

Radio Sermon - Sunday, April 28, 1940

Pastor W.H. Offiler

1 Kings 18:21 "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."

No doubt your heart has been thrilled time and again as you have read of this outstanding incident in the life and ministry of Elijah, the Prophet. And you, together with all the peoples of God, in all Ages of time, have wondered at the ease by which Israel fell away from Divine truths and began the worship of the sun god, Baal.

This was the condition obtaining in Israel at the time Elijah applied this wonderful test. The bullocks were chosen and laid on the altar ~~fixes~~ of wood. On the one offered to Baal no fire was placed underneath and these prophets called on their god. As fanatics always do, they leaped on the sacrifice and cut themselves with knives and shouted and raised a great ado, from morning to night, but there was no answer. No fire fell to consume their sacrifice. They called on Baal that they might demonstrate to the children of Israel that there was a god outside of the hosts of Israel. But Baal did not answer. Baal was no god. Idolatry is always idolatry. In ourselves there is always a wonder and more or less of a deep sympathy for those people whose spiritual light reaches no further than idols of wood or stone, fashioned by hands of men.

Also, on Elijah's sacrifice no fire was placed. When Elijah's turn came to demonstrate to all Israel the power and glory of God, who answers by fire, they poured on his sacrifice twelve barrels of water. It ran all over the sacrifice and around about the altar and when Elijah called on the God of Heaven, instantly the fire fell from Heaven, consumed the sacrifice and licked up the water and in this way the message of Elijah was wonderfully confirmed to the people in the day of Israel and their backsliding in to sin.

So often, since that event the same cry has gone forth to the heart of the people. Today there is so much indecision. Men and women are slow to take a stand on anything that is presented as religion or the gospel. There are so many religions -- they spring up like mushrooms by night.

I bring you the message of the Prophet Elijah as he brought it in days of old, "How long halt ye between two opinions.?" Do you know, it is just as permissible to put God to the test today as it was in the days of Israel's sin. Why halt between two opinions when we have the testimony of our God given to us through the Lord Jesus Christ; the testimony that has been furnished to us through the history of the church of God throughout the Ages of time, and the testimony offered by ten thousands, ye, the millions of hearts that have put God to the test and have proved that the God who answers by fire is always the God of Heaven.

How wonderful it is just to read in our New Testament the scripture where John the Baptist came preaching in Judea and said, "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." He spoke of the coming of the Messiah and said, "I baptize you with water unto repentance for the remission of sins, but there cometh One after me mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and Fire."

When that prophecy was fulfilled on the great day of Pentecost, the Natal day of the church, the Spirit of God was poured out on them from on high and there appeared unto them cloven tongues of fire and it sat on each of them and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues or languages, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Today the standard of God has never changed. He always answers to faith and Christian experience by the fire that falls from Heaven, on your soul and spirit, and on mine. What you and I need, what the world, and what the church needs in these latter days of time is that mighty Baptism of the Spirit of God and that holy fire that consumed the sacrifice as it is presented to the Lord and burns all the debris and rubbish from our lives and makes it possible for God to honor His word through the church on earth and pour out the mighty blessing of the promises of God. Revival stands near by as you and I present our bodies a living sacrifice to God and allow the Spirit of the Lord to work in our lives those mighty demonstrations and operations of His Spirit.

(over)

We shall not always find it pleasant. Fire is sometimes a phasant fellow when we are wet and cold and need the warmth of a fire. How blessed it is that God has made fire. But sometimes there are other needs of fire. In olden days the fire fell to consume the sacrifice and in this manner it still falls. When the Spirit of God comes on you in answer to your prayer and you present your body as a sacrifice, the fire burns out all the rubbish, and makes us instruments of righteousness and peace in the hands of God to bring to the world the message of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Today the challenge is offered once again, "HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?"

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