

GOODNEWS LETTER

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DETERMINATION

Ben-Hadad, King of Syria said, "**God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day,**" 2nd Kings 6:31.

Determination means to *"settle something conclusively by referring to an authority."*

Thus, could there be any stronger statement than placing one's life on the line in order to settle something? Absolutely not! When we read the words of Benhadad, "**May God do so and more also to me,**" we know that he meant what he said.

While, the two Biblical references are made by those utilizing a pagan system of a plurality of gods, (Benhadad and Jezebel), we learn that Eli also spoke the same words (1st Sam 3:17). This time, however, the "**determined threat**" fell on Samuel instead of himself - "**May God do so to you, and more also...**"

Jezebel's words were used when she tried to settle the matter with Elijah in 1st Kings 19:2. She was **determined** to slay Elijah because of the Mt. Carmel incident of "**God or Baal.**" The record shows that 400 hundred of Baal's prophets lost the challenge.

"**God do so and more also to me**" fits the definition of **determination** perfectly. Again, it means: *"to settle something, conclusively, by referring to an authority."*

But, in using this phrase, we see a problem, here. It has implications of accusing God right along with man. Certainly, God is the final authority; however, one has to be in His will before calling for a blessing.

Plus, New Covenant followers could never utter such words, even against their worst enemies. When it comes to Godly determination, Jesus said it comes by Loving the enemy, forgiving them and turning the other cheek, if need be.

Our time is no different that when Elijah summoned the prophets of Baal to Mt. Carmel. We are called to settle the "**something's**" of life by learning the blessed "**Sermon on the Mount.**" It is the method of getting Scriptural determination. We find that the meaning is different than what the Old Testament records.

While, there is no question that Christians need **determination** when serving the Lord of Heaven, it has to be learned properly - chapterly and versely.

But, wouldn't it be nice if - with proper zeal, we carried out God's will, grasping it as a golden opportunity, every time! Further, in today's religious climate

of "**Falling Away**" with its "**Laodecian**" tendencies, the church must utilize strong **determination**.

Each person must be careful to serve God with what understanding they have; unless and until, they receive a better teaching from the Lord.

However, when we read the letters to the churches of Asia; as well as, the Book of Hebrews, et al, it is incumbent that each member of the body "**Take care**" (He 3:12); "**for we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm unto the end**" (3:14).

In our service, it takes strong belief. Perhaps it would be good to think on an answer to the noble truth of "**Only the Strong Survive.**" It suggests that we grow strong by helping the weak to become strong. Then, we are strong by their joining with us as strong believers.

The idea is a good one; but, in the service of God, aren't we always calling people to a challenge? Is it "God or Baal." However, determination and strength doesn't come by their joining with us. It is God's control over our lives that make us determined, only. Therefore, we look upon each encounter as a golden opportunity to serve God and witness on His behalf.

And, we often serve to God alone, all by ourselves. Sadly, the majority fail to believe God. To see this fact just read the Biblical record. It has many incidents where fleshly thinking replaces "**God's word.**" Simply, there is no **Determination**.

We see determination lost in the Promised Land offer to the Jewish nation. Only two were determined to believe God. The majority of Ten failed to seize this opportunity.

When we analyze the definition of "**Determination**" in a Biblical manner, we find that life's struggles and opportunities can only be conclusively settled by God's authority.

His word causes our determination "**to just do it!**" It's how we grow and stay on the road leading to life. It's narrow, as Jesus taught. It is on the narrow road we learn to place our thoughts and lives in God's eternal hands. Indeed, sometimes, it's a lonely road!

But, we can't be too "**worldly**" busy, either. The walk of a Christian has to be a daily, a daily, walk of obedience. Each encounter of life determines the victory or, the lose thereof; whether it is Mt. Carmel, the Jordan River or on the Mt. of Olives.

Wherever or whatever God summons us to, He allows us to move on to the next challenge once the first one is met. This is how we "**Seek the kingdom of God, first**" (Mt 6:33) and how "**all these things shall be added unto you**" (Mt 6:34).

But, really, it's God that we give glory to, not Baal. Neither, is it words of determination that we might cite; even, if we place our life on it.