

## THE ALTAR #4 THE ALTAR BRINGS THE BLESSING

Remember: The altar is a place to meet with God  
The altar demands a sacrifice  
The altar is made for fire  
The altar is a place of blessing

1Kings 18 <sup>41</sup> And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for *there is* a sound of abundance of rain. <sup>42</sup> So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, <sup>43</sup> And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, *There is* nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. <sup>44</sup> And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare *thy chariot*, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. <sup>45</sup> And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. <sup>46</sup> And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. KJV

The altar has been rebuilt, the wood laid in order, the sacrifice has been soaked in water, and the fire has fallen. Everything disappears. There is nothing left but an empty trench! The fire of God consumes everything; even the stones of the altar.

The prophets of Baal have been slain; what now?

Judgment always prepares the way for blessing.

When the fire fell and judgment for sin has been offered, blessing will follow.

## I. **THE SOUND OF RAIN**- blessing-

<sup>41</sup> And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for *there is* a sound of abundance of rain.

**A. No one but Elijah heard it.**

**B. He did not see the manifestation of rain but in the realm of his faith he heard it.**

Before you see it, you have got to hear it.

We are living in a day when it is reversed. We say show me something and then I will believe it. But God says believe, and then I will show you something.

Jesus told Thomas blessed is he who has not seen yet believes.

C. It is easier to have the ear of faith when God has just answered prayer.

- Elijah prayed it would not rain and it didn't.
- Elijah prayed for Israel to know their God was the true and only God and God answers his prayer with fire consuming the altar and the sacrifice.

## II. **THE SEARCH FOR RAIN**- watch and pray.

...And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, <sup>43</sup> And said to his servant, **Go up now, look** toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, *There is* nothing.

**A. If it took prayer for fire to fall; it will take prayer for the rain to fall.**

III. Some would say, “All you have to do is command it!” If that were the case, then Elijah could have pointed a bony finger to heaven and commanded rain, but that is not what happened. Instead we find him still praying.

**B. The prayer of faith demands expectation.**- v43  
“go,..now, look”

Col. 4 <sup>2</sup> Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; KJV

**C. The prayer of faith demands persistence.**  
Six times the servant is sent to look toward the sea.  
The report is the same, “There is nothing”!

On those first six trips that servant may have wondered, “Why in the world do I have to keep this up? How long will it last? How many more times can I make this trip and come back disappointed?”

Elijah has told Ahab that he heard the sound of rain but there is none....yet.

Don't you know that the devil taunted Elijah about his prophecy? He no doubt played with his mind. Have you ever heard these words, “You didn't really hear from God. This drought is going to continue”?.

What do we do? Keep watching and praying. PUSH- Pray Until Something Happens!

**III. THE SIGN THAT RAIN IS COMING** - a little cloud

<sup>44</sup> And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. KJV

**Seven is the number of perfection.** When we persist in faith something is going to happen.  
On the other side of nothing...THERE...IS...SOMETHING...

Keep on climbing. Keep on praying. Keep on looking. There will come a day when you will see a cloud!  
This drought will end. The blessings of God will fall. That seventh time will come. Your 7th time will come. Your rain will fall. The clouds will gather, the wind will blow, and the rain will fall upon you.

God thrills in using small things:  
The fishes and loaves to feed 5,000, and later, 4,000.  
One small stone to kill Goliath  
Gideon said, "I am the least in my father's house."  
An empty barrel feeds a widow and her son.  
A small amount of oil is stretched to pay a widows bills.

What are you seeing? III. The Lisa's baby

#### **IV. A SIGNIFICANT RAIN ARRIVES**

And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare *thy chariot*, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. <sup>45</sup> And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and **there was a great rain.**

Elijah now filled with faith **after seeing the sign prophecies to the king that a hard rain** will keep him from leaving if he doesn't do so now.

**After he prophesied**- the sky turns black and the wind blows.

**After he prophesies** – there was a great rain.

If you are on the other side of nothing, you have persisted in prayer, you have received a sign, tell somebody what God is about to do. Thus they will know that it was an answer to your prayer. Do you hear the sound, do you see the sign, are you prophesying what his coming, it is here! The drought is broken!