

A Spiritual Showdown

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[0 : 0 0] Well if we could, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling this evening, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, 1 Kings chapter 18.

1 Kings chapter 18 and we're going to look at the whole passage that we read, but if we just take as our text the words of verse 21. 1 Kings chapter 18 and verse 21.

And Elijah came near to all the people and said, how long will you go on 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. How long will you go on limping or halting between two opinions?

This passage in 1 Kings is probably one of the most well-known passages in the Bible because it presents to us that great occasion where there was a spiritual showdown on the top of Mount Carmel.

[1 : 1 8] And it was between the Lord, the Creator and the covenant God of his people. And there was Baal. Baal who was said to be the God of fertility and faithfulness or fruitfulness.

It was a spiritual showdown. And the contest was very, very simple. The God who answers by fire. He is God. But you know this question which Elijah poses to the people of Israel.

How long will you go on limping between two different opinions? This question, it's often posed to the unconverted where they're asked, and rightly so, they're asked to make a decision between following the Lord or clinging to their idols.

In fact, at the age of 19, this was the first text that I ever preached. How long will you go on limping or halting between two different opinions? And I applied it to the unconverted sitting in the church as I would do today.

But you know, when we consider the life of Elijah, and the Lord's call that was upon Elijah's life, his call to be a prophet, Elijah wasn't called to be an evangelist to the unconverted.

[2 : 2 8] He wasn't called to introduce to the people of Israel. He wasn't called to introduce to them the Lord for the very first time. Because the people of Israel, they already knew who the Lord was.

They already understood that the Lord was their covenant God. They already knew that it was that same covenant Lord who delivered them from bondage and slavery in Egypt.

It was that Lord who brought them into the promised land. The Israelites, they knew their history. They knew their upbringing. They knew where they had come from. And they knew that they were meant to live and conduct themselves as the Lord's covenant people.

They knew all the covenant promises and all the covenant blessings that had been given to them and were being held out before them. They knew the Lord. They knew that they were his covenant people.

And they knew that they were the Lord's people. They knew that they were the church. They knew who they were. But they had turned their back upon the Lord. And so Elijah, he wasn't called to be an evangelist to the unconverted.

- [3 : 31] To try and make the Lord known to the Israelites. Elijah was called to be the Lord's prophet because the Israelites, they already knew their covenant Lord.
- But Elijah, he was to proclaim God's truth. He was to present to them God's covenant. And he was to challenge the Israelites for worshipping false gods and bowing down to idols.
- And sadly, the Israelites knew that they had turned their backs upon the Lord to serve foreign gods and to bow down to idols. And you know, this had gone on for so long and things had become so bad in the northern kingdom of Israel that the Lord sent Elijah to give them an ultimatum.
- How long will you go on limping between two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him. But if Baal, then follow him.
- But you know, before the Israelites would make up their minds, Elijah wanted to prove that the Lord was God and that he was worth following. And so in order to address the spiritual state of the kingdom of Israel, Elijah calls for this spiritual showdown.
- [4 : 47] The showdown between the Lord and Baal or Baal, and they were to meet on the top of Mount Carmel. But you know, before we even get there, before we reach the spiritual showdown, before the spiritual showdown can take place, we see first of all, the preparation.
- The preparation. We see that in verses 1 and 2 of chapter 18. It says, After many days, the word of the Lord came to Elijah. In the third year, saying, Go show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth.
- So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the famine was severe in Samaria. Chapter 18 begins by reminding us of what happened in the previous chapter.
- Because in chapter 17, as we saw last week, the northern kingdom of Israel was in a spiritual state. King Ahab had married Jezebel.
- He had married the daughter of a foreign king. Ahab had made this woman his foreign wife. And their marriage resulted in Ahab compromising his position as king.
- [5 : 58] Because Ahab, he allowed Jezebel's foreign god, Baal, to come and dwell in his room. In fact, Ahab built Baal, his own temple. And he encouraged all the Lord's covenant people to come and worship Baal.
- But as the covenant king, Ahab was meant to be the spiritual leader of the covenant people. Ahab was meant to lead the people to love the Lord, to worship the Lord, to serve the Lord.
- But by adopting this God that his wife loved, Ahab, he forfeited his own soul, which left the kingdom in this spiritual state of darkness.
- Ahab, he might have secured political stability. He may even have guaranteed economic growth for his kingdom. But he brought the kingdom of Israel into a spiritual mess.
- And as the previous chapter emphasises, it says, Ahab did more to provoke the Lord than all of the kings who were before him. And it was because Ahab had provoked the Lord that the kingdom of Israel was in this covenant crisis.
- [7 : 13] Because you have the covenant king, Ahab. He had led the covenant people, Israel, into this covenant unfaithfulness. And when Elijah appears, who is the covenant prophet, he appears before King Ahab.
- And Elijah is now pronouncing a covenant curse upon the king and upon his kingdom. And the covenant curse was that there will be no dew from the ground and no rain from heaven, except by the word of the Lord.

And so chapter 18, it opens by reminding us that the kingdom of Israel is still under this covenant curse because of the covenant unfaithfulness of the covenant king and his covenant people.

And for three years, Elijah, he has just been waiting upon the word of the Lord. Waiting upon the Lord for the Lord to send him back into Israel to speak to King Ahab.

You remember, as it is at the end of chapter 17, that Elijah was sent into the foreign region of Zarephath. And he was to be fed by the widow of Zarephath.

[8 : 19] And for those years, King Ahab, he hadn't seen Elijah. He had been searching for him, looking everywhere for Elijah. But King Ahab hadn't seen Elijah.

He hadn't heard the word of the Lord. The Lord had been silent. And the land of Israel hadn't received one drop of rain. And as you would expect, after three years of drought, there was a severe famine in the northern kingdom of Israel.

People were dying. The kingdom was in disarray. And the king was absolutely powerless over the whole situation. And that's evident from Ahab's command to his first official, Obadiah.

We see that in verse 3. It says, And Ahab called Obadiah, who was over the household. Now, Obadiah feared the Lord greatly. And when Jezebel cut off the prophets or slaughtered the prophets of the Lord, Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water.

And Ahab said to Obadiah, go through the land, to all the springs of water and to all the valleys. Perhaps we may find grass and save the horses and mules alive and not lose some of the animals.

[9 : 37] And you notice the contrast between Ahab and Obadiah. The passage is actually highlighting the contrast between King Ahab, who sought to save horses and mules over his people.

And then you have Obadiah. He sought to save the Lord's prophets. And Obadiah, he wanted to save the Lord's prophets because he feared the Lord.

He feared the Lord, the covenant God. Because when Queen Jezebel was on her slaughtering spree of all of the Lord's prophets, Obadiah, he hid a hundred of the Lord's prophets in caves and fed them.

And you know, we have to marvel at Obadiah's faith. Because here's a man. We don't know that much about him. In fact, very little is said about this man, apart from the fact that he feared the Lord from his youth.

But in comparison to Elijah, whose ministry was very public, very confrontational, right to the fore, this man, Obadiah, he's very much in the background.

[10 : 47] He's walking quietly behind the scenes, just where the Lord has placed him. And yet he's silently living out his faith and he's serving the Lord with fear. And you know, sometimes that's all that's asked of us as Christians.

Friends, we're not called, we're not all called to public ministry to be in the forefront and to be seen. Because the Lord sees us whether we're serving him in the forefront or we're serving him behind the scenes.

And you know, I believe that those who serve the Lord in private, they do far more than those who serve the Lord in public. And sometimes that's our calling, where we're called to silently live out our faith and serve the Lord with fear.

And yes, we have to get out of our comfort zone. We have to be an active Christian. We're not to become a lazy Christian. We must live and serve the Lord by faith.

Because even though Obadiah was in the background, he wasn't idle. He was serving the Lord. He was preserving the Lord's cause by hiding all these prophets.

[11 : 53] He was protecting the Lord's prophets. He was preparing for the future. He was waiting upon the Lord for the moment Israel turned back to the Lord. And what's remarkable is that Obadiah was living by faith.

And he was serving the Lord with fear. And he was doing it while working in one of the most ungodly environments. Obadiah was the first official to an ungodly king who had married Jezebel, the most ungodly wife.

Obadiah lived and worked and served the Lord in one of the most ungodly environments. And you know, that might be where the Lord places us.

Where he places us in an ungodly environment. With people who have no time for God or church or Christ. We might end up being surrounded by the walk and talk of the world.

But you know, if that's where the Lord has placed you, that's where the Lord has placed you. And you're there in his providence. Maybe not to be an Elijah. But to be an Obadiah. And you know, the Lord needs Obadiahs as much as he needs the Elijahs.

[13 : 09] Because the Lord needs men and women to silently live out their faith. And serve the Lord with fear. Just where he has placed them. And we need to, you know, we need to pray for those whom the Lord has placed in these ungodly environments.

We need to pray for Christians in government. We need to pray for Christians in our local council. We need to pray for Christians in our schools.

In fact, we need to pray for Christians in every sphere of life. That the Lord would use us to live out our faith. And serve the Lord with fear. We need to pray for more and more Obadiahs.

To serve the Lord with fear. And so before this spiritual showdown even takes place on Mount Carmel. We see the preparation. There's preparation beforehand.

But as we approach the spiritual showdown. We see secondly the proposal. The proposal. Look at verse 17. It says, After this three year wait.

[14 : 41] Elijah finally appears before King Ahab. And the first thing King Ahab says to Elijah is, Is it you? You troubler of Israel.

Ahab can't even see his own sin. He can't see that he's the one who's been led astray. And he can't see that he's the one who has led the kingdom astray. By his own sin.

Ahab is in denial. He's in denial that it's his fault that there's a drought in the kingdom of Israel. Ahab wants to move all the blame away from himself onto the Lord's prophet.

Is it you, you troubler of Israel? And you know that's what the heart of a backslider does. They blame someone else. As to the reason for their covenant unfaithfulness.

Now that's what Adam did in the Garden of Eden. He blamed Eve. Then Eve, she blamed the serpent. Because that's what a backslider does.

[15 : 42] They blame someone else. They blame something else. As to the reason for their covenant unfaithfulness. And that still happens. Because someone who's in a backslidden state.

They blame the minister. Or the elders. Or the church. Or other Christians. As to the reason for their covenant unfaithfulness to the Lord. But as Elijah reminds Ahab.

The buck must stop with you. He says in verse 18. He says. 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. Elijah reminds Ahab. That the reason there's a drought and famine in the kingdom at all.

Is because there's a covenant crisis. The covenant king has led the Lord's covenant people. Into covenant unfaithfulness. And it has resulted in covenant curses being poured out upon them.

[16 : 42] But you know the greatest irony. About all this. Is that Baal was the god of fertility and fruitfulness. You worship Baal if you wanted to have a child.

Or you worshiped Baal if you wanted to have a good crop that coming year. Baal promised to provide growth and blessing on your family. And upon your land. Baal promised to provide good weather.

And good growth. And good harvest. Baal was the god who said. He could bring storms. And fire. And lightning. And rain. He could provide grain. And oil.

And wine. He could revive the dead. Heal the sick. Grant blessing. To anyone who called upon his name. But you know the kingdom of Israel had seen. None of that.

Over the past three years. Despite building all these temples. And altars to Baal. And continually worshipping him. Day in. Day out. There was no sign that Baal was actually listening.

[17 : 43] And if he was listening. It seems that Baal had a real case of impotence. But you know. If the Lord had simply given rain.

And poured rain upon the kingdom of Israel. The king and his wicked queen Jezebel. Would have very quickly said that Baal had recovered from his episode of impotence.

So before it's safe for the Lord to send rain. Baal has to be completely discredited. And it has to be done clearly. Publicly.

And decisively. Because when Baal is exposed. The covenant people. They will no longer look to him for their help and hope. And so Elijah makes his proposal to King Ahab.

Verse 19. Now therefore send and gather all Israel to me. At Mount Carmel. And the 400 prophets of Baal. And the 400 prophets of Asherah.

[18 : 39] Who eat at Jezebel's table. Elijah wanted everyone to be there. He wanted the 450 prophets of Baal. To be there. He wanted the 400 prophets of Asherah to be there.

And he wanted everyone in the kingdom of Israel. To gather on Mount Carmel. To see this spiritual showdown. Elijah wanted everyone to be there. To make them see how useless.

And how impotent Baal really is. And also to make them see. How powerful. And how glorious the Lord is. And so King Ahab. He accepts Elijah's proposal.

And then we're told in verse 20. It says. So Ahab sent to all the people of Israel. And gathered the prophets together at Mount Carmel. 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.

[19 : 37] And the people did not answer him. A word. The location of this spiritual showdown is worth noting. Because Mount Carmel was located on this.

You could say it's a peninsula. In the northwest coast of Israel. And it was a mountain right on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. And this peninsula.

And mountain. It was known to many as Holy Head. But it was regarded as Holy Head. Not because it was a key place. Where the Lord was worshipped. It was the opposite in fact.

Holy Head of Mount Carmel. Was one of the main locations. Where Baal was worshipped. Because worship. It often took place on the top of mountains. Or the high places.

Where the shrines and the temples. They were all built on the high places. To offer worship to their God. And so Elijah. He purposely chose Mount Carmel.

[20 : 36] For this spiritual showdown. Because you could say. Well that was Baal's home turf. And if Baal was going to make an appearance at all. He would do it because there was this home ground advantage.

But before the spiritual showdown takes place. Elijah takes his opportunity. To question the Lord's people. And remember that this wasn't said to the unconverted.

This wasn't said to people who didn't know the Lord. No the Israelites knew the Lord as their saviour. And they knew that they had turned their back upon the Lord. To serve foreign gods.

And bow down to idols. They knew the Lord. But they knew that they were the Lord's covenant people. They knew that they were the church. Which is why Elijah asks in verse 21.

How long will you go on limping between two different opinions? Now the issue with the backslidden condition of the Israelites.

[21 : 36] Was that they had not completely turned their back upon the Lord. Because despite all the altars and temples that they had built to Baal. They still continued to worship the Lord.

And go through all the motions. Where they attended all the services. And they offered all the right sacrifices. And they said the right prayers. And they did the right rituals. But the truth was their heart was far from the Lord.

And they even mixed their worship of the Lord with the worship of Baal. Where they would worship the Lord. And then they would go later on. They would leave the temple of the Lord.

And go to Baal's temple and worship Baal there. And sometimes they would do both. Even at the same time. And it all showed that their loyalty to the Lord was divided. Their devotion to the Lord was divided.

Their allegiance to the Lord was divided. They had what we would say. They had a foot in both camps. They had a foot in both camps. And that's why Elijah asks.

[22 : 37] How long will you go on limping between two different opinions? Elijah looks at the Lord's covenant people. And he says to them. You're limping.

You're halting. You're jumping back and forth. Over the divide between worshipping the Lord. And worshipping Baal. And you have this limp.

You're limping and halting. Because you're not standing firm. You're not standing firm. And Elijah says to them. You need to stand firm. You need to make your decision.

You need to nail your colours to the mast. If the Lord is God, he says. Then follow him. If he's Baal. Then follow him.

Literally Elijah is saying. If the Lord is your God. Then go after him. Go after him. Pursue him. Love him. Follow him.

[23 : 34] Look to him. But if it's Baal. If Baal is your God. Then go after him. Love him. Follow him. Pursue him. Because Elijah is saying to them. You can't go on like this.

You can't limp between two different opinions. All your life. You have to stand firm. And this proposal that Elijah puts to the people. Is that he's saying to them.

Your choice will have consequences. Your decision. Your decision. Your decision. Will lead to discipleship. If the Lord is God. Follow him. Follow him.

And you know. Is that not what Jesus says to us? Whosoever will come after me. Let him deny himself. Take up his cross. And follow me. Which means that.

It must be whole hearted commitment. To the Lord. God. Dale Ralph Davis puts it very bluntly in his commentary. He says.

[24 : 33] Elijah's statement. Should make us realize that God does not permit the nonsense of having Jesus as your Savior. But not as your Lord. I'll read that again.

Elijah's statement should make us realize that God does not permit the nonsense of having Jesus as your Savior. But not as your Lord. He doesn't give you that option.

And so. If Jesus is your Savior. Then he must be your Lord. And as your Lord. He must be Lord over every area of your life.

He's your Savior and Lord. When you come to church on Sunday. He's the Lord of your whole Sabbath. He's the Lord of the Lord's Day. And he's the Lord of every day of your life.

And he's to be Lord of every area of your life. Your character. Your conduct. Your conversation. He's to be Lord over your home. Over your family. Over your marriage.

[25 : 37] Over your children. He's to be Lord when you're at work. He's to be Lord when you're in the community. He's to be Lord when you're going about your daily business. He's to be Lord when you're at home. And when you're away.

He's to be Lord over all your decisions. He is to be Lord over your car, your house, your finances. He is to be Lord over your computer.

Lord over your phone. Lord over your TV. Lord over your iPad. Lord over your social media. My friend, when Jesus Christ is your saviour, he is to be Lord over all.

Everything. Lord over all. You can't have Jesus as your saviour and not as your Lord. You can't have what you may think is the best of both worlds. We can't have a foot in both camps.

Because as a Christian, as someone for whom Jesus is your saviour, you must be wholeheartedly committed to him as your Lord. But you know, the temptation to worship Baal, it wasn't really around during the time of the New Testament church.

[26 : 45] Baal had come in a different form of worship. The God of this world and the danger of worldliness. And you know, the Apostle James, he reminds us by asking, he says, Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?

Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. And you know, James made it clear. And Elijah makes it clear. That as Christians, we can't go on limping between the church and the world.

The world and the church. We can't be halting between the two opinions. No, if the Lord is your God, follow him. Go after him. Learn from him.

Be committed to him. Live your life for him. But if Baal, or the world, or whatever it is that's dividing your heart, if it is at all. If that's your God.

Then follow him. Follow him. Because there's one thing the Lord doesn't want. The Lord doesn't want a compromised Christian. The Lord doesn't want to give off a message of confused Christianity.

[27 : 56] No, the Lord doesn't want you to limp between Christ and the world. The world and Christ. My friend, Elijah is saying to us tonight, Make your stand. And follow him.

Make your stand. And follow him. And so as we finally come to the spiritual showdown, we've seen the preparation, then the proposal, And then lastly, we see the prayer.

The prayer. Look at verse 22. Then Elijah said to the people, I, even I only, am left a prophet of the Lord. But Baal's prophets are 450 men.

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. 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.

[28 : 56] And all the people answered. It is well spoken. So as everyone gathered on the top of Mount Carmel for the spiritual showdown between the Lord and Baal, Elijah reminds the people that all the odds are stacked against him.

All the odds are against him. They're in Baal's home territory on Mount Carmel. He is only one prophet against 450 prophets of Baal. But you know, as Elijah will prove, one man with God is always in the majority.

And so because the prophets of Baal are more in number, Elijah, he lets him go first. Because if Baal is going to answer at all, he will answer when all his prophets are praying together at the same time.

And so we're told in verse 25, Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, Choose for yourselves one bull. Prepare it first, for you are many. Call upon the name of your God, but put no fire to it.

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.

[30 : 05] And they limped around the altar that they had made. You know, the prophets of Baal, they cried and cried.

For three hours, we're told, from morning until noon, O Baal, answer us. But then we're told, no voice, there was no voice, no one answered.

And after that, Elijah begins to mock them. He mocks them, so that they will up their game. He just says, Come on, let's hear him, let's hear him. And he says in verse 27, At noon, Elijah mocked them, saying, Cry aloud.

He is a god. Either he's musing, or he's relieving himself, or he's on a journey, or perhaps he's asleep, and must be awakened. And they cried aloud, and they cut themselves, after their custom, with swords and lances, until the blood gushed out upon them.

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. The prophets of Baal, they tried everything, to show that they were dedicated, to Baal, and desperate, for him to answer.

[31 : 15] They cried, they shouted, they chanted, they danced, they cut themselves, they let their blood, pour out onto this altar, and this carried on, for another three hours, until the time, of the evening offering, which was to be offered, at the temple.

But again we're told, there was no voice, no one answered, no one paid any attention. Then verse 30, Elijah said to all the people, come near to me.

And all the people, came near to him. He repaired the altar of the Lord, that had been thrown down. Elijah took the 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.

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 sails of seed. Elijah calls the people, to come near, to make sure, that they see, that the Lord, will answer by fire.

And Elijah repairs the altar, an altar that had been torn down. He replaces the altar, that had been torn down, and replaced with, the altar of Baal.

[32 : 25] Elijah, he repairs the altar, with twelve stones, representing, the covenant, with which the Lord had made, the covenant with Israel. But then in order to prove, that the Lord is the covenant God, of his people, Elijah commands the people, to pour seawater, from the nearby Mediterranean, upon this altar.

He says, pour seawater on it. He says in verse 33, He put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, laid it on the wood, and he said, fill four jars with water, and pour it on the burnt offering, and on the wood.

He said, do it a second time. They did it a second time. He said, do it a third time. And they did it a third time. And the water ran around the altar, and filled the trench, also, with water. The odds, are all stacked, against Elijah.

He's on away ground. He's in the away stadium. He's in the minority. He is now soaking his altar, with water. And everyone knows, wet stuff doesn't burn.

And yet, in verse 36, we're told, 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, that I am your servant, that I have done all these things, at your word.

[33 : 45] Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know, that you, O Lord, are God, that you have turned their hearts, back. 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.

At the time of the evening, sacrifice to the Lord, the same time, that a sacrifice, would be offered to the Lord, in the temple, in Jerusalem, was the same time, that the Lord answered, by fire.

And what we must notice, about the prayer of Elijah, apart from the fact, that it was based upon, God's covenant promises, to his people, Elijah's prayer, was short, and sincere.

Elijah's prayer, was short, and sincere. The prayer, from the prophets of Baal, was to a dead God, but they were long, and loud.

They were long, and loud. Elijah's prayer, short, and sincere. And as the New Testament, reminds us, Elijah is a man, just like us. Therefore, our prayers, are not to be long, and loud, but to be short, and sincere.

[35 : 02] Whether we're praying, in public, or in private, our prayers, ought to be like Elijah's, based upon the covenant, but short, and sincere. Our prayers, ought to be like Elijah's, based upon the covenant, but short, and sincere.

It was Professor Dolan McLeod, who used to remind us, in college, when we were, what did we call it then? Practical theology, that's what it was called. He used to talk, about public prayer, and he said that, when you pray publicly, for the first five minutes, everyone is praying, with you.

In the next five minutes, everyone is praying, for you. In the last while, after that, everybody's praying, for you to sit down. And you know, in many ways, that's true. Our prayers, ought to be like Elijah's, based upon the covenant, but short, and sincere.

Our prayers, have to be based upon, God's covenant, but short, and sincere. But you know, how does the passage, on the spiritual showdown, how does it conclude? Concludes in verses 39 and 40.

When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces, and said, the Lord, he is God. The Lord, he is God. And Elijah said to them, seize the prophets of Baal, let not one of them escape.

[36 : 21] And they seized them, and Elijah brought them down, to the brook Kishon, and slaughtered them there. This spiritual showdown, it concludes, with the people, confessing, and the prophets, being crushed.

The Lord's people, they repent. They confess, that the Lord alone, is their covenant God. And in order, to try and prevent them, from turning back, to Baal, Elijah, has, these 450, prophets of Baal, slaughtered.

You know, we might think, that that's extreme. But Elijah, was only acting, according to the covenant. The covenant law, in Deuteronomy 13.

Which says, that if a false prophet, leads the Lord's people, away from the Lord, that prophet, shall be put to death. Because he has taught, rebellion, against the Lord. My friend, the Lord, your covenant God, is a jealous God.

And this is what, this chapter is teaching us. Our God, is a jealous God. And he will not, share his glory, with anyone else.

[37 : 32] And having considered, the spiritual showdown, on Mount Carmel. We're just left, with Elijah's question. How long, will you go on, limping between, two different opinions?

If the Lord, is your God, follow him. But if Baal, is your God, or the world, or whatever it is, then follow him. How long, will you go on, limping, between two, different, opinions?

May the Lord, bless these thoughts, to us. Let us pray. O Lord, our gracious God, we give thanks to thee, for thy word, that thy word, always seeks, to challenge us, and to remind us, that our allegiance, must be to Jesus Christ, and to Jesus Christ alone, that he is our king, and that we shall serve, no other, that we shall love, no other, that we shall follow, no other.

Help us, Lord, we pray, to realize, that he is our king, and head. And we pray, Lord, that whatever may be hindering us, or whatever may be causing us, to limp, that we would put it away, that we might stand firm, stand firm, in the power of his might, and to keep looking, to Jesus, the author, and the finisher, of our faith.

Lord, forgive us, we pray, for our worldliness. Forgive us, Lord, for the times, where we are often, fainting and failing, because we're looking, at ourselves, or the world.

[39 : 08] But Lord, help us, we pray, to renew our focus, and to turn anew, to this Jesus, who is always doing in us, and for us, beyond our asking, and beyond our thinking.

Oh Lord, keep us then, we pray, and go before us, do us good, for Jesus' sake. Amen. We're going to bring our service, to a conclusion, by singing the words, of Psalm 135.

Psalm 135. We're singing from verse, it's on page 426. We're singing from verse 15, down to the end of the psalm.

Words that are very similar, to what we were singing, in Psalm 115. Psalm 135, at verse 15. The idols of the nations, of silver, iron, gold, and by the hands of men, is made their fashion, and mould.

Mouths have they, but they do not speak, eyes, but they do not see, ears have they, but hear not, and in their mouths, no breathing be. And we'll sing on down, to the end of the psalm, and blessed be the Lord, our God, from Zion's holy hill, who dwelleth at Jerusalem, the Lord, oh praise ye still.

[40 : 28] These verses, to God's praise. The idols of the nations of silver and gold And by the hands of men is great, their fashion and gold But of them, of them, do not speak Eyes, but they do not see Ears of them, but they're not undid Them mouths no breathing be

Them makers are like them, so are All that long can rely O Israel's house, bless God, bless God, O Eros family Bless the Lord of Levi's arms, ye who his serpents are And bless the holy name of God All ye the Lord that fear

Blessed be the Lord our God From Zion's holy hill Who dwelleth at Jerusalem The Lord all praise ye still The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ The love of God the Father And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all Never and forever more Amen