

BEGINNING OF A SPIRITUAL REFORMATION

We are currently studying a series entitled, Life of Elijah. We are studying only the first phase of the Life of Elijah. It involved Elijah's ministry during the reign of King Ahab during an attempt to lead a Spiritual Reformation in the North Kingdom against the idolatry of Baal worship. **God had sent a 3 ½ year drought to spiritual awaken the people of the nation.**

In our [last study](#) we learned that God had positioned three men to lead a Spiritual Reformation in the Northern Kingdom: A National prophet, Elijah; A National statesman, Obadiah; and King Ahab.

We also learned that Obadiah was on his way to meet with Ahab about another drought crisis when Elijah suddenly appeared enroute to meet with the King himself. Elijah told Obadiah to set up a special meeting with him TODAY.

We will study **four aspects** of the Beginning of Spiritual Reformation that came because of Elijah's meeting with King Ahab.

1. Elijah had four important meetings which involved the Beginning of a Spiritual Reformation in the Northern Kingdom (1 Kings 18:17-40).

- 1st (1 Kg.18:17-18)
 - Elijah's special meeting with King Ahab and Obadiah (God needs all 3).
- 2nd (1 Kg.18:19-23)
 - Elijah meets with the Sons of Israel (King needed the people).
- 3rd (1 Kg.18:24-29)
 - Elijah meets with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah (national contest)
 - Like our Super Bowl.
- 4th (1 Kg.18:30-40)
 - Elijah's second meeting with the King Ahab (Reformation in full swing).

This lesson will include the **first three meetings** of Elijah; that were part of the Beginning of the Spiritual Reformation (1 Kg.18:17-29).

2. During Elijah's first meeting with King Ahab, Elijah proposed a settling of the dispute between the worship of Baal and the worship of the God of Israel.

He proposed a contest between the 850 prophets of Baal and the ONE prophet of the God of Israel, "**winner takes all**". It reminded me of David's contest with Goliath in (1 Sam.17:8-11).

As a politician, Ahab needed complete support of the people (the citizens) in this contest so, he called a meeting of the tribal leaders and received complete support for it.

All sides agreed to the contest between the 850 prophets of Baal and the One prophet of the God of Israel to meet on the Mount of Camel.

- Earlier Jezebel had murdered all but 100 of the prophets of the God of Israel?
- And God would not remove the drought until the contest was over! Who would win the contest?

- Would it matter to know that Baal worship was forbidden by the God of Israel in (Deut.16:21-23?)
- **How big is this contest to the priest-nation?**

3. **The contest is completely spiritual.**

It is part of the spiritual warfare:

(Eph.6:10-17) “Then you shall call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord, **And the God who answers by fire, He is God.** And all the people said, ‘That is a good idea.’” (1 Kg.18:24)

The contest was designed by God to bring the people from spiritual awakening to **spiritual reformation**. A turning away from idolatry of Baal worship and turning back to worship of the God of Israel with God’s long history of faithfulness.

4. **Rules of the contest are laid-out!**

The prophets of Baal are allowed to go first because they have the larger numbers (1 Kg.18:25-29). This should a sure bet and done quickly.

The Rules:

- Choose one ox
- Prepare it for sacrificial offering
- Call on name of your god; but put no fire under it (1 Kg.18:25-26).

1st exercise: Normal worship of Baal from morning to noon

- **No answer** (1 Kg.18:27-28).

2nd exercise: Extreme worship from midday to evening

- **Still no answer from Baal** (18:28-29).

Paul told the Corinthians of his day to avoid the mistakes of ancient Israel regarding Idolatry (1 Cor.10).

(1 Cor.10:6-7) “**Now these things happened as examples for us (Church Age Believers)**, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were as is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play.’”

(1 Cor.10:11-14) “**Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fail. **No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. Therefore, my beloved, **flee from idolatry.**”****

Doctrinal conclusion:

(1 Cor.10:19-22) “What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? ²⁰No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. ²¹You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. ²²Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? We are not stronger than He, are we? (1 Cor.10:31)