

INTRODUCTION

1 Kings 18 contains one of the most exciting stories in the Bible – a direct confrontation between the LORD and false gods. In the midst of this confrontation is Elijah, a prophet of God. Elijah had outrageous expectation of His God, as he went above and beyond the norm as he prepared his sacrifice.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever had to choose to stand alone for what was right? Share with your group how that went.
2. Read 1 Kings 18:20-39. What did Elijah say to challenge the people of Israel and what was their response (v 21)? Why do you think they responded this way?
3. In 1 Kings 18:22, Elijah states that he is the only one of God's prophets left. Read 1 Kings 18:13, and discuss why you believe Elijah said this.
4. Read 1 Kings 18:26-29. How long did the prophets of Baal cry to him to answer? What things did they do to try to get his attention?
5. What was Elijah's attitude towards Baal (v 27)?
6. Read 1 Kings 18:30-35. What does it say about the state of Israel's idolatry that the altar to God had to be repaired?
7. List below the things Elijah did to prepare his sacrifice to the Lord:
8. Since there was a drought in Israel for three years, where do you think the water came from?
9. What do these preparations say about Elijah's outrageous expectations of God?
10. Read 1 Kings 18:36-37. What do you notice about Elijah's prayer?

Study Questions for Community Groups

11. How did God answer Elijah's prayer? How did the Israelites respond?

SCRIPTURE

²⁰So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. ²¹Elijah 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. ²²Then Elijah said to them, "I am the only one of the LORD'S prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. ²³Get two bulls for us. Let Baal's prophets 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. ²⁴Then 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." ²⁵Elijah 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." ²⁶So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. "Baal, answer us!" they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made. ²⁷At 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." ²⁸So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. ²⁹Midday 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. ³⁰Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the LORD, which had been torn down. ³¹Elijah 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." ³²With 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. ³³He 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. ³⁵The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench. ³⁶At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "LORD, the 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. ³⁷Answer me, LORD, answer me, so these people will know that You, LORD, are God, and that You are turning their hearts back again." ³⁸Then 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. ³⁹When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The Lord—He is God! The Lord—He is God!"

1 Kings 18:20-39

APPLICATION

Participate in the 21-Day Prayer Challenge.