

### **Choose This Day whom You Will Serve (1 Kings 18:16-46)**

- In Rom 1:18-19 Paul writes that men in their unrighteousness suppress the truth
- Elijah confronts idolatry head on – a show-down between Baal and Yahweh
- This age old battle that between Baal and Yahweh, the true God and idolatry
- Rom 3:10 "None is righteous, no, not 1; no one understands; no 1 seeks for God
- Elijah was appointed for this purpose: confront God's people in their idolatry

#### **I. God Whose Strength Is Made Perfect in Weakness**

- It would appear the contest was uneven: the odds were stacked in favor of Baal
- Elijah summoned the people to Mt. Carmel (18:19) on a highest mountain
- The contest was staged in a most desirable place for Baal to exert all his power
- Baal had the masses on his side, as well as all the nations' leadership on his side
- The whining & crying from sun up to sun down surely impressed Baal (26-29)
- The king and all his prophets certainly would have caught his ear (vs. 19)
- Baal's cult was clearly well established while the Lord's altar was in ruins (30)
- Even Elijah's wood was drenched enough to make a little mote around the altar
- As Elijah taunted the crowds to a fever pitch for Baal, the weaker Baal looked
- It was when Elijah's case looked impossible that God demonstrated His power

#### **II. God Is A Jealous God**

- There would be no room for compromise and no room for negotiation with Baal
- The first commandment requires the exclusive loyalty of God's people Ex 20:2
- There's no room for Israel to waver between two opinions (Heb 10:29)
- They prayed for rain, but God would not answer the double minded (James 1:7-8)

#### **III. God Is Our Great Deliverer**

- Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal was a picture of the final battle
- It was a picture of the day when Yahweh would fully & finally destroy all idolatry
- After Yahweh's confrontation with Baal, all the people responded to God (18:39)
- Elijah ordered the prophets of Baal be taken down to the river & slaughtered (40)

#### **IV. This Great God Is a Consuming Fire**

- Started as a battle between Yahweh & Baal, ended in a burnt offering to Yahweh
- God consumed Elijah's sacrifice, and not the people because God is merciful
- The fire consuming the sacrifice- not judgment, but as grace in reclaiming Israel