

Chronological: A Journey Thru Scripture

The Lord is God! 1 Kings 18

Good morning church! I'm glad to be back with you! Before I preach this morning, I want the mission team to come and give you a brief word about our trip and what they learned.

TEAM SHARES

As you can see our trip was beneficial and our prayer is that many of you will join us next year (June 4-11). We also have a trip coming up in December to Bangladesh if you would like to join us for that trip we need to know by July 11.

Well today I continue our series...

Chronological: A Journey Thru Scripture

I hope you are reading along with us as we study chronologically through the bible. Don't forget we are reading for transformation not information. We are asking the Lord to change us as we seek Him and His word daily.

Today I want us to look at 1 Kings 18...which is one of my favorite historical narratives in the Old Testament. I like Elijah because I can relate to him. He was willing to be used by God to boldly speak the truth, but he also felt the weight of his mission and needed seasons of rest.

Here is the background to our text. Ahab becomes king in Israel, and he is very wicked. You might remember him better as the husband of Jezebel. Ahab set up an altar to Baal and led the nation into idol worship. His wife, Jezebel, had all the prophets of God killed, with the exception of the one's Obadiah hid at the Lord's command.

Because of the king's wickedness Elijah at the Lord's command pronounced a three-year drought in the land. After three years the Lord sends Elijah back to Ahab because He was about to send rain on the land.

There is an interesting interlude in verses 7-15 between Obadiah and Elijah. Obadiah is worried that if he tells Ahab that he found Elijah, that Elijah will be a no show and Ahab will kill him. But Elijah promises Obadiah that would not be the case seeing God was sending him to Ahab.

Now let's read the rest of 1 Kings 18...

1 Kings 18:17-46 (NKJV) — 17 Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, "Is that you, O troubler of Israel?" 18 And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and have followed the Baals. 19 Now therefore, send and gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table." 20 So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. 21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people answered him not a word. 22 Then Elijah said to the people, "I alone am left a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. 23 Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it. 24 Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who answers by fire, He is God." So all the people answered and said, "It is well spoken." 25 Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first, for you are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it." 26 So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, "O Baal, hear us!" But there was no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made. 27 And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, "Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened." 28 So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them. 29 And when midday was past, they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice. But there was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention. 30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down. 31 And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, "Israel shall be your name." 32 Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed. 33 And he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood, and said, "Fill four waterpots with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood." 34 Then 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 So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled the trench with water. 36 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 Israel, let it be known

this day that You are God in Israel, and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. 37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.” 38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!” 40 And Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape!” So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and executed them there.

41 Then Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain.” 42 So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, 43 and said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.” So he went up and looked, and said, “There is nothing.” And seven times he said, “Go again.” 44 Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, “There is a cloud, as small as a man’s hand, rising out of the sea!” So he said, “Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.’” 45 Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel. 46 Then the hand of the LORD came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Since our time is short...let me give you three quick lessons from this text.

1. Follow Christ Whole Heartedly

Matthew 6:24 (NKJV) — 24 “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Matthew 16:24 (NKJV) — 24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

2. What is the Object of Your Faith?

Elijah challenged the people to return to the Lord. They had left Him to follow a worthless, lifeless idol. They left the One True God Who loved them with a loyal love. Their hearts were corrupted, and they fell into deprave and wicked practices.

They believed what a lot of people believe today...all religions are the same.

Not all religions are the same...the object of their faith is different.

David Jeremiah reminds us...

“Faith is not the important thing. That may strike you as an odd or blasphemous statement, but faith is not paramount. It’s the object of faith that is the most important thing. The people who followed Baal surely had a kind of faith. They had worshipped this god all of their lives. They believed in Baal. They had faith in Baal. But their faith was worthless because the object of their faith was worthless.

Faith doesn’t get you into heaven unless it is faith in God and in His Son, Jesus Christ. This lesson teaches us that only those who believe in Jehovah end up on the winning side. There is no other in which to place your faith.¹

3. You Can Pray Like Elijah

James 5:16–18 (NKJV) — 16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. 17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

Elijah is just like us. He is not a super saint...he doesn’t have a cape; he doesn’t have super-powers...he is just an ordinary man who saw God do extraordinary things in answer to his prayers.

Now Elijah was also a righteous man! It is the “*effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man that avails much.*” Let’s look at those words...

- ✓ Effective = energy
- ✓ Fervent = passion
- ✓ Righteous Man = conformity to God’s standard, righteous living

¹ Jeremiah, David, <https://davidjeremiah.blog/4-lessons-from-elijah-and-the-prophets-of-baal/>

Let me say three things about righteousness.

1. No one is born righteous

Romans 3:10 (NKJV) — 10 As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one.

2. Christ Righteousness is Our Righteousness

Philippians 3:8–9 (NKJV) — 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.

3. Practical Righteousness is Necessary

Psalms 66:18 (NKJV) — 18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear.

Elijah Prayed. Despite his frailties. I would submit to you that it is because of our frailties that we should pray.

So how did he pray? James said...

He prayed **earnestly** – literally he *"prayed in his praying"*.

What does this look like? Well turn to 1 Kings 18:42-46

- ✓ His place of prayer, 42
- ✓ His posture in prayer, 42
- ✓ His passion in prayer, 42
- ✓ His persistence in praying, 43
- ✓ His petition, James 5:17-18

Specific prayers will see specific answers.