

Week 4 Elijah the Prophet

Wednesday Bible Study

Elijah on Mt. Carmel 1 Kings 18:16-39

1. Elijah and Ahab– Face to Face. Verse 17-20

Elijah is falsely accused of bringing trouble to Israel. He has not, rather it is the disobedience and idolatry of Ahab and Jezebel that has brought trouble because they have led the people into these evil practices. Elijah issues a challenge to Ahab and the prophets of Baal. A day of decision.

2. A Clarifying Question. Verses 21.

“How long will you waver between two opinions?” literally: “Limp along on or between two twigs” Israel had not in their minds totally rejected the Lord, but were seeking to combine worship of Him with the other Gods. (MacArthur Study Bible) The true God of the Bible requires wholehearted worship and service. The one who desires to serve the true God cannot be divided in their loyalties and worship others. (Ex. 20:1-6; Deut. 6:1-5, 13-15; 7:1-6). To live your life divided in your devotion to God, cause you to limp along spiritually. He has confronted the people with their divided heart– and they are silent before Him..

What would indicate half-hearted devotion to God in our day and age? (1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4-6)

3. The Challenge to Identify the True God. Verses 22-25

“The God who answers by fire, He is God.” Both were reputed to be the God of thunder lightning and storms. Psalm 18:13-14; 29:3-9; 104:3. This confrontation is to discredit the Gods of Ahab and Jezebel.

4. The Prophets of Baal Call upon their god. Verses 26-29

Of course Baal will not answer. Psalm 115:2-8. Elijah begins to mock the prophets. The Pagan God’s were believed to be fickle and temperamental. When Baal does not answer they begin to slash their themselves. Just as the people were speechless before Elijah, so too, Baal was speechless.

5. Elijah Calls Upon the True God. Verses 30-38. Verses 30-38.

“Come here to me.”- This is what the Lord wants his people to do– come near to God. He wants people to worship Him and be in relationship with Him. I want us to note that the altar is a symbol of all 12 tribes and Elijah references the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel. Though the kingdom is physically divided God views them as one nation. This division is not permanent. Vs. 36: The time of sacrifice was in the morning and at twilight. This was the evening sacrifice. (Ex. 29:38-41) Elijah offers a simple prayer. ***What is the significance of this simple prayer to Jehovah in contrast with the false prophets communication with Baal? (Matt. 6:7-8)***

6. The People Confess the True God. Verse 39

The true God has been revealed in a powerful way, and the people fall prostrate before this display of power. There is only one God-All will kneel before Him. (Rev. 7:9-12)



View of Kishon Valley
from Mount Carmel

Beliefs that Ancient Near Eastern Pagans Held Concerning their Gods.

Compiled from the Book:

Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament.

John H Walton

Baker Academic, 2006

Their Gods:

1. Had more power and lived longer than humans but were not considered superior to humans qualitatively.
2. Only operated within the Cosmos.
3. Had their base was in whatever city their temple sat but they desired more territory.
4. Were born and they themselves procreated with other gods and eventually died.
5. Were fallible. They made mistakes, misjudgments, and even committed crimes.
6. Were subject to their emotions. They acted on whims, fickle, craved things and experienced shame and fear.
7. Had daily routines: eating, sleeping etc.
8. Functioned within families, made decisions with other gods.
9. Were rarely described as being good. Worshippers hoped their God would act. Intrinsic goodness within the go was not generally considered.
10. Gave no assurances or promises that they would be faithful to their worshippers.
11. In regard to holiness it was only considered in regard to worship items and worship actions of the people. It did had no concern with the actual moral status of the individual.
12. Permitted the worship of other gods as long as their own “needs” were met.



Image of the false god Baal

The bible instructs us that false gods are not gods at all, but are demons (1 Cor 8; 1 Cor. 10:14-22)- Pastor Paul.