

# God's Power vs. Human Weakness

## 1 Kings 18-19

Key Bible Texts	1 Kings 18-19
Key Bible Verse(s)	"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. (1 Kings 18:21)

## Background to the Study

Obadiah, a faithful servant of Jehovah, managed the household of the wicked King Ahab yet "feared the LORD greatly." He courageously hid and fed 100 prophets during Jezebel's purge. When Elijah approached him with a message for Ahab, Obadiah hesitated, knowing Ahab had searched relentlessly for Elijah.

The contrast between Obadiah's and Ahab's greetings to Elijah is striking—Obadiah showed reverence, falling on his face, while Ahab accused Elijah of troubling Israel. Elijah challenged the people, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" Many Israelites knew who the true God was. However, idolatrous worship brought sinful pleasure, which they may have been reticent to give up. The scene on Mount Carmel unfolded with 450 prophets of Baal, but the prophets of Asherah did not appear. Baal's followers believed he controlled rain and fertility, yet their desperate attempts to summon him failed. Elijah, in contrast, made his challenge even harder by pouring water over his sacrifice. At the evening sacrifice, he prayed, and God sent fire, consuming everything.

Obedying **Deuteronomy 13:1-5**, Elijah executed the false prophets. Despite God's promise of rain, Elijah prayed persistently, demonstrating deep faith. A small cloud confirmed the coming downpour. Strengthened by God, Elijah outran Ahab's chariot to Jezreel—a feat showcasing divine empowerment.

Elijah had just experienced two glorious victories on Mount Carmel — fire on the sacrifice and rain upon the land. One might expect him to have been on the mountaintop praising the Lord. However, because of Jezebel's threatening message to him, Elijah ran in fear for his life. Elijah was exhausted and discouraged as he sat down under a juniper tree and asked the Lord to take his life. Today, what Elijah experienced might be called "**emotional burnout.**" He also had some self-pity. However, God loved him and provided what he needed: rest and nourishment before his journey to Mount Horeb.

When Elijah told God that "I, even I only, am left," he forgot that others had helped him kill Baal's prophets. The wind, fire, and earthquake were dramatic events for someone to experience, especially

while alone. Still there was not a message for Elijah from the Lord in these things. Finally, the “still small voice,” a gentle call, caused Elijah to move out to the entrance of the cave, for he recognized God’s Voice. After Elijah listened, he made a fresh start at obeying God and following His leading.

Elijah finally realized there were still tasks for him to do and that God would be with him to help him do them. God instructed him to anoint three men, and said that these men would bring punishment to Israel. As king of Syria, Hazael would fight against Israel, Jehu would nearly destroy Baal worship in the northern kingdom (2 Kings 10:18-31), and Elisha would succeed Elijah.

## TESTIMONIES FROM OUR DAY

*Life is full of choices, some of which have lasting consequences. A man once struggled with addiction and despair, feeling hopeless after years at sea during World War II. Standing alone by the ship’s rail, he contemplated ending his life. As he battled inner turmoil, he heard the voice of Jesus asking, “If you jump, what will the end be?” That moment changed everything—he chose life, later prayed, and was born again.*

*Similarly, Elijah challenged Israel to choose between serving Baal or the Lord. Just as the man’s decision determined his future, our personal choices shape our eternal destiny. In our focus verse, Israel was called upon to choose between two options. Elijah challenged them, as a nation, to come to a decision. Would they continue serving Baal, or would “the LORD be God”? In our spiritual lives, we are confronted with the decision of whom we will serve. We have two choices — the God of salvation, or Satan, the enemy of our souls. Our personal decisions will determine our eternal destination.*

*God is always ready to guide us, offering wisdom and support for both spiritual and everyday decisions. By seeking Him and standing on His promises, we can navigate life with faith and assurance.*

## A Closer Look

### Question 1

How many prophets did Obadiah hide? (1 Kings 18:3-4) Why?

### Question 2

How did the people respond at Mount Carmel when asked which God they would serve (1 Kings 18:21)? Why would they have responded in this manner?

### Question 3

Why did Elijah have water poured over the sacrifice? 1 Kings 18:33-35.

**Question 4**

After praying a short and simple prayer that caused fire to come down from Heaven and consume the sacrifice, why did Elijah need to pray seven times to cause the rain to come? 1 Kings 18:42-45. How can we know today that we are serving the true God?

**Question 5**

Why did Elijah run, when for the past three years, he had done nothing without listening to and obeying the Lord's instructions? 1 Kings 19:1-3

**Question 6**

When Elijah fled to Mount Horeb, in what manner did the Lord speak to him? (1 Kings 19:12) How does God speak to us today?

## Take Home

God's blessing will be upon us as we choose to make decisions based on His Word and His will for us as individuals. No matter how alone we feel or how much of a failure we think we are, God can use us if we listen and obey.