

God Does Not Forsake His People

Introduction:

1. The Bible states in many passages that "God does not forsake His people."
 - a. (Deuteronomy 31:6) Moses assured the Israelites that God would not forsake them.
 - b. (Joshua 1:5) God said that He would not forsake Joshua.
 - c. (1 Chronicles 28:20) David assured Solomon that God would not forsake him.
 - d. (Hebrews 13:5-6) Christians are assured that God will not forsake us.
2. As 2013 concludes we are examining several of God's servants who struggled with this issue.
3. As we look at these Bible characters we are presenting information that will help us maintain our confidence in God's faithfulness throughout the new year.
4. Previously, we have examined Job, David, and Naomi.
5. In this lesson we are concentrating on Elijah.

Discussion:

- I. ELIJAH IS INTRODUCED (1 Kings 17:1)
 - A. He was known as "*Elijah the Tishbite*," and he was "*of the inhabitants of Gilead*."
 - B. Elijah served God as a prophet during a difficult period.
 1. When we first read about Elijah, he was speaking to Ahab, the king of Israel.
 2. Ahab's wickedness is described in 1 Kings 16:30-33.
- II. ELIJAH SAW GOD'S POWER DEMONSTRATED ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS
 - A. God sent ravens to provide food for Elijah (1 Kings 17:2-6).
 - B. God provided meal and oil for a widow (1 Kings 17:8-16).
 - C. God brought the widow's son back to life (1 Kings 17:17-24).
 - D. God withheld rain for over 3 years (1 Kings 17:1; 18:1, 45).
- III. ELIJAH DEMONSTRATED HIS FAITH AND COURAGE WHEN HE DEFEATED THE PROPHETS OF BAAL ON MT. CARMEL (1 Kings 18)
 - A. (vs.19-20) Elijah had Ahab gather the prophets of Baal to Mt. Carmel.
 - B. (vs.21-24) Elijah issued his challenge.
 - C. (vs.25-29) Baal did not respond when his prophets called upon him.
 - D. (vs.30-37) Elijah prepared an offering and called upon God.
 - E. (vs.38-39) God responded to Elijah's call.
 - F. (vs.40) Elijah killed the prophets of Baal.
- IV. ELIJAH SEEMS TO HAVE THOUGHT THAT GOD HAD FORSAKEN HIM (1 Kings 19)
 - A. (vs.1-2) Jezebel threatened to kill Elijah.
 - B. (vs.3-4) Elijah fled to the wilderness and wanted to die.
 - C. Elijah never stopped believing in God; however, his responses to God's questions indicate that he lost his confidence in God's protection (vs.9-10, 13-14).
- V. GOD DID NOT FORSAKE ELIJAH
 - A. (1 Kings 19:5-8) An angel provided food and water for Elijah.
 - B. (1 Kings 19:18) There were 7,000 other Israelites who had not worshipped Baal.
 - C. It was important for Elijah to realize that God had not forsaken him because God had work for him to do (1 Kings 19:15-16).
 - D. Eventually, Elijah was taken to heaven by a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:11).
- VI. APPLICATION
 - A. Elijah illustrates the need for proper thinking when facing adversity.
 1. Jezebel's threat led Elijah to think that he was the only faithful prophet left, he did not think that his life was worth living, and he apparently did not think that God would protect him.
 2. Proper thinking is addressed in Proverbs 23:7 and Philippians 4:8.
 - B. God will provide direction for those who follow the instructions given in Proverbs 3:5-6.
 - C. Through his example, Elijah shows us that:
 1. anyone can be affected by discouragement
 2. discouragement can be overcome.