

DEALING WITH A SPIRITUAL CRISIS

1 KINGS 18:17-21

Introduction

Here we see the nation of Israel, God's people, whom He had made into a nation...in fulfillment of His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...**in a serious crisis situation of their own making!**

It was God Who had sanctified Israel (i.e. He set them apart unto Himself for His own purposes!) **But, they had strayed from Him (again) and because of that we see them once again in a crisis situation!**

I said that this was a crisis situation of Israel's own making **because it was the result of them having had forsaken God and His commandments to follow Baalim or Baal!**

Understand that **the worship of Baal appealed to Israel's flesh**, just as much as **a lot of the present day so-called worship appeals to folks flesh!** People call it worship! And make no mistake, it is worship...but the question is who or what is it a worship of? Is it worship that is acceptable to God?!

We see a lot of worship going on in this chapter, but the worship of those in the majority here was NOT acceptable to God!

But I want to look closely at this crisis situation that has developed here...

I. UNDERSTAND THAT WHERE SIN REIGNS THERE IS A CRISIS TO ALL THOSE INVOLVED!

More specifically...**ANYTIME** and **ANYWHERE** and **ON ANY LEVEL THAT SIN REIGNS** a crisis situation will develop!

A. Sin And Sinners Reigned In Israel, Causing The Crisis Situation That We See!

Proverbs 14:34—"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."

In our passage, the times of blessing for Israel had long past as there had been over 100 years of wickedness.

In fact, there had not been a king in Israel that did right in the sight of the LORD for a very long time.

DEALING WITH A SPIRITUAL CRISIS

1 KINGS 18:17-21

1. The spiritual condition of the nation of Israel was shown by its leadership—vs 17-18.

Ahab had established idolatry in Israel.

He was a dangerous innovator and patron of foreign gods! (*1 Kings 16:30-33, 21:25-26*)

He was a weak-minded man who lacked moral fiber and righteousness in his life. (*1 Kings 21:4*)

He was the tool of his cruel and wicked wife, Jezebel!

Ahab and his wife Jezebel had forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and had followed Baal wholeheartedly!

(Baal was the chief god worshiped by the people of Canaan.)

2. The spiritual condition of the nation was shown by its people—vs 21.

The Israelites were tempted continually to forsake the worship of the true God of Heaven for the worship of Baal instead.

The worship of Baal was frequently connected with immorality, which is one of the primary reasons the Israelites were so sorely tempted toward Baal worship. (*The Devil still uses the lust of the flesh to draw men away from God.*)

But we see the problem is that the people of God did not want to wholly commit unto God. (*They were just like a lot of people today who want to ride the fence.*)

DEALING WITH A SPIRITUAL CRISIS

1 KINGS 18:17-21

They weren't really opposed to the LORD God being worshiped, but they wanted to hang on to the LORD and Baal at the same time!

But that just won't work! If the LORD be God, follow him!

B. Where Sin And Sinners Reign Today, It Still Causes A Crisis Situation!

Proverbs 14:34—"... sin is a reproach to any people."

Look at what alcohol and drug dependancy have done to the breakdown of the morals and the mores of our society!

It has robbed our nation in many ways and at many levels! It steals and kills and destroys life and liberty!

Look at what the violation of the LORD's commandments has brought to our society!

Thou shalt have no other gods before me!

We were founded as, and once were, but no longer are "*one nation under God!*"

Rather, we are a nation under many gods who have become tolerant to all gods except the one true God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ!

Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain!

The name of God and His Son have become by-words and are used in the most heinous and disrespectful ways! Even by those in authority! They are used in conjunction with curse words openly and continually with no regard for God! And now they are even forbidden in much of the public arena to be spoken of by those who follow Him!

DEALING WITH A SPIRITUAL CRISIS

1 KINGS 18:17-21

Honor thy father and thy mother!

Disrespect for those in authority is now rampant in our society! (e.g. Police officers, teachers)

I believe you can trace this disrespect for authority outside the home back to the disrespect of authority within the home!

And the disrespect for authority within the home can be traced to the disrespect of God in our society!

Thou shalt not kill!

Whenever life is considered cheap...that's a crisis! When our government continues to promote and fund the murder of millions unborn children for what it deems "*the greater good*" or in the name of "*choice*" ...that's a crisis!

Thou shalt not commit adultery! (As well as all the other laws of God against immorality!)

Look at what immorality has done in our society! The call for so called "free-love" back in the 60's has now led a "free-fall" of morals in our society.

The sensuality that is so pervasive in life, music and entertainment has now led to the toleration of public acts and displays of lewdness and vulgarity which has consequently led to a widespread acceptance of that which the LORD calls an abomination!

This downward spiral into reprobation (which is a judgment in itself) has made our nation ripe for further judgment!

(Romans 1:18ff)

Thou shalt not steal!

Breakdown of morals in general have led to an increase in thefts as people feel entitled to what others have!

Thou shalt not bear false witness!

Lying is tolerated and not dealt with at the highest levels of government, so citizens justify their own lying and deceit!

Thou shalt not covet!

Wherever God has been pushed out, there is a void that causes discontentment that cannot be satisfied!

Where Sin And Sinners Reign Today, It Still Causes A Crisis Situation!

We've Talked About How That's True In Society!

- C. **It Is Also True In The Church And Those Who Make Up The Church!** (e.g. Corinthian Church – *1 Corinthians 6*)
 - 1. **When The Church Drifts With Society, It Is Not A Good Thing!**
 - 2. **When The Church Is Not A Godly Example, It Is Not A Good Thing!**
 - 3. **When The Church Yields To Adopting Societal Standards Over God's Standards, It Is Not A Good Thing!**
- D. **When Sin Reigns In A Family, That Family Is In A Crisis Situation!** (e.g. Lot's family – *Genesis 19*; Eli's family – *1 Samuel 2*)
- E. **When Sin Reigns In An Individual's Life, That Individual Is In A Crisis Situation!** (e.g. Achan – *Joshua 7*; Samson – *Judges 13-16*; Demas – *2 Timothy 4:10*)

**II. THE ANSWER FOR DEALING WITH A SPIRITUAL CRISIS!
(Vs 21)**

A. Stop Straddling The Fence!

B. Which God Is Really God?

C. Figure It Out And Follow Him!

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 – 4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: 5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."