



Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

Who will be your God?

May 13-15, 2017

(1 Kings 18:16-39) So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah. {17} When he saw Elijah, he said to him, "Is that you, you troubler of Israel?" {18} "I have not made trouble for Israel," Elijah replied. "But you and your father's family have. You have abandoned the Lord's commands and have followed the Baals. {19} Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table." {20} So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. {21} Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." But the people said nothing. {22} Then Elijah said to them, "I am the only one of the Lord's prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. {23} Get two bulls for us. Let them choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. {24} Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers by fire--he is God." Then all the people said, "What you say is good." {25} Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire." {26} So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. "O Baal, answer us!" they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made. {27} At noon Elijah began to taunt them. "Shout louder!" he said. "Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened." {28} So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. {29} Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention. {30} Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the LORD, which was in ruins. {31} Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, "Your name shall be Israel." {32} With the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs of seed. {33} He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, "Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood." {34} "Do it again," he said, and they did it again. "Do it a third time," he ordered, and they did it the third time. {35} The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench. {36} At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. {37} Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again." {38} Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. {39} When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The LORD--he is God! The LORD--he is God!"

1. What is the most memorable fireworks display you've ever witnessed? Compare that event with what Elijah witnessed.
2. Why do you think Ahab went along with Elijah's request to bring the priests of Baal and Asherah to Mount Carmel? (v.19)
3. How did the people react to Elijah's words in v. 21? How would God judge their words? (cf. Rev. 3:15-16; Matt. 10:32-33)
4. Agree/disagree: The priests of Baal were extremely fervent in their prayer to God.
5. Why do you think Elijah soaked the altar with water?
6. What contrasts do you see between Elijah's prayer and the prayers of the priests of Baal?
7. Agree/disagree: In our world, there is no competition between Baal and God.
8. How do you know that the God you worship is the true God?
9. What role (positive or negative) did your mother play in your spiritual life?
10. What will/did you "take home" from this sermon/lesson?