

# Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

## 23 March 2014

### Topics

#### A.M. Bible Class:

Jesus Appears to the Disciples (John 20:19 f)

#### A.M. Lesson:

Encourage One Another (Hebrews 3:12-14)

#### P.M. Lesson:

Spiritual Food (John 4:27-38)

#### Wednesday:

Siege of Samaria (2 Kings 6:24 f)

Pulpit Evangelist

*Ken Knowlton: 428-3494*

Elders

*Greg Briggs: 428-8756*

*John Cunningham: 428-0895*

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

## Where was the Ascension?

On Luke 24:49

According to Luke, the apostles were told to "tarry in the city of Jerusalem" until Pentecost. But Matthew tell us that they went into Galilee (Matthew 28:10, 16).

**SOLUTION:** First, it is possible that the command was not given until after they had been in Galilee. In this event there would be no conflict whatsoever. Furthermore, the command to "tarry" simply meant to make Jerusalem their headquarters. It did not preclude taking short trips elsewhere. Jerusalem was the place they were to receive the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49) and to begin their work.

Geisler, Norman L. and Thomas Howe. *The Big Book of Bible Difficulties*. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992)

## Thwarting God's plans?

Neil Short

Is it possible to thwart the plans of God? I am about to argue that it is possible.

The life of Elisha was spared when God intervened in the evil plans of the king of Aram. This account is detailed in 2 Kings 6:8-23. Divine power was available to Elisha—power that was personified by a mountain "full of horses and chariots of fire" (NRSV). It was the intent of the Aramean king to thwart God's plans by dispatching Elisha, for Elisha was in the habit of frustrating the king's war plans. Was it necessary that the king fail to capture/kill Elisha? A broader look at the Bible suggests the answer "no."

We have already seen that some plans are set in motion in the form of a covenant. Those plans are easily thwarted by man's failure to adhere to the covenant. God's plan for Jeroboam is a good example. In 1 Kings 11 God, through a prophet, informs Jeroboam that he has been selected to be king of the northern half of the soon-to-be divided kingdom. "If you will listen to all that I command you, walk in my ways and do what is right in my sight by keeping my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did," God says, "I will build you an enduring house, as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you" (1 Kings 11:38). But Jeroboam failed in his side of the covenant. The prophet says, "therefore, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam. I will cut off from Jeroboam every male..." (1 Kings 14:10).

But what if there is no covenant? What if a prophet receives hostility for his bad-news oracles? It happened all the time in the Bible. Sometimes the prophet was miraculously spared but sometimes he was not. Sometimes he was thrown into prison—permanently—or killed (e.g., 1 Kings 19:10; 22:26-28; 2 Chronicles 16:7-10; Nehemiah 9:26; Jeremiah

26:20-23; Matthew 23:34-37; John 16:2-3). Mathew 23:37-39 indicates that Jerusalem successfully thwarted God's plans by killing the prophets that were sent to her. Verse 39 is yet another invitation to embrace Jesus and avoid the disaster that is coming.

There is an unusual passage in Judges 1:19 in which the enemy was able to thwart God's plans in battle because it had superior military equipment.

Clearly, God's will that everybody be saved is thwarted by many who refuse to serve God (2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:1-4).

What about God's promises? Can they be thwarted? The answer seems to be "no." God's promise to David (2 Samuel 7:12-16) motivated God to turn away from the deadly consequence that would have otherwise fallen on Judah (2 Kings 8:19).

Why did Elisha survive? There are at least two possibilities. First, it may have been necessary for God to protect Elisha in order to keep his promise that Elisha receive a double portion of the Spirit (2 Kings 2:9). Second, it may be the case that Elisha, having a double portion of the Spirit, was able to better utilize the power God put at his disposal ("horses and chariots of fire").

When God gave man a free will, part of the deal was that God would not interfere with the choices men make. If they make terrible choices, God permits them to be carried out. For God to do otherwise is to revoke man's ability to chose. Mankind regularly thwarts God's plans.

## God changes his plans on the fly

Christopher Fisher, condensed

If my father says he will discipline me when he gets home (these are hypotheticals, I live in my own home) but when he gets home he sees that I have mowed the lawn, cleaned the house, and vacuumed the carpet then he might repent of what he said he would do.

In the same fashion, we should understand when prophecies fail that sometimes the conditions have changed. Sometimes people just did not cooperate. A coworker told me about a father who used his connections to get his son a six figure job, but the son quit after a minor misunderstanding with an admin person. The father then flexed his power to

re-secure that job for the son, but the son just never showed up. What person would fault that father if before all these events the father said to his son: "I will secure you a six figure job." In fact, the only way we would fault the father for being wrong is if the father knew the outcome before it happened.

We should look at prophetic predictions through normal human understanding. No one calls Jonah a false prophet although his prophecy was wrong. We rightly understand circumstances change.

<http://realityisnotoptional.com/2013/11/02/why-biblical-prophecies-fail/>

## News

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Esther and Sara Atchley plan to return to Safford this week.

Sandy Cavasos: We'll hope for an update this morning.

Sunday, March 30, being a "Fifth Sunday," we will have a special collection for the mission work in India that we support.

Inez Clendenen will celebrate her birthday with a party at her daughter's home on April 5 at 1:00 P.M. She has invited everyone in the fellowship of the Safford church. She wants everyone to RSVP Sharon or Inez so her daughter can adequately prepare. A map to the party is forthcoming. No gifts (she said).

April 29, 10 A.M. - 2 P.M.: Picnic @ the fairgrounds.

May 2: Elder Appreciation Dinner. Details TBA.

May 11: Donuts & Coffee @ 9 A.M. in the Anex.

## Prayer List:

*Healing: Hattie Hedrick, Della Phillips, H.L. Boling, Jerry Robinson's mother Norma, Mike and Sandy Cavasos, Faye Atchley, Nicolas and Annie Self, Jonda Gardner, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.*

Back issues are posted at  
<http://saffordchurchofchrist.org>

