

The Struggles of Life And the Strength of God

GOD IS _____ THAN MY _____

1: Spiritually Mature People

If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. John 15:18

Here on earth you will have what? many trials and sorrows. John 16:33

- Unhealthy: _____?
- Healthy: _____?

2: Spiritually Mature People

Now summon all Israel to join me at Mount Carmel, along with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah who are supported by Jezebel. So Ahab summoned all the people of Israel and the prophets to Mount Carmel. Then Elijah stood in front of them and said, "How much longer will you waver, hobbling between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him! But if Baal is God, then follow him!" But the people were completely silent. Then Elijah said to them, "I am the only prophet of the Lord who is left, but Baal has 450 prophets. Now bring two bulls. The prophets of Baal may choose whichever one they wish and cut it into pieces and lay it on the wood of their altar, but without setting fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood on the altar, but not set fire to it. Then call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by setting fire to the wood is the true God!" And all the people agreed.

Then 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." So they prepared one of the bulls and placed it on the altar. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning until noontime, shouting, "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no reply of any kind. Then they danced, hobbling around the altar they had made. About noontime Elijah began mocking them. "You'll have to shout louder," he scoffed, "for surely he is a god! Perhaps he is daydreaming, or is relieving himself. Or maybe he is away on a trip, or is asleep and needs to be wakened!" So they shouted louder, and following their normal custom, they cut themselves with knives and swords until the blood gushed out. They raved all afternoon until the time of the

evening sacrifice, but still there was no sound, no reply, no response. Then 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. He took twelve stones, one to represent each of the tribes of Israel, and he used the stones to rebuild the altar in the name of the Lord. Then he dug a trench around the altar large enough to hold about three gallons. He 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, he 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, and the water ran around the altar and even filled the trench. At the usual 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. O 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." Immediately 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 trench! And when all the people saw it, they fell face down on the ground and cried out, "The Lord—he is God! Yes, the Lord is God!" **1 Kings 18:19-39**

- Human Perspective: 450 + 400 = majority
- Spiritual Perspective: Elijah + God = majority

David and Goliath

- Human Perspective: A boy with a slingshot, Goliath was too big to fight.
- Spiritual Perspective: A boy with a slingshot, Goliath was too big to miss.

Jesus

- Human Perspective: Unfairness, injustice, evil and sin prevailed.
- Spiritual Perspective: The grave was merely borrowed for the weekend and Jesus rose victoriously.

Jesus said, Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world! **John 16:33**

Your hope will not be disappointed. **Proverbs 23:18**

3: Spiritually Mature People

Elijah came to a cave, where he spent the night. But the Lord said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Elijah replied, "I have zealously served the Lord God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too." **1 Kings 19:9-10**

3 Things God Offers Victims

'Go out and stand before me on the mountain,' the Lord told him. **1 Kings 19:11**

As Elijah stood there, the Lord passed by, and a mighty windstorm hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind, there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper. **1 Kings 19:11-12**

Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path. **Psalms 119:105**

Elijah, there are 7,000 others who have never bowed down to Baal. **1 Kings 19:18**

4: Spiritually Mature People

For the Spirit in you is far stronger than anything in the world. **1 John 4:4**

If God is for us, who can be against us? **Romans 8:31**

No weapon turned against you will succeed. **Isaiah 54:17**

No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.
Romans 8:37

I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength. **Philippians 4:13**

Jesus said, Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world! **John 16:33**

God is stronger than any struggle I'll ever have