

## **Confrontation with Ahab**

### **1 Kings 18:17-24**

*What is the role of a prophet?*

A prophet is a person who speaks God's truth to others. They know God - and they speak for God.

*A true prophet of God will be committed to speaking God's truth. He or she will never contradict God's revealed Word. A true prophet will say, with the prophet Micaiah just before his fateful confrontation with Ahab, "As surely as the Lord lives, I can tell him only what my God says" (2 Chronicles 18:13).*

### **Cause and Effect**

**Cause** - Ahab had forsaken the commandments of the Lord.

There is always a foundational element to our lives. It will dictate our actions and reverberate through our life. If it is based on our ways of life it will result in one way, if it is based on God's way of life it will look different.

Matthew 6:33, "But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

What do we base our lives on?

**Effect** - Ahab looked to other gods and followed the Baals.

James 1:19-27 - "But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. 23 For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; 24 for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. 25 But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act - they will be blessed in their doing."

### **Confrontation #2 with the Prophets**

"How long" - Elijah was asking them what it was going to take to wake them up. How much of God's discipline would they have to endure before they realized the way of life they'd chosen was not working? Not only had God closed the blessings of heaven, but He was revealing the emptiness and barrenness of the life they had chosen. What was it going to take?

"Hesitate" is the Hebrew pasach - (1) "to pass over, spring over;" or (2) "to limp, be lame, or be crippled."

We cannot walk the fence with the Lord

Matthew 6:24--"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." This warns us that half-hearted commitment to the Lord leads to no real commitment at all. We end up choosing against the Lord in the crucial issues of life."

Matthew 12:30--"He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters."

In practical terms, either we are with the Lord 100 percent, or we end up standing against Him and His plan and purposes for us as His people.

### **Silence**

There was simply no room for self-justification. They had no argument that would make sense against this challenge of Elijah, and neither do we.

*The principle of 1 Kings 18:21 and that of Matthew 6:19 means that as long as the idols of this world fascinate us, i.e., the things we think we must have to be happy--money, power, praise, attention--we are going to find life miserable. White writes, "We were created to have one center. To have two is to be miserable and to enjoy neither spiritual things nor material."*

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6:19-21

## ***The Test***

Elijah proposes a test to reveal the futility of their faith.

It is foolish to worship what is false.

It is foolish to worship in a false way.

*Mount Carmel* - The place chosen for the contest was Mount Carmel. "Carmel" is a Hebrew word that means "a garden land, a place of fruitfulness or fertility." It comes from karam, "to tend vines" or kerem, "a vineyard."

No spot in Palestine is more beautiful, more bracing, or healthful than Carmel, "the Park-like." Up in the northwest, it juts as a promontory into the Mediterranean, rising to a height of five hundred feet. Thence it stretches about twelve miles to the S.S.E., rising into two peaks. The first of these, about four miles from the promontory, is not less than 1740 feet high. Still further to the southeast is a third peak, 1687 feet high, which to this day bears the name of El-Mahrakah, or "place of burning" (sacrifice).

### *Why Fire?*

God revealed himself and faithfulness in fire with Moses and to Israel.

Baal was considered the god of fire or the god of the sun.

"Our god is a consuming fire - Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe; 29 for indeed our God is a consuming fire." Hebrews 12:28-29