

Spiritual Warriors

From a Transcribed Sermon

by

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Home Missionary Baptist Church

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INTRODUCTION



As the kings of Israel became more evil, the people of the northern kingdom became more and more detached and distant from God and His ways. They became more brazen in their sin. By the time of Ahab, the seventh king, the nation had plummeted to the depths of spiritual degradation of Baal worship. Baal worship had replaced their worship of God and it became the national religion of Israel.

Baal worship had resulted in Israel having problems they had never had before. They became so entangled with “Baal worship”, they did not know what to do or how to solve their troubles.

Then, Elijah, as he is on his way to confront Ahab, declares, “Elijah is here.” Elijah means, “My God is the Lord”. Elijah makes a declaration that we, as God's “spiritual warriors” need to make in today's society, confounded by modern day Baal worship. *“Elijah is here!”*



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1st Kings 18: 1-16. *"And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, [that is the 3rd year of the famine] saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. And Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria. And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly: For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.) And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts. So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself. And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: [Elijah is on his way to see Ahab] and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou that my lord Elijah? And he answered him, I am: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? As the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the Spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth. Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the LORD'S prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water? And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold,*

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Elijah is here: and he shall slay me. And Elijah said, As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to day. So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah."

It has been nearly three and one half years since Elijah first went to Ahab in chapter 17:1, where he declared, *"As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years ..."* Since that time, Ahab sought the life of Elijah. That is made clear in the verses we began with. But, God miraculously sustained Elijah. Now, God instructs Elijah, go show himself unto Ahab.

By this time, we see from verse 2, the famine was sore in the land. As Elijah is on his way to Ahab, Ahab says to his governor Obadiah, "We have to find some water. We've already lost some beasts. We can not lose our horses and mules. We have to find water. We have to find grass. You go one way, I'll go the other in search of water and grass." As they do so, Elijah meets Obadiah. That is in verse 7. Obadiah falls on his face and he asked a question, *"Art thou that my lord Elijah?"* Aren't you Elijah? In verse 8, Elijah answers Obadiah, *"I am."* Then Elijah says, *"... go, tell thy lord behold, Elijah is here."* Obadiah was very reluctant to do so, out of concern for his own life. He presents that in verses 9 and 10.

"Go tell thy lord, go tell Ahab, Elijah is here." In that declaration, we see a man of great courage, a man of steadfastness. He stands firm and unashamed. He says, "Go tell Ahab, Elijah is here." It is from that statement that we want to take the main thought of the message. When he said, "Go tell Ahab that Elijah is here," I picture him as a spiritual warrior. That is our subject, **"Spiritual Warriors."** I want to consider this action of Elijah and then make application.

First of all, consider the background leading up to this event. Ahab was, of course, the son of Omri. Omri was a wicked king. He assassinated Zimri his predecessor. Omri was a very

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wicked ruler. He passed on his wicked ways to his son Ahab. So much so, that the name Ahab means, “brother” or “friend of his father”. Brother or friend of his father. The six kings prior to Ahab were all ungodly kings, all evil men. In 1st Kings 16:30, *“Ahab ... did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him.”* So, Ahab was worse. In verse 33, it says, *“... Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.”*

As the kings became more evil, the people of the northern kingdom became more and more detached and distant from God and His ways. They became more brazen in their sin. By the time of Ahab, the seventh king, the nation has plummeted to the depths of spiritual degradation. Ahab would marry Jezebel, who was a princess of Zidon. They were the descendants of the Canaanites, worshipers of the false god Baal. Ahab marries Jezebel, and in 1st Kings 16:31, *“... [he] went and served Baal, and worshipped him.”* Ahab would also build a temple in the capital city of Samaria. Verse 32 says, *“And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.”* So, there is an altar in the house of Baal. Ahab has built a temple for Baal, which he had built in the Samaria.

Baal worship was satanic in origin. It was very anti-God. It was a form of rejection of God. It was imported from the pagan Canaanites. And now, we see it is adopted as the national religion. The people, for many years had been conditioned to accept Baal and Baal worship. Israel is now practicing the very thing that they were to drive out. They are now practicing Baal worship. It has become their national religion.

Ahab's wife, Jezebel, who was steeped in Baal worship, was intolerant of any recognition or any worship of God. Ahab not having any backbone, allowed her to kill the priests of the Lord.

Baal was thought to be the god of fertility, the god of agriculture. He was believed to be the giver of life. In Baal

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worship, people would gather around the altars of Baal. They would often cut themselves with knives. It was a religion in which the human body was disrespected and desecrated.

Furthermore, sexual deviation, immorality, immodesty, nakedness, and lewdness were an integral part of Baal worship. People would gather around the altars of Baal, where there would be sexual orgies, both heterosexual and homosexual. The worshipers of Baal would communicate with Baal by ritual sexual actions. By these sexual actions, they were portraying what they wanted from Baal, which was fertility. It was very abominable system of worship. They wanted Baal to bring rain to make fertile mother earth, as they would have called it. The people would gather on high hills, almost like a theater or a stadium. There they would observe public sex. This sounds pretty familiar. People do the same thing today. It is called “concerts” and many other things.

Baal worship was a religion rooted in sensuality, that was licentious, and even involved prostitution in the temples of Baal. It was a religion of sexual abandoned. It was rooted in pleasure, festivity, and self indulgence. Again, this sounds very familiar. The people liked Baal worship because it was exciting. It was exciting to their flesh. They liked the liberty that it gave them to do what they pleased. Additionally, no doubt, they liked the business that was facilitated through Baal worship. In reality, Baal worship corresponds to the activities that people participate in today. Very much so. The sacrifice of infants was also integral to Baal worship. This sounds very familiar, as well. Pantheism, the worship of earth, was integral to Baal worship. Baal worship was very popular. Personal success, personal networking, were dependent upon attending Baal worship.

Baal worship had been infiltrated into Jewish life during the time of the judges. Refer to Judges 2:12-13. In Judges 2:14, you will find the effects that Baal worship had upon the nation. *"And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he*

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delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, [there was a loss of income, there was a loss of property] and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, [there was a loss of status, all as the effect of Baal worship] so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies." This all sounds so familiar. All the result of Baal worship.

Judges 2:15 says, "... *and they were greatly distressed.*" That is, this infiltration of Baal worship brought them much anguish, misery, and despair. It put them in dire straights. Baal worship had brought economic, political, and social ill. That was the result of the infiltration, the beginning of Baal worship. But by the time Ahab is king, Baal worship is widespread. It is prevalent. The altars of Baal are everywhere. Temples have been built for Baal and the altars of God had been casted down. Everywhere you looked was the heresy of Baal. Everywhere you looked were the ways, the philosophies, and the pursuits of Baal worshippers. There was open antagonism toward God and toward the people of God.

The northern kingdom of Israel had become a godless society. In some way, almost everything about their daily life was now associated and connected to Baal worship. In some way, associated and connected to the philosophies, doctrines, and the ways of Baal. The northern kingdom of Israel is now engulfed and submerged in the filth, vileness, wickedness, and ungodliness of Baal worship. The perversion and the heresy of Baal worship was everywhere. They are under the influence and sway of Baal worship. Under the influence and sway of that which is repulsive, loathsome, and shameful. That was the condition of the nation, or the kingdom. They were in a cycle of doom.

There is Elijah. He is on his way to face Ahab, the very embodiment of evil, with a message from the Lord. He is God's representative. He meets Obadiah. Obadiah is diligently looking for food, for water, and for grass. Why is Obadiah looking for

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water and grass? Because of a drought and famine. Why was it a time of drought and famine? Because of Baal worship.

Because of Baal worship, Israel had problems. They now have to find solutions to problems that they created. That is our society today. *We have problems we would never have if it were not for Baal worship!* How does our government and how does our society seek to solve all these problems? More Baal worship. That is the cycle that God's people were in. It is the cycle we are in. The root of the problem went back to a departure from God and His ways and the adoption of Baal worship. So it is today. Their life was now dictated by problems that were the result of sin. So it is today. *People don't even know what bathroom to go to because of sin.* You wouldn't have that problem if it weren't for sin.

It was a time of barrenness and loss. It was a time of emptiness and ruin. All as a result of a departure from God and His ways and the adoption of Baal worship. It was also a time of persecution against the people of God. There was widespread apostasy, widespread idolatry, indifference, coldness, and unconcern among even the people of the Lord. It was in these circumstances that we see Elijah. He declares, "Go tell Ahab that Elijah is here."

In the eyes of society, Elijah is an individual who is standing on the wrong side of public opinion in his day. Yet, he says without any fear, with no sign of wavering in his voice, "Elijah is here!" He is in the midst of hatred, opposition against God, and a society that has fallen in line with the programs and agenda of Satan. He is living in a society that was offensive and repulsive to God. Nevertheless, there he stands, with great courage, fearlessness, and he boldly declares, "Go tell Ahab, the very embodiment of evil and wickedness, behold Elijah is here."

The name Elijah means, "My God is the Lord". When he says, Elijah is here, he is making a statement. The statement is, that he stood clearly for God. Elijah is here.

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Now let's make application to you and I. We need to be like Elijah. We need to make it very clear to even the embodiment of evil, we are here and we stand for God. That is who we stand for. That is what Elijah was saying. Behold, Elijah is here! Elijah had no connection whatsoever with Baal worship. We must make sure that's true of us as well. Elijah stood apart from it and he declares, Elijah is here!

Nowdays someone may think, "Well, we don't have Baal worship today. We don't have that problem today." Such a thought would be entirely erroneous. Baal worship, though it's not called Baal worship today, is still very relevant, is still very prevalent in twenty first century America. It is everywhere. The pillars, the core tenants of Baal worship, (disrespect, desecration of the human body), is everywhere. It's not called Baal worship, but it is still the same thing. Nakedness, immodesty, sexual perversion, child sacrifice, pantheism; those are all the tenants of Baal worship, and they are everywhere today. They are widespread, protmoted, encouraged, accepted, applauded, and celebrated today.

Satan has given them a different mask. Today, the core tenants are masked under meaningful relationships, affairs, freedom of expression. These are all masks for Baal worship. Adult entertainment, alternative lifestyles, freedom of choice, environmentalism, global warming, etc. These are some of the masks that Baal worshipers wear today.

Modern liberalism deviates little from its ancient predecessor, Baal worship. There is no difference. Modern day liberals like to label themselves as progressives. But we will just call them humanist, because that is what they are whether they realize it or not. They labor under the misconception and deceit that their fundamental tenants and blind secular humanist faith is progressive. There is nothing progressive about it. It is a mask.

The so called "progressive movement" of today is really just a retread of pagan Baal worship. That is what it is. It is

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promoted by politicians, by academia, and by the media. These folks are the priests of Baal worship. But it's not just self styled progressives or secular humanists who have adopted the fundamental pillars of Baalism. We live, of course, in postmodern, post-christian times and there is something called today *emergent Christianity*. New age Christianity. Which is simply *quasi Christianity*. In other words, it's not Christianity at all. It's simply liberalism stamped with the word Christian. But that doesn't change it. People get deceived.

Those who adhere to this emergent Christianity, under the guise of social justice, often support or at least rationalize abortion and the homosexual agenda of so called, progressives. When a child of God can say, "Well, I don't really see anything wrong with two men getting married or two women," you have quasi Christianity. That is, it doesn't amount to a hill of beans. It's not Christian at all. You have adopted a philosophy of Baal worship.

This is where we are in our country. Make no mistake about it, Baal worship is still very, very prevalent today. It happens all the time in many, many different cultural variations. Hollywood, pop culture, entertainment, on and on we can go. It's not much different than the Baal worship that takes place in the Old Testament. The masses today revel in, glamorise, and celebrate what God calls wicked.

Here we are. We are a very individualistic, self indulgent society. A society that is oblivious to God. A very atheistic society. A society that has fallen prey to godless philosophies, reasonings, viewpoints, goals, and pursuits of a world that is steeped in Baal worship. It has been for a long, long, long time.

Here we are in a time of intensifying, open and blatant hatred, denial, and disregard of God. A time of open and blatant hostility, and defiance towards God and the word of God. A society that mocks, ridicules, and renounces the word of God. We are surrounded by the enemies, haters, and deniers of God.

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They are annoyed, they are irritated by any mention of the name of God. They're out to tear down every altar of God and put in it's place the altars of Baal.

As a result of all of this, we are a society drowning in confusion. People don't know what to do. *They have problems they never had before* and they're not even smart enough to say, "You know why we have these problems? Because we departed from God and we put in it's place Baal worship." They are not smart enough to figure that out. What do they do? They pass new laws. They get more and more steeped in the very thing that's brought on all their problems. There is no solution in sight. But we, God's people, like Elijah, we are to stand in the midst of it all. We are to stand with courage, fearlessness, and conviction of soul, and boldly and steadfastly declare, **"We're for God! I'm here and I stand for God!"** We must be more bold than we've ever been to declare that today. We must be more willing to declare that than we've ever been. *"I'm for God,"* in the right place, in the school. "But it's against the law." No it's not. You stand and you say, "I'm for God. Come what may, I'm for the Lord."

We need some Elijahs, who in their little corner of the world, will have some courage and conviction in a God defying society, a society that is blindly and willfully ignorant of God. We need to stand and say, *God is supreme. God is absolute. God is infinite. God is almighty.* We need some Elijahs, who in their corner of the world, will declare with boldness and conviction Jesus Christ. Elijahs who will declare, in an anti-Christ world, that in Jesus Christ there is the righteousness, acceptance, redemption, forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace that you need. *Elijah is here!* Oh, we need to stand and say I believe that all fullness is in Jesus Christ.

Oh, for some Elijahs to stand in the midst of the debauchery, perversion, lewdness, infidelity, deviation, nakedness, immorality, and the sensuality; stand in the midst of

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all the anti God philosophies and declare holiness of life. Declare, to a world that does not believe it, that all sexual expression, desires, and acts are between husband and wife. By husband and wife, I mean male and female, not male and male and not female and female. We need some Elijahs to stand up and say, "*Elijah is here and we're here to declare to you today that all sexual expressions are between a man and a woman in a union of marriage.*" It needs to be boldly declared. All male and male, and female and female, are abominable unions. They are demonic unions. Elijah is here.

Oh, for some Elijahs to step forth in the midst of all the confusion, disorder, chaos, turmoil, upheaval, and dysfunction and declare with boldness and conviction of soul, that God has left us his word! In a society that despises, mocks, ridicules, and renounces the BIBLE, that thinks that they are smarter than God, OH, for some Elijahs to stand and say, "*This book! This book is the eternal, infinite, inerrant, immortal, word of God! Thus saith the Lord!*" The world needs to hear that today. They need to hear that the message of the BIBLE is absolute, it is fixed, it is immovable, it is unchangeable, it is unaffected by the times and it is inflexible. It does not bend.

Sinners need to be told, "You can regulate your life by the BIBLE. You can build your life upon this book. You can regulate and build your marriage upon this book. You can regulate and build your home upon this book." It doesn't have to be the way it is today. Realize the problem, realize the root of the matter is Baal worship and get back to God. *Elijah is here!* You can build your life, your home, your marriage, and all your relationships on, "Thus saith the Lord." How we need some Elijahs.

In this day, when the government, the so called judicial system, schools, families, marriages, and homes have been stripped, it is a famine. They've been stripped of respect, stripped of faith in God and dependence upon God, stripped of Godly

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values, and morality, and integrity, stripped of that which is good, and decent, and beneficial to society, stripped of sanity. We need some Elijahs that will stand, with courage, fearlessness, without any wavering, and boldly declare, "My God is the Lord! The Lord of heaven. My God is the Lord who wrote the BIBLE. This is His word. My God is the Lord! And I'm here today to live for Him. I'm here today as His representative."

The world thinks we have lost our minds. But you know what, my life's pretty good. The world thinks I'm crazy, the world thinks you're crazy. My home is not torn upside down. I haven't lost sanity. I know you might think I have, but I haven't. I'm not living in dysfunction. My God is the Lord! Even if the world thinks we've lost our mind, and they think returning to God will never work, it does work. If they would just open their eyes, which they're incapable of doing, and look around. If they had a brain cell functioning, they would say, "You know what, this isn't working." But, they're so deceived. They look around and in the midst of all the dysfunction, "Oh isn't this great! Life is never been this good." How sad.

Elijah is here. What wonderful words. Oh that we would boldly declare that today. *"I'm here."* Whether it be in the workplace, school, wherever, neighborhood, family, *"I'm here and I stand for God, and what you're doing is wrong. Now if you don't want me back in any of the family reunions, fine. That's fine, but let it be known I stand for God."* That needs to be our attitude and we need to go forth with that. Elijah is here. Thank God for Elijahs. There's still Elijahs. We've got Elijahs here. Thank God for Elijahs.

