

# Elijah at Mount Carmel

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- [ 0 : 00 ] Welcome to our service and as we come together again around the Word of God, let us seek his blessing to be upon his Word. Let us pray.
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- [ 1 : 36 ] Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.
- Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Oh, that we would see the glory of the incarnate Word through the written Word today.
- And we pray, O Lord, that our hearts may today rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ. As we already sing today, that thou art the one who can forgive us our sins, that thou art the one who can take the filthy rags of our sins away from us.
- That thou art the one who can clothe us with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, so that we can have a standing before a holy God who is of pure eye then to behold iniquity.
- We give thee thanks, O Lord, for that great blessing that we can have our sins forgiven, and for the great blessing that still awaits thy people, and the rest and the tranquillity that still awaits those who put our trust in Jesus Christ.
- [ 3 : 00 ] We give thee thanks, O Lord, that we can have that living hope through the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray thy blessing upon our communities, upon our homes and our families.
- We pray, O Lord, that thou would come in a day of thy power, and that thou would bring us to repentance. That thou would bring us to repentance as a nation.
- A nation that has gone astray. A nation that has moved away from thee. O Lord, in thy mercy return us. O Lord, have mercy upon us.
- Have compassion and pity upon us. O in thy wrath remember mercy. And we pray, O Lord, that as a nation that we can come to repentance, that as communities we would repent, as individuals that we would repent of our sin, and that we would seek the mercy of God in Jesus Christ.
- We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless those who are ill, that thine healing hand may be upon them. Bless, we pray thee, those who mourn.
- [ 4 : 16 ] O we pray that thine own comfort would be their portion today. That they would come to see that there is one that sticketh closer than any other.
- And we give thanks unto thee, O Lord, that thou art the unchanging God. That thou art the same yesterday, today, and forever. That changes belong to us.
- But that thou art the unchanging God. That thou art the God who is full of compassion. That thou art the God who delighteth in mercy. That thou art the God who calls us to come through thy Son, Jesus Christ, into thine own very throne room with boldness and with confidence, to lay our petitions before thee.

That thou art the God who hears prayer. That thou art the God who answers prayer. We ask thy blessing upon our young people and our children.

We pray, O Lord, that thou raise up a generation that would fear thy no name. Remember, we pray thee, those who are indifferent and careless to the claims of thy word.

[ 5 : 29 ] O Lord, draw them through thy Spirit. Convict them of their sin. Enlighten them to understand the sufficiency of the provision that thou hast made in thy Son to meet with their need.

O Lord, we pray that thou wouldst work among them. That thou wouldst draw them to thyself. For it is the work of thine own hands that is going to give thee praise. We ask, O Lord, that thou would remember thy people.

Those who are seeking thy countenance. O Lord, that thou wouldst be pleased to show thyself to them. That thou wouldst be pleased to bring that inner warming Spirit into their hearts.

That they may say it like another of old. Did not our hearts burn within us while he speak to us by the way? And, O Lord, we do need thee to speak to our hearts as we are by the way.

O Lord, we pray that thou wouldst remember our nation. That thou would remember our Queen and the Royal Household. And that thou, O Lord, would remember them at this time as they are so concerned regarding Prince Philip.

[ 6 : 47 ] We pray, O Lord, that thy healing hand may be upon him. And that the bed of affliction at this time may be a bed of blessing for him. Where he would see that there is one who is sovereign over all things.

That there is one who is sovereign over the universe. That we are all in his hands. And that he is working out his purpose and plan.

And whatever we may do, that his plan will not fail. That we cannot frustrate his plan. And that he is working out his purpose to the glory of his name.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless all nations of the earth. That thou would accompany the gospel. All may it go forth in the power and demonstration of thine own spirit.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would continue with us as we come to wait upon thee. Remember the elderly, the aged. Remember those who are lonely this evening hour.

[ 7 : 54 ] We pray, O Lord, that thou would be near to them. And we pray that thy presence may be with us as we come to read thy word. And meditate upon it.

That we may know that thou art there. And all that we ask for the forgiveness of our sins. In Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen.

May we now read the word of God as we find it in the Old Testament. In the first book of Kings, chapter 18. And we'll take our reading at verse 16 to verse 40.

First Kings, chapter 18, at verse 16. So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him. And Ahab went to meet Elijah.

And it came to pass when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Balaam.

[ 9 : 02 ] Now therefore send and gather to me all Israel into Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal 450, and the prophets of the groves 400, which eat at Jezebel's table.

And Ahab sent all, and to all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto Mount Carmel. And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long hold ye between two opinions?

If the Lord be God, follow him, but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered to him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord.

But Baal's prophets are 450 men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks, and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under.

And I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under. And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord, and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God.

[ 10 : 08 ] And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose ye one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first, for ye are many, and call the name of your gods, but put no fire under.

And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning, even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered.

And they leaped upon the altar which was made. And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud, for he is a god. Either he is talking, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.

And they cried aloud, and cut themselves out of the manor with knives and lances, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it came to pass, when midday was past, that they prophesied, until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice.

And there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.

[ 11 : 26 ] And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name. 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 measures of seed.

And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels of water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.

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 the third time. And the water ran about the altar, and he filled the trench also with water.

And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day, that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know, that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

[ 12 : 47 ] And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces, and they said, The Lord God, the Lord, he is the God, the Lord, he is the God. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal, let not one of them escape.

And they took them, and Elijah brought them down to the brook cushion, and slew them there. May the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word.

And seeking his blessing and help, let us turn again to verse 21. That is 1 Kings chapter 18, verse 21.

And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him, and if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him, not a word.

As we continue our study on Elijah, we note that after meeting Ahab, and accusing the prophet of being a troubler of Israel, Elijah challenged the king.

[ 13 : 55 ] I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father shouts, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baal. Now therefore send and gather to me all Israel into Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal 450, and the prophets of the groves 400, which eat at Jezebel's table.

But this was not only a challenge to Ahab, but a challenge to the people as well. How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him, and if Baal, then follow him.

The people did not know which God they wanted to serve. Now, it may be difficult for us to imagine the commotion and stir that took place at Carmel, as King Ahab, along with 450 prophets of Baal, and 400 prophets of Aserath, along with livestock, wood, and altars, made their way to Carmel.

But there we read that Elijah came unto all the people. Oh, a lonely figure, making his way up to Mount Carmel, and probably every eye fixed upon his person.

A.W. Pink, in his book, quotes a commentator who wrote, No tiger ever watched its victim more fiercely. However, the scene was set, and the contest was about to begin.

[ 15 : 27 ] And as we think of Elijah standing alone among the vast crowds that had no sympathy for him, or for his cause, we may ask, how could he do it?

It was, indeed, a courageous thing. But you see, Elijah was a man of faith in the living God. However vast their numbers, however great their power, it was nothing in comparison to the power of the living God.

It was nothing in comparison to the power of Almighty God. You know, you and I may sometimes be called to be a solitary figure in defense of the cause of God, whether in our family, or at work, or in our community.

And the only way by which we can overcome fear, and this was a fearful sight upon Carmel, and Elijah was a man subject to like passions as ourselves.

But the way to overcome fear is to exercise faith in the living God. And that famous chapter of faith in the New Testament, Hebrews chapter 11, gives us a summary of what can be achieved by faith.

[ 16 : 44 ] It says there, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness, when made strong, walked the valley and in flight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

In the New Testament, there is an incident where Paul speaks of a solitary moment in his own experience. That is recorded for us in 2 Timothy chapter 4, where he says, At my first answer, no man stood with me, but all men forsook me.

I pray God that it may not be laid to the charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

You see, the Christian must not be surprised at times to be found to be a solitary figure in the cause of Christ. Paul says, But all men forsook me.

I pray God that it may not be laid to the charge. In the days of Elijah, where are the hundred prophets that have opened I ahead?

[ 18 : 08 ] Where are the seven thousand that did not bow the knee to Baal? Ah, Paul says, I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.

And maybe tonight you are that lonely figure. Maybe tonight you are fearful. But remember that you have the living God on your side. And although Elijah looks to be so solitary, so alone, so lonely on the mount, yet he has his trust in the living God.

Elijah begins by challenging the people. How long hold ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him. But if Baal, then follow him.

Or as the New King James has it, how long will you falter between two opinions? Or as the ESV has it, how long will you go limping between two different opinions?

As we can see, the word for halt means that they were not walking upright, but they were limping along. They were hobbling along. They were not fully committed to either the God of Israel or Baal.

[ 19 : 23 ] They did not want to abandon the God of Israel. But they did not want to offend Ahab or Jezebel. So they wanted to have, as I said, where a foot in both camps.

But Elijah challenges them. He wanted to know how long they were prepared to waver or dither and hesitate between two opinions.

He makes the same demand that Moses made years before when he came down from Mount Sinai after being with the Lord and receiving the commandments. He saw the people worshiping the golden calf. And he challenged them with these words, Who is on the Lord's side?

Joshua made the same demand upon the children of Israel after the death of Moses. Choose of yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your father served that were on the other side of the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.

But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. The same challenge comes to everyone in every generation. The gospel challenges you tonight to choose whom you will serve.

[ 20 : 35 ] In the gospel of Matthew chapter 12, we read the words of Jesus, He that is not with me is against me. There is no such thing as sitting upon the fence.

You are either with Jesus or you are against Him. Tonight you are either with Jesus or you are against Him. Jesus said, No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other.

You cannot serve God and mammon. If we are to serve God, we must do so with all our heart. We must do so with all our mind and with all our soul and with all our strength.

So tonight, let each of us examine ourselves and ask, Have I given my whole self to God through Jesus Christ? Am I making Him to be first in everything in my home, at work, in my leisure time?

Or am I still dragging my feet and telling myself that there is plenty of time and hoping that all will work out good at the end? Maybe you are limping because you are depending upon others and believing that they will be the crutch or prop to give you salvation.

[ 21 : 58 ] How many are lost because they were deceived to think that the prayers of their parents or their parents' godly living or their own righteousness would see them saved to heaven?

And they use those props and go on limping unto death. You see, the Lord wants total commitment. He wants the whole heart.

For where our heart is, there is our treasure. The Puritans used to say, You cannot serve God by halves. It is not giving half of your heart to God and the other half to Baal.

No, it must be total commitment. Paul warns us in his first letter to Titus of those who profess that they know God but in works they deny Him.

There must be no compromise. We either follow Jesus or we deny Him. We are either for Him or we are against Him. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life.

- [ 23 : 05 ] No man cometh unto the Father but by me. Our sins have separated us from God and the only way by which we can be delivered from the punishment that our sins deserve is to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, believing that His death on the cross and His resurrection from the grave delivers us from our sins and that it reconciles us to God.

Do you believe that? Or are you going to go on in life to hold death and into death, limping between two opinions? This challenge was a reproof or a taking off to the people.

For they knew better they were not ignorant of the God of their fathers. They knew that God is to be loved and honoured and to be served in the ways that He has commanded.

But despite their knowledge, they still went limping their way between the God of Israel and Baal. They may resemble yourself tonight.

Do you know that God is to be loved and honoured and served? Maybe in your lifestyle you avoid that which dishonours God.

- [ 24 : 27 ] In your lifestyle you honour a Sabbath day. In your lifestyle you attend the Gospel. But still in your heart you are divided. And you know, God looks on the heart.

Remember when Samuel went to Bethlehem to annoy the next king of Israel after the Lord refused King Saul. He went to the house of Jesse and Samuel thought that the first son that came before him that he was the chosen one.

But the Lord taught him otherwise. The Lord said to Samuel, Look not on his countenance or on the height of his stature because I have refused him.

For the Lord seeth not as man seeth. For man looketh on the outward appearance but the Lord looketh on the heart. How is your own heart with God tonight?

Is your heart totally devoted to the Lord or do you have a divided heart? James warns in his letter in chapter 1 A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.

- [ 25 : 40 ] Tonight to whom are you giving your time and affections? If you believe that God in the person of his Son Jesus Christ on the cross of Golgotha is the true God then follow him.

How did the people respond to Elijah's challenge? Well we read And the people answered to him not a word. There was an immense silence among the people on Mount Carmel as they were challenged by Elijah.

Maybe their conscience stabbed them. If it be so their silence showed that they were unwindedly to confess their sins. Maybe tonight the challenge of the gospel leaves you with a stopping conscience.

Maybe leaving you restless and uncomfortable. You are convicted of your sins. You know more of the truth than you are willing to admit. Your back is to the wall through the challenge of the gospel.

But how shall you respond? Will you stay silent and keep on compromising? Or will you confess your sins knowing that he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness?

- [ 27 : 09 ] Well after challenging the people the silence was broken with another challenge that would demonstrate who was truly God. Then said Elijah unto the people I even I only remain a prophet of the Lord but Baal prophets are 450 men.

Let them therefore give us two bullocks and let them choose one bullock for themselves and cut it in pieces and lay it on wood and put no fire under and I will dress the other bullock and lay it on the wood and put no fire under and call ye on the name of your gods and I will call on the name of the Lord and the God that answereth by fire let him be God.

And all the people answered and said it is well spoken. We read here that the people's silence is broken for they answered this challenge by Elijah by saying it is well spoken.

They approved of the challenge because they were intrigued by the proposal of the supernatural. Just as it was in the days of Jesus the people were fascinated by the miracles or as A.W. Pink writes Alas such is poor human nature ready to witness the miracles of Christ but death to his call to repentance.

Pleased with any outward show that appeals to the senses but displeased with any word that convicts and condemns. Is it thus with us?

[ 28 : 43 ] Asks Pink. Is it thus with us? You know we have there set in Luke chapter 16 in the New Testament in that narrative where we are told about the rich man and the beggar Lazarus.

They both died and we are told that the rich man been in torments and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom. And we are told that he requested I pray thee therefore father that I would send him to my father's house for I have five brethren that he may testify unto them that they also come into this place of torment.

To which Abraham answered there Moses and the prophets let them hear them. And he said nay father Abraham but if one went unto them from the dead they will repent. And he said unto him if they hear not Moses and the prophets neither will they be persuaded that one rose from the dead.

As we have already noted since we began our study on Elijah what brings us to salvation is not to witness the supernatural. What brings us to salvation is repentance and faith repentance and trust.

In fact the Bible brings before us the only supernatural event that shall result in our salvation. And the thing is are we ready to accept and trust in that supernatural event?

[ 30 : 10 ] And what is that supernatural event? The resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Well the people wanted proof and they were going to receive it.

Elijah gave the prophets of Baal the first opportunity to prepare with the one restriction which he also placed upon himself put no fire under that is under the wood on the altar for the challenge was the God that answereth by fire let him be God.

Now this may seem strange to us but the Bible in many places brings before us the presence of God through the symbolism of fire. We read in Exodus chapter 3 that while Moses was at Horeb that the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush and he looked and behold the bush bound with fire and the bush was not consumed.

This was the way also that the Lord chose to make his presence known to the children of Israel as they journeyed through the wilderness from Egypt to Sinai for in Exodus chapter 16 sorry Exodus chapter 13 it is we read there the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light and we are told in Exodus chapter 19 that the Lord when the Lord descended upon Mount Sinai that it was in fire and as the smoke of a furnace and when we come to the New Testament we are told in Acts chapter 2 that the day of Pentecost was fully come that they were all with one accord in one place as the disciples and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and it filled all the house where they were sitting and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire and it sat upon each of them and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost in the book of Hebrews we are told that our God is a consuming fire so we should not at all be surprised that a God who answered by fire would be the ultimate proof that the God of Elijah was the true and living God fire as well has been a symbolism of the divine presence it's also a symbolism of God's wrath we are told by Paul in the second letter to the Thessalonians chapter 1 that when the Lord

Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels that he shall come in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and they that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power but as well as being a symbol of God's presence and God's wrath fire is also a symbol of his acceptance given the law of sacrifices to the children of Israel we read in the book of Leviticus that sacrifice was to be made by fire and that the fire upon the altar must never go out and we are told there in chapter 9 that when they had prepared the sacrifices and placed them upon the altar that there came a fire out from before the Lord and consumed upon the altar the burnt offerings and the fat which when all the people saw they shouted and fell on their faces it showed that God had accepted their sacrifice so fire in the Bible is a symbol of God's presence of God's wrath and of God's acceptance

[ 33 : 45 ] Elijah gave the prophets of Baal the first opportunity and we are told that they took the bullock which was given them and they dressed it and called on the name of Baal from morning and evening until noon saying O Baal hear us but there was no voice not any answer and they leaped upon the altar which was made but nothing happened there was no fire they were in a frenzy and they began to leap upon the altar and yet nothing happened Baal did not respond on their case scripture was confirmed as we have in Psalm 135 the idols of the heathen are silver and gold the work of men's hands they have mouths but they speak not eyes have they but they see not they have ears but they hear not neither is any breath in their mouths they that make them are like unto them so is everyone that trusted in them just as it passed noon we are told that Elijah mocked them and said cry aloud for he is a God either he is talking or he is in person or he is in a journey or per adventure he sleepeth and must be awaked the challenge was the God that answereth by fire let him be God but nothing happened the sacrifice slain pieces upon the altar there was no fire no smoke then they went into this kind of mood where they cried aloud and cut themselves after the manner with knives and until the blood gushed out and it came to pass when midday was past that they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice but there was neither voice nor any to answer nor any that regarded what we have upon Mount Carmel is a solemn spectacle we have the prophets of Baal shouting and dancing and cutting themselves and yet nothing happened they certainly were very committed to their cause they cannot be faulted in that but it was an empty cause and how often this kind of scene is before us a people whom we cannot fault for their intense commitment to their cause and yet it is an empty cause but then it came to



Elijah's turn and we are told that he said and to the people come near unto me and all the people came near unto him and he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down and Elijah took twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob unto whom the word of the Lord came saying Israel shall be thy name 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 measures of seed and he put the wood in the altar and cut the bullock in pieces and laid him on the wood and said fill four barrels with water and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood and he said do it a second time and they did it the second time and they said do it the third time and they did it the third time and the water ran round about the altar and he filled the trench also with water twelve barrels of water twelve stones with which he built the altar the broken altar was evidence of how spiritually dark the land had become and Elijah's first task was to repair the altar of the Lord recently we studied the furniture of the tabernacle and we noted that the first great object that met the worshipper as he came into the court of the tabernacle was a brazen altar always burning and blood streaming from it the altar was the appointed place to worship

God but here the altar has fallen into ruins in our own day we have places of worship been closed and falling into disrepair because of the apathy of the people and that is exactly what was happening here the appointed place of worship had been neglected and was left to fall into ruins the altar was a place where one was taught of their sin and the atoning work of Jesus Christ but it was in ruins and Elijah began his work by repairing the altar one of the sad things that belongs to our own day in our land is that the altar of the Lord lays in ruins people do not want to be reminded that they are sinners under God's wrath and condemnation they see no reason to come and worship God they see no sense in the atoning work of Jesus Christ as Paul writes for the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness but unto us which are saved it is the power of God oh my dear friends we need to repair the altar of the Lord we need to remind our people that they are sinners in need of the atoning work of Jesus Christ

Elijah began with the altar and there is where we have to begin as well Elijah put the fire in order and he cut the bullock in pieces and laid them on the wood a bullock was killed cut into pieces and laid it upon the wood on the altar you see there can be no reconciliation no salvation no forgiveness no peace between a holy God and sinners except on the ground of atonement and atonement requires the shedding of blood and this truth was now openly displayed by Elijah as he killed the bullock and cut it up into pieces and laid it upon the altar that he had built in the name of the Lord on Mount Carmel he had made a trench around the altar and he gave a strange command fill four barrels with water and pour it on the burnt of sacrifice and on the wood and he said do it a second time and they did it the second time and he said do it a third time and they did it the third time and the water ran round about the altar and he filled the trench also with water some may wonder where there was so much water to be found after that three years drought but it must be remembered that Mount Carmel was near the sea and this would be seawater and it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice that Elijah the prophet came here and said

Lord God of Abraham Isaac and Israel let me know on this day that thou art God in Israel and that I am thy servant and that I have done all these things at thy word the prophets of Baal worshipped right up to the evening sacrifice but notice what is said about Elijah he came to worship at the time of the evening sacrifice now this may seem to some to be of no significance but in the land of Israel God had appointed a time to worship the prophets of Baal worshipped anyway what they pleased they worshipped in any way that pleased them but Elijah worshipped the way that God had instructed him he worshipped in a way that was acceptable to God see Elijah could say I have done all these things at thy word you see we are not left to worship God in any way we please we must worship the Lord in a way directed by the

[ 42 : 13 ] Lord himself Jesus said to the woman of Samaria true worshippers shall worship the father in spirit and in truth for the father seeketh such to worship him in the book of Hebrews we are told let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear God dictates to us in his word the way we are to worship and serve him and notice the way that Elijah began notice the way that he began his prayer Lord God of Abraham Isaac and of Israel he came pleading in the name of the covenant God hear me oh Lord hear me that this people may know that thou art the Lord God and that thou hast turned their hearts back again there was none of the hilarity of the Baal worshippers this was just a simple prayer then we are told the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice and the wood and the stones and the dust and leaked out the water that was in the trench there was absolutely nothing left all was consumed now let us at this point note that while Elijah helped to disprove

Baal it was God himself and not Elijah that proved God in other words God proved himself the people wanted proof that the God of Elijah that the God of history was the living and true God and God proved himself and that truth holds in every generation we can disprove the gods of this world we can speak about our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ we can defend biblical truth we can give abundant evidence when we look at creation of the evidence of intelligence design we can speak of how real the Bible is we can even speak of how archaeology confirms the truth of biblical history but it is God himself and only God himself that can prove himself to the unbeliever that is why we are so dependent on the

Holy Spirit as we preach the gospel because it is God himself that can convince sinners of their need and the sufficiency of Jesus Christ in his life and death and resurrection to meet that need however as we noted recently when we reflected upon the Queen of Sheba's visit to King Solomon that she came and although perhaps she was cynical or doubtful of what she had heard about King Solomon we noted that she was always open to believing the truth that she came to Solomon with the right kind of attitude not the kind of attitude that refuses to believe anything at all but the kind of attitude that is committed to believe only what is really true and it is important for me and you that when we come to the Lord or to his word we come in the right frame of mind with the right attitude and here we have the response of the people and when all the people saw it they fell on their faces and they said the

Lord he is the God the Lord he is the God the fire from heaven consuming everything was not simply an act proving the power of God but it was also an act of grace remember Elijah's prayer hear me oh Lord hear me that this people may know that thou art the Lord God and that thou hast turned their heart back again he prayed that the people's hearts would be turned back to God and here we find the people that they fell on their faces and they said the Lord he is the God the Lord he is the God God had proved himself to them let Elijah's prayer be mine and yours tonight that our covenant God for we have that confidence and boldness to draw near to him through the blood of the everlasting covenant and let us come near to our covenant

God and seek that he will prove himself to our people and turn their hearts to him in repentance and faith we may witness we may pray but it is God alone that can change a person's heart from unbelief to belief when the people were initially challenged by Elijah we read that they remained completely silent but now after God had proved himself to them they received their voice and they cried out in reverence as they fell on their faces to the ground the Lord he is the God the Lord he is the God no longer were they limping between two opinions they were fully convinced that the Lord was a true and living God oh how good it would be if we had a carnal experience in our homes in our villages and throughout our communities throughout let us pray for a day of the fire of the

[ 48 : 04 ] Holy Spirit to descend upon our land and our people a day of conviction and conversing and people being brought to confess as we find Thomas in the gospel confessing after Jesus convinced him that he had risen from the dead and Thomas said my Lord and my God just as the people of Elijah's day when they skied out the Lord he is the God the Lord he is the God may the Lord bless our thoughts let us pray oh Lord we pray that it may please thee to come in a day of thy power and a day of thy grace and to turn the hearts of our people and to thyself to turn the heart of our nation to repentance and to seek the mercy of

God fully convicted and convinced that the God of Elijah the God of Israel the God presented to us in the Bible is a true and living God oh Lord we confess that we may preach and we may witness we may speak but only thou and thou alone can prove to unbelievers that thou art the true and living God thou alone can change a person's heart from unbelief to belief it is the work of thine own hand that shall give thee praise and so we come before thee oh Lord and seek and plead with thee that thou would work among our people that thy right hand in salvation would touch them that thou would draw them by the power of thy spirit to see their need oh that there would be a people who would come from being silent to praising thee and crying out to thee the Lord he is the

God the Lord he is the God that there would be a people who would come to make that personal confession and to cry out my Lord and my God oh may it please thee oh Lord to look upon us graciously and to shine upon us with the light of thy countenance we ask oh Lord that it may please thee continue with us in coming days and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen