

Yahweh v Baal

(1 Kings 16-19)

Round 1: the rain competition (1 Kings 16:29 - 17:24)

Ahab worships a storm god...

“... he took for his wife Jezebel the daughter of Eth-Baal king of the Sidonians, and went and served *Baal* and worshipped him. He erected an altar for *Baal* in the house of *Baal*, which he built in Samaria.” (16:31-32)

... So God announces a drought

Round 2: the barbeque competition (1 Kings 18)

Only Yahweh can light the fire

Baal 0 - 1 Yahweh
(v25-29) (v30-38)

Only Yahweh can send the rain

Baal 0 - 2 Yahweh
(v2, 5-6) (vv41-4)

A puzzle

Why does Yahweh wait until he has won the Barbeque Competition before he scores the winning goal in the Rain Competition?



God v the people's doubts!

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
The true prophets are cut off; Obadiah faithful but afraid (v3-16) The people “limped” (v21 cf. v26b) The people “did not answer” (v21 cf. v26, 29)	The number 12 (v31, v33-35) The ‘horizontal’ prayer (v36-37)	The people know the score: “Yahweh, he is God; Yahweh, he is God” (v39) The false prophets are cut off (v40)

Application

Don't waver. Yahweh is God!

“Elijah was a man just like us” (James 5:17-18)

At first sight he doesn't seem very like us at all!

But take a text out of context and you're left with a con! James 5:16-20!

A story of a burned out prophet? (1 Kings 19)

Elijah's a bit down and needs God to softly whisper to him?

*Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm.*

Evaluating Elijah's evaluation

"I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts.
For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant,
thrown down your altars,
and killed your prophets with the sword,
and I, even I only, am left,
and they seek my life, to take it away." (v10, v14)

There won't be a second chance

- 1) Clear allusions to Exodus

1 Kings 19	Feature in Exodus	Significance in Exodus
God sends Elijah to Mount Horeb (v8) where there is wind, earthquake and fire (vv11-12)	The people of Israel go to Mount Sinai (another name for Mount Horeb, see 3:12) where there is an earthquake and fire (19:16-20)	God made his covenant with the people of Israel (19:5-6)
Elijah hides in a cave (v9) as God 'passed by' (v11)	Moses hid in a cleft of the rock as God 'passed by' (33:22)	God renewed the covenant with the people of Israel after their apostasy with the golden calf (34:10, 27)

- 2) A clear contrast to Exodus: 'the LORD was *not* in the wind...*not* in the earthquake.... *not* in the fire' (vv11-12).

The assassins are coming (1 Kings 19:15-18)

Hazael

Jehu

Elisha

But there is a remnant (cf. Romans 11:1-5)