

## Message Notes

June 27, 2021

Elijah  
Renewal by Grace Through Faith  
(1 Kings 18:1-40)

### Two Paths

- ◆ Elijah is an \_\_\_\_\_ man with extraordinary faith who \_\_\_\_\_ up in a time of darkness.
- ◆ Elijah is sent by God to put before the people two paths: the path of \_\_\_\_\_ worship or the path of \_\_\_\_\_ worship.
- ◆ Sometimes the \_\_\_\_\_ thing for me is getting what I thought I \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ If Baal wins then Elijah is the troubler of Israel and Ahab is \_\_\_\_\_. If YHWH wins then Ahab is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Israel and Elijah is vindicated.

### Lingering at the Crossroads

Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions?” (1 Kings 18:21)

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_ is the blending of different beliefs and values into a single \_\_\_\_\_ worldview.
- ◆ Elijah proclaimed that YHWH and Baal are \_\_\_\_\_ not \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ is the experience of being torn between \_\_\_\_\_ (this world is all there is) and \_\_\_\_\_ (there must be something more).
- ◆ The \_\_\_\_\_ of every false god is if you do enough, you’ll be \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ Halfhearted worship offers what you really \_\_\_\_\_ but comes with a cost. Wholehearted worship looks costly but offers what you really \_\_\_\_\_.

### A Note on 1 Kings 18:40

We live in a pluralistic society where peaceful coexistence of religions is normal and we expect religious freedom and tolerance. This is one of those moments in the Bible where we wonder what sort of God YHWH is who kills the prophets of Baal. This doesn’t seem to square with our society today or a picture of God as Love. It’s good that we would wrestle with texts like these. Here’s a few things to consider:

- (1) The cult of Baal was known for human sacrifice, particularly child sacrifice through burning. See Ezekiel 16 and Jeremiah 7 and 9. Even in our liberal democracy, there are forms of worship we simply would not tolerate.
- (2) See Deuteronomy 18:9-20. God tells Israel to listen to his prophet to know how to live in His kingdom, not to cult leaders. God says He Himself will call to account anyone who lives by false prophecy, but that Israel is to put to death a corrupt prophet. The execution of Baal’s prophets under Elijah obeys this law.
- (3) Children were sacrificed in the Valley of Hinnom. In Hebrew, it’s *gey hinnom*, where we get the term Gehenna, the New Testament’s word for hell. Jews at the time of Jesus remembered what took place in the valley and considered it hellish. Jesus is purging what is of hell from earth and bringing what is of heaven to earth. Like a judge who removes a dangerous person from society and a mother who protects her children from harm—love cannot tolerate evil.
- (4) Jesus specifically rebukes his followers (See Luke 9:51-56) for the idea that he had come to deal out judgement on God’s enemies. There is a time appointed by God for judgement against those who lead others into spiritual death, but we are not authorized for that now. Elijah acts in a special capacity as God’s anointed within the former covenantal framework. This violence is a *sign* to us, but not a *model* for us. We are to love our enemies while enacting justice for victims of evil.