

2 Kings 13

Written by K B Napier
Friday, 16 September 2016 15:04

There are consequences resulting from an inadequate obedience or response to God's demands. This chapter shows us how, and comments are for today's believers who are unwise in such dark days.

Verses 1&2

1.

In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years.

2.

And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

When Joash king of Judah was thirty years of age, Jehoahaz became king of Israel in Samaria. He lasted 17 years as ruler. Like the previous kings and those who followed, he was a wicked king, repeating the sins of all the others (apart from David, and Solomon in his earlier days). It is true that a corrupt root produces corrupt fruit. Even today, Christians refuse to face up to the corruption of their teachers, pastors, preachers, and corrupt fellow believers, allowing them to continue unchallenged and unrebuked, though God is angry with them. It is why our churches are so rotten, and why Christians are being subjected to persecution.

Verses 3-9

1.

And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Benhadad the son of Hazael, all their days.

2.

And Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened unto him: for he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them.

2 Kings 13

Written by K B Napier
Friday, 16 September 2016 15:04

3.

(And the LORD gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as beforetime.)

4.

Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin, but walked therein: and there remained the grove also in Samaria.)

5.

Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by threshing.

6.

Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

7.

And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned in his stead.

God is patient and long-suffering, but even He must show His wrath at times, as He did against Israel. In spite of His many interventions on their behalf the people of Israel continued in their evil ways... much as modern Christians do. God handed Israel over to Syria in the reigns of both Hazael and his son Benhadad, for long periods. Christians today are being persecuted because they follow the examples of wicked kings of Israel. More is to come today, as they still ignore the warnings and penalties of doing what is wrong.

The king of Israel called on the Lord when the oppression of Syria was bad, and God graciously listened to His pleas. (Significantly today, God does NOT answer our pleas though persecution is rife. This implies that we are still not in a position of true humility and faith). Note that it was

2 Kings 13

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 16 September 2016 15:04

God Who allowed Israel to suffer at the hands of Syria in the first place. So it is with the persecution of Christians today; it is the result of lacking in obedience and faith, which is sin.

God finally took Israel out of the hands of Syria, and the people lived in their dwellings in peace. But, the same people did not deserve the favours of God! “... *they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam.*” (verse 6). I

often hear Christians today speak disapprovingly of these ancient people and their kings – yet they do nothing in modern times to act differently! We are as they were! The sins of today were well-known in ancient times. Christ instructs us to judge others, but not if we are guilty of the same sins. And it is very easy to be critical of the dead, when they cannot point a finger at our own deficient lives.

A grove – a place of worship to Baal – still remained in the chief city of Samaria, right under the nose of the king of Israel, yet he did not remove it. This was like having a putrid running sore on the body of Israel. Today, we have similar running sores, when we allow mosques and other places of modernised Baal worship in our midst. Law might prevent us overturning and destroying them, but we do have voices!

God did not leave the king of Israel with much by way of weapons and army; he was left with only fifty cavalry soldiers, ten war chariots, and 10,000 foot-soldiers. Syria destroyed the rest. Chronicles contains more details of this king. No more is said of him in 2 Kings, but his son, Joash, took the throne at his death as the twelfth king of Israel, when the king of Judah had reigned for 37 years.

Verses 10-13

1.

In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah began Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned sixteen years.

2.

And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin: but he walked therein.

3.

2 Kings 13

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 16 September 2016 15:04

And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

4.

And Joash slept with his fathers; and Jeroboam sat upon his throne: and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

Jehoash reigned as king of Israel for just 16 years, but he, too, was a bad king, ignoring the demands of God on the nation. Each king of Israel after Solomon gave a wicked legacy to their sons, and these wicked kings taught all of Israel to ignore God and to do what was sinful. Again, I say that this is what we see in modern Christian churches. 2 Kings thinks little of this new king, for his account is now terminated – look in Chronicles for more details. His son, Jeroboam, became the 8th king, and was just as evil, taking all of Israel down with him.

God specially mentions leaders who take nations into sin – we even see this activity today. But, we must ask ourselves if this can often be an excuse for sin. While leaders are deservedly hated by God for doing what they do, every individual has a conscience and KNOWS when he sins. It does not matter if we are brought up in a lovely Christian home, or a wicked one – none of us can blame others for our sins. This is the Lord's position regarding our sin, and it has not changed since the beginning of time.

Verses 14-18

1.

Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.

2.

And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows.

3.

And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand upon it: and

2 Kings 13

Written by K B Napier
Friday, 16 September 2016 15:04

Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.

4.

And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the LORD'S deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them.

5.

And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed.

Elisha fell ill with a terminal disease, Before he died Joash (not the king of Judah) came to visit him and wept, calling him "My father, my father", giving him the title of "chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof", acknowledging him to be the one man in Israel who taught truth from God, and who kept Israel from the worst of harm from attacking nations.

Elisha told him to get his bow and arrows, and then told him to get his bow ready to shoot, while he placed his own hands on top of the king's hand. Elisha told him to shoot through a window facing west, which he did. Elisha said that the arrow represented God's deliverance from Syria; it also represented God's deliverance from sin, if the king obeyed. Joash would conquer the Syrians at Aphek (a city near Jezreel). But, first, he was told to fire more arrows out of the same window, which he did, three times, and then stopped.

Verses 19-21

1.

And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.

2.

And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.

2 Kings 13

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 16 September 2016 15:04

3.

And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

When he stopped at the third strike, Elisha was angry – ‘You should have shot five or six times. Because of this you will only harm Syria but not completely destroy it! Instead, you will only hit them three times, and they will still continue to attack you!’ Very often, modern Christians listen to God but only do part of what He demands. And so their lives are only partially supported by God.

I also see in this anger the situation with Islamic terrorists today. Instead of bringing a mighty hammer down upon them, the West simpers and holds back, only applying minor fight-backs, allowing them to grow in numbers and do despicable things. The answer is simple – in the name of God, strike them until they all die, or they will keep attacking.

After this, Elisha died and was buried in Samaria. Soon afterwards, in the new year, the Moabites, Lot’s descendants, began an attack on Israel, so the king’s lack of purpose led to this extra burden on Israel. As they (the Moabites) were burying a man, they saw a group of men afar off. Thinking they were enemies, the Moabites just lowered the dead man into the grave occupied by the dead Elisha. Then, extraordinarily, the dead Moabite came alive when his body touched the body of Elisha, and he stood up on his feet.

This is similar in type to the blessing of handkerchiefs by the apostles, which then healed the owner. It is not a typical act today, and we should not read anything into the healing. It is not a healing we can expect today (unless God brings it about on a very rare occasion), and so charismatics who regularly make claims for the efficacy of objects and materials are to be ignored and not believed. This is not disbelief in God’s power, but a disbelief in claims made by a false Christian church or individual. We do not know why God gave this resurrection, but must accept it at face value, as a special, non-repetitive mercy, otherwise we enter the pagan field of Roman Catholicism and its belief in the miraculous effect of dead ‘saints’ and relics.

Verses 22-25

2 Kings 13

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 16 September 2016 15:04

1.

But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.

2.

And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet.

3.

So Hazael king of Syria died; and Benhadad his son reigned in his stead.

4.

And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Benhadad the son of Hazael the cities, which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. Three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

As Elisha warned, because Jehoahaz did not fire the right number of arrows, he only had limited success against Syria... Syria continued attacking Israel throughout the reign of Jehoahaz. Yet, even so, God still showed the nation mercy. Not because of its own spiritual state, but for the sake of God's promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For this reason, God did not allow Hazael to destroy them utterly, nor did He completely withdraw His presence from Israel (even today) – but note the ominous last two words, “as yet”. Today, no Christian can rely on God's presence if he continues in sin. He does not know if and when the Lord will crush him and his life on this earth. Far better to live a holy life than to tempt the Lord to strike him down.

Hazael died and his son took over the throne of Syria. Jehoash gained strength in his army and he took back cities Hazael had secured in previous battles. It took three battles to do this – the exact number of arrows fired by his father. If his father had only fired more arrows, the success against Syria would have been complete.

In our own day this means that every Christian must live a holy life and do whatever God

2 Kings 13

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 16 September 2016 15:04

demands of them FULLY and not partially. If they do not, they will never know complete triumph in their Christian lives, and they may even be plagued by continuous streams of attack, rarely recovering from them, because they have not completely given themselves over to the Lord. Such folk will continually bounce between fear and faith, always susceptible to anxiety when their lives suffer set-backs and when things do not go well.

But, reader, do not be self-assured over this. God can have a far worse answer for those who silently ignore living as they should, an answer that is quieter and extremely serious. That is, God slowly removes His presence from the Christian. This can be so slow as not to be noticed, particularly as his or her life might just be still, with no challenges and no rewards. It will evidence in an increasingly superficial spiritual life, with more emphasis on what one can achieve and get, than in obeying the Lord. In this way many unbelievers, as well as believers, accrue riches or status, and know little by way of spiritual problems. This is an arid place to be in life, for God will not feed them, nor will He give them what they should have. God forbid that any who read this message refuse to listen and change their lives following repentance.

I have watched many ignoring these warnings during my lifetime. They carry on as normal, showing just how poor their understanding is, and how loathe they are to let go of their own self-determined destiny. God will allow this for just so long, and then He lets them do as they wish, to suffer the consequences of ignoring Him. This is more current than most Christians realise; it is why nations who were once Christian in-the-main slide into obscurity, or even end up in chains; it is why we are plagued by godless leaders; it is why God allows, or even raises, evil people to trouble us – ISIS, and other terrorists who hate not just the West, but Christians and God in particular.

Thus, we must not only obliterate these wicked men – we must also obliterate the sin that causes us to slow down in our spiritual lives, and to even stop us from worshipping God as we ought. All men KNOW when they sin, and they KNOW God is real. There is no excuse for their wickedness (Romans 1). Take stock, friends, and repent; do what is right and cast off what is wrong. This aligning with God might take a short while, but it is necessary. To put it bluntly, you have read these warnings and are now without excuse. So am I. You will either honour the Lord fully, or you will offer Him minor, meaningless worship, which He despises.

© March 2016

---oOo---

2 Kings 13

Written by K B Napier

Friday, 16 September 2016 15:04

{loadposition btm_address}