

CONFRONTING BAAL WORSHIP IN THE LAND

1Ki 18:21 "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? (positions, thoughts) If the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word".

BRO. CHIJIJOKE NWAUCHE

Quotable quotes:

In the absence of the genuine fear of God, men always certainly turn back to Baal worship (*worshipping God against the prescribed order*). Baal worship springs up when men begin to compromise. We must turn away from every semblance of Baal worship, lest we provoke God to Jealousy. Every man must make a conscious decision where he will stand. You cannot halt between two opinions in these times.

SUNDAY MAY 23rd, MAY 2010.

1 kings: 17, 18.

1Ki 17:1 And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

Organized Baal worship was introduced to the land of Israel by Jezebel, Ahab's wife. She was the daughter of a priest of Baal. Jezebel and her prophets terrorised and persecuted the prophets of God. In our environment Baal worship is expressed through the worship of the Mammy water spirit. Violence, whoredom, and waywardness are characteristics of the Baal worship. Baal speaks of the flesh (*carnality*). You worship Baal by succumbing to the uncontrolled desires of the flesh. The robberies, kidnappings, murders we see around us are all fall outs of this worship. **Just as in the ages past, there is going to be a confrontation between the prophets of Baal and the Sons of God.** In the era where satanic manifestations are becoming more daring and receiving more acceptance, PRAISE THE LORD that the word of God assures us that as it gets darker and darker, God will to intervene.

THE CONTEST

1Ki 18:18 "And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.19 Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.20 So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel". God is raising a body and everyone in that body should have one objective, which is, to confront Baal in the name of Jesus and by obeying the word of the Lord. A contest has been set. Are you part of the contest? Are you part of the kingdom of God in this contest? *Lu 11:23 He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.* There is a confrontation in the spirit. Elijah issued this challenge without any apology Likewise **God is looking for men who are ready to confront Baal worship in the land.** War has been declared, the battle lines are drawn. We can not escape the war. Tribulation must come so that our redemption can draw neigh. Paul said he gloried in tribulation. We should do likewise, "for tribulation worketh patience. The tribulation is not the issue; the most important thing is that you continue to trust for the time when God will begin to make a separation. God is allowing the pressure so that the power of God might be made manifest.

Significance of the number 400, 450 (the time of captivity) 400 is the number of tribulation and in the passage above reference is made to 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the groves. The Israelites were in the land of Egypt 430 years. Be warned brethren, a time of captivity is coming when Baal will rule. What does this mean? God is saying that for a space of time, (*symbolic of the 400 years*) there will be captivity. But the good news is that **a time also is coming when the hold of Baal (flesh) will be broken over the church, so that the church can give life.** HALLELUJAH. God is waiting for the Elijah's to come on the scene and the bondage of Baal worship will be broken. "They that are Christ have crucified the flesh and its lust". This is a prophetic word going forth this hour. You can be free from the flesh, free from sin, free from all the things that prevent you from bringing forth the life of God (*fruits of the spirit*). In the time of this anointing (*pouring forth of God's power*) there will be liberty. Just as rain came in the time of Elijah, so will showers of blessing come in our time. Hear ye the word of the Lord; the flesh has ruled, but a time will also come and now is when flesh will no longer rule. Every one who is alive in God should look forward and press on to be a partaker of this hope.

1Ki 18:21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions. {positions, thoughts}? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. God forbid that we be a people who answer the Lord "not a word". Their silence was a sign of unbelief. May God help our unbelief and heal us from coldness. There was also a problem here of having double vision. The Bible enjoins us to be single eyed and to be a people of vision. However the question here is, what is your vision? Is our vision physical prosperity? If that's all, then "we are of all men most miserable". **THE VISION BRETHREN SHOULD BE CHRIST IN YOU (THE GLORY OF GOD COMING INTO YOUR SOUL) THIS IS THE HOPE OF GLORY.** Is Satan (*Baal*) going to rule over your soul or is it Christ that will rule? Brethren we were created for God's pleasure, not just to eat, drink and die. How long halt we between two opinions? The vision must be correct. We must draw the lines. We must decide which way to go. We have to take a stand and break through the flesh.

1Ki 18:26 And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. God is drawing our attention to all the gymnastics and mechanics (*leaping*) going on in the church in our day. There is so much noise. Do you know why? The problem is that there is no fire. When a man is preaching you should feel the fire (*stirring, quickening*) your soul? When the fire does not come, men begin to jump around (*leaping as it were upon the altar*), making all manner of entertainment, using mechanics, worldly principles etc to sustain men's attention.

THE MATTER OF SACRIFICE/ SERVICE

1Ki 18:28 *And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. They brought a blood sacrifice (cutting of themselves with lancets). One thing the devil is looking for is blood. We must be careful not to give it to the devil (Baal). Do you know that as you give your money, you are giving your blood? Your sweat (strength) is from your blood. From your sweat you earn money, so to whom you give your money, is whom you give your blood to. Your sweat (strength) must first go to the Lord. God is looking for an offering of your time, sweat, money etc, first; then all other things shall be added to you. The question here is, are you giving yourself to God? Are you an offering to God? Or have you given yourself to other things; T.V, music, career, food, entertainment etc?*

Do you feed on the scriptures or are you feeding on these other things? What is the driving force of your life? Brethren **there must be a sacrifice; there must be something to deny to gain the “Excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ”**. The Devil wants you to give him your life (*that thing that sustains you*). God forbid that it is money that sustains us, that affects our emotions, that occupies our thoughts. The things of this life are legitimate, yes, but they are not the main issue. **THE MAIN ISSUE IS TO SERVE GOD AND OBEY HIS COMMANDMENTS**. Serving God should not be an aside to us. Let the flesh (*sexuality, carnality*) not rule us. Let us ask the life or river of God (*that continuous flow of real power or energy*) to flow, that we may have the fruits of the Spirit; that the things of this world will grow strangely dim in the light of the glory of His countenance. May we be loosed from the earth realm that we may rise to the heavenliness wherein righteousness dwelleth. May we have faith temperance, peace, love. Brethren, we should be full of these things.

THE TIME OF THE EVENING SACRIFICE

1Ki 18:29 *And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. We are in the time of the evening sacrifice. That is the time of Midnight; it is at midnight that the ultimate sacrifices are brought by the sons of God. The evening time is a time of trouble, a time of stress, it is also a time when we have light. Remember where sin abounds, grace doth much more abound. The darker it becomes, the more offering God requires. Notice that Elijah waited until the time of the evening sacrifice to act.*

DRAWING NIGH TO GOD

1Ki 18:30 *And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.* It is not that the sweet communion of fellowship is no longer there. The problem is, we have refused to come NEAR ENOUGH. When God says draw near to me, we must respond. Are you taking steps to draw near to God? When they drew near, Elijah went on to repair the altar of the Lord that was broken down. It is time to repair the altars (*the altars of your SOUL*). God is restoring the earth that “was without form and void: He is creating “a new heaven and a new earth”. Will you draw nigh to Him sufficiently for Him to make this restoration? The blood of Jesus was shed so that our souls may be repaired and restored back to the place where it would receive life from God. We must repair the altar (*quiet time*) first in our hearts, home etc so God can speak to us. *Jas 4:8 draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.* Are you at peace with the world or is the world at peace with you? One who is at peace with the world cannot build God’s altar

COMPLETE DEALING OF GOD

1Ki 18:32 *And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.* The altar must be made of stone. Why stone? It is one substance that can withstand tribulation. The bible talks of lively stones, stones of fire, and burning coals of fire. The stone must be tried and confirmed by fire. In the world you will receive tribulation. We are in the world so that we will be tried, and tested. The purpose of the pressure is that we may come forth as Jewels. We should learn to rejoice in tribulation. For out of the experience we will know God better. It will work out in you a much more exceeding weight of glory. 12 stones were used to build the altar; the number 12 is symbolic of the complete nature (*dealing*) of God in the church.

THE WATERS OF TRIBULATION

1Ki 18:33 *And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. V34 And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time.*
35 *And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.*

Why did he soak the wood with water? He wanted to take away all doubts. Water also speaks of trails and temptations. It is mostly at the time we have purposed to stand with God that a flood of issues arise to distract us. Do away with the foolish thought that you will only serve God when your troubles are over. No matter what, the water will still come to try to quench the fire. And God allows it. Reason, the altar must be made sure. Water was poured in the trench three times. Job's testimony is there for all to see. This is our confidence; after we have been tried we will come forth like Gold. Praise God! Like Paul may we not be moved by these things. *Ac 20:24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE POWER OF GOD

1Ki 18:37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. v 38 Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. The problems will disappear, when the Lord answers by fire. The condition is that we must bring an offering. Be encouraged. The fire will lick up the coldness, the weights etc. Bring your troubles and lay them down at the feet of the Master and wait upon Him, the fire will certainly come. *Isa 50:10 Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God.* Do not be tempted to go ahead of God and make your own sparks (*light your own fire*). Remember Nadab and Abihu. When you are weak or your heart is cold, wait on God, that is the place of strength.

THE FAIR WEATHER GROUP

1Ki 18:39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God. The fair weather group, is the group that swings one way or the other depending on what they see or experience. They have no set convictions. For them any thing goes. They had to wait to see the fire before they declared the, 'Lord He is God'. The Elijah company is the group of men who are not easily swayed. They are the group of men who are confident in the ability of their God to hear and to deliver. They are the men of faith who are able to hold God by his word. Many of us are not too sure about God. We find it difficult sometimes to commit our affairs totally to him. Paul was sure of his God. His confident declaration in Acts 27: 22, proves it. *And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. v 23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve.*

When people around you whom you have been praying and fasting for begin to drive expensive cars and God has not deemed it necessary that you get one, will you still be able to confidently declare, *I know that my redeemer liveth?* Brethren we need to know that God is a rewarder of them who diligently seek him. We need to trust in the Lord and take a stand for Him. The three Hebrew children were confident. *Da 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. v 17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. v18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.* A man boldly declared "FOR ME AND MY HOUSE WE SHALL SERVE THE LORD". WE SHOULD MAKE A RESOLVE NOT TO BOW OR SUCCUMB TO THE DEVILS PRESSURES. THIS IS THE SEASON TO LEARN TO ABOUND AND ABASE.

THE COVERING WILL BE REMOVED AND GOD WILL MAKE A NEW HEAVEN

1Ki 18:40 And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there. The covering cast will be removed. A time is coming when sickness, disease, sin, will all be things of the past. The Lord is making new heavens and a new earth. We must look unto it, we must seek it.

THE ELIJAH COMPANY

1Ki 18:42 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, 1Ki 18:45 And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. The king went to eat and drink but, Elijah went to pray. Learn from the wisdom of Elijah, he knew that it was not time for merriment. Brethren at this time we should be at the mountain top praying and looking out for the rain of God's power. We should be busy equipping ourselves for the season of rain that is coming upon us. We should be strengthening our foundations, checking our weapons of war, for it is going to rain, and the prophets of Baal are going to be judged. This is not the time to be held sway by lack or by abundance. **No matter the situation, we must serve our God.** Rain is coming brethren, prepare for the rain. And don't be afraid or discouraged. FOR WHERE SIN ABOUND GRACE DOTHS MUCH MORE ABOUND.