



“ON EAGLES’ WINGS MINISTRIES”

“See how I bare you on eagles’ wings and brought you unto myself.” Exodus 19: 4.

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“GOD’S KINGDOM IS ONGOING” PART 7, MAY 2021.

This entire series is based upon a single verse of scripture as spoken by an ancient prophet: *"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be not end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."* Isaiah 9:7. As we have said in earlier chapters, verse 6 continues to be the prominent part of the Christmas Sunday morning sermon possibly across the entire world. As such, we are invited to embark upon that old pathway that leads us to the manger in which the newborn Christ is born, in the company of adoring animals. We have been enjoying Christmas carols for the past month, and this Sunday morning, or early afternoon marks the grand finale. But in our critique of this most important time of year, very little is being said in sermons and bible studies about verse seven, quoted above. With all of the above in mind, we have committed ourselves to put verse seven under the spotlight; no matter how long it takes, and no matter how much of scriptures, both old testament and new testament are required to bring the study to the fore in clarity and perfect understanding. To do a comprehensive study of the kingdom of God, this study will join the kingdom at its very inception in the book of Daniel: and join the songs of angels when God’s kingdom will fill the earth in the book of Revelation.

In last month’s issue, we ended the study with our introduction to the story of Eli, the priest of God in Shiloh. His case is the third and final in our study of what the Lord determined to happen. So far, in the previous two cases we saw that because of men turning to God in repentance with a heart to seek God’s mercy, he turned aside from the pending judgment and turned his wrath into mercy. The young lad Samuel lived with the priest Eli in Shiloh; and in time, God began to speak to the young lad. The old man called Samuel to him and inquired of him what God had said to him. *"Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I. And he said, what is the thing that the Lord hath said unto thee? And Samuel told him every whit and hid nothing from him. And he (Eli) said, It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good."* 1st Samuel 3:16-18.

We are told that Samuel told Eli everything: but we can read all that Samuel told the aging priest. When we read all that was told by the young lad, it becomes even more alarming that all Eli chose to say was: "It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good." But what were the full details that Samuel told Eli? This is somewhat lengthy but let us read the entire episode. *"And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? And did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel? Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people? Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for-ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. **Now it gets really heavy in God's judgment!** Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that **there shall not be an old man in thine house forever.** And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age.*

And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them. And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of everyone that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning this house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore, I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever. And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the Lord." 1st Samuel 2:31-34; 3:11-15.

This is an intensive and concise account of God laying out as in a court of law his case against Eli the priest. Having observed God's account and his pending judgment against Eli, one cannot help but wonder how, after hearing the full story from Samuel, Eli could simply reply: "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good to him." The priest showed no sign of remorse, and he certainly did not ask for God's mercy and plead with him to bestow his tender mercies upon himself and upon his sons. I like to spend all the time needed to focus upon this human story that highlights how even a priest, who is in charge of the local synagogue, to keep the light burning and to officiate over all the duties that rest upon the shoulders of the priest could fail the Lord so badly, bringing God's judgment upon his entire household and causing both he and his sons to die in one day.

This priest made no effort in repenting for himself and for his two sons. More than that; we are not shown in scripture that Eli strongly corrected his sons who routinely led the women into transgression when they came to the synagogue to worship and offer sacrifices. These acts they did in the very building of the synagogue. It is unthinkable that a priest of God would know of these acts and simply looked the other way. We are taken to the fulfillment of God's judgment upon Eli and his house. After 24 years, the Philistines fought against Israel and the ark of God was taken. Twenty-four years seemed to be time enough for Eli the priest to make amends, and to correct his ways and to strongly come out against the acts of his two sons. Thus, we read:

"And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain. And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head. And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the wayside watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city, and told it, all the city cried out. And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What meaneth the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told Eli. Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see. And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled today out of the army. And he said, What is there done, my son?"

"And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken. And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake and he died; for he was an old man, and heavy." 1st Samuel 4:11-18.

Thus! As if before our very eyes, the judgment of God fell upon the house of Eli and his two sons, in that all three died in one day, as God had said: *"I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever."* 1st Samuel 2:31,32. We have highlighted three cases involving real life stories, showing how real people like ourselves when faced with pending judgment and destruction from God, took actions that turned the tide of God's anger, and opened the door to his abundant mercies and grace so that his anger and pronounced judgments were turned away. So far, two cases met the mark, in circumstances that offered no mercy up front. There are many such cases in scripture that serve as testimonies to the willingness of God, though angry, will not ignore a broken heart in repentance, neither will he turn a deaf ear to a penitent soul. But by moving forward in true repentance, God's immediate judgments were removed and gave way for his loving kindness and his tender mercies to replace his wrath and judgments.

Let us highlight another well-known case that fits in well with our study, as we take a look at case number three in our study. Thus, we read: *"And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel, hard (or close) by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. Ahab talked with Naboth suggesting that Naboth would give him his vineyard for a garden of herbs, or sell him his vineyard for money. "And Naboth said to Ahab, The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers.*

But Jezebel his wife cooked up a scheme by which Naboth would be killed, thus allowing the king to take possession of the vineyard:

"And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth to take possession of it. And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel which is in Samaria: behold he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is going down to possess it.

"And thou shalt speak unto him saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? Thus saith the Lord in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. Behold I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel. And of Jezebel also spake the Lord, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. And it came to pass, when Ahab heard these words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.

*"And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou, how Ahab **humbleth himself before me?** Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house." 1st Kings 21:1-6, 16-29.*

Notice how God promised that he would defer his judgment upon Ahab, but would fulfill it upon his son's days. This brings to mind the case of Solomon and David his father. Let us read the case of Solomon first, that will lead us into the case of David his father:

"And he had seven hundred wives, (Simply hard to imagine) princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father.

*"And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father. And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice. Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in the days I will not do it for **David my servant's sake**: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son." 1st Kings 11:3-6, 9-12.* As seen here, David continued to hold sway in the midst of what God did and planned to do.

However, as we glance over the life of David in retrospect, we are faced with a man who lusted after a married woman bathing on her rooftop. He committed adultery with her and had her husband purposely killed in battle so that way was then clear for David to have the woman. This is one act that God held against David. But instead of passing an enduring judgment upon David, God showed mercy upon Solomon because of his father David. There are so many lessons for us to learn from these studies as we take a ringside seat and watch the ultimate workings of the Divine Mind. This reminds us of the letter from Paul to the Romans, in which he wrote: *"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."* Romans 9:18. God is keen to show forth his wrath, his anger, and his enduring mercies in the midst of a wayward world. As laborers together with God (1st Corinthians 3:9)

It is required of us to become as one with HIM, so that we work the works of God according to his eternal blueprint, charted and set in place before the ages were framed. Earlier, we alluded to the fact that writing a book, doing a seminar or compiling a narrative for television, the subject is so vast that from our current vantage point, we can only raise our hands in total worship and conclude that indeed **the half has never yet been told**. Our former presiding bishop in one of his Sunday morning sermon said: "Even in eternity, we will still be learning God, for when there is nothing more to learn of him, he ceases to be God. The Christian experience means quite a lot more than we hear from our pulpits on Sunday morning. It goes beyond making bad people good. It goes beyond filling the pews of the local Assembly. We read: *"What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is **one spirit**."* 1st Corinthians 6:16,17. The idea of us being one with Christ, gives us all the authority we need to be "workers together with him."

We are obligated as children of God being classified in scripture as the actual body of Christ, of his flesh and of his bones (Ephesians 5.30) From this perspective we must view and understand biblical truths from the realm of spirit. This is where we come into the picture! Let us go back to the beginning and frame our study in the realm of spirit. A king must have a kingdom to be relevant.

A king without a kingdom can be called "a king in exile." Jesus was born "King of the Jews" meaning that out of necessity, he must have a kingdom (people) to complement his title. England could not be seen as **The United Kingdom** without the people of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The British Commonwealth could not be known as such without the membership of multiple nations.

On the same basis, the kingdom of God would not be relevant without a composition of redeemed people. Let us join a number of ordinary people who wanted to know when the kingdom of God would appear. *"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or lo there! For, behold the kingdom of God is **within you.**"* Luke 17:20,21.

Let us borrow from the Phillips Translation. *Later, he was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he gave them this reply: The kingdom of God never comes by watching for it. Men cannot say, Look, here it is, or there it is, for the kingdom of God is inside of you.* When we give all diligence to this case as espoused by Jesus Christ, we are compelled in all practicality to stop watching the eastern sky for Christ to come. We need not look toward the four points of the compass in our search for the kingdom of God because what you are looking for on the outside, is already on the inside. Paul added his personal touch by saying: *"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."* Romans 14: 17. Paul added: *"For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power."* 1st Corinthians 4:20. And that power works from within with His effect being seen and felt on the outside.

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