

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

2 KINGS 1:13-16

Woodland Park Church of Christ

5 January 2020

2 Kings 1:13-16

- Again, **he sent a third captain of fifty with his fifty men**. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and pleaded with him, and said to him: "Man of God, please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight. ¹⁴ Look, **fire has come down from heaven and burned up the first two captains of fifties with their fifties**. But let my life now be precious in your sight." ¹⁵ And the angel of the LORD said to Elijah, "Go down with him; do not be afraid of him." So he arose and went down with him to the king. ¹⁶ Then he said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.' "

BACKDROP

Some years ago, I delivered the sermon, *Same Script, Different Cast*.

Some time later, I brought the sequel, *The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same*.

This evening's sermonette could be the threequel, but for its brevity.

The NEW YEAR always provides occasion to reflect on the previous year.

- **Losses/failures**
- **Gains/strides made**
- **Fallen loved ones**
- **Missed opportunities – evangelism, teachable moments**
- **Lessons learned**
- **New best practices through statistical analysis**

In the text, the unnamed captain saved his life and the life of 50 men because he understood, from experience of the two previous envoys, what the ramifications (outcome) would be if he followed through with King Ahaziah's directive.

Are there things/events/circumstances we witnessed in 2019 that can help us live better and "Work the Works!" in 2020?

From Personal Vantage Point

1. Experienced the loss of some beloved and impactful persons in 2019
 - Mother-in-law
 - Three (3) dear sisters in the Church
 - Long-time friend and business ally (in the waning moments of the year)

And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, Hebrews 9:27

2. Enjoyed a milestone occurrence

- Celebrated Silver (25th) Wedding Anniversary

*He who finds a [true and faithful] wife finds a good thing
And obtains favor and approval from the LORD.*

Proverbs 18:22 (AMP)

3. Made some significant spiritual and professional strides, while missing on others

In times of success, my appetite was voracious (insatiable); in seasons of lackluster performance, I was not as hungry.

The enemy of GREAT is GOOD!

*Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: ¹² I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. **Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry**, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³ **I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.***

Philippians 4:11-13

Lord's Invitation Extended

- **Be added to the Lord's body --**
 - Hear the gospel (Acts 15:7);**
 - Believe the gospel (Acts 8:37,15:7);**
 - Repent of sins (Acts 2:38);**
 - Confess Christ (Acts 8:37);**
 - Be baptized for the remission of sin (Acts 2:38).**

Lord's Invitation (cont'd)

- Be reconciled unto the Lord (1 John 1:8-9); or
- Desire prayer. (James 5:16).