

Do You Believe God?

2 Kings 7:1-3

INTRODUCTION

- A. John was reading a book when his five year-old daughter Melodye Jan, came and asked for a doll house.
 - 1. John promptly nodded and promised to build her one, then he went back to reading his book.
 - a. Soon he glanced out the study window and saw her arms filled with dishes, toys, and dolls, making trip after trip until she had a great pile of playthings in the yard.
 - b. He asked his wife what Melodye Jan was doing.
 - 2. His wife said, “Oh, you promised to build her a doll house, and she believes you. She’s just getting ready for it.”
 - 3. John promptly ran to the lumber yard, bought supplies, and came back and built a doll house.
- B. When God has spoken, how much do we believe him?
 - 1. There are many in this world who believe not a word God has spoken.
 - a. This morning, we’re going to think about a man who refused to believe what God had spoken.
 - b. We’re not even told the man’s name.
 - 1) I really wonder if the author of Kings thought this man didn’t deserve that much ink.
 - 2) On the other hand, it’s interesting he remains unnamed, for, in a very real sense, he stands for every person who disbelieves God.
 - 2. As we ask the question, “Do You Believe God?” we see GOD SPOKE, MAN DISBELIEVED, & GOD PUNISHED.

GOD SPOKE, vv. 1, 16

- A. Elisha said, “Hear the word of the LORD. This is what the LORD says: About this time tomorrow, a seah of flour will sell for a shekel and two seahs of barley for a shekel at the gate of Samaria,” v. 1.
 - 1. A great famine overtook the Northern Kingdom.
 - a. 6:24-25.
 - 1) As we read these words, we need to recall that the standard monthly wage in this time period was only one shekel.
 - 2) The famine was so severe that a donkey’s head, one of the most undesirable things to eat for food, sells for eighty months wages.
 - 3) A quarter of a cab (probably about half a pint) of seed pods (NIV) sold for five months wages.
 - a) Linguistically, “seed pods” is very difficult to translate — the Hebrew was used for seed pods in places, but in other places it referred to pigeon manure.
 - i. It could very well be that a half pint of pigeon manure was selling for five months wages.
 - ii. We do know that pigeon manure was eaten for food in very dire circumstances in the ancient world.
 - b) Imagine saving for five months just to buy your kids a little pigeon manure to eat before sending them to bed.
 - b. Elisha declared that prices would deflate over night.
 - 1) The prices Elisha gave are still very much inflated, however, they are far better

than what things had been.

- 2) A seah was about seven quarts and would make about a week's worth of food for a single adult.
 - 3) A family of four would need about four quarts of barley per day.
 - 4) The situation was not good, but it was far improved over what it had been.
2. The point I want to make here is simply that God spoke and said what would come to pass.
- a. Notice that Elisha twice emphasizes that what he is speaking is the Word of God — “Hear the word of the LORD. This is what the LORD says.”
 - b. Throughout Scripture, we are reminded that God has spoken in Scripture, that Scripture is his word.
 - 1) “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
 - 2) “Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:20-21).
- B. Notice what happened with the word of God.
1. You recall from our discussion from last week that four lepers went and found food and reported the message back to Samaria.
 2. When the lepers reported the news of the deserted camp to Samaria, “The people went out and plundered the camp of the Arameans. So a seah of flour sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley sold for a shekel, as the LORD had said” (v. 16).
 - a. When God speaks, the case is settled, God's word is firm, it is settled.
 - 1) “I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished” (Mt. 5:18).
 - 2) “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away” (Lk. 21:33).
 - b. When God speaks, what God says is going to occur.

MAN DISBELIEVED, v. 2

- A. The officer sitting next to the king said, “Look, even if the LORD should open the floodgates of the heavens, could this happen?”
1. We've already discussed how severe the famine was in Samaria.
 2. The king's servant doesn't believe even God could bring an end to the famine, and he mockingly tells Elisha so. He says, “Look, if it rains and rains and rains, even God cannot bring an end to the famine.”
- B. This officer just doesn't believe what God has said. How many people today believe what God has said?
1. How many times do we hear that we as Christians need to condone homosexuality? We often hear that the Bible just doesn't really condone homosexuality?
 2. How many times do we hear that baptism really doesn't have anything to do with salvation?
 3. How many times do we hear that women really ought to be given leadership roles in the church? Paul had a problem with women and that's why he wrote as he did.
 4. The root issue is that those who argue in such a way don't really believe what God has said.

GOD PUNISHED, v. 2

- A. When the officer told Elisha that he didn't believe God, Elisha said, “You will see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it!”

1. Notice what Elisha basically says to this officer, “You don’t believe God? Doesn’t matter, God’s still going to do what God has said he’s going to do.”
 2. God’s Word doesn’t depend on you and me.
 - a. It doesn’t matter what you and I think about what God has said, God will do what he has said he’ll do.
 - b. It doesn’t matter whether you or I obey what God has said, God will do what he has said he’ll do.
 - c. It doesn’t matter whether you or I like what God has said, God will do what he has said he’ll do.
- B. Notice what Elisha promised the officer: Punishment. You’re going to see a reprieve in the famine, but you’re not going to eat any of the promised food.
1. The officer didn’t eat any of the promised food.
 - a. “Now the king had put the officer on whose arm he leaned in charge of the gate, and the people trampled him in the gateway, and he died, just as the man of God had foretold when the king came down to his house” (v. 17).
 - b. Notice again that we have the firmness of God’s word; Elisha had said the officer wouldn’t eat of the food, and he didn’t.
 - c. Additionally, though, we have the idea of punishment: The man died because he didn’t believe God.
 2. You know that God punishes those who do not follow his Word.
 - a. When Jesus comes again, “he will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess. 1:8).
 - 1) Undoubtedly, some will be punished because they do not know God; they do not know any better, they do not know there’s an opportunity for life.
 - 2) But, Jesus will also punish those who do not obey his gospel — Undoubtedly many of those will know the gospel but chose not to obey, chose not to believe.
 - b. “See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God” (Heb. 3:12).
 - 1) That unbelieving heart has serious consequences. That unbelieving heart had serious consequences for the Israelites:
 - a) Because the Israelites didn’t believe God, their bodies fell in the desert.
 - b) Because the Israelites didn’t believe God, they wandered in the wilderness 40 years and were not permitted to enter the Promised Land.
 - 2) Unbelieving hearts continue to have serious consequences: God will not bless those who disbelieve his Word.
 3. Are you obeying the Word of God? Do you trust God?