

The Kings of Judah and Israel

LESSON #20 | The Governor, Obadiah, greatly feared the LORD

Teacher: Pr. Cornelius Koshy

1 Kings 17:1

1 And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

James 5:17

17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

1. What would the phrase, "before whom I stand", have meant to King Ahab when Elijah the Tishbite said it to him?

- Elijah testified that he fears and serves the living and true God of Israel, in contrast to Baal (false god) and idols which Ahab worshipped.
- Elijah testified that he stood for a long time in worship of God, and he did not sit down.

2. Read James 5:17 and explain the phrase, "according to my word" in 1 Kings 17:1.

3. Although Scripture does not explain why Elijah prayed for a drought, we can deduce the reason by recalling God's description of Ahab. Ahab was the most w _____ king to reign in Israel, and he brought B ___ worship into Israel when he married J _____, the daughter of Ethbaal.

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1 Kings 18:3-6

3 And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly:

4 For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.)

5 And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.

6 So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

Luke 4:25

25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

4. Because of the drought (lack of water) in Israel which lasted three _____ and six _____, the land would have been very d____. Vegetation would have d____ without rainfall, and crops would have withered. Besides, livestock and cattle that eat grass and vegetation would soon die - and that was what Ahab was afraid of! That's why in verse 5, Ahab told Obadiah to search out all Israel for g_____ to feed the beasts.

5. Who was Obadiah?

- A man living in the southern kingdom who managed the affairs of the king's house
- A man living in the northern kingdom who managed the affairs of the king's house
- A prophet who lived in King Zedekiah's time and wrote (minor) prophecy concerning Edom, which is part of the Old Testament

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6. In our last lesson, we learnt that Jezebel was a wicked queen because she was i _____, worshipping many idols and false gods. In this passage, Scripture tells us that Jezebel was also m _____, killing the prophets of the Lord.

But Obadiah, the governor of Ahab's house, feared ___ more than men. Obadiah was willing to risk his life by hiding 100 prophets of the LORD, 50 in one cave, and 50 in another cave. Not only did Obadiah hide them, he also f__ them with bread and water.

God p _____ and p _____ for his prophets through Obadiah. Scripture records that Obadiah "feared the LORD _____" (1 Kings 18:3).

With this description, we know that Obadiah did not worship Baal nor the golden calves. He knew God's law, feared God and obeyed His law, unlike king Ahab. He also loved God's s _____, and knew that he had a duty to protect them. Therefore, it is of little wonder that Obadiah, a man of uprightness, would also be outstanding in other administrative matters.

Clearly, Obadiah was a r _____ man, who did his duties excellently. King Ahab noticed his reliable nature and good character in the office of "g _____ of the house" and thus, he gave Obadiah the duty of searching out grass from across the northern kingdom.

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1 Kings 18:7-16

7 And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou that my lord Elijah?

8 And he answered him, I am: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.

9 And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me?

10 As the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not.

11 And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.

12 And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the Spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth.

13 Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?

14 And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here: and he shall slay me.

15 And Elijah said, As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to day.

16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

2. What does the phrase, "he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth." (1 King 18:12b) tell us about the faith of Obadiah?

8. Memory Verse:

Acts 5:29

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said,

We ought to _____ rather than _____.