**Yahweh, He is God!**

**I Kings 18:1–46 (Lesson #15)**

***18:1 After many days the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, "Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth." 2 So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the famine was severe in Samaria. 3 And Ahab called Obadiah, who was over the household. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly, 4 and when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water.) 5 And Ahab said to Obadiah, "Go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the valleys. Perhaps we may find grass and save the horses and mules alive, and not lose some of the animals." 6 So they divided the land between them to pass through it. Ahab went in one direction by himself, and Obadiah went in another direction by himself.***

**Vs 1 –** Many days have passed. Elijah has continued to sojourn with the widow and her son. We can imagine what it would have been like to have Elijah, in your home, teaching the word of God.

After many days, the Word of the Lord (there is that phrase) comes to Elijah.

**APPLICATION:** God still speaks to his people today!

This is the third year since, the prophet met with Ahab and told him **“no rain or dew.”** Now Yahweh tells Elijah, "Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth."

Elijah had hid himself, now it is time to show himself! The prophet is commanded by God to go show himself to the King.

The total time the famine has been going is 3 years and 6 months and that is according to Jesus (Luk 4:25) and James (Jam 5:17).

**Vs 2 –** **Instantly obedient Elijah** goes to show himself to Ahab in Samaria (the capital).

**APPLICATION and MESSIAH:** Good reminder for us, great picture of our Lord Jesus Christ! Who was always instantly obedient, both actively and passively!

Notice the ***famine was severe in Samaria.*** A 3 ½ year famine is **severe** regardless of where it happens!

First, let’s read **verses 3-6 without the parenthetical** and then we will read the parenthetical:

**Vs 3a, 5-6 -** So the man over Ahab’s house is a man named Obadiah. Ahab says to him: Go to every spring, and each valley to find grass to feed my horses and mules, so that none die.

It is unlikely that this is the same Obadiah (the minor prophet) for that seems to have been written around 586. Right now is the mid-800s. There are a number of different men named Obadiah in the Old Testament. The Hebrew name **Obadiah** means **“Worshipper of Yahweh”** or **“Servant of Yahweh.”**

A worshipper of Yahweh in the house of Ahab, C.H. Spurgeon said this:

“*As it is horrible to find a Judas among the apostles, so it is grand to discover an Obadiah among Ahab’s courtiers. What grace must have been at work to maintain such a fire in the midst of the sea, such godliness in the midst of the vilest iniquity!”*

So that I do not bury the lede on Obadiah, some scholars believe he was a man who served Yahweh, although he worked for a pagan king, while others build the case that he was a compromiser.

The king of Israel, and the man over his house are roaming through the land, looking for grass, searching for a place to pasture his horses and mules. They divide the nation and are in search for grass for the horses and the mules. While the people languish under this wicked king!

The draught has killed almost everything, and the king and the man over his household are in search of grass.

**Now the parenthetical, it is about Obadiah:**

**Vs 3a-4 -** Obadiah, in spite of working in the house of wicked King Ahab, was a follower of Yahweh. He was a man who **“feared the Lord greatly!”**

He was not a passive or distant follower, but an **active follower**, a man who feared Yahweh greatly.

**He was a man whose faith moved him to action.** We are told that somewhere over the last 3 ½ years Jezebel had moved to **“cut off”** the prophets of Yahweh. The Hebrew word means to **kill, cut down,** or **destroy**.

This **wicked Ball worshipper** was executing God’s men. She had taken a personal interest in killing any prophets (spokesman) of Yahweh. While this was happening, we see that **Obadiah’s faith** called him to **act.**

**Vs 4 –** Although we are told what Jezebel did, Ahab was the king and at a minimum he was complicit in his silence as Jezebel was having prophets of the Living God executed!

**Vs 4b –** Obadiah obviously knew of a large cave or cave system. He hid 100 prophets in groups of 50s. But more than that he provided for them bread and water. We can imagine at his **own expense** and to the **detriment of his own welfare** if he were to be caught. We can imagine if he was caught, not only was that the end of his employment, but it would also likely result in his death!

**APPLICATION:** There will be times when our faith will call us to act. James summed it up this way: *“But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?” (Jas 2:20 NKJV)*

**Obadiah’s faithfulness to Ahab did not prevent him from being ultimately faithful to his God.**

**APPLICATION:** We all worksecular jobs, no doubt many of us work for a secular boss. We should work for that boss like we are working for Jesus (Col 3:23) up and until he calls us to do something that violates God’s law or would compromise our integrity.

**IMPORTANT POINT:** God used miraculous means to save Elijah, the ravens, and then the widow, but God used ordinary mans to save these hundred prophets! Yet it was the same God who delivered them all.

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***18:7 And as Obadiah was on the way, behold, Elijah met him. And Obadiah recognized him and fell on his face and said, "Is it you, my lord Elijah?" 8 And he answered him, "It is I. Go, tell your lord, ‘Behold, Elijah is here.’" 9 And he said, "How have I sinned, that you would give your servant into the hand of Ahab, to kill me? 10 As the LORD your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my lord has not sent to seek you. And when they would say, ‘He is not here,’ he would take an oath of the kingdom or nation, that they had not found you. 11 And now you say, ‘Go, tell your lord, "Behold, Elijah is here."’ 12 And as soon as I have gone from you, the Spirit of the LORD will carry you I know not where. And so, when I come and tell Ahab and he cannot find you, he will kill me, although I your servant have feared the LORD from my youth. 13 Has it not been told my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, how I hid a hundred men of the LORD’s prophets by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water? 14 And now you say, ‘Go, tell your lord, "Behold, Elijah is here"’; and he will kill me." 15 And Elijah said, "As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to him today." 16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him. And Ahab went to meet Elijah.***

**Vs 7-8 -** So Obadiah, is out searching for somewhere the King might get food for his animals, and he runs into Elijah. The man who God has had in His witness protection program!

In spite of having not seen him for at least three years, Obadiah recognizes Elijah and falls on his face on the ground. Elijah says yes, it is me, go tell you lord (Ahab) that **“Elijah is here.”**

**Vs 9 –** Obadiah responds that if I do this Ahab will have me killed. In his response, Obadiah appears to be exhibiting fear. We know that God has not given us the spirit of fear… But let’s not be too hard on our brother.

**Vs 10 –** We now learn that Ahab has been combing the land looking for Elijah. There is no nation or kingdom, where Ahab has not sent Obadiah searching for Elijah. When the leader would say, Elijah is not hear, then Ahab would demand the king take an oath and swear that they had not found him.

We can only assume that Baal’s prophets have told the king that the reason it is not raining is because of Elijah, and Ahab must kill him before Ball will send rain.

But, to believe that is to forget who set this in motion in the first, place. It was Yahweh who said through his prophet *“As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."” (1Ki 17:1 ESV)*

Ahab is trampling over God’s extension of mercy!

**Vs 11-12 -** And after all these years, you simply want me to stroll in the palace and say the guy you have been hunting for years is here? As soon as I do that God will carry you off somewhere else. I will tell Ahab, that you are here, then you will be gone, when Ahab cannot find you, he will vent his anger on me and kill me.

We do see from Obadiah’s own mouth, he has “feared” had a reverence for Yahweh since he was a boy. But, we cannot let Obadiah totally off the hook for his lack of faith.

**APPLICATION:** *“for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” (2Ti 1:7 ESV)*

**APPLICATION:** This is more than fear is it not. It is a lack of trust in God’s sovereign care and control over his life: *“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.” (Ro 8:28 ESV)*

**Vs 13-14** - Here we reminded again about Jezebel’s wickedness, beyond her Baal worship.

Jezebel wanted much more than Baal worship. She wanted Baal and Asherah worship with Yahweh completely removed from the equation.

**APPLICATION:** *“Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?” (2Co 6:14 ESV)*

But we do see that Obadiah, reminds Elijah that he has been on God’s side of the equation, and he has acted.

**APPLICATION:** we all have a unique blend of spiritual gifts and talents. This unique blend, creates a very unique minister of the gospel: *“****4*** *For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function,* ***5*** *so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.* ***6*** *Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith;* ***7*** *if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching;* ***8*** *the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.” (Ro 12:4-8 ESV)*

**Vs 15-16 -** Elijah is clear, I will surely show myself to Ahab today. Obadiah left to go tell Ahab, and ultimately told him. Having received that word, Ahab went to meet Elijah.

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***18:17 When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is it you, you troubler of Israel?" 18 And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you have, and your father’s house, because you have abandoned the commandments of the LORD and followed the Baals. 19 Now therefore send and gather all Israel to me at Mount Carmel, and the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table."***

**Vs 17** - It has been **three years** since Ahab has seen Elijah. He has combed the countryside for him and here he is! Face to face, so when Ahab, finally sees Elijah, you see what he says.

Ahhhh is that you, you troubler of Israel? The Hebrew word used here is somewhat rare, it is the Hebrew word **עכר** (aw-kar’). **Literally what he is saying, Is it you, the one who brought this curse upon Israel?**

I have a few things to say here: Ahab is far and away the worst, most ungodly king to sit on the throne of Israel. To say a king was extremely wicked, is to say he was like Ahab. Here this wicked, ungodly king wastes no time blaming God’s prophet for the disaster that has befallen the nation which is all, his and his family’s fault!

One has to imagine, that the false prophets of Ball, have convinced Ahab, that Baal is not sending rain because of Elijah.

God’s word is clear on the reason for the draught (Deut 11:16-17).

Now if these types of accusations by Ahab seem familiar, it is because they are:

Jesus: *“1 Then the whole company of them arose and brought him before Pilate. 2 And they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king."” (Lu 23:1-2 ESV)*

Paul: *“1 And after five days the high priest Ananias came down with some elders and a spokesman, one Tertullus. They laid before the governor their case against Paul. 2 And when he had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying: "Since through you we enjoy much peace, and since by your foresight, most excellent Felix, reforms are being made for this nation, 3 in every way and everywhere we accept this with all gratitude. 4 But, to detain you no further, I beg you in your kindness to hear us briefly. 5 For we have found this man a plague, one who stirs up riots among all the Jews throughout the world and is a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.” (Ac 24:1-5 ESV)*

**APPLICATION:** The world does not love us, in fact at the core they hate us. Not because they hate us personally, but because they are enemies of Christ. *“****18*** *If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.* ***19*** *If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.” (Joh 15:18-19 ESV)*

**Vs 18 -** Here Elijah is clear, it is not I, it is you and your father’s house who have troubled Israel, who have brought the curse upon Israel.

This exact same Hebrew word is used In Josh 6:17 and in Josh 7:25. First to describe what would happen if anyone took anything and second to show when Achan did, his disobedience brought trouble upon the nation.

You Ahab, and your father’s house have brought this **curse (trouble, like Achan of old)** upon the landbecause you have **“abandoned”** the commandments of God. The Hebrew word **עזב** (aw-zab’), it means to **leave, forsake,** **abandon or cast behind your back,** and, you have turned and followed the Baals.

Here we see the sin of omission as well as the sin of commission:

**Omission:** abandoned the commandments of the LORD

**Commission:** followed the Baals

**MESSIAH:** Jesus was completely obedient to the Father, He committed no sins of omission or commission. He is our perfect high priest.

**Vs 19 -** Then Elijah, in almost what appears to be a command, tells King Ahab, to gather “all Israel” at Mount Carmel, along with the 450 prophets of Baal, along with the 400 prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.

So, at this point we cannot imagine, what Elijah is imagining, but he is calling all Israel to come out. In one corner there will be 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah, in the other corner, Elijah.

Notice that these 850 prophets eat at Jezebel’s table, they are supported by the state.

**Does it not seem funny to you that these 450 prophets of the rain god Baal, have been unable to produce rain for more than 3 years and yet they are still being supported by the King and his wife.**

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***18:20 So Ahab sent to all the people of Israel and gathered the prophets together at Mount Carmel. 21 ¶ And Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." And the people did not answer him a word. 22 Then Elijah said to the people, "I, even I only, am left a prophet of the LORD, but Baal’s prophets are 450 men. 23 Let two bulls be given to us, and let them choose one bull for themselves and cut it in pieces and lay it on the wood, but put no fire to it. And I will prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood and put no fire to it. 24 And you call upon the name of your god, and I will call upon the name of the LORD, and the God who answers by fire, he is God." And all the people answered, "It is well spoken." 25 Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose for yourselves one bull and prepare it first, for you are many, and call upon the name of your god, but put no fire to it." 26 And they took the bull that was given them, and they prepared it and called upon the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no voice, and no one answered. And they limped around the altar that they had made. 27 And at noon Elijah mocked them, saying, "Cry aloud, for he is a god. Either he is musing, or he is relieving himself, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened." 28 And they cried aloud and cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances, until the blood gushed out upon them. 29 And as midday passed, they raved on until the time of the offering of the oblation, but there was no voice. No one answered; no one paid attention.***

**Vs 20-21** - We can imagine that Ahab sends messengers through the region of Israel, gather at Mount Carmel.

The 450 prophets of Ball along with the assistance of the 400 prophets are going to finally deal with the menace named Elijah.

Ultimately, assembled at Mount Carmel, was a large number of the nation of Israel, King Ahab, the prophets of Baal, and the prophets of Asherah

Then Elijah, addresses the people, we can imagine him in the midst of them, moving as he is addressing them: ***How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him."***

Spiritually speaking, Israel was like an unfaithful spouse who doesn’t want a divorce, nor does she want to give up her illicit lover.

The ancient Hebrew word translated **falter** means “to limp, halt, hop, dance, or leap.” It is the same word used in 1 Kings 18:26 where the prophets of Baal leaped about the altar. It may be that Elijah meant, **“How long will you dance between two opinions?”**

He is asking how many more sermons, how many more times of conviction, how many more times does the spirit of God need to speak to you… **HOW LONG?**

**APPLICATION:** We need to be sure that we are not leading the same kind of life, “dancing between two positions.” *“"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.” (Mt 6:24 ESV)*

Vs 21c - **And the people did not answer him a word.** This is surprising, shocking, and damning.

Now keep in mind, David died in 971BC, when he died the nation principally worshipped Yahweh exclusively. Now the year is approximately 870BC and here the nation will not even say a word about how they are **faltering, limping, flopping, and flailing** between two opinions.

**Vs 22-23 -** Here Elijah says: **“I, even I only, am left a prophet of the Lord…”** It seems the Elijah’s point, is that he is the only one, here on Mount Carmel, willing to make a public stand for Yahweh!

**APPLICATION:** Greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world (I Joh 4:4), we have the promise that God will never leave us nor forsake us (Heb 13:5). Thus, like Elijah, there may be moments when we are alone, but we must never forget, **we are never alone**!

**Elijah’s proposes a debate, a showdown, a duel, an opportunity to prove who is God, Baal or Yahweh.**

Here are his rules for the ~~debate~~ showdown:

1. We will do it here. What Elijah is saying is I give Baal home field advantage.
2. We will fetch two bulls, and the prophets of Baal can choose which bull they would like to use as the bull that they will sacrifice to their God, and I will take the one they do not choose.
3. We will each cut our bull into pieces, as a sacrifice to our God, lay those pieces on the wood we prepare, but we will not light the wood.

**Vs 24-25 -** With the cut-up bull, on the wood, **you will go first**, and you will call upon the name of your god… **אלהים** (el-o-heem’)

**Don’t miss the point, this is about prayer. This is about the God who responds to prayer. That is Elijah’s point. You call out to your God. I will call out to Yahweh!**

1. **Vs 24b - The God, who answers by fire… That god IS GOD!**

**Now this is a winner take all event.** Whoever succeeded in bringing down fire, just one time, would **win the contest immediately**! The Baal worshippers get to go first, in **a first god to deliver fire is the winner contest.**

**Vs 24c** – The **people** (the Israelites who have made the trip for this massive event) say: ***"It is well spoken."***

**Vs 25 –** The Elijah spoke to the Baal prophets. You understand they hated Elijah; he was singlehandedly messing in their game. The rain and thunder god was suffering from performance problems and we can imagine that this group wanted Elijah’s head.

**Elijah’s method of evangelism:**

1. Disprove the existence of Baal
2. Allow God to prove His own existence

**Vs 26 -** They picked the bull of their choosing. They prepared it**. That morning, they begin to call on the name of Baal. Crying Oh - Baal answer us BY FIRE.** Reign down fire Baal!

**Vs 26b -** There was no answer, there was no response. You can imagine the **silence was deafening** because everyone knew what it meant.

Thus, they begin to ESV **“limp”** around the altar. The word the ESV translated “limp” is the word **פסח** (paw-sakh). It means to pass over, to leap over, to dance. **The idea seems to be that they begin leaping and dancing around the altar in a frenzy.**

**Vs 27 -** Then Elijah began to mock them. Notice first, maybe **you need to cry louder:**

1. Maybe Baal is **musing**, he is **meditating**, he is **thinking about something.**
2. Maybe Baal is **relieving himself,** he is possibly **taking a potty break**, or possibly at the **porta-potty.**
3. Maybe Baal went on a **long journey** and that is why he has not answered you.
4. Maybe Baal is **asleep**, possibly he is **taking a nap** and needs to be **snapped out of his slumber**!

**Vs 28-29 -** So they cried even louder. They began to cut themselves (which was their custom) with swords and with spears. You can imagine there is blood is all over the place.

It is just past noon and the frenzy continues! Imagine, you are one of the Israelites in the crowd.

What a spectacle of worship... **YET NO ANSWER!** This is the second time the writer tells us this. He is using this repetition as a **bold font**. This continues on until the time of the evening offering but no answer.

**APPLICATION:** At the end of the day, it is not the experience that matters, regardless of how intense it may have been or be. The only thing that matters is worshipping the true and living God!

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***18:30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." And all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that had been thrown down. 31 Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD came, saying, "Israel shall be your name," 32 and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD. And he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two seahs of seed. 33 And he put the wood in order and cut the bull in pieces and laid it on the wood. And he said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." 34 And he said, "Do it a second time." And they did it a second time. And he said, "Do it a third time." And they did it a third time. 35 And the water ran around the altar and filled the trench also with water.***

**Vs 30** - Then Elijah steps in and speaks. You can picture in your mind all the jumping and screaming stops.

Like a **father speaking to his sons**, like a **God speaking to his wayward people**, he says come near, and they do. You can picture a massive crowd on Mt Carmel, standing around the single prophet of God.

He then repaired the altar that had been thrown down. It appears that on Mt Carmel was one of the **“high places”** where the people previously worshipped Yahweh, before the temple was built (Deut 12:2, I Kin 3:3).

Here Elijah, rebuilds this high place **for one final special use**. Do not worry, God Himself will destroy this high place when this is finished. The only place to approach Yahweh will remain the temple in Jerusalem.

**THE PICTURE:** Do not miss the picture here. The place of former worship was in shambles and served as a picture of Israel’s worship of Yahweh… In shambles! Elijah is gathering the tribes back together, here at the altar of God, calling them back to Himself **one more time**.

**OHHHHHH the grace of God, the long suffering of God, and the mercy of God.**

**Vs 31 -** Maybe these 12 stones were part of the original altar, or maybe he collected 12 stones, but he takes 12 stones, one for each son of Jacob, we could say, one for each tribe of Israel.

**Vs 32 -** First, he constructs the altar, in the name of Yahweh (Ex 20:25-26). Then he digs a trench about the altar, a large trench, one that would contain two seahs of seed.

**Vs 33 -** He then sets the wood in order; he cuts the bull in pieces and lays it on the wood. (Lev 1:6-8). He then gives command to fill **four jars of water**. It is during a drought; we can imagine that this water likely came from the river Kishon that was at the base of the mountain or from the Mediterranean Sea (1 mile away).

**Vs 34-35 -** He gives command for it to be done a done a **second time** and then a **third time**. Everything is soaked, the wood is soaked, the bull is soaked, and the trench around the altar is filled with water.

Elijah has given **every possible advantage** to Baal and now he appears to make starting a fire **impossible!**

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***18:36 And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. 37 Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back." 38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, "The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God." 40 And Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape." And they seized them. And Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slaughtered them there.***

**Vs 36 -** Elijah comes now and stands near the altar and **prays.** This prayer is vocal and public. Before we unpack his simple prayer, which took **less than one minute to deliver,** please keep in mind the false prophets of Baal had been worshipping, praying, dancing, however you want to describe the spectacle, for **6-8 hours**.

**Vs 36b-37 - Then Elijah Prays.** It is not about **length** or **eloquence**; it is all about the **glory of God**.

**APPLICATION:** All of this, even this drought, and now this showdown on Mt. Carmel is to call men and women to God. He could have already judged them for their sins. Instead, we see a patient, longsuffering, kind God, giving chance, after chance, after chance!

**Vs 38 - THEN, the fire of Yahweh fell.** The prayer has scare left his mouth and FIRE FELL!

**APPLICATION:** *“7 "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” (Mt 6:7-8 ESV)*

**APPLICATION:** *“And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.” (1Jo 5:14 ESV)*

Then the fire of Yahweh fell and consumed the burnt offering, the wood on the altar, the stones that made up the altar, the surrounding saturated dust and sand, and even the water that was in the trench!

**Vs 39 –** There is likely thousands of people, standing there at Mt Carmel, having observed the all-day spectacle, and now they behold the **glory of God** and the **power of God**.

They fall to the ground on their faces before Yahweh and His prophet. The begin chanting: ***"The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God."***

Elijah has **disproven the existence of Baal** and then set the stage for God to prove his own existence. THIS IS APOLGETICS 101.

**APPLICATION:** Through logic, reason, and Biblical truth, we can pull the threads of all false religions and they will fall apart under their own weight, then we can then share convincing proofs of the true and living God. But God must show up, bring conviction, and fire must fall from heaven to convince a person of truth.

**MESSIAH:** Here on Mt Carmel, we have a **beautiful** and **amazing picture of Jesus and the gospel**. On one side we have a bull that is to be a sacrifice to the Lord, on the other side the nation of Israel, faltering between serving Yahweh and serving false gods. Standing, under the judgment of God, because of their sins. **The fire of God,** rains down, not on the people, as it should have, but instead on the bull, (sacrificial animal) which endures the brunt of the judgment of God, rather than the people. This is the gospel, this is a picture of the lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world!

**Vs 40 -** Elijah commands the people present to seize the prophets of Baal and to not let even one of them escape. He directs them to be brought down to the brook (river) Kishon.

The penalty for worshipping a false god is clear. Elijah is about to execute that punishment upon the people who were instrumental in leading Israel away from Yahweh (Deut 13:12-15).

**APPLICATION:** This is a reminder and a picture of final judgment. This is a picture and a reminder that one day, God will put down (eternally, in a place called hell) every single rebel.

**APPLICATION:** Should we carry swords and be ready to put down rebels? (Eph 6:10-17).

**Important Point:** It was absolutely critical to confront and eliminate these false prophets of Baal *before* God sent rain. Otherwise, there was a possibility that they might receive credit and further darken men’s minds. God wanted to be clear to the nation that the rain came from Him, not Baal!

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***18:41 And Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of the rushing of rain." 42 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel. And he bowed himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees. 43 And he said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." And he went up and looked and said, "There is nothing." And he said, "Go again," seven times. 44 And at the seventh time he said, "Behold, a little cloud like a man’s hand is rising from the sea." And he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Prepare your chariot and go down, lest the rain stop you.’" 45 And in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. 46 And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah, and he gathered up his garment and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.”***

**Vs 41 -** This is really surprising to see the prophet keeps directing the king and the king keeps following his instructions. We have to wonder what is going through the mind of Ahab, he has just watched fire fall from heaven in response to Elijah’s prayer, proving the Yahweh is God. He then watches as 450 prophets of Baal are slaughtered.

**Vs 42 -** Interestingly enough, he leaves, and seemingly goes “up” to eat and drink. We are not sure where, he goes. We are simply not told. **Elijah goes up to the top of Mount Carmel.**

There on top of the mountain, he bows himself down on the ground and places his face between his knees. We should imagine that he begins to pray.

Yahweh has overthrown the false god Baal. Yahweh has consumed the sacrifice instead of the people. He did so publicly, as Elijah asked, with the goal of turning Israelites back to Yahweh. **He answered Elijah’s prayer with fire. Now Elijah is asking Yahweh to answer his prayer for rain!**

**Vs 43 -** Here we learn something we did not know apparently, along with Elijah, this entire day was his servant. Elijah sends his servant to go look out toward the west towards the Mediterranean Sea.

He comes back, nothing. But Elijah keeps praying. He does this seven times. Go look towards the sea and seven times, nothing. But Elijah keeps praying. The promise of God did not make prayer unnecessary, rather it made prayer mandatory.

**Vs 44 -** Then on the seventh time, the servant comes back and he says: ***"Behold, a little cloud like a man’s hand is rising from the sea."*** At this Elijah responds: ***"Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Prepare your chariot and go down, lest the rain stop you.’"*** So they knew, at least roughly, where Ahab was.

Why was Elijah praying so hard and looking so hard for even a hint of rain? He has every reason to believe, in spite of a lack of evidence that it is going to rain.

**Vs 45-46 -** How long do we have to wait for your prayers, even the ones that are according to God’s will to be fulfilled. The answer varies, but in this case the answer is that very afternoon, the answer was now! The heavens grow black with multiple clouds and the wind picks up.

Ahab rides to Jezreel:

1. He had a palace in Jezreel (I Kin 21:1).
2. It appears that Jezebel is in Jezreel (we will see that next week) (I Kin 19:1).
	1. Why was she not on the mountain for the great showdown? We do not know.

Then the Lord moves upon Elijah and he gathers up his garment and runs before Ahab and gets to the entrance of Jezreel. This would have been roughly 24 miles. WOW! What a day,

 it started in the midst of a long draught and ended with an amazing display of God’s power (in multiple ways).

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