

God Does Amazing things to get our Attention!

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I have spoken concerning the things that God has done down through the ages to get the attention of those with whom He has desired to reveal his glory. Whether it is a hard headed king, a prophet of Baal, or God's prophets, He performed marvelous array of miracles to let them know that He alone is God. 1 Kings Chapter 19

Today I want to speak about the prophet, Elijah. A few weeks ago, I spoke about the miracle of Elijah stopping the rain for a period of three years and then he showed up and announced to Ahab that it was time to meet the challenge of showing who had the power to bring fire down from heaven to burn a sacrifice. The prophets of Baal went first and they built an altar. They cried out all day "hear us o, Baal, hear us. Nothing happened. They danced, they shouted, they went into a religious ritual of even cutting themselves trying to get results. Nothing happened. Elijah made fun of them. "Cry louder", he shouted. "He is a god. Perhaps Baal is asleep and needs to be awakened. Maybe he is on a journey. Either he is talking or pursuing?" He mocked them and all day he watched as they wore themselves out praying, pleading and crying out to a god who didn't exist. After the sun began to set and the day was done, Elijah took charge. He built an altar to Jehovah, he put a bull on it and he ordered that water be poured over the altar. The people poured water until everything was drenched and the trenches around the altar were filled with water. Elijah came near to the altar and said a simple prayer. "LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and that I have done all these things at your word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that you are the LORD God and that you have turned their heart back again."

Fire came down and consumed the burnt sacrifice, the wood and the stones and the dust and licked up the water that was in the trench. And the people saw it and fell on their faces and said "The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God. "Not one of the prophets of Baal escaped death that day.

Following this great victory, rain came down from heaven and Ahab went home to report to his wife, Jezebel, concerning the events of the day. Jezebel was furious that her prophets of Baal had lost the battle and lost their lives.

She promised that "Elijah would be killed within a day's time. When Elijah was given that report, he ran for his life and went out into the desert and sat under a Juniper tree. He asked God to let him die. He was so worn out that he fell asleep. An angel came and touched him and told him to rise and eat. He looked and he saw a cake cooking on some coals and there was some cold water to drink. He ate and drank and fell back to sleep.

The angel of the LORD came a second time and touched him and said, "Arise and eat for the journey is too great for you." He arose, ate and drank and went on the strength of that meal for 40 days and 40 nights until he arrived at Horeb, the mountain of the LORD. He lodged in a cave and the word of the LORD came to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

"I have been doing my best for you, LORD God of hosts. All the children of Israel have forsaken your covenants, thrown down your altars, and slain your prophets with the sword. All except me and now they are seeking my life to take it away."

God said, "Go forth! Stand upon the mountain of the LORD. Behold the LORD passed by and a great and strong wind rent the mountain and broke rocks into pieces before the LORD but the LORD was not in the wind and after the wind, an earthquake but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came fire, but God was not in the fire and after the fire, a still small voice. When Elijah heard the voice, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave and the voice came again.

"What are you doing here, Elijah?" Elijah repeated the same story about his being the only faithful one. Everyone else in Israel had forsaken the LORD's covenants, had torn down his altars, had slain God's prophets with swords, and now they were out to get him killed also.

The LORD said, "Go through the wilderness of Damascus and when you arrive, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. Also anoint Jehu, the son of Nimshi to be king over Israel. And you shall anoint Elisha to be prophet in your stead." These leaders will eliminate the false prophets of Baal. Yet I want you to know that there are 7000 people in Israel who have not bowed to Baal nor kissed his image. Go, Elijah."

How many times do we wonder, "Lord, I've done my best to spread the gospel of truth and it seems that the false teachers and false leaders are multiplying and the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ is being overcome by the liars and the deceivers of our day. How can I go on and get victory over the enemy, the destroyer of souls?" Have you ever come to God with a discouraged heart and heard the words, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; for he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Galatians 6:7-10.

God calls us to do his work and the results are left for God to decide. We don't need to worry or be concerned about the outcome; God will bring about his purpose when we are obedient to him. When we feel down and feel like giving up, how often does the Lord send someone with a warm cake right out of the oven. It might be a phone call to encourage us, it might come in a form of a letter in the mail reminding us of the blessings that God has

given to someone we ministered to. Last Sunday night, a young lady came up to me at the Dexter Pentecostal Church. She asked me if I knew her and I said, "No." She said, "I'm Melissa and this is my daughter. We use to attend your church. I wanted to tell you how much I loved your book and my Mom loves it to. She just finished reading it." Here is a family that came when we first became pastors and we introduced them to Dexter Pentecostal Church. I didn't realize that they have been attending there for many years and now their daughters and grandchildren are still serving the Lord. The seeds that we sowed 23 years ago continue to bear fruit. Praise God! We will never know the extent that our witness for the Lord has on others until we meet Jesus in eternity, but He calls us to be faithful. Satan would like to have us think that we are the only ones. We are alone in keeping the gospel pure as the Apostles taught. God has people who are called by his name who have not bowed to the pressure of this worldly culture to set aside holy living, to set aside purity in marriage, to accept those who murder babies in the womb, to accept those who follow false teachings and religions. He is among the 2's and the 3's who gather in his name for his word declares that He is in the midst of us. I want to be true to the faith; I want to stand firm in my convictions; I want to hear "Well done, good and faithful servant when the Lord calls my name.