

## THE POWER OF THE WORD OF GOD

*Isaiah 55:10* For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

*Isaiah 55:11* So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Today I wish to put the spotlight on the Bible, the word of God. ***God speaks through Isaiah and states that just as water and snow come down from above and bless the earth, so too the word of God which comes from even higher, from his throne and mouth, blesses the soul.***

This is an eternal principle: the earth is dependent on things above for its day-to-day functioning. Consider the sun: what would life be without sunshine? The earth is actually useless without blessings from above. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17). The word of God waters the soul. Without the word of God, the soul becomes parched and dry. “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God” (Psalm 42:1). Have you seen a parched, dry, cracked landscape? Nothing grows there; all lifeforms seem to have abandoned this landscape. Such is the condition of the soul without the word of God. Such was the condition of the soul of King Saul when he no longer heard a word from God. Saul constantly rebelled and attacked the word of God and, so, finally, he experienced a terrible famine of the word of God in his soul.

*1Samuel 28:6* And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

*1Samuel 28:7* Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.

Saints of God, let us rejoice and express our gratitude to the Lord Jesus Christ for the abundance of his word that we richly enjoy. Notice what God promised: “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void...” God’s word will only return to him after accomplishing its task – after blessing the people of God. The Bible records countless such promises which never returned empty: to give Abraham a land and a people; to take the children of Israel out of bondage and to the Land that flows with milk and honey; to raise the Messiah from the seed of David; to return the children of Israel from the exile in Babylon after 70 years; to pour out of his Spirit upon all flesh in the last days etc., -

the word of God has never returned empty to his throne. Do you still have complete faith in the power of the word of God? Can we thank him this moment for the shower of blessings from his word?

There is real and serious power in the word of God. When King Jehoshaphat sent teachers to teach the word of God throughout Judah, ***the Bible states that his enemies did not make war against him*** – teaching the word frightened the enemy into declaring peace.

***2Chron 17:8*** And with them he sent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tobadonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests.

***2Chron 17:9*** And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.

***2Chron 17:10*** And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.

The lesson from Jehoshaphat’s experience is clear: rather than fret and worry about enemies around us making our lives miserable, let us study the word of God. As we study and humble ourselves before the word of God, God himself sends his word out to subdue the enemies troubling us. The enemy will never fear us until we fear the word of God. Our problems will continue to threaten us as long as we do not submit to the word of God. Is there anyone who does not appreciate and respect the power of rain and sunshine? Even evil people appreciate natural blessings from above. How much more ought we to appreciate and welcome the blessings that flow from the word of God? “For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word” (Isaiah 66:2). In the next segment, let me highlight the stories of two Kings, their responses to the word of God and the results they experienced. The first is Jehoiakim

***Jeremiah 36:21*** So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll: and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king.

***Jeremiah 36:22*** Now the king sat in the winterhouse in the ninth month: and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him.

***Jeremiah 36:23*** And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth.

What was the result of burning the word of God through the prophet Jeremiah? Jeremiah prophesied that the King would be killed, have no children to continue his legacy and he would not get a proper burial. “Therefore thus saith the LORD of Jehoiakim king of

Judah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost” (Jeremiah 36:30). Not long after, Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem and killed Jehoiakim. Jeremiah foresaw his demise without the honor of a proper burial. He predicted that the people of Judah would refrain from lamenting for him. Instead, he anticipated being laid to rest like a donkey—dragged and cast beyond the gates of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 22:18–19). Furthermore, Jeremiah envisioned his lifeless body exposed to the harsh elements, enduring both the scorching heat of the day and the chilling frost of the night (Jeremiah 36:30). According to Josephus, Nebuchadnezzar not only took the life of Jehoiakim and high-ranking officers but also ordered Jehoiakim's body to be callously thrown outside the city walls, denied the dignity of a proper burial. There is power in the word of God, and we would do well to tremble before it. The next example is King Josiah.

*2Chron 34:19* And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes.

*2Chron 34:20* And the king commanded Hilkiah, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king's, saying,

*2Chron 34:21* Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this book.

The opposite reaction to the word of God was that of King Josiah. Josiah knew the word of God never returned void to God. When God spoke into the void in the beginning, the void made room for God’s word. “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (Genesis 1:2). He also knew it was actually too late to try to implement the word of God at this late stage, so he only wanted to know the judgment God was about to unleash. While he could not prevent the looming judgment of God, he managed to save his own soul. This demonstrates the principle that responses to the word of God is individual before he it is collective. God bless the people of Nineveh who collectively demonstrated fear at the word of God.

*Jon 3:6* For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

*Jon 3:7* And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:

**Jon 3:8** *But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.*

**Jon 3:9** *Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?*