

1 Kings 20
“The God of the Hills and Valleys”

WELCOME -

AS YOU SETTLE IN PLEASE TURN TO 1 KINGS 20...

- I've titled today's message: **“The God of the Hills and the Valleys”**

WERE GOING TO SEE SOMETHING VERY ENCOURAGING

- The faithfulness of God is not dependent on the season of life that you're in
 - Mountain Tops or Valley Lows
 - It's a temptation to believe that the God who was faithful on the mountain somehow became less faithful in the valley.
 - We know better theologically, but practically we can still live that way.
 - God is the same yesterday, today and forever

INTRO -

A LITTLE BIT OF CONTEXT FOR WHERE WE ARE AT...

LET'S PRAY -

IDEA 1 - Stand for what Matters

(READ V. 1-3)

SO WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE?

- Ben-Hadad who assembled 32 other kings with Chariots and Horses
- Then with all of this power behind him he makes his demands:
 - Maybe Ahab saw it as a way out from Jezabel!
 - And now we get to see Ahab's brave response in verse 4

(READ V. 4)

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NOTICE HOW EASILY AHAB JUST GAVE UP HIS FAMILY

- He was no man fighting for his honor
- No husband fighting for his wife
- No father fighting for his children.
- All that we see is passive compliance.
 - Its when you become a passive leader within your home and your priorities are misaligned
 - Ahab gives us a picture of what passive leadership looks like.

(READ V. 5-6)

HERE ARE THE RESULTS OF AHAB’S FEAR AND PASSIVE LEADERSHIP

- This is satan’s strategy - Give him an inch and he will take a mile
 - 1 Peter 5:8 NKJV

(READ V. 7-21)

NOW HE TURNS TO THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL TO GET COUNSEL

- It's never a good sign to ask for advice after the fact!
 - Proverbs 11:14 NKJV
 - But its even better to seek counsel from the Lord
 - But God was still gracious to him by sending a prophet
 - God is merciful even when we dont deserve it
 - 2 Peter 3:9 NLT
 - Key: Grace is ALWAYS undeserved

THE KEY FOR HIS WHOLE CHAPTER IS VERSE 13

- “... that you shall know that I am the LORD.”
 - God isn't delivering Ahab because Ahab deserves it. What God is doing is revealing Himself.
 - Ahab is king of Israel God is really the one on the throne

(READ V. 22)

PREPARE BECAUSE THERE IS ANOTHER BATTLE ON THE HORIZON

- Spring is the season for military advancement

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- Application: If you win a battle against the enemy, he strategizes and waits
 - When satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness the Bible says that Satan left and waited for an opportune time
 - It's important to be ready, wearing the armor of God

IDEA 2 - Trust God in the Valley

(READ V. 23-30)

LOOK AT HOW THE SYRIANS BELIEVED THE GODS WORKED

- Polytheistic - Many gods
- Henotheistic - gods are localized.
 - The thought was that since he was the god of the hills he wouldn't be able to operate in the valleys.
 - Maybe they heard rumors about what Elijah the prophet did
 - In Fact the name Ben-Hadad isn't actually a name,
 - Ben translates to SON
 - Hadad translates to THE GOD OF THE STORMS

GOD IS BOTH THE GOD OF THE HILLS AND VALLEYS

- Psalm 139:7 NKJV
 - God is omnipresent, he is not limited to any territory or terrain
 - Take that and apply it to your life!
 - We often make the same mistake Syria made, just in a more sophisticated way.
 - When you know that God is able to solve your church problem but not your financial problem
 - ETC
 - Listen to this, God refuses to be boxed into one circumstance
- The God who met you on the mountain did not stop being God when you walked into the valley

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THE DANGER FOR CHRISTIANS IS WHEN THEY LIVE LIKE THIS

- Where God is God of my Sundays but not the God of my Saturdays
 - We are making the same mistake Syria made
 - We are trying to give God borders.

LOOK AT VERSE 28 “...and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

- It isn't about Ahab, It's not about Ben-Hadad, or about military strategy.
 - It's about God revealing who He is.
 - 2 tiny flocks of goats Similar to Gideon
 - There was no way of explaining it, BUT GOD
 - God does not need favorable circumstances in order to be faithful.

BUT NOW THE SCENE TURNS FROM GREAT VICTORY TO COMPROMISE

(READ V. 31-34)

IDEA 3 - Don't Surrender the Victory that God Gave you

AHAB MADE A CRITICAL MISTAKE HERE

- Ahab turns the defeated Ben-Hadad into an ally.
 - Don't negotiate away from God's victory
 - Regardless of whether it was a humanly smart move to make if a good thing replaces the best thing, it is no longer a good thing.
 - Ahab reasoned himself and never consulted the Lord.
 - Instead Ahab sees a political advantage
 - Ahab's main focus was self-preservation

INSTEAD OF RECEIVING GOD'S GRACE HE WANTED HIS WAY

- He likely foresaw an even greater threat not from the Assyrian army
 - Practically and politically you could look at that as a smart move
 - Ahab stopped short of full victory
 - God wanted to remove the cancer that was around his people
 - Now apply that to your life!

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- The areas of your life where God wants to operate on, not to hurt you, but to save you

HE WINS THE BATTLE BUT MISHANDLES THE VICTORY

- Key: compromise can rob you of effectiveness after victory
 - Transitioning– A prophet disguises themselves as a soldier on the battlefield and speaks to the king

(READ V. 38-43)

THIS REMINDS ME A LOT OF WHEN NATHAN THE PROPHET

- The Prophet tells a story and the king judges themselves as a result.
 - And the key verse that I want to focus on here is Verse 40
 - We can be busy doing good things and still neglect the most important thing.
 - The principle for us is that if we were too busy here and there we will miss on the one thing that God told us to do
 - Busyness is not the same thing as faithfulness

A VERY ANTI-CLIMATICAL ENDING TO THIS CHAPTER

- Notice his response to all of this
 - There was no repentance
 - No confession
 - No brokenness
 - All there was, was irritation
 - All of this because Ahab wanted to be king on his own terms
 - Ahab wanted God’s victory without God’s Authority

THE DANGER ISN’T MERELY OUTRIGHT REBELLION

- Sometimes the most dangerous form of disobedience is **obedience until obedience becomes inconvenient**
 - He trusted God’s word when God’s word meant victory

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- He ignored God’s word when God’s word interfered what he wanted
 - The real victory is not just defeating the enemy... it’s surrendering to God.

CALL WORSHIP UP

APPLICATION

HERE IS WHAT I WANT TO LEAVE YOU WITH

- God is the same in the valley as He is on the mountains. And for those of you who are in the middle of your valley, the Bible says that God is near to the broken hearted
 - And it's in those Valley Experiences where you are able to sense the nearness of God in ways you wouldn't otherwise

PRAY