

re-thinking some of the parables ... No.23

THE PARABLE OF MOUNT CARMEL

I Kings 18:1-41 ... read it again!

INTRODUCTIONS

Let me introduce you to the **Elijah** of the 21st. century. He has been living in a time of *famine — that of hearing the word of the Lord*. These overcomers (Elijah is corporate) have mostly been hidden from the mainstream of what has been called 'Church'. In this time of seclusion, the Lord has marvellously supplied their needs and they have been learning to recognize the voice of their God. This Elijah is known by the name he carries. His name means '*the God-life of Jah*' and everyone who has the cry deep within them of desiring to come into God's image, will relate to this one. Such a burning desire has resulted in their nonacceptance by the Ahab franchises (i.e. the denominations or traditional groups that receive instructions from their HQ's and pay their dues!). It is now time for these Elijahs to come forth out of obscurity for God has spoken . . . all they know is how to move in faith, having heard the voice of their Lord. They will be easily led to their Mount Carmel experiences. Carmel means '*fruitful place*' — the place where they desire to be, so that they can pour out to others.

The next introduction before us is **Ahab** of this hour. His name means '*a friend of (his) father*' and thus easily shows us that he represents the traditional Church scene who have operated in the ways and beliefs of their fathers before them not daring to believe that there might be something different that God is doing in this day. Ahab has a big following and numbers more prophets than any other denomination and they regularly prophesy the words that the members like to hear . . . exaltations that are readily forgotten. The Ahabs find the Elijahs rather irritating; they are afraid that some of their members might give a listening ear to what they say! It seems that the Elijahs are a threat to the 'status quo' of the Ahab churches. On the other hand, great peace rests upon the Elijahs and the traditional Church with all its programs are not a threat at all; in fact they have a great concern for ALL the people therein.

THE TIME OF CHALLENGE HAS COME

It is certainly has not been prompted by Elijah but by the Lord God, who will be orchestrating every word and every move. God caused Ahab to meet Elijah showing His timing in what He was about to do. Ahab was very quick to place the blame for his uneasiness on Elijah. It was almost as if he had a wee bit of conscience left! Elijah simply spoke back the truth . . . that it was under Ahab's leadership, the people of God were following after Baal, instead of obeying the commandments and desires of the Lord. Baal (meaning '*lord, master, husband*') is the substitute for the true anointing. Now lord-Baal distributes all his words that his staff receive from Jezebel's table of '*the tree of knowledge of good and evil*'. The people believed that these prophets spoke revelation from God; it being confirmed to them by the release of much emotion and clamour as well as 'goose-bumps' up and down their spines! For us today, we can well equate Baal with a part of Antichrist whose name means '*instead of Christ*'. We will continue looking for the most part, at this parable in its original setting. The Spirit of the Lord will quicken any part that He feels you need to hear. Bear in mind that the overwhelming majority of numbers (adherents) does not make religion and her ways right! Even with over 850 bible-school trained workers are as nothing when put alongside one man who truly hears the voice of God.

TO KNOW HIM

The hour arrived for a timely challenge that would bring all of God's people back to their quest of '*knowing Him*'. Elijah called for **ALL** of God's people and **ALL** the prophets of the system to be present to see the deadness of Ahab exposed, the clearing of Elijah's name from libellous labels and above all, that the Living God really was on their side, desiring to be all in all in them *not imputing their trespasses unto them*. Elijah waited for all of God's

people involved to assemble and then he spoke God's word into their hearts.

GOD's GREAT PLAN

"How long are you going to hesitate before choosing God and His way in place of what you have been doing for so long? If the Spirit you are following be the Lord Jesus, follow Him 100% or if the spirit of tradition be lord, keep following him." Understanding how the congregations don't usually say anything, Elijah was not surprised at the silence that followed his question! Was their silence due to not knowing what was ahead? Were they afraid? Was it perhaps, that their beliefs were being threatened in which they had their security? Even the leaders were quiet . . . probably confidently quiet!

A REVEALING SACRIFICE

"Let's get one thing straight. This situation will not be decided by voting!". This large majority would be shown up as being shallow. So much for the voting system of the world that has entrapped God's people. Two sacrifices were to be made; the fire for each would come from the deity they worshipped. Ahab would be looking to his lord and later Elijah would be looking to his LORD. Which ever source answered, He would without question, be Lord and God of Israel.

From Ahab's great resources they produced two bullocks that would be sacrificed. The prophets of Baal built their altar first, put the wood upon it, killed and cut up their bullock and placed it on the top. They were ready and expectant of a supernatural display as their altar would receive fire from heaven. These folk were not strangers to the supernatural — they must have seen many signs and wonders performed by their prophets and were expecting this meeting to be like the ones they had previously experienced. They reckoned this situation would resolve itself very quickly and their ways and words would be thus substantiated and, because of it, Elijah would be brought back to the fold !!!

RELIGION'S TRADITIONAL MEETING

The congregation of Ahab with his prophetic ministry started their meeting with quite a long praise service which included 'send down the fire, lord'. Last week's anointing just wasn't here this week. What have we missed? What 'law' have we not fulfilled? Perhaps we just didn't fast long enough to get God's blessing? Ah! Here's another idea! Not enough sacrifice or self-denial. The people must give themselves more to the work of God. Four hours and still no anointing! They demonstrated that they would even lay down their lives for the church. Things got quite messy to say the least. What a sorry sight they all were. They 'had words of the lord' that they prophesied until they were hoarse. They even took turns leaping on the altar . . . now if that didn't impress their God, what would? Elijah just couldn't restrain himself as he taunted them. He just wanted each one of them see the futility of their performance and lack of reality in their worship. It was later that Elijah's compassion prompted by the Lord that said *'enough is enough'*.

This is where the tide turns. The one that had been hidden and now was out in the open called all the children of Israel together . . . all the church attendees . . . to come to where he was. *'Come closer to Him that is within me'*. They were no longer afraid to come near to Elijah. God had shown them what they had been involved with had no life that really satisfied them. Therefore they became hungry for more reality in their lives. Such is the magnetism of the Lord — *If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto Me* — that drawing power of God drew the people and they just waited and watched.

THE CROSS PRINCIPLE

The Elijahs of today know the importance of 'the cross'. . . not as something to sing about, but rather to walk in its principle of laying down one's own thinking so the mind of Christ may freely come forth. The cross is the altar of the New Covenant where grace is poured out to the hungry desiring change. The cross-altar is the foundational

access which supports the whole expression of the Christ life. This was Elijah's starting point also as he re-laid that basic teaching in the repairing of the altar at Mount Carmel. His teaching was done in the name of the Lord — moving entirely in the nature of God for *'nature' equates with 'name'*.

COMPASSION FOUND IN THE ELIJAHS

Elijah's heart went out to **ALL** of Israel . . . to all of God's people locked up in the traditions of their fathers. He simply indicated his desire by taking twelve stones which represented all twelve tribes named after the sons of Jacob. The meaning of each name shows a progressive step that God is desirous of working in the lives of His people. From the first-born Reuben — *"Behold a son"* — to last-born Benjamin, *"Son of my right hand"*. **Oh how the people of God in this day need to hear what God has stored up for them.** How He would change our Jacob nature into His Israel nature. He desires to lead us away from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that we might live by the tree of Life which is His thinking. Ahab has truly given a short-measure of the living word to his adherents. Are they not positionally seated with Christ in heavenly places at the right hand of God? We all need to have the same love that Elijah had and include all of God's people in His family not just the few that are close to us!

DOING IT ALL GOD'S WAY

What is God up to here getting Elijah to build a trench all around this altar? The word *'trench'* means *an irrigation ditch (which raises water for the field), also 'healing' from a root word 'to ascend'*. Such a ditch in our dry land has a capacity of holding a double portion of word that will cause us to ascend to the throne to receive a healing word for others. All was ready for this 'Burnt Offering' of Elijah's. A burnt offering speaks of full consecration which means a 100% surrender. The Elijahs of today are willing to offer themselves fully knowing that the source of their life in every aspect is the Lord and Him alone.

Can you imagine the murmuring when they were told to pour twelve barrels of water on the sacrifice? That water represents all the revelations that you have had over the years, all the tremendous testimonies that accompanied them along with all your beliefs about God and His plans. Those touches of God were all great in their time, but now they have become a crutch or an expression of yesterday's manna.

They had been without rain for so long that every drop of water was precious . . . four barrels three times!!! Water ran all over everything and then Elijah filled the trench. The water came from the cistern located at the foot of **Mount Carmel**. It had been stored from the rainfall of a long time ago before this drought. The timing of the conclusion of this preparation was the 'time of the evening sacrifice' — the high point of God's dealings with His overcomers . . . what He has been working towards in all His Elijahs for quite some time.

THE ELIJAH'S HEAR HOW TO PRAY

The man who knew God's voice prepared to pray in the hearing of the people of God who knew that they were the offspring of Jacob. *Jahweh-Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Israel* . . . Just a moment Elijah, that's not the correct way to address the Lord! In the bible, *Isn't it the Lord-God of Abraham, Isaac and JACOB?* **Oh no!** This prayer was relating this people to **Israel**, not Jacob. Israel was the one who had a complete change of nature when his name/nature was changed by God. This prayer was joining the people with the God that changes one. The people of God had been led astray and are now being drawn into the place of victory and ruling as *a prince with God*. . .yes, the God Who was very much alive in Israel (the true church — people, acknowledged by God as His!) but they needed to know that. Elijah testifies that he is a servant of the Lord who delivers the word entrusted to him for that occasion. The word being such that would turn the hearts of the children of God back again to their First-love, their true Father.

A CONSUMING FIRE

Fire from the presence of God . . . for *He is a Consuming fire* (Deut.4:24) — in fact a manifestation of God Himself. God delights in cleaning up anything and everything that does not relate to present truth; that fails to

overflow His Life and which doesn't **fully** magnify Christ-Jesus. So, you might ask, why did He consume the altar? It had served its purpose. For us, has the provision and principle of the cross been so worked into us that its effect can never be removed? We become the evidence of its reality. When our lifestyle is 'the cross', the law and knowledge about God's provision in Christ, has served its purpose. The wood of our carnal thinking, the dust of our 'fleshly' self-protecting reactions, the water of our testimonies of yesteryear as well as the traumatic dealings of what God has done in our lives and the dust heaped up out of our earth, has all been removed by unquenchable fire — God Himself. Do we really believe that?

A TESTIMONY OF GRACE

After the meeting was over, what was left? A testimony of God in the earth (us). . . **the empty trench** waiting to be filled with fresh oil from the throne, or anointed word that would bring life to the parched earth. This was like the dealings of God with Jacob who, afterwards, bore a mark in his earth — his body; he limped to show that his walk had been touched by God. A total of **FIVE** items God accepted in this Burnt Offering. He was bringing His people to see that Grace sets them free from the Law because He fulfilled it and He is within us . . . His holy ground. It is grace that will bring His plan of the ages to fruition.

FROM DEADNESS TO SATISFYING WORSHIP

The people witnessed it all and fell on their faces before God. Were they scared that the mercy of God wouldn't cover them? Did they expect to be consumed as well? When they were not touched by the fire, they eagerly declared that '*The Lord, He is the God*', and worshipped Him. They even said it twice . . . it overflowed out of their grateful hearts marvelling God would take specific time to come to them. They knew His forgiveness. Their testimony now was, '*we are of the circumcision which worship God in spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh*'. (Philip.3:3).

Now there was work to do. Take every religious **spirit** that oftentimes prophesies a word from the flesh or gives a message built on emotion and see that they are destroyed — never to return to be fed upon. Every thought within us that would twist God's word and mix literal words with spirit words making confusion. . . they too have to be destroyed. Anything that brings condemnation has to go.

THE DROUGHT WILL BE OVER

After such a dealings of God through His firstfruit-overcomers, there is the sound of the abundance of rain that will be sufficient for all men. . . each in his own order for *the rain falls upon the just and the unjust* . . . upon the dispensers and the receivers of His Life.

So what is the cry from your heart? **WHERE IS THE GOD OF ELIJAH?** . . . or . . . **WHERE ARE THE ELIJAH'S OF GOD?** §