pride that separates me from truly knowing God in the depth that I could. I need this reminder constantly, that as I humble myself before God He will come to me and cleanse me so that I can stand before Him pure and forgiven.

Dear God, I long to remain humble before You and to have the type of heart toward You that Naaman had—a heart that vows to worship no other! Amen.

Wednesday, August 8, 2018

See

2 Kings 6-7

"Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.
2 Kings 6:16-17

Elisha is a man who is being used by God in amazing ways. He is proclaiming God's power and His sovereignty as he speaks for God. This makes him a target for those who are opposed to God and who are impacted negatively by his message. As God chooses to protect Israel through revelations to Elisha, the king of Aram pays the price and so he sends men to capture Elisha. He sends an army with horses and chariots—so many that the servant of Elisha is gripped with fear and yet Elisha is calm. Elisha is calm because he sees that the LORD has provided an army as well. God has allowed Elisha to see what others did not. Elisha saw the army of the LORD. He asked God to allow his servant to see and God opened the servant's eyes. I have often wondered what the servant thought at that moment. I must constantly remind myself that He who is in me is greater than he who is in the world. I am not in the battle alone. It may look as though the forces against me are great, and yet, if I could see the army that I know is there, my faith would become sight and I would walk in much greater victory.

Dear God, help me see the way that You helped the servant of Elisha. I want to remember constantly that the battle is Yours and that You have the forces needed to gain victory as I walk in Your path for my life. Amen.

Thursday, August 9, 2018

Pride

2 Kings 8-9

Then Jehu went to Jezreel. When Jezebel heard about it, she painted her eyes, arranged her hair and looked out of a window. As Jehu entered the gate, she asked, "Have you come in peace, Zimri, you murderer of your master?"
2 Kings 9:30-31

God is bringing about justice on the house of Ahab. God had promised that disaster would fall on his sons and so it has. Elisha had Jehu anointed as king and Jehu is the agent the LORD is using to bring the prophecy to pass. Jezebel is next. She had urged Ahab on in his evil ways (1 Kings 21:25) and, in 1 Kings 21:23, Elijah had proclaimed her death. He had prophesied that the dogs would eat her flesh. She knew the prophecy. She knew that Jehu was coming to bring about her death. Unlike Ahab, she did not humble herself before the LORD. She chose to enter into death in pride. She adorned herself and waited for Jehu and when he came, she taunted him. Jehu wasted no time in calling for her death and there were some eunuchs more than ready to help. Jezebel—one of the most evil women in the Bible—has met her fate, as foretold. Jehu runs her over with the chariot and then the dogs come and devour her flesh. God is just. Jezebel sets an example of how pride can devour a heart and a life, which will then be devoured in judgment. God will not be mocked. I must see the absolute wickedness that is possible from a heart that is hard against God. Pride devours those who set their hearts against the LORD and His love.

Dear Lord, evil is so prevalent all around me. I see people who are opposed to You and taunt those whose hearts are Yours. Please Lord, reveal Yourself to them. Amen.