

K-538 the Spirit of Elijah (1 of 2)

by Art Katz

Art Katz explores the life and significance of the prophet Elijah, emphasizing the need for bold prophetic voices in a corrupt world.

Duration: 46:42

Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:19, 1 Kings 17:5, 1 Kings 17:10, Matthew 6:33, Galatians 6:7, 2 Timothy 3:16, James 1:22

Topics: "Endtimes"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the current state of society and civilization, highlighting the immorality, cultural decay, and economic crisis in America. He also mentions the escalating national debt and its detrimental impact on the economy. The speaker expresses concern over the increasing violence and lawlessness in Russia, particularly the rise of the Russian mafia. Throughout the sermon, the speaker emphasizes the need for obedience to God and ponders how God prepared the prophet Elijah for his obedience without any indication in the Bible.

Transcript

I just feel like this is Elijah Day today, and that we need to say something about the prophet Elijah. And we've been turned to 1st Kings 17, where he makes his abrupt history on the historic scene, which itself is a statement. Hey, where did this guy come from? 1st Kings 17.

But I want to read you a few comments out of an introduction to a book on Elijah by A.W. Pink. How many people know this author? You should know him. Who can recite some other titles of things he's written? The whole Gleanings series.

Gleanings from Exodus, Gleanings from Genesis, Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, an outstanding British commentator. Now this is not his introduction, it's that of another, but it says some wonderful things about Elijah, who appeared on the stage at the darkest hour of Israel's history. Everything that we're saying historically has a resonance of things that we're saying about the things of the future.

That which is past is now. Ecclesiastes 3.15. That which is past is now. That which will be has been.

And God requires that which is past. A whole different perspective. Because mankind's propensity, if something is past, it's done.

God's propensity, something that's past is now. And will also be. That eternal now that sees everything in flux.

Okay. So if this is God's, a man on the darkest hour of Israel's history, what can we expect in the darkest hour to which we are tending? And dark in the murders and violence and lies, the things that we've been describing and discussing. He calls Elijah the most eminent prophet reserved for the corruptest age.

It's like an inverse ratio. The more vile the age, the more corrupt the age, the darker the age, the more eminent the prophet. The more distinctive the genius of the prophetic man who confronts it.

And there's a logic to that. It must be. There's more to be undone.

Remember how Elijah, was it Elijah who, oh yeah, before he called down fire from heaven in that confrontation with the false prophets of Baal, before the whole of assembled Israel on Mount Carmel? Imagine the authority that this man had to say to King Ahab, Now gather up all Israel unto me and the false prophets of Baal, and let them make their altar, and let them sacrifice their bullock, and let them call upon their God to consume their sacrifice with fire, and I'll erect my altar, and I'll make my sacrifice, and let that God be God who answers by fire. The audacity of that man. And this is the foretaste of the last day's Elijah ministry.

That's what we need to appreciate. I mean, I love it historically. If it was never again ever to come upon the scene of history, there's enough there to dwell upon and to enjoy thoroughly.

What a man. Audacity. But what heightens our appreciation is that it's also a picture of what must yet come.

Elijah must first come and restore all things before the Lord's coming. Whether that means an Elijah body, an Elijah... What's the word? Elijah company. That's the word.

Corporate manifestation of the Elijah spirit in a body, or as individual Elijah men, or both. I don't know. But there must be that phenomenon.

And therefore, this is remarkably instructive. And John was equated with Elijah, of whom the Lord himself said, the greatest of all prophets. So what a celebration, then, of the intrinsic Elijah content of what John is.

So the most eminent prophet reserved for the correctest age. History repeats itself, this writer says. The wickedness and idolatry rampant in Ahab's reign lives on in our gross 20th century profanities and corruptions.

The worldliness and ungodliness of Jezebel in all their painted hideousness have not only intruded into the present day scene, but have become ensconced in our homes and our public life. This is written in 1963, which was virtually the age of innocence next to the evil that the last generation for 30 years have revealed. And at that time, he's talking about the spirit of Jezebel that has permeated the whole of civilization, our homes, and we could say also our churches.

History repeats itself. The wickedness and idolatry rampant in Ahab's reign lives on in our gross 20th century profanities and corruptions. The worldliness and ungodliness of Jezebel in all their painted hideousness have not only intruded into the present day scene, but have become ensconced in our

homes and our public life.

That's a prophetic statement that goes far beyond 1963, and that modern times and the present hour has certainly established. It says of Ahab that he was more wicked, more evil, than any of the kings of Israel before him. So we know that this is the epitome of evil, and the conjunction between a political Ahab and a religious Jezebel that elicits strange, ungodly, vile union brings together the worst of things political and things religious, and makes it such a consummate power.

This is what we need to understand. This is the prefiguring of the last days world religious and political system to which we're now moving. It's the logic of our time.

There needs to be some kind of a global authority. There needs to be some kind of resolution of the things that are dividing mankind between the Serbs and the Croats and orthodoxy versus Catholicism versus this versus that. If there's going to be any sanity on this globe, any kind of resolution of conflict, if it were even just to stop one factor, the flow of refugees out of their own nations and spilling out over the world by the millions, then some kind of sanity, peace, and order has got to be restored to nations by some kind of unity that ends the necessity for them to be at war with each other.

What's happening in the Sudan now is a horror. It's a holocaust. It's genocidal.

It's wholesale murder. It's bringing whole entire segments of black mankind to death by starvation in the conflict between the Islamic northern part of Sudan and the Christianized southern part as well as a Marxist versus other elements that are opposed to it. That whole nation is in turmoil unto death.

And it's happening everywhere. Yugoslavia, Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, my God, what an eruption of ethnic differences with such vitriolic hatred and suspicion of each other that we cannot even conceive. In this last issue of U.S. News & World Report, the writer says in an ironic way, even if the political and military thing is resolved, they said the contemplation of a peace is a horror.

That these people with this tortured history and blood and mass rape as a political and military maneuver where 12-year-old girls are repeatedly raped to humiliate the enemy, supposing that the conditions of the violence cease and now they're caught at peace and they're going to live alongside each other? Phew! They're erecting barricades, even in Sarajevo, between the Muslim neighborhood and the other. So, it's going to require some kind of union, both of a political and religious kind, and that is forespoken, that is foreshadowed by the union of Ahab and Jezebel in the time of Elijah. There's only one who stands up to oppose it, that whatever the benefit it confers to men in seeming peace, it is not God.

And how long do you hold between two opinions? It is spoken to an apostate nation that only wants peace, peace at any price, the false thing, so that business can go on as usual. The Lord has already given me something, if I'll be allowed to go to Israel for that conference in Jerusalem and to say to these, quote, Arab Christians, you know why you're being judged now? You know why you're in a state of upheaval and turmoil and threat? It's because you were too long satisfied with a shopkeeper's Christianity. And only anyone who's been to Israel and the Old City knows what I'm talking about.

You know the kind of cordiality that these merchants can bring, and, oh, do come into my shop, they want the kind of peace that is conducive to commerce. But they don't want the kind of faith that is implicit in true believing, which is radical. And that finally will bring its judgment.

Someone said to me about the Armenians and their disaster and their holocaust. I said, well, I've not thought much about it, but just off the top of my head, I would say it's a judgment for allowing the once true faith to have become only a cultural and shadow of what it was at the first. A shopkeeper's Christianity.

And who's the one who will not go along with that? Who's the one who sees right through it? Who's the one that will confront it? Even when it reaches its most vile form of the union with Ahab and Jezebel, the woman whose specialty was destroying the prophets of God. Remember the 50 that were kept alive in a cave by some servant of that household who has some respect for the prophetic call? Otherwise, what can we imagine? They were being dismembered. There's something about the Jezebel spirit that is so actuated in a hatred against that which is prophetic.

Because it knows that whatever that is, it threatens that whole system that is implied in the name Jezebel and Ahab. And it's to that that God sends this man. I'm not picturing some six-foot brute with bulging biceps and, you know, something out of the phone booth.

I'm picturing, I don't know what, a less impressive, externally impressive man. His authority and power and audacity is not the statement of what he is externally, but what he is inwardly and truly, which is the whole truth of what authority in God is. It's not the audacity that grows from the fact that you're macho.

That's a false audacity, but to confront Ahab as the Lord my God lives before whom I stand, it shall not do nor reign but according to my word. And at the end of this introduction, the writer says, the test of Carmel is still completely valid. The God that answers by fire, let him be God.

So, let's take a look at that wonderful text, 1 Kings 17. Let's begin in 16, verse 33. And Ahab made a grove, and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

All you need to do is read about those kings. They were out of domination, and yet Ahab exceeded them. And then chapter 17, Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, as the Lord God of Israel lives before whom I stand, there shall not be do nor reign these years but according to my word.

How many years did that prove to be? Three and a half years. The same, strange, the same length of time as the tribulation period itself. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Shareth, that is before Jordan.

And it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook, as commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did according to the word of the Lord. For he went and dwelt by the brook Shareth, that is before Jordan.

And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning and bread and flesh in the evening. And he drank of the brook. And it came to pass, after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Sidon, and dwell there. By the way, who came from Sidon of Zarephath? Jezebel. Her own hometown.

And I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose and went to Zarephath, and so on and so on. Let's just deal with these initial verses, maybe beginning with the last of these and then

coming back to the first.

The remarkable, how would you say it, obedience to the strange requirements of God. And that a prophet himself is not exempt from the conditions that are established by the judgment that has come through his own word. The brook dried up.

You're not making some judgment from which you yourself are absolved. The Jeremiah that gave warning to Jerusalem was there when Jerusalem's judgment came. So that's a pattern that we need to remember and to consider.

But did he pick himself up and go as he visibly saw the brook drying up? Wouldn't logic and self-interest and necessity for preservation say that if the brook dries, you've got to find another accommodation? Here we come to the root thing of what makes Elijah Elijah. He was never, ever once moved to any kind of action or conduct on the basis of his own critique or examination or logic or reason or any kind of thing that men would humanly employ to determine their movements. Only one thing moved that man.

What was it? The Word of the Lord came. And what if the Word of the Lord did not come? And the brook not just constricted and became less, but fully and totally dried up. And the Word of the Lord did not yet come.

Then what? Here's what I'm getting at. You're not going to be led by the Word of God and the Word of God is not the Word of God except unto death. Faith is really unto death.

Though though he slay me, yet will I trust him. And if obedience means my death, that's what it's just going to have to mean. There's never going to be a point reached where I can, on the basis of self-preservation, absolve the principle that is the cornerstone of my whole prophetic life.

If it means my death, then it means my death. But I move by one consideration only, the Word of the Lord that comes. And when you are so habituated to that, how will God then honor your word? You remember what the widow woman said? Now by this I know that thou art a man of God and the Word of God in your mouth is truth.

And haven't we noticed this? We're all long old enough in the Lord to have heard many men speak and preach and teach and over the same subjects and the same texts even. And some leave us virtually untouched and we yawn and we go on to something else and to others, what did Randy say last night? For two nights he didn't sleep. What makes the word in one mouth more effectual than the word in another? It's this.

It's the same thing with Samuel and God did not allow any of Samuel's words to fall to the ground. Because Samuel did not allow any of the Lord's words to fall. Whatsoever you say, that too shall you reap.

You're submitted to authority, you'll have authority. Al was sharing with us last night. Where is the authority in the church? It's not there.

Because there's a lot of free-ruling men doing their thing. Don't they have boards and don't they have deacon men? Yeah, but what are they? Rubber stamps. Self-appointed or salaried staffs that approve and affirm the man but will never contend with him or challenge him.

So, let this sink in. If it meant that he would perish by the brook that dries up, so he'll perish. After all, whose life is it? If you haven't settled that question, you're going to get a little itchy as you watch the brook dries up.

As if it's your life. Now, what's the whole spirit and note of the pro-abortionists? What's their cry? Our rights. Our right to our body.

You can't tell me what to do. This is my body. And if I want to abort, I'll abort.

It's my body. Not so. We are the lords.

The earth is the lords and the nations and those that dwell therein. And probably a lot of Christian unhappiness would be ended if we have come to a real reckoning about this once and for all, that our life is not our own. How can you tell whether you've made that reckoning? That even when you're called on to share before other believers, you go into a frenzy and a panic, lest you're embarrassed, or how will it sound? Things like that.

We reveal in little things, even among ourselves, whether indeed we're holding our life unto ourselves or not. And so I'm always encouraging you to that unselfconsciousness by which you can share and speak and pray and do. What are we that has not been given? And what do we have that God has not Himself established? Okay.

I love that verse, So he went and did according to the word of the Lord. Verse 5. Verse 10, So he arose and went to Zarephath. It's as if in each instance God's not just calling him to an obedience, but to an ultimate obedience in everything that defies human logic and religious understanding.

To go to the city, which is the birthplace and the center of the very religious occultic civilization from which Jezebel came, and to dwell there without analyzing, without totaling it up. Could it possibly work? What will it mean? This is insane. Nothing.

God spoke. He acts. So he arose and went.

Any obedience that hesitates is no longer obedience. Any obedience that's partial is disobedient. What would be a great text that shows that? Another A for the day.

Saul, 1 Samuel 15. Utterly destroy and spare not. Infants, sucklings, camels, sheep, men and women.

God's judgment had come on a complete civilization. Even its animals were not to be spared. Its infants and its sucklings.

But what does your mind say? It's not fair. Okay, I can understand men and women, they're totally corrupted, but infants and sucklings? Can't we train them up and can't they be saved and we re-educate them and, you know, you don't submit God's requirement to your reason. But what did Saul do? He destroyed the men and the women and even the infants and sucklings, but the camel, sheep and the ass, you know, these animals, it takes your heart out.

It shows you they can't be evil. What do they know? He saved the best of the camel and the sheep for a sacrifice unto the Lord. This is what we're talking about.

Our worst evils are predicated on principles of righteousness for the Lord's sake. Isn't that remarkable? We're going to destroy the Son of Man and the Son of Glory because it's necessary that one man die, that the nation remain and that we do not lose our place, our religious place. So he arose and went.

So he arose and did according to the word of the Lord. Everybody knows that a raven is a bird of prey. It lives from dead things.

And this is the bird that God employs to feed the prophet. It didn't simply turn over in his Jewish kishkas and that would never have said, you know, not a quibble. That's what God will employ.

That's what he'll have. Now the remarkable thing is that nothing precedes this description of Elijah. Here's the full or totally prepared man thrust on the scene of history in that condition of obedience and without anything to indicate how he came to it.

And that's a little bit of what we need to ponder. And what does that mean? I mean, we have to learn not only from what God says but what he leaves unsaid. Why do we have some sketch of how God prepared such a man for such an obedience? Why is it unrecorded? Why is it left in obscurity? Because Elijah is indicative in type of the last days Elijah band also trained up for ultimate obediences in obscurity and hiddenness in such places as La Porte, Minnesota.

Where? Well, wherever you are. Even in the busiest, you know, place centers of men. God's dealing with his prophetic sons is in the place of obscurity and hiddenness.

It's unknown, not only to the world but even to the religious community. And doesn't the Lord have a way to do that? Can he take the ordinary elements of your life and use that to employ that to discipline and train you up in a long preparation that is not recognized nor seen by others? What does Elijah reveal that would be suggestive of this in the words of his own mouth that we've already read? Being students of the scripture that you are. We've got to hang on to every clue, every word, every syllable.

Nothing is here by happenstance. Everything is fraught with meaning. As Lord my God lives, what a statement to make to an apostate generation that has lost all sense of a living God.

And that's why he could take its liberties. That's why he could follow Baal. That's why he could make its altars to false gods and forget the God of Israel.

He no longer lives. Where is he? And isn't that the statement of our generation, particularly the Jewish people today? The secular, I'm not talking about the orthodox minority, but the preponderance of modern Jews today, there's no sense of God. There's no reference to him in the deepest crises of their life.

There's never a thought, where is God? Should we look for him? Is there a God who is the God of our fathers who can extricate us from our present dilemma? There's nothing like that. It would be an embarrassment for any journalist or political figure in Israel even to suggest such a thing. Everything is predicated totally and unequivocally on secular and atheistic presumptions.

Anything else, not only for Israel, but for this country, even for the Baptist that Clinton is, quote-unquote. I think he's been disowned by the Southern Baptist movement. But can you picture such a man? He's gone to Cape Cod or somewhere up in New England for a rest because his mind is absolutely fatigued.

I mean, that poor man, and he was brilliant. He was a Rhodes Scholar, and they talk about a whole new generation of meritocracy, that is to say, who have been raised up to a place of political prominence by their ability and their intellectual attainments. He's sharp.

And the whole coterie of advisors are men and women like him, modern-day, atheistic, sharp-minded. They're going to set things right by their analytical and critical abilities. And he has to deal with Bosnia, he's got to deal with Somalia.

Remember what happened there? We went on a little thing just to help people from starvation, but the thing is blowing up in our faces. We're starting to suffer fatalities. Americans are being killed by people who are somehow not appreciating our well-meaning intention.

Everything that we're touching is erupting in our faces. The economy is in pitiful shape. The whole tenor of American society and civilization is immoral.

Its culture, its values, it stinks. And all of these things, the terrible national debt that it takes to service that debt, which is to say, merely pay the interest on it, is now so staggering that it sucks the blood right out of the economy. But of the great proportion of wealth that could have been turned to need, merely pays the interest on an overwhelming body of debt that we can't even begin to pay off.

And it increases and increases and increases. It's just totally skyrocketed, out of control. The court system is shot, the jails are overflowing, a crash program we've talked about conscripting another 500,000 policemen as if we could put a lid on the evil that is erupting everywhere.

In Russia now, gangs are running the country. There's a Russian mafia that is operating with violence and terror like nothing that nation has ever seen since the lid is off. Tourists are being murdered in their beds in Russian hotels and the police can't even begin to contain it.

There are more mobsters than there are police. The world is lawless. And here's the man who wants so desperately to be in the place of power and is overwhelmed by the totality and the magnitude of these problems, he's got to go on a vacation and not think about them.

But in all of that crisis, can you imagine him suggesting and having a night on TV and calling the nation and the Congress and the Senate and the whole system to stop and look to God that maybe we need to reckon that we're out of control and that the magnitude of our crises are beyond any human solution and that our only answer is that if there's a God to consult him and to be heard of him, that he might give us an answer. What would happen to his political career if he so much as hinted at such a thing? They'd cut that man off with a straitjacket. He would be more quickly led out of office than Nixon was.

What happened to Nixon? What do they call that when you... Impeachment. Impeachment. He was impeached.

Impeached. Because the guy's lost his marbles. He's actually talking about calling on a God? It's okay to speak sanctimoniously about God and to commence the sessions of Congress with a prayer, but not, come on, get off it, to call on God in any serious way as if he really exists and can give answer.

And that was exactly the mentality of the generation into which Elijah was birthed. Jewish? Yeah. Ceremonially? Yeah.

There's a temple system and so on? Yeah. But not a living God who looks upon men, hears and sees, needs to be consulted and who can give answer. I mean, come on, get off it.

But here's one skinny little guy who believed that and begins his whole first statement, as the Lord my God lives before whom I stand, it shall not reign nor do according to my word. You know what we need to do? We need to break up the class into committees and each committee take one fragment of that statement and wrestle through. I don't know which has the more formidable task, the committee that has to do with the phrase as the Lord my God lives, and really burn with to that.

What does he mean by that? Why does he begin with that? And having said that, how impressed is Ahab? And why does he have to begin with that? And is he saying it merely as a point of introduction or is that the foundation of his life and being and his prophetic authority? And how does he know that God lives in an age of apostasy? How come he knows it and the others don't? And to what degree does he know it? And how did he get to know it? How did you get to know it? That your God really lives. Really lives. He's not just there positionally as a higher power.

He really lives. And you know that you know that you know, not because you've been instructed or it's part of your curriculum or your creedal confession, but God has come to you in such reality and in such power, in such intimacy to touch things of your life in such a way that you know that you know that you know. And you've got to know that before you stand before Ahab and Jezebel.

You've got to know that you know that you know that your God lives. Really lives. And that knowledge is not cheap.

How many people are satisfied with their present knowledge, which is satisfactory for most operating circumstances, but it's not satisfactory to stand before Ahab? Why would men prefer to remain with the quotient of knowledge that they presently have than to go on to a knowledge that's sufficient to stand before Ahab? What a requirement. To know God as Elijah knew him is to welcome suffering, is to open yourself, is to make yourself vulnerable for such pain, such trials, such dealing, such being upturned, such things that can't be anticipated, that except God be God, you're likely to perish in any one of those things. How many people just would rather get by? Just a modicum of God sufficient for our need, but not the knowledge of God that exceeds our need.

The knowledge of God as He in fact really is and desires to be known. Some of you may have heard this in the Pope where I went to hear a tremendous godly man, international reputation. I'd only heard a little bit on tape and I was bowed over.

His word was such a power, resonance of God. I remember we were filing out of the room, going through the exit, and some guy in front of me was saying, I'll go a long distance to hear this man preach again. I said, yeah? I said, I'll go a long distance merely to hear him clear his throat.

There's a raspy quality to this man's voice. I know that he had been in a mental institution. I know he'd had a nervous breakdown as a minister.

I know he had been through hells of struggling through issues of faith with God and it resonated even in his voice. That raspy quality of his voice just was so indicative of struggle, of wrestling, of breaking through, of finding God out of that darkness. What do they call it, that dark night of the soul? How many have experienced that? The sense of despair and where is God and futility and all that you've hoped for is

crushed and you're so dispirited you can't lift your head up and something has hit you from the blind side that was unthinkable and just everything is forsaken and finished and gone and where is God? He's silent.

And how long a season will that be and to groan your way through that in the dark night of the soul? Well, I would suspect that Elijah is a man for whom such experience as that was not strange. And I don't think it's automatic and maybe we just need to let the Lord know that the knowledge of Him is so dear to us that we're willing for whatever it would take to obtain it. And that the single factor that describes the Messianic age however much it talks about its glory, its government, its righteousness the greatest fact is this that the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the seas.

And what kind of knowledge? Not religious, not Talmudic, not evangelical, but this knowledge. So as the Lord my God lives would be for one committee before whom I stand would be another committee. Why is that cogent? Not only does he live but he's the God before whom I stand.

What does that imply? Accountability to that God and to that God alone? Can you stand before that God and equally or even partially stand at the same time before others? It's mutually exclusive. If you're going to stand before that God you cannot stand before any other. So what does that mean then about the approval of men or rising in the religious system becoming a presbyter, becoming celebrated? No way.

I mean we can go on. That's why it takes a committee to examine this. What does it mean to stand before God solely and exclusively for full accountability without so much as looking out of the corner of your eye as to how any other man or authority or religious group or prestigious segment of society will so much as take note of you.

Total and absolute indifference to what men think or say. And I'm not all about encouraging some kind of sophomoric or I don't give a rap what others say. We need to give a rap about the body of Christ and those to whom we're submitted and related.

But you understand what I'm saying? Not a looking toward acknowledgement from men. You cannot have the two. To stand before God is an absoluteness.

And I think I want to stand on the statement that in fact here's what I say to God's people frequently now. How far are you willing to go? What's your intention? Do you have an apostolic intent as a believer? To what length will you go? How far are you willing to go with God? How much are you willing to open yourself and make yourself vulnerable not only for discomfiting things challenging things, threatening things out of which comes such a knowledge of God and such an eternal reward. I think saying everything that I want to say about the sovereignty of God and the absoluteness of God there's something that's got to come from us.

Namely, a willingness. How far are you willing to go? And that question has been answered by a number of you who have come here. At distance and at expense and sacrifice is a statement of how far you're willing to go.

It's not the full statement but it's a good statement. Many are not willing. This far, no further seems to be an attitude that I meet in a lot of Christians.

This far, no further. But an Elijah must be a God a man who pulls out all the stops. And I'm just describing what is the animus of hatred against the Davidic people of God in every generation and especially the last.

If you're going to respond to the encouragement to pull out the stops you're signing a death warrant. You're giving reason for those who will oppose you with a fury because it's not the kind of model that they want exhibited by which the fraudulence of their own tepid, T-E-P-I-D banal religion would be exposed. You're not going to stand before that throne with any kind of confidence but with unbelievable terror unless you can say in this life as the Lord my God lives before whom I can stand and say it in truth.

Whatever the sacrifice to be able to make that statement in this life I would say it's worth it. Just to avoid the terror of standing before the throne of the Lord when he makes that the eternal determination of your destiny. To know that you stand and to know it in this life whatever it takes to know it is worth it.

So there's evidently a spirit of Elijah a quintessential prophetic character that John exhibited that was of spirit and of kind with Elijah and will again picture what is yet future an Elijah band upon the earth in that same separation that same audacity that same confident knowledge of God that same authority to perform the last days works of God and to confront a church in a world that has become apostate and challenge them by challenging its prophets and bringing down the demonstration of God in fire. Got our work cut out for us. Go ahead.

Just to build on that a second. It really is a statement of an ultimate death that will even allow you to die to what the word of God says where God is even allowed to contradict himself and you're not put off from that because you have an insistence that God has got to be contained within his own word that if it pleases him to exceed his word or to set aside his word or go beyond his word that that's what makes God God and how can I say that without encouraging any attitude as if the word is a flippant thing that we can set aside at will. God himself has exalted his word above his name.

Heaven and earth will pass away and his word will endure forever but what if in some peculiar requirement of God by his own wisdom he exceeds his word or contradicts it or seems to is your relationship with him great enough where God can be God even beyond his own word and will not limit the Holy One of Israel even to his word. I'm talking off the top of my head. I mean, we're skating on thin ice here.

I wouldn't entrust that to an amateur. I wouldn't entrust that attitude to someone who's yet alive to himself that wants to justify himself in conduct in, well, you know, taking this liberty. It can only be entrusted, in fact, ironically to that one who has the deepest reverence for the word of God and who lives totally by it.

So the word of the Lord came to Elijah and Elijah arose and went. It's only because of that that when it's a requirement beyond the word, being fed by ravens, being fed by a Gentile widow, even from the city of Jezebel he arose and went. He knew the God of the word.

He knew the word. But there's a an ultimate recognition of God that many of us would balk at that was indicated by a little squeamishness the other night when we had our little dancing and party and we were not quite sure if this was God honoring and maybe it was not the spirit of worship. I think that that more stirred up something of that layer of that resonance of religiosity that has not yet met the cross that keeps God from being God.

And that it would surprise us that the Lord had a ball that night and enjoyed it fervently. He was not at all offended that we were because we're more fastidious for the principles of God than himself. I'm getting at something.

Give me some grace here. But what I'm getting at is just that little thing that separates the sheep from the goats, that makes the difference between well-meaning men and the Elijah men. To be in that place in God that does not even limit God to his own word and would not even require an explanation why the request is at disparity with the word.

You don't see a whisper of Elijah taking God to task. Well, how come? Now doesn't your word say that that's an unclean animal? You know I'm not supposed to come into the house of a Gentile, let alone from Sidon. Nothing.

Not a whisper, not a complaint, not a question. He arose and went and did according to the word of the Lord. Now, how do you know it was the word of the Lord? Couldn't that have been the enemy? Getting Elijah out from the place where God wanted him, moving him to another place outside of Israel itself, bringing him in fact into the place of greatest jeopardy and danger, the very city and kingdom of Jezebel herself.

And the dumb sap thinks that that's the word of God. Shouldn't he know better? Where's his discernment? Logic itself would say that can't be God. So he arose and went and did according to the word of the Lord.

It's not even a moment's hesitation as even to debate whether it's God speaking or the enemy who knows well how to imitate God's voice and has tricked many saints by such a means.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/23/SID23273.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/art-katz/k-538-the-spirit-of-elijah-1-of-2/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net