

# Week 24: Elijah on Mount Carmel - Contending with False Religion

*A Sabbath Family Bible Study*

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## Introduction

When Israel turned to Baal, God raised up Elijah to confront idolatry and call the nation back to truth. On Mount Carmel, he stood alone against 450 prophets of Baal, proving that the Lord alone is God. Elijah's courage was not born of numbers but of conviction. He refused compromise, challenged deception, and trusted God to reveal Himself through fire. This study reminds us that true faith must contend with falsehood, and that holiness always requires confrontation with what opposes God's Word.

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## Scripture Reading: Selected Passages (KJV)

1 Kings 18:17–24; 1 Kings 18:30–39; 1 Kings 18:41–46

(With commentary throughout)

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### **1 Kings 18:17–24 - Elijah Confronts Ahab and Challenges the People**

**17** And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?

**18** 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 Baalim.

**19** Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.

**20** So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

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

**22** Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

**23** 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:

**24** 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.

**Commentary:**

Elijah stood against a nation that had forgotten truth. He faced accusation from a corrupt king who blamed righteousness for rebellion. When truth exposes sin, the wicked call it trouble. Elijah's challenge was simple - stop wavering. Israel's silence showed their compromise. Faith must choose a side; neutrality is rebellion. When people drift from obedience, the righteous seem like disturbers of peace. But true peace can only exist when truth rules. Elijah's question, "*How long halt ye between two opinions?*" still confronts every generation that tries to worship both God and the world.

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**1 Kings 18:25–39 - The Contest and the Fire of the LORD**

**25** And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under.

**26** 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.

**27** 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 pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.

**28** And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.

**29** And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

**30** 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.

**31** 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:

**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 measures of seed.

**33** And he put the wood in order, 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.

**34** And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time.

**35** And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also 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 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.

**37** 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.

**38** 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.

**39** 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.

**Commentary:**

False religion exhausts itself in noise and pain, but it cannot produce power. Elijah did not shout, he obeyed. Before the fire fell, he repaired the altar. True revival always begins with order and obedience. When God's fire comes, it consumes everything unholy and leaves worshipers on their faces, not their feet. The fire did not fall until the altar was restored. In the same way, God's power will not rest on divided hearts or compromised homes.

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**1 Kings 18:40–46 - Judgment and Mercy**

**40** 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 Kishon, and slew them there.

**41** And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

**42** So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees,

**43** And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.

**44** And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

**45** And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel.

**46** And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

**Commentary:**

The prophets of Baal were destroyed, proving that idolatry always ends in death. Yet even after judgment, mercy returned. The drought ended only after repentance and restoration. God's mercy follows obedience. The fire reveals His holiness; the rain reveals His grace. God's power is not only to consume but to restore. The man who stood against kings now prayed for rain on a repentant land. Humility bends low before blessing descends.

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 **Discussion Questions for All Ages**

**Young Children:**

- Why did Elijah challenge the prophets of Baal?
- What did God do to show He is the true God?
- Why should we always worship only the Lord?

**Older Children & Teens:**

- What does it mean to “halt between two opinions”?
- Why did Elijah rebuild the altar before he prayed for fire?
- What lessons about faith and obedience can we learn from Elijah's example?

**Adults:**

- What false religions or idols compete for people's devotion today?
  - How can believers stand for truth without pride or cruelty?
  - What must be "repaired" in our own homes before God's fire can fall?
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 **Psalm Reading****Psalm 97:10–12 (KJV)**

**10** Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

**11** Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.

**12** Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

**Commentary:**

Those who love God must hate evil. True worship separates light from darkness. Joy follows holiness, not compromise.

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 **Hymn: Faith of Our Fathers**

By Frederick W. Faber (1849)

**1.**

Faith of our fathers, living still,  
In spite of dungeon, fire, and sword;  
O how our hearts beat high with joy  
Whene'er we hear that glorious Word!

Faith of our fathers, holy faith,  
We will be true to thee till death.

**2.**

Our fathers, chained in prisons dark,  
Were still in heart and conscience free;  
How sweet would be their children's fate,  
If they, like them, could die for Thee!

Faith of our fathers, holy faith,  
We will be true to thee till death.

**3.**

Faith of our fathers! We will love  
Both friend and foe in all our strife,  
And preach thee, too, as love knows how,  
By kindly words and virtuous life.

Faith of our fathers, holy faith,  
We will be true to thee till death.

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### **Family Application Points**

- 1. Repair the Altar:** Return to consistent family worship and prayer. God's fire falls on restored order.
  - 2. Stand for Truth:** Teach your family to speak God's Word boldly and without shame.
  - 3. Reject Compromise:** Refuse to mix worldly ideas with holy worship.
  - 4. Pray for Rain:** Seek God's mercy after repentance, He restores what obedience secures.
  - 5. Live by Conviction:** Let your household be known for faith that acts when others stay silent.
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### **A Sabbath Feast Prayer**

Almighty God, You are the only true God. We thank You for Your truth that burns brighter than any false fire. As we gather on this Sabbath, purify our hearts, cleanse our home, and make us bold witnesses of Your power and mercy. Let our table be a place of praise, and our lives a living altar. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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### **Closing Prayer**

Lord, teach us the courage of Elijah and the faith to stand alone if necessary. Keep us from bowing to false gods of comfort, fear, or conformity. Let Your fire purify our hearts and Your rain refresh our souls. May our household be a beacon of truth in a world of idols. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.