

LESSONS FROM ELIJAH

1Ki. 19: 9-18

INTRODUCTION:

- A. There are, I think, many good lessons contained in story of Elijah and how he handled his responsibilities to God
- B. Must have been sobering experience for Elijah, hidden in a cave, to have God ask, "What doest thou here"?
- C. Notes on Jezebel: "A Sidonian princess, an imperious, unscrupulous, vindictive, determined, devilish Woman, a demon incarnate"(Halley's Bible handbook). She built a temple to Baal in Samaria. maintained 850 prophets of Baal & Ashtoreth, slew the prophets of Jehovah & abolished the worship God had ordained.
- D. Ahab, king of Israel almost as wicked as wife Jezebel.

DISCUSSION:

I. ELIJAH'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PROBLEMS

- A. Elijah came on scene of Israel during reign of wicked king Ahab - prayed that rain and dew would cease till he gave the word 1Ki 17:1
- B. Sustained by God through drought of over three years
 - 1. Fed by ravens 17:6; by widow of Sarepta 17:9
 - 2. Raised widow's son from the dead 17:22
- C. Engaged in great contest with the prophets of Baal at Mt. Carmel 1Ki 18:19-40
- D. Queen Jezebel vowed to kill him and fearing for his life he fled.
- E. Refuge in cave close to Mt. Horeb {Sinai} far to south of Israel (between 200 and 300 miles from Mt Carmel)
- F. Elijah begins to feel sorry for himself
 - 1. Proclaimed drought & rain but didn't bring Israel to senses.
 - 2. Raised one from the dead with no effect on Israel
 - 3. Vividly demonstrated God's power over Baal at Mt. Carmel - still Israel sinned
 - 4. Felt he alone was left who even tried to serve God and only a matter of time before they found him & killed him
 - 5. Felt despair - what's the use of trying to continue

II. GOD'S RESPONSE TO ELIJAH'S DESPONDENCY

- A. God shows awesome power - wind, earthquake, fire; but showed he did not have to work through such devastation, when he actually came in the still small voice 1Ki 19:11,12
- B. God gave Elijah work to do

- 1. Regardless of what others do or fail to do - you do what I want you to do
- 2. Go to Damascus, anoint Hazael king of Syria, Jehu king of Israel and Elisha as prophet in your place
- C. Not alone "still 7,000 who have not bowed to Baal. 1Ki 19:18 Neither are we alone today

III. SOME LESSONS FROM THIS ACCOUNT

- A. God's great and wonderful power
 - 1. Demonstrated in drought, rain, sacrifices at Carmel wind, earthquake and fire
 - 2. Same God is with us today
 - 3. There is power in God's word Heb 4:12
 - a. Power to save Rom 1:16
 - b. power to cleanse 1Jhn 1:7
 - c. Power to preserve the world for judgement 2Pet 3:4-7
- B. Life is not just one big effort then quit
 - 1. Elijah apparently thought one or two great works should be enough - we think the same way.
 - 2. Life is an everyday business, consisting of many small as well as some large challenges, problems, and opportunities - keep pressing on through all of them 1Cor 15:58
 - 3. It could take more faith to deal with everyday problems than one isolated major one
- C. Open our eyes and look Jhn 4:35; Gen 42:1
 - 1. Despair usually results from limiting our vision and becoming self-centered
 - 2. All is not difficulties and heartache
 - 3. God is present and will help
 - 4. There are those who are tired of sin and seeking righteousness, we need to find them and help. "the fields are white unto harvest"
- D. God's cause will triumph
 - 1. We may not accomplish great things, but others will come to complete the work 1Cor 3:6
 - 2. We can't afford to quit what is certain to be a winning cause for what is certain to be a losing cause 1Jhn 2:17

CONCLUSION:

- A. How about us? What are we doing? Are we hiding?
- B. Have we given up and quit trying like Elijah?
- C. The same God who blessed Elijah has work and blessings for us.