



Our special guest speaker, Kirk Cameron, began his acting career in the 1980's sit-com "Growing Pains." Since then, Kirk starred in faith-based movies: "Fireproof," "Left Behind," "Monumental," and then "Lifemark" with the Kendrick Brothers about the value of life in the womb and the beauty of adoption. He produced the documentary "The Homeschool Awakening" and hosts TBN's television series, "Takeaways with Kirk Cameron" & "One on One with Kirk Cameron." His "American Campfire Revival" program, livestream, events, and podcast, urge the family to return to the biblical principles that will bring blessings and protection to America. Kirk recently authored the children's book "As You Grow" with Brave Books and a new book releasing in October, "Born to be Brave." Kirk is working on a new online TV show "Adventures with Iggy and Mr. Kirk," a children's show that brings God back into the forefront of children's entertainment. It will be like a modern-day Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood, entertaining children while developing their character in every episode. He and his wife, Chelsea, host an all-expenses-paid summer camp for terminally ill children and their families called Camp Firefly.

**Kirk's message centers on the prequel/backstory to the famous, epic showdown between God's prophet, Elijah, and the prophets of Baal. Kirk focuses on two takeaways that are important to consider for our journey today:**

- 1. God often demonstrates His power precisely where others claim it for themselves.**
- 2. When God's people reject His Lordship and His Word, He takes His grace and favor to others.**

**\*What has God shown you that is so important you will still pursue it, even if people reject you?**

## **EPIC COLLISION BETWEEN ISRAEL'S LIVING GOD & THE DYING BAAL—1 Kings 18:1:20-39**

*<sup>20</sup> So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. <sup>21</sup> Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." **But the people said nothing.***

*<sup>22</sup> ... Elijah said to them, "I am the only one of the Lord's prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. <sup>23</sup> Get two bulls for us. Let Baal's prophets choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. <sup>24</sup> Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by fire—he is God." Then all the people said, "What you say is good."*

*<sup>25</sup> Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire." <sup>26</sup> So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. "Baal, answer us!" they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made. <sup>27</sup> At noon Elijah began to taunt them. "Shout louder!" he said. "Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened." <sup>28</sup> So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. <sup>29</sup> Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.*

*<sup>30</sup> Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, which had been torn down. <sup>31</sup> Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, "Your name shall be Israel." <sup>32</sup> With the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs of seed. <sup>33</sup> He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, "Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood." <sup>34</sup> "Do it again," he said, and they did it again. "Do it a third time," he ordered, and they did it the third time. <sup>35</sup> The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench. <sup>36</sup> At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. <sup>37</sup> Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again." <sup>38</sup> Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. <sup>39</sup> When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!"*

*<sup>40</sup> ... Elijah commanded them, "Seize the prophets of Baal. Don't let anyone get away!" They seized them, and Elijah had them brought down to the Kishon Valley and slaughtered there. <sup>41</sup> **And Elijah said to Ahab, "Go, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a heavy rain."** <sup>42</sup> So Ahab went off to eat and drink, but Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees. <sup>43</sup> "Go and look toward the sea," he told his servant. And he went up and looked. "There is nothing there," he said. Seven times Elijah said, "Go back." <sup>44</sup> The seventh time the servant reported, "A cloud as small as a man's hand is rising from the sea." **So Elijah said, "Go and tell Ahab, 'Hitch up your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.'"***

**\*What are some examples of gods or idols that have been created in our culture today?**

- **Who Is Elijah?** Elijah is like us in that he's a believer—He loves God. But he is very different from us in that he holds an office of being the bringer bearer of God's Word—Elijah is the mouth of God, the prophet of God.
- **Who Is Baal?** The annually dying pagan god of storms & rain, holding the people hostage in worship so that he might also annually be resurrected. Baal's weapon was lightning; his blessing was rain.
- **What Is the Collision?** God took the fight to Baal, and Elijah is going to attack every claim of Baal. This is helpful to know when praying for loved ones trapped in sin or who do not know the Lord at all. How do we pray for children trapped in addiction or spouses trapped in idolatry? How do we pray for someone who is chasing after other things that they think will bring them peace and fulfillment and give them a sense of identity and purpose, and they've bought into these false ideas within their hearts? How do we pray for them? ***We pray that God would invade their life and attack the idols of their heart and defeat them so that our loved ones might be set free and return to worship the true and living God. Amen.***

**\*Share a time in your life when there was a very clear showdown between good and evil?**

## **NOW—THE PREQUEL: GOD SETS UP HIS CHALLENGE TO THE FALSE GOD, BAAL—1 Kings 17:1, 7-9**

*Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word."*

*<sup>2</sup> Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah: <sup>3</sup> "Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. <sup>4</sup> You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there." <sup>5</sup> So he did what the Lord had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. <sup>6</sup> The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook. <sup>7</sup> Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. <sup>8</sup> Then the word of the Lord came to him: <sup>9</sup> "Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food." <sup>10</sup> So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, "Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?" <sup>11</sup> As she was going to get it, he called, "And bring me, please, a piece of bread."*

*<sup>12</sup> "As surely as the Lord your God lives," she replied, "I don't have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die."*

*<sup>13</sup> Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. <sup>14</sup> For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the land.'"*

*<sup>15</sup> She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. <sup>16</sup> For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, **in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.***

**\*What steps can you take to exhibit trust in God's provision during challenging times?**

**\*When God wanted to change the nation of Israel, He chose one person, Elijah, to be a catalyst for change.**

**What are some obstacles that might discourage people from believing they can make a difference?**

### **PRAYERS**

Lord, what is my confidence which I have in this life?

Is it not you, O Lord, my God, whose mercies are without number?

Where has it ever been well with me without you, or where could it be ill with me when you were present?

I would rather be a pilgrim on earth, than possess heaven without you.

Where you are, there is heaven; and where you are not, there is death and hell.

There is no one who can help me in my needs, but only you, my God; you are my hope, you my confidence.

Although you allow temptations and adversities, yet you order all these to my advantage.

In my trials you should be loved and praised no less than if you filled me full of heavenly comfort.

*Source: Thomas à Kempis Source of this version: Freely modified from Prayers of the Middle Ages, edited by J. Manning Potts, 1954.*

Father, we have come to a decision point where we must choose whether we're going to serve the gods of this world or You, the True and Living God. Would You please make it clear that there is no God but You—that You are responsible for the air we breathe, the water we drink, the rain, the crops? You keep our heart beating at night while we're asleep. You raise up kings and You knock them down. Empires rise and fall at Your command. God, would You please give us a fresh outpouring of continual patient faith when things are difficult, and it seems like Your provision is trickling out? Perhaps this is where You are deepening us, and You are building in us character, hope, and faith like we've never experienced before. Perhaps this is how You'll demonstrate Your power and Your goodness. We love You Lord. We pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.