

The Lord is God
1 Kings 18:17-40
Series: Topical

1. Introduction

- a. Israel north has floundered away from the Lord. They have embraced idolatry and the worship of false Gods to such an extent that they no longer understand what true orthodoxy is.
 - b. During this time, the people of Israel had adopted a view that, unfortunately, resembles the view of today. “All roads lead to heaven”
 - c. Because of their unwillingness to repent, the Lord had proclaimed a three-and-half year drought upon the land. The drought was so severe that Israel was practically in ruins.
 - d. At the end of the appointed time, Elijah is sent to the people to confront them and their idolatry.
2. Verses 17-18 – The Spiritual Condition of Israel –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.
- a. During this time, a true minister is viewed as a troubler; as one that causes dissension and brings trouble.
 - b. The real problem does not lie with the people of God but in the condition of the unbelievers and their rampant sin. This world quickly and unabashedly abandons the commandments of the Lord to follow other gods that are not profitable.
 - c. There was no humility in the face of judgment, no repentance.
3. Verse 19 – Rampant falseness – 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."
- a. **2 Timothy 4:3-4** For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, (4) and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.
 - b. The false are treated well and gather great wealth and reputation. The true are found hiding and fleeing. The world rejects the men of God.

4. Verse 20-21 – The time is coming and is here where we must choose – 1 Kings 18:20-21 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.
 - a. Noticed to play both ends or to try to consolidate two different but contradicting worldviews is folly.
 - i. To do so is to “limp between two different opinions.”
 - ii. The decision for you and for me is clear. We must make up our mind. We must follow the Baal of this world and be completely committed to him or,
 - iii. Serve the Lord and surrender all to Him. We must choose. Eternity is hanging in the balance.

5. Verses 22-24 – 1 Kings 18:22-24 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."
 - a. The challenge is to see what God answers with fire. What God can truly move and intervene in the affairs of men and change the course of a nation. More importantly, which God can move a nation, a man to repentance.

6. Verses 25-29 – Any other God is sheer impotency – 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.

- a. Notice that they cry out (verse 26), they serve, they implore and yet there is no answer. There is only futility in serving anything else but the true God.
 - i. **Psalms 115:3-7** Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases. (4) Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. (5) They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. (6) They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. (7) They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat.
- b. (27) notice that those that serve other gods will one day be subject to derision, scorn, and mockery. Their gods will one day prove to them the sheer madness of idolatry because they can't answer.

7. Verses 30-35 – Our God of the impossible – 1 Kings 18:30-35 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.

- a. In contrast to the previous section, we find that our God has move and continues to move in the affairs of men through his all-consuming and miraculous power.
- b. **Ephesians 3:20** Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,

8. Verses 36-37 – the prayer of the saints – 1 Kings 18:36-37 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."

- a. Lord – He understands that God is sovereign
 - b. Abraham – God has been generationally faithful.
 - c. God is God – over his people
 - d. We belong to him
 - e. We move at his word
 - f. We want to see a dying world converted
 - g. It is God that turns the hearts
9. Verse 38 – Fire – 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.
- a. God is an all-consuming fire. Notice that everything, and I mean everything is consumed.
 - b. When God answers, he answers. He is the only that can and does.
10. Verse 39 – The Lord is God – And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, "The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God."
- a. The only appropriate response to seeing God and finally seeing His power displayed is to repent on the floor. The only response is to proclaim the only truth, "The Lord is God.
11. Verse 40 – Death – 1 Kings 18:40 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.
12. Benediction –
- a. ***Isaiah 45:20*** "Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, you survivors of the nations! They have no knowledge who carry about their wooden idols, and keep on praying to a god that cannot save.