

Major Event: Elijah at Mt. Carmel

Lesson: Elijah Confronts Pantheism of Baal Worship

Scriptures: 1 Kings Chapter 18

Central Text: 1 Kings 18: 20 – 40

Suggested Subjects:

1. The Lord required obedience to the Mosaic Law by the kings of Israel & Judah, if their kingdoms were to receive His blessings; disobedience would bring discipline / exile (1 Kings 9:3-9).
2. Unfortunately, all of the kings of Israel and the majority of the kings of Judah “did evil in the sight of the Lord.”
3. King Ahab reigned for 22 years and “did evil in the sight of the Lord more than all (kings) who were before him.” (1 Kings 16: 29-30).
4. The Lord sent His prophet, Elijah, to confront King Ahab & the people with their sin and their need to return to Him.
5. The people chose to place their faith in Baal (a nature god)
6. **Elijah mocked Baal because (1) he knew that Baal is not the one true God of the universe and (2) he knew Baal would not answer them (v. 29).** – See Constable’s Notes below¹
7. The false prophets were slain.

Suggested attributes:

- 1 Of God: Sovereignty, Veracity (absolute truth), Justice (regarding vs. 40)
- 2 Of Man: Sinful, Too easily swayed to believe lies -- without consistent intake of God’s word, we do not have the truth in us so use to recognize the lies.

Suggested Home Study: Acts 17; Hebrews 4:12.

Notes:

1. Teach the application today regarding the need for us, individually, as families, and as a nation to obey God’s mandates, such as walking by means of the Spirit rather than carrying out the sinful desires of our sin nature Gal. 5:16). And, that doing so requires / means making good decisions – all day long.
2. In each thing we do, are we individually glorifying the Lord or are we doing evil in His sight?
3. Today, rather than prophets, we have the Word of God. It confronts our thinking (including our intentions) which leads to our decisions which leads to our actions. Read aloud Heb. 4:12. Emphasize the importance of learning the Word on a daily basis & the importance of churches that emphasize the Word.
4. **How should we handle false gods and false prophets of today -- things such as karma, the “green” movement, the media that criticizes Israel, etc...?**

¹ Even though Baal worshippers thought the thunder represented Baal’s voice, they did not hear his voice on this occasion (v. 26). This was not a rainmaking dance but a wild dance in worship of Baal.248 Elijah did something that must have shocked everyone present: he mocked Baal. In the ancient East, even if a person did not worship an idol, he at least took its status as a god for granted.249 However, Elijah refused to acknowledge that Baal was a god at all. He suggested that Baal might be “occupied” (v. 27; **lit. relieving himself**).250 His devotees also thought Baal accompanied the Phoenician sailors, so Elijah suggested he might be on a journey (v. 27). All of these possibilities exposed Baal’s limited powers. Pagan worship has always proved destructive to humanity, as the priests’ cutting themselves illustrated (v. 28). For six hours the priests of Baal ranted and raved to no avail (v. 29).