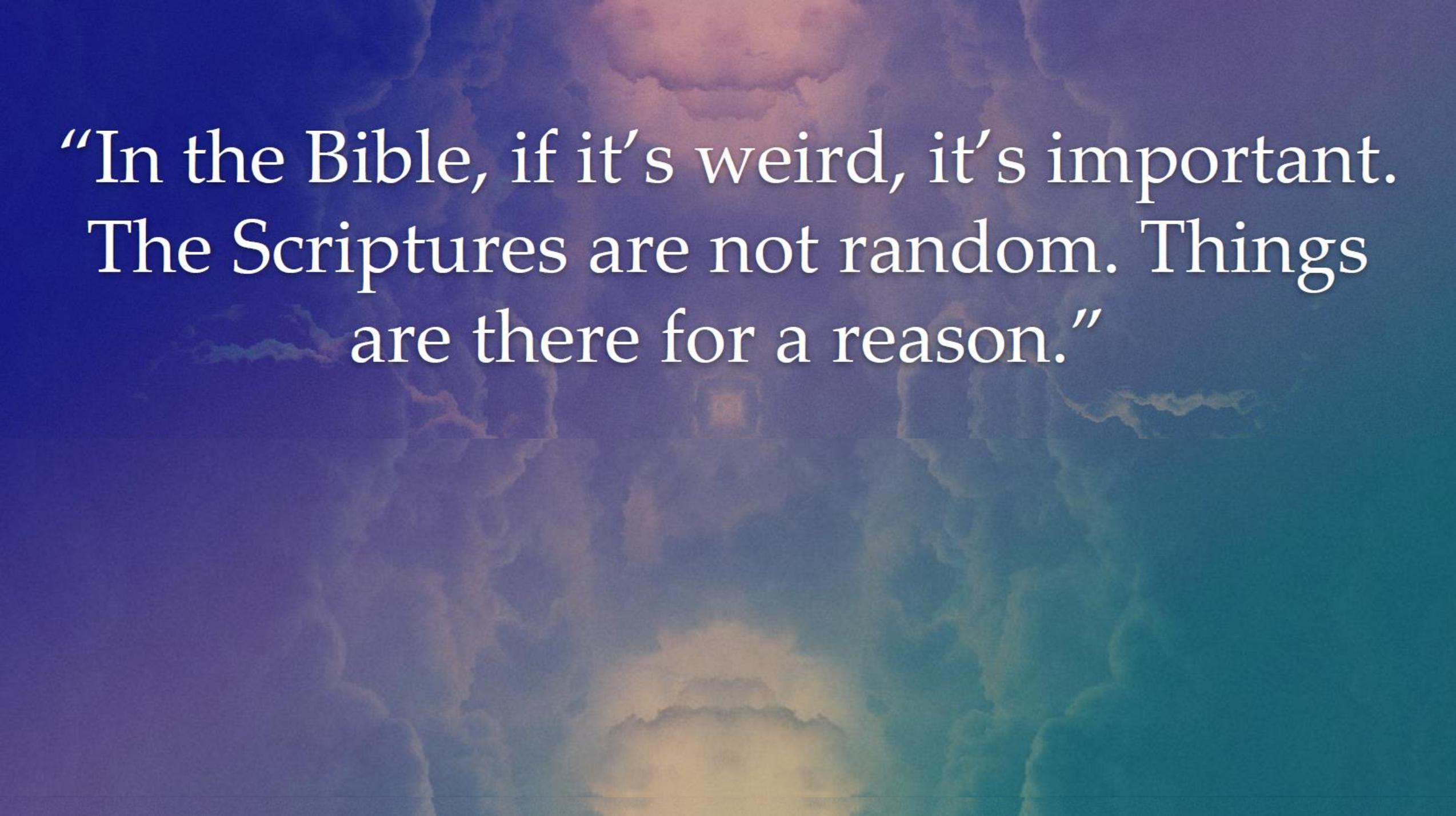


2 Kings 2:23-24

Elisha and the She-Bears





“In the Bible, if it’s weird, it’s important.
The Scriptures are not random. Things
are there for a reason.”

2 Kings 2:23 He went up from there to Bethel, and while he was going up on the way, some small boys came out of the city and jeered at him, saying, “Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!”

24 And he turned around, and when he saw them, he cursed them in the name of the Lord. And two she-bears came out of the woods and tore forty-two of the boys.

25 From there he went on to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.



Context

Epic conflict of the Garden continues

- The kingdom is divided 1 Kings 12
- Israel was worshipping idols
- Elijah confronted kings, priests and sin 1 Kings 17, 18
- Elijah fears the king and his wife—Jezebel 1 Kings 19
- God tells him to anoint Elisha 1 Kings 19



Elisha

- Probably in his 20's
- Takes up the call
- Apprentices for several years



Situation

- God has led Elijah across the Jordan
- Elijah asks Elisha what he can do for him
- “Give me a double portion of your spirit”
- God answers
- Elisha starts a journey



Observation

Elisha approaches Bethel

More than 42 turn out to confront him

Ill-mannered boys or angry mob?

2 Kings 2:23 He went up from there to Bethel, and while he was going up on the way, some small boys came out of the city and jeered at him, saying, “Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!”

English Standard Version



The “Small Boys”

- Na’ar, noun
 - Baby Moses – Exodus 2:6
 - Adult Absalom – 2 Samuel 14:21
 - Servant – Genesis 22:3
 - Armor-bearer – Judges 9:54
 - King’s official – 2 Kings 19:6
 - Priest – 1 Samuel 2:17
- Qatan, adjective
 - Hadad the Edomite – 1 Kings 11:17
 - King Solomon at 20 – 1 Kings 3:7



Angry Mob

- Better:

2 Kings 2:23 He went up from Jericho to Bethel. On the way, young [maturing and accountable] boys came out of the city and mocked him and said to him, Go up [in a whirlwind], you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!

Amplified Bible Classic Edition



What they did, what they said

- My take: servants of the cult of idol worship
- Lacked standing to challenge God and His prophet
 - Resorted to name calling
 - Mocked his authority
 - No respect for God



What Elisha did

- Called upon the name of the Lord

What the Holy Sprit did

- Sent 2 bears
 - In Joshua, hornets went before the army of Israel



Enduring Lessons

- Respect the authority of God and His people
- When our faith is mocked, it is God that is mocked
- God goes before his people
- His plans are not derailed by men



“In the Bible, if it’s weird, it’s important. The Scriptures are not random. Things are there for a reason.”

“If, after you’ve done the grunt work of context-driven interpretation, if what the biblical text says still disturbs you, let it.”

Be excellent to each other!

