

LIKE FATHER LIKE SON**2 KINGS 17:41****INTRODUCTION**

THERE IS NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN. ALL THAT WE HAVE AND ALL THAT WE WILL EXPERIENCE, HAS BEEN EXPERIENCED BEFORE, AS RECORDED IN SCRIPTURE.

THE CAUSE MAY CHANGE IN ADAPTATION TO CULTURE, BUT THE END RESULT NEVER CHANGES.

ON THIS FATHER'S DAY, WE LOOK TO THE EXPERIENCES OF THE TRANSPLANTED NATION OF ISRAEL FOR INSIGHT AND SPIRITUAL DIRECTION.

THE KING AND PEOPLE OF ISRAEL HAD BEEN CARRIED AWAY CAPTIVE.

THE LAND IN WHICH THEY HAD DWELLED BECAME DESOLATE AND UNCULTIVATED FOR MANY YEARS, AND SAVAGE BEASTS HAD RE-ENTERED THE KINGDOM TO RECLAIM THE UNTILLED SOLITUDES, AS WEEDS WORKED TO DESTROY THE GARDENS AND VINEYARDS OF SAMARIA.

THEN FINALLY, THE KING OF ASSYRIA DECIDED TO RE-INHABIT THE LAND WITH PEOPLE.

HE SENT A MULTITUDE FROM DIFFERENT NATIONALITIES IN HIS EMPIRE TO THE LAND OF ISRAEL.

THERE WERE MEN OF FIVE NATIONALITIES, MOST OF THEM FROM RECENTLY CONQUERED NATIONS.

BY MINGLING THESE DEPORTED CAPTIVES, THE KING OF ASSYRIA HOPED TO WARD OFF DISSENSION.

ALL FIVE NATIONS BROUGHT THEIR NATIONAL PECULIARITIES WITH THEM.

THEY KNEW NOTHING OF JEHOVAH, THE GOD WHOM THEY HEARD WAS THE LOCAL DEITY OF ISRAEL.

WHEN THEY BECAME TROUBLED BY THE WILD BEASTS THAT HAD INHABITED THE LAND, THEY ATTRIBUTED THE TROUBLE TO THEIR NEGLECT OF THE WORSHIP OF THE GOD OF ISRAEL.

THEY BELIEVED THAT ISRAEL'S GOD HAD SENT THE LIONS INTO THE LAND AS RETRIBUTION.

THAT'S THE HEATHEN WAY OF THINKING.

MAN HAS HIS OWN LOCAL DEITIES. EACH NATION, EACH COMMUNITY HAS ITS OWN. AND MAN IS READY TO WORSHIP THEM ALL, BECAUSE HE HAS NO REAL WORSHIP OF ANY.

LOOK AT AMERICA. WE ARE A NATION FOUNDED UPON BELIEF IN ONE GOD, YET WE HAVE BECOME TOLERANT OF MANY GODS FOR THE SAKE OF CONVENIENCE.

THAT'S BECAUSE MAN'S REASONS FOR WORSHIP ARE WEAK.

HE WORSHIPS TO ESCAPE FROM HARM...TO PAY TRIBUTE TO A GOD WHOSE PEOPLE MAY RETALIATE IF HE REFUSES TO PAY OBEISANCE.

SO THE SETTLERS IN ISRAEL, HAVING NO TRUE NOTION OF THE WORSHIP OF JEHOVAH, WERE TAUGHT THE RITES OF ISRAELITE WORSHIP, BLENDED WITH THEIR OWN IDOLATRY.

[2 KINGS 17: 30,31], BOLDLY LIST THE NAMES OF THEIR GODS:

- 1. SUCCOTH-BENOTH, {SUHK-ATH-BEE-NOTH}**
- 2. NERGAL, {NUR-GUL}**
- 3. ASHIMA, {UH-SHIGH-MUH}**

4. NIBHAZ, {NIB-HAZ}
5. TARTAK, {TARTAKE}
6. ADRAMMELECH, {UH-DRAM-UH-LEK}
7. AND ANAMMELECH. {UH-NAM-UH-LEK}
8. AND ADDED TO THEIR WORSHIP, THEY BEGAN TO INCLUDE JEHOVAH....OUT OF FEAR.

FEAR IS THE WRONG REASON FOR WORSHIP.

1. THE RELIGION OF FEAR IS WORTHLESS.
2. IT PRODUCES NO HOLINESS.
3. IT DOES NOTHING FOR A MAN AND DOES NOT BIND HIM TO HIS GOD.
4. HE IS NOT MADE STRONGER BY IT.
5. IF IT DOES ANYTHING, IT PARALYSES.
6. WORSHIP MOTIVATED BY FEAR IS SPASMODIC AND INTERMITTENT.
7. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO KEEP IT UP, SO INSTEAD, IT COMES IN FITS AND STARTS. AND WHEN THE MORNING COMES, WE END UP LAUGHING AT OUR FEAR.
8. THE MAN WHO BEGINS BY FEARING WHEN THERE IS NO NEED, ENDS UP NOT FEARING WHEN HE OUGHT.

FEAR HAS ITS PLACE IN OUR HUMAN EXISTENCE, BUT IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH MAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

FEAR WAS NEVER MEANT TO BE A PERMANENT MOTIVATION FOR WORSHIP.

IT SHOULD ONLY BE AN ALARM BELL THAT WAKES UP THE SOUL THAT IS SLEEPING ON IN MORTAL PERIL.

BEYOND FEAR, TRUE WORSHIP SHOULD LEAD MEN TO PENITENCE AND FAITH AND JOY IN JESUS.

“WE HAVE ACCESS WITH CONFIDENCE BY OUR FAITH IN HIM.”

THUS, THE NEW INHABITANTS OF ISRAEL BEGAN A FORM OF WORSHIP THAT WAS MOTIVATED BY FEAR AND MIXED WITH IDOLATRY.

AND THIS WAS THE RELIGION THEY PASSED ON TO THEIR CHILDREN....AND THEIR CHILDREN’S CHILDREN.

IT WAS AN OUTWARD, RATHER THAN AN INWARD FORM OF WORSHIP.

IT WAS BASED ON HABITS AND RITUALS, CUSTOMS AND CULTURES.

ARE WE SO DIFFERENT FROM THOSE INHABITANTS OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL?

- 1. WE HAVE OUR HABITS OF WORSHIP;**
- 2. OUR SUNDAYS WHEN WE ATTEND THE FORMAL CEREMONIES SO OUR NAME REMAINS VISIBLE ON THE ROLES.**
- 3. WE DISPLAY AN OUTWARD CHRISTIANITY...A CHRISTIANITY PASSED ON BY OUR ANCESTORS...**
- 4. A FORM OF WORSHIP THAT WAS THEIR HABIT, AND HAS NOW BECOME OUR OWN.**
- 5. AND OUR OUTWARD DISPLAY DOES NOT BIND US TO OUR GOD, BECAUSE ONLY LOVE CAN BIND US TO JEHOVAH.**

CHURCH-GOERS AND CHRISTIANS ALIKE ARE EXPOSED TO THE DANGERS OF ERECTING SYMBOLIC FORMS OF WORSHIP THAT MAR THE SPIRIT.

WE ALL TEND TO SUBSTITUTE FORM AND FASHION FOR THE REAL THING!

AND LIKE THE MEN OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL, WE HAVE OUR GOD AND WE HAVE OUR *gODS*.

AND “IF TRUTH BE TOLD”, MANY OF US LIKE THE LATTER BEST.

WE GIVE GOD OUR FORMAL WORSHIP, BUT WE GIVE THE OTHERS OUR MORE *ACTIVE* SERVICE...

***gODS* LIKE, BASEBALL AND FOOTBALL, CARS AND POSSESSIONS.**

YES, WE’LL STAY HOME FROM WORSHIP TO POLISH OUR POSSESSIONS, AS OUR CHILDREN WATCH.

YOU CANNOT BE CHRISTIAN AND WORLDLY WITHOUT SEVERE RAMIFICATION.

YOUR CHILDREN OUR WATCHING.

ELIJAH’S QUESTION RINGS THROUGH THE CENTURIES, PRESSING FOR OUR ANSWER...

- 1. ”HOW LONG WILL YOU HALT BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?”**
- 2. HOW LONG WILL WE ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE DRAWN AWAY FROM GOD BY OUR OWN CONSCIENCES AND INCLINATIONS?**

GOD REQUIRES OUR ALL. IF WE WORSHIP IN SINCERITY AND TRUTH, HE CLAIMS OUR HEART AND TAKES SUPREME CONTROL OVER OUR NATURE.

THERE CANNOT BE TWO WHO ARE SUPREME IN THE HEART OF MAN;

GOD AND SELF *CANNOT* COEXIST. IT MUST BE GOD OR SELF.

TO ATTEMPT ANYTHING ELSE IS TO DECIDE AGAINST GOD.

YOUR CHILDREN ARE WATCHING...AND AS THE POPULAR SAYING GOES, 'LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON'.

WHAT KIND OF FAITH EXAMPLE WILL YOU PASS ON TO YOUR CHILDREN?

THE MISGUIDED MEN OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL PASSED THEIR WATERED-DOWN, HABITUAL IDOLATRY TO THEIR CHILDREN.

THE SCRIPTURE SAYS, "SO THESE NATIONS FEARED THE LORD, AND SERVED THEIR GRAVEN IMAGES, BOTH THEIR CHILDREN, AND THEIR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN: AS DID THEIR FATHERS, SO DO THEY UNTO THIS DAY."

WHAT WE DO EFFECTS THE GENERATIONS THAT FOLLOW US.

THE COVENANT GOD MADE WITH ISRAEL IS THE SAME COVENANT GOD WANTS TO MAKE WITH YOU, WHICH IS THIS:

"AND THE COVENANT THAT I HAVE MADE WITH YOU YE SHALL NOT FORGET; NEITHER SHALL YE FEAR OTHER GODS. BUT THE LORD YOUR GOD YE SHALL FEAR; AND HE SHALL DELIVER YOU OUT OF THE HAND OF ALL YOUR ENEMIES."

[2 KINGS 17: 38-39]

WHAT KIND OF FAITH WILL YOU PASS ON TO YOUR CHILDREN, AND YOUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN?

WILL IT BE A FAITH WHOSE ONLY FEAR WAS THAT WHICH CAUSED YOUR SOUL TO REPENT AND REJOICE?

“LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON !”

WE TEACH BY EXAMPLE, AND OUR CHILDREN WILL FOLLOW IN OUR FOOTSTEPS.

- 1. IF WE HAVE BEEN MOTIVATED BY THE LOVE OF GOD...THEY WILL SEE AND REMEMBER.**
- 2. IF WE HAVE BEEN ANOINTED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD...THEY WILL SEE AND REMEMBER.**
- 3. IF WE HAVE BEEN SANCTIFIED BY THE BLOOD OF GOD...THEY WILL SEE AND REMEMBER.**
- 4. IF WE HAVE BEEN GUIDED BY THE HAND OF GOD....THEY WILL SEE AND REMEMBER.**

WHAT WILL YOUR CHILDREN REMEMBER?

- 1. WILL THEY REMEMBER A FATHER WHO WAS DIRECTED BY THE WISDOM OF GOD?**
- 2. A FATHER WHO WAS LOYAL TO THE PRINCIPLES OF GOD?**
- 3. A FATHER WHO WAS SATURATED WITH THE JOY OF GOD?**
- 4. A FATHER WHO WAS DEVOTED TO THE GLORY OF GOD?**
- 5. TOUCHED BY THE HAND OF GOD,**
- 6. INSPIRED BY THE WORD OF GOD,**
- 7. BLESSED BY THE GRACE OF GOD,**
- 8. STRENGTHENED BY THE POWER OF GOD,**
- 9. ENCOURAGED BY THE PROMISES OF GOD?**

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON!

CONCLUSION

THE SAME IS TRUE OF JESUS AND HIS FATHER GOD.

- 1. GOD WAS IN THE BEGINNING, AND SO WAS JESUS; “LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON.”**
- 2. GOD IS A MIRACLE WORKER, AND SO IS JESUS, “LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON.”**
- 3. GOD IS LOVING, AND SO IS JESUS. “LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON.”**
- 4. GOD IS FORGIVING, AND SO IS JESUS. “LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON.”**
- 5. GOD IS LIGHT, AND SO IS JESUS. “LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON.”**
- 6. GOD GIVES AND SO DOES JESUS. “LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON.”**

(A). GOD GAVE HIS SON; AND THE SON GAVE HIS LIFE.

7. GOD IS ALL POWERFUL AND SO IS HIS SON.

(B). BECAUSE EARLY SUNDAY MORNING, THE SON GOT US WITH ALL POWER IN HIS HAND.

“LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON.”