

"FIRE FROM HEAVEN"
1 Kings 18:25-39

²⁵Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, 'You go first, for there are many of you. Choose one of the bulls and prepare it and call on the name of your god. But do not set fire to the wood.' ²⁶So they prepared one of the bulls and placed it on the altar. Then they called on the name of Baal all morning, shouting, 'O Baal, answer us!' But there was no reply of any kind. Then they danced wildly around the altar they had made. ²⁷About noontime Elijah began mocking them. 'You'll have to shout louder,' he scoffed, 'for surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or he is relieving himself. Or maybe he is away on a trip, or he is asleep and needs to be wakened!' ²⁸So they shouted louder, and following their normal custom, they cut themselves with knives and swords until the blood gushed out. ²⁹They raved all afternoon until the time of the evening sacrifice, but still there was no reply, no voice, no answer. ³⁰Then Elijah called to the people, 'Come over here!' They all crowded around him as he repaired the altar of the LORD that had been torn down. ³¹He took twelve stones, one to represent each of the tribes of Israel, ³²and he used the stones to rebuild the LORD's altar. Then he dug a trench around the altar large enough to hold about three gallons. ³³He piled wood on the altar, cut the bull into pieces, and laid the pieces on the wood. Then he said, 'Fill four large jars with water, and pour the water over the offering and the wood.' After they had done this, ³⁴he said, 'Do the same thing again!' And when they were finished, he said, 'Now do it a third time!' So they did as he said, ³⁵and the water ran around the altar and even overflowed the trench. ³⁶At the customary time for offering the evening sacrifice, Elijah the prophet walked up to the altar and prayed, 'O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, prove today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant. Prove that I have done all this at your command. ³⁷O LORD, answer me! Answer me so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God and that you have brought them back to yourself.' ³⁸Immediately the fire of the LORD flashed down from heaven and burned up the young bull, the wood, the stones, and the dust. It even licked up all the water in the ditch! ³⁹And when the people saw it, they fell on their faces and cried out, 'The LORD is God! The LORD is God!'"