

CLASS: SS2

SUBJECT: CRS

TOPIC: THE SUPREMACY OF GOD

WEEK: 3

TERM: THIRD

CONTENT

1. The Stories of Elijah and Obadiah (I Kings 16:29-34; 17:1-7; 18:1-19; 19:1-18)
2. Elijah Meets King Ahab and Throws a Challenge (I Kings 18:1-19)
3. The Contest on Mount Carmel (I Kings 18:20-46; I Sam. 5:1-12)

ELIJAH AND OBADIAH

(I Kings 16:29-34; 17:1-7; 18:1-19; 19:1-18)

Ahab served as king in Israel who took over from Omri. The kingdom of Israel was made up of ten tribes. During Ahab's reign, Elijah was the prophet of God. Ahab was thriving in his evil deed as the Bible recorded that he did evil more than all the kings that ever ruled before him. He worshipped graven images, erected and built a house for **Baal in Samaria**, made grooves round Baal's temple where evils were concealed.

In the midst of all these evils, there was a man serving under King Ahab but kept his faith in God and maintained his stand for God. His name was **Obadiah**.

Elijah went to the king and proclaimed a prophecy of drought in the land. Elijah was told by God to hide himself by the **brook Cherith** where he was fed by **ravens** until the brook dried up. Elijah proceeds to the **widow at Zarephath** who sustained him after the dried brook.

After three and half years, God told Elijah to show himself to Ahab, which coincided with the time Ahab and Obadiah parted ways to look for grass for horses and mules to eat.

Obadiah saw Elijah and immediately recognized him. Elijah then sent him to inform Ahab of his presence but Obadiah objected stating Elijah might disappear before his master arrives which may lead to his death. Elijah promised to show himself to the king. When they both met, Ahab asked Elijah rudely *"Is it you, you troubler of Israel?"* Elijah replied that he is not but Ahab and his father's house.

Elijah then request the king to gather the people of Israel at Mount Carmel, **four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and four hundred prophets of Asherah** to the mountain for a contest to prove who is to be worshipped, Yahweh or Baal.

ELIJAH MEETS KING AHAB AND THROWS A CHALLENGE

(I Kings 18:1-19)

God is a spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and truth as the highest, greatest, the ultimate Being above all other gods. He is ever ready to provide us with solutions in the most difficult times and problems. God's supremacy was evident during the reign of King Ahab who imposed the pagan (bad) worship on the people of Israel which gave rise to religious crises.

Ahab is described as the king who did evil in the sight of God more than all before him. This was consequent to his marriage to the Sidonian princess- Jezebel who contaminated Israel with the worship of Baal, to the extent that the worship of true God was almost forgotten and overthrown. Jezebel waxed stronger with no respect or regards for the God of Israel. She was killing the prophets of God recklessly and chasing others into hiding in order to enforce Baal worship in the midst of persecution. Obadiah the officer in charge of King Ahab's household had to hide hundreds of those prophets of God in fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water, morning and evening.

As the situation persisted, God had to send Elijah to Israel (Ahab) to proclaim a 3½ years drought in Israel as punishment for abandoning their true God. Elijah was divinely directed to stay where God provided for him away from the reach of Ahab and Jezebel. First, in the Brook Cherith where he drank from the brook as the ravens fed him with bread and meat.

The drought affected the land so much that the king Ahab himself with Obadiah had to go in search of green pasture for the animals. The drought was partly as punishment to Israel for their idolatrous practice and partly to show God's supremacy over Baal and prove that He is the owner and the controller of everything. He withheld rain for 3½ years, made provision for Elijah and used Obadiah to protect and feed His prophets throughout the duration of the drought. When Ahab eventually met with Elijah through Obadiah, Elijah challenged him to gather all the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel. This challenge and gathering of the prophets of Baal led to the **contest on Mount Carmel**.

THE CONTEST ON MOUNT CARMEL

(I Kings 18:20-46; I Sam. 5:1-12)

God, being merciful and just decided to end the suffering through the contest on Mount Carmel; where He proved His supremacy through Prophet Elijah.

Elijah directed Ahab to gather on Mount Carmel the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and all the Israelites for the contest. Elijah ordered that two bulls be provided; and

each would be offered to God and Baal; and the one that would answer by fire would prove to be the true and supreme God. The prophets of Baal were the first to offer a bull to their god, Baal. They prayed, cried and bruised (cut) themselves from morning till evening calling on their god, but no fire came. Their god did not answer; the bull they prepared remained on the altar unconsumed.

As Elijah's turn to call on his God came, he re-prepared the altar with twelve stones according to the twelve tribes of Israel. He cut the bull in pieces and placed the bull with the wood on the altar and dug a trench round about. He then directed the people to pour four jars of water on the burnt offering three times repeatedly and the trench was filled up. Elijah called on God to send down fire to consume the burnt offering to prove himself as God in Israel, to prove him (Elijah) as His true servant. Immediately, the fire of the Lord fell from heaven and consumed: the burnt offering; the wood; the stones; and dried even in the water in the trench. The prophets of Baal were filled with awe. Seeing what happened, the people fell on their faces and confessed "The Lord, He is God, The Lord, He is God". Their faith in God as the true supreme God was restored.

As a result of this development, Elijah ordered the killing of all the prophets of Baal and they were killed at the brook, Kishon. After the contest, Elijah announced the coming of rain to mark the end of the drought and he went to the top of Mount Carmel and prayed and God answered with a heavy rainfall. Thus Elijah demonstrated the supremacy of God over all false gods.

An instance of the demonstration of God's supremacy is in the case of Dagon and the ark of the Lord. God demonstrated His supremacy over Dagon, the god of the Philistines fall down on its face before the Ark of the Lord, and had its hands and head cut off from the trunk when the Ark of the Lord was brought to the house Dagon (I Samuel 5:1-12).

ASSIGNMENT

- 1) Write a short note on Obadiah.
- 2) Explain how Dagon, the god of the Philistines fall down on its face and other gods destroyed before the Ark of the Lord.