Bailing Out on Baal

**Read:** I Kings 18:30-39

**Introduction:** What event did it take in your life to cause you to change your mind about Jesus? What caused you to go from being a lover of self to a lover of God? Was there a significant event or was it a gradual realization of your need for Christ? (ask for testimonies)!

In the story that we just read it was a very significant event. Elijah was wise to set the stage in an area that he was familiar with. We must be careful to not let the world define the perimeters of how the Gospel is presented. (Where is God in calamities vs Where is God in our daily life). (What is wrong with…vs What is right with…) Elijah took them to the place of God’s altar and he determined what the parameters of the test would be (fire).

**I. Elijah repairs the altar:** There was already an altar there or we would read that he built the altar. He was preparing a place to meet God. He had been here before and God had been here before. If you are missing the presence of God it is a good idea to go back to the place where last enjoyed His presence. Many times people will leave a good church because they are mad at someone or something. They end up in a dead church or not going to church at all. Everyone can see their frustration. What should they do? Go back and get it right at the church that they left. Many problems can be solved with two words: “I’m sorry!”

Think about it where did Mary and Joseph find Jesus when they had gone a day without Him. It took them three days but he was right there in the temple where they had left Him.

**II. He used 12 stones:** The 12 stones represent the 12 tribes of Israel

or God’s people. Where did the stones come from? They were left

from the old altar. Romans 11:29 says: “For the gifts and calling of

God *are* without repentance” God doesn’t change His mind when He

chooses who to use.” He wants you back in the saddle. What He has

called you to do has not changed.

**III. He dug a trench:** There is only one reason to dig a trench around an altar and that is because you expect an overflow from heaven. One Gospel song says it this way: “I’m drinking from my saucer because my cup has overflowed.” When God blesses He is not stingy.

**IV. He places wood under a bullock:** the wood is a picture of a fut-ure cross and the bullock is a sacrifice for the sin of the nation (as opposed to the sin of an individual).

**V. 4 barrels of water X 3 = 12 barrels of water:** When you see the same number twice in the same scenario the first usually is a picture of the Old Covenant and the second is a picture from the New Covenant. 12 barrels of water is a picture of the 12 disciples bringing the living water. Jesus is the living water. They were in a drought but there is no shortage of living water.

**VI. What time is it?** It is the time of the evening sacrifice (prayer time) in verse 36 and the time to recognize who God is as well as who repress-ents God in this scenario in verse 37. Elijah had let the prophets of baal go first. He had let them use the daylight hours. He had given them more than ample time to display the powerlessness of their god. Now he presents his sacrifice and prayer at the exact time that the children of Israel were to offer the evening sacrifice. He prayed at the time that he was used to having a conversation with God. He knew that God was waiting to hear from him and he was used to coming to God at this time. Do you have a prayer time? Do you have a Word time?

**VII. The Fire of God falls** and defies all the laws of burning. It starts at the top and burns down to the bottom of the pile at last burning the rocks and then finally burning up the water. *That is impossible*: rocks don’t burn and water does not burn. They do when God lights the fire.

**Conclude: People bow before God for the 1st time:** What will change the hearts of those in your world who are unbelievers? It may just be that they need to see the power of God in real time. They already know that the gods that they are serving leave them empty and frustrated. When they look at you and I and they see no difference with the God that we serve then how can we expect them to see a need for change? When they see the power of God at work when we pray and watch as we go through trials then perhaps they will say: “The Lord: He is God!” Perhaps the reason that we are ineffective in sharing the gospel is that it is not visible in our lives. Perhaps it is because we are afraid to put God to the test ourselves.