

Without Jesus, We Have Nothing



Gary Wilkerson December 30, 2019

“There was Eli, sitting on a seat by the wayside watching, for *his heart trembled* for the ark of God” (1 Samuel 4:13).

The word “tremble” as it is used here means to be in anguish, as travailing. At this time in his life, Eli was old and infirm, his eyes had grown dim, his spiritual leadership was diminishing, and his own sons were corrupt priests. Things all around him looked hopeless.

Eli was watching the Ark of the Covenant being taken away — God’s glory was leaving the camp — and he was largely responsible. As the high priest, he had overseen the offering of sacrifices, but it was all ritual with no real spiritual significance. The fear of the Lord was no longer in the hearts of the people and Eli knew that without the presence of God, all was lost. Recognizing what was happening caused his heart to tremble.

But there is another kind of trembling, that which emanates from joy. The Spirit of God shocked his church when he told them, “For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or household gods” (Hosea 3:4, NIV). In other words, God was taking away all their large buildings of worship and stripping them of all that they depended on.

But then God promised, “Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They will *come trembling* to the Lord and to his blessings in the last days” (3:5, NIV).

Imagine if your church had no more eloquent preachers or even buildings to meet in. What would you do? Well, if God replaced all these things with a heart to seek him, it would be worth it all. If we don’t have Jesus, we have nothing! Ask God to give you a heart that trembles at his Word, to give you a longing for his presence.

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