

What You Need to Know About ELIJAH:

“Someone Who Watched God at Work”

Study Number Four – 1 Kings 18:19-46

We’re looking at the life of Elijah. We have seen that he is a contemporary of Ahab, who is the seventh king in the northern kingdom. And all six of them have been bad before him and he’s the worst of them all.

And he was confronted by Elijah. Elijah said that it would not rain for three and a half years. During those three and a half years, he was miraculously preserved by being at brook Cherith with the ravens flying to him for about eighteen months. And then for about two years he lived with a widow and her son in Zarephath. And there he was miraculously provided for as well.

In our last study “the word of the Lord came to him saying, ‘Arise and go see the king.’”

And on his way to see the king, the king was communicating with a man by the name of Obadiah, who was his very close associate—he “feared God greatly.”

Our last study was centered around THREE THINGS:

1. AHAB,
2. OBADIAH, and
3. ELIJAH.

We shared that our lives probably would pretty well depict one of these three. These two powerful personalities—Ahab and Elijah—met at the end of our study. Ahab takes the first shot. He says, “Is that you, you old troubler of Israel?”—referring to Elijah.

Elijah’s really equal to the thing and he certainly doesn’t ducktail him around. He just simply says, “It is not me, it’s you. You have forsaken the god Baal and you have not kept the commandments of the Lord.”

And that’s the way the study ended.

Now we can divide this passage into FOUR PARTS. There are a lot of verses in it. But it’s a very colorful passage so it’ll be easy to follow.

First of all, in verses 19-24 we have the PROBLEM and the PROPOSITION that’s presented.

In verse 25-29 we have the PROPHETS OF BAAL are going to stand before us.

In verses 30-40 we have the PROPHET OF GOD.

And then in verses 41-46 we have the PRAYER that takes place at the end of the study.

We're going to look at the PROBLEM and the PROPOSITION first, then we'll see the PROPHETS OF BAAL do their thing, then we'll see the PROPHET OF GOD do his, and then the PERSEVERING PRAYER.

Now let's pick up at verse 19.

v. 19 Now then send and gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, together with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

"Now then send and gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, together with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

Elijah's still talking. He's saying, "Alright Ahab, what I want is the Carmel Convention. I want you to get 450 of the prophets and bring them and the 400 prophets of the Asherah those who serve in an assistant fashion, those of the male and the female counterparts that are being supported by government subsidy and eating their meals at Jezebel's table. So it's going to be easy to get all 850 of them up there. Along with anybody else in Israel who wants to come. So go ahead and notify all the press and the networks that we're going to have a Carmel Convention and we'll have time together and

we're going to discover what the problem is and see if we can't solve it."

v. 20 So Ahab sent a message among all the sons of Israel, and brought the prophets together at Mount Carmel.

"So Ahab sent a message among all the sons of Israel, and brought the prophets together at Mount Carmel."

Now imagine the pomp and circumstance and the color and the ceremony of these guys, these religious authorities—850 of them—gathered together in all of their garb along with a lot of the sons of Israel.

Where was Elijah during the time that all this is coming about? He's probably spending time with the Lord and he's really searching his heart as he prepares to carry out this ministry.

In a way, as we look at this tremendous crowd of people, we almost feel a little bit sorry for Elijah. Mount Carmel overlooks the city of Haifa and it's right on the Mediterranean Sea, in the north. It's the third largest city that sits down at the base of Mount Carmel.

On the top of this mountain they're gathered together and old Elijah, picture a hundred-yard football field, all of his home stands over there empty but there's a whole crowd the other side. And there's only one prophet over there. He's got a

number on his jersey. It's probably a tear-away jersey just in case the prophets of Baal get a little bit out of hand.

And he's over there on his side all by himself with this great massive crowd. There's a tendency, when we have things like that, to feel a little bit sorry for the guy that's by himself. But as the little girl misinterpreted that verse, "If God be for us, you're up against it," with God we have a majority. And David said, "The battle is the Lord's." So we don't have to fear for Elijah in this situation.

2 Chronicles 32:7-8

Be strong and courageous and do not fear or be dismayed because of the king of Assyria or because of all the multitude which is with him. For the one with us is greater than the one with him. With him is only the arm of the flesh but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles.

Now if we get the picture of this great crowd, Elijah walks to the microphone in the center of the field. He's going to declare some things that will cause this crowd to subside and to listen to every word that he has to say.

v. 21 And Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people did not answer him a word.

"And Elijah came near to all the people and said, 'How long

will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.’ But the people did not answer him a word.”

“How long are you going to be hopping between two opinions? How long are you going to go sitting on the fence? And if Jehovah’s God, alright. If Baal’s god, okay. But this neutrality business has got to stop.”

In this situation, if we can picture in our mind that they’ve sung the Star-Spangled Banner and had the invocation and the toss of the coin, now we have Elijah confronting them with the whole issue.

There are three kinds of people in the crowd:

1. There are the people who are for Jehovah, and there are not very many of them.
2. And there are the people who are for Baal, and there’s quite a few because of the influence of the leadership in the land.
3. But there’s a whole bunch of people in this pool who are undecided. They’re going to wait until they see what happens today before they finally make up their mind on this issue.

“How long will you lean to both sides?” is the way the Hebrew describes it.

“If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if it’s Baal, then follow him.” There is silence in the stands.

Cultivation had ceased. Cattle, sheep and goats had died. This was a time of national distress.

“How long are you going to continue to experience God’s judgment in this set of circumstances?”

Matthew 6:24

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.

Revelation 3:15 fits here too:

Revelation 3:15

I wish that you were cold or hot. Because you’re lukewarm you make me sick.

And the Lord in essence is saying here through the prophet, “Neutrality is like sitting on a barbed wire fence. You can’t sit there very long and be comfortable.”

In the book of Joel, it says:

Joel 3:14

Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision...

When we get to glory, how many graves are going to be filled with good intentions? People who are always counting on tomorrow or next week, and who were called upon to die today?

Now here are some people who have not yet gotten serious. We see Jesus in Mark 3, as He confronts the religious establishment, “He looked around at them and He was grieved at their callousness of heart.” (see Mark 3:5)

Cold, indifferent, callous because of what life had done to them.

v. 22 Then Elijah said to the people, “I alone am left a prophet of the Lord, but Baal’s prophets are 450 men.

“Then Elijah said to the people, ‘I alone am left a prophet of the Lord, but Baal’s prophets are 450 men.’”

Now, what we’ve got here is 1 against 450 odds. But we don’t need to worry about him.

v. 23 Now let them give us two oxen; and let them choose one ox for themselves and cut it up, and place it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other ox, and lay it on the wood, and I will not put a fire under it.

“Now let them give us two oxen; and let them choose one ox for themselves and cut it up, and place it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other ox, and lay it on the wood, and I will not put a fire under it.”

Now Elijah kind of describes the contest like a referee is laying out the rules for the game. And he’s saying, “Look, we’ll give those guys an ox and we’ll take one.” Picture a 30-yard line on one side and a 30-yard line down on the other. And we’ve got the prophet’s altar down on one end and the Baal guys with their altar on the other end of the field.

And so he’s throwing down and he describes the contest for them and the rules of the game.

v. 24 Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord, and the God who answers by fire, He is God.” And all the people answered and said, “That is a good idea.”

“Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord, and the God who answers by fire, He is God.’ And all the people answered and said, “That is a good idea.””

He says “the God who answers by fire.” Who is Baal? He’s the god of the sun.

It’s probably a hot day on Mount Carmel. We can imagine

what it would be like to play right into the hands of these Baal worshippers. “If there’s any god who can certainly bring a little fire out of heaven it’s got to be the god of the sun.”

And so they kind of feel inside all the people that are there with the thundering applause and a deafening cheer, they’re saying, “Hey! This is a good idea!”

The prophets of Baal are left with their responsibility on one end of the field and Elijah’s going to be left with his on the other.

When playing for a winner they really don’t have to sweat it. We can trust the Lord that He’s going to take care of it and handle all those circumstances.

v. 25 So Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one ox for yourselves and prepare it first for you are many, and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it.”

“So Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, ‘Choose one ox for yourselves and prepare it first for you are many, and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it.’”

What he’s saying here is, “I’ll punt and you can receive. See what your offense can do.”

Then in verse 26 he says—after he tells them, “Look, there’s a whole bunch of you guys. You do it first and then I’ll take my

turn right after that.”

v. 26 Then they took the ox which was given them and they prepared it and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon saying, “O Baal, answer us.” But there was no voice and no one answered. And they leaped about the altar which they made.

“Then they took the ox which was given them and they prepared it and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon saying, ‘O Baal, answer us.’ But there was no voice and no one answered. And they leaped about the altar which they made.”

Alright, get the picture. It’s 9 o’clock in the morning. It’s kick-off time. All these people have their eyes glued on the 30 yard line where the Baal guys are working. There’s 450 of them working around that altar. There is a real hub-bub on the field down there.

And they’ve got a lot of things going. But as soon as they get their sacrifice in place it says they start crying, “O Baal, answer us.”

“But there was no voice and no one answered.” Then they got a little excited so they started leaping about the altar.

Now the sad thing about that is that’s really a picture of an awful lot of paganism today. It’s a picture of a lot of people who are worshipping a god that’s a figment of their

imagination.

There's a really sad passage that's over in Psalm 115 that says:

Psalm 115:2-8

Why should the nations say,
“Where, now, is their God?”
But our God is in the heavens;
He does whatever He pleases.
Their idols are silver and gold.
The work of man's hands.
They have mouths, but they cannot speak;
They have eyes, but they cannot see;
They have ears, but they cannot hear;
They have noses, but they cannot smell;
They have hands, but they cannot feel;
They have feet, but they cannot walk;
They cannot make a sound with their throat.
Those who make them will become like them.
Everyone who trusts in them.

“there was no voice” and no one heard while they cried to this god that was a figment of their imagination.

v. 27 And it came about at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god; either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be

awakened.”

“And it came about at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, ‘Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god; either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened.’”

Some people look at that and they say, “Boy that’s sure bad for the prophet to do that.” He is so confident that he is exposing errors that he can mock at this point.

In Psalm 2 it says the Lord’s going to sit in the heavens and laugh at the time of judgment because people had every opportunity to believe Him. (see Psalm 2:4)

They let grace run out. God is not laughed at.

Galatians 6:7

For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

Elijah is just a typical competitor. He’s giving a little field talk here. Kind of stirring these guys up a little bit. They’re whooping it up. They’ve been going for three hours now and 450 of them have been wailing around the altar and they’re not getting anything.

So he says, “Hey you guys! You know you haven’t scored yet. It’s half time. Your spotter’s up there. Better start diagnosing some plays. Maybe Baal has gone on a journey. Perhaps he

hasn't gotten up yet! Whoop! Boy you guys are in trouble. You better get with the program."

It does accomplish its results because verse 28 says:

v. 28 So they cried with a loud voice and cut themselves according to their custom with swords and lances until the blood gushed out on them.

"So they cried with a loud voice and cut themselves according to their custom with swords and lances until the blood gushed out on them."

Total commitment. If sincerity could have won for these guys, they were sincere.

But sincerity is never enough in one's relationship with God. Just hacking themselves up and they've got blood coming out of their wounds and they're hoping around for three more hours! Six hours now!

Where are the people? If there ain't nothing going on down on the field, people hit the refreshment stands. They've taken off. They're scattered all around. There ain't nothing going on down there for six hours. They got to talking to their friends and they're off somewhere.

v. 29 And it came about when midday was past, that they raved until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice; but there was no voice, no one

answered, and no one paid attention.

“And it came about when midday was past,”—three o’clock in the afternoon—“that they raved until”—noon.

“they raved until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice;”—that was three o’clock.

“but there was no voice, no one answered, and no one paid attention.”

They hung in there for six hours in all and got nothing. Now the passage turns from the PROPHETS OF BAAL at verse 30 to the PROPHET OF GOD.

So Elijah picks up the microphone now.

v. 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 which had been torn down.

”Then Elijah said to all the people, ‘Come near to me.’ So all the people came near to him.”—they’re all off at the refreshment stands. He gets them all back.

“You guys get back in your seats for the main attraction. Boy you’re gonna see something now! Just watch this.”

“And he repaired the altar of the Lord which had been torn

down.”

v. 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.”

“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.’”

v. 32 So 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 measures of seed.

“So 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 measures of seed.”

v. 33 Then he arranged the wood and cut the ox in pieces and laid it on the wood. And he said, “Fill four pitchers with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood.”

“Then he arranged the wood and cut the ox in pieces and laid it on the wood. And he said, ‘Fill four pitchers with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood.’”

Isn’t that different from us? We pray for something and we hurry out and try to help God get it done so we can give Him

the credit for doing it, but we helped Him.

Ever thought of praying for something then put some difficulties in the way? So we'd really recognize it was from the Lord when it came?

This guy doesn't want anybody in those stands to think that he's got a spark underneath there or a lighter of some sort, or he's got some hidden flame that's all of a sudden going to hit the scene at the critical time.

v. 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.

"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."

And so he looks at the sacrifice all fixed and he looks at the bucket brigade and he says, "Hey y'all! Go fill four buckets with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood."

And he steps back after they've poured it—they just doused the sacrifice with these four buckets of water—and he says, "That ain't enough. Go get four more!" And they go get four more and they douse it again. And he says, "That isn't enough." And so he says, "Go do it a third time!" Twelve buckets!

v. 35 And the water flowed around the altar, and he also filled the trench with water.

“And the water flowed around the altar, and he also filled the trench with water.”

Just soaked the field.

v. 36 Then it came about at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, “O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, today let it be known that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy word.

“Then it came about at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, ‘O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, today let it be known that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy word.”

Here’s his prayer request:

“let it be known that You’re God in Israel, that I’m Your servant, and I did all this in accordance to Your word.”

v. 37 Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that Thou, O Lord, art God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again.”

“Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that Thou, O Lord, art God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again.”

This guy's famous for his prayers. He prayed it wouldn't rain for three and a half years and it didn't. He prayed, too, that little boy would be restored to life and he was.

This guy knows what it is to pray. James talks about him. He says:

James 5:16

The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

And he's not making any big dramatics. He's just talking to the Lord here. All the dramatics are gone. The pagans have hooped it up long enough. It's time for something to really happen.

v. 38 Then 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.

“Then 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.”

The “fire of the Lord fell.” Fire the cannon! Bring on the pep squad! Strike up the band! Time just ran out! Yay God!

God, seven. Baal, zip.

That's the way it is. God just scored!

“And now unto him who's able to do exceeding abundant above all we could ever ask or think.” (Ephesians 3:20)

It just wiped the whole thing out. A great big ole burnt spot left on the ground out there. And nothing that was there before was there.

v. 39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God.”

“And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God.”

Two bits—four bits—six bits a dollar! All for God stand up and holler!

Man, God is it! He's the One!

What a moment of victory and a turning point in history.

v. 40 Then Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal; do not let one of the escape.” So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

“Then Elijah said to them, ‘Seize the prophets of Baal; do not let one of the escape.’ So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.”

Galatians 6:7

What a man sows, that shall he also reap.

These guys were in their positions because all the prophets of God had been slain by Jezebel meticulously, except for the hundred that were hidden in the caves by Obadiah that we looked at in our last study.

It tells us one other thing. Before God is ever going to bring the rain and refresh the land, He’s got to clear the crud out of our lives. He’s got to get that stuff that’s not supposed to be there, out of there.

That’s what 2 Corinthians says:

2 Corinthians 7:1

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness and fear of God.

Jesus grabbed a little whip when He got to the temple and began to whip the animals and drove them out of there, and the money-changers too. Cleansed the temple.

In that little book on fellowship in 1 John, John says:

1 John 5:21

My little children, keep yourselves from idols.

Don't let anything take up a place that belongs to the Lord and to Him alone.

What is it in our life that's keeping us from the Lord's blessing on our life? We've always got to ask ourselves. If we aren't really blessed, if we aren't really rejoicing in the Lord, there's something in our life that's not pleasing to Him.

And that's withholding the blessing. And it will until we listen to 2 Corinthians 6:

2 Corinthians 6:17, 18

"Come out from among them, be separate," saith the Lord. Touch not the unclean thing, and I'll receive you." And, "I will be a Father unto you, you shall be my sons and daughters."

We've missed so much because we're hanging on to what we should have turned loose. In this situation Elijah knows that and he takes care of the prophets of Baal.

v. 41 Now Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of the roar of a heavy shower."

“Now Elijah said to Ahab, ‘Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of the roar of a heavy shower.’”

Where’s he going? He’s going up to the celebration tent. These prophets of Baal were so cool, they had it all figured out. That they’re going to win this thing and Elijah’s blood is going to be shed and then they are going to celebrate.

They had the bar-b-que wagons up there and the baked beans and the cornbread and everything. They’re ready for a feast as soon as they get rid of this prophet of God. But now the tables have been turned and old Ahab has watched all this.

He says, “Go on up there! I hear the sound of a big shower.”

Well, was the sky clear? There wasn’t anything on the horizon. He is hearing by faith. And the Lord said what, remember? When He sent him up there He said, “I’m getting ready to send rain upon the earth.”

So now he can go pray again.

v. 42 So Ahab went up to eat and drink. But Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he crouched down on the earth, and put his face between his knees.

“So Ahab went up to eat and drink. But Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he crouched down on the earth, and put his face between his knees.”

And he started to pray.

v. 43 And he said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.” So he went up and looked and said, “There is nothing.” And he said, “Go back” seven times.

“And he said to his servant, ‘Go up now, look toward the sea.’ So he went up and looked and said, ‘There is nothing.’ And he said, ‘Go back’ seven times.”

This guy is not content with one shot.

The prayer was probably a lot like Jesus’ prayer in John 17. Probably went something like this: “Father, I’m here before You asking You for the rain You promised.” And he sends his servant the first time and there’s nothing.

“Father, I’ve glorified You on the earth. I finished the work You gave me to do. The rain is all that’s left to be done.” And he sent him up a second time.

“Father, You answered in fire and I refreshed the people with the showers of blessings.” Sent him up a third time. Nothing.

“Father, I’ve come. Thy words which You gave me, they have received them. Now come honor Your word with the rain!”
Fourth time.

“Father, the hour has come. Glorify Yourself and send in the rain.” Fifth time—nothing.

“Oh Father, I plead with You for the promised showers. Send them now lest the people fail to see that You’re God.” He sends him a sixth time.

“Father, I know You heard my cry and the rain is on the way.” And he sends him the seventh time.

We don’t know very much about intercessory prayer today. There’s one guy who said, “You know, in the church of Christ today we’re so different from the early church. In the early church they prayed for ten days and preached ten minutes and three thousand souls were saved. My goodness, today we pray ten minutes and preach ten days and thirty souls are saved and we think we started Pentecost.”

Just look at the statistics, it’s incredible. But that’s about the way we are a lot of times with regard to really laying hold of God with those promises in view.

v. 44 And it came about at the seventh time, that he said, “Behold, a small cloud as small as a man’s hand is coming up from the sea.” And he said, “Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Prepare your chariot and go down, so that the heavy shower does not stop you.’”

“And it came about at the seventh time, that he said, ‘Behold, a small cloud as small as a man’s hand is coming up from the

sea.’ And he said, ‘Go up, say to Ahab, “Prepare your chariot and go down, so that the heavy shower does not stop you.”’”

1 Thessalonians 5:23

Faithful is the one who has called you who also will do it.

Just a little cloud the size of a man’s hand, but that’s all Elijah needs. He knows that the Lord’s done sending it on the way. And so he tells him to get on down there. He says, “Hurry up so the flash flood warnings don’t stop you before you get back to Jezreel.”

v. 45 So it came about in a little while, that the sky grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy shower. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel.

“So it came about in a little while, that the sky grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy shower. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel.”

v. 46 Then the hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he girded up his loins and outran Ahab to Jezreel.

“Then the hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he girded up his loins and outran Ahab to Jezreel.”

The first marathon man in the Bible. He’s running on ahead of that old chariot singing, “I’ve seen fire and I’ve seen rain.”

It's beautiful to see how God is so faithful. Fire to burn up the junk and rain to refresh us as he's running along there. God is so good.

Well, it kind of gives us a warm feeling in our heart when we come to the end of a study like that, doesn't it? It's kind of like Elijah going to lead a revival. Everybody's going to turn to God and they're all going to live happily ever after.

We have to remember one thing. The time of our greatest victory is the time of greatest vulnerability. This guy's going to be in the pits in our next episode. We're going to be amazed how he can come off a time of great victory like this and go clear down into the valley.

But we're all like that. We have great times with the Lord and then there's a great moment of reaction when we really get down in the pit because life has a way of overwhelming us.

There are some lessons that come out of this passage.

Lesson #1: Who is your God?

How long are we going to hop between two opinions?

And perhaps we have a problem with pride or peer pressure at this point. Afraid to take a stand so we act like a moral chameleon. We take our color from the last environment that we crawled across. Pride in ourselves in being some kind of a palace politician. Being able to be at peace with everybody and

never really stand for anything.

Joshua 24:15 says:

Joshua 24:15

Chose you this day whom you will serve.

2 Corinthians 6:2 says:

2 Corinthians 6:2

Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Acts 26:28

Then Agrippa said unto Paul, “Almost you’re persuading me to be a Christian.”

We have to always remember that close only counts in grenades and horseshoes. As far as salvation’s concerned, close isn’t going to make it. There has to be a relationship. We have to choose one or the other.

Lesson #2: The Lord is always faithful to fulfill His promises.

And we’ve seen that in Elijah’s life over and over and over again. The Lord has just been so faithful to fulfill the promises that He’s made to him.

Lesson #3: There are three things about Elijah's prayer that are beautiful:

1. It's definite,
2. It's earnest, and
3. It's based on the promises of God.

We read about his prayer life in James 5. Somebody wrote the neatest little poem that talks about prayer that really goes well here:

It's for a purpose I have prayed and prayed
Until my words seem warm and bare with arduous use,
and I had knocked and asked and knocked and asked again.

And all my fervor and persistence brought no hope.
I paused to give my weary brain a rest
And ceased my anxious human cry.

In the still moment after self had tried and failed,
There came a glorious vision of God's power
And lo, my prayer was answered in that very hour.
(source unknown)

So many times we just pray and we sweat and we struggle
and we fume and we fuss. Then finally we just kind of come to
that point where we turn it over to Him.

Lesson #4: Cleansing must precede God's blessing.

Psalm 139:23, 24

Search me, oh God, and know my heart;
try me and my thoughts.
See I there be any wicked way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

Lesson #5: When are you going to turn loose so God can triumph?

Maybe the blessing of God is being withheld in our life because we're hanging onto something that He really wants.

For old Jacob he had to surrender his Benjamin. Remember that?

"If I'm bereaved, I'm bereaved but take Benjamin." (see Genesis 43:14)

And then God just poured out His blessing in fantastic fashion on that old bird. When finally he turned loose of Benjamin, the Lord took care of him in a marvelous way.

He finally says, "It's enough. I can't take anymore Lord. This is just incredible what You've done since I turned it over to You."

Father, we bow before You. We thank You for Your Word and the precious sense of Your presence. We would pray now that the Holy Spirit would take the lessons from this passage of scripture that's quite colorful and dramatic and filled with a lot of action and pick out of it the things that need to be spoken to us. And the issues that need to be made through our lives. How we love You and praise You for Your goodness and ask that Your Word will be meaningful. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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What You Need to Know About ELIJAH:

“Someone Who Watched God at Work”

Study Number Four – 1 Kings 18:19-46

NOTES

v. 19 Now then send and gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, together with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table.”

v. 20 So Ahab sent a message among all the sons of Israel, and brought the prophets together at Mount Carmel.

v. 21 And Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people did not answer him a word.

v. 22 Then Elijah said to the people, “I alone am left a prophet of the Lord, but Baal's prophets are 450 men.

v. 23 Now let them give us two oxen; and let them choose one ox for themselves and cut it up, and place it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other ox, and lay it on the wood, and I will not put a fire under it.

v. 24 Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord, and the God who answers by fire, He is God.” And all the people answered and said, “That is a good idea.”

v. 25 So Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one ox for yourselves and prepare it first for you are many, and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it.”

v. 26 Then they took the ox which was given them and they prepared it and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon saying, “O Baal, answer us.” But there was no voice and no one answered. And they leaped about the altar which they made.

v. 27 And it came about at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god; either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened.”

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v. 28 So they cried with a loud voice and cut themselves according to their custom with swords and lances until the blood gushed out on them.

v. 29 And it came about when midday was past, that they raved until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice; but there was no voice, no one answered, and no one paid attention.

v. 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 which had been torn down.

v. 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."

v. 32 So 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 measures of seed.

v. 33 Then he arranged the wood and cut the ox in pieces and laid it on the wood. And he said, "Fill four pitchers with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood."

v. 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.

v. 35 And the water flowed around the altar, and he also filled the trench with water.

v. 36 Then it came about at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, today let it be known that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy word.

v. 37 Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that Thou, O Lord, art God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again."

v. 38 Then 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.

v. 39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God."

v. 40 Then Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal; do not let one of the escape." So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

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v. 41 Now Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of the roar of a heavy shower.”

v. 42 So Ahab went up to eat and drink. But Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he crouched down on the earth, and put his face between his knees.

v. 43 And he said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.” So he went up and looked and said, “There is nothing.” And he said, “Go back” seven times.

v. 44 And it came about at the seventh time, that he said, “Behold, a small cloud as small as a man’s hand is coming up from the sea.” And he said, “Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Prepare your chariot and go down, so that the heavy shower does not stop you.’”

v. 45 So it came about in a little while, that the sky grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy shower. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel.

v. 46 Then the hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he girded up his loins and outran Ahab to Jezreel.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read 1 Kings 18:19-46 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. What does Elijah command Ahab to do in verse 19?

3. What question does Elijah ask of the people in verse 21?

4. What proposition is presented by Elijah in verses 23 & 24?

5. What kind of a response did the people get from their god Baal, according to verse 29?

6. Outline the prayer requests of Elijah in verses 36 & 37.

7. What response do we get from the people in verse 39 when the fire of the Lord fell?

8. Describe in your own words Elijah's prayer life and the response to his prayer in verses 42-46.

9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Who is your God? How long are you going to hop between two opinions?

LESSON #2: The Lord is always faithful to fulfill His promises.

LESSON #3: There are three things about Elijah's prayer life. His prayers are: (1) definite; (2) earnest; and (3) based on the promises of God.

LESSON #4: Cleansing must precede God's blessing. (See Psalm 139:23-24)

LESSON #5: When are you going to turn loose so God can triumph?