

Introduction:

- Have you ever been caught in the middle of a struggle that is taking place and you are pulled in both directions?
 - You have the one side here the other side there, you like both people but you are caught in the middle. I.e. Joshua lives with us, for a couple more months. Sometime he finds himself caught in the middle of struggle that Kelly and I are having. We pause and look at him...the look on his face is precious as he sits in silence thinking, "This will be interesting in how it ends."
 - Have you ever found yourself caught in the middle of a personal decision of choosing right or wrong? One the one hand you know what is right on the other hand you know what is wrong but you want to do that. You know you should choose 'A' but 'B' looks like more fun. I.e. The peach milk shake from Chic Filet.
- Have you ever found yourself in the middle of drought in life? a financial drought? An emotional drought? A relational drought? Did you look for God? Or, Just look to survive? Or, Were you drug by your flesh into a deep drought? As much as I dislike droughts, I dislike them immensely but I am finding that they help me discover more of God and more about God. Also important side note: Not all droughts in our lives are cause by our sin. Sometimes they are caused by 'Ahab's' sin. But all drought cause us to take inventory of what is in our heart.
- I Kings 18:15, 21, 41-44.
- This story begins in chapter 15 with the onset of a series of rulers in Israel who did evil in the sight of the Lord. It begins to climax in chapter 17:1 when a prophet named Elijah from Tishbe declares: *"Now Elijah, who was from Tishbe in Gilead, told King Ahab, "As surely as the Lord, the God of Israel, lives—the God I serve—there will be no dew or rain during the next few years until I give the word!"*" (1 Kings 17:1, NLT) Two things immediately stand out.
 - In life you will find this constant tension between the glorious Kingdom of Heaven and fallen world we live in. And you are caught in the middle and you will choose where you stand. We have Ahab on one side. Elijah is on the other side. And the people are caught in the middle.
 - Second we have a three year drought. Droughts create deficits in our lives. Deficits create fear, stress and desperation. And the desperation of the situation exists to move us closer to God. Sometimes God fixes 'fixes' to get us fixed. He is after people! He wants us all to grow and to experience the joy of our faith. Phil 1:25 NLT

I. Where You Stand Determines Where You Go

- A. Where you stand in life and who you stand with greatly determines where you will go in life. *"But Elijah said, "I swear by the Lord Almighty, in whose presence I stand, that I will present myself to Ahab this very day."*" (1 Kings 18:15, NLT) Who you stand with makes all the difference. Elijah is standing in the presence of God!
1. I.e. I remember a phrase my mom would randomly say at different times as I grew up: "Bad company corrupts good character." What she was trying to teach me was this:

- a) "Son, who you hang out with, who you stand with, will determine where you go in life." or in another way...
 - b) "Son, if you lie down with dogs your are going to get up with fleas."
 - c) "Son, bad company corrupts good character." 1 Cor 15:33. You can flip that: "Good company builds good character."
2. In order for the disciples to follow Jesus they had to leave their fishing friends, their tax collector friends, and their zealot/patriot friends. They still had contact, but they could not hang out with them. They hung out with Jesus
- B. Stand with God. *"And the angel answered and said to him, 'I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.'" (Luke 1:19, NKJV)* Standing with God...
1. Gives you credibility with God because you know Him and credibility with people because they see God in you. We do not just want to know about Him we want to know Him and that only happens by time with Him.
 2. Gives you a message from the mouth and heart of God. Revelation knowledge flows from God. It emanates from God. In Revelation 4:5 ...lightnings, thunder, voices!!!
 - a) *"Now when they saw the **boldness** of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus." (Acts 4:13, NKJV)* What do people realize about you?
 3. Gives you influence on earth to help those who are caught in the middle. IE. It is that Acts 1:8 power to be witnesses.
 - a) Both Elijah and Gabriel walked in authority to be witnesses.
- C. Where you stand determines where you go. God is still going places! Where you stand determines where you go. This also includes your eternal future.

II. Where You Go Determines How You Pray

- A. Because Elijah stood with God, God determined where he would go and the contest that would ensue. God was fixing a 'fix' to get Israel fixed. Lets note Elijahs prayer life:
1. First, *"Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months."* (James 5:17, NKJV) Greek, 'pascho' it has to do with that which happens on the outside and affects us on the inside. It is often associated with suffering.
- B. He prays for a drought. God is creating a deficit for the purpose of revealing Himself. But we must note that this a God activity to create a deficit, that leads to a desperation and results in powerful delivering revelation.
1. In 17, we are introduced to a widow and her son who are barely alive in this three year drought. Elijah asks for water and bread. This requires her to use her last bit of oil and flour to feed the man of God.

2. Before he tells her what God will do he says to her, "Do not be afraid." 17:13. Why is this important? Because fear can't find God. Fear is consumed with self, survival, not finding God. Elijah says, "Do not be afraid."
 3. "Do not be afraid." These words, so often must be heard before the first step of faith taken. Matthew 8:26; 28:5,10.
 - a) *"Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows."* (Matthew 10:31, NKJV)
 - b) The situation exists to move us closer to God. *"But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus."* (Matthew 14:27-29, NKJV) When Peter stepped out he got closer to Jesus.
- C. He prayed for drought now he prays for fire! You know the story.
1. God's heart and Elijah's heart is for the people. *"Then Elijah stood in front of them and said, "How much longer will you waver, hobbling between two opinions? ... But the people were completely silent."* (1 Kings 18:21, NLT) The question is real. People have to hear the question and face the reality before they can even begin to look for answers. Love asks the question but does not demand the answer. It demonstrates the answers... God's love.
 2. God answers by fire! This reveals that God is truly God. And the people say, "The Lord He is God."
 3. Where you go determines how you pray! If you stand in God's presence in the morning and His hear is for the people, how will you pray as you go? What will you pray when there? When will you decide to pray?

III. How You Pray Determines Where You Finish

- A. Elijah's prayer caused revelation knowledge to flow, faith to arise and deliverance to come. We pray to see revelation knowledge come to people. Eph 1:17, To see faith arise and people enjoy God. And for deliverance to come Spirit Soul and Body.
 1. Elijah's prayer moved a nation back to God. *"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 18:39, NLT)
 2. With the fire lies were eliminated, truth was exalted and the people once again trust God.
 3. The Faith of Elijah released the faith of the people that released the nation from the drought!
- B. Post victory activity. The job wasn't done yet. Elijah wants to connect the people not just to the fire but to the rain. The fire brought freedom but the rain brings restoration!

1. "Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go get something to eat and drink, for I hear a mighty rainstorm coming!" (1 Kings 18:41, NLT)
 - a) That sound was emanating from heaven! It was being revealed to Elijah that it was going to rain. The sound of rain is the call to prayer. Elijah hears the sound then goes to pray. 18:42-43.
 - b) The sound strengthened his faith and his hope.
 - c) The sound was enough evidence that something was about to take place.
 - d) The sound was where he could sense that God was working.
 - e) The sound was the reality that rain had to be prayed into its place.
 2. When he heard the sound intercession came upon him. He went to the high place to pray! "So Ahab went to eat and drink. But Elijah climbed to the top of Mount Carmel and bowed low to the ground and prayed with his face between his knees." (1 Kings 18:42, NLT) Elijah put his face between his knees and kissed the past good bye!
- C. After the victory keep looking!
1. Elijah sends his servant to see if the rain is coming. On the 7th trip (that is perseverance in prayer) the report is: I see a cloud the size of a mans hand!
 2. When one tiny cloud appeared, Elijah declared to Ahab that there was a coming deluge. Elijah was so confident of the return of the supernatural, that the slightest sign was taken as fulfillment/confirmation. Zech 4:10 "*Do not despise small beginnings.*"
 3. There was a sound: The sound was an indication (Something is coming). It meant: life, recovery restoration, the rivers will run again, fish will be caught again, the crops will grow again, there will be joy where there has been sorrow, there will be laughter where there has been weeping.

Conclusion:

- God cares about people and He has equipped you to choose where you will stand and where you will go.
- Where you go let powerful prayers be release through you.
- And with revelation determine where you and others will finish!
- This world is in a struggle between two opinions. Is there a God or not? You may be the only Elijah they will ever know. You are the voice of God to those who are in a drought. You are the real rainmaker!
- What I am trying to tell you, is that there is a day on God's calendar that a front from heaven is going to blow your way and the rain of heaven will flood your soul and your drought will be broken.
- The rain of heaven is being sent through you to break the drought in someones life!