

Elijah Called on the Name of the LORD
1 Kings 18:20-40

1. Don't **CONFUSE** "prayer" with talking to God, 18:20-26 (cf. *Matthew 6:9-10, 24; Joshua 24:15; Psalm 135:15-18; John 14:6*).
2. Pity the zealous who pray **POWERLESS** prayers, vv. 26-29 (cf. *Romans 9:1-4, 10:1-3; 2 Timothy 2:25-26; Proverbs 28:9; Isaiah 44:12-20; 45:20; 46:1-13; 59:2; Acts 14:8-18; 1 Corinthians 8:5*).
3. Pray so that God gets the **CREDIT** for answered prayer, v. 24, 30-39 (cf. *Isaiah 37:20; Psalm 79:9; Daniel 9:19; Matthew 6:9-10; Philippians 1:9-11; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12*).



Family Time:

Read 1 Kings 18:1-45 together as a family, assigning different verses to multiple readers.

How is the showdown between Elijah and prophets of Baal like a battle in sports between rival teams? Who is clearly the winner in 1 Kings 18? Who are the losers? Now read 1 John 5:1-5 and 1 Corinthians 15:54-57. Who gets to be a winner and how does that happen? Pray together, giving thanks to God for winning the victory for us in Jesus Christ.

For Further Study, Thought, and Discussion

1. Read 1 Kings 17:1, 18:1-2 and 18:41-45. What is the immediate context of the duel between Elijah and the prophets of Baal (18:20-40)? Considering that Baal was believed to be a god of both lightning (fire) and storms, and Mt. Carmel provides a great view of the Mediterranean (v. 43), what does it seem is the purpose of duel? Hint: see vv. 24, 37-39. What does that reveal to us about God's willingness to use nature to teach us about Himself?

2. Who prays, and to whom do they pray in 18:20-38? Compare and contrast their prayers looking at method, words used, time, etc. How is this story illustrative of Jesus' instructions about prayer in Matthew 6:7-10? What can we learn about our own prayers from this example?
3. In the context of the duel on Carmel, Elijah mocked the prophets of Baal for unresponsiveness of their god (v. 27). What do the prophets do in response in v. 28-29? What adjectives would you use to describe their devotion to their religion? Read Romans 9:1-4 and 10:1-3. What was Paul's attitude toward those who were zealous in faith, but who rejected truth? How is that instructive for our attitude toward those who devote themselves in prayer to false gods?
4. "Interfaith prayer gatherings," where people of different faiths are brought together to pray together, are common in our pluralistic culture. Given what you've learned from 1 Kings 18, would you accept an invitation to such a gathering? Why or why not? If you were asked to pray at one, would you do so? Why or why not? If yes, how would you pray?
5. In v. 37, Elijah prayed a simple prayer God would answer his prayer so that He would get the credit as the One who turned them back to Himself. He was praying that God would be glorified by people in response to His power at work. What can we learn from this about how we pray? Are there ways to pray that wouldn't lead people to give God credit for the answer?

NEXT WEEK: Hezekiah Called on the Name of the LORD