

# Seven Thousand

#0694

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—March 26, 1982

Our text this evening is 1 Kings 19. For the last two Friday nights, we've been studying the experience of Elijah at Horeb. He was told to anoint Hazael, king of Syria; Jehu, king of Israel; and Elisha to be prophet in his place. You remember the setting. Baal worship had been well nigh universal in the land of Israel, brought in by Ahab's heathen wife, Jezebel, the daughter of the king of Sidon, Ethbaal. Elijah was so burdened over the matter of apostasy that he prayed to the Lord to withhold the rain. God had promised that very thing in the law of Moses, and Elijah claimed the promise. Isn't that such a strange thing for a man of God to be praying that God will withhold the rain, but that is what Elijah was led to do? God heard his prayers, and for three and a half years, there wasn't any rain. Baal was supposed to be the god who would send rain, but he didn't send any for three and one-half years.

But finally, God knew that the time had come for a change. He told Elijah to show himself to Ahab and call all Israel to Mount Carmel. They came, and there occurred that wonderful demonstration of utter failure on the part of the prophets of Baal and complete victory on the part of Elijah and his God.

Elijah was discouraged because Jezebel threatened his life, and he ran and ran and ran. Finally, at Mount Horeb, God met him. That's what we're studying tonight again, is God's message to Elijah. In the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> verses, you remember that God asked him He asked Elijah, "What are you doing here way off here in the desert? I sent you to Ahab with the message. I sent you to the brook and took care of you. I sent you over to Zarephath, and the widow took care of you. I sent you to Carmel and stood by you. But who sent you here?"

Elijah said in answer to it:

"I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword..."

Is that true? Exactly.

"...and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" 1 Kings 19:10.

Did the Lord say to him, "Elijah, under those circumstances, maybe you'd better stay out here"? No. The very first word of God in response is what?

"Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou come, anoint Hazael to be king over

Syria: And Jehu the son of Nimshi shall thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shall thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapes the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay..." 1 Kings 19:15–17

Now, I want you to read with me our 18<sup>th</sup> verse, for tonight:

"...Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" 1 Kings 19:18.

You remember that our subject for tonight is what? Seven thousand. Where did we get that number? We got it from this verse. Who were the seven thousand people in Israel who hadn't bowed the knee to Baal? They were Israelites who were true to God in a time of almost universal apostasy. It is interesting why God told Elijah this. In the 14<sup>th</sup> verse, Elijah told God, that how many of them were true and loyal? One. Who was the one? Elijah. And Elijah is explaining why he has to be where he is. He thinks he is, what? The only one. God says, "Elijah, things may be bad, but they are not that bad. Things may be dark, but they are not that dark. I have 7,000 who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

Now before we get too enthusiastic over that, let's remember that seven thousand were not very many in the whole nation of Israel, with thousands upon thousands of people. So, we must look at both sides of this. Why am I studying this? Because it applies today. I'm studying it because if you and I are faithful, we must be among the 7,000. I'm studying it because it's a time of almost universal apostasy. I'm studying it because (as I said to you last Friday night) the religion of Baal and the religion of Jehovah were mixed back there and is mixed today. God deliver us, my friends. God deliver us!

So our study of this is not merely historical, it's very practical. We are not going through some historical museum. We are going through some tremendous object lessons. And what God did back there through those seven thousand He is longing to do through the remnant today:

"Lord, they have killed Thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" Romans 11:3–5.

Yes, "amen" is the right word, brethren. I'm glad to hear you say it. Our courage must not fail as Elijah's courage failed. Elijah wouldn't have failed if he had been looking at God instead of at whom? He was making two mistakes—he was looking at himself and the people. We will never get courage, looking either at

ourselves or the people around us. We must maintain our faith in God and His promises. God said, "I have reserved to Myself 7,000 men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." Even so at this present time, there is also a remnant according to the election of grace.

So, with this clear statement from the New Testament (the inspired application of Paul) to the experience of Elijah, we turn to its application again to the present time:

"The apostasy prevailing today is similar to that which in the prophet's day overspread Israel..."

You remember the four great marks all the way through Baal worship?

"...In the exaltation of the human above the divine, in the praise of popular leaders, in the worship of mammon, and in the placing of the teachings of science above the truths of revelation, multitudes today are following after Baal. Doubt and unbelief are exercising their baleful influence over mind and heart, and many are substituting for the oracles of God the theories of men... Yet this apostasy, widespread as it has come to be, is not universal. Not all in the world are lawless and sinful; not all have taken sides with the enemy. God has many thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal" *Prophets and Kings*, pages 170–171.

What do you say? Let's deal with a very practical problem. Suppose someone says to us, "You think you are pretty good, don't you? You think you are part of the 7,000."

Brothers and sisters, I would hate to admit to being anything different from the seven thousand. That's my purpose, desire and earnest expectation. I know I'm lost unless I'm part of that seven thousand. That's not boasting. That is my only hope. I must be part of the remnant who keep the commandments of God and have, hold unto, and won't let go the testimony of Jesus which is the Spirit of Prophecy.

Back in the days of Elijah and Elisha, what were some of the signs that marked the 7,000? I would like to show w few examples of them.

One of those 7,000, was a man by the name of Shaphat. How many of you know who Shaphat was? Let's take a look back in our text: This is after God told Elijah that He had 7,000. He told him where to go to find a man:

"So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him" 1 Kings 19:19.

What did that mean? That meant that Elisha was to come and be his helper and eventually fill his place. We have a beautiful statement in the book *Prophets and Kings* about this man Shaphat:

“Elisha’s father was a wealthy farmer...”

He was what? He was a farmer, and he was wealthy.

“...a man whose household were among the number that in the time of almost universal apostasy had not bowed the knee to Baal...” *Prophets and Kings*, page 217.

I wonder if I would be misunderstood if I were to make the following statement. If you misunderstand it, come and ask me about it. I hope that somebody will get the message.

We should work for all classes of people. We should work for people who have been deep in the mire and filth and everything that’s bad in this world, whether it’s religious or otherwise. But when God is looking for a prophet to take a prophet’s place, He is looking for those who come with a background with long experience in the spiritual things of God; who has had an experience in the discipline of useful work; who has learned to be steady, sober, and dependable—*dependable*, brethren! Now I know that some here have come from all kinds of backgrounds. I want to tell you something, friends. One of the greatest lessons you can learn is to settle down and get steady. Get as soon as you can, as rapidly as you can, what Elisha got in the home of his father, Shaphat. Listen while I read it:

“Elisha’s father was a wealthy farmer, a man whose household were among the number that in the time of almost universal apostasy had not bowed the knee to Baal. Theirs was a home where God was honored and where allegiance to the faith of ancient Israel was the rule of daily life...”

You notice that word, “ancient”? They were not interested in the New Theology.

“...In such surroundings the early years of Elisha were passed. In the quietude of country life, under the teaching of God and nature and the discipline of useful work, he received the training in habits of simplicity and of obedience to his parents and to God that helped to fit him for the high position he was afterward to occupy” *Ibid*.

When you plant seeds, what you plant depends to some extent on what you want to get, doesn’t it? And how soon you want to get it, are there crops that you can get soon? You can grow a squash in one season and grow radish quicker than that. If you want to grow an apple tree, that takes longer, doesn’t it? And the type of character to receive the seal of God and give the Loud Cry message is something that is very difficult for those who have not learned the responsibility of how to work.

Dependability leads them to stick with something until it gets done. They are not driven away by problems and trials.

What kind of a man was Shaphat? A farmer. What was that adjective? Wealthy. Do you know why he was a wealthy farmer? He was successful. Do you know why he was successful, my friends? He wasn't dilatory. He wasn't lazy. He wasn't slow and stupid in his work. Neither were his children that way. Oh my friends, I pray that the spirit of Shaphat and Elisha will come upon us and lead us to realize that we can't get young people to succeed in getting ready for the Latter Rain and the Loud Cry merely by teaching them a few doctrines different from what they heard before. The whole foundation must be built.

My dear young friends, you who are here from over in the valley, you who are here on this campus, and others from other places, I beseech you to let it be your ambition to be among the 7,000. The grace of God is wonderful. Oh, what He can do with any kind of material that will yield to Him and be submissive to the discipline of useful work—dependability, responsibility, not standing around talking to people all the time but getting at the job and getting it done.

Elijah found Elisha not sitting under a tree meditating, not talking to the hired help about scripture. You know what he found Elisha doing? He found him on the job. Do you notice what it says that Elisha was doing? What does it say? Plowing with the twelfth yoke of oxen. That doesn't mean that he had a team of 12 yoke of oxen before him in one set. It means that there were 11 servants ahead of him, each with a yoke of oxen. He was in charge, under his father, of that whole operation. He had worked up in responsibility until he could handle that whole farm. That had taken years of training and hard work.

Shaphat was one of the seven thousand. Every morning, they had family worship. Every evening, they had family worship. In between, they worked and worked hard. That built something into their character, and they didn't do what? They didn't bow the knee to Baal.

What was the popular kind of worship in the days when Elisha was growing up? Baal worship. And the in thing was to kneel before Baal. The in thing was to kiss the image of Baal. If you wanted to be popular with your peers, you went along with that. And remember that in many cases, that and the religion of Jehovah was all mixed up together. The music of Baal was being played in sung. The parties of Baal were going on. If you wanted to be popular with the young people, go to a Baal party. Did Elisha go? No. He was different. He was peculiar. Why? Because in his home, they believed in the Spirit of Prophecy. The mark of the 7,000 was implicit faith in the Spirit of Prophecy.

There was a young woman who was one of the 7,000. Elisha was a sample of the young men among those 7,000. Here is a young woman whose name is not given, but I know that she is one of the 7,000. I know the home she came from was one of the 7,000. No question about it. This is the little maid who was carried captive to Syria and waited on Naaman's wife. Naaman was the captain of Syria's army. This is the most interesting and fascinating account to me in the setting of our

study tonight. Notice how God takes a tiny, little thing and uses it to accomplish tremendous results.

The story opens in the city of Damascus. There is Naaman, he is a captain. You might say a five-star general because he had charge of the army of Syria. But he had leprosy. One of his bands of soldiers had gone down into the land of Israel (there was war between Syria and Israel) and carried captives, and among them was a young woman—a little maid, the Bible calls her. I don't know how old she was, but she was old enough to work because the Bible says that she did what? She waited on the wife of Naaman.

Now get the picture. Here we have a number of girls here tonight, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. I don't know how old this girl was. She must have been a teenager, she was called a little maid, and she wasn't a baby. She could work. Mrs. Namaman wouldn't have had her around if she hadn't been. She would have been in an orphanage. She wanted work, did she get it? It must have been good work because she was pleased. This girl had influence although she was treated as a slave

Oh, my dear friends, I wonder if there is a some girl tonight who's going to find her destiny as a captive working as a servant, with no honor. Yet a destiny greater than all the stars of the TV screen or Hollywood, my friends. What did she do? She did her job and watched for souls. As she ministered from day to day, instead of hating the people who had captured her, she loved them. One day, when she had won their confidence by her faithful, quiet, calm, loving spirit and service, the Holy Spirit impressed that girl (one of the 7,000 that hadn't bowed the knee to Baal) to say to these idol worshipers, "Oh, I wish my master could be down there in the land of Israel where the prophet is, because the prophet would recover him of his leprosy." Isn't that what the Bible says? Yes. That's the third verse.

You know I've pondered over it, friends. I wonder where this girl ever got the idea that was how to deal with leprosy. Were leprosy cures common? Do you know of any references that Elisha had done some healing before this? Yes. Had he healed leprosy of the soul? There is no record of it. And yet here was a young woman whose faith in God's working through the Spirit of prophecy had reached the point where the Holy Spirit could impress her to say this to her mistress. And God rewarded the faith of that child. Where did she learn it? She learned it In her home, back in the land of Egypt when she was just a child.

This idea, friends (oh God keep it from us from it), that people have got to wait until they grow up and get old before they can have much religion or interest in it, is of the Devil, friends. Doesn't make sense. There were seven thousand who believed that the way to train children was to train them in the things of God from infancy. That's why Elisha became Elijah's helper, and that is why this girl became God's missionary to the land of Syria.

Perhaps I ought to read this here in *Prophets and Kings* about this girl and her home:

"The parents of that Hebrew maid, as they taught her of God, did not know the destiny that would be hers. But

they were faithful to their trust; and in the home of the captain of the Syrian host, their child bore witness to the God whom she had learned to honor. *Prophets and Kings*, page 246.

“A slave, far from her home, this little maid was nevertheless one of God’s witnesses, unconsciously fulfilling the purpose for which God had chosen Israel as His people...” *Ibid.*, pages 244.

And on page 245, there is a sentence that really impressed me. Listen, girls, and boys too:

“The conduct of the captive maid, the way that she bore herself in that heathen home, is a strong witness to the power of early home training” *Ibid.*, pages 245.

If you couldn’t get it in the home you were born in, thank God, you can get it in the school if you get into the right school, dear friends.

Somewhere, someday God has an opportunity for you to get this kind of training that exalts the spiritual value of useful work and faithful service. And it teaches children and young people that the time to know God is when they are young. If that young woman had not learned that, she would have missed her destiny.

And you remember the rest of the story in 2 Kings 5, God used that witness to impress the wife of Naaman. She told her husband. He told the king. And so here goes Naaman in a chariot with a lot of gold and silver and servants to carry it and all the men down to the king of Israel. Do you know who the king of Israel was worshipping? False gods. And yet, that was all God had to head up that nation. So He let Naaman come there. But this man was so steeped in a lack of confidence in God’s chosen channel of guidance that he didn’t know what to do with this letter from the king of Syria. All he saw in it was that the king of Syria was trying to have a quarrel. But notice what Elisha said:

“Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel” 2 Kings 5:8.

So the man came down there to the home of the prophet. He got the directions and was on his way to the River Jordan. So after a period of indecision and balance he got the victory and went down into the water and did just what he was told to do. And he got well and went back to Syria worshipping the true God.

My point is this; it’s all a sample and illustration of the power of God in developing seven thousand people, young people and older ones, who will not bow the knee to Baal. But they’re not satisfied to merely not be Baal worships, they’re strong, vibrant, living, happy, successful Jehovah’s worshipers.

You see, friends, you can be in any religion as long as those around you are following the same thing you believe in, and doing just what you want to anyway. It doesn't make that much difference. But if you are going to be one of the seven thousand, you must learn to be *different* and not worry about it. You must learn to be peculiar and not let it cause you to wilt. You must be willing, even to be persecuted and not allow it to lead you to turn from loyalty to God and His truth.

I have been meditating this week a bit on what did help the seven thousand three thousand years ago and will help the remnant today to have that experience. And I want to tell you something, friends; it's the thing, is this—to know that you found something that is worth more than anything else in this world.

Let me illustrate it. Many years ago, I was in one of the great port cities of America holding meetings. I went downtown one day on an errand where I saw in one of the big stores, tubs of live oysters. I saw a man step up to the counter, and he said, "Give me half a dozen on a half shell." The man who was in charge took those live oysters and broke them open. The man put pepper and other things on those oysters and stood there and ate them just like that.

I told you that to say that it didn't make my mouth water [Laughter from the audience], neither did I feel deprived or underprivileged or held in or restricted. I didn't feel in bondage. Do you see what I'm getting at?

If all the worshippers of Baal were eating oysters on the half shell, it doesn't need to bother us in the least, does it? Let me tell you something, the man or the woman, the boy or the girl, who begins to feel sorry for themselves are already on the way out. Don't forget it. The only way to be among the 7,000 and stay there is to know that you have found something so infinitely better than Baal worship that it's not going to affect you. But you have to be willing to be different.

I feel so sorry when I see Seventh-day Adventist parents (when I travel from place to place, some of them talk to me about it) who are concerned to have everything in place just the way they think it ought to be so *their* children—mark it—won't have to be odd and peculiar in order to do what they think is the right thing.

How do you train a Daniel, friends? How do you train a little maid to go to Syria? These 7,000 were not in a colony. If they had been, Elijah would have known about them, don't you think? There was one here, and one there, and each one stood out like a sore thumb as far as the area in which he was. Elijah wasn't peculiar when he got up there. [inaudible]

There are going to be some people today who are going to be translated the way Elijah was. They'll be part of the remnant. They love the Word of God. They love the testimony of Jesus. They are happy in doing what God says.

I am very much impressed tonight, dear friends, that as parents and teachers, we need to put away the idea entirely that we have got to have everything just so for our boys and girls, and that they must never have the opportunity to be different. Everything must be fixed so their peers are always encouraging them. Listen, boys and girls, if you're on the way to the kingdom of God, you'll have an



experience, no matter where you live, where you will have to stand out and be different.

Daniel was. How many people stood with Daniel down in Babylon? Three others. We're told that if Daniel hadn't stood, they wouldn't have stood either. But how many were there? Were there just those four who went from the land of Israel? No. We don't know how many, perhaps hundreds, at least scores. But the only names that we have are Daniel and his three friends. Daniel was true in Babylon because he had been true in Jerusalem. He was willing to be different in a heathen country because he had learned to be different among the professed people of God.

I come to the emphasis on the positive joy of God's way, whether it's in diet or dress or reading or music or anything else. You see, the Devil's game today is just what it was 6,000 years ago. He came to Eve in Eden and said, "You can't eat of everything here, can you?" Was it true? Could she eat of everything? Did she prove it? Yes. Oh, if she could have held on to what she had, she would have been glad through eternal ages that she had missed what was offered to her. But it was true that God had restricted them, wasn't it?

So today, God has restricted us for our own benefit and for the development of our characters. Happy are those who learn early in their Christian experience that everything God says is for our happiness—*everything*. And if we'll try it, eventually, we will find it so.

I was looking at the expression of "the seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal." Do you remember the rest of it? Every mouth which hath not kissed him. Just think of kissing an old idol that was made of lumber or stone or gold or silver. I don't think that I would want to kiss even a golden god, would you? What did that kiss mean? Well, a kiss has many meanings. A kiss is a token of affection. A kiss is a token of devotion. A kiss is a token of allegiance. A kiss is a token of belonging. And I don't want anything to do with kissing Baal or anything related to him, what do you say?

Kisses belong to God. As the psalmist says in the second Psalm, "Kiss the Son." Every love of your soul belongs to Jesus, my dear friends. Every devotion of your heart belongs to Jesus. Every allegiance of your spirit belongs to Jesus. Let's not have any Baa kissing. What do you say?

But when people can sit hour after hour viewing the sports of this world on TV and getting involved in it, whether they've heard these words or not, they are kissing the image of Baal, my friends. When they become intoxicated with foolish and fictitious drama, whether it's on the stage or on the screen or within the leaves of a book (even if it's a book that's supposed to be religious, even if it's in a church building instead of a theater), all of that is kissing the image of Baal.

But the answer is not to break the image of Baal for Baal worshipers. The answer is something better. The thing that kept the 7,000 was not that someone came around and crushed all the images of Baal, so there was none to kiss and none to bow down before. They had an experience in something so infinitely better that they didn't *want* to go after the end thing—the worship of Baal and the kissing of

him. Truth is better than fiction, what do you say? Reality is better than pretence . What do you say? Helping others is more encouraging and cheering than beating them and hurting them. What do you say? Love is better than rivalry. Truth is better than falsehood. The hope of eternal life is worth more than the fleeting things of this world.

But, my dear friends, this is something that nobody can give another. The Christian home and school can provide the environment, but every young person, and older ones too, must choose for himself. You will eventually love what you choose to love. You can become so enamored with Baal that you actually enjoy his oyster parties, goose parties, marijuana parties and all the rest, and think that life wouldn't be worth living unless you could get high on this or that or the other thing. It's happier, thousands, millions.

Thank God for a message of something better and a demonstration of something better. I pray that God may impress us with how valuable what He has offered us is. We ought to be, and I trust are, the happiest people in this world. That isn't to lead us off into Elijah's cave. God asked him what he was doing there. He said, "You get back where the people are; where the needs are; where the reformation is needed and get to work! What he did and how it succeeded, I'll tell you next Friday night, the Lord willing.

Is there anyone here tonight who longs for a deeper experience in loving what God loves so that you're not even tempted by Baal? May I see your hands? Shall we go to the Lord in prayer?

Our Father in Heaven, we thank Thee with all our hearts that what things were written afore times were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. And hope we have as we see what that young man learned in the home of Shaphat, as we think of what that young woman learned in the home that prepared her to go to Syria as a student missionary with all expenses paid. Lord, help us to develop some young people and older ones too, who will follow in their footsteps; who will rejoice to be different, not for the sake of being different, but for the sake of being right; who will enjoy the things of God not in a selfish way but to share them with others.

Make us not content to be down in a cave with Elijah in isolation. Get us going, Lord, on the way to spread the good news that Baal is dead and God is alive, that the things of this world are, but broken cisterns and the fountains of God are flowing free and fresh with joy happiness. May we demonstrate in our lives that joy that comes from a knowledge of sins forgiven because we've met our Lord at Calvary. Here tonight, kneeling at Thy cross, we would ask Thee to forgive us for every time we've sorrowed and cried and felt sorry for ourselves because we had to be different to be right.

God help us to glory in the cross of Christ, to be happy for every opportunity to stand up for Jesus. Bless these boys and girls, these young men and women, parents and teachers, and all of us who are older. Make us glad because Thou art our Savior. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.

[Testimonies from Stonecave faculty and students]

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