

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



"Hidden Heroes in a Dry Land"

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): 1 Kings 18:1-8; 2 Chr. 7:13-14; 2 Cor. 4:8-12; Phil. 1:21

There are seasons when it is easy to look around and wonder, "Where is God in all of this?" The world feels dark. Things feel unstable. People are hurting, fighting, arguing, compromising, and rebelling against God. Sometimes it can seem as though darkness is winning and the people who reject the Lord are the ones running the show. That is very much the world we step into in 1 Kings 18. Israel is in the middle of a devastating drought. Ahab is king, Jezebel has been aggressively promoting Ba'al worship, the prophets of ADONAI are being slaughtered, and the land has gone more than three years without rain. Everything is dry—physically and spiritually.

But God has not disappeared. He has not abandoned His people, and He certainly has not lost control. In fact, while much of Israel has turned away from Him, the Lord is quietly at work through faithful people in places we might never expect. We all know Elijah. He is about to stand on Mount Carmel and become the central figure in one of the most dramatic moments in Scripture. But before the fire falls, the Bible introduces us to someone much less famous—a man named Obadiah. His name means "servant/worshiper of ADONAI" and in the middle of a dark, dry, hostile land, Obadiah reminds us that God is still at work through hidden heroes who choose to be faithful.

1. GOD STRATEGICALLY PLACES HIS SERVANTS IN SURPRISING PLACES. We are told that *"Ahab summoned Obadiah who was the steward of the palace. Now Obadiah feared ADONAI greatly"* (1 Kgs. 18:3). Think about where God had placed this man. Obadiah was not hiding somewhere in a faithful community far removed from the wickedness of Ahab and Jezebel. He was serving *inside* their palace. He was the steward of Ahab's household—a man the king trusted and depended upon. Yet while Obadiah served Ahab, his first allegiance belonged to ADONAI. When Jezebel began slaughtering the prophets of the Lord, *"Obadiah took 100 prophets, hid them 50 to a cave, and provided them with bread and water"* (1 Kgs. 18:4). At tremendous personal risk, he worked against Jezebel's plans while serving right under her roof.

Think about how God had provided during this drought. First, He used ravens to feed Elijah. Then He used a starving widow in Zarephath. And now He is providing food and water for one hundred prophets through the steward of Ahab's own palace! God had strategically planted one of His servants in exactly the right place. We may sometimes wonder why the Lord has placed us in a particular workplace, neighborhood, school, community, family, or difficult environment. Perhaps the better question is not simply, "Lord, why am I here?" but, "Lord, what do You want to accomplish through me here?" God does not call us to compromise in spiritually dark places. He calls us to be faithful there. Like Joseph in Pharaoh's world, Daniel in Babylon, Hadassah in the palace of Ahasuerus, and Obadiah in

the house of Ahab, God can place His servants in surprising places to accomplish His purposes.

2. GOD CALLS US TO DO THINGS THAT SOMETIMES FRIGHTEN US. As Obadiah is traveling through the land looking for grass and water, suddenly Elijah appears. Obadiah recognizes him immediately and bows before him. Elijah then gives him what sounds like a simple assignment: “*Go tell your lord, ‘Look, Elijah is here!’*” (1 Kgs. 18:8). But Obadiah understands exactly how dangerous those words are. Ahab has been searching everywhere for Elijah. Obadiah essentially responds, “What did I do to deserve this? Are you trying to get me killed?” He explains that if he tells Ahab Elijah is there and then the the Spirit of the LORD carries Elijah somewhere else, Ahab will put him to death. Obadiah fears the Lord greatly, but that does not mean he never experiences fear. He is faithful—but he is also human.

Sometimes the Lord calls us to do things that frighten us. Obedience is not always comfortable, and it is not always safe. Throughout Scripture, faithful people were asked to trust God in situations where the consequences were very real. Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah faced the furnace because they would not bow. Hadassah knew approaching the king could cost her life. Paul endured persecution, imprisonment, beatings, and suffering for the sake of the Good News. Yet he could write, “*We are hard pressed in every way, yet not crushed; perplexed, yet not in despair; persecuted, yet not forsaken; struck down, yet not destroyed*” (2 Cor. 4:8–9). Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage is choosing obedience even while fear is present. Sometimes being an Obadiah—a servant of the LORD—means trusting God enough to take the next step even when that step feels scary.

3. A SERVANT IS FAITHFUL IN OBSCURITY. Obadiah tells Elijah, “*Now I, your servant, have feared ADONAI since my youth*” (1 Kgs. 18:12). He reminds Elijah of what he did when Jezebel began slaughtering the prophets—how he hid one hundred of them in caves and personally made sure they had bread and water. And Elijah knew nothing about any of that. Obadiah had performed an incredibly courageous act that saved one hundred lives, yet one of Israel’s greatest prophets had apparently never even heard the story. Obadiah had been faithful in obscurity. There was no audience. No applause. No recognition. For years he had simply done what needed to be done because he feared ADONAI.

Everyone remembers Elijah. We sing songs about Elijah. We remember the ravens, the widow of Zarephath, the raising of her son, and the fire that is about to fall on Mount Carmel. But almost nobody remembers Obadiah. And we don’t know the names of the one hundred prophets he saved. Later, the Lord will tell Elijah that there are seven thousand in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Ba’al, and we do not know their names either. They are obscure to us—but not to God. Being faithful to the Lord is never supposed to be about receiving glory for ourselves. It is not about making our name great or memorable, gaining recognition, or making sure someone notices what we have done. We are not called to make **our names** known. We are called to make **His Name** known.

CONCLUSION

Our world can feel very much like the world of Obadiah—a dark, dry, spiritually weary land. It can look as though the Ahabs and Jezebels of this world are in control. But they are not.

God is still on the throne. The nations may rage, rulers may imagine that they are running the show, and people may believe they are manipulating events behind the scenes, but none of them have displaced ADONAI. Even during Israel's darkest days, God had Elijah hidden in Zarephath, Obadiah serving inside the palace, one hundred prophets protected in caves, and seven thousand others who had never bowed to Ba'al. What looked like defeat from the outside was not defeat at all. God was still working.

And He is still working today. The question is whether we will allow Him to work through *us*. Perhaps He has strategically placed you somewhere you never expected to be. Be faithful there. Perhaps He is asking you to do something that frightens you. Trust Him and obey. Perhaps you have served for years without recognition and wondered whether anyone sees. The Lord sees. So bring your life before Him today and say, "ADONAI, make me Your servant. Make me Your worshiper. Use me wherever You have planted me. Give me courage to obey You, even when I am afraid. And whether anyone ever remembers my name or not, let my life make Your Name known." Let's not spend our lives trying to make sure the world remembers us. Let's spend our lives faithfully making Yeshua known and doing everything we can to see more names written in His Book of Life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is Obadiah's position as the steward of Ahab's palace so significant to the message of 1 Kgs. 18:1–16? What does his position reveal about the way God places His servants?
2. How did Obadiah demonstrate that his ultimate allegiance was to ADONAI rather than to Ahab and Jezebel?
3. Obadiah "*feared ADONAI greatly*," yet he was still afraid of what Elijah asked him to do. What does this teach us about the relationship between fear, courage, faith, and obedience?
4. Where has God planted you right now—your workplace, community, family, school, or ministry? How might He want to use you there to accomplish His purposes?
5. Would you remain faithful to God if no one ever recognized what you were doing? Are there areas where the desire to be noticed, appreciated, or applauded has begun to compete with simply serving the Lord?

CLOSING PRAYER

ADONAI, thank You that You are still on the throne even when the world around us feels dark, dry, and unstable. Thank You that You never abandon Your people and that You are always at work, even when we cannot immediately see what You are doing. Help us to recognize that You have placed us where we are for a purpose. Give us wisdom to know how to represent Your Kingdom faithfully in the places where You have planted us.

Shape us into servants like Obadiah. Give us courage when obedience frightens us, and help us to fear You more than we fear people or consequences. Keep our hearts free from the desire for recognition or earthly glory. Whether anyone notices our faithfulness or not, remind us that You see and You know. May our lives never be about making our own names great. Instead, through everything we do, let **the name of Yeshua be exalted**.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.