

# 1 Kings 18:17-20

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[ 0 : 00 ]     1 Kings 18, 17-20. 17-20, we're just gradually working our way up to Mount Carmel. So we'll be right there on the edge of it tonight.

So let's pray. God, we thank you so much for just this day you've given us. We thank you for your faithfulness throughout today. We thank you for the opportunity we have of gathering together. And Lord, we just thank you for every grand opportunity it is to open up the Word of God with one another.

Lord, we pray that you guide our time as we read the Word. We see the truths that it contains. And Lord, we pray those truths would have application in our life. We pray that it would be so much more than a record of history, but God, that it would be the very Word of God that speaks into our lives for your good and your glory.

We pray you be with us as we go through the business session and the prayer time. God, we pray that you lead in all things in this place. We pray that you be with those working with the children and the youth. We ask that Christ be magnified in each meeting there.

And we ask it all to be God-honoring, Christ-clorifying. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. 1 Kings chapter 18, starting in verse 17.

[ 1 : 12 ]     If you remember, up to this point, Elijah has been hidden for three and a half years. Three and a half years of famine.

Then Elijah no one knew where he was. He was at the widow's home. We know that. But during that day, no one knew where he was at. Until we get into the 18th chapter, and then Elijah shows himself.

He comes out and meets Obadiah. Obadiah is the one who had hid the priest by 50s in two caves. He had fed them, taken care of them. So all these things are worth remembering.

I know it's been a couple of weeks since we've been together, because I wasn't here last Wednesday. But we know what's coming, right? So we have the privilege of reading Scripture with the understanding, if we've read through it before, knowing what comes after these things.

So it bears repeating that Obadiah had hidden these 100 priests. It bears repeating because immediately following the event that we're going to look at very soon, Elijah gets into kind of a period of depression and says, I alone am left.

[ 2 : 15 ]     How soon he forgot that there were 100 that were hidden everywhere else. But God has been faithful. God hasn't forgotten nor forsaken his people. God always has his man or his woman in place.

Obadiah happens to be one of those. And where we left it was where Obadiah met Elijah, and Elijah told him to go tell Ahab, and Ahab was on his way to meet Elijah. Now, that's important, because Elijah, the famine which was on the land, was very severe.

And everybody wanted to know where Elijah was, because the last time they had seen Elijah, Elijah looked at Ahab and said, as surely as I stand before the Lord my God, it will not rain according to my word until I say so.

And he left. So they want to find Elijah, because the land is desperately in need of this rain. So that's where we pick it up, starting in verse 17.

Now, we're not going to get to the showdown yet. We'll get very close to it when we get to the verse 20. But it says here, When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, Is this you, you troubler of Israel? He said, I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, because you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and you have followed the Baals.

[ 3 : 28 ] Now then send and gather to me all Israel out at Mount Carmel, together with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table.

So Ahab sent a message among all the sons of Israel and brought the prophets together at Mount Carmel. Okay, I wanted to go further than that, but for the sake of time, we want tonight, we won't do it tonight.

We'll get into it. So it kind of gets us right up until the precipice of where the meat of the text is going to begin taking place, that grand showdown. But we don't want to rush through it, or we don't want to rush through this either.

So I want you to see what it looks like to confront the problem. That's exactly what Elijah is about to do. He is confronting the problem. Now the problem is, we can name it, it is the sin which is besetting the land of Israel.

Now when we say Israel, we're talking about the 10 northern tribes. We have excluded the two southern tribes, because that's Judah. You remember the division of the kingdom. So we need to understand it.

[ 4 : 29 ] When we talk about all of Israel, we're not talking about the two tribes in the south. We're not discussing them. We're talking about the 10 northern tribes, because if we don't remind ourselves of that, when we get into second kings, and our focus is more on the southern kingdom, and we see righteousness, and we see kings that are ruling as David did, and we see them doing what is right, we would be confused, because we say, I thought all of Israel was doing this.

No, that's the northern kingdom. That is the 10 tribes that, immediately after the separation, they began to enter into false worship. They set up the golden calves. They set up this kind of deviation.

They wanted to worship according to their own way, and their own places, and their own manners, and their own customs. They started out doing it similar to the way they worshiped down in Jerusalem, but very quickly, that similarity began to deviate a little further, and then they went a little further, and they went a little further, until finally Ahab, who did more wickedly than any other king, comes, and he doesn't seek to worship God differently.

He seeks to replace God, and you know why. He married a woman named Jezebel, and he married Jezebel, brought her gods into the country, and set up the bells and the Asherah. The Asherah, if you're reading, depending on which translation, simply could be the grove.

It's just this place of worship, not necessarily referring to a particular god. That's Baal. But we've seen how God is judging this, because in the midst of all of this, I know we're bringing it together, the prophetic voice of God has been heard.

[ 5 : 56 ] Even from the very beginning of the deviation, the prophets of God would come and say, repent of your ways, or God's going to judge. Repent of your ways, or God's going to judge. When Ahab finally goes so far, to try to replace God with Baal, Elijah comes, and he begins what is called, the prophetic sign ministry.

Up to this point, there have been prophets who came and said, thus saith the Lord God. Now Elijah comes, and he says, this is what God says, and so that you believe what God says, I will demonstrate it to you.

This is a big difference, because now we've made a shift. We've made a shift from just hearing the word of God, to hearing the word of God, and then having the word of God affirmed by the signs of God.

We pay close attention to these things, because God is most gracious to affirm what he is declaring, immediately before the greatest judgment comes. The northern kingdom will fall very quickly.

Okay, the northern kingdom is going to fall to the Syrian empire, and they're going to fall very rapidly. The same as Christians will go into the southern kingdom, Hezekiah will be king at that time, they will surround Jerusalem, Hezekiah will fall on his face before the Lord God, and the same kingdom that just gulfs up the northern kingdom, will implode as they are besieging the city of Jerusalem.

[ 7 : 14 ] What's the difference? Well, it's the problem. It's the sin. It's not a matter of strength, because there were more soldiers and more troops in the northern kingdom than there were in the southern kingdom. It's not a matter of fortification, because the cities in the northern kingdom were fortified as well.

This is why the Assyrians, when they besieged, if you remember, Elijah is still king then, I mean, still prophet then, but if you remember that when Hezekiah is there, and they're saying, don't trust in your chariots, don't trust in your horses, don't trust in your walls, don't trust in your God, because he didn't protect your, you know, neighbors to the north there.

This is the problem. This is what's going on. God gives the greatest displays of opportunity to repent immediately before the coming judgment. Think book of Revelation.

You go to the book of Revelation, and you read the sign wonders, and everything that God is doing in the heavens, and on the earth, and the water's turning into blood, the seas drying up, the fish dying, everything that is going on.

Why? It's all going on, because the great day of judgment is rapidly approaching. Man is without excuse. One thing that we find when we read the book of Revelations is God is doing this, God is doing this, and it says, now, according to my interpretation of Revelations, the church is already gone.

[ 8 : 26 ] By the time you get to chapter four, the church is standing in heaven, and it's gathered around, and they're casting their crowns, and they're worshiping. I believe the church is raptured by then. I know we can differentiate on our dispensationalism, right?

So you don't have to believe in the pre-tribulation, post-tribulation, or amelenism. You don't have to believe in all that. Somebody's like, what in the world is he talking about? When you think the church raptures, or if the church is raptured, is not a major doctrine.

So we can differentiate here. But the judgment that we can't differentiate on, that is taking place in the book of Revelation, is on the unbelievers. Okay? It's not on the church.

That's the unbelievers. I don't have time, or I could take time, but I'm not going to take time tonight to really lay that out. But one thing you find in Revelations, every one of these plagues, when they're poured out, you'll notice there's this theme.

It said these things happen, but they did not repent. But they... ..shortened their heart towards the Lord God.

[ 9 : 24 ] They did not repent. They did not repent. They did not repent. In the end, they are without excuse. Because God displays truthfulness of his word in a grand way right before.

You want another example? Noah builds an ark for 120 years. 120 years, they're building away. 120 years, things look weird. All of a sudden, animals line up two by two. The animals, which are not normally lining up two by two, except in sevens when they're to clean animals, and they make their way to this boat that he's been building for 120 years, and they all enter the boat.

Have any of you ever been able to herd things like that? I mean, every animal that had breath in its lungs, not to see creatures, makes its way into the boat, and they're in the boat, and Noah and his children go into the boat, and it says, and for seven days, they waited until God closed the door.

Why? Because if building the ship didn't get your attention, then the animals should have gotten your attention. But if the animals didn't get your attention, then when everything started quaking, it should have got your attention. Up until the last day where God shut the door, said, okay, that time of repentance is over.

Why? Because God gives the greatest signs of the authenticity of what he is saying right before the greatest judgment. Elijah is one such prophet. Elijah and Masha.

[ 10 : 33 ] They do phenomenal things because judgment is coming. But Elijah is confronting the problem. He's getting ready to on Mount Carmel. And the problem is not that it hasn't rained.

That's not the problem. See, quite often, mankind, we deal with secondary issues. We can bring this application to our own life, right? If we were Ahab, we would think the problem is is we need rain for our horses.

We need water for our horses. What was Ahab doing? Looking for rain for the horses and the cows so they didn't have to kill the livestock. They wanted to keep their tanks, essentially their chariots, running. They needed rain.

They needed water. That's the problem. That's not the problem. That is the secondary issue that is a result of the problem. In our lives, we say, well, this is what I need. My problem is I need this.

I need financial resources. I need security. I need this. I need this. I need this. I need this. I need this. These are not the problems. These are secondary matters that are connected to the problem.

[ 11 : 32 ] And what we have to do is we have to confront the problem. We can give it one word, and the word sin. It's exactly what Elijah is getting ready to do. So I want you to see, and I'll try to make my way through them quickly.

I know I'm talking a little faster tonight for the sake of time. I'm trying to do that. I want you to see what it looks like to confront the problem. Number one, you have to confront the problem boldly. You have to do it boldly.

It says, when Ahab saw Elijah. Now, think about this just for a moment. Ahab is the king of the land. You have to at least give him that. Ahab has some goodness about him.

We're not saying he's a good guy because he did wickedly according to scripture. He married the wrong woman, that's for sure. But it wasn't Jezebel's fault, right? Ahab is the one who brought the bells and Asher and all those other things there.

But Ahab is the leader of the land. And the majority of the people, we cannot say everybody because you have people like Obadiah and you have the hundred prophets and you have others. But the majority of Israel has went along with what Ahab is doing.

[ 12 : 35 ] Okay, so he's a somewhat popular king. He's the king of the land who is at least popular enough to be out in the land looking for springs even though there's a drought.

So he's got to have at least some kind of security about himself. Nobody's going to kill him because he's being a bad king. And yet Ahab meets Elijah and he looks at Elijah. Now, who is Elijah? All we know about Elijah is that God told him to go declare a word.

The only thing we know that Ahab knows about Elijah up to this point was there was a man named Elijah who walked up to him and said, as surely as I stand before the Lord my God it will not rain according to my word these next few years and then he's gone.

Ahab knows nothing about the widow's oil that hasn't run out. Ahab knows nothing about the son that died and was raised back to life. We know that but he doesn't. Who is Elijah in the sight of Ahab other than the man who told him it wasn't going to rain?

Right? That's all we know. Ahab meets Elijah and Ahab looks at him and says, is that you, you troubler of Israel? You've caused this problem. So he blames him.

[ 13 : 39 ] But one thing that we notice, though, is that in the courtroom of earth Ahab is a man of prominence and Elijah is a nobody. The courtroom of earth.

Now we know in the court of heaven Elijah is a man of God who is called. We know he's going to be called up in the chariots of fire. I mean we know Elijah is a wonderful God according to the courtroom of heaven. But according to the courtrooms of earth Ahab is the one who holds the keys to the kingdom.

So he thinks he's a man of prominence. He's a man of position. He's the king. In the northern kingdom, the kingdom wasn't passed down generation to generation according to the descendants of David.

The kingdom rather was earned and gained because you killed other people. We have a lot of dynasties in the northern kingdom whereas in the southern kingdom there is but one. It's because the strongest man wins.

And so this kingdom here is Ahab's because his family at least was strong enough to take the throne. And so here he is. He confronts Elijah. But do you notice that Elijah doesn't coward or he doesn't pull back.

[ 14 : 41 ] He doesn't even hold back from what he says. Elijah is very bold in his response. He looks at Ahab and he says, I have not troubled Israel but you and your father's house have.

Right? I mean think about this. This is an open field in Ahab's realm so to speak. And he has the boldness to confront the reality that he is not the problem. Obadiah is at least enough scared of Ahab that he told Elijah if I go tell Ahab I have found you and you're not there then Ahab's going to kill me.

Because he wants to kill you. He's looked everywhere for you. So he's been warned about this before but yet when he confronts him he does not even though Ahab gets really upset at Elijah.

Elijah I think he takes Ahab off guard. He doesn't do anything about it. As a matter of fact he tells him what to do and Ahab does it. I mean that's astounding to me, right? He says, I'm not the one.

You are the one. You go get these people for me. And he turns around and goes and gets them. I mean to me that kind of in the realm of earth that makes no sense. What king whose land has just been subjected to such famine would listen to the man that he is blaming for the famine other than the fact that Elijah had the boldness to confront the problem?

[ 15 : 54 ] You know this week I've been studying for Sunday morning's message and I'm also reading in my daily reading some of you have done it as well reading through the book of Revelation so you're right there at the end. Revelation 21 is a reading for today.

You've got one more chapter and you finish up that and you go back through into the gospels. But I've noticed there in 2 Corinthians and we won't preach Sunday morning's message yet but 2 Corinthians chapter 5 our text that we'll get into Paul speaks of being of good courage being of good courage being of good courage says it twice in 2 verses be good courage and then when we get to the book of Revelations we see the judgment of those who have cast out how many of you pay attention to the list of people that are not going to enter into the presence of the king of kings and lord of lords those who are cast into the fiery lake of the lake of fire called hell.

You know what the first one is there? The coward. The cowards and unbelievers and then it begins to start listing things we would expect to see there fornicators the adulterers the murderers the idolaters the first one listed is the cowardly and the unbelievers.

It's pretty astounding right? Because God calls us to walk in holy boldness when we confront the problem of sin not only in others but also in our own lives. You know the reason the problem continues to remain the same so often is because we're not bold enough to stand before it and tell it it's the problem.

Because it's going to push back, right? And we're bringing this to application to ourselves. I'm not talking about walking up to somebody else and saying, no, you're the problem. I'm talking about looking internally and asking the Lord your God to search you and try you.

[ 17 : 36 ] And when he points out the problem in your life, not being bold enough to look at that and go, yes, that's the problem. The problem is this. This matter that I've allowed to reside and to stay and to be present.

We're not bold because we have an enemy who looks at us and tries to convince us we are the problem. The enemy, he tries to convince us that the secondary issues are the problem, but we never confront it unless we are bold.

The second one is you confront it boldly and boldness allows you to do the second one that is truthfully. Because you will never speak truth if you are not bold.

Truth does not make one comfortable. It does not even make the individual who is saying it comfortable. It does not always make you feel good.

But praise God, the word of God is not according to our feelings, right? It's truth. So we seek to align our feelings with the truth that is being declared. When Ahaz said this to Elijah, Elijah said, I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have.

[ 18 : 37 ] So he confronts him and he's bold and then he declares the truth. This is why the problem is not that it hasn't rained, but it's because you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and you have followed the bells. That's the truth.

What has caused the problem is the spiritual matter that is going on. The problem is not that it's not raining. The problem is they have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, the God, the Lord God of heaven, and have followed after bells.

You know what Elijah is doing? Elijah is only repeating what God had already said. Read your scripture. In the book of Deuteronomy, it tells them that if they forsake the Lord God and they do not follow his commandments, he will send a famine on the land, right?

God has declared that a famine is a spiritual judgment for spiritual infidelity. God had declared. Now that's to a particular people at that time. I'm not saying that just because it's not raining here, you say, well, what have we done here?

I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about the land of Israel, that land. Everything was so connected to that land and that people. God had covenantal promises with them. Some of them were non-conditional.

[ 19 : 44 ] Others were conditional. The faithfulness of God upon the rain was conditional upon the faithfulness of the people to worship the Lord God. And God had declared that if you forsake me and if you forsake these commandments, then I will fail the land with rain.

I won't send it. But if you are faithful, I will send the early rains and the latter rains. If you are faithful, then your crops will produce. If you are faithful, then your offspring will be born. If you are faithful, all these things, this prospering will take place because you are faithful.

God has said that one of his judgment tools for unfaithfulness would be famine. Elijah has the boldness to call it what it is. The reason it's not raining is because you are forsaking the Lord God.

You are not obeying his commandments and you are replacing him with the bells. And he calls it what it is and his truth is not what Elijah thinks. Okay, friend, listen to me.

Truth is not what you think is true. Truth is what God has declared is true. And so when he repeats the truth, he is just restating what God had already declared.

[ 20 : 49 ] You find truth in the very word of God. You don't find truth in the opinions and thoughts of man. You don't find truth in even your assessment of a situation.

You don't find truth in how you perceive things. And you can honestly look at an individual and sometimes you can see it truthfully. And, you know, accountability is a good thing because other people can see things in us that we cannot see ourselves.

We become spiritually blind or physically blind to them and we don't see them. Often we need somebody to tell us that. But we know the truth. The truth, well, the capital T, is found in the word of God alone.

So when you go to an individual in love and you're talking about a problem, then be sure that the problem that is being addressed is being addressed according to the truth of scripture, not to the truth of your interpretation of their events.

That is, be careful not to ever say, well, I think these things are happening because. Rather say, the word of God declares. It's a big difference there. You know what I have found? That the moment I begin to declare a truth that is based upon my thoughts and my opinions, then when someone comes back to me, I don't have an answer.

[ 21 : 54 ] But when we declare a truth that's found in the word of God and somebody comes back and they may not like that truth, then all I have to do is tell them they need to take that up with God because I didn't say it the first time. And that's a lot easier, that's a lot better place to be.

Right? Ahab may not have liked the truth that Elijah said, but this isn't Elijah's opinion. This is Elijah's restatement of what God has already said.

In our own life, when we're confronting the problem in our own life, because we will get there eventually, 2 Corinthians chapter 10, where it says that we're destroying every spiritual stronghold, which Satan has risen in our mind. Do you know that we tear down by holy warfare?

Because there are strongholds in your mind, there are strongholds in my mind that Satan has, and he's put them there, but Paul says that we tear those strongholds down. We do spiritual warfare, and we tear them down in our own minds. How do you do that?

How do you tear the stronghold of Satan down in your mind? By declaring the truth. By telling the one building the wall what is true.

[ 22 : 52 ] That's what Paul will say, 2 Corinthians chapter 10, that it is through Christ and the truth of Scripture that we destroy those strongholds. You have to be bold to declare the truth to others, and you have to be even bolder to declare the truth to yourself.

Because no one knows you better than yourself, I'm talking to me as well, and no one can make you feel better about yourself than yourself. We're pretty easy on ourselves. We need the truth of Scripture.

This is why we say, search me, oh God. This is why we need to stand the word of God, because when we read the word of God, it brings conviction, it brings confrontation. It is sharper and two-edged toward, and it pierces to the joints and marrows and the divisions of our own life, right?

This is why we need it. Do we read it because it makes us feel good? No. We read it because it declares the truth about us, to us, and for us. And it confronts the problem of our life.

What I have found with most people, when they put the Bible down, it's because it don't feel good. And I say, every day I pick up the Bible, and I don't feel good about it. But I know it's for my good.

[ 23 : 54 ] It's for my good. Because it's the truth, right? So boldly, truthfully. Number three, you must confront the problem completely. Completely.

Elijah says, now go. Now send and gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, and look at what he says, together with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah who eat at Jezebel's table.

So it's going to be Elijah against 850. Right? You know it. Big showdown. It's great. I love it. They get half a day. Elijah takes five minutes.

That's what it takes, you know. Right? Elijah spends much longer building the altar than he does praying to the God of the altar. I mean, it's a wonderful story, right?

It's about a five-minute prayer that changes the course of history. But yet we see, what we see here is, by the way, just a complete side note.

[ 24 : 54 ] Just a complete side note. On one of the sides of Mount Carmel, there's a precipice. It isn't the very pinnacle, but there's a precipice. Upon that precipice, you can see the Mediterranean Sea.

If you know the story, you know that Elijah kneels down, he prays, and he has this guy that's with him looking out to the sea to see a cloud the size of a fist coming up. It's a complete side note. It's not even sermon. I know I'm not there yet.

But many, many years ago, archaeologists found what seemed to appear to be a scorched altar at that precipice on Mount Carmel. Stone altar, erected with scorched marks all over it.

It's pretty cool. You know, because there's a fire that fell down there, things kind of change a little bit. So anyway, let's get back to the sermon. A little side note. Things that come to mind.

Anyway, so he tells him, call all these people. But notice what Elijah does. Elijah says, if we're going to confront it, we're going to confront it once for all. He didn't say, bring a few of the prophets.

[ 25 : 51 ] He didn't say, bring some of the prophets. He didn't say, bring half of them. He didn't say, give me the 450 prophets of Baal, and then I'm going to deal with the 400 prophets of the Asher over there. He said, bring them all. Why? Because he wants one grand, complete confrontation.

He knows that if he just deals with it step by step, he is allowing it to continue to exist. Now, will the confrontation end it? No, we know that the judgment of God's coming, and we understand that this is something they're going to wrestle with anyway, but this principle is still there.

When you confront the problem, you confront the problem completely. Because until you completely deal with it, you're allowing it to exist. And when you allow it to exist, go read the book of Judges.

The problem, that time, didn't have this. Now, God said he was going to give them a land a little bit at a time, a little bit at a time, so that the land didn't grow back and that they could tend the land. But they allowed some of them to stay. They allowed some of them to stay. They allowed some of them to stay.

What happened in the book of Judges is there was done little by little, and some people were allowed to stay. And those people who allowed to stay caused great harm. If you don't deal with the problem completely, you're allowing it to continue to exist.



[ 27 : 06 ] And these are true matters. Right? He says, I want it in its entirety, and I want it here so that when it's done, everybody knows. I don't have to reprove it. God's going to declare, and God's going to proclaim his truth.

He's going to show it. He's going to, he's not going to say, oh, well, some of them were over there, and some of them were there. See, the problem that I find in my own life, and maybe you find it in yours, is when we know there's a stronghold, or a sin, an issue we're dealing with, we want to deal with it little by little, little by little.

We don't want to deal with it completely, because completely calls us out to a big scene, right? Completeness brings us to this grand time where we seem to be outnumbered, and completeness brings us to the point where we have to really cut it off.

And we kind of want to hold it here, like, I deal with it a little bit, but I don't want to just completely give it away. I just want to, if I hold on to a little bit of it, it won't be a problem, but the Bible's roots cause grand problems. And we understand this, right?

When you confront the problem, you deal with it completely. And you seek to bring it all to light, which gets us to the last thing in this text, and I must go ahead and say that I wasn't going to put this fourth point in here, but it's in this text, so I want you to see it.

[ 28 : 14 ] And the reason I wasn't going to put it here, you need to understand that this isn't a text, this point isn't as applicable to every one of the problems we face. Every problem we face, internally, personally, or with another, need to be faced with boldness, truthfulness, and completeness.

That is, we must be bold to declare the truth, and we must do it completely. We must address the problem. Don't, it's something I have to, I'm a people pleaser by nature, some of you are too, so we don't want to kind of beat around the bush.

We need to deal with it, right? Just handle it. In our own life, we need to handle it. So we need to be bold, truthfully, and completely. This fourth one, the application is not always the same, so I want you to hear me out on that.

Sometimes, you need to confront the problem publicly. So I'm saying, you know, I say that because scripture teaches this very clearly, that if your brother sins against you, you go to your brother one-to-one.

That's not a public confrontation. Or if you have sinned against a brother and you need to ask for forgiveness, you go to your brother alone, one-to-one. Now, if they don't hear you, then you go with two or three more.

[ 29 : 22 ] And if they don't hear you then, then you bring it before the church, and it becomes public. That's Matthew 18, right? It's what we call church discipline. That if there's an issue, you confront that problem privately. You deal with it. If that issue is not resolved in that private confrontation, then you go with two or more others and you deal with it kind of semi-corporately.

And if it's not handled then, then you bring it before the corporate church. Not every problem has to have a public confrontation. This one is. Because Elijah says, gather to me all of Israel.

And it says in verse 20, so I have sent a message among all the sons of Israel. This is a very public confrontation. You know why it's public? It is a public confrontation because it's a public problem.

You confront the problem to the extent that it impacts others. This was a very public problem. The entire nation had been swayed in their worship.

The entire nation had been given over to the bells. The entire nation had been doing this thing. And God was dealing with it publicly because it was a publicly embraced issue.

[ 30 : 31 ] That is to say, when a matter becomes a public issue, then the confrontation must meet the matter. We said it before, bears repeating, too often, we like to sin in retail and repent and wholesale.

wholesale. That is, we sin in particular and then we say, oh God, forgive me for all my sins. Rather than saying, God, forgive me for my hatred, forgive me for my greed, forgive me for my bitterness, forgive me for, you name it.

Because we sin in retail. But we like to repent and wholesale instead of calling it what it is. often, there are problems that are public problems that address and affect the multitudes.

And we try to handle them privately and the whole time we're doing no good to the public that have been affected by it. That's what was going on with Elijah. It affected everybody, therefore the confrontation was going to take place with everybody.

If a matter in a church, I believe, begins to affect the entire church and I think it is becoming of the church to address that matter publicly. Not on the internet, not streaming it to everybody, but if it addresses a local assembly entirely, then the entire local assembly needs to be involved in it.

[ 31 : 58 ] We see this when we come into the New Testament. We see matters that arise in the church and they are dealt with publicly because it brings this reverence for a holy God.

And we need to be careful there. Not every matter needs a public confrontation, but there are those times when it does. In our own lives, quite often, we want to try to dismiss things privately and at times that is good.

But if what we have done has caused a ripple effect to others, then we need to make sure that in addressing that, we include those that it has affected. We want to make sure that there's complete restoration and we see this is what is going on here with confronting the problem.

Now, the confrontation is about to take place. But we know that Elijah is doing it with boldness, truthfulness, completeness, and he's going to do it publicly.

And in the end, God will get the glory because he puts himself out there that if God fails, everybody knows he fails.

[ 33 : 17 ] But if God comes through, everybody will know he comes through. And this is how we confront the problems even in our own lives. We see this in 1 Kings 18, 17-20.

Thank you, my brothers. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.